



Transcript for the video:

## ***Outdoor Physical Activity: FUN MUD (2019)***

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**Dr. Darren Robert, Professor of Kinesiology and Physical Education:** Fun Mud Day came about because our physical education classes are very typical. They're inside; they're fun; but they're not what we're looking for children to do on the outside—the opportunity to be in mud, to go on water slides, to take challenges and risks.

**Dr. Michelle Ferrer, Assistant Professor of Kinesiology and Physical Education:** They get out of it more than they realize. I think it's a lot of new things that they don't typically get to do, but I think just that challenge and having them try something that they may not be comfortable with initially.

### **Water Slide**

**Dr. Robert:** The water slide is simply a tarp on a hill, and then at the end of it we put some mats around it to kind of corral the water in towards the bottom. And then to make it a little bit more slippery, we put bubbles on it.

**Dr. Ferrer:** It's definitely a little bit of a challenge for them, because it's a little bit intimidating to be up there and see the water down below. So I think as far as that, it's a little bit more of how they feel emotionally—not so much a cardiovascular or a muscular endurance type activity, but more something that's going to challenge them in a different domain.

**Dr. Robert:** One of the things that they're getting out of this, of course, the first thing is fun—it's fun to go down a slide—but the balance that they have to show and the courage, the bravery to get over being a little bit nervous of getting pushed down a hill into a water pit that is probably a little cold and bubbly—that's probably the most favorite for most children.

### **Rope Swing**

**Dr. Robert:** What we do is we move the swing sets away or detach them, and we tie a rope with several knots on it. And then basically we just had two mats on each side and a little kiddie pool in between.

**Dr. Ferrer:** If there are students who are willing to try and want to try, then having them do it without support is beneficial, but I think some of them want that support—even if they have it one time, and then the second time, they do it independently.

**Dr. Robert:** They were going across it in droves; they loved it, and I was shocked at their ability to do the upper body strength activity going all the way across.

**Child:** I don't need help!

**Dr. Robert:** "I did it; I don't need help; I can do it by myself." That's what we're looking to hear. That's marvelous; that's a reward for us when we hear those.

**ALL:** I will try each challenge, even if I'm a little nervous.

**Dr. Robert:** Some things make us nervous, but part of growing up, part of becoming a—part of being a child, is to give it a try.

**Dr. Ferrer:** I love that, "Try everything." As a mom, it was a little challenging to get my daughter to try everything, but from an educator standpoint, I think that is extremely beneficial for the students.

**Dr. Robert:** So as long as you give it a try, that's all we ask.

### **Water Bucket Run & Fill**

**Dr. Robert:** A large bucket or small pool, so the children can easily scoop it, and what I liked about the pool is it was shallow, so they can scoop it by just bending over, scooping up with their sand bucket. Ten feet away is two other large buckets or as many as you want for children to fill up. And of course, half the water or more than half the water falls out all over the ground and on them before they get there.

**Dr. Ferrer:** It's fun to carry that water back and forth, and it's spilling everywhere, so I think that they don't necessarily realize that, "This is a hard task; this is a challenging task; and I'm getting tired doing it. It's just fun to bring it back and forth, and let's fill up this bucket as fast as we can."

**Dr. Robert:** I like that one, because you don't really have to wait your turn. I had plenty of buckets there, plenty of opportunities to for them to run their own pathway and fill it up.

### **Mud Crawl**

**Dr. Robert:** My favorite is the mud crawl. They get to get muddy, and no one yells at them; no one complains. They actually encourage them to get muddy, to get wet and yucky, and many of our children really take that to heart. The mud crawl is very simple. It's once again, we put a tarp down so we don't hurt the grass, and then I sprinkle some shovelfuls of screened loom on top of it, and then we put a water sprinkler on it. The netting helps us get it down a little bit lower. It also provides a little tunnel-like action, but it doesn't get the sort of nervous where they can't see out of it.

**Dr. Ferrer:** The mud crawl is a little bit of that muscular strength, a little bit of that cardiovascular endurance, because it's not a large area they have to crawl through, but when you're considering the size of the students and the area that they have to crawl through—especially when it's muddy, and it's wet, and it's cold—it's a bit of a challenge for them.

**Dr. Robert:** That usually is the most difficult to get children in, but once they're in, they experience that mud on their fingers and their bellies, and they love it. They keep coming back for more.

**Dr. Ferrer:** I like the mud crawl. I think that it's something different that the students don't typically get to do, but I think they look forward to that one. They want to get muddy; they're excited about getting muddy; and that gives them the best opportunity to get as muddy as possible.

**Dr. Robert:** So as we think about all these obstacles—any kind of physical activity—if we can get children happy, then they'll want to do it more. The more they're going to want to do it, the healthier their bodies are going to get.

**Dr. Ferrer:** Step outside your comfort zone, and let the students explore.

**Dr. Robert:** Go out there, and have fun. Think about what you do, especially during the summer with your children, and wouldn't they like a break? Wouldn't you like a break? Because our teachers were having as much if not more fun than the children were.

**ALL:** "MUD!"

**Dr. Robert:** "Go have some fun!"