

Help Sheet

0 – 25 Specialist Teaching And Support Service

How to support an enveloping schema.

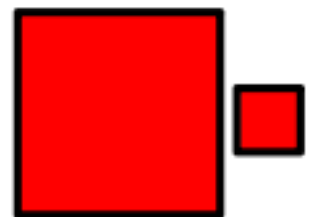


Why?

- 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.
- Enveloping is a schema where children enjoy covering objects, themselves or their friends with different materials. When a child is exploring the enveloping schema, they are learning that things continue to exist even when they are out of sight and developing a greater awareness of shape and space. In doing this they are learning a range of mathematical and scientific skills such as observation, estimating, testing ideas, predicting, problem solving and making conclusions.

Learning gained from the enveloping schema can be:

- Object permanence
- Cause and effect
- Spatial awareness
- Shape and space
- Size
- Gross motor control
- Fine motor control



Related Vocabulary: Under, in, on, over, behind, cover, wrap, hide, gone, large, small.

How?

Play behaviours associated with the enveloping schema may be:

- Covering objects completely with playdough.
- Hiding objects in the sand.
- Painting over a picture in one solid colour.
- Wrapping up objects in paper.
- Hiding behind the furniture.
- Putting paint or glue all over their hands, being fascinated by the change.
- Hiding under blankets.
- Wrapping dolls and toys up in blankets.
- Dressing up in hats, scarves and jewellery.
- Making dens and nests.

Things to note:

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

- [Help Sheet – How to support an enveloping schema.](#)
- Resource – Resource to support an enveloping 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 Bruce, Honorary Professor in Early Childhood Education – The Froebel Block Play Project 1987

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