Parents,

I understand that you can get frustrated with playdough all over your house! It sticks in the tread of children’s shoes and litters your carpets, dried creations can crumble, bits and pieces must be saved and treasured. Guess what? It dries up for easy removal from carpets and flooring. It is odorless. It is cheap. It is fun. It can provide hours of entertainment.

If you Google "Playdough" you'll come up with a list of more than 700,000 references. Clearly, this stuff is here to stay. Playdough provides children with a plethora of opportunities to explore and develop social / emotional skills, math and science concepts, language and literacy skills, and, of course, fine motor skills as well as creativity and imagination. Kneading and pinching playdough can be very calming for some children; for others it opens the door to unlimited possibilities. It can be found in every developmentally appropriate preschool setting worth it’s salt, which, coincidentally, can be one of it’s major ingredients. Several years ago I had the opportunity to hear Early Childhood Education guru Bev Bos talk about clay. At her school she has a permanent clay table – that wonderful wet grey stuff that was a preschool staple when I was a preschooler many moons ago. They just leave it out all the time, cover it with a damp towel each night, and uncover it each morning. Wouldn’t that be a wonderful addition to our classroom? Somehow, I think we just don’t have the room for it. At BioKids we do our best to offer fresh, i.e., clean, playdough each week. If two colors are brought in, by the end of the week they are blended into a lovely new color.

If you have never made playdough at home, I guarantee that your child will be entertained by a fresh batch (Alex’s mom Kaylen has come up with a terrific new recipe, a copy of which I’ve put in your child’s cubby. I’ve also attached a recipe for Peanut Butter Playdough – just mix, don’t cook). Let your child pick out the color, open your kitchen gadget drawer for rolling and stamping tools, and have-at-it.  

continued...
BioKids will be closed on PIONEER DAY, Wednesday, July 24!

Thank You all-around!

A huge, gigantic Thank You to Aki and Kenzo’s mom Janet for re-designing our website. It looks fantastic and is very easy to use. Check it out http://biologylabs.utah.edu/biokids/

Another big Thank You Hazel’s dad Greg for being our Handyperson for the past two years. Special thanks to Oliver’s mom Heather who has been a faithful grocery shopper for the past several years – and she has actually enjoyed the task. Another big thanks to Carter’s family who has banked over 50 co-op hours upon leaving BioKids - after two children and 8 years with us!

Robin’s Nest continued...

One of our favorite activities is pounding wooden golf tees into playdough with plastic hammers. Providing your child with a designated playdough play space – a place mat, cookie sheet, or tray – will help control the dough. You might be surprised at the conversation that develops when you sit down with a child, you with your mound of dough, and they with theirs. Just wait (which can sometimes be hard to do) .....they will take you where they want to go. Children are used to putting the dough back into a container at school; not everything they make has to be kept. If they make something they want to keep, store dried creations in a specific place, one shoebox or shelf. To show off a prized creation put it under an inverted Lucite box.

Remember that playdough creations, just like a painting or other creative expression are just that – something that the child has put some thought into. They need to be respected as much as any other form of expression. You value what they say about a painting or drawing; you provide positive feedback and ask open-ended questions regarding what they build with Legos. So don’t sell playdough short!

Thanks, Robin

You can also try this: Put some uncolored playdough in a zip lock baggie with a few drops of food coloring and smush it around (under supervision, please, food coloring stains); explore mixing food colors.
Co-op Opportunities

There are several out of the ordinary ways to earn co-op credit this month.

1. Bean bags – make 24 bean bags out of sturdy fabric, double seamed and filled with dry beans.

2. Fruit picker (while this is on the calendar regularly, it needs clarification) – pick up some fresh fruit, enough for both classrooms, at the store or farmer’s market and earn an hour of co-op credit for each $10 spent, plus an hour for remembering to bring it in. The fruit needs to come to BioKids un-cut: just buy it, bring it in, we’ll do the rest.

3. Our outdoor Reading Quilt has bit-the-dust. If you have a smooth fabric (cotton) bedspread you would like to donate you can earn 2 hours of co-op credit. It needs to be out of a smooth fabric so wood chips easily fall off when given a shake.

4. Several things to choose from related to our August 2nd Playground Party are listed on the co-op calendar in the Preschool Room: bring in a card table and tablecloth, pick up the cake from the Union building and deliver it to BioKids, donate a watermelon, provide two large spouted water jugs, and/or purchase a $25 gift card for a musician (we need two).

Summer Playground Party

Our annual Playground Party is a great way to mix and mingle with other BioKids families and sometimes figure out just who is that friend your child is always talking about. It is also a nice send-off for children leaving to attend kindergarten – Sonia, Nate, Oliver, Max, Rachel, Carter and Jason. The party will be Friday, August 2nd from 4:15 – 5:30. Entertainment will include the ever-popular pony, face painting, and live music from members of the Whistling Rufus Band. Watermelon, cake and water will be served as well.
Annual Parent Evaluation

Every year we ask parents to complete an evaluation - the forms will appear shortly in your child’s cubby. Please complete the form and put it in the return envelope on the Preschool Room bulletin board by Friday, July 19th. The forms are reviewed by staff and all comments are taken very seriously!

Family Photo Album

The children in the Preschool Room love looking through our Family Photo Album. The notebook provides lots of vocabulary-building opportunities. If your family has not made a page, or you would simply like to create a new or updated one, there are supplies available on the parent information bulletin board in the Preschool Room.

Infant/Toddler families – we will create a notebook for your classroom as well. Supplies will appear in your child’s cubby.

Please write your child’s name on the page and cover one or both sides with family photos. Nothing fancy is required, just pictures that the children can look at and talk about.

Thank you to whomever left the small climbing structure on our playground.

The Preschoolers love it!

Just let us know who you are and you’ll get some co-op credit!