

# Developing your **Watch Me Play!** practice

Health visitors, looked after children's nurses, social workers, supervising social workers, nursery workers, infant mental health specialists and child psychotherapists are well placed to encourage parents and carers to do **Watch Me Play!** with their babies and young children. Professionals who visit the family home or see families in a clinic setting may be able to use the **Watch Me Play!** approach during their visits. Foster carers can be supported by supervising social workers and peer support networks as well as by children's social workers. Infant mental health clinicians may find the **Watch Me Play!** approach helpful as a first-line intervention or for families on waiting lists.

The **Watch Me Play!** approach requires careful preparation, time for reflection and note writing, and the support of colleagues and teams.

You will need:

- At least two years' experience of work supporting children and families,
- A good understanding of child development

- Opportunities to work with parent or carer-child dyads, where children are aged 0-8 years, or, in early years settings and schools, with individual children
- A room or a suitable quiet space, or the capacity to offer home visits, or work online
- Time to read the WMP resources
- Time to write detailed notes on WMP sessions and to check sessions for fidelity to the WMP approach
- Regular supervision.

## Supervision

It's important to access supervision when doing **Watch Me Play!**. Coming closer to the experiences of an infant or young child, and to families with young children can be very rewarding but also can bring challenges. The support and containment of regular supervision, whether individual or in small groups, is needed to sustain practice and support practitioners in this work.

In the work discussion method, a group of four to six practitioners meet regularly with a trained facilitator to discuss their work in detail, reflect on the experience of doing the work and share ideas and learning. This approach is helpful for many **Watch Me Play!** practitioners.

You can find information about online training and supervision [here](#).

Training and supervising colleagues in order to cascade the WMP approach requires:

- Experience of **Watch Me Play!** with five or more families, with children of different ages and families in different situation
- A good understanding and familiarity with the **Watch Me Play!** resources
- Opportunities to shadow or co-train with experienced trainers
- Regular supervision with an experienced practitioner