Affective Play Den

Affective play spaces are spaces which “a) pay attention to and support the variety of feelings and moods that children and young people bring with them or have during play; b) have particular areas, materials or props that stimulate or encourage the expression, experience or experimentation with a range of emotions; and c) have playworkers who seek to develop via diverse means, an overall ambience of welcome, acceptance, freedom and playfulness.” *Play London*

Affective play spaces are particularly good for younger children, and those with physical or learning disabilities, although all children engage with and enjoy them.

**Suggested equipment**
- Old CDs: string up to reflect the light
- Collections of natural materials such as fir cones, pebbles, larger stones, shells
- Multi sensory balls
- Torches and glowsticks
- Box of pot pourri or other smelly bits; you could drop essential oils onto pine cones
- Wind chimes or use string and old spoons to create your own
- Tactile fabric, eg velvet, netting, fake fur
- Cushions
- Tin foil, tinsel, bubble wrap
- Tarpaulin as an easy way to cover space
- Blankets and throws
- Pop up tunnel for entrance to the lair!
- Any other multisensory resources

**Method:**
1. Use a table or climbing frame to provide the basis for the den.
2. Cover it with dark material, to limit the light.
3. If you have one, add a pop up tunnel to create an exciting entrance to a secret cave.
4. Fill with all the multi-sensory resources you can find, or better still let the children do it for themselves.
5. And if all the children are happily engaged, remember to take photos, so you can show Ofsted next time they visit.

**Areas of learning and development:**

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