

Time Together with Your Toddler!

Finding things to do with your little one at home, which fit in with your busy family life, can be difficult. This booklet has been produced by nasen to give you some ideas of places to look for activities from trusted and well-known sources.



Whether your little one enjoys being outside exploring, sharing stories, rhymes, making cakes, going on a treasure hunt, chilling out under a tree or splashing in water, all of these things can support their development and learning.

When you spend time together having fun, you are helping your child to grow and develop. Being playful is the best way for young children to learn and develop; being playful does not always involve toys! Your little one's favourite 'toy' and 'playmate' will be you! When you can, even just a few minutes of playfulness can be just the thing to be involved in your child's development.



Did you know?

In the first three years of life, the brain grows, and changes faster than it does at any other time.

Being playful with your child can happen anywhere and at any time. The key is to be at your child's level, such as on the floor, sitting on blanket, lying down, sitting on a sofa or chair, in the bath or even in a shopping trolley!

Some of the websites suggested, put activities together by age. Choosing what to do with your little one should be based on what they enjoy and then adding different ideas as you go along. You know your child best and what may interest them.

Children develop at different rates and enjoy different things. They also love to repeat and do things that they have done before, so even if you have heard the rhyme, sung the song or played a game your child likes many times, repetition is good for their brain development.

When you are looking for something to do with your child, look for the following symbols to help you find the type of activity you might enjoy:



Songs and rhymes to sing and do together



Popular stories and videos to share



Making and building things – using everyday objects to make things



Playing – including active play, dance and movement



Quiet and calm – ideas to relax and support well-being



Speaking and listening – ideas and tips to help develop your child's language

Places to look for good ideas

Book Trust: www.booktrust.org.uk/

Book Trust are the UK's largest children's reading charity. The website has many books, resources and support for all ages. The resources are suitable for a wide age range. They have a great selection for children 0-5 which includes rhymes, songs and stories with videos. Many of the videos have signing to support everyone's enjoyment and participation.

[Home Time for five years olds and under](#): This part of the website has a wide range of things for families and children under 5 to enjoy together. There is story time with free online books, videos, games, quizzes, and activities like drawing.



[Owl babies](#)

Read along, with or without signing and get some top tips



[Every bunny dance](#)

Sing along with rhymes. There are bedtime rhymes and rhymes on the themes of animals and nature



[Do the animal bop](#)

A spoken rhyme, which you sing or dance along.



[If you're happy and you know it](#)

Sing, dance, chant along, with BSL signing



[A hole at the bottom of the sea](#)

Read along, with or without signing.



[Rumble in the jungle](#)

Read along, with or without signing.



[Lulu loves stories](#)

Read along, with or without signing.



[Hairy Maclary from Donaldson's Dairy](#)

Read along, with or without signing.

BBC Bite size – Parents Toolkit: <https://bbc.in/344Xgsi>

BBC bite size is a website that offers a wide range of activities for parents and families to do with their children. There is a specific section which has useful ideas to support children to be calm and relaxed. There are also some useful tips about physical activities at home.



[Seven techniques for helping kids keep calm](#)

Mindfulness and relaxation activities.



[Five ways to incorporate mindfulness into your child's day](#)

Mindfulness, breathing, stretching, laughing, cloud-watching, listening, colouring.



[How physical activity can support children with special educational needs and disabilities at home](#)

You are encouraged to keep it fun, use what you have got, make sure it's suitable, involve your child in physical activity decisions and to get the family involved



[I am a Robot](#)

Sing, sign and dance challenge.



[Maddie's 'Do you know?' playlist](#)

From Cbeebies, sing along to the playlist.

Communication Trust: www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/early-years/

The Communication Trust is a group of over 50 not-for-profit organisations who work together to support everyone who works with children and young people in England to support their speech, language and communication. Their website has lots of information and tips for parents of children of all ages. They have a dedicated section for Early Years. Here are a few of their useful tips sheets, guides and resources.



[Being able to communicate is not just about talking](#)

Simple activities on cards to print out and choose from to develop skills for early communication.



[Raa Raa the NOISY lion](#)

Raa Raa the NOISY lion is a character that supports children to enjoy rhyme, rhythm, repetition and retelling.



[Make music bottles](#)

Art activities such as making music bottles, crowns and wind chimes.



[Raa Raa's Ten Point Plan for parents with pre-schoolers at TV time](#)

Some tips to get involved and make the most of time for TV with your child.



[Top talking tips for parents](#)

A 3-page leaflet with easy to understand tips for talking to your young child.



[Small Talk - how children learn to talk from birth to age 5](#)

A booklet about how children, 0-5, learn to talk; includes sections on 'Getting to know your baby', 'First Words', 'Toddler Talk', 'Child's Talk', 'Little Chatterbox'. There are things to do and what to do if you are worried.

Department for Education (DfE):

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education

The Department for Education is responsible for children's services and education, including early years, schools, higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills in England.



[Help children aged 2 to 4 learn at home during Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

Help children aged 2 to 4 to learn at home during coronavirus (COVID-19). Advice for parents and carers of Early Years children who have not yet started school.

Easypeasy: www.easypeasyapp.com/parents

A website and App for parents and practitioners to support play and learning in the home learning environment to support speech and language. You will need to create an account and you will be sent emails with ideas and activities.

Hungry Little Minds: <https://hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk/>

This website is supported by the Government for parents to use. There are simple, fun activities for newborns to five-year olds. There are short videos of suggested activities. They are divided into age groups. You can pick and choose the ideas that feel right for you and your child.



ICAN: <https://ican.org.uk/>

ICAN is the children's communication charity. The charity specialises in helping children develop the speech, language and communication skills they need to thrive in a 21st- century world.

ICAN's website has a specific area for parent/carers. They have developed a range of resources and fact sheets to help children with speech, language and communication needs.



[Talking points for parents](#)

The ages and stages guide gives information about the typical stages of speech and language development and also how to help young children learn to talk.



[Talking points for parents - Ages and stages](#)

There are a range of factsheets for parents to download covering a wide range of topics.



[Talking points for parents FAQs](#)

Examples include 'How can I help my child learn new words?', 'How can toys and games help develop my child's speech?' and 'What are visual timelines and how can I help my child?'

National Literacy Trust: <https://literacytrust.org.uk/>

This is an independent national charity who have developed programmes, projects and resources to support reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. The charity focuses on supporting families, young people and children.



[Time Together](#)

This booklet contains fun and simple activities to do with your child at home.



[Childrens well being book list](#)

There is a list of books to support you to help children understand about Coronavirus.



[Fun things to make and do: Birth to 4](#)

Story videos with activities to do.



[Scavenger Hunt](#)

A useful checklist to help your child explore their environment.

Small Talk: <https://small-talk.org.uk/>

This website is supported by the National Literacy Trust and is linked to the Hungry Little Minds website. There are ideas and activities for different aged children. No toys or equipment are needed, just you and your little one! The activities are focused around 'chat', 'play' and 'read' and the website is divided into different age groups.

Ideas include rhymes, copying sounds, pointing and naming, peek-a-boo, 'Ready Steady Go' games, wriggling and jiggling, making a post box, using a mirror, bubbles. The activities can be used for fun at any age!

Words for Life: <https://wordsforlife.org.uk/>

Words for Life is created by the National Literacy Trust, funded by Kindred, the Department for Education, and is supported by UK publishers. It provides parents, children and young people with activities and support to improve their language, literacy and communication skills from home. It includes ideas and activities for children 0-3 years.



[Going back to school or nursery](#)

Contains ideas to help you support your child.



[Playing at routines](#)

Help your child to understand their daily routines.



[Friendship cookies](#)

Cooking together is a good way to practice many skills and the development of speech and language.

Tiny Happy People: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people>

Part of the BBC website, this section is aimed at helping you to develop your child's communication skills through activities and play ideas. The activities can all be used for fun times with young children. Activities are for a range of age groups from pregnancy to 5 years of age. Choose from any of the age groups to find something your child might enjoy. There are short videos of parents with their children and a range of people giving hints and tips. There is also a specific section on nursery rhymes.

Sources of Information about Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Autism Education Trust (AET)

The AET is a not-for-profit organisation led by two national autism charities. It is supported by the Department for Education. AET promotes partnerships throughout the education system to improve educational access, experience and outcomes for children and young people with autism.

The following AET webpage offers general advice for parents about supporting children with autism during the Coronavirus pandemic and includes:

- Supporting emotions
- Routine and Structure
- Reducing anxiety
- Social Stories

www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/coronavirus-and-helping-autistic-children-advice-from-educational-psychologists/

Council for Disabled Children

The Council for Disabled Children is the umbrella body for the disabled children's sector bringing together professionals, practitioners and policymakers.

The help and resources section of the website has a section specifically for parents.

[Councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk resources and help for parents](https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/resources-and-help-for-parents)

Contact – for families with disabled children

Contact is an organisation that offers advice, information and support to families of disabled children. There are newsletters you can sign up for as well as a free helpline. Resources include fact sheets and parents' guides.

<https://contact.org.uk/about-us/resource-library/>

Downs Syndrome Association

This website specifically has information and support for all families with children with Downs Syndrome and also for adults with Downs Syndrome. There is a section which is focused on learning at home which offers short videos of speech and language activities. There are also links to information and fact sheets. The section which is called 'free teaching resources' provides links to other organisations.

www.downs-syndrome.org.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/learning-at-home/

National Portage Association

The National Portage Association offers training and support across England and Wales. The website has information and advice for parents and practitioners.

There is a page which has resources for parents which includes top tips to support your child's development. It includes how to use scissors, matching colours, threading, using a spoon and early reading skills.

In addition there is a useful [You Tube video](#) which shows a Portage Home Visitor demonstrating a range of playful activities you could try with you child.

www.portage.org.uk/support/resources/parent-list/317

National Association for Special Educational Needs (nasen)

nasen is a charitable membership organisation that supports education professionals in order to help them meet the needs of all learners. There are resources, webinars and webcasts, which are aimed specifically at those working with SEND in the early years.

<https://nasen.org.uk/training-and-cpd/early-years.html>

There is a recently developed DfE funded resource 'Resilience Development Pack' which is for parents and practitioners specifically to support partnership-working in a time of transitions and change.

<https://nasen.org.uk/training-and-cpd/early-years/resilience-development-pack.html>

National Deaf Children's Society

The National Deaf Children's society offers help and support to families of children and young people who are deaf. They provide training and run events for families and parents across the UK.

The website has a section which for parents which includes top tips for learning at home with your child, and a specific section on [playtime tips](#).

There are also several storybooks to use to explore deafness.

www.ndcs.org.uk/information-and-support/parenting-and-family-life/parenting-a-deaf-child/our-childrens-storybooks/

Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)

The RNIB is one of the UK's leading sight loss charities and the largest community of blind and partially-sighted people. They offer help and support which can be practical or emotional support, reading services and they have a range of products available. The website has some guidance on early years and a useful guide called '[Let's Play](#)'.

www.ndcs.org.uk/information-and-support/parenting-and-family-life/parenting-a-deaf-child/playtime-tips-and-ideas/