Throwing and climbing

Why might a children throw or climb?

A child might throw things to:

- Explore cause and effect *("What happens when I throw this/climb here?")*.
- Satisfy a need for visual sensory stimulation (watching fast moving objects past the eye/looking at things from a height)
- Imitate other children and adults.
- Feel strong and in control.
- Act in self-defence.
- Communicate need for interaction or engagement.
- Communicate or express difficult feelings, such as frustration, anger, confusion, or fear *("There are too many people here and I feel cramped")*.

Strategies

While every situation is different, here are some general guidelines for supporting children.

Environment and Resources

- **Make sure your child's schedule, routines, and transitions are predictable and consistent**. At meal and bedtimes, try to do things in the same way and at the same times. Young children thrive when they know what will happen next. Use a visual now and next board to reinforce meaning.

Activities

- **Try a risk assessment.** Check whether other children are in danger as a result of the throwing/climbing, or if the child is in danger of hurting themselves.
- **Redirect the behaviour** and show the child where they can throw/climb safely. Offer obstacle course, soft play, outdoor climbing equipment, throwing and catching games and other stress-reducing activities such as sensory circuits.

Interactions

- **Have age-appropriate expectations** for your child's behaviour based on their current skills and abilities. Check all adults know the expectations and all respond to throwing or climbing in the same way, you may want to look at your policy for guidance.
- **Use simple and clear language** such as 'stop, feet floor' with Makaton for stop with gestures to move hands downwards to indicate to the floor. You can also show the visual below:


Feet floor


Feet down


Hands down

- **Consider your language** when you **redirect** the behaviour using a positive spin. For example, instead of *'no get down!'* tell the child what you **do want to see** such as *'stop, feet floor'* and you can also validate their ideas but redirect at the same time i.e. *'I really want to do some climbing too, let's do it over here/outside'* etc.

What else?

A schema is a repeated pattern of play that is a necessary step in a child's learning and development. There are many different forms of schematic play, and some children may display more than others.

Schematic play should be encouraged (safely!), they are a typical part of child development, and it is important to consider what you are observing from the child. What may seem like unsociable behaviour, or behaviour we feel we should stop, could in fact be a vital learning process for the child. Some of the various types of schemas include:



- **Trajectory** – creating lines in space by climbing up and jumping down. Dropping items from up high.
- **Positioning** – lining items up and putting them in groups.
- **Enveloping** – covering themselves or objects completely. Wrapping items up or placing them in containers.
- **Rotating** – enjoys spinning items round and round. Likes to run around in circles or being swung round.
- **Enclosing** – adding boundaries to play areas e.g. fences around animals. Adding borders to pictures.
- **Transporting** – carrying or moving items from one place to another; carrying items in containers or bags.
- **Connecting** – setting out and dismantling tracks, constructing, joining items together with tape or glue.
- **Transforming** – exploring the changing states of materials, transforming them from a solid to liquid state and back again.
- **Orienteering** – an interest in positioning themselves or objects in different places or positions e.g upside down or on their side.

Useful Links



Dingley's Promise – online training module (Behaviour that Challenges)

Ordinarily Available Provision, Bristol's Local SEND Offer

CCHP Sensory Support