

Resources & Activities to support Play Schemas



Children's Play Schemas

In case you need a recap on Play Schemas then I highly suggest you head to our blog 'What are Play Schemas?' before reading ahead. As a very quick recap, the repetitive action of a schema allows a child to practice and construct meaning until they have mastered the understanding of the schema.

Being aware of play schemas helps in two ways:

1. It helps parents and educators to differentiate between 'behaviour' vs 'natural urges' which move past the belief that a child is just being 'difficult'
2. It helps parents and educators to plan learning environments that support the development and mastery of schemas

In summary it is our job as parents and/or educators to support play schemas through learning and play.

At Growing Kind we focus on the 7 most evident play schemas in the early years. Please note there are many more:





Resources / Activities to support schematic play

The following is a list of resources and activities that can help you at home (or in educational settings) to support play schemas in children 0-5 years.

Trajection (trajectory or trajecting) involves dropping, throwing, kicking, swinging items; perhaps the most problematic schema of them all. A child experiencing this schema may drop their food at the table, throw toys, kick objects or people, enjoy swinging, or dropping things into containers. We can support this schema and shift undesirable behaviours (such as throwing food) into constructive play by providing children with opportunities to traject in a safe environment.

Play Schemas *Trajection*

Definition
Exploring the way objects move through space

- dropping
- throwing
- kicking
- swinging items

Play ideas

Roll balls along a range of surfaces



Push objects down ramps of different heights and lengths



Play Keepy Uppy (don't let the balloon touch the ground)



Throw felt balls at a target





In the bath, pour water from a height




 Growing Kind

Positioning involves lining up toys, position things into order, ordering books, turning cups upside down or obsessing over items being in an exact place. Many parents worry that this stage of development is abnormal, though in an atypical child 'positioning' is very healthy. Allowing your child to move through this schema and have outlets for 'positioning' supports them without placing any of our own fears or insecurities onto them.

Play Schemas


Positioning

Definition


Placing objects considering, order, logic and symmetry

- lining up toys
- ordering objects
- tidying


Play ideas




Set the table




Mandala art using loose parts to create circular patterns




Puzzles



Create stone mountains



Order nature items according to material, size or shape





Connection involves putting objects together. It might involve taping things together, connecting blocks or lego or joining train tracks. This can mean a process of connection then disconnection also, such as building a castle then knocking it over. We can provide resources that connect and join, and safely break apart to help support the connection schema.

Play Schemas

Connecting

Definition
Exploring the way objects can join and link together

- gluing
- building
- buckles
- tying

Play ideas

Threading

Magnetic tiles

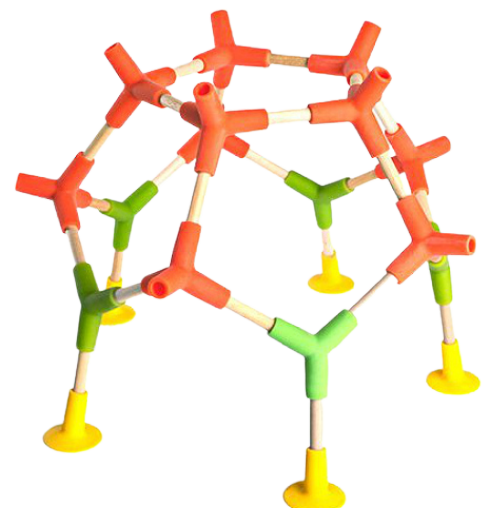
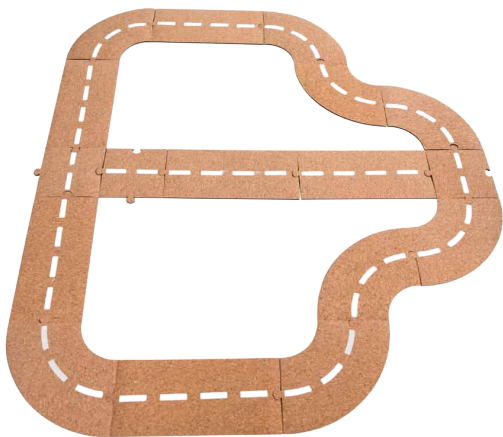
Building blocks

Weaving

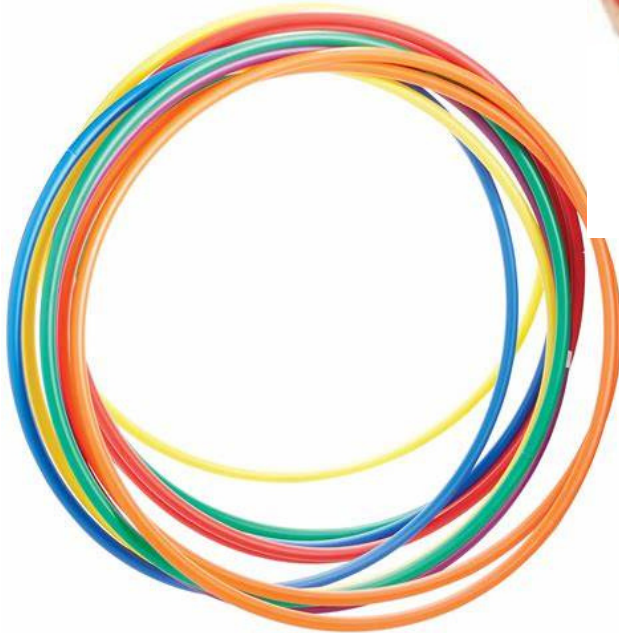
Create paper chains

Water play

- pipes
- funnels



Two wooden spinning tops (topy) are shown against a white background. Each top consists of a flat, circular body decorated with concentric rings of color in a rainbow pattern (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple). A wooden stem is attached to the center of each body. The top on the left is shown from a side-on perspective, while the one on the right is shown from a slightly elevated angle.



 Growing Kind

Enveloping is a highly evident schema; involving the children covering themselves or objects. This might look like wrapping toys in paper, laying fabric on top of dolls, playing peek a boo with silks, climbing into boxes or kitchen drawers, or hiding your keys in a cupboard. The big difference with the 'Enveloping' and 'Enclosing' schema is that enveloping is completely covered and out of sight, whereas enclosing is more of a fence /enclosure.

Play Schemas

Enveloping

Definition

Exploring the way objects can be hidden, including themselves

- posting
- hiding
- wrapping

Play ideas

- Posting toys
- nesting boxes
- shape sorters

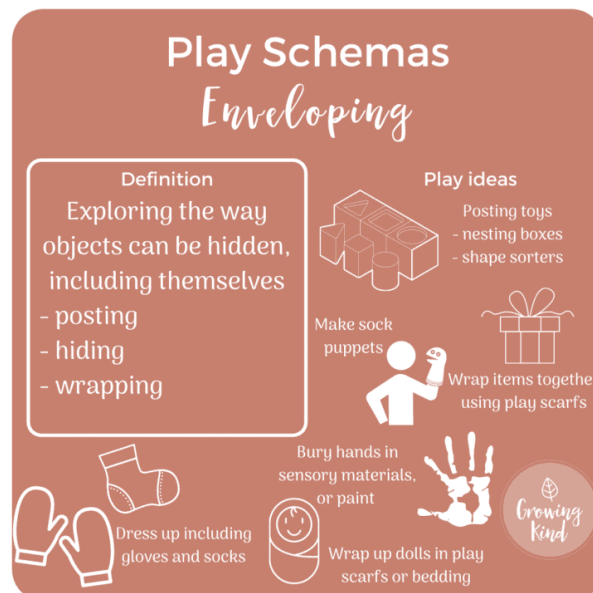
Make sock puppets

Wrap items together using play scarfs

Bury hands in sensory materials, or paint

Wrap up dolls in play scarfs or bedding


Dress up including gloves and socks



The infographic is a red-bordered box with a white background. It contains text, icons, and a list of play ideas. The 'Definition' section explains the schema as exploring how objects can be hidden. The 'Play ideas' section lists various activities like posting toys, nesting boxes, making sock puppets, wrapping items with scarfs, burying hands in sensory materials, and wrapping dolls in bedding. There are also icons for a sock puppet, a hand in sensory material, a doll wrapped in a scarf, and a pair of gloves.



Enclosing (enclosure) involves drawing or creating a barrier or enclosure. It may involve connecting items to build a fence or drawing circles around objects. At dinner time this might look like moving food to the edge of the plate. Children may be seen building a toy barrier all the way around themselves, whilst playing in the middle.




Play Schemas


Enclosing


Definition
Exploring how to create boundaries and a desire to work within lines


- containing
- ordering
- sorting


Play ideas

String to make lines in art or around items 

Hide and seek 

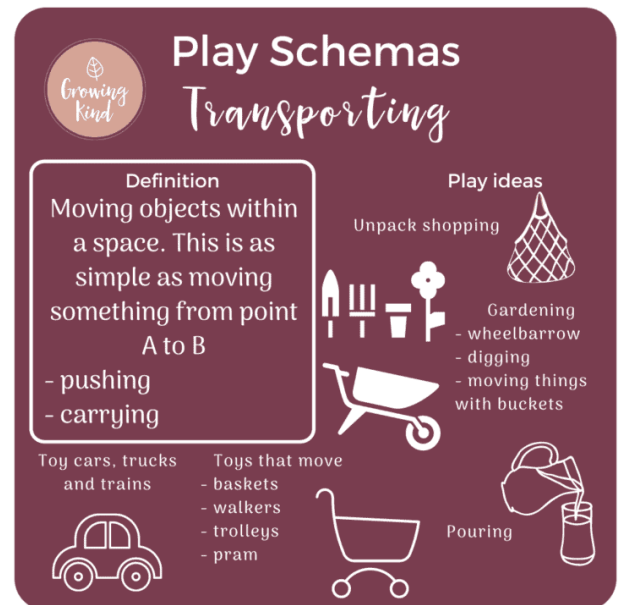
Create cardboard box forts 

Create paddocks for animals using blocks 

Draw faces placing the facial features inside a circle 



Transporting involves moving objects from one place to another. A child may like to move objects using baskets, wheelbarrows, buckets, pockets, boxes or their hands. Transporting becomes problematic for adults when children take everything off the shelves and place inside a cupboard or in a different room of the house. By setting up 'transporting' activities you can support your child's urge to transport items without the mess.



As a parent or educator, one of the best things about having an understanding of these urges is that we are able to recognise and support them in our children as soon as possible; meaning less stress for all.

Schema graphics created especially for Growing Kind by @inspire.learn.teach