



## Trajectory

A child that has a trajectory schema is interested in how things and themselves move. It is a very common schema and one that young babies will often display, explaining why they love to drop things from their highchairs.

### A Child with a trajectory schema may:

- always seem to be running around
- like throwing things;
- like to play with running water or;
- like pushing things in a straight line.

### If your child has a trajectory schema you might like to:

- provide soft balls to throw and roll;
- blow bubbles to be caught;
- allow them to play on slide and bike or;
- give opportunities to pour water.

## Transporting

A child with a transporting schema moves everything from one place to another. If you have a transporter nothing will ever be in its place.

### A child who transports may:

- put sand in a bucket and move it to another area;
- take things from one place to another in prams, trolleys and bags or;
- go back and forth bringing you items from around the room.



### You could provide:

- a collection of bags and boxes;
- pushchairs and trucks or;
- pasta and other items to transport.

## Connecting

A child with a connection schema is interested in joining things together.



### This child may:

- tie your chair legs (even your legs) together!;
- love joining train carriages together or taking them apart;
- enjoy all sorts of construction toys or;
- once they are drawing, enjoy joining dots or lines together.

### You could provide:

- tow trucks and cars, train sets;
- beads for jewelry making ;
- string, wool, lengths of fabric;
- construction blocks or;
- masking tapes and boxes

## Envelopment

A child who has an envelopment schema is interested in enveloping itself and objects or a space. It is very closely related to enclosure.

### You could provide:

- blankets to wrap dolls and themselves in;
- dressing up clothes;
- paper and newspaper to make parcels or;
- to be allowed to paint themselves.

### A child with an envelopment schema may:

- like to wrap themselves in material;
- make parcels containing everyday objects;
- cover their hands and body in paint or;
- paint a picture and then cover it with a solid layer of paint.



## Rotation

A child who has a rotation schema is interested in things that are circular or rotate.



### This child may:

- love to play with wheels on toys;
- like spinning around;
- may enjoy playing with water wheels in sand or water;
- enjoy playing with toys that spin or;
- love watching the washing machine.

### You could provide:

- bikes, cars and toys with wheels;
- mixing and stirring activities;
- pens, paints, chalks for drawing circles;
- windmills;

## Enclosure

A child who enjoys creating enclosed spaces in which they may or may not put objects and themselves into.



### This child may:

- like putting things in bags and pots;
- enjoy shape sorting toys;
- climb into boxes;
- love filling up boxes and bags with sand or;
- draw or paint pictures then put boxes or circles around them.

### You could provide:

- pots with things they can fill them with;
- containers to fill in the bath or sink;
- dry play, such as pasta and pots to fill or;
- boxes or tents to go in.

### Scattering

Some children just seem to want to scatter everything around, e.g. tip ALL the bricks out onto the floor.

#### You could provide:

- pasta, oats, bricks to scatter on tuff tray;
- ball pool;
- bean bags.

#### This child may:

- empty out all the baskets;
- tip ALL the bricks out on the floor;
- use arms or legs to scatter things i.e. pasta, rice or;
- wipe all the toys/objects off the surface;



### Positioning

A child who carefully positions objects or themselves in lines, patterns or sequences.

#### This child may:

- stack unlikely objects;
- line up toys e.g. trains, cars, small world people;
- create layers of paint or collage;
- Balance objects on the edge of tables or;
- like working with small objects with lots of pieces

#### You could provide:

- collage materials for gluing
- objects for sorting
- objects with the same characteristics e.g. coloured matchsticks
- peg boards to create patterns



### Orientation

A child who like to look at toys and themselves from different angles.

#### This child may:

- hang upside down from climbing frames;
- look at the world from different directions by turning themselves upside down;
- turn objects and toys around and look at them or;
- climb up onto things and look around.

#### You could provide:

- binoculars, kaleidoscopes and magnifying glasses;
- boxes for creating peep holes;
- different coloured acetate;
- mirrors;
- climbing frames or bars.



Louis, S., Beswick, C., Magraw, L. & Hayes, L. (2008) Again! Again!, Featherstone, S. (ed) A&C Black Publishers LTD  
Nutbrown, C. (1999), Threads of Thinking, 2nd edition, Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd, London



## Early Years Schemas

Parents and practitioners working with young children are often puzzled by some of the children's actions.

- ◆ Why do some children have a fascination with running water and flood the bathroom?
- ◆ Have you ever given a present to a child and noticed he/she is more interested in the box rather than the toy?
- ◆ Have you ever noticed a child painting themselves or other people?
- ◆ Have you ever noticed a child paint or draw a lovely picture then cover it completely in paint?

*'Schemas are patterns of linked behaviours, which the child can generalise and use in a whole variety of different situations. It is best to think of schemas as being a cluster of pieces which fit together'.*

Bruce, 1997

A schema is seen to be a pattern a child demonstrates through their actions, language or play. While a child may play with a variety of toys, a pattern may link these seemingly disassociated activities. Schemas indicate the child's focus in an activity. By identifying a child's schema we can plan learning in ways that most interest them. We form our schemas during childhood as a way to make sense out of our world. They are normal and natural reactions to events. Children exhibit schemas when they are playing and trying to find out more about the world.

For further information visit:

[www.pengreen.org](http://www.pengreen.org)  
[www.dorsetforyou.com/index.jsp?articleid=357248](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/index.jsp?articleid=357248)