

# Why **play**?

Being active is child's play







## why play?

Children and play go together like strawberries and cream. Every child wants to play – give them the right environment and good access, and watch them enjoy being free, being active and having fun.

### make play part of every day

Play is a great way for children to develop physical and social skills. Running, jumping and climbing are an essential part of a healthy lifestyle which makes for happy, healthy children growing into happy, healthy adults.

#### did you know?




-  Active outdoor play varies from chase, to roller-skating, to climbing trees, to cycling and exploring with friends;
-  Active play is a great way for children to burn off steam, helping them to focus at school and sleep better at night;
-  Active play is the perfect way for children to get their daily recommended dose of an hour of physical activity;
-  Play can also include walking. Why not make up stories about the animals you see in the park or play an I-spy game when walking along.



## the best things in life are free

Playing in the park, playground or other green spaces costs nothing – it's by far the cheapest way to keep kids happy. Walking to places is also often a lot quicker than you think, with no traffic jams and no problems parking.




### did you know?

-  Many of us live less than a 20 minute walk from a park, green space or playground, and there are no entrance fees;
-  Spending time together outdoors as a family is great fun and makes a day to remember;
-  Children love playing together and are more active when they're in a group. Try teaming up with other parents and children when you next visit the park.

## children love bikes

Get a child on a bike and it's hard to get them off! Whether cycling to school, to the shops or on a family day out, riding a bike is a great way for children to grow up fit and healthy.

### did you know?

-  It's easy to cycle with children. From the time a baby can hold up their head, until the time they get their own bike, there are plenty of options for cycling with children – visit [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk);
-  The National Cycle Network is a great place for play and to learn to ride a bike. More than half of you live within a mile of it, and a third of its 12,000 miles are dedicated paths for walkers and cyclists. Find your local paths by contacting Sustrans or your local council;
-  Many schools provide cycle training. Find out if your child's school offers Bikeability training or Bike It. If your school doesn't have either, pester them.








## making time for activity is child's play

Fitting physical activity into our busy lives can seem challenging, but the beauty of play, walking and cycling is that they can become part of your daily routine.

### did you know?

-  We can walk anywhere, it can fit it into the busiest schedule, and there's no need for special clothing. Try walking to the shops or to school and you'll be combining a regular journey with regular activity;
-  A journey can be play time – kids love to avoid the lines on paving stones, or play hopscotch along the way, and splashing in puddles and kicking leaves provides great entertainment;
-  Helping children to learn to love walking through play is a great habit that will last a lifetime.





# Who says P.E. lessons can't start at your door?



**Sustrans is the UK's leading sustainable transport charity.**

Our vision is a world in which people choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and the environment. We work on practical, innovative solutions to the transport challenges facing us all. Sustrans is the charity behind the award winning National Cycle Network, Safe Routes to Schools, Bike It, TravelSmart, Active Travel, Connect2 and Liveable Neighbourhoods, all projects that are changing our world one mile at a time.

To find out more visit or call:

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