

For more great ideas...



50 Things to do Before You're Five is a mobile app that gives parents and carers 50 fantastic experiences to share with their children to help develop their confidence, language and vocabulary and to support them in being ready for the next stage in their education.

The 50 activities are low or no cost experiences that include indoor, outdoor, seasonal, home-based, and out-and-about activities that are not only fun but will get your child off to a flying start with their learning and language development.

Cambridgeshire parents/carers can download the app from the [Apple App Store](#), [Google Play](#).

For example:

- Find recipes for messy play in the activity "The Rough and the Smooth"
- Find healthy recipes to make and share in "Yummy Picnic"
- "Making connections" supports children's problem solving and critical thinking
- Home made bubble recipes are available in "Bubbles".

Further help and support...

If you are concerned about your child's development, please speak to their key person at their Early Years Setting or to your Health Visitor for advice and support. You can contact your Health Visitor by calling 0300 029 5050 or texting 07520 649 887.

Supporting your child's speech and communication development – ideas from Cambridgeshire Children's Speech and Language Therapy.



The Healthy Child Programme offers advice in many areas including supporting your child with independence, toileting and sleep.

If your child has Special Educational Needs or Disabilities, or you are concerned that they might have, please visit the Cambridgeshire SEND Information Hub for advice and support.



This video from ChatHealth supports you in preparing your child to be ready for Reception.



A guide for parents and carers

early years

Helping your child to develop independence



There are lots of things you can do to help your child start to develop independence skills. This leaflet has been designed to give you some ideas and top tips that might help.

The **Characteristics of Effective Learning** describe behaviours that children use to support them in their play and learning. By developing these behaviours children are starting on the journey to developing independence. Below are suggestions of ways you can support your child to develop these effective learning behaviours:

Playing and Exploring

Children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'

- ✓ Explore different textures with your child. Try gloop, slime or squirty cream, or make a simple paint from flour, water and food colouring. If they are reluctant to get their hands dirty offer them tools to explore with such as spoons or paint brushes.
- ✓ Encourage your child to try new foods. If they are reluctant to taste them try smelling and feeling them first. Encourage them to take part in preparation using a child safe knife. Children who help prepare food are more likely to try new things.
- ✓ Allow your child plenty of time to carry out activities. Children can take much longer to process new ideas than adults so giving them time to think about what they are doing will encourage them to have a go.

Active Learning

Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements

- ✓ Help your child develop resilience by encouraging them to try completing a task by themselves. Don't let them get frustrated – watch your child for signs they are about to give up and try to gently encourage or model what to try next.
- ✓ You can support your child to learn to complete a new task by teaching them one step at a time. For example, when putting on a coat help them with their arms, then to put the two parts of the zip together, start the zip then ask them to pull the zip up. When they have mastered this gradually get them to do the zip from the bottom, then put the two parts together.
- ✓ Praise your child when they persevere on encountering difficulties, not just for the end result, so they understand that keeping on trying is important too!

Creating and Thinking Critically

Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

- ✓ Talk about emotions with your child. Help them to recognise when they feel happy, sad, angry or worried. Support them to identify how their bodies feel at these times and model how you respond when you feel this way.
- ✓ Teach your child simple strategies to calm down when they are upset or cross, for example by blowing bubbles or taking deep breaths.
- ✓ Look at pictures of things you have enjoyed doing together. Talk about what happened first, what came next and when you have taken part in similar activities.
- ✓ Help your child sequence simple tasks, for example washing hands or brushing teeth. Use words or pictures to remind them what comes next.