

GROSS MOTOR ACTIVITIES FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

1. BIG PAPER PAINT

One of the things I love most about Children's Museums is the opportunity for large scale art. They have the space and materials to scale an entire wall with art. To have a cooperative mural covering a large table. To have a large weaving experience. To have an easel big enough for several children to create.

Inspired by these experiences, this is one of my favorite activities to do at home with older infants and young toddlers. This is a great activity for babies that encourages crawling or early walking while you paint.

Materials:

- Large Pieces of Paper
- Tape
- Paint
- Plate or Tray for Paint

Set Up:

Cover your floor in paper – the bigger the better.

Clear the general area around the paper.

Pour paint onto a tray or plate.

Activity:

I suggest striping your child down to their diaper and then offer them trays of different colored paint. I placed the trays in a couple different places around the paper to encourage them to crawl.

Allow them to crawl, walk, and paint everywhere on the paper and themselves. This is obviously messy – but the large scale of the painting gives them space to move around and explore their bodies while they paint.

Clean Up:

Remove paint trays to a counter or sink. Wash these later at your convenience.

Gate off the area if possible. This obviously makes it easier to try to clean without worrying about little ones crawling back into the area.

Either way, cleaning off your little ones is the first step. Mine went straight in the bathtub. The wonderful thing about tempera paint is how easily it washes right off.

Once your infants are cleaned off and happily situated with another activity or fast asleep, remove the paper from the floor. Save if so desired. Use a wet washcloth or wet wipe to clean any stray paint marks on the floor. Clorox wipes work well for me.