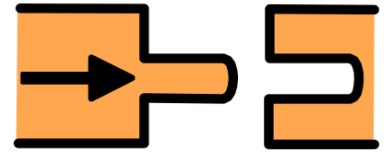


Help Sheet

0 – 25 Specialist Teaching And Support Service

How to support a connection schema.



Why?

- The word schema was first introduced by Jean Piaget in 1952. In simple terms, schemas are 'patterns of play' that help children to develop their knowledge and understanding about how things work.
- Schemas are part of child development. For children with SEND schemas are likely to be in line with their developmental stage and may last for a longer period of time.
- Some schemas will fulfil a child's sensory needs as well as being exploratory learning.
- Children find schemas motivating so they can be a useful way to plan 'next steps' for a child with SEND.
- Connection is a schema where children connect and disconnect objects. It can also include lining objects up. When a child connects and disconnects objects they are learning about how things work.

Learning gained from connecting and disconnecting can also be:

- Cause and effect
- Gross motor and fine motor skills - co-ordination and control
- Categorising objects
- Sensory feedback
- Linking and building on experiences

Related Vocabulary: Build, fit, join, connect, stick, tape, thread, hook, fit, tie, fasten, hook.

How?

Play behaviours associated with the connection schema may be:

- Building and constructing by connecting blocks and other construction resources.
- Connecting and disconnecting train tracks.

- Connecting themselves to others or objects using skipping ropes, string or wool.
- Attaching toys together e.g. with string.
- Taping or gluing boxes together.
- Creating long chains e.g. bead threading or paper chains.
- Disconnecting models they have made.
- Pulling Velcro pieces apart.
- Disconnecting interlocking toys.

A connection schema can cause friction with peers e.g. disconnecting another children's model or needing to connect all the trains or all the bricks. To overcome these problems:

- Have loose parts so that there are a wide range of connecting opportunities.
- Redirect the connecting / disconnecting to another activity or area.
- Have a basket with the child's photo on it and put a set of items in it to connect / disconnect.

Things to note:

This resource sheet is part of the Schemas - Connection Tool Kit.

- [Help Sheet – How to support a connection schema.](#)
- Resource – Resource to support a connection schema.

Reference / Evidence base – informed by:

Jean Piaget, Psychologist – Piaget's Theory 1952

Chris Athey, Lecturer in Education – The Froebel Early Education Project 1973-78

Tina Brue, Honorary Professor in Early Childhood Education – The Froebel Block Play Project 1987

Understanding Schemas in Young Children Again! Again! – Sally Featherstone