

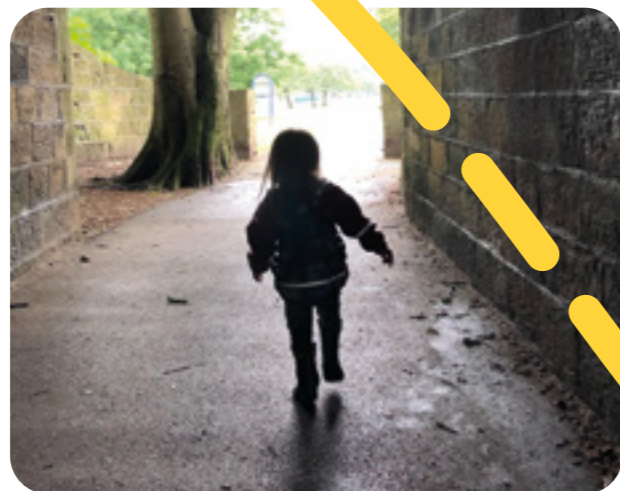
50 before you're
things to do **five**



Impact Report 2023



A golden thread through communities, helping every child reach important health, learning, and wellbeing milestones by providing 50 low cost or no cost ideas for play to the people who care for them.



Our support for 50 Things to Do Before You're Five

I am privileged to work in a hospital where lives are saved daily. It is difficult to imagine anything more satisfying than a life being saved because of a medical intervention.

It's easy to see the link between cause and effect in the hospital, but the link between **50 Things to Do** and saving lives is just as real - even if it can be a bit more difficult to identify.

In the Bradford Royal Infirmary, we have health and education records that demonstrate how the first five years of life impact on a child's physical and mental health. These records show clearly that someone lives **10 years longer** when they are supported to develop life skills in the first five years of life. If children don't learn these skills, then they are at risk of doing poorly in school and thereby lack the education that helps people make healthy life choices.

The tragedy is that we could save so many lives by administering the right intervention at the right age – and **50 Things to Do** is that treatment. The even better news is that this medicine tastes great!

There is a huge amount of evidence that shows the fun activities encouraged by 50 Things will literally ensure children enjoy longer healthier lives. This is why all of us at the Centre for Applied Education Research are passionate advocates of **50 Things**, and why we support the team in continually evaluating and improving their approach so that every child across the UK can thrive.

Professor Mark Mon-Williams

Professor of Psychology at the University of Leeds and Bradford Institute for Health Research

Director of the Centre for Applied Education Research



Executive Summary

50 Things to Do is a place-based, parent-facing offer for Local Authorities and other public sector organisations. It helps parents to develop their home learning environment so that far more children thrive by the age of five. 50 Things is based on the simple notion that fun, low or no-cost experiences with family, indoors and outdoors, are great ways to support children's development, combining to create a life-enhancing environment.

Since its launch in 2018, 50 Things to Do has been introduced in 22 areas across the British Isles, representing 13.3 % of the under-five population in these localities. To celebrate the 5th birthday of 50 Things to Do, this impact report presents evidence on the effectiveness of the 50 Things to Do approach in promoting positive childhood outcomes.

Using a combination of user-surveys, in-depth interviews, and focus groups with those using 50 Things to Do materials, the report presents evidence on the effectiveness of 50 Things to Do in promoting positive changes in the home learning environment and, in turn, positive outcomes for children. Our report reveals how 50 Things to Do's non-judgemental approach supports parents to be more informed and inspired to do activities with their children and encourages positive changes in the home learning environment. This, consequently, leads to the positive outcomes of:

- Increased family engagement with their child's learning.
- Increased parental confidence.

The longer-term impact of 50 Things to Do will require longitudinal evaluation. However, from extensive research, we know that these outcomes can have a profoundly positive impact on the child's

learning and development and the health and wellbeing of the whole family. Research consistently demonstrates that parents' engagement, confidence, and the activities that they do with their children at home:

- Have a positive influence on their children's health and wellbeing.
- Are more impactful on children's future achievements than the social class or level of education of their parents.

These positive outcomes are not only a result of the resources provided directly to families, but also through the support 50 Things to Do provides to the wider network around the child. The report highlights the value of 50 Things to Do in delivering a joined-up approach for Commissioning Partners and frontline practitioners, connecting agencies and professionals to provide consistent messaging in their support for local families, so that every child has the best chance to thrive by the age of five.

The value in 50 Things to Do can be described as a Golden Thread. In the words of one of our Commissioning Partners: "50 Things to Do provides a joined-up approach and runs like a golden thread through the support available for families and young children. It provides a consistent message for our local partners, frontline practitioners, and parents, and ties the different strands together to positively impact on outcomes for children" (50 Things, Wakefield).

The findings of this report highlight the importance of place-based, play-filled learning in promoting positive outcomes for young children and will be used to inform the ongoing development, delivery, and expansion of 50 Things to Do.



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About 50 Things to Do Before You're Five

What is 50 Things to Do Before You're Five?

50 Things to Do Before You're 5* is a multi-platform offer, free for parents, involving an app, website, printed resources and social media campaign. It's based on the simple notion that access to life-changing, fun, low or no-cost experiences with family, indoors and outdoors, is a great way to support children's development. 50 Things is a place-based, parent-facing offer for Local Authorities and other public sector organisations. It helps parents** develop their home learning environment so that far more children **thrive by the age of five**.

How does 50 things to do support children and their families?

50 Things to Do is underpinned by research on successful pedagogy and parenting approaches in the home learning environment. We recognise that what parents do with their children at home positively influences health and wellbeing, as well as being far more impactful on their future achievements than parents' social class, or level of education.

Each activity is linked to learning outcomes and the 50 Things to Do approach encourages families to play an active role in their child's development, helping to secure relationships and interactions between parents and child - in turn, **promoting positive health and educational outcomes**.

Why 50 Things?

Co-constructed with parents, grandparents, professionals, and children, the 50 Things to Do activities span the first five years of life. Every activity is certain to **develop the skills, knowledge, delight, and understanding** that will put each child in a strong place to make the most of the opportunities that they will face in the future. Activities are localised and are no or low-cost, so that they are accessible to all families who want to use them.

*50 Things to Do Before You're 5 is referred to as 50 Things to Do throughout the remainder of the report.

**We acknowledge that there are lots of people who play a key role in children's lives. When using the word parents throughout this report, we are also referring to the adults who are important in the child's life.



The golden thread

Connecting together agencies who provide professional support, so that every child has the best chance of reaching important health, learning, and wellbeing milestones, and thrive by the age of five.



Celebrating 5 years

2018

50 Things to Do Before You're 5 is launched! Developed in the Bradford District, the project was launched in Bradford and then presented at the House of Commons. Leeds joins as a 50 Things partner later in the year.



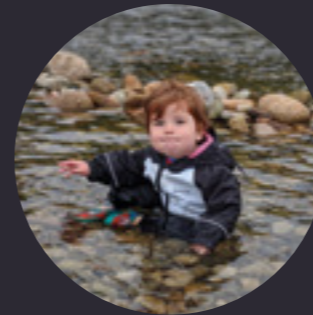
2020

Sheffield, Wakefield, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough become 50 Things partners.



2022

Birmingham, Jersey, Bedfordshire and West Berkshire become 50 Things partners. 50 Things Primary is launched in Bradford, with plans to make it available for 50 Things partners in 2023 to use in their regions.



2019

East Sussex, Calderdale and Kirklees become 50 Things partners.



2021

Warwickshire, Southwark, Oldham, Oxfordshire, Hertfordshire, and Norfolk become 50 Things partners.



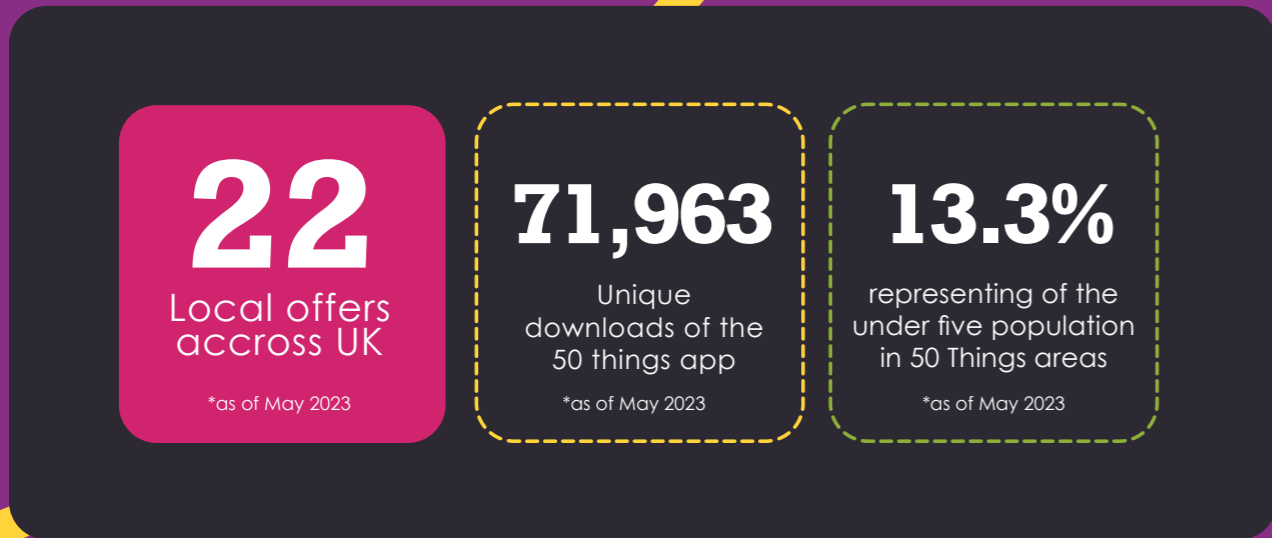
2023

Suffolk becomes a 50 Things partner. The network continues to grow with Fife, Coventry and Hounslow due to launch their projects this year.

50 Things in figures



The approach



Measuring our impact – about this report

50 Things to Do was co-constructed with parents, who have continued to inform its evolution over the past five years. Informed by cross-sector research, 50 Things was created by a team of education and early years specialists who used theories of learning, child development, play and health to underpin the activities.

Over the last five years, we have gathered evidence and feedback from parents, practitioners working with under 5s and our Commissioning Partners. All of this has informed our ongoing delivery and development, helping us maximise the positive benefits of 50 Things to Do on the lives of young children. To celebrate the 5th birthday of 50 Things to Do, this impact report presents evidence on

the effectiveness of the 50 Things to Do approach in promoting positive childhood outcomes. Themes from the report will inform our ongoing development, delivery, and expansion of 50 Things to Do. They also highlight the importance of place-based, play-filled learning in promoting positive outcomes for young children.

This report was developed using:

- A survey of sixty 50 Things to Do users.
- In-depth interviews with ten of our Commissioning Partners.
- Focus group conversations with six practitioners working with families and children under 5.
- In-depth interviews with four parents who use 50 Things to Do.

50 Things to Do is designed to increase parental engagement with their child's development, by providing a positive home learning environment. The 50 Things to Do approach is unique. 50 Things to Do provides a **localised offer that is accessible to all families**. It is centred on promoting play, encouraging families to **have fun together** - a positive way to achieve the best outcomes for their children.

Fun

Promoting playful activities as a positive way for children to learn.

Accessible

Supporting parents in a non-intrusive way, with an accessible resource that parents can use how and when they want to.

Local

Encouraging families to play in places and spaces close to home and to connect with their local community.

Underpinned by evidence, research and practice

50 Things to Do's content has been co-constructed using learning and research, to maximise its positive impact on children's development, including evidence on:

- The importance of communication and language approaches in the Early Years.
- The close links between parental engagement and progress in the Early Years.
- The strong correlation between high-quality play-based learning and early learning outcomes.

Fun



50 Things to Do Before You're 5 gives great suggestions for how to have fun and learn at the same time.

- 50 Things (Southwark)



The importance of play

At any age, play acts to retain and enhance meaningful context, and optimizes the learning process.

The National Institute for Play (2006)

In his analysis, Fisher found that

Playing could enhance a child's cognitive, linguistic, and social development

The impact of play on development: A meta-analysis. Play & Culture (1992).

75%

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

50 Things to Do links in well with our vision to enhance children's health, wellbeing and quality of life through play.

- 50 Things (Fife)



Promoting play as a positive way for children to learn

50 Things to Do promotes playful, fun activities for parents to do with their children, without overtly promoting the fact that it supports children's learning and development. The focus on learning through play challenges the assumption that children can only learn with the guidance of an education professional in a formal setting. It also recognises that babies and children learn holistically through play.

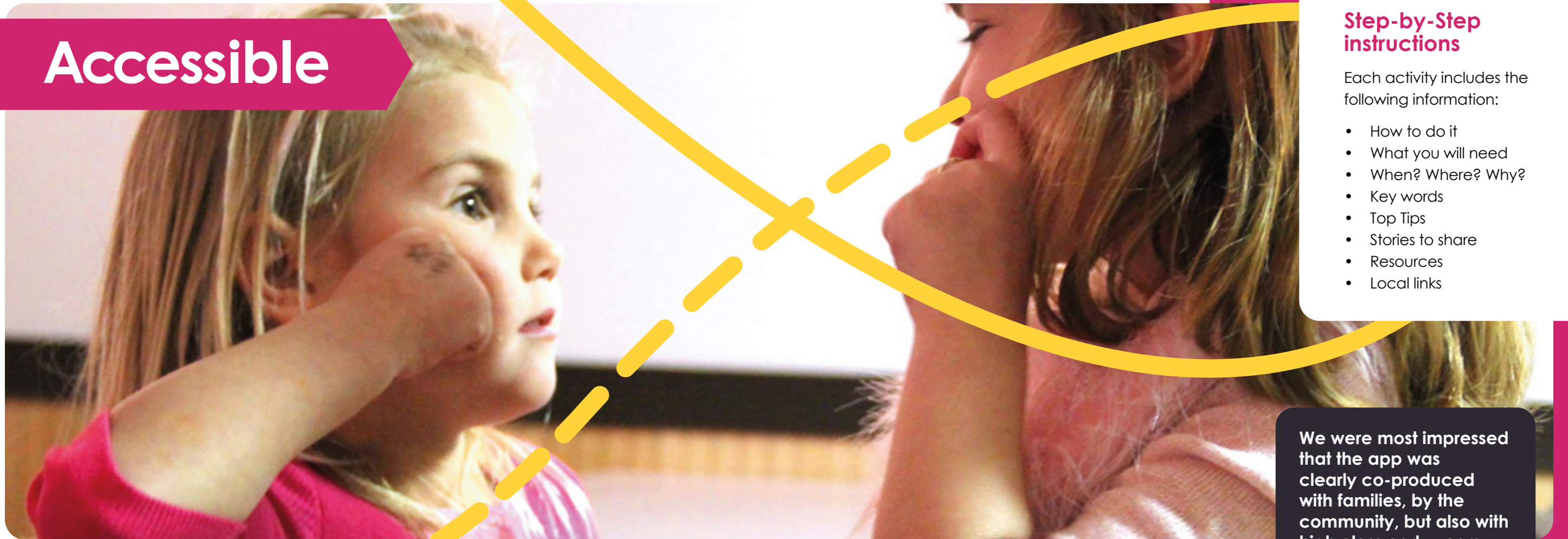
For example, they develop important social and emotional skills through watching, listening, and interacting with parents through their play. Promoting play as the way children learn helps to provide longer term inspiration for parents about the type of activities they can do as a family to support their child's development.

Making simple activities more fun and engaging

50 Things to Do gives parents ideas of engaging activities which are fun and easily accessible. Parents told us that their favourite 50 Things to Do activities included those promoting the arts and creativity, water play, and reading and sharing books. These activities may not be new to parents, but 50 Things to Do encourages parents to offer their children a greater variety of playful activities, which are undertaken more frequently.

*Between March-April 2023 we conducted a snapshot user-survey, completed by 60 people using the 50 Things to Do approach.

Accessible



Step-by-Step instructions

Each activity includes the following information:

- How to do it
- What you will need
- When? Where? Why?
- Key words
- Top Tips
- Stories to share
- Resources
- Local links

We were most impressed that the app was clearly co-produced with families, by the community, but also with high class early years educators people who really understand how children learn.

- 50 Things (Leeds)



Promoting free & low-cost activities accessible to all

50 Things to Do is free at the point of access and the activities are predominately no or low-cost, reducing financial exclusion and making the initiative more accessible. In a world where activities and events promoted to families often have a high cost attached to them, 50 Things to Do provides the alternative by featuring activities with no or low cost, so that more families can enjoy activities together and support their child's development.

Right from the start we were determined that the needs of children with SEND were central to the 50 Things offer

- 50 Things (Bradford)



Providing non-judgemental support to families

50 Things to Do is non-prescriptive and co-constructed, so parents are empowered to use it how and when they want to. The aim is to give parents inspiration and to show them how they can do activities with their children, rather than passing judgement on their parenting skills. However, it is worth noting that Commissioning Partners are able to develop a targeted universalism approach within their own communities, utilising the data the app gathers to support targeted interventions where needed. It is stated that "Within a targeted universalism framework, universal goals are established for all groups concerned. The strategies developed to achieve those goals are targeted, based upon how different groups are situated within structures, culture, and across geographies to obtain the universal goal."

Sharing everything in one place

50 Things to Do cuts above the noise to link all activities and information relating to the family learning environment in one place. It can be daunting for parents to find accessible information at the level they want. The 50 Things to Do initiative offers information in one place, including links to research and explanations on why and how the activities support child development. 50 Things to Do is non-prescriptive; the information is there to maximise the experience and each family can use this how they want to, including families whose child has Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

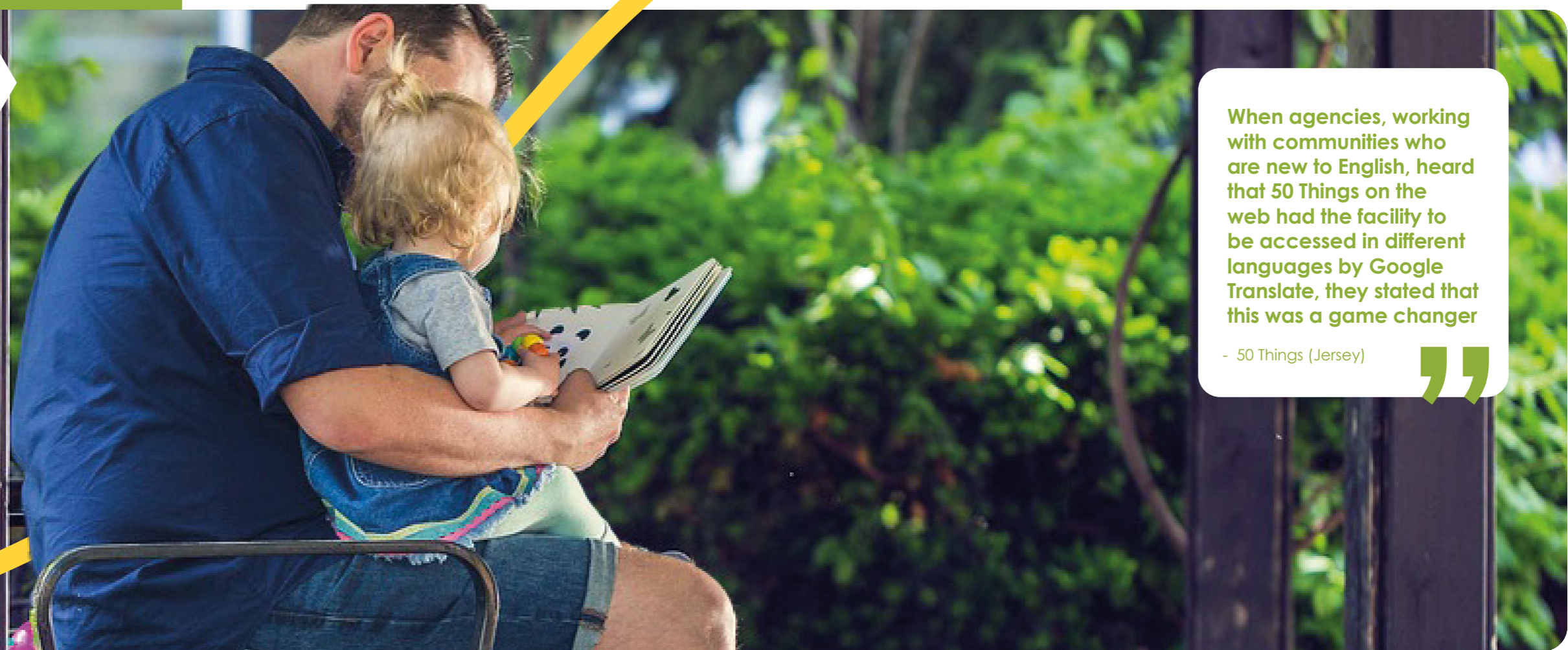
Importance of non-judgemental support

A report published in 2020 by The Royal Foundation highlighted, as one of its key insights, that 7 out of every 10 parents feel judged by others.

Royal Foundation, *State of the Nation: Understanding Public Attitudes to the Early Years (2020)*.

Feeling judged can reduce parents' engagement in activities that would support their child's development.

Local



When agencies, working with communities who are new to English, heard that 50 Things on the web had the facility to be accessed in different languages by Google Translate, they stated that this was a game changer

- 50 Things (Jersey)



The importance of local, place-based learning

A report published by The Place-based Education Evaluation Collaborative stated that:

Place-based education fosters students' connection to place and creates vibrant partnerships between schools and communities. It boosts student achievement and improves environmental, social, and economic vitality.

The Benefits of Place-based Education (2010).



70%

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

The localised approach of 50 Things to Do has helped to provide a targeted approach to areas of deprivation and get a greater reach to families in Oldham. It feeds into a holistic and early intervention approach, which aligns with our goals.

- 50 Things (Oldham)



Encouraging connection with the local area

50 Things to Do's localised offer is unique. Each Commissioning Partner promotes their own easily accessible local activities and events. Research suggests that positive outcomes are a result of encouraging families to engage with the places and spaces in their local area, such as museums and parks, groups and events.

Localised offers celebrate the diversity of individual communities across the country and acknowledge the need for an offer that represents and connects with local people. By encouraging children and families to explore their own local landscapes, communities and cultural venues alongside the local history that defines the places they live and it increases the connection for families with the communities around them.

Being a "gamechanger" for communities whose language is not English

Families can become isolated from their communities for a variety of reasons. Often, cultural and language barriers can prevent families from accessing resources to improve the home learning environment for their children. Being locked out of these opportunities can have a detrimental impact on their child's development, especially if the family doesn't have an existing support network.

50 Things to Do can be a gamechanger for these families, giving them ideas and access to the activities and locations that they otherwise wouldn't know about. The 50 Things to Do initiative uses Google Translate, via the website, removing the language barriers that may prevent these families from accessing 50 Things To Do.

The outcomes

Informed and inspired

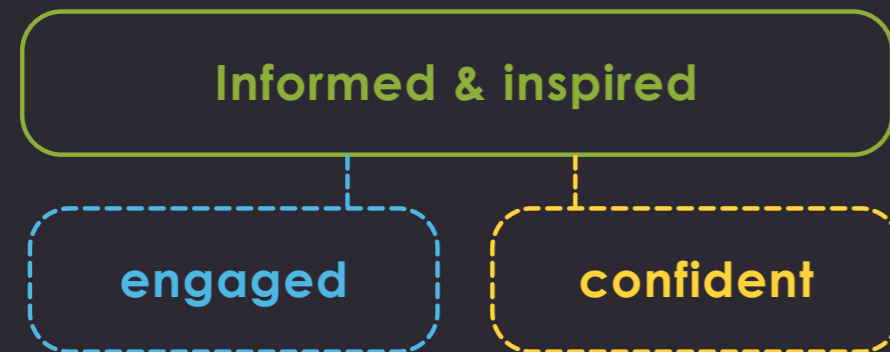
The 50 Things to Do approach supports parents to be **more informed** on the activities they can do and how they can create a positive home learning environment, leading to the best outcomes of their child. The focus on play **inspires** families to do activities together, making simple activities fun and engaging. The approach provides parents with the information they need in a **non-judgemental** way, to increase their knowledge of the activities they can do with their child and removing the unhelpful assumption that you need to be a trained educator to educate. 50 Things to Do helps to increase parents' understanding of:

- **How** to do fun activities with their children.
- **What** to include when doing the activities (language, books, stories).
- **Where** to do the activities in their local area.
- **Why** they are doing the activities and how it helps their child's development.

Parents being more informed and inspired to do activities with their children, and in understanding why these activities support their child's development, in turn, leads to the positive outcomes of:

1. **Increased Family Engagement with their child's learning**
2. **Increased Parental Confidence**

Non-judgemental approach



These positive outcomes, in turn, support improvements in family wellbeing, child development and improved life chances.



This is a fantastic app/ concept that visually maps out some great ideas on what you can do for your under five-year-old. I use it regularly as a tool to help inspire and shape activities that I do with my children.

- SH (parent)



The Effective Provision of Pre-school Education project (EPPE)

"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"

Sylva et al (2004) Department for Education and Skills and Institute of Education, University of London.

Desforges and Abouchar

"Home influence is powerful because it is enduring, pervasive and direct. Children absorb enthusiasm and a positive attitude towards learning from their relationships with adults at home.

The Impact of Parental Involvement, Parental Support and Family Education on Pupil Achievements and Adjustment, (2003) DfES.

Increased family engagement with their child's learning



72%

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

Inspiring families to engage in fun activities that have positive developmental outcomes

50 Things to Do gives families a bucket list of activities that are affordable and easy to access in their local area, often improving engagement in outdoor play and learning.

68%

Over two thirds of the parents we surveyed told us that they use 50 Things to Do mostly for activity ideas or to give their child more choices. The activities act as inspiration, acknowledging that families have a lot of demands to juggle and sometimes a little inspiration is all they need.

Inspiration translates into families engaging with more varied activities together.



72%

Almost three quarters of parents felt more able to help their child in different ways as a result of the resources available on the 50 Things to Do app.

Parents also found that their children were more engaged with simple activities than they were with some more complicated, paid-for activities that over-stimulated them. Parents also liked that, with 50 Things to Do activities, children can set their own pace.

The greatest learning comes from the basic activities. Children are often more engaged with basic, simple activities where they can set the pace.

- Carrie (parent)



50 Things to Do is a fantastic addition to our Family Learning programmes as it gives parents the opportunity to explore a broader range of activities with their children at home and helps children develop a wide variety of skills

- 50 Things (Sheffield)



50 Things to Do is a great tool to engage parents in their child/ren's learning, in fun ways.

- Emma (parent)



Supporting each stage of a child's development

Parents with more than one child told us they found the initiative helpful in providing adaptable activities that they can do with their children of different ages at the same time, enabling the whole family to have fun together.

Parents and practitioners working with children under five also find that 50 Things to Do provides a great structure with a consistent approach throughout a child's development, meaning that as the child grows, they use the same activities but when needed it is easy to adapt and extend them.

Developing cultural capital to elevate future potential

50 Things to Do encourages families to build on children's interests and experiences to harness the cultural capital they already have. For young children, building cultural capital can mean things like knowing how a library works, or having the opportunity to visit a museum.

Developing cultural capital supports children in school and beyond, helping them to develop the knowledge, experiences, and communication skills that will prepare them for their future success.

50 Things to Do helps to top up children's cultural capital pot. It can be used in a bespoke way to support specific areas of need and help them to achieve their potential.

- 50 Things (Kirklees)



It's helped my child to be more explorative and curious. He always wants to do the activities and wants to do the ones that he's done before.

- Robert (parent)



Increased parental confidence

Going back to basics - confidence in doing “the right things”

The 50 Things to Do approach challenges the view that children only learn from formal educators, and only by being in formal settings. Combining fun, simple, and accessible activities with an underlying learning outcome gives parents the confidence that they can have a positive impact on their child's development through simple activities.

Often, parents found that they were already doing these activities with their children, which instilled further confidence that they were doing the right things. They found increased self-confidence from the message that going 'Back to Basics' and doing simple activities can be the most effective way to support a child's development.

By providing an explanation to parents about how and why the activity supports their child's development, 50 Things to Do supports increased parental confidence in knowing how to suitably adapt the activities. This can lead to a longer-term impact on their confidence in doing meaningful activities with their children.

72%

Almost three quarters of parents told us they felt more able to help their child learn.

63%

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



Confidence with language and communication skills

The 50 Things to Do app contains suggestions of age and stage-appropriate words and vocabulary to use with children that are appropriate and relevant to the different activities. This translates into parents having increased confidence in using purposeful language with their child as they play. **Almost two-thirds (63%)** of parents said that, since using the 50 Things to Do Before You're 5 app, they can communicate more purposefully with their child whilst they are playing.

The importance of language and communication in childhood development

Content is not learnable if communication skills are not in place, and critical thinking operates on content, not in a vacuum. In this way, the skills build on and reinforce one another.

Rebecca Winthrop & Eileen McGivney, Center for Universal Education, Brookings Institution





Impact

The longer-term impact of 50 Things to Do will require longitudinal evaluation. However, from evaluation already undertaken, we can demonstrate that 50 Things to Do is an approach that supports positive changes in the home learning environment, and leads to:

- Increased family **engagement** in developmental activities.
- Increased parental **confidence**.

We also know, from extensive research, that the impact of increased engagement and confidence can, in turn, have a profound positive impact on the child's learning and development and the health and wellbeing of the whole family. Research consistently demonstrates that parents' engagement, confidence, and the activities that they do with their children at home:

- Have a positive influence on family **health and wellbeing**.
- Are more impactful on children's future achievements than their parent's social class or level of education, improving their **life chances**.

Improved family wellbeing

- Establishing **active lifestyles** through taking part in outdoor activities and connecting with nature leads to better mental wellbeing, lower obesity, and improved coronary and respiratory fitness.
- Engaging in play can have a positive impact on **mental wellbeing**, reducing stress and boredom and promoting feelings of joy and happiness.
- Increased confidence and parents feeling they are doing the right things to support their children can increase **self-efficacy** for parents.
- Positive interactions and improved communication can lead to improvements in the **parent-child bond**.

Improved life chances

- Positive changes in the home learning environment can **increase school readiness and reduce the attainment gap** for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Parental engagement and confidence in supporting development of language, literacy, and communication skills can positively impact **achievement** in primary and secondary school stages.
- Engagement with developmental activities improves children's skills, language, and resilience needed in school and beyond, helping them to be better prepared to **make the most of opportunities** and increase their life chances.



The role of play in mental wellbeing

Play relieves feelings of stress and boredom, connects us to people in a positive way, stimulates creative thinking and exploration, regulates our emotions, and boosts our ego.

Gary Landreth, *Play Therapy: The Art of the Relationship* (2002)

The role of families in educational attainment

Evidence on the most important factors influencing educational attainment suggests that it is families, rather than schools, that have the most influence. Closer links between schools, the family, and the local community are needed.

Michael Marmot, *Fair Society, Healthy Lives* (2010)

The role of parents in school achievement

Parents who confidently support the development of language, literacy and communication skills with their under-fives have a profound impact on achievement in primary and secondary age phases.

Early Language Development (2017)
Public Health England,
Education Endowment Foundation



Creating lasting and sustained change

Built on best-practice and extensive research, 50 Things to Do develops the building blocks for long term outcomes. The focus is on supporting families to make sustained positive changes to improve the home learning environment and create lasting positive outcomes for their children. 50 Things to Do achieves this through:

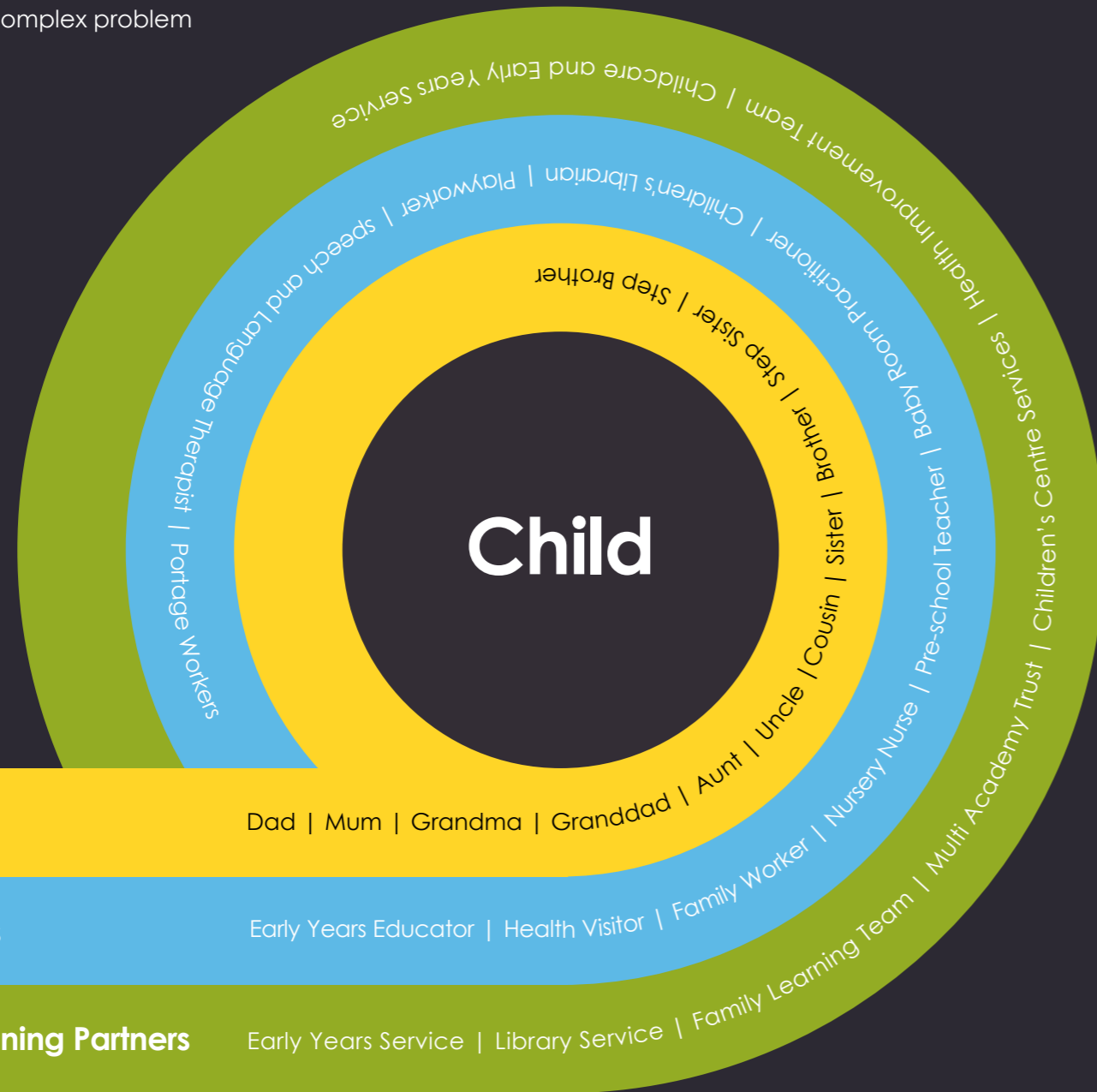
Establishing healthy habits that can last a lifetime, including active lifestyles, exploring the local area, and doing activities together as a family.

Increasing parental knowledge of the activities they can do and how and why they support their child's development so that they can adapt activities and continue to support their child's development beyond the activities in the app.

Building cultural capital, helping them to develop the knowledge, experiences, and communication skills that will prepare them for their future success.

Cascade model

Providing a simple approach to a complex problem



Children grow up in a locality and are part of a community. Therefore, we encourage the engagement of local services, health services, early years settings and cultural locations, to work together and create a sense of community involvement, enabling a space for partnership and the participation of parents. 50 Things to Do provides the opportunity for collaboration that helps individual agencies to achieve their own targets within the bigger picture.

50 Things to Do works well within our cascade model. Our role is to support practitioners to improve practice and 50 Things is great for engaging families in their children's learning and development. We share how to use and get the most out of the app and website with practitioners, so they can support the families they work with.

- 50 Things (Birmingham)



The 50 Things to Do model supports Commissioning Partners who, in turn, support frontline practitioners who, in turn, support local families to create positive home learning environments for their children. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, explains the influence of social environments on human development and has influenced our approach.

As well as this cascade approach, 50 Things resources are directly accessible at all levels of the support network, providing a consistent and accessible message to families enabling parents to get to recognise that services are not isolated.

Commissioning Partners are provided with material to support the Early Years practitioners in their area, promoting best practice and providing resources to promote positive outcomes for young children.

Practitioners are provided with materials that they can use in their work with families and children, having a resource to share with parents.

Parents are provided with materials, which are consistent with the messages from various agencies they engage with, to use with their children at home.

What is 50 Things to our partners?



An opportunity

To positively engage with families, practitioners, and other partners to support early childhood development.



A spark

Generating new ideas and ways to support families and children.



An umbrella

Covering all areas of support for early childhood and families.



A structure

A framework that provides a structure to the support for early childhood development.



A foundation

Creating connections across partners and services as a foundation for early childhood development.



A solution

To support and achieve the goals of different organisations involved in early childhood development.



A tool

To engage and communicate with families positively to support their child's development.



The golden thread

As the thread that links all of their work on promoting early childhood development.



50 Things to Do provides a joined-up approach and runs like a golden thread through the support available for families and young children. It provides a consistent message for our local partners, frontline practitioners and parents, and ties the different strands together to positively impact on outcomes for children

- 50 things (Wakefield)



Engagement tool



Engaging with families

50 Things to Do is a useful tool to support agencies in their work with local families. Rather than an intense and prescriptive offer, 50 Things to Do is a fun and non-judgemental way to engage with families in activities that will improve the home learning environment.

For our Commissioning Partners, this first point of engagement is the first step to creating positive outcomes with the family and child. It also provides practitioners working in a variety of agencies with a tool to engage with parents, at whatever level they want, in a friendly, non-judgemental way.

As an engagement tool, 50 Things to Do leads to impact which goes beyond

engagement in 50 Things to Do activities. This is the first step on a journey that leads to further positive changes, increased parental confidence, and increased family engagement in supporting the child's development.

50 Things to Do helps our Early Years Settings to open the conversation with parents. It provides an easy way to work with parents in a non-confrontational way to support a child's development. It's a positive activity to introduce them to rather than a disruptive intervention.

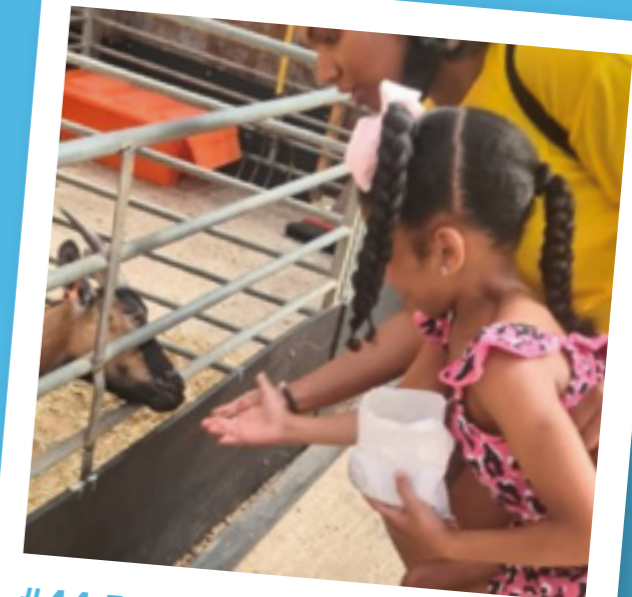
- 50 Things (Cambridgeshire)

A localised offer

50 Things to Do includes one unique experience in each localised offer at #44, an activity that meets the criteria for inclusion of being low cost or no cost and accessible to all, that is very much local to the area. Commissioning Partners have included diverse choices, including "A Grand Day Out" (Bedfordshire), based in and around the Embankment area of Bedford; local architectural landmarks such as #44 in Calderdale, "The Piece Hall water feature", and natural landmarks such as "Head for the Hills" in East Sussex and "Low Tide" in 50 Things Jersey which encourages families to explore the coastline, beaches and rockpools and understand the changing landscape linked to the tidal flow around the island. Birmingham encourages children to start to think about sustainable living early on, with their #44 of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Hertfordshire highlights the "Fantastic Farms" in the county that can be visited, and Wakefield and Oxfordshire promote interactions with animals. Many cities have magnificent fountains that delight children and families, and Bradford, Southwark and Sheffield have all used their version for #44.

The focus of embedding 50 Things to Do in Bedfordshire is building relationships: with NHS professionals to promote from antenatal and through the first stages of 0-5, with Early Years settings to scaffold their home learning environments, and mutually beneficial arrangements with libraries, museums and family orientated businesses to feature in, and promote, the app.

- 50 Things (Bedfordshire)



#44 Fantastic Farms
Hertfordshire



#44 Fountains of Fun
Southwark



#44 A Grand Day Out
Bedfordshire



By developing and maintaining strong community and organisational partnerships, 50 Things to Do has been able to give children access to opportunities and experiences that they otherwise wouldn't have access to

- 50 Things (Bradford)



50 Things created a steering group, engagement/partnership working that has wider impact across Early Years initiatives.

- 50 Things (Calderdale)



Developing Partnerships

50 Things to Do creates the opportunities for new partnerships, both locally across different sectors and nationally with other partners using 50 Things to Do.

Local Partners

50 Things to Do helps the Commissioning Partners who hold 50 Things to Do in their local area to work more effectively with their local partners and agencies. This includes those who are working in a targeted way specifically with children under five, such as public health, early years teams, health improvement teams, and early years settings, as well as museums, libraries and theatres. 50 Things provides wonderful opportunities to work in partnership towards a collective vision.

National partner network

The 50 Things to Do National Commissioning Partners network brings partners together from across the British Isles to learn from each other and to look for collective solutions to shared challenges. The network meets once a month and is an opportunity for Commissioning Partners to learn and share best practice, helping them make even better use of 50 Things.

50 Things to Do creates the opportunities for new partnerships, both locally across different sectors and nationally with other partners using 50 Things to Do

- 50 Things (Suffolk)





A simple approach to a complex problem

50 Things to Do provides a simple approach to a complex problem. By presenting a universally accepted way to support parents and families involved in children's development, 50 Things to Do becomes the core offer to all parents by all agencies a universal tool in the repertoire of a range of local teams. The agencies can identify shared goals and targets from their Early Years Strategies, and rather than organisations across the Local Authority working in isolation to meet individual goals and targets, 50 Things to Do provides the opportunity for a shared language, a universal approach to early development and an opportunity for collaboration and reduction of duplicated work. In addition to consistently supporting collaboration across local partners and focusing on local areas of priority, 50 Things to Do also works in line with national policy agendas.

This exciting initiative is part of our school readiness work, supporting families and nurseries to enable children to have all the ingredients they need from birth to develop their early language skills.

- 50 Things (Oxfordshire)

50 Things to Do aligns well with the EYFS and the activities that early years practitioners are already implementing. It packages our support for Early Years nicely into a clear structure, so that practitioners can support families.

- 50 Things (Oldham)

Structure for collaboration across agencies

50 Things to Do provides Commissioning Partners with a structure and framework, informed by best-practice, to support cross agency working. They encourage their local partners to use 50 Things as a tool bringing teams together to work towards shared local and national goals.

Rather than health visitors, Early Years educators, health improvement teams (the list can go on!) across a Local Authority area working in isolation to meet individual targets, 50 Things to Do provides the opportunity for collaboration, which helps individual agencies to achieve their own targets within the bigger picture.

50 Things to Do aligns well with the EYFS and the activities that early years practitioners are already implementing. It packages our support for Early Years nicely into a clear structure, so that practitioners can support families

- 50 Things (East Sussex)



Frontline practitioners

In the 50 Things to Do model of support, practitioners are the connection between the Commissioning Partners and families; they receive support and guidance from Commissioning Partners and, in turn, directly support parents. Practitioners also have direct access to the 50 Things to Do resources, to use with parents and children in their work, as well as encouraging families to use 50 Things to Do at home.

Providing consistent messaging for families

Practitioners find that using 50 Things to Do increases the consistency of their approach, across different agencies, so that parents receive a congruent message of how to promote a positive home learning environment for their child. They use the resources to promote positive activities to parents and to show them how to use them, giving them ideas of what they can try with their children to support their development. This also provides consistency for the child, as they will be doing similar activities in early years settings as they do at home, if both practitioners and parents use the resources.

50 Things to Do includes activities that you would be encouraging anyway as a health visitor, covering the key themes you want to promote with parents. It inspires families to do activities that they can afford that bring benefits to their children, increasing parent's engagement in their child's development.

- Sarah, Health Visitor (Calderdale)



50 Things to Do provides a joined-up approach and runs like a golden thread through the support available for families and young children. It provides a consistent message for our local partners, frontline practitioners and parents, and ties the different strands together to positively impact on outcomes for children

- 50 Things (Wakefield)

Signposting rather than instructing

Frontline practitioners find 50 Things to Do to be an effective, softer engagement approach with families. They find the option to signpost to the universally accessible, 50 Things to Do initiative more effective than telling parents directly about the activities to do with their children. This supports the non-judgmental approach and focuses on introducing local families to positive activities rather than intervening in a more direct way. Commissioning Partners felt that the 50 Things to Do approach encourages practitioners to develop closer partnerships with parents, providing them with a positive tool to use with parents and in developing an active interest in a family's and child's development.

The role of early years practitioners in child development

A Public Health England and EEF Report on Early Language Development found one of the best ways to improve early language development for children who struggle with language before school starts is through training for practitioners in early years settings so that they can deliver cost-effective, and evidence based interventions to those children who have fallen behind.

Public Health England and EEF (2017):
Early Language Development



THANK YOU TO ALL OUR COMMISSIONING PARTNERS



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