Growing Together: Family, Community, and the Role of Shared Experiences

Early childhood is a critical period for building the foundations of lifelong learning, wellbeing, and social connection.

The **50 Things to Do Before You're Five** initiative provides a practical framework for enriching children's early experiences, strengthening family bonds, and fostering connections with local communities. By encouraging shared activities between children, families, and practitioners, 50 Things to Do supports the development of cultural capital from the earliest years.

Building Early Experiences Through Play

The 50 Things to Do activities are designed to **build on children's early experiences**, offering inspiration for playful and engaging opportunities that children and families can enjoy together.

All of our activities were carefully chosen to encourage families to explore the local environment, discover new experiences, and engage with community spaces.

This approach allows children to develop curiosity, confidence, and a sense of agency, while also fostering strong family relationships through shared playful experiences.

Strengthening Community Connections

A core aim of 50 Things to Do is to **encourage families to build ties with their community and surroundings**, providing children with a sense of place and belonging.

Developed as a universal offer, the initiative ensures that all children, regardless of background, have access to a shared set of experiences.

By highlighting local parks, libraries, cultural venues, and everyday outdoor spaces, the programme nurtures both social and environmental awareness, supporting children's understanding of their communities and their role within them.

50 Things to Do is an exciting initiative offering 50, screen-free, low or no-cost activities for families with young children, helping them reach their social, emotional and physical milestones and ultimately, improving their life outcomes.

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

BEST START IN LIFE

# Linking to Theory: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems

The initiative fits well with **Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory**, which highlights how children grow through their interactions with different environments. Our 50 activities connect children with their **family**, their wider **community and local resources**, and nearby **institutions and services**.

These experiences give children supportive relationships and enriching environments, helping them develop and feel connected to both their immediate family and the wider community.

Contribution to the Best Start in Life Strategy

50 Things to Do supports the principles of the **Best Start in Life strategy**, which prioritises early intervention, equity of access, and rich developmental opportunities for all children.

By embedding these activities within family hubs or commissioned programmes, local authorities and providers can offer a **structured yet flexible approach** to early years enrichment, ensuring that families are empowered to participate in meaningful, community-based experiences.
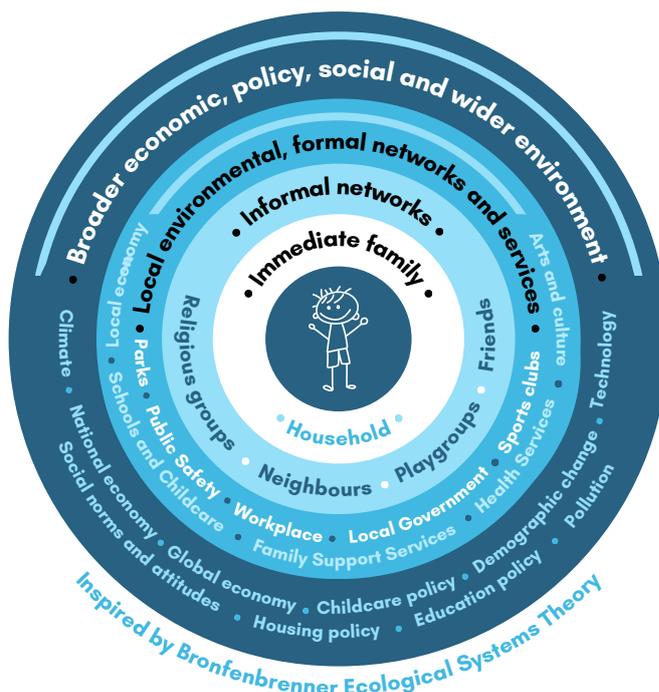
Conclusion

By promoting **shared experiences between children, families, and communities**, 50 Things to Do nurtures cultural capital, strengthens social bonds, and enhances children's sense of belonging.

Commissioning this initiative as part of a **Best Start Family Hub** offer provides a tangible, universal method to give every child the richest possible start in life, supporting both their immediate wellbeing and long-term development.

Interested in bringing 50 Things to your area?

If you are interested in commissioning 50 Things to Do in your local area, email us at **info@50thingstodo.org,** or call us on **01274 543282**.