

The Project Approach to Learning at

**RisingOaks**  
Early Learning

| Lincoln Road

**Project Name:** Rotation

**Age Group:** Infant (6 weeks to 18 months)

**Project Start Date:** March 2021

**Project End Date:** June 2021



**RisingOaks**  
Early Learning

**Growing minds through play**

## Background

Rotation. The children were often noticed spinning around balls and cups. They would bring over other toys to watch the educators spin them and then try themselves. We had children 12 months - 17 months in our room during this project. We started the project in March 2021- June 2021. The educators involved were Celine Burley, Shannon Swanson, Melody Bruchacher and Maja Brankovic RECE.

## Phase 1: Beginning the Project

The educators noticed the children were interested in different objects and rolling or spinning them.

What We Know	What We Want To Know
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balls Spin</li> <li>• Wheels Rotate</li> <li>• Xylophone/ Piano Spins</li> <li>• Top toy spins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What objects spin?</li> <li>• What ways can my body spin?</li> </ul>

## Phase 2: Developing the Project

As part of our rotation project Alex, Ezra, Claire, Jack, Felix, Kayden, Blakely and Thomas were given fidget spinners to explore. There were a variety of colours that the educators labeled as the children examined them and some of them light up with red, green, and blue flashing lights. All of the children used their fine motor skills as they figured out how to make them spin and how to stop them from spinning. Claire helped Melody to get them all spinning and Thomas liked to stop them all. Claire also experimented with other toys to see if they would spin. Blakely found the button on them that she pulled off. The science of spinning spinners was lots of fun.



## Salad Spinner Activity (March 18, 2021)

A salad spinner, colourful bells and big Lego blocks for the infants as part of a way to explore and engage in our rotation project. Felix proceeded to push the inside of the salad spinner, which made it spin. Maja showed Alex how to use the salad spinner but Alex found that if you spin the handle in its place that it can also move the container. Claire figured out that the lid makes the container spin because she pushed with her fingers on the spinner part at the back of the lid. This activity provided the infants the opportunity to practice their fine motor skills (Palmer grasp holding on the handle/putting the lid on), language skills (learning the names of the parts), and problem solving (figuring out different ways on how the salad spinner can work).



## Discovering Office Chair and Gross Motor Toy

Today we explored two different spinning objects, an office chair and a sit and spin gross motor toy, for our rotation project. Ezra, Claire, Felix, Kayden, Thomas, Hudson, Alex, Jack and Blakely all quickly discovered how to make both objects spin by pushing with both hands. We took turns being spun in the office chair and on the sit and spin toy. The other infants would help rotate their peers in the chair. We enjoyed playing peek-a-boo around the chair or when the children were spinning around. Where did they go, peek! On the sit and spin some infants used no hands, just core muscles and balance, while others problem solved moving their hands in different places to figure out how to spin themselves, and one even explored standing and holding the shelf to spin. They pushed the chair, sit, and spin, around the room. Then the infants used their gross motor skills and muscles to lift and carry the sit and spin to different spots (like behind the door). So much fun to see our world spinning.



## Exploring the Kaleidoscopes (March 23, 2021)

Kaleidoscopes were brought in for the infants to explore and engage in our rotation project. Felix and Alex both seemed interested in what was inside the kaleidoscope. Felix would look through the hole and then poke his finger in it, which made the kaleidoscope roll. Alex would look at the bottom of the kaleidoscope and roll it between his palms. Jack was looking through his kaleidoscope when it slipped from his hands and rolled away. Jack was interested in how it rolled because he grabbed it again and used his right hand to roll it back and forth on the floor. Hudson figured out that the bottom part of the kaleidoscope moves; he was twisting it with his hands. Kayden put his kaleidoscope on the toy shelf and was looking from above. He noticed that it could move if you twist it with your hands in one place. The infants figured out different ways to use and rotate the kaleidoscopes. Through this activity, they were able to expand on their fine motor skills (twisting and rolling the kaleidoscope), explore their visual and tactile senses (seeing the shapes and colours inside the kaleidoscope); as well, as engage in cause and effect play (experimenting different ways how the kaleidoscope moves).



## What Can You Do with Gears? (March 29, 2021)

A toy bin full of different coloured gears and their block attachments were brought out for the infants to continue to engage in the rotation project. Alex, Kayden, Felix and Claire joined the activity. Alex was watching Maja as she put the gears on the attachment block. Alex put one of the gears on the bottom part and it moved. Kayden was able to put his gear on the block attachment; he also put it on the non-attached spot and was able to spin his gear. Felix and Claire were more interested in just the gears. Felix took one of the gears and was able to spin it on the floor. He continued with his pincer grasp and was able to make the gear move along the windowsill like a wheel. Claire was able to spin her gear on the floor but she noticed that the gear was moving quicker when it is on Plexiglas. She spun it on the family display board. Although Maja showed the infants how to put the gears on the attachment block, the infants took over the activity and were able to explore different ways the gears could move. Through the infants' exploration they were able to expand on their fine motor skills (twisting and attaching the gears), listening skills (following directions and colour identification), as well as engaging in cause and effect play (experimenting different ways the gears can be used).



## Ballerina Spinning (April 12, 2021)

Today for our rotation project, we explored spinning our bodies. Shannon got out the projector and showed the infants a video of ballerinas doing pirouettes (spinning). Shannon then showed the infants how (as she was a ballerina for fifteen years). Ezra, Claire and Kayden copied Shannon and the ballerina on the screen by moving their arms and spinning in a circle. Shannon also held one of Claire's hand to spin around and around, then the other way so she would not get to dizzy. Felix created his own dance moves to the classical music playing. He was watching the ballerina spinning on the screen, and with both hands up in the air, he bounced up and down on his knees to the music. Thomas and Hudson watched very focused without dancing along really taking it all in. It was so much fun sharing one of my passion with the infants for our project.



## Rolling Down the Ramp (April 19, 2021)

Celine brought balls, eaves trough and plastic tunnels for the children to explore. Kayden grabbed a ball and put it down the grey tunnel. Felix brought a ball to the eaves trough and would put it half way up and watch it roll down. Claire enjoyed putting the balls on the eaves trough watching them roll, then run after the balls to do it again. Claire also tried the black and grey tunnels to see how the ball would go down. Thomas carried the balls around the playground. Hudson was handed a ball, which got his attention, and he started to put it in the eaves trough laying on the ground and would watch it roll. Claire, Felix, Hudson and Thomas all placed the balls down the roller coaster. This activity fostered the children's fine motor skills by picking up the balls. They also were able to see how the balls rotated around and around like a wheel as they went down the tubes and eaves trough.



## Golf (April 26, 2021)

The children have been interested in rotation and objects rolling. Today we played golf outside and indoors. The children were given child sized golf clubs and golf balls. Felix crawled over, stood on his knees with the club in one hand, hit the ball on the ground, and watched it roll away. Kayden stood up with the club and leaned over looking at the ball before hitting it. Ezra ran over picked up a club at first just carried around the club and ball, he stopped placed the ball down then swung to hit the ball. Claire started by sitting on the bike holding the club, she moved the club to make the ball roll. Claire got off the bike, stood up, and looked where the ball was before using the club to hit the ball. Claire and Ezra enjoyed carrying the golf balls around the playground. Thomas in a kneeling position held the club in one hand, he moved the club and the ball went rolling. Jack was more interested in carrying the golf clubs around the room. Alex was scouting around the classroom with a ball in one hand and the club in the other. He would put down the ball down then look before swinging. The children used their gross motor skills while swinging the clubs to make the balls roll. The children were able to learn when they used the golf club and hit the ball it would roll in different directions. This also help foster their hand eye coordination, as they would look where the golf ball was before hitting it. What a fun way to learn about rotation.



## Pin Wheels (April 30, 2021)

Shannon made pin wheels for the children to explore. We took them outside to play with. Ezra, Claire and Kayden each held onto one. When the wind came, it would make the pinwheel spin. Ezra watch intently as it spun around. Claire watched as the wind made it spin then turned it around in her hand to make the whole pinwheel spin around. Celine held a few for the children to see as well. Hudson and Thomas enjoyed holding the pinwheels and examining them. We came inside and Celine brought out a fan to explore the pinwheels some more. Celine held one in front of the fan for the children to see it spin. Jack came over and held onto the pinwheel. Celine hand over hand helped him hold it in front of the fan; it started to spin around and around. This continued our rotation project, as they were able to see the tops of the pinwheels spin around. They learnt that the wind and air from the fan made them move.





### Phase 3: Concluding the Project

Normally we would invite parents in to the classroom, do a zoom or video to show the final project. Due to COVID and the staff changes in the room, we were unable to do a final project.

### Teacher Reflections

It is amazing how whenever an activity was provided for infants with a specific purpose in mind by the educators that the infants figured out a completely new and different way to experience the same activities. That is what I found time and time again when I implemented my activities. I was surprised how the infants were more independently playing and exploring with the items I provided in my activities. One of the highlights of one particular activity that stood out for me was how the infants took apart the salad spinner and then explored every piece of the container (eventually figuring out that you can spin the container with other parts independently). The infant's curiosity and exploration has not diminished because their interest in how things move and rotate has greatly expanded. I am happy that I was a part with the infants in this really interesting and fun project!

Maja Brankovic, RECE

During this project, the children's interest in rotation and how things could move was very interesting to watch. While providing the children experience to explore and bring in new activities to continue the children's learning, as well as, my own was an experience I really enjoyed. Watching the children's excitement as I brought out new activities and learning with them if different objects would move and in what ways helped build connections with the children. We had so much fun learning about rotation.

Celine Burley RECE