

WEE PEOPLE, BIG FEELINGS MORAY



MARK MAKING

Play Kit Booklet

Packed with ideas for creative play
inspired by Starcatchers' Wee People Big
Feeling Moray play sessions.

CONTENTS

- Wallpaper Roll
- Paint Pens
- Coloured Masking Tape



THE ARMED FORCES
COVENANT FUND TRUST
Funded by HM Government



Ministry
of Defence



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ABOUT STARCATCHERS

Starcatchers is Scotland's Arts and Early Years organisation. We believe that our youngest children, those aged birth-to-five, should be able to fulfil their right to access arts and creative experiences that give inspiration, joy and wonder to early childhood in Scotland.

The Wee People, Big Feelings Approach

"Every forces family is different, and every deployment is different: sometimes we cope well with the transitions, and sometimes it can bring a lot of challenges. There's no one size fits all approach, its important we develop a repertoire of techniques to support wee ones and their families."

Early Years Practitioner and Forces Family member



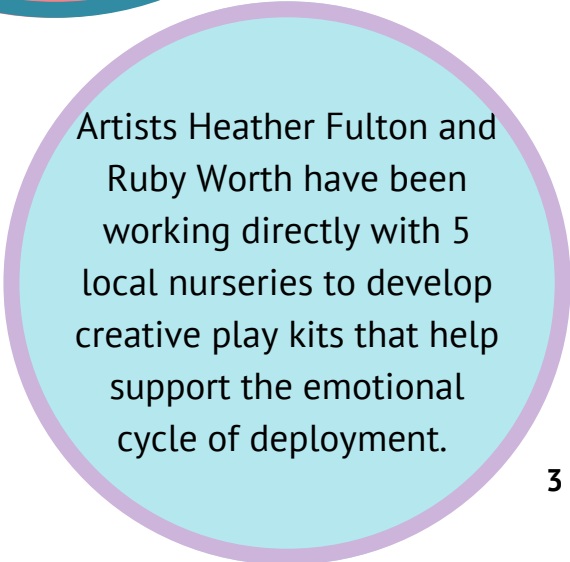
Wee People, Big Feelings has been developed to support forces families with wee ones age 2-5 years old



The Armed Forces Covenant Fund has now funded Moray Council and Starcatchers to bring Wee People, Big Feelings to develop Creative Play Kits with nurseries in 2025-26.



In 2022 Starcatchers worked with the Ministry of Defence and Scots Corner Early Learning and Childcare Centre to develop creative ideas and resources that helped wee ones develop emotional literacy skills



Artists Heather Fulton and Ruby Worth have been working directly with 5 local nurseries to develop creative play kits that help support the emotional cycle of deployment.



CO-CREATION

The **Wee People, Big Feelings approach** offers opportunities to tune into wee ones and how they communicate, pre- and non-verbally, through movement, music, stories, and play. By placing wee ones at the heart of the experience, you can respond, adapt and create together. Shaping creative invitations around the needs and interests of wee ones, will mean you are truly co-creating.

Be curious

Approach each moment with openness. Notice what captures wee ones' attention and allow their curiosity to guide your own.

Follow

Resist the urge to direct. Trust wee ones' ideas, pace, and ways of exploring, to allow for the experience of discovering together.

Boundaries

Some children may choose not to take part, and that's okay. Respect their boundaries by offering experiences as invitations rather than instructions.

Every moment invites exploration

Every action, idea, sound, object, or response is an invitation to explore together.

Wee ones will engage in their own way.

Slowing down and taking time to understand each child's strengths, preferences, and needs allows you to adapt the experience so everyone can participate in ways that feel comfortable, meaningful, and enjoyable.

Yes together

We know that saying yes to everything isn't always possible, there are times when boundaries are needed. The 'yes' space is about looking for the possibility within limits; finding a way for your 'yes' to meet the wee one's 'yes', so their curiosity and agency can still flourish.

WEE PEOPLE BIG FEELINGS MORAY

Video series

Our Wee People Big Feelings video series was dreamt up by Artists Heather Fulton, Ruby Worth and Starcatchers together with the settings, families and little ones who are taking part in Wee People, Big Feelings Moray. Each video represents a big theme or interest we observed the little ones focusing on with the Artists, Early Years Practitioners and families, and captures all the different ways we played and explored together.

Scan the QR code to access the full series of videos:



PREPARING THE SPACE

[VIMEO.COM/1210496433](https://vimeo.com/1210496433)



HOW DO YOU FEEL

[VIMEO.COM/1210498547](https://vimeo.com/1210498547)



HUMAN PLAYGROUND

[VIMEO.COM/1210501637](https://vimeo.com/1210501637)



STRETCHY BAND PLAY

[VIMEO.COM/1210504777](https://vimeo.com/1210504777)



BIG LYCRA PLAY

[VIMEO.COM/1210805919](https://vimeo.com/1210805919)



TAPE PLAY

[VIMEO.COM/1210834620](https://vimeo.com/1210834620)



RIBBON PLAY

[VIMEO.COM/1210725712](https://vimeo.com/1210725712)



STORYTELLING

[VIMEO.COM/1210533780](https://vimeo.com/1210533780)



MARK MAKING

[VIMEO.COM/1210540055](https://vimeo.com/1210540055)



RELAXING

[VIMEO.COM/1210513930](https://vimeo.com/1210513930)



REFLECTING

[HTTPS://VIMEO.COM/1210526971](https://vimeo.com/1210526971)





Video 1

MARK MAKING

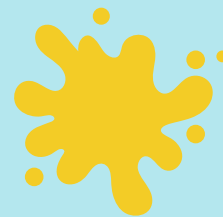
In every Wee People Big Feelings session we offer the chance for the children to make their mark. Scan the QR code to watch the short film of what we got up to.

SCAN ME



REMOVING EXPECTATIONS

We call it mark making rather than drawing to remove any expectations of what the children produce - the experience is not about creating something that is recognisable as an image (although many children may want to do this and that's fine!) but to allow them the space and opportunity to explore colour, texture and scale.



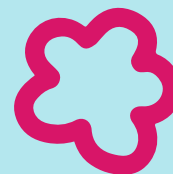
REMOVING PRESSURE

Mark Making also removes the pressure from the adult - how many times are adults guilty of saying 'I can't draw' or 'I'm not artistic'. In this activity the adults can explore their own journey with the materials in parallel to the child.



EMOTIONAL REGULATION

In our Wee People Big Feelings sessions we think about opportunities for the children to breathe in (constriction) and breath out (expansion) after expansion activities that involve big physical play such as 'Big Lycra' or 'Human Playground', Mark Making is a great way to breathe in to a more focused activity that gives the mind a chance to quieten and reflect.



PAPER



We like to work on a large scale, using big paper - the excitement of rolling it out and seeing a large white expanse waiting for colour.



COMMUNAL PAINTING

Large paper also makes the Mark Making experience a communal one - patterns, lines, dots, wiggles can be made separately but together we create a bigger picture.



POSITIONING

The positioning of the paper can feed into the experience - taping the paper onto a wall or another upright surface can change the perspective; having it as a wide strip on the floor where we lie on our tummies to make our marks. In WPBF we played with having the paper under the foam tiles so that we could reveal the paper at a time that felt like the children were ready to change their focus.

SURFACES

Thinking about vertical, horizontal or three dimensional Mark Making, cardboard boxes are wonderful objects to use offering multiple planes for the children to work upon with the addition of being inside or outside the box.



SPACE TO CREATE

Working inside or outside depending on what space you have Mark Making can last 2 or 20 minutes depending on what you and your child need/want at that time.

PAINT STICKS

The paintsticks you'll find in the kit were chosen as they offer a range of opportunities and creative experiences for the children.



CHEEKY BONUSES

Opening the box of paint pens and seeing the range of rainbow colours; making the choice of what colour/s to use; the problem solving and fine motor skills involved in working out how to take the lid off and how to twist up the paint stick.



ACCESSIBLE MARK MAKING

The colours of the paintsticks are bold and the colour is saturated, creating satisfying and clear marks on the paper. They also require little pressure to make marks so a range of dexterities can be supported.

EMBRACING THE MESS

The paint will undoubtedly(!) go on fingers and hands and clothes - it washes off well and easily but even so you might not want to wear that sparkly white brand new item of clothing for this activity.





Video 2

TAPE PLAY



SCAN ME



CHOICE

Like the paint sticks, tape offers children opportunities to make artistic choices.

Notice how they communicate through gestures, facial expressions, movement, by reaching, pointing, or pausing let these guide what happens next.

THE ADULT ASSISTANT

The adult can work as an assistant - holding the tape and ripping off a piece at a time and handing it out when required. At this age the children struggle to rip the tape off themselves but giving them a pair of scissors increases their agency in retrieving what they want and helps develop their fine motor skills.

What makes this experience so enjoyable is it's a communal task for the adult and the child - both are needed to create the art work.

TAPE SHAPES

When the children do get a hold of the tape you may find that they want to pull out very long lengths of it.

It can feel hard letting the children use lots of tape - is it a waste? The answer for us is yes and no. We love seeing the children pulling out long lengths, exploring trajectories, making tightropes on the floor, and often wrapping themselves up, however you may find that you reach a point where it feels right to pull back and move onto something else.

If you do find you have lots of used tape it can be molded into shapes - we found that making a big ball of it proved to be lots of fun and started another game.

TAPE PICTURES

We found that the children loved sticking the tape on the pictures - creating shapes, layering up the tape or sometimes sticking it on themselves - because it is masking tape it can be stuck to most things and removed without causing damage.



Video 3

HOW TO FINISH A SESSION



RELAXING

Getting cosy together, putting out blankets, pillows, lying down, having a wiggle, a cuddle and a snuggle.



REFLECTING

Reflection can happen in many ways. Children may share through words, but also through their expressions, gestures, movement, sounds, or simply by being present. Notice what they choose to offer—what has made them smile, what they have enjoyed, or what they want to revisit from the session or the day.





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Photo credit: Jason Sinclair

