

# Expanding Schemas

## What is a Schema?

A desirable urge to repeat a specific pattern of engaging or pleasurable activities. Understanding a child's schemas can give us ideas for supporting their skills and development by focusing on their strengths during playful activities. Think about what your child seems most interested/curious about and try to build on that idea. This way you could effectively engage them, by supporting them to learn and develop their interests.

## Types of Early Years Schema

### Transporting:

Moving resources around from one place to another. Items are carried in hands, pockets, containers, or transporters. To support this schema you could make roads for your little one to push their object of choice across in a container.

### Rotational:

Turning, winding, twisting, spinning objects or part of the body. To encourage your child to expand this schema you could, make some magic wands by using a stick and materials that you could wind around the stick such as pipe cleaners or string.

### Orientation:

Turning objects or themselves upside down to see things differently. To assist your child in developing this schema, you could make binoculars out of kitchen rolls or a kaleidoscope out of a toilet paper roll, clear plastic, and beads and get them to look at different patterns and textures through them. For some ideas about how you could make your kaleidoscope:

[CLICK HERE](#)

### Trajectory:

Fascination with horizontal, vertical and diagonal movement of things and self. You could throw leaves or paper planes in the air and watch them fall to help your child develop this schema further. You could also make a ball run out of toilet paper rolls and watch things fall down. [CLICK HERE](#)

### Enveloping:

Covering and hiding items or self. Also, filling and emptying containers. To develop this schema you could freeze your child's favourite toys and use object such as a spoon to open it. You could also bury 'treasure' in sand or playdough or wrap objects in blankets.

### Enclosing:

A child will enclose themselves in a space. You could make dens out of cardboard boxes.

### Connecting:

Joining things together and taking them apart. You could thread leaves onto a string or make some paper dolls/paper chains or daisy chains.

## Safety factors to keep in mind

Do not use plastic bags, make sure the recyclable materials are washed before use, keep small, loose parts away, and make sure that there are no staples or sharp edges in the recycled materials. Be wary of any string used and keep close supervision of your little ones at all times.