50 things to do > before you're five™

# Using 50 Things to Do Before You're Five in Childminding & Early Years Settings

50 Things to Do Before You're Five is an exciting initiative full of ideas and activities for parents and families with young children.

50 Things is a suite of **localised**:

- Apps
- Websites
- Promotional materials

Our project offers a wide range of activities from **outdoor discoveries** in the woods, to **exploring how sound changes** in different places, to **sharing stories** and **water play**!
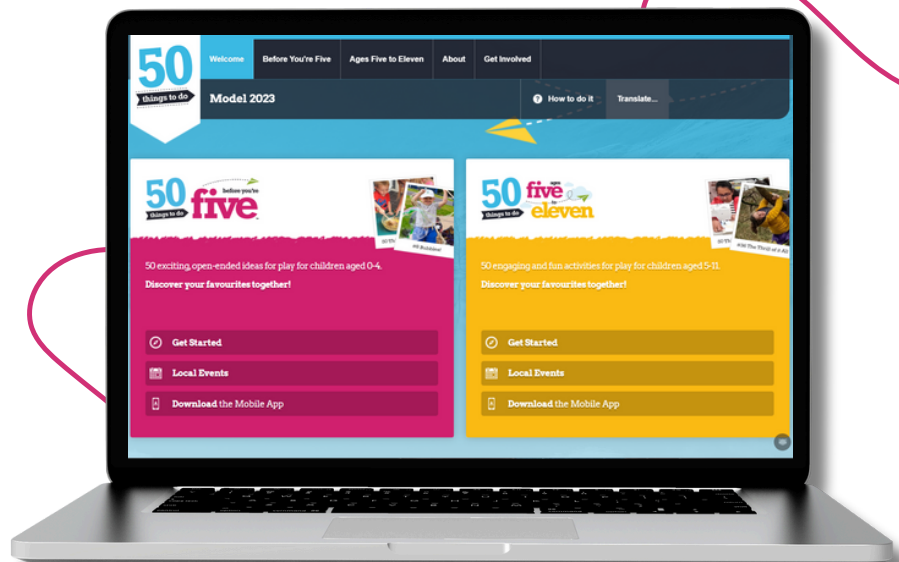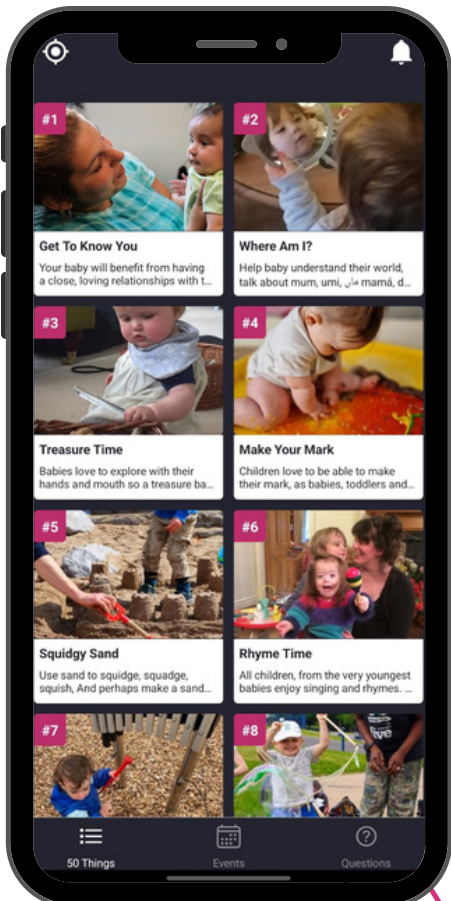
Why use 50 Things in your setting?

Working with Families

Working in partnership with parents/families and carers is central to the **Early Years Foundation Stage.** When parents are actively involved in your early years setting, and their child's learning, research shows that there will be a significant impact on improving children's learning.

When they **engage in experiences with their children at home** too, it has an even greater impact, as The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project reported, "All parents who regularly involve their children in early home learning activities that 'stretch a child's mind' can enhance their children's learning and development".

We have seen that when settings implement **50 Things to Do Before You're Five** into their provision, the relationships between parents and practitioners improves. There is also some evidence (NESTA, 2023) emerging that strong parent/practitioner relationships impact positively on attendance!

> "Regardless of the quality of settings, the most important predictor of children's future outcomes is the quality of the home learning environment, so involving parents in their children's learning is the most significant factor in enabling children to do well despite disadvantage. The benefits are greatest when practitioners and families work in respectful partnership to develop ways to support children both at home and in the setting."
> **Birth to Five Matters**

A full suite of Home Learning Activities

50 Things to Do Before You're Five is based on such a **simple idea:** Fun, low or no-cost experiences for the whole family, indoors and outdoors. It is a free bucket-list of 'fun stuff', involving an app, website, and social media campaign. It provides childminders and Early Years group settings with the perfect resource for supporting your families.

There are many ways you can use 50 Things to Do Before You're Five in your setting. For example, some settings and childminders **invite parents to complete the same activity over a weekend**, some have 50 Things to Do Before You're Five **home learning bags** that they loan to parents. The project is there for you to use in a way that s**uits you and your parents best**. You can thread it into your work too, by creating experiences related to the activities, and recording them in children's learning journeys.

> "A family that used the **50 Things to Do** bag had expressed having struggles with finding new things to entertain their child at home. This bag gave them a new resource and the family told us that their child enjoyed the element of surprise in choosing something new from the bag each time. This got them excited to have 1:1 time with their family and increased their bond. "
> **EYs Practitioner in Peterborough**

Our initiative is underpinned by evidence-informed, impactful pedagogies and parenting approaches, but **what your parents really need to know** is that it is full of fun stuff to do with their children! Our focus on families having fun together is a deliberate approach, promoting an inclusive, non-judgmental way for parents to engage fully with their children.

Why use 50 Things in your setting?

Promoting Effective Practice

The activities have been developed to support all aspects of child development, especially:

- Physical Development
- Mental Health
- Cognitive Development
- Social Development
- Speech and Language Development

They also promote the **Characteristics of Effective Learning** for young children:

- **Playing and Exploring**: children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.
- **Active Learning**: children concentrate, keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements.
- **Creating and Thinking Critically**: children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.
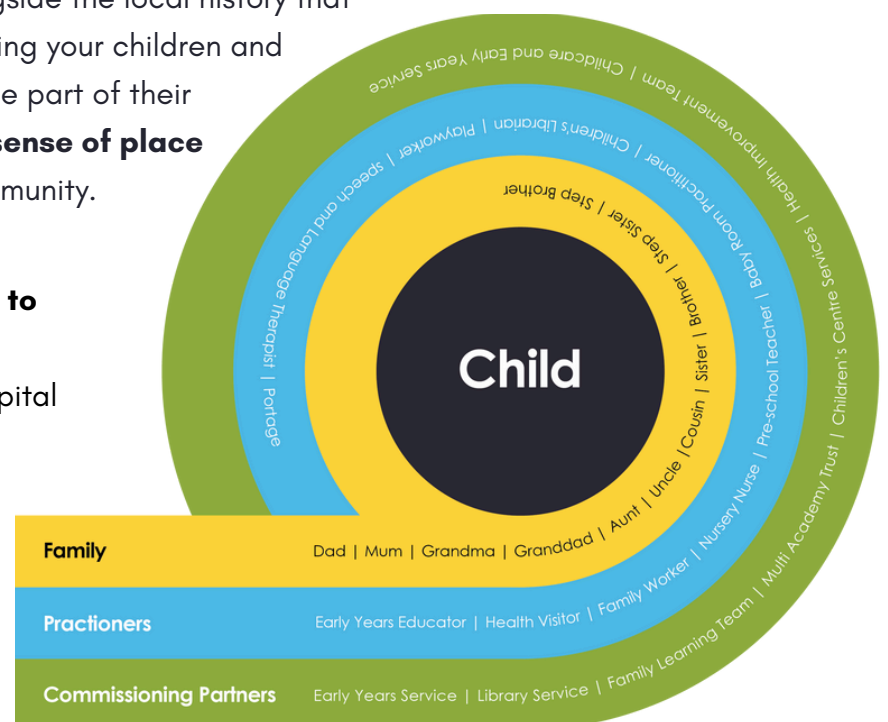
Encouraging Cultural Capital

Children **grow up** in a locality and are **part of a community**. 50 Things to Do Before You're Five recognises that children's development is not exclusively dependent on the input of families, or your early years/childminding setting.

50 Things to Do encourages children and families to **explore their own local** landscapes, communities and cultural venues alongside the local history that defines the places they live. Encouraging your children and their families to find opportunities to be part of their local area **provides children with a sense of place** and a greater connection to their community.

50 Things to Do **encourages families to build on children's interests** and experiences to harness the cultural capital they already have.

Developing **cultural capital** helps children to develop the knowledge, experiences, confidence and communication skills that will prepare them for their future success.

Child

Childcare and Early Years Service | Health Improvement Team | Children's Librarian | Playworker | Speech and Language Therapist | Portage | Baby Room Practitioner | Nursery Nurse | Pre-school Teacher | Multi Academy Trust | Children's Centre Services | Family Learning Team

Step Brother | Step Sister | Brother | Cousin | Sister | Aunt | Uncle

Family — Dad | Mum | Grandma | Granddad

Practioners — Early Years Educator | Health Visitor | Family Worker

Commissioning Partners — Early Years Service | Library Service

The impact it can have in your setting

By **helping families to make their home a great place to play and learn**, you are supporting children's development and contributing to improved life chances. We know that playing, especially outside, impacts children's brain development and **positively impacts health** later in life.

By helping families **establish active lifestyles** through taking part in outdoor activities and connecting with nature, you can improve mental wellbeing, coronary and respiratory health, and also **lower obesity**.

By encouraging your families to play together, you are having a **positive impact on the whole family's mental wellbeing**, reducing stress and boredom, while **promoting feelings of joy and happiness**.

By encouraging positive interactions and improved communication, you are helping families bond. You are also **improving parents' confidence** in supporting the development of children's language, literacy and communication skills. We know that this **positively impacts on academic achievement** at primary and secondary school ages.
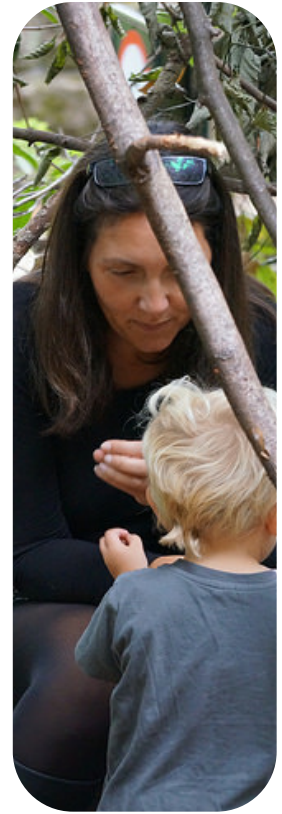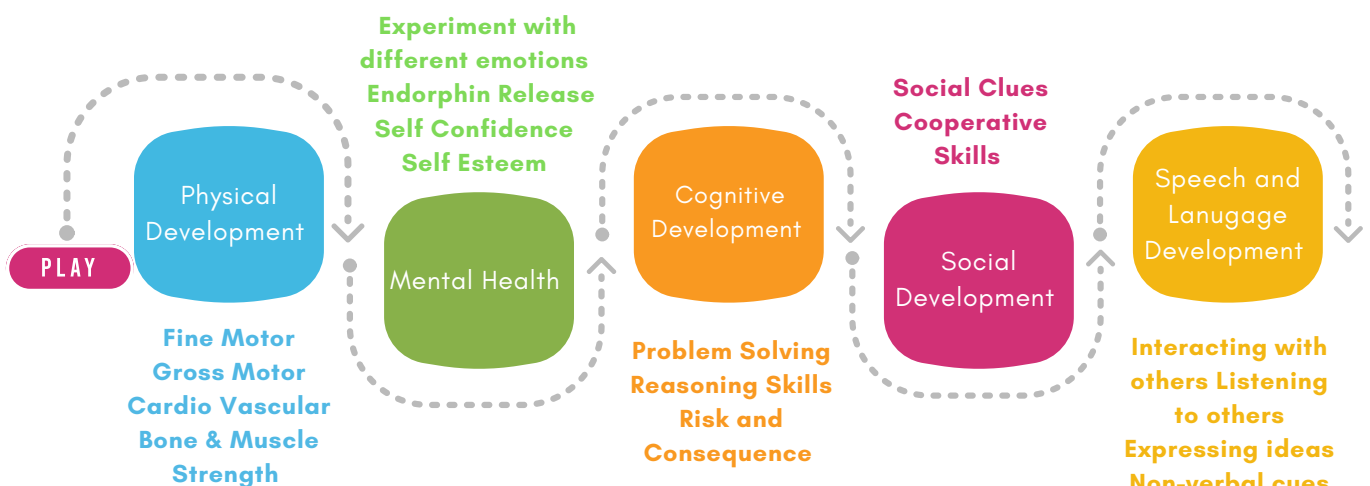
OFSTED have regularly said positive things about 50 Things to Do Before You're Five during inspections, including:

"The school has adapted a local '50 things' project of activities to enhance pupils' wider experiences. "
Special School, Bradford

"Parents are provided with a range of information to support their children's learning and development at home. For example, staff share the '50 things to do' project with families to support children's outdoor experiences."
PVI, East Sussex

The project is about promoting **play** because it is **essential in our lives**. It underpins all development and learning for young children.

PLAY

Physical Development
Fine Motor
Gross Motor
Cardio Vascular
Bone & Muscle Strength

Mental Health
Experiment with different emotions
Endorphin Release
Self Confidence
Self Esteem

Cognitive Development
Problem Solving
Reasoning Skills
Risk and Consequence

Social Development
Social Clues
Cooperative Skills

Speech and Lanuage Development
Interacting with others Listening to others
Expressing ideas
Non-verbal cues

The impact in numbers

We regularly gather feedback from families and practitioners using 50 Things to Do Before You're Five, so you don't have to just take our word for it!

As you can see from the data here, by using **50 Things to Do Before You're Five** there are positive changes in behaviours that we know will have a positive impact on outcomes.

72%
of parents said that, since using 50 Things to Do Before You're 5 they feel able to help their child learn in more and different ways.

Social Development

"Part of how kids learn how to get along with others is by spending time with people, making friends, and also by being with people they wouldn't necessarily choose to be around. It's with practise that children and adults get better at doing all of those things. So we are definitely seeing signs of developmental lag in some children's social skills." **UNICEF (2022) Managing the long-term effects of the pandemic on your child's mental health.**

70%
of parents said that, since using **50 Things to Do Before You're 5**, their child has had more opportunities to socialise within their local community.

Speech and Language Development

The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated the outcomes gap, and set back children's learning and development – particularly in language and maths – and hit those from disadvantaged backgrounds hardest. **DfE (c2022) COVID-19 Recovery Package, DfE Factsheet.**

One serious effect of the nationwide lockdowns was the negative impact on children and young people's speech, language and communication. **Nuffield Trust (2022) The impact of Covid-19 on health care for children and young people in England.**

63%
of parents said that, since using **50 Things to Do Before You're 5**, they communicate more purposefully with their child whilst they are playing.

86%
of parents said that the **50 Things to Do** activities provide different opportunities to communicate with their child.

Mental Health

"Time spent outdoors, in nature, increases life expectancy, improves well-being, reduces symptoms of depression and increases a child's ability to function in school." (**Open University's OPENspace Research Centre**)

Physical Development

"Playing outside allows children to develop more advanced motor skills than children who spend most of their time indoors, including agility, balance and coordination. Children who spend time playing outdoors are more likely to move in ways that challenge their muscles, bones and physical endurance" **Miracle Recreation.**

Physical development also supports many other aspects of learning, including the ability to sit still, hand-eye coordination needed for writing, and the eye movements which support reading.

75%
of parents said that, since using the **50 Things to Do Before You're 5** app, their child has gone outside to play more often.

Parental Confidence

When parents feel competent in their parenting role they are more likely to be engaged in their child's learning and development. "An individual's belief in their ability to be successful in the role of parenting (i.e., confidence) is an essential component of the quality and sustainability of parenting behaviours." **Belsky J, Jaffee SR (2006) The Multiple Determinants of Parenting**

"It's exhausting to be a parent in any circumstance, but it's much more exhausting to be a parent when you don't have the resources that other families have." **Lew-William.**

67%
of parents said that, since using the **50 Things to Do Before You're 5** app they feel more confident to try new things with their children.

50 Things to Do Before You're Five is a free resource for practitioners and families to use in 24 areas of the British Isles.

You can download the app here:

Or find your local website here:

The local website will give details of the team leading the initiative in your area, get in touch with them to see what additional resources are available for you to use.

Calderdale 1
Bradford 2
Leeds 3
Oldham 4
Kirklees 5
Wakefield 6
Sheffield 7
Birmingham 8
Warwickshire 9
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough 10
Norfolk 11
Central Bedfordshire 12
Oxfordshire 13
Hertfordshire 14
West Berkshire 15
Southwark 16
East Sussex 17
Jersey 18
Suffolk 19
Fife 20
Coventry 21
Hounslow 22
Portsmouth 23

Can't see us in your area?

50 Things to Do Local offers are commissioned by agencies, often based in local authorities. If you are are interested in finding out more, do get in touch.

info@50Thingstodo.org

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