



Child observation simulator

Schemas in children's play

From birth, children have particular patterns of behaviour. Early on we see sucking and grasping schemas. As children grow, these schemas increase in number and complexity. Eventually, simple schemas that involve vertical, horizontal and circular movements become integrated and coordinated. Identifying schemas can be helpful; you make sense of a situation and you can understand better why some children would do certain actions.

Schemas in children's play are such an important concept when it comes to the development of our children. Schemas are building blocks for the brain. Observing children as they play is the best way to begin to understand the schemas that underpin their learning, and to plan the next steps in learning experiences to match their needs.

Transporting

An interest in moving themselves around and in transporting objects - children often carry bags, push prams, play games that involve going on a journey, or explore maps and different means of transport.

Positioning

An interest in carefully placing objects or themselves in patterns or rows - children often line-up toys, walk on lines, have their food laid out in a particular position or pattern.

Orientation

The urge to hang upside down, get the view from under the table or on top of the dresser and other actions that are part of the Orientation schema.

Connection

Joining train tracks, clicking together construction material, running a string from one thing to another – connection and disconnecting is all part of this schema.

Trajectory

The urge to throw, drop, climb up, jump off, put hand under running water are part of this schema.

Enclosure

The urge to fill cups with water, climb into cardboard boxes, build fences for animals or to put all the animals inside the circular train track is the enclosure/container schema.

Rotation

Anything that goes around anything that is circular – wheels, turning lids, watching the washing machine on spin cycle, drawing circles, spinning around on the spot, being swung around. These are all experiences of this schema.

Enveloping

Having a sheet over your head, wrapping things in fabric or with tape and paper, peek-a-boo are all actions seen in this schema.

Transformation

Mixing water with dirt, helping to mix the bread dough, mixing paint together to see what happens are all part of this schema.