


3+ Review

Additional Information



Social and emotional development

Children's ability to regulate their emotions and skilfully manage social interactions is critical to their healthy development and future success.



I don't need my mummy or daddy to stay with me at nursery. I know they will come back for me after I have finished playing.

When one of my friends hurts themselves, it makes me feel sad too. I try to help them feel happy again.

I am starting to share and take turns, I find this hard during some games but I am learning.

I am able to use the toilet by myself! Sometimes I can have a little accident but that's ok because I'm only three.

I love pretending to be an astronaut, or imagining that I am making sandwiches in the kitchen to take on a picnic.

Language development

Language is the key that will unlock the door to a child's future learning.

I ask and answer lots of questions that use 'who', 'what', 'where', 'why' and 'when'.

I am using a lot more new words and can join my sentences together to make a story.

I love listening to stories and nursery rhymes like Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star...

I can retell my favourite stories in my own words.

I am starting to like simple jokes.

I can understand instructions with three to four words like 'put teddy away', 'give me the ball'.

I enjoy make-believe play. I can feed teddy and dress teddy up.

I am starting to take turns and play games with my friends.

I can't quite use my 'l, sh, ch, r, th' sounds yet, but that is normal for a three to four year old.

I can use words like full and empty, big and small. I can also use 'his', 'her' and 'they' correctly when I am talking.

BBC Tiny Happy People

www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people

Tiny Happy People is a website designed to help you develop your child's language skills and is full of simple activities and play ideas.

Reading is fun

Books can be exciting or calming. They spark the imagination and, most importantly, they are lots of fun.

Introducing your child to books early will also help with future learning.

- ✓ Join your local library – membership is free!
- ✓ Set aside special time for reading, ensure a quiet space without distraction.
- ✓ Encourage your child to choose the book. This shows that you value their opinion and they will tend to engage with the book better.
- ✓ Sitting together will encourage your child to turn the pages and become more involved in the reading activity.
- ✓ Look at the pictures, point to them and talk about them. Encourage storytelling through the pictures.
- ✓ Encourage your child to talk about the book. Discuss the story, the characters and what might happen next.
- ✓ Don't be afraid to use funny voices for different characters. This makes the book more interesting and fun for children.



For more information visit www.pha.site/booktrust or www.pha.site/wordsforlife

Use your local library

Reading is an essential skill and libraries play a vital role in developing your child's love of reading. A library card provides access to a wide range of reading material and each library is arranged so that children can choose their own books. The service is free and up to nine books can be borrowed each time.

There is a wide range of free books available:

- picture books;
- stories in languages other than English;
- fact/information books.

The Libraries NI website www.librariesni.org.uk is a valuable source of information for all parents and carers. The website has the following information:

- Details about lots of free activities and events for young children and families.
- Rub-a-Dub Hub, a free online resource with tools, tips and fun activities to help parents and carers develop their child's communication and language skills.
- Recommended books for toddlers and young children to help with real life situations like visiting the doctor.

- Information about where to borrow or buy a copy of Monkey See Monkey Do, a Libraries NI book of rhymes with accompanying CD.
- eBooks and eMagazines are available for members to access through the website. Be a good role model and show your children how much you enjoy reading – it's infectious!



For more information visit www.pha.site/librariesni

Independence

I can try to



Wash my hands and face.



Help tidy up.



Dress myself.



Choose my own clothes.



Help in the kitchen.



Pour my own cereal and butter toast.

Behaviour

Building a positive relationship with your child is the best way to help your child develop positive emotional wellbeing. Understanding why your child misbehaves can often be the key to helping you to deal with a situation effectively. Behaviour can be affected by changes in routine, physical problems, insecurity, strong feelings and much more.

What I need from you



Boundaries and routines

Boundaries and routines are an important part of family life. They offer a sense of safety and predictability for your child.

- ✓ Don't just say 'No!' Always explain why not.
- ✓ Routines help a child to know what to expect.
- ✓ Be consistent - changing boundaries will confuse a child.
- ✓ Make sure that boundaries and consequences are age appropriate.
- ✓ If you are in control your child will be in control.
- ✓ If you are stressed your child will be more likely to be challenging.
- ✓ Look at the NSPCC Talk PANTS guidance for parents and carers to help you have simple conversations to help keep children safe
www.nspcc.org.uk/pants



For more information visit www.familysupportni.gov.uk or contact local parenting programmes.

Play

Playing is fun. It is also the most effective way for a child to learn.

Play promotes imagination, development of skills, ideas and concepts, problem solving, independence and creativity.

Playing with your child can help you learn about their child's view of the world, how they understand and what is on their mind.



No matter how busy you are – set aside time every day to play with your child. **Playtime makes memories.**

Playtime

Children don't need expensive toys - a cardboard box is just as effective. The best kinds of play can be the messiest!

Playing with playdough

You can make your own dough with your child to explore their senses and learn key skills. Here's a simple playdough recipe:

- 1 cup water
- 1 cup plain flour
- 2 tablespoons cream of tartar
- ½ cup salt
- 1 tablespoon cooking oil
- food colouring

Mix ingredients in a saucepan and stir over a medium heat until it forms dough. When cooled, allow your child to explore their imagination and make different shapes. Store in a plastic box in the fridge to use again.



Outdoor play

Play outdoors with your child. Let them explore the world around them. Take them outside where they can run, jump and climb in natural surroundings.

Children under five need at least 180 minutes (three hours) of physical activity per day.



Water play

Get a basin of water or play in the bath. Provide your child with resources for pouring and so on. Use plastic bottles, plastic tubing, a sponge, colander, straws, a funnel and spoons. Ensure these are durable and won't cause harm. Put children in clothing you don't mind getting wet.

A young child can drown silently in less than five centimetres (two inches) of water – never leave a child unsupervised or let yourself become distracted during water activities.



Dressing up

Allow your child to explore their own identity through dressing up. Collect old hats, bags, gloves, scarves, lengths of material, tea towels and old curtains. Create face masks using paper plates or cereal boxes.

Make sure fabric has no loose cords, strings or ribbons which could cause harm to your child.



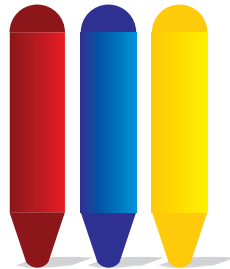
Puppets

Play with puppets to talk to your child and talk through emotions and feelings. You can make homemade puppets using odd socks, paper bags or envelopes. Draw faces on them or use stickers to make them more interactive.



Drawing, painting and junk modelling

Give your child resources to explore their creativity such as crayons, felt tips, paint, cardboard boxes and glue. Allow them to get creative with junk art using envelopes, cereal boxes, cartons and yogurt pots.



For more information visit www.pha.site/birthtofive

Sleep

- Sleep is essential to support children's development. Well rested children are best able to reach their full potential.
- Children aged three to five years need approximately 10–12 hours sleep per night.
- All children can benefit from having a good bedtime routine. A successful sleep routine needs to be well planned – it is also important that you are firm and consistent.

Bedtime routine



For more tips on sleep visit www.pha.site/birthtofive or www.sleepscotland.org

Toilet

At age three years most children are likely to be toilet trained. If your child is struggling to make progress, if they are wet more than once an hour or you think they may be constipated (if poos are hard, difficult or painful to pass, they seem to be straining to poo or straining to hold a poo in, or they are pooing less than three times a week) then speak to their health visitor or GP.

Top tips

- ✓ Talk to your child and let them see you use the toilet and use stories, pictures and play (teddies/dolls sitting on the potty) so they understand what is expected.
- ✓ Remove the nappy or pull up during the day and use washable training pants or ordinary pants.
- ✓ Try to give your child a water-based drink about every two hours and take them to use the potty after drinks and meals.
- ✓ Praise them for sitting on the potty and for any success with the potty.
- ✓ Remember that any wetting or soiling can be part of the learning process. Do not get cross with them if they have an 'accident' but help them to get changed with the minimum fuss and remind them to use the potty next time.
- ✓ Have a plan for 'accidents' – carry spare clothes, wipes and plastic bags with you when you go out and make sure you plan in times to use the potty when you are out.
- ✓ Try to avoid going back to nappies in the day – your child may get confused about what is expected or they may just wait until they have the nappy on.

It usually takes a little longer to stay dry throughout the night. Although most children achieve this aged 3-5 years, it is estimated that one in four 3-year-olds and one in six 5-year-olds wet the bed.



For more information visit: www.bbuk.org.uk or www.eric.org.uk

Physical activity

Being active is important for your child's health. It helps them develop movement skills, social skills, a strong heart, muscles and bones, keep to a healthy weight and much more.

Children under five need at least 180 minutes (three hours) physical activity each day. Remember your child doesn't have to do this all in one go.



Ideas for active play with your child

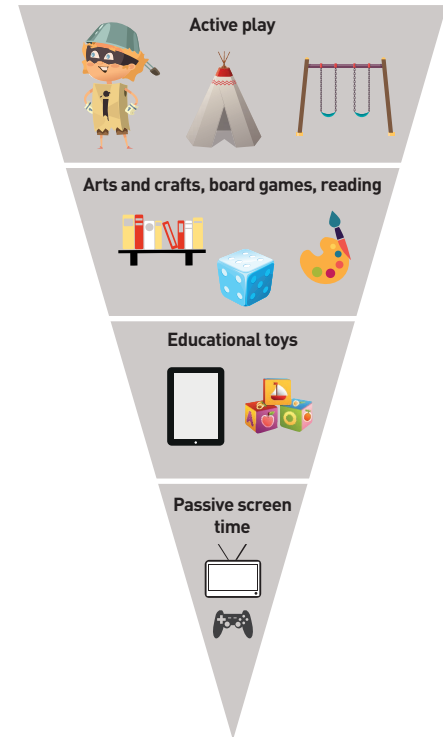
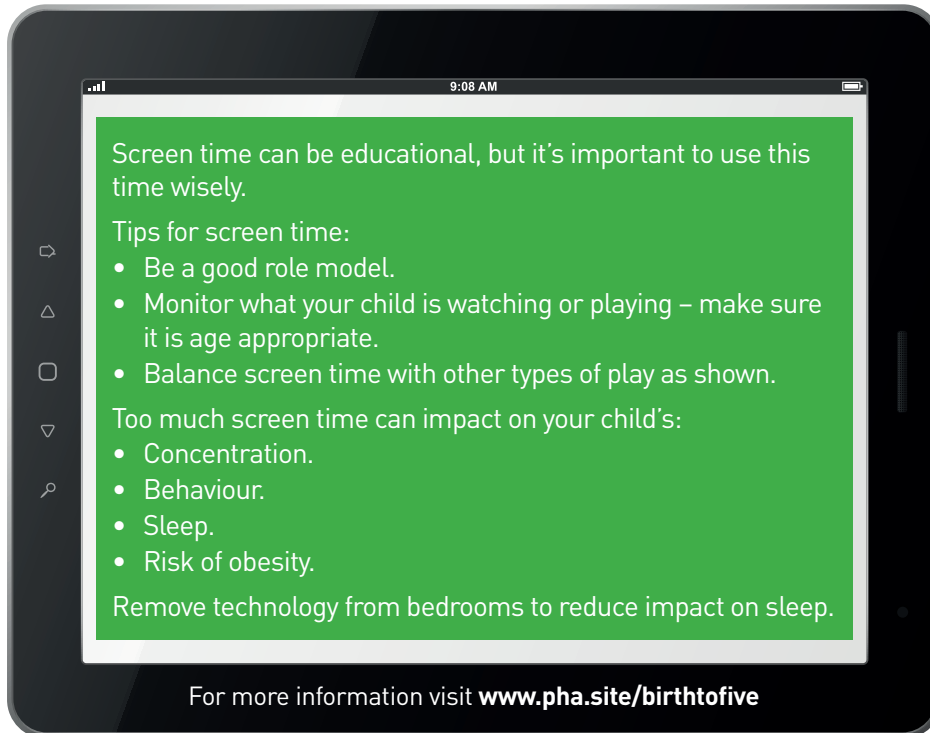
- ✓ Play games together with simple equipment such as balls, bats and boxes.
- ✓ Play chasing games like tag.
- ✓ Set aside time to do something as a family like walks, visits to the local park or swimming.
- ✓ Choose toys for birthday presents which will encourage your child to get active.
- ✓ Have one of your child's friends around to play – children are more active with a playmate.
- ✓ Do action songs and nursery rhymes.
- ✓ Focus on what they can do instead of what they can't.
- ✓ If possible, walk to nursery or pre-school.

Don't forget healthy eating is important too!

For more information visit www.publichealth.hscni.net www.bhf.org.uk or www.nhs.uk/change4life

Screen time

Screen time should be part of a healthy mix of activities



Healthier eating

Childhood is an important time to establish good eating and drinking habits for future health.

Children under five need to eat a variety of foods from the following five food groups:

Fruit and vegetables

Five child-sized portions should be offered each day. Examples of one child-sized portion are:

- ½ apple, ½ pear, ½ banana or ½ orange;
- 1 tablespoon fruit salad, tinned or stewed fruit;
- ½ cup of strawberries or grapes;
- 1 tablespoon cooked or raw vegetables.

Note: to reduce the risk of choking cut up smaller fruits and vegetables like grapes and cherry tomatoes, remove any stones and pips and cut larger items into smaller pieces both lengthwise and across.



Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins

Two servings should be taken every day, ie at lunch and evening meal.

Examples of one serving include:

- 2–3 tablespoons baked beans;
- 2 fish fingers;
- 1 egg;
- 45–60g (1½–2oz) beef, pork, lamb, chicken or fish.



Processed meat products such as sausages should be given no more than once a week.

Note: to reduce the risk of choking whole nuts should not be given to children under the age of five.

Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy foods

Offer a minimum of one portion with each meal. Examples of one portion are:

- 1 small potato;
- 1 slice of bread;
- 3 tablespoons cooked pasta or two heaped tablespoons cooked rice or 8 oven chips;
- 2 tablespoons low sugar breakfast cereal eg Weetabix, porridge or corn flakes.



Note: offer a variety of the above until five years of age as eating only high fibre choices would fill small children up before they get the nutrients and energy they need.

For further information on nutrition information visit www.pha.site/getting-good-start

Dairy and alternatives

Each day allow 350–600mls (½–1 pint) of milk. This can be semi-skimmed milk if your child is eating a varied diet.

or

2–3 servings of other dairy foods or alternatives, such as:

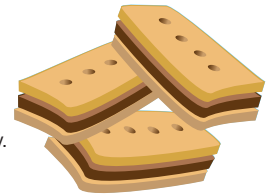
- 25g (1oz) of hard cheese;
- 125g carton of yogurt – avoid ‘diet’ varieties;
- bowl of milky pudding like rice pudding.



Oils and spreads

Getting enough healthy fats is essential for growth and development. The best are unsaturated oils and spreads eg rapeseed, olive or sunflower.

Note: Fat and sugary foods such as biscuits, cake, ice-cream and sweets should be eaten less often and in small amounts to help reduce the risk of tooth decay and obesity. Avoid adding salt to children’s food during cooking or at the table.



Snacks are important at this age as small children cannot usually eat enough at mealtimes to meet their needs for energy (calories). Choose snacks that are sugar-free or low in added sugar and packed with nutrients, eg toast, sandwiches, fruit and raw vegetables.

Drinks

- Children should drink enough during the day, to prevent dehydration and tiredness.
- Water should be freely available throughout the day, and drinks should always be included with each meal.

- Water and milk are the most suitable drinks for children.
- Pure unsweetened fruit juice, well diluted (one part juice to ten parts water). This should only be given at mealtimes to avoid damage to teeth.

Other drinks are not recommended.

or www.pha.site/healthy-breaks-preschool

Fussy eating

It's perfectly normal for a young child to refuse to eat or even taste new foods. Children will usually eat enough to keep themselves going.

Try not to worry unless your child is not putting on weight as quickly as they should or is obviously ill.

- Are mealtimes stressful?
- Are portion sizes age-appropriate?
- Do you give large snacks between meals?
- Do you sit together at mealtimes?

Nursery says she eats everything they give her.

Every time I give her food she just gags, I don't know why!

I'm worried she's not eating enough.



Why is mummy upset - I have eaten enough. I'm not hungry!

If I make a fuss she will give me whatever I want.

I don't like those lumps.

Top tips

- Limit large snacks between meals.
- Sit down to family meals together and turn off televisions and tablets as these are distracting for your child.
- Give your child the same food as the rest of the family.
- Don't delay mealtimes until your child is too hungry or tired to eat.
- Your child may be a slow eater so you may have to be patient.
- Give small portions and praise your child for eating, even if they only manage a little.
- If your child rejects the food, don't force-feed them. Just take the food away without comment. Try to stay calm even if it's very frustrating.

Happy smiles

- 1 Register your child with a dentist and visit regularly to ensure teeth and gums are healthy.
- 2 Brush teeth for two minutes last thing at night and on one other occasion during the day – supervise brushing until at least seven years of age.
- 3 Keep all sugary foods and drinks to mealtimes only.

Looking after teeth

- ✓ Children over three should use a small pea-sized blob of toothpaste. Choose a brush with a small, soft head and change it every three months.
- ✓ Brush teeth with fluoride toothpaste (1,350–1,500 parts per million) see toothpaste tube for information.
- ✓ Don't rinse out after brushing – as the fluoride toothpaste left behind helps protect the teeth.
- ✗ Dummies are not recommended for children over 6–9 months old.



You can search for a dentist in your area using the link:
<https://online.hscni.net/in-your-area/hsc-service-finder/>

When I talk and play, take my dummy away!

Giving up my dummy

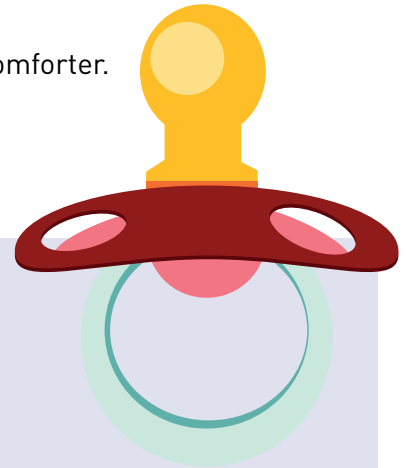
- Helps me talk to you using clear sounds and words.
- Helps my teeth grow straight.

Dummies at this age may have become a habit and are no longer needed as a comforter.

The longer you leave it the harder it will be! Never dip a dummy in anything sweet!

Tips from parents

- “I take it out when she is playing”
- “I made a clean break, stuck at it and didn’t give it back”
- “Give it to the Dummy Fairy”
- “Singing songs and nursery rhymes helped distract him”
- “My child swapped it for a small toy”



Home accident prevention

Accidents are the leading cause of death among children aged between one and five years.

Young children are usually inquisitive and adventurous and they do not know immediately whether a situation or an object is safe or dangerous. Five key issues for children under five:

I might fall

- Teach me to take care on the stairs.
- Keep floor space free of clutter.
- Teach me not to play near windows, balconies or climb on furniture or worktops.
- Don't put my bed near a window.

I might get burnt or scalded

- Use your elbow to test my bath water and always add cold water first.
- Fit fire guards to all fires and heaters.
- Teach me not to touch lighters or matches.
- Keep hot drinks, pots, kettles and hair straighteners out of my reach.

I might get strangled, choke or suffocate

- Think blind cord safety! Secure looped cords or chains on blinds with safety aids.
- Cut food up in small, narrow strips or quarters (not round pieces). Teach me not to run with food in my mouth.
- Keep plastic bags, coins, buttons, batteries and small items out of reach.

I might get poisoned

- Keep medicines, cleaning products, liquid tabs and batteries out of reach and in a locked cupboard.

- Fit carbon monoxide alarms in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Ventilate home and ensure installation and maintenance of fuel burning appliances are carried out by a qualified professional.

I might drown

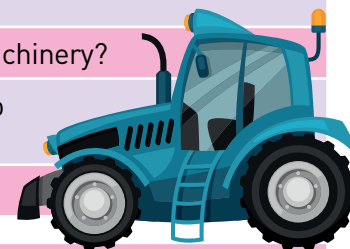
- Don't leave me alone in the bath with an older sibling or unsupervised during water activities.
- A young child can drown silently in less than five centimetres (two inches) of water.

For further information visit www.rospe.com/home-safety or www.capt.org.uk
You can download a free first aid app from www.redcross.org.uk/firstaid

Harm on the farm

How safe is your farm?

- ✓ Are your slurry lagoon and slurry tank securely fenced?
- ✓ Have you explained the dangers around the farmyard and livestock?
- ✓ Did you know that children under 13 years should not ride on tractors or farm machinery?
- ✓ Do you secure all heavy wheels, gates, heavy equipment and stacked materials to prevent them from toppling over?
- ✓ Do you have a safe and secure play area?



- ✓ Keep children away when mixing slurry.
- ✓ Keep track of where all family members are playing or working and when they are expected to return.
- ✓ Provide a secure play area for children to keep them away from livestock, machinery and traffic.
- ✓ Ensure that guards are in place to prevent access to dangerous parts of machinery.
- ✓ Lock away all harmful, poisonous substances.
- ✓ Ensure everyone washes their hands before eating and drinking.

Make sure all family members know what to do in an emergency and keep a list of emergency contacts.

For more information: www.hseni.gov.uk

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Rachel McEvoy for kindly providing some of the illustrations within this resource to enhance the public health messages.



