

Help Sheet

0 – 25 Specialist Teaching And Support Service

How to support an enclosing 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.
- Enclosing is a schema where children enjoy creating boundaries and borders which contain or enclose objects or themselves and others. When a child is exploring the enclosing schema, they are developing their sense of control and security within their environment and can protect whatever is inside the enclosure and keep it safe. When a child is exploring an enclosing schema, they are exploring a range of mathematical concepts such as size, shape and pattern.

Learning gained from the enclosing schema can be:

- Spatial awareness
- Emotional regulation
- Gross motor control
- Fine motor control
- Shape and Space
- Positional language
- Cause and effect



Related Vocabulary: Inside, tall, short, long, wide, safe, secure, bridge, tunnel, fence, edge, next to, behind, in front, above, below.

How?

Play behaviours associated with the enclosing schema may be:

- Building forts using cushions blankets and boxes.
- Drawing frames around the pictures they have drawn.
- Putting resources away into different enclosed places e.g. boxes and baskets.
- Using box modelling to make houses for small world characters.
- Using blocks to make fences and walls around their small world figures.
- Fitting themselves into small spaces such as under tables or between shelving units.
- Drawing out parking bays for the wheeled toys in the outside area.
- Using wooden planks to create boundaries to contain object.



Things to note:

This resource sheet is part of the Schemas – Enclosing Tool Kit.

- [Help Sheet – How to support an enclosing schema.](#)
- Resource – Resource to support an enclosing 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