

## The power of play: Why playing is essential to a child's growth.

At the Health Improvement Commission we agree with the statement by Play England: *Play isn't just for learning; play for its own sake is a child's right and what they're driven to do*".

Through play, children develop physically and discover a range of emotional skills. In short, play is pivotal to a child's development right from birth. It is especially important during difficult times such as lockdown

A recent American Academy of Paediatrics (AAP) [report](#), emphasises just how important playing with both parents/carers and peers is for building thriving brains and bodies.

Physical activity, through play and other activities, is especially important for children's physical health as well as their mental health and development. There is also some evidence that if children are physically active when they are young they are more likely to keep active as they grow up.

Play is especially important in developing children's fine motor skills such as writing, grasping small objects and gross motor skills like walking, running, throwing and kicking. Through activities as varied as climbing trees, running, jumping, swimming, dancing and riding bikes, children will also develop stamina, flexibility, body awareness and social skills.

We would especially encourage children to play outdoors where there is space and opportunity for them to move more freely even when it's wet and windy. Active outdoor play is essential for our children and young people to understand, value, enjoy and protect our natural world.

Giving your child plenty of opportunities to play is one of the best ways to help them grow into curious, creative, healthy, and happy adults equipped with the skills they need today. Next time your child asks to play with you, jump at the opportunity! Share the joy of discovery as you connect with each other and the world around you.

### Resources for encouraging play

#### Resources

[#101waystoplay campaign - Play Scotland](#)

[35 indoor family games from play Wales](#)

[Home - GoNoodle](#)

[Playful Families, Play Scotland](#)

### Articles on the importance of play

[Why It's Good When Your Child Can Play... Even When They Are Alone | HuffPost UK Parents \(huffingtonpost.co.uk\)](#)

[Coronavirus: just letting children play will help them, and their parents, cope \(theconversation.com\)](#)

[Outdoor Play and Learning | Play in a time of lock-down](#)

[The Power of Play - How Fun and Games Help Children Thrive - HealthyChildren.org](#)

[The Power of Play: A Pediatric Role in Enhancing Development in Young Children | American Academy of Pediatrics \(aapublications.org\)](#)