

Learning Together at Home: Supporting the Development of Early Years Children.

Barnsley Education Inclusion Services Portage Service

[Link to Barnsley Education Inclusion Services local offer](#)



Introduction

Learning Together at Home is a resource that has been developed by the Barnsley Portage Service for parents/carers, and practitioners who work with families. The resource is to support, recognise and celebrate parents/carers role as their child's primary educator.

Learning together explores how parents/carers can support their child's development through daily routines and play experiences at home. It offers strategies and activity ideas to promote relationships, communication, playing together and being active.

The resource is divided into the four areas of focus below, and each focus area is colour coded.

-  **Being together**
-  **Communicating together**
-  **Playing together**
-  **Being active together**

Each focus area is organised into a **Summary**, **Top Tips** and **Activity ideas**.

Parents/Carers and practitioners may find it beneficial to use this resource to support a child's priorities for development in a specific area, such as communicating together or their development as a whole, enjoying the activities as a family. Parents/Carers may want to share the resource with other significant adults to their child to ensure consistency of approach.

Learning Together

As a parent/carer you are your child's primary educator and experiences you give your child teaches them something about themselves, the world around them and their place in that world.

Children learn most through everyday experiences and play.

Play is about having fun and any activity your child enjoys is considered play.

Through play children learn and develop important skills they will use throughout life that include learning to problem solve, taking risks and being creative.

Through play children learn how to interact with others, manage their emotions and adapt to different situations

Outdoor play is just as important as play indoors. Outdoor play provides sensory experiences, fun ways to learn and explore that develops motor skills, creativity, friendships and independence alongside promoting physical and mental health and well being.

Being Together

Being together at home is where children learn valuable everyday life lessons about how to interact with others, social norms, build relationships and develop social networks.

Children will develop attachments, form positive relationships, social skills, manage feelings, understand appropriate behaviour and gain confidence in their abilities.

Playing alone is also appropriate as it helps children to develop socially by promoting independence, imagination, creativity and learning how to devise their own entertainment.

Children use free play to express themselves and their emotions, learning how to deal with their fears. Children often express how they feel and what they are thinking through the behaviours that we see.

Being Together

Promoting Positive Behaviours

Top Tips

- **Be positive:** Give lots of opportunities to be positive with each other by practicing what they can already do well. For example, give them the responsibility of carrying out a small task, such as giving out a snack or drink to a sibling or helping to put washing in the machine. Give lots praise when they complete the task.
- **Modelling social skills:** When the child does something hurtful don't make them say sorry. Model this yourself, but don't ask the child take part unless they want to. If the child doesn't want to, it's just an empty gesture that will not be pleasant for either child. If you want your child to have good manners and be polite model please/thank you; hello/goodbye at the appropriate times. Remember you are your child's number one role model. During mealtimes and snacktimes encourage your child to sit at the table to eat and sit with them.
- **Understanding feelings:** Label feelings as they are happening and what that sensation may feel like 'You look angry, it's making you all hot and sticky.' Offer help maybe a cool cloth. Play games and read books that demonstrate emotions, so that children can begin to understand their own feelings and the feelings of others in very simple terms.
- **Avoid labelling:** Always separate the behaviour from the child. i.e. 'Hitting is unkind'. Create the opportunity to reflect with your child and teach or model appropriate behaviours. For further advice visit [NHS: Behaviour](#)



Being Together



- **Encourage lots of affection:** Use lots of hugs, touch and tickling games in daily routines. Remember that even when you are talking about something you may feel they have done wrong, it is important to still use touch or hugs and reassure them that even though you don't like their behaviour you still love them.
- **Promoting independence:** feeling they can do things for themselves and as though they are helping an adult, promotes self-esteem in children. You can support this by encouraging children to help with everyday chores, feeding themselves, dressing themselves and tidying up their own toys.
- **Personal care needs:** Children may start to show an awareness of when they are wet or soiled, this may be an indication that they are ready for toilet training. Let children sit on the potty or toilet. Ensure hand washing after using the toilet and messy activities.
- **Establish routines:** For example getting dressed, meal times, bath times and bedtime. These routines are important to bond the family together, establish expectations, create a calm household and gives your child confidence and independence.
- **Healthy sleep:** Sleep is important to children. Getting the right amount of sleep can support your child's immune system, ability to concentrate and affect their overall mood
[For further advice visit : NHS: Sleep Tips](#)

Being Together

Activity Ideas

Playing Alone: When your child is playing independently or alone it is important to offer them the right help at the right time. This will enable them to solve a problem or carry out a task they are finding difficult.

- **Offer Hints:** Give verbal hints, pictures or gestures to help your child complete the task without giving them the entire solution.
- **Give Prompts:** such as 'that's a good way of doing that' 'what do you think we should use?'
- **Make Suggestion:** For example if you can see your child is struggling with building a tower of blocks which keeps falling over, you could suggest using the bigger blocks at the bottom.
- **Provide Resources:** For example, if your child is struggling to draw/paint a cat suggest they find a picture in a book/magazine or a cuddly toy they may have.
- **Model/Demonstrate:** Sit and make/do your own version of what the child is trying to do. Give them time to practice.
- **Provide Physical Support:** when using a shape sorter you could cover the wrong shapes with your hand and just leave the correct shape option – building a tower of blocks hold the bottom blocks to help the child stabilise the tower.



Being Together



Exploring Feelings and Recognising Emotions

It is important that young children develop emotional vocabulary so that they can express their own feelings and identify feelings in others.

- **Share books with pictures:** Comment on how characters in the pictures feel, noticing their facial expressions. For example 'He is smiling. He looks happy'. Make emotional connections with the story. Describe what is happening in the picture. Ask your child how they would feel if that happened to them. Ask them how they think the character is feeling.



- **Mirrors:** Copy faces in the mirror, Make a happy face/sad face and explore how they feel.

Singing: Try singing songs about feelings
[For example If Your Happy and You Know it Link](#)

- **Creative:** Make a collage face using paper plates – cut out different faces/emotions from magazines or catalogues – Make faces from fruit and vegetables for snacks – Drawing and painting – Role play.
- **Games:** Emotion matching games.
- **Puppets:** Use puppets or soft toys to model conversation and to encourage your child to talk or to model responding to others feelings.

Being Together

Turn Taking

Turn taking is an important part of learning the basic rhythm of communication and the back and forth exchanges between people.

Examples of turn-taking games you could try are:

- Share a game of Peek-a-Boo
- Copy actions and vocalisations
- Bang a drum or other musical instrument
- Block building – take turn stacking blocks saying 'my turn, your turn'
- Turning pages in a book
- Blowing bubbles
- Rolling a ball or pushing cars back and forth
- Posting objects into a container
- Matching games / board games
- Baking – stirring the cake mixture
- Click clack track



Communicating Together

Communication is all about enjoying being with another person, allowing that person into your personal space and having the ability to focus on what another person is doing. This can be looking and sharing eye-contact, understanding facial expression or gestures and noting how feelings are expressed.

Often your child will be trying to communicate something through an action, a gesture, a vocalisation or a behaviour. The tricky part for the adult is working out what that communication or message is. For example, using physical contact to lead an adult could be a way to indicate something they want or need.

Strategies that may help understanding what your child is trying to communicate include taking time to observe, listening and being mindful. Notice the way your child communicates which may be a particular facial expression, a tug, a tap, a gesture, a sound or a behaviour. For example you may find your child has a different cry to signal if tired, hungry or in discomfort. If unsure you could offer a choice using objects.

Communication may often present as a behaviour such as throwing, hitting out or having a tantrum. We need to help children to find a different way to communicate in order to promote positive behaviours

Communicating Together

Top Tips

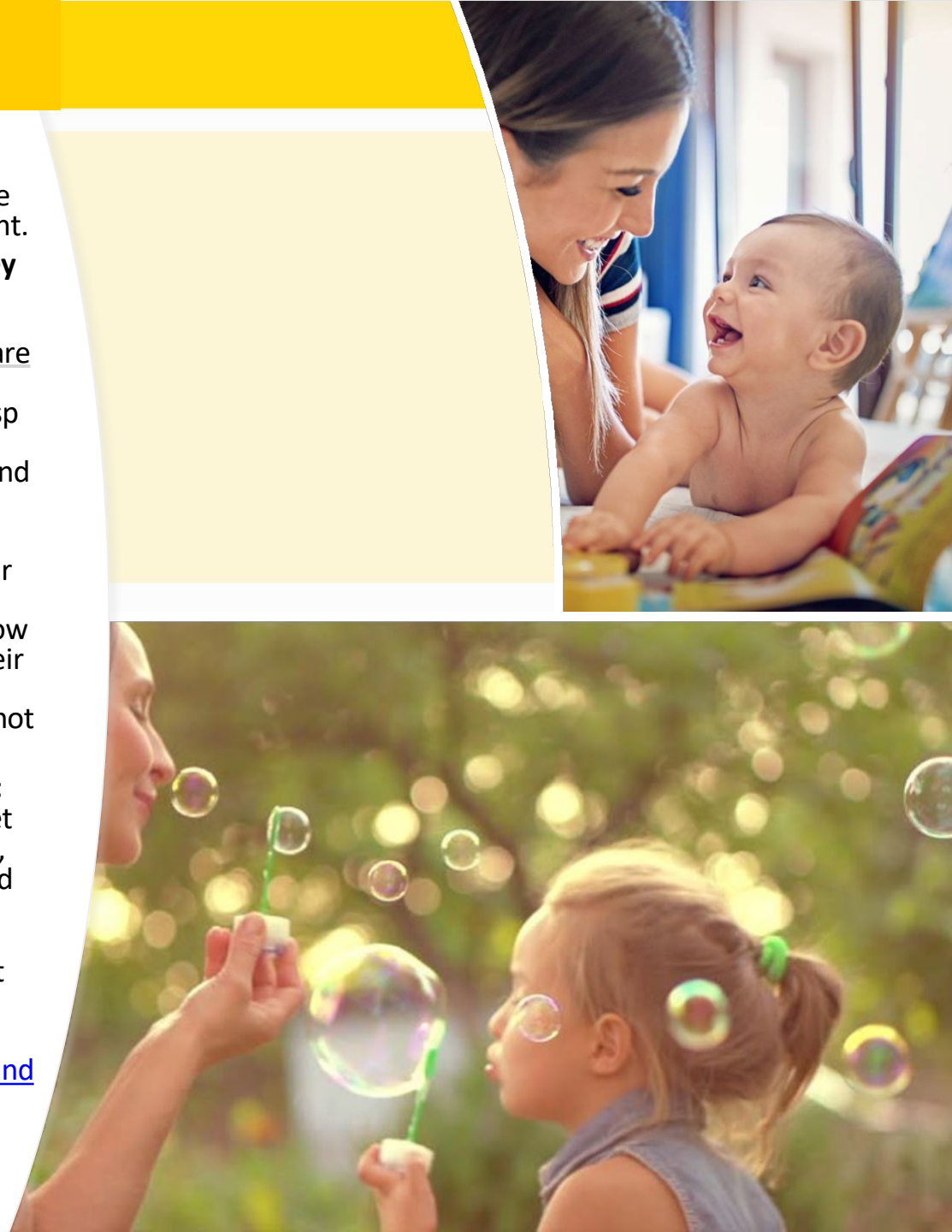
- **Minimise distraction:** play somewhere quiet, turn off the tv, radio, telephone. Have just one toy activity to concentrate on, put the rest out of sight.
- **Gaining Attention:** Say your child's name before asking them to do anything. Stop when you feel you are losing your child's interest and consider changing the activity. Keep language clear and simple. Stress important words by saying them a little louder. Give lots of praise and encourage.
- **Take time to notice:** listen and tune in to how your child communicates, any noises or gestures they make or emotions they demonstrate.
- **Take your child's lead:** be spontaneous and willing to join in with your child's play. For example, if your child is showing shock and wonder in the fact that they can open and close a flap on a toy, join in with this level of amazement. Imagine that you too are seeing this for the first time
- **Be your child's co-adventurer:** enjoy exploring the world around them, help them to make sense of their discoveries and experiences by adding simple language when appropriate.
- **Put words to objects:** create opportunities to label items or actions that your child has become engrossed in. For example, if they are opening a flap say 'Open' as they close it say 'Oh, closed'.
- **Make communicating fun:** be enthusiastic, be playful, be silly, be animated and be loving.
- **Get down to your child's level:** sit on the floor, lay beside them or in front of them or pick them up to your level, sit them facing you on your knee
- **Encourage eye contact:** put interesting toys or objects in your child's line of vision then move the object towards your eyes. Play games that promote eye contact.



Communicating Together

- **Create a shared experience:** by turn taking in non-verbal communication such as an exchange of eye contact, expression, gesture or movement.
- **Teach your child how to communicate that they want more:** Give a little of an activity and then abruptly stop and wait for your child to communicate they want more. Tickling games are good for this, tickle, tickle, tickle then freeze! Wait for your child to give eye contact then Gasp and tickle, tickle, tickle. Repeat until you know your child has understood the pattern of play and that they have realised they have the skills to make their adult continue.
- **Build up confidence in relationship:** talk to your child about how special they are. How you love the way their nose crinkles when they smile, how their eyes sparkle, how their hair curls, how their tongue pokes out when they are thinking or trying really hard. Love them for who they are not what they can do.
- **Seize everyday opportunities to communicate:** talk with your child whilst doing the washing get them involved in everyday chores. For example, ask them to put the washing in the machine and label 'Socks in' 'Pants in' or when preparing meals label foods, textures tastes. Draw their attention to things of interest when you are out and about, point to things of interest and label them. For example, 'bus' 'tree'

[For more ideas follow this link to Barnsley Speech and Language Toolkit](#)



Communicating Together

Activity Ideas

Copying games

Coping your child promotes and celebrates what your child can do alongside promoting turn taking.

- **Copying Game Stage 1**- Copying games can happen during play, snack times, bath time etc. Wait for your child to make an action or sound. Then copy the action or sound. Observe if they show signs that they are waiting for you to copy them. This could be as simple as banging on the side of the bathtub.
- **Copying Game Stage 2** -You can then introduce a toy/object that is big enough to share, such as a large drum or saucepan. When they bang you copy, playing alongside. Allow your child the time and space to process what is happening and learn from the repetition.



Communicating Together



Commenting on your child's play

When you comment and label you give opportunities for children to hear how we talk or see how we sign.



- **Commenting:** Sit alongside your child as they play. Comment on what they are doing by labelling objects or your child's actions. For example, when your child is playing bead maze, describe what they can see and what they are doing 'Green circle, push!' or when playing with cars 'Car, brmm, driving, spinning the wheels.' or 'Wow, red car, it's driving fast, round the track, oh it's going to crash into the toy box, crash! Oh, oh!'. This helps validate their play, develop your relationship though play and builds vocabulary.
- **Communication box/bag:** Fill a box or pillow case with everyday objects. Encourage your child to pull them out one at a time, as they do, name the item and describe by discussing texture, colour etc.

Communicating Together

Creating Opportunities

Create reasons for your child to communicate by using things that they like or are interested in.

For example

- Give the packet of snack unopened, so they have to 'ask' you to open it, this could be a look, gesture or sound.
- Put a snack in a clear tub with a lid, so your child has to communicate they'd like more.
- Give the juice cup empty to check if they will communicate before filling.
- Offer a little of an activity such as row, row, row your boat then pause to see if your child pulls you to communicate they want more.
- Offer a choice between snacks. Start by making the choice an obvious choice between something they love and something they don't like and progress to choices between two liked foods
- Blow some bubbles or offer a small piece of snack. Then wait until your child communicates they want 'more'. This could be a look, gesture or sound.
- Interrupt an expected routine by doing something silly. For example, when getting dressed put their socks on their hands and then wait for the communication.



Communicating Together



Singing and nursery rhymes- Singing and actions songs are great ways to develop communication, build your relationships and develop your child's understanding. You can use nursery rhymes and action songs as a fun way to interact with each other.

[Visit Nursery Rhymes and Actions Songs for ideas.](#)

You could also try:

- **Song box/bag:** Fill a box or pillow case with items that could link in some way to a song or nursery rhyme. Allow your child to pull out an item then sing the song/rhyme that corresponds. For example a toy spider for 'Incy Wincey Spider'

- **Using songs to support routines-** Songs can be a great way to support children to understand routines and to anticipate what may happen next. You may introduce a song you sing at mealtimes, bath time, bedtime or when tidying up the toys to help your child understand and take the cue understanding what is happening next.

For example:

- **Tidy up time try singing** 'clean up, clean up' as you tidy up the toys.

[Link to Barneys Clean Up song.](#)

- **At bath time try singing** 'this is the way we wash our hair'

[Link to This is the Way We Wash Our Hair.](#)

- **At bedtime:** Sing the same soothing lullaby or find a piece of music you enjoy and play this at bedtime.

[Link to Mozart relaxing music.](#)

Communicating Together

Sharing books: Encourages them to listen, develops concentration and helps to focus their attention

- **Looking at books together-** Simple picture books are great for children as they give a picture visual to the word you are saying. Children often may like to turn the pages in books quickly, don't worry about reading the text in the book just comment on what you see in the pictures. Encourage and model pointing as you name the things you can see.
- **Make your own book-** this could include family photos, images of favourite things, textures, interesting places, books like this are excellent for preparing for transition to nursery
- **A special place** -Think about creating a special communication space away from distractions. For example a cosy den space, you could have things in there such as picture books or puppets to use as prompts with nursery rhymes. Or simply snuggle up in bed.

[Link to Booktrust Reading Tips.](#)

[Link to Childrens Libraries in Barnsley.](#)



Communicating Together



Listening and attention

Children learn from what they see and hear going on around them, so developing good looking and attention skills is important. Your child's talking and learning will progress through them developing good attention and listening skills.

- **Face to face games:** Face to face games such as peek-a-boo, round and round the garden, so big, and row, row, row your boat are great for building up eye contact, anticipation and positive relationships.
- **Listening games:** Draw attention to noise in the environment such as the washing machine, Hoover, the tap running or an alarm.
- **Sound walks:** When outside draw attention to noises you hear such as cars, airplanes, birds chirping, dogs barking. You could go on a sound walk. Give your child a wooden spoon and encourage them to bang on different surfaces as they go, notice the different sounds they make.
- **Matching instruments:** have two identical sets of instruments. Model the sounds that each instrument makes. Hide a set behind your back. Play one of the instruments and encourage your child to choose which instrument they think you are playing.
- **Animal noises:** Using toys animals to make the noises appropriate to each animal and encourage your child to make the noise too.
- **What's that noise:** Make a recording of familiar noises around the house, dog barking, toilet flushing, doorbell ringing, tap running, Hoover and washing machine.



For more ideas on how to support your child through fun activities visit the [Link to NSPCC 'Look, Say, Sing, Play'](#)

Playing Together

Children learn so much through play which is all about having fun. While playing, children learn and develop important skills. They learn about themselves and the world around them.

Play encourages socialising, sharing, turn taking, problem solving and interaction with other adults and children.

Giving your child time to play is important for their development. They develop their language skills, emotions and social skills. Play helps to develop imagination. They can learn essential skills such as problem solving, working with others, sharing and much more.

Children learn through all their senses through taste, touch, vision, hearing and smell.

It helps them develop the ability to concentrate. Providing children with a range of multi-sensory playthings will help them learn in several ways.

Playing Together

Top Tips

- **Take your child's lead:** be spontaneous and willing to join in with your child's play. For example join in with pretend play.
- **Being your child's co-adventurer:** making play fun and seeing the world through your child's eyes and encourage exploration
- **Relax and enjoy the activity:** go at your child's pace, offer activities in short bursts frequently throughout the day. If the child loses interest move on to something else.
- **Small steps:** Break an activity down. Use backward chaining and forward chaining. For example, when putting on a coat forward chaining would be your child putting their arm in the sleeve and you doing the rest. Backward chaining would be you take off the coat leaving only the sleeve for the child to remove. This can be applied to any activity i.e. building a tower.
- **Limit distraction:** turn off the tv or music.
- **Consider your child's sensory preferences:** some children may not like to touch certain textures. For example, your child may not like finger paint but will happily paint with a brush.
- **Involve peers:** arrange play dates, visit the park, play areas, library, play groups etc.



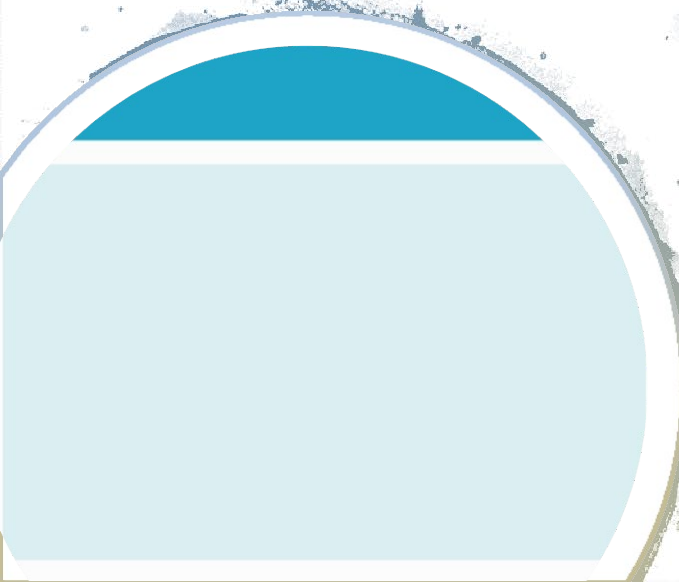
Playing Together

Activity Ideas

Messy Play

The sensory experiences messy play provides, helps children to understand how things feel, smell and taste. This type of play promotes an awareness and understanding of the world around them

- Shaving foam is a great activity, children love to squash and spread the foam around. Add a small amount into a tray or onto a plastic mat and enjoy.
- Dry oats, cooked /dried pasta, custard or jelly can also be used to give a different sensory experience.
- Flour makes good snow, children enjoy pushing cars through the flour, looking at the tracks they make.
- Food play is great for fussy eaters or children with a sensory preference.



Playing Together

Sand and water play

This can be an early introduction to science and maths. For example, learning that water is fluid, not solid, and that it can be measured in different sized containers.

Examples of sand play

- Put play sand in a suitable container that your child can access. Use buckets and spades, yogurt pots and containers to scoop and tip the sand.
- Try using dry sand with colanders, sieves and slotted spoons.
- Encourage your child to feel the sand patting sandcastles, hide interesting objects in the sand for your child to find.

Examples of water play

- Try adding bubble bath to make bubbles or adding glitter to the water; food colouring to change the colour; adding food flavourings gives the water a different sensory experience
- Children enjoy filling and tipping water from container to container, use plastic jugs, yogurt pots, plastic cups spoons of different sizes.
- Count how many spoons of water to fill the cup, how many cups to fill the jug etc.
- Put plastic toys and animals in the water use a slotted spoon from the kitchen to scoop out the toys





Play Dough

Playing with playdough or clay can encourage creativity and imagination.

Provide resources such as:

- Bun tins, bun cases, cutters rolling pins, candles.
- Bun tins or ice cube trays encourage your child to pull pieces of dough from the ball and place in each hole.
- Try singing 'Five Current Buns in a Bakers Shop'. This activity can support fine motor development and encourage counting. [Link to Five Current Buns](#)

Playing Together

Uncooked Play Dough Recipe

- 1 cup plain flour.
- 1/4 cup salt.
- 1 tablespoon cooking oil.
- A few drops of food colouring.
- 1/2 cup water.

Try adding glitter, food colourings and flavourings to make a sensory playdough.

Playing Together

Problem Solving

Building blocks, jigsaws and shape sorters can help with recognising different shapes and sizes.

Building

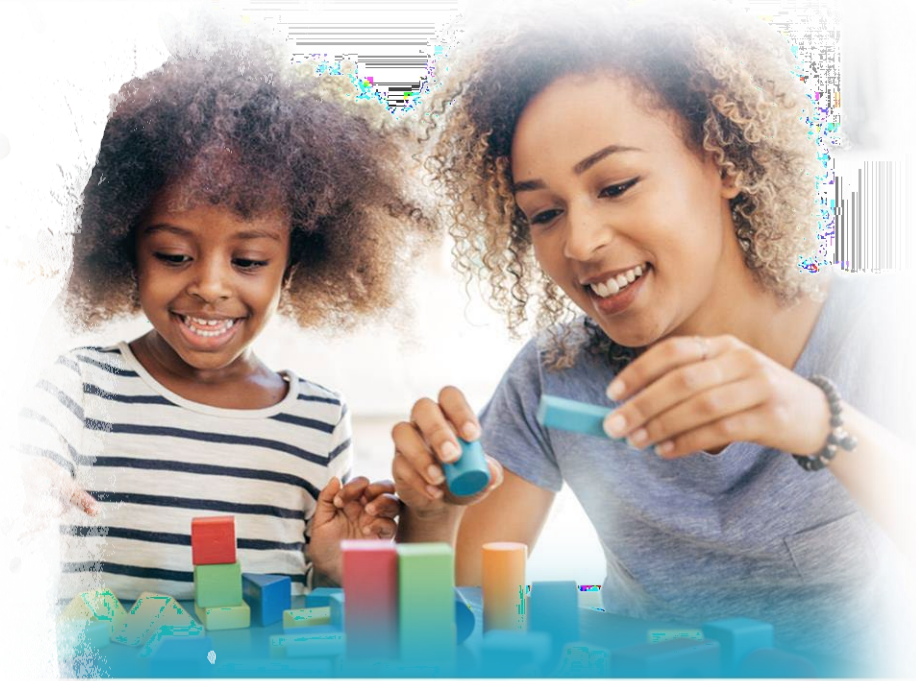
- To build a tower of two blocks for the first time, your child may find it difficult to place one block on top of the other. Try starting with a larger block for the first block, so that your child has a larger area to place a smaller block on top.

Jigsaws

- Inset jigsaws with matching pictures in the tray are a good place to start they give your child an extra clue to where the pieces will fit.
- When playing with jigsaws start by removing one piece for your child to replace. Once they understand how to put the puzzle piece in the board remove 2 pieces, this also encourages problem solving as they must work out which hole each piece fits in.

Shape sorters

- Start with a simple shape sorter with 3 holes, cover 2 of the holes leaving the hole for the shape your child is trying to post visible. Once they have posted the first shape continue covering 2 holes until your child has posted all 3 shapes. Next cover one hole encouraging your child to work out which hole their shape fits. Next do not cover any holes.



Playing Together



Ball Games

All children can benefit from ball games. Game such as these give children the opportunity to develop hand eye co-ordination, tracking, turn-taking, timing and prediction.

- **Rolling a ball:** Sit opposite your child, at their level, hold the ball and say 'Ready, steady, go or 1,2,3, go'. Roll the ball to your child as you say 'Go'.
- **Playing Catch:** Catching a ball can be quite a challenge. Encourage your child to hold their hands out and cupped, stand close to your child and throw the ball gently towards their hands. Give lots of praise when they catch it. Encourage your child to throw the ball back to you
- [For more activities ideas visit Hungry Little Minds.](#)



Being Active Together

Being active benefits children physically, mentally and emotionally. The physical benefits of being active are building up strong muscles and bones and supporting maintaining a healthy weight.

Children who are physically active are also more likely to be motivated, focused, and successful in nursery and school. Mastering physical skills builds confidence at every age.

Your child can be active inside or outside and taking opportunities to be outside has many benefits. Being outdoors in natural light ensures children maintain healthy levels of vitamin D and Serotonin. Outdoor play is therefore essential in maintaining children's mental health and benefits their overall development.

Allowing children daily outdoor playtime in natural light, ensures they soak up some nourishment for their brains as well as keeping their bodies physically active.

Outdoor play also promotes healthy sleep routines in children and increases happiness. The outdoors is a great place to allow children to take risks, be carefree and explore nature.

Babies aged 0-12 months need plenty of opportunities to access floor play, this enables your child to explore and develop skills like reaching, rolling, sitting up, crawling, pulling up and walking.

Toddlers need plenty of free time and space to just run around and play. Gardens playgrounds, parks and the beach are all great places for children of this age.

Being Active Together

Top Tips

- **Find a fun activity:** Help your child find an activity that they enjoy. The more they enjoy the activity, the more likely they will continue it. Get the entire family involved. It is a great way to spend time together.
- **Choose an activity that is developmentally appropriate:** For example, give children a chance to get out of their pushchair and crawl, roll or walk on different surfaces when going for a walk. Consider taking a blanket in case your child does not like the sensory feel of the grass or beach. Young children may need frequent rests, bike rides may need to be mainly flat and short.
- **Plan ahead:** Make sure you allocate time in your day for exercise, ensure you check the weather and your child has appropriate clothing for the weather. Rainy days can be a fun time to explore outdoors if your child is wearing a puddle suit and wellies.
- **Provide active toys:** Young children need easy access to balls, jump ropes, hula hoops and other active toys.
- **Be a role model:** Children who regularly see their parents enjoying sports and physical activity are more likely to do so themselves.
- **Play with your child:** Games such as football, boules, chasing games such as tig, cricket and rounders are great family games,
- **Turn off the TV:** Limit TV watching, I-pads, tablets and computer use. 1-2 hours screen time a day is plenty for a child. Use the free time for more physical activities.



Being Active Together

Activity Ideas

Being outdoors is great for your child's physical and mental well being: Experiencing all weathers, in all seasons supports them to learn about the world around them. Having wide open spaces gives a sense of freedom to run, shout, scream and burn of energy.

- Nature hunt to collect leaves/twigs/berries to make a decoration/collage
- Playing hide and seek
- Playing chasing games, such as Tig
- Rolling over and over on a flat surface or down a slight incline
- Kicking piles of leaves on Autumn days
- In the rain: Walking and jumping in puddles
- In the snow: Making and throwing snow balls, Building a snowman building igloos
- In the wind: Twirling ribbons fly a kite



Being Active Together

Ball Play

Playing with balls improves children's motor skills, hand-eye coordination and timing, which are important in the development of toddlers. As children get older these skills support them to take part in collaborative and competitive team sports.

- Try kicking, throwing or rolling a ball.
- Try hitting a ball with a bat/racket along the ground.
- Try hitting a ball that is thrown underarm, with a bat.
- Play Skittles.
- Play Golf.
- Throw and catch with different size balls i.e. beach balls, tennis balls, beach balls, bean bags.



Being Active Together



Encourage Body Sensations and Risky Play

Children enjoy the sensation of being on the edge. They crave activities that include a level of risk. All of these natural activities that a child's body is biologically programmed to do are stimulating the vestibular system, and in turn stimulating the brain for new learning. These experiences are vital for children being able to sit still and concentrate in later learning and improve reading and writing functions.

- Climbing frames, ladders or low branches on trees.
- Creating an obstacle course made from cushions and anything found around the home.
- Playing in the park on seesaws, roundabouts, slides and swings.
- Jumping across stepping stones.
- Swing across monkey bars.
- Rolling down grass banks.



Being Active Together

Ride on toys

These types of equipment support the development of both gross and fine motor skills. They also provide children with a sense of balance. Children also learn how to navigate the space around them. Pushing and pulling each other give opportunities for cooperative play.

- Riding scooters and tricycles
- Sit on toys
- Push along toys
- Pull along toys
- Sledges
- Roller skates
- Skate boards



Being Active Together



Being creative outdoors

Using the outdoors for creativity allows you children to experience all the activities they would indoors but on a much larger scale. These large movements are necessary for building up the muscles needed in order, to later refine those movements into the fine motor skills needed for writing.

- Painting the garden fence, floor or walls with water using a large paint brush and bucket of water.
- Chalking on the floor.
- Powder paint in puddles.
- Making collages on the floor.
- Making mud faces on trees .



Being Active Together

Tummy time

Tummy time is a great way to help build your baby's upper body strength. You can start doing tummy time from birth by lying your baby on your chest (but only do this when you are wide awake and unlikely to fall asleep). Gradually increase the amount of time you do this day by day. Then when your baby is ready, try doing tummy time on the floor. Tummy time helps strengthen the back, neck and shoulders, as well as giving them a different view of the world!

- **Classes such as:** baby massage and baby yoga are great to try follow the link to find local classes and other great ways to stay active as a family in Barnsley.

[Link to groups in Barnsley](#)



Being Active Together

Keeping active indoors

As the indoors may not lend itself as naturally to being active, as the outdoors does, you may have to consider making the environment safe before starting activities. Push furniture back to create a space and cover any sharp corners that children could bang themselves on.

Activities you may try indoors are:

- 'Keep it up' with a balloon.
- Playing catch with a bean bag or balloon.
- Twirling ribbons.
- Planning an indoor treasure hunt.
- Playing hide and seek (if space is limited could be with a toy).
- Making a den.
- Sensory play foil blankets, treasure basket etc.
- Popping bubbles.
- Singing with actions.
- Dancing or a dance-a-thon.
- Playing musical statues.
- Rough and tumble play.
- Musical bumps.

[Busy feet is fantastic to get you and your child up and moving give it a go with this Link to Busy Feet](#)

