



defending the early years  
international mud day 2023



# INTERNATIONAL MUD DAY 2023

The Oaks Children's Academy participated in their first ever International Mud Day celebration on June 29, 2023!! Mud Day is a way to connect children to the Earth and soil, and discover the messy joy that comes from playing in and with mud!! We joined others around the globe in a day of splashing, rolling, squishing, sliding, making mud pies, and more! The children had access to several different stations on the playground and were free to get messy. Most excitingly, The Oaks applied for and was awarded a mini grant to use toward the creation of a MUD KITCHEN at our North Charleston location! This station was a favorite! Friends spent time in the sunshine "cooking" mud soup, strawberry mud cakes, and much more! In keeping with DEY's mission, The Oaks also promised to use this as an opportunity to intentionally advocate for playful experiential approaches to learning by enlightening parents and teachers of the evidence-based importance of MUD PLAY! The Oaks shared information and resources on the importance of mud play during the days leading up to Mud Day! Some of the many benefits to mud play include: Supports the development of fine and gross motor skills, calms anxious or frustrated children, provides a multisensory experience, is perfect for children to learn about texture, facilitates a connection with the very 'real' and imperfect natural world, is cost effective, easy to source and fun to collect, encourages 'scientific thinking and problem solving, supports the release of serotonin, allows children to focus on process, rather than product, supports risk taking, encourages unstructured play, provides a platform for many feelings to be experienced through play – sometimes all at the same time; wonder, trepidation, delight, joy, and happiness! This was such a special day for children and teachers alike. "At the end of the day, your feet should be dirty, your hair should be messy, and your eyes sparkling," -- and indeed they were.