

“My Place to Play” for families living in International Protection Accommodation GUIDE FOR PRACTITIONERS

This guide provides some helpful information and pointers to support local implementation of “My Place to Play” with families and babies living in International Protection Accommodation. This resource is an accompaniment to and is in addition to the on-line “My Place to Play” Briefing Session for Practitioners. It is recommended that all staff implementing “My Place to Play” locally have attended at least one Briefing Session for Practitioners prior to commencing local implementation.

The content of this Guide for Practitioners includes:

- I. Summary description of “My Place to Play”
- II. Top 3 messages for families/parents when implementing “My Place to Play” locally
- III. Suggestions for how to implement
- IV. Summary description of the “My Place to Play” materials and their qualities and benefits for baby’s development
- V. Information on capturing the experience and impact of “My Place to Play”.
- VI. Where to get further support.

I. Summary description of “My Place to Play”

“My Place to Play” promotes the development and well-being of very young children living in accommodation that has a limited amount of space available for free movement and play. It aims to promote the importance of play; increase developmental activities for babies including tummy time and sensory development; and encourage parent-child bonding.

II. Top 3 messages for families/parents when implementing “My Place to Play” locally

- ✓ “My Place to Play” materials support giving the children a **sense of belonging**.
- ✓ “My Place to Play” promotes **tummy time** for babies to prevent flat head in young children.
- ✓ Encouraging even 10 minutes of **play** to start with will promote all round development.



III. Suggestions for how to implement

- ✓ Make time to sit with each participating family.
- ✓ Explain to the family that My Place to Play's purpose is to support baby's development and fun and highlight the 3 key messages as above
- ✓ Get the family to open the pack and take out the toys with you. Explain how each toy can be used and how it helps baby's development. See table on page 3. Show the family the Tipsheet included in the pack.
- ✓ Remind the family to use the mat on the floor with adult supervision at all times. This is the safest way to use the materials.
- ✓ Let the family know that you will check in with them about how they are getting on, including taking part in a survey about the mat and toys.
- ✓ Check in with the family after a week if possible to see if they have any questions and just to generally ask them how they are getting on.

IV. Summary description of the "My Place to Play" materials and their qualities and benefits for baby's development

Go to the table on Page 3.

V. Information on capturing the experience and impact of "My Place to Play"

CYPSC and IPAS and our partners would like to get as much feedback as possible on the project so it can inform all of us going forward. This information will help us to find out about the experience and impact of this project for young children in our communities and for practitioners and service providers. A Project Review managed by the national CYPSC office will be carried out over the coming weeks and months. Staff implementing "My Place to Play" locally will be asked to complete an online survey and also to support participant families to fill out a survey especially for them too.

VI. Where to get further support

Query type	Contact	Email
General queries about the project or Project Review and / or queries from CYPSC/CYPSC members / Tusla	Colma Nic Lughadha National Co-ordinator for CYPSC, Tusla Child and Family Agency	Colma.niclughadha@tusla.ie
Queries from IPAS Centre personnel	Bernard Cantillon Manager of the Child and Family Services Unit, IPAS, DoJE	BMcantillon@justice.ie
Practice queries about the use of MPTP materials	Marion Byrne 0-2 Years Co-ordinator Early Learning Initiative	marion.byrne@ncirl.ie

Summary description of the “My Place to Play” materials and their qualities and benefits for baby’s development

Product	Benefits	Suggested Activities
Play Mat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The baby having a set place to play no matter where they are staying ✓ Baby starts to associate this mat with play time ✓ Quality time with their parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Just for the parent to be in that moment with the baby is sometimes good enough ✓ Singing songs with the baby ✓ Talking to the baby ✓ Moving toys out of the baby’s grasp to encourage movement
Rattle Rings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Great for hand co-ordination ✓ Promotes their senses; touch, taste and listen ✓ Adds to words if parents talk about the colours, textures etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Moving it so the child can follow it with their eyes ✓ As the child gets older hiding it and the child finding it
Mini Maracas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Encourages movement of the arm ✓ Promotes singing and making music 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Action songs ✓ Adult can imitate the sound the baby makes
Mirror (Book)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Encourages identity and belonging ✓ A great way of promoting communication ✓ Helps the baby discover themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Parent lying down with the baby and copying the baby's facial expressions ✓ Lie the mirror under the baby so they can look at themselves ✓ Place mirror at the side of the mat to encourage the child to move towards it
Ball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The ball promotes the child’s movements ✓ Hand eye co-ordination ✓ Encourages gross motor movement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ If the child can sit up, a parent can sit opposite and encourage rolling from one to the other. ✓ As the child explores the ball the adult can describe the colours textures, shape to expand the child's language
Wrist Rattle (provided for Under 6 month olds)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Encourages association of movement with sound ✓ Rattle sound and bright colours help vision, interaction and curiosity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Attach to baby’s wrist so they can look, see and listen as they play ✓ Baby will learn to associate their body movement with controlling sound.

Source: Marion Byrne. Early Learning Initiative, National College of Ireland.