

Child's play



TOP TEN TIPS
for parents and families

Child's play

All parents want the best for their children – and one of the best things is play! All children can play, no matter what their ability. Play isn't just messing around – it's a very important part of growing up. Through play, children are learning about the world around them, practising talking and listening as well as finding out how to make friends and get along with others. Here are some **TIPS** to help you and your child play.

Getting started



Just because your baby can't talk, doesn't mean they're not learning. Babies learn all the time through watching and listening. Talking (or signing), singing and reading all help your baby's development - and they will enjoy it too. Talk (or sign), read and sing to your baby to give them the best start in life.

Messy play

Children really love messy play. Play with things that your child can get their hands into -

something as simple

as a bowl of water or sand



can be fun to a child. Keep messy play to one area in your house and put down a plastic sheet or newspapers. If you can, get messy, playing outdoors.

Outdoor play

This is important for physical fitness and developing self confidence. Activities need a bit of challenge and uncertainty - too safe can equal boring! Make friends with other parents in the area – the more adults keeping an eye out for children, the safer it will be to play outside.



Safety

Teach your child about safety – this includes road safety, stranger danger and safety at home.

Make sure to supervise small children playing with water, and don't leave small objects within easy reach - if it can fit inside a toilet roll then a child under 3 can choke on it.



Leave the clearing up

Don't get too worried about having a tidy house. The dust will still be there tomorrow!



Small children and tidy homes just do not go together and you will miss out on more important things like having fun with your child. Make sure you make time to play!

Be creative

Children don't just play with toys. Children love playing



with household items such as pans, wooden spoons, and sponges.

Leave your child to choose what to use and how to use it, for example, a sheet thrown over a table or chairs makes a great den.

Helping out

Young children love helping around the house. What may seem like boring chores to you can be fun

as well as a real learning experience for your child.

It may take longer but laying the table, Hoovering, dusting, washing up can be good fun when you do them together.



Play with the elements



Let your child experience playing with water, wind and earth.

Make mud pies, go exploring through the woods, have water fights, play in the bath, make and fly kites! When it's wet and windy go out for a walk with your child – children love splashing about in puddles.

Free play

When you first give your child a new toy or puzzle, they may need your help, but it's also OK for children to play on their own.



When your child plays alone, they're learning how to keep themselves occupied. When children play with friends they make up games and learn how to get on with others.

Look after yourself

Being a parent isn't always easy, so it's important to look after yourself as well as your child. Make sure you have people to talk to when you need to and get time to yourself – even if it's only a cup of tea and reading the newspaper while your child's playing.



National Playday

Every year there is a national playday in Scotland. To find out what's happening this year visit

www.playday.org.uk

Local libraries

Libraries welcome families and children. As well as offering a variety of resources to borrow from books to DVD's, they run activities for parents and children such as mother and toddler sessions, help with homework and 'bouncing rhymes' for parents with young children.

This booklet has been produced by Parenting across Scotland and Play Scotland, working in partnership to promote play.

Parenting across Scotland

Is a partnership of children's charities and adult relationship organisations working together to provide a focus on issues affecting families in Scotland.

www.parentingacrossscotland.org

Play Scotland

Works to promote the importance of play for all children and young people, and campaigns to create increased play opportunities in the community.

www.playscotland.org

PAS partner helplines

ParentLine Scotland

0800 028 2233

Lone Parent Helpline

0808 801 0323

Stepfamily Scotland

0845 122 8655

Advice Service

Capability Scotland

0131 313 5510



supporting families to support children

playtalkread



For more tips about play visit:

www.playscotland.org

www.parentingacrossscotland.org

www.playtalkread.com

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