

## How (and why) to add Peep into your Stay and Play (drop-in) sessions

(We use the term 'Stay and Play' to include any Drop-in or Parent and Toddler type sessions, where families arrive and leave when they want, and move around to different play activities when they feel like it.)

**Why include Peep:** Using Peep Learning Together is an effective and practical way of adding opportunities to share ideas with parents about supporting their child's development and their home learning environment, within the informal Stay and Play structure.

**Getting started:** We've suggested six ways of incorporating Peep, followed by 15 suggested topics (3 from each strand) that work well in Stay and Plays, using the Talk time: *Activity* session plans.

### 6 ways to incorporate a Peep topic into your Drop-in or Stay and Play sessions:

#### 1. Display the Topic Card near the entrance, to introduce the session focus

These are the cards with an introductory sentence, starting 'Thinking about...'.

This is a low-key way of introducing the session focus to families, as they arrive. You could also display it on the wall near the topic activity, and point it out during the session when appropriate.

#### 2. Display a relevant Peep Tip next to your topic-related activity

These short tips are designed to share a message with parents about how the activity supports their child's learning. (Stick the Peep Tip to the table to stop it getting knocked off.) Often, the tips open the door to conversations with the parent.

You could use the activity suggested in the session plan with Talk time: Activity or feel free to adapt it or choose your own, to suit your and the families' interests. You only need to have one topic-related activity (which you might spend more time near, to chat about the children's learning in relation to it). Plan the other activities to suit your resources and families' preferences, and/or the activities you usually have in Stay and Play sessions.

#### 3. One-to-one conversations with parents

This can be done while you are at the topic activity, or whenever you get the chance. Chat with parents about one or two of the Key Ideas relating to the topic – read the Key Ideas and 'Talk time' suggestions before the session. You probably won't get the opportunity to chat with every parent, it's a drip, drip approach.

Parents quite often see drop-in sessions as an opportunity to chat with other parents while their child plays – which is an important aspect! But it's also worth actively encouraging parents, in a friendly way, to come and join in with an activity their child is doing. It provides a way in for you to chat about the child's learning, but also gives the parent an opportunity to have fun playing with their child – some parents are less comfortable or confident about doing it than others, initially.

#### 4. Use cued modelling when playing, listening and talking with the children

This can be done at any time, engaging the child to support their learning. 'Cued' modelling is when you (as a practitioner) draw parents' attention to something that you are doing – and why you are doing it, so that the parent/carer feels encouraged that it is something that THEY can do at home. It's a step beyond simply modelling, which can (unintentionally) encourage parents to see the practitioner as the 'expert'.

## 5. Share a Key Idea or two during song time and story time

It's great to add a song and story time at the end of your Stay and Play session, if you don't already have one. About 20 minutes before the end of the session you could let the families know it's tidy up time, followed by gathering together for singing and story, and it soon becomes part of the routine.

**Including LTP Strand or Topic Key Ideas:** Start the singing with the hello song and your familiar core of songs you share each week. Include one or two songs that relate to your topic, and share a few words about how it supports children's learning (e.g. "Heads, shoulders, knees and toes is great for helping children learn the names of body parts" or "... for gradually learning to stay quiet for some bits as you move through the verses, which helps them develop their attention, and manage their actions and behaviour"). Finish the session with a story (and a key idea) and a goodbye song.

## 6. Share handouts with families

Remind parents at the end about the handouts for continuing Peep at home. This would usually be a TDAH (Things to Do At Home) - briefly share some of the ideas, and why you're asking them to do these at home. If they'd like more info, you could also share the topic handout.

You could pin one to the wall and invite parents to take a photo of it, to save printing costs. Or you can share it electronically if you have a closed Facebook or WhatsApp group etc – and invite families to share comments or photos of their experience, to support and encourage each other.

**Changing an existing Stay and Play:** If you are going to make changes to an existing Stay and Play, be mindful that some parents may not like things to change - this is normal! It may be a good idea to share with existing families that you are starting to add Peep to your Stay and Plays, from whatever date you're choosing, and explain why. There are leaflets on the website which you can share with existing or new parents. They explain what Peep, is and how it supports young children's learning in day-to-day life.

## Suggestions for Stay and Play (activity) topics

- The suggested topics can be used in any order. They're just suggestions – you can adapt them and/or choose other topics.
- Each topic name below is a weblink to the topic page (log in to the People website for the link to open). We recommend reading the relevant topic, and picking a couple of key ideas to share.
- The Talk Time *Activity* is probably the easiest to use in this context – use the activity as your 'topic-related activity', and display the suggested Peep Tip on the table next to it.
- The TDAHs (Things to do at home) and Peep tips suggested can be found in the Toolbox for that topic.

## Personal, Social and Emotional Development:

### > The importance of names (age/stage: any)

This topic lends itself very well for a first session getting to know new families, as most parents have a story about their children's names and perhaps how they chose them.

- TDAH (Things to do at home): The importance of names
- Peep tip: The importance of names

### > Understanding and managing behaviour (toddlers/preschool)

Families generally love this topic, for obvious reasons!

- TDAH: Making choices

- Peep tip: Behaviour – making choices

> [Knowing me knowing you](#) (age/stage: babies/ any)

This topic is aimed at babies, though the activity session can be done with any age. Parents will be painting their child's foot and making a footprint on card for a keepsake. At the same time, we want parents to observe their baby/child and think about what they are feeling while they are having their foot painted. This will encourage parents to tune in to their baby/child.

- TDAH: Tuning into your baby's feelings and sharing books
- Peep tip: Acknowledging feelings

## Communication and Language:

> [Imaginative play with puppets](#) (age/stage: toddlers/preschool)

Making and playing with puppets is a great way to encourage conversations between parent and child. This activity also encourages them to continue playing at home with the puppets they made in the session.

- TDAH (Things to do at home): Making and playing with puppets
- Peep tip: Imaginative play with puppets

> [Musical moments](#) (age/stage: babies/ any)

Encourage all the parents to make a shaker with their child, to use during singing at the end of the session (then at home).

- TDAH: Playing with tiny shakers
- Peep tip: Causing sound

> [Making sense of sounds](#) (age/stage: any)

You'll need to collect small boxes with lids (e.g. empty teabag boxes) for families to make a magic sounds box. The activity gives you the opportunity to model and explain why and how we use the magic sounds box with children, and to talk about the importance of listening for children to acquire language.

- TDAH: Playing with a magic sounds box
- Peep tip: Distinguishing sounds

## Early Literacy:

> [Mark making](#) (age/stage: any)

This topic is a good way into conversations about the value of children having lots of opportunities to make marks, and why scribble should be valued. It's great for drop-in/stay and play as you can re-visit this one again and again, sharing different mark making activities every time.

- TDAH (Things to do at home): Playing with gloop (cornflour and water)
- Peep tip: Making marks with gloop

> [Homemade books](#) (age/stage: any)

For some families that do not really have or share books, this might be a game changer, especially if you can supply some photos taken the previous week to put in their books. For older children, they become authors of their own books. Make lots of blank books if possible, so they can also take one home and make another homemade book.

- TDAH: Ideas for homemade books
- Peep tip: Homemade books encourage interest

> [Lots to read and write about](#) (age/stage: toddlers/preschool)

Sending letters/pictures by post can create lovely conversations between parent and child about who they want to post it to and what they want to say. If providing stamps is an issue, families could hand deliver them or send a photo of the message via WhatsApp.

- TDAH: Reading and writing in everyday life
- Peep tip: Lots to read and write about – watching others

## Early Maths:

> [Maths in songs and rhymes](#) (age/stage: any)

Lovely activity where you can encourage all families to have a go at making song props in the session, to use during singing time later, then at home.

- TDAH (Things to do at home): Playing clapping games and finger rhymes
- Peep tip: Maths in songs and rhymes

> [Numbers, numbers everywhere](#) (age/stage: toddlers/preschool)

This topic encourages parents to think about their children seeing numbers, but also to help their child understand that 'one' means one thing and so on when counting (rather than just being able to count without much understanding). The topic activity - making their own book with counting opportunities in it - and taking it home, encourages families to share these ideas again and again at home.

- TDAH: Playing I spy numbers
- Peep tip: Using numbers

> [Toddler numbers](#) (age/stage: toddlers)

During the teddy bears picnic (activity) - using cued modelling to get parents to think about how sharing snacks at home or out and about can also be a time to use numbers and counting with young children.

- TDAH: Making and playing with a posting box
- Peep tip: Numbers 1 and 2

## Health and Physical Development:

> [Exploring food](#) (age/stage: any)

Getting parents to think about how they respond to certain foods will influence a child's preferences too, using cued modelling. Encourage parents to model trying foods with their child.

- TDAH (Things to do at home): Trying new foods – making food faces
- Peep tip: Not born liking certain foods

> [Looking after me](#) (age/stage: toddlers/preschool)

Hand washing activity, fun and very relevant with experience of Covid. Cued modelling opportunity - how using a song can help with routines around 'looking after me'.

- TDAH: Washing dolls and teddies
- Peep tip: Routines and song-sheet: wash, wash, wash your hands

> [Exploring nature](#) (age/stage: toddlers/preschool)

Great opportunity to deliver your Stay and Play/Drop-in in a local park or other outside space so you get everyone outside.

- TDAH: Ideas for getting outside
- Peep tip: Exploring nature