

## RED PAINT IN THE HAIR??!

Red paint in the hair? Blue paint on the jeans? Sand in the shoes? Peanut butter on the favorite shirt? White socks that look brown? Sleeves a little bit damp?

### Your child probably. . .

Worked with a friend  
Solved a problem  
Created a masterpiece  
Learned a new skill  
Had a great time  
Developed new language

### Your child probably didn't. . .

Feel lonely  
Become bored  
Do repetitive "babyish" tasks  
Do worksh\*ts that are too easy  
Do "sit down" work that isn't appropriate for their age group

### You probably. . .

Paid good money for the clothes and will have trouble getting the red paint out  
Are wondering if your caregiver is paying close enough attention to your child

### Your caregiver probably. . .

Was aware of your child's needs and interests  
Spent time planning a challenging activity for the children  
Encouraged the children to try new things  
Made smocks available for the children  
Was worried you might be concerned

Try to remember your favorite activity when you were four years old. Was it outdoor play with water, mud dress-up clothes? Young children really learn when they are actively involved in play – not when someone is talking to them. There is a difference between "messy" and "lack of supervision". The caregiver made sure your child was fed, warm, took a nap, washed hands after using the potty and before eating, and planned messy fun things to do because that is how young children learn! Please send your child to school in clothes that can get dirty! Keep extra old clothes at the play site for times when the child gets really wet or messy. If you need to take the child out, bring the dressier clothes when picking up, and allow time to change. Keep calm. Remember in a few years the teenagers will use the shampoo, mirrors and all the towels! Young children need time to be kids. If you have concerns talk to your child's caregiver about active play! Credit : YMCA/CRS Newsletter, Summer 1996, who credited OPTIONS Summer 1995 Newsletter