



## Helping young children to socialise and play

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### Try a play ideas mat! Why use a play ideas mat?

- To provide the child with a range of different options to choose from in open-ended activities
- To use in open-ended activities with children who lack play ideas and become stressed and/or anxious as a result
- To increase the amount of time a child spends in open-ended activities, as a range of different ideas are presented to extend the child's play
- To reduce the child's anxiety about not knowing what to do
- To assist in the social inclusion of the child

### How to use a Play Ideas mat:

- Initially use each of the picture prompts individually, showing the child step-by-step how to create the image in the photo
- Once the child can copy several different images, place them on to a mat (laminiate it)
- Position the mat at the activity (on the wall near the block corner or at the painting easel, for example) for all children to see and use if they wish

