

## Talking: out and about (part 1 of 2)

Going out of the home can really help boost your child's language. New experiences provide opportunities to see new objects and people and these all need labelling.



As a parent, you may also find that going out has plenty of other benefits, too. Fresh air, for example, will help your child sleep better while the stimulation gained from seeing new things will keep your child from becoming bored and potentially more demanding.

### **OFF TO THE LIBRARY**

#### **From six months**

Babies love books. If you have not been to your local library, it is worth paying a visit. The old days of the musty, silent library are long gone.

They are now child-friendly areas where you can meet other parents and your baby can socialise.

Use picture books and spend a moment pointing to the images and making comments about what you see. Expect your baby to take time to respond to new images.

## How this activity helps your child

**Literacy:** Early introduction to books will help your baby learn to enjoy them.

**Socialisation:** Going to new places where babies can see other children and adults is a great way to help them learn to be with others.

**Language development:** Sharing books with babies has been shown to **develop their vocabulary and communication skills**

### What next?

Find out if there are any rhyme or story sessions held at your library that you can join.

## FEED THE DUCKS



**From 15 months**

Children love animals, and if you have a park with a pond nearby you might like to take your child to feed the ducks one day. Spend a little time talking about what the ducks are doing or, if you cannot see them, consider where they might be hiding.

**Take time as well to get down to your child's height and see what they are seeing.**

Don't worry if your child prefers to eat the bread rather than give it to the birds. This is pretty typical for this age.

## How this activity helps your child

**Movement:** This activity helps your child to use their arms as they throw or drop the pieces of bread.

**Perception:** Watching the ducks as they move can help children's **visual skills** as they have to track the moving objects.

**Mathematics:** This activity lends itself to some early mathematics. **Try counting the ducks or pointing out a duck that is significantly smaller or larger than the others.**

### What next?

Teach your child the nursery rhyme Five Little Ducks Went Swimming One Day.

## Talking: out and about (part 2 of 2)

### BALL GAMES

#### From two-and-a-half years

Games involving balls are great to play in the garden or park. To begin, choose a medium-sized light, soft ball. Don't worry about teaching your child as most children learn to use balls by watching others and practising for themselves. Try a range of activities including kicking and throwing and catching.

#### How this activity helps your child

**Language:** Your child can learn words linked to distance such as 'far' and 'near'.

#### Balance and co-ordination:

Playing outdoors with a ball improves co-ordination and balance.

**Social development:** Taking turns to kick or throw a ball helps children to learn to play with others.

#### What next?

Put out some simple targets for your child to aim to hit, such as a half-filled bottle of water.

### ON THE BUSES

#### From three years

If you normally use a car, think about taking a bus or even a train for a change. While it may seem a simple activity, it is a great experience for a child.

It doesn't really matter where you go; climbing onto a bus - especially a double decker one - can seem like an adventure for a child. Let your child choose their seat, look out of the window and press the bell when it is time to get off.

#### How this activity helps your child

**Language:** Your child can learn new words linked to buses or trains, such as 'stop', 'fare' and 'request'.

**Social development:** Using public transport can help children to learn how to adapt their behaviour in a range of different situations.

**Mathematics:** Count the stops before you need to get off.

#### What next?

Sing the nursery rhyme The Wheels on the Bus and see if your child can join in with the words.

## OFF TO THE SHOPS

### From four years

Walking to the local shop can be a **good way for children to develop a range of skills**. Talk about what you need to buy on your way there and why it is needed. Once you arrive at the shop, see if your child can find the item by following your instructions - for example, **'It's a red packet, on the second shelf.'**

Where there is one or more similar items, you might talk to children about the reasons you prefer a certain product; it may be due to cost, taste or something else.



### How this activity helps your child

**Confidence:** Going to the shop and finding products can help

children's confidence as they learn to follow instructions.

**Mathematics:** Shopping is a great way for children to learn about numbers. **Point out prices and consider letting your child pass the money across the till.**

**Literacy:** Looking at labels on products can help children become more aware of the printed word, and you may find that after a while your child can recognise some words.

### What next?

See if your child can help you draw up a simple shopping list. Don't worry about spelling or letter formation. Just **let them enjoy the experience.**