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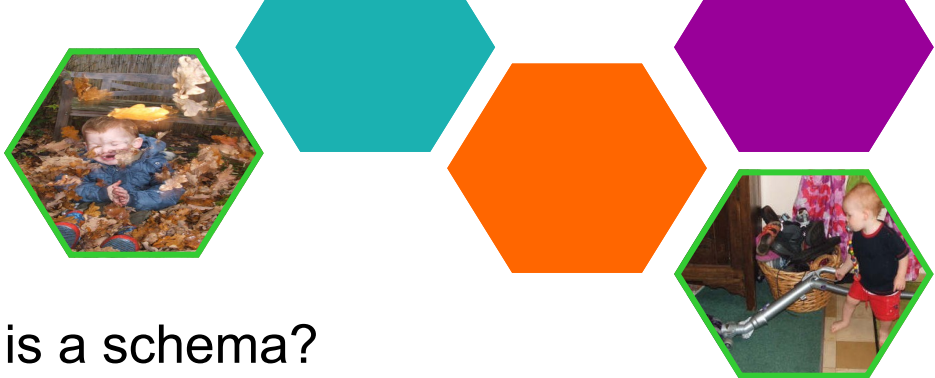
Schemas



the knot unites



the knot unites



What is a schema?

When we spend time watching children we notice that they are rarely still. They are always busy with something! They can make a game wherever they are and out of whatever is available. Very often the games they play are repeated over and over again.

As babies, children practice kicking their legs, finding their mouth with their thumbs and reaching for objects. Later they spend time throwing things, filling boxes and bags, transporting things from one to another, lining things up, building towers and knocking them down.

These repeated actions and persistent interests are called **SCHEMAS** and they show us how the child's mind is working. Some of the most important learning takes place between 0-5 so it's important that we know as much as we can about how children's brains work and develop.



Transporting

Transporting: moving things from one place to another.

Children who display this type of schema may be seen:-

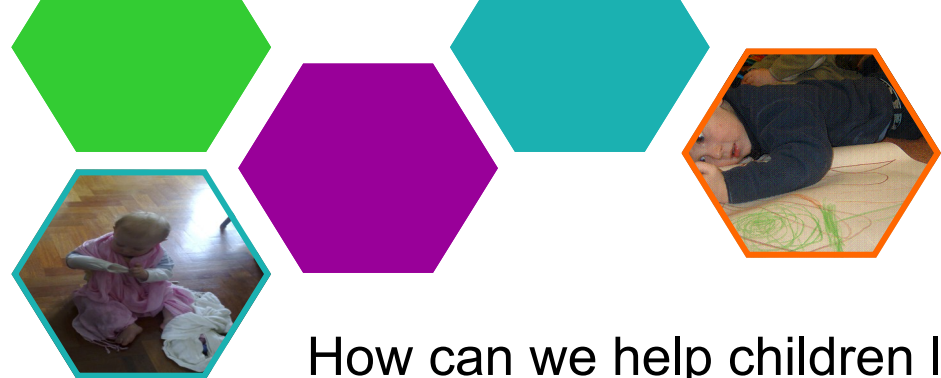
- Moving toys and resources from one part of the environment to the other during pretend play.
- Being the bus driver, using chairs to create their bus.
- Carrying sand and dough to other areas to develop their play.
- Moving bricks, planks, leaves or pebbles etc around the environment.



Children demonstrating the connecting and disconnecting schema repeatedly enjoy playing with construction toys and materials e.g. Lego, duplo, train track or anything that connects and disconnects.

Children may also enjoy playing with ribbons, trailing them around the environment and tying up the furniture.

When children first connect things they may just be absorbed in the action, but later they may start talking about what they are making and doing.



How can we help children learn?

We can find out which **SCHEMAS** children are using when we watch them playing and listen to what they say. We may see them when they are very focussed in their play and not distracted.

We can look at their drawings, paintings, collage pictures or models and observe how they play with the resources available to them. It is easier to spot schemas in some children than others.

Once we know what the children's interests are and we have identified the schema or schemas we can plan activities to support and extend their learning.

We hope you will feel inspired to look for patterns of behaviour in your children's play.

You may want to record them on video or through photographs.



Children who display these schemas in their play often can be seen climbing in and out of things and enjoying crawling through tunnels.

They enjoy making dens to play in and will make use of anything around them to create their hideaway.

Children may also enjoy filling and emptying containers and building with boxes.



Children who display this schema can often be seen covering or wrapping objects or themselves or putting things into bags, baskets and Containers.

Children will sometimes drape themselves in fabric or clothing such as hoods, hats, gloves or cloaks.

They could be seen coving hands, feet, legs or objects in sand or other media.



This is a very common schema and can be spotted in young babies who love dropping things out of their high chairs. Trajectory is all about straight lines, up and down or across.

It can often be spotted during water play. Have you noticed those children who spend a long time watching the water running in the bathroom?

Children may also enjoy, sweeping, drawing, painting lines, making trails and pushing trolleys and pushchairs.



A child who is demonstrating a rotational schema, may love to play with or watch cars, trucks, tractors or anything which has wheels which turn.

Their drawings may include lots of circles and wheels.

They may enjoy playing with kaleidoscopes or be fascinated with the washing machine turning or a fan blowing round and round.



Transforming

Children who enjoy messy play may have transforming schema. It may not always be evident in their play but can be seen during meal times.

Have you ever mixed your gravy with the mashed potatoes?

Or

Swirled jam into rice pudding?

Children may make mud pies outside or add water to the sand or spend time kneading playdough and watching the shapes change.



Positioning

Some children are very careful about positioning things during play, lining items up or stacking.

Children demonstrating this schema may put things on their head, prefer to have sauce or gravy next to their food rather than over it and may lie on the floor or under the table.