LINC
LEADERSHIP FOR INCLUSION IN THE EARLY YEARS
CEANNAIREACHT DO CHUIMSIÚ SNA LUATHBHLIANTA

The LINC Programme is a higher education programme designed to promote the inclusion of all children in Early Childhood Settings across Ireland, for more information see www.lincprogramme.ie

LOOSE PARTS PLAY

"The humble stick can become a wand, a spoon or a fishing rod"
(Play Scotland, 2019 p.5)

The term 'loose parts' emerged as a result of Simon Nicholson's article on the Theory of Loose Parts: How NOT to Cheat Children (1971). Loose parts offer rich and endless play opportunities for children, they encourage creativity, curiosity and imagination (Play Scotland 2019). Here are some ideas for providing loose part play experiences for children.

Types of Loose Parts: Natural Materials

- Sticks
- Feathers
- Mud
- Stones
- Grass
- Flowers
- Leaves
- Twigs
- Sand
- Water
- Shells
- Pine Cones
- Tree stumps
- Wooden Logs and slices
- Large and small wooden planks

Benefits of Loose Parts:

- Promotes creativity and imagination.
- Promotes social development.
- Encourages problem solving.
- Children learn about risk and challenges.
- Encourages communication and negotiation skills.
- Promotes fine and gross motor development.
- Provides opportunities for children to engage with nature and the outdoors.
- Encourages STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths).

Role of the adult in Loose Parts Play

- Share in the children's creativity and imagination as they explore and use loose parts.
- Plan for child-led and adult guided play opportunities, for example, join the children's play when invited and stand back and allow the children to explore the loose parts with their peers without adult guidance.
- Encourage the children to problem solve as they use loose parts.
- Support the children in their use of loose parts where necessary, for example moving larger loose parts.
- Encourage the children to resolve conflicts as and when they occur when using loose parts through appropriate language and conflict resolution steps.
- Create a policy and procedure on the use of loose parts in your setting.
- Carry out risk assessments on the loose parts prior to giving them to children and for evidence of 'wear and tear'.

Manufactured Materials:

- Blankets
- Parachute
- Crates
- Wooden Pallets
- Wooden or Plastic Barrels
- Tyres
- Pots
- Pans
- Wheelbarrow
- Baskets
- Buckets
- Funnels
- Ribbon
- Kitchen Utensils
- Old Car Steering Wheel

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