



GRASS TRAY

Materials you need:

- A large baking tray or similar containers that can handle being damp
- 1 cup of grass seed and cress seeds or sprouts
- Damp sand
- A handful or two of seed raising mix.
- Spray bottles with water for misting.

Setup for play:

- Work with the toddlers to scoop and spread the damp sand onto the tray until evenly distributed.
- Mix the seeds together and then show the children how to press into the wet sand just under the surface. Use a couple of smaller trays if you have a large group so there is easier access for everyone to get a turn. Sprinkle some seed raising soil over the top.
- Spray with the water bottles then choose a sunny, sheltered space to leave the tray.
- The children should begin to see green shoots in just a few days as they are fast growers. Let the children dig around with their hands to find and investigate the seeds and small plants at different stages of growth.
- When the grass is longer on the tray allow baby to kick with their feet or crawl over the top of the tray for a simple sensory experience.

EXPLORING OUR WORLD - ACTIVITY GUIDE 102

What are they learning with this activity?

As the children plant the seeds and watch them grow they are learning to:

- Explore, infer, predict and problem solve
- Explore differences between wet and dry.
- Understand how water helps to make plants grow.
- Develop new vocabulary and language skills
- Strengthen fine motor muscles, visual motor integration and control
- Respect and care for natural living things
- Persevere and experience the satisfaction of a job done well and sense of achievement
- Understand lifecycles and how food gets to our plates
- Use their senses to explore the natural environment

Extending the play:

- Once the tray has lots of greenery add some loose parts, figurines, dinosaurs or other materials for the children to set up a small world space.
- Set up a garden centre dramatic play area outside and add seeds to plant into old seedling containers to take home.

