



# PLAY WELL PACK

Supporting wellbeing  
through play

What's inside

**MEET THE WELLBEING BUDDIES**

**BITE SIZE INFO ABOUT PLAY**

**FUN ACTIVITIES**

**4 PAGE PULL-OUT**

**IDEAS BANK**



**Scotland's  
Play Strategy**  
Valuing play, every day

# WELCOME TO YOUR PLAY WELL PACK

“This pack has resources, **SUGGESTIONS** and **IDEAS** to support your child’s play and learning at home. There are games and activities designed for children aged three to six. These can easily be changed to suit younger or older children too.

Lots of these activities help develop the skills that will be a good start for when they begin or go back to school. Each topic offers a simple play-based activity you can try with your child, and there are some extra ideas for play that are great fun but don’t need much preparation or resources.

Going back to nursery or getting back to primary school is exciting but it might be an anxious time. This pack aims to help you talk through these worries with your child and maybe help reduce some of your fears too.”

Yours playfully,  
Marguerite Hunter Blair, Play Scotland  
& Claire Telfer, Save the Children

## REMEMBER

### PLAY IS IMPORTANT!

When children are worried, play is more important than ever.

It helps them to relax and express themselves.

Play is important for children’s learning too. So playing with your child and having fun together is at the heart of this pack.



# SUPPORTING WELLBEING THROUGH PLAY

To ensure everyone has a common understanding of wellbeing, the **Scottish Government** introduced **eight indicators**, often referred to by their initial letters, **SHANARRI**.

For children to reach their full potential they should have opportunities to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens and supporting each wellbeing indicator will help make this happen.

We’ve incorporated the eight indicators of wellbeing into this pack, to give you ideas and inspiration for play, conversations and activities to support your child’s wellbeing at home.

## MEET THE WELLBEING BUDDIES



### SAFE STELLA

I’m Safe Stella and I want you to know about how to stay safe, like washing your hands to keep germs away.



### HEALTHY HENRY

I’m Healthy Henry and I want you to know it’s important to make healthy choices, like getting outside for fresh air and doing things that make you feel happy.



### ACHIEVING ANDREW

I’m Achieving Andrew and I want you to learn new things and feel confident.



### NURTURED NORA

I’m Nurtured Nora and I want you to know that it’s important to be cared for and care for others.



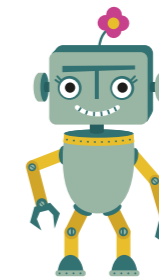
### ACTIVE AAMIR

I’m Active Aamir and I want to give you ideas to play at home and move your body!



### RESPECTED RHIYA

I’m Respected Rhiya and I want you to know it’s important you are listened to and involved in decisions about you.



### RESPONSIBLE ROBBIE

I’m Responsible Robbie and I want you to know about right and wrong and show you helpful things to do.



### INCLUDED ISABELLA

I’m Included Isabella and I want you to join in games and conversations with others and not feel left out.

# SAFE

## BITE SIZE INFO

Starting school or nursery at this time, or going back after a while away, may bring a range of emotions for you and your child. Talk to your child about when and how school will be reopening. Explain that everyone will be doing lots of things to keep children, families and teachers safe, and that children can play an important part in this.

Playing boosts children's confidence, creativity, problem-solving skills and perseverance, enabling them to cope with stress and challenges through life.

## ACTIVITIES

If you're feeling a bit nervous about going to school or nursery, **TRY JIGGLING LIKE A JUMPING BEAN** then go all floppy by letting your arms and neck completely relax. Feel any worries dripping out of you. Do this a few times till you get rid of your worried feelings. This is a good one for adults to do too.

**MAKE UP YOUR OWN HAND WASHING SONG** that helps you to wash your hands for 20 seconds, or try singing 'if you're happy and you know it wash your hands!'. Try to include some funny words in it, maybe make up your own word for the noise that bubbles make when you squelch them between your fingers.

When learning something new or challenging, or going somewhere different we can feel uncertain, anxious and frustrated. Naming feelings is the first step to learning how to manage them. **LOOK IN THE MIRROR AND SEE WHAT YOUR FACE IS SHOWING**. Do you have a smile, frown, raised eyebrows? On the back of this pack there are pictures of different emotions. Looking in a mirror with someone and making faces is good fun and you can take turns guessing what feeling the other person is showing with their face.

## MORE IDEAS

### PROVIDE SIMPLE AND CLEAR INFORMATION

Children may pick up information from multiple sources. Ask them what they know and correct any misinformation. Explain what is happening, using simple, age-appropriate language. Refer to trusted sources for information.

### REASSURE AND EXPLAIN

Remind your child what's in their power and how to keep safe - demonstrate effective handwashing and tell them to cough and sneeze into a tissue or their elbow. Ask children to draw around their hands, colour them in and stick them around the house to remind them to keep their hands clean.

### SHARE THE LOVE

Give your children extra love, warmth and attention - it'll make them feel safe and secure. Think about your child's perspective - what are the things that concern them? Show your children that you love them and that you are in this situation together. Hug them, cuddle them, talk, listen to their thoughts, ideas and concerns.



# HEALTHY

## BITE SIZE INFO

Regular opportunities for outdoor play with access to nature in all weathers is really important for children. Even if we can't get out much at the moment, it is important for children to go outside for some time every day. There are lots of benefits, even if it is only for a short time. When you go outside, please bear in mind current physical distancing guidance and wash your hands when you come in.

## ACTIVITIES

**OUTDOORS BINGO** - before you go out make a list of things you might see. These can be things like a tree, a flower, a bee, the sun, a big bus, someone on a bike. Maybe include some of your favourite and familiar places - or people! When you are out, make it a game to be the first person to spot something/someone on the list.

**BIG OUTDOORS ART** - make a big piece of art using what you can find when you go on a walk - leaves, twigs, cones and stones. If you have chinks you can use these to draw outlines and faces. What sort of creature can you make with your bits and pieces?

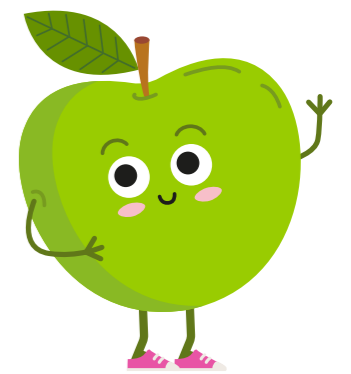
**GO ON A SENSORY WALK** outside and think about what you can hear, smell and feel. If you're out walking with an adult, stop and close your eyes and really listen. Sometimes you will notice things that you haven't noticed before. Next time you play outdoor bingo you can add in some things to hear as well!

## MORE IDEAS

### GET A BIT MORE NATURE INTO YOUR DAY - SOME EVERYDAY TIPS

- Dress for the weather! If children can stay warm and dry they will be happier outside
- Stop to look at a view or up to the sky
- Play I spy or go on a 'bear hunt'
- Take up stargazing! Can you see pictures in the stars?
- How about an evening walk with the children?

Some parents find an evening walk is a great way to settle down in the evening, making for a better night's sleep and chance to talk.



# ACHIEVING

## BITE SIZE INFO

Playing helps support children's cognitive development. This includes the development of language skills, problem solving, gaining perspective, memory and creativity. We can give children lots of opportunities to learn through play in the home environment by involving them in everyday activities, being curious ourselves asking "what if?" and encouraging them to explore.

## ACTIVITIES

### EXPLORE NUMBER NAMES AROUND THE HOME TOGETHER

You will need:

- A pen and paper
- Objects with numbers on them
- A variety of small objects

#### PART 1

##### Making a Number Hunt

Create an easy and fun Number Hunt activity. Write down a sequence of numbers - for example 1-5 or 1-10 depending on which numbers your child knows - on paper or using objects with numbers on. Find places to hide the numbers around your home - though not so well that your child won't be able to see them!

#### PART 2

##### Do the Number Hunt

Encourage your child to search the area or room to see if they can find the numbers. Encourage them to explore, praising them as they go. Continue to play until all the numbers have been found. Help your child name the numbers as they find them, so they can make connections between the symbols (digits) and the words we use to describe them. When the game's over, help your child put the numbers into a number line so they can see the order in which numbers go. Your child can put some small objects against particular numbers on the line to show their understanding of the quantity they represent.

## MORE IDEAS

**INVOLVE CHILDREN IN SORTING AND MATCHING ACTIVITIES** - like matching socks, setting the table and helping with tidy up time to find the right places for things.

**BAKING CAKES TOGETHER** can let your child practise their maths as they join in weighing out ingredients or counting eggs.

**PICTURE BOOKS** such as Goldilocks and the Three Bears or The Three Little Pigs can help your child become familiar with number order.

**IF YOU GO OUT FOR A WALK COUNT NUMBERS OF THINGS YOU CAN SEE** - asking, for example, how many red cars do you see? How many daisies in the park? How many trees? How many people on bikes?



## -WHAT YOU CAN DO-

You can do these really important things to help.



List all the times you should wash your hands!



4 PAGE PULL-OUT

### WASH YOUR HANDS! A LOT! (Super important)

Wash for 20 seconds with soap and water.

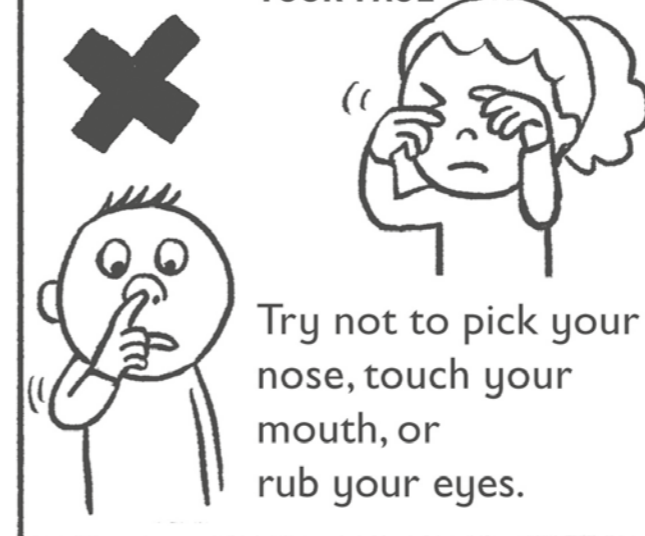


### COVER YOUR MOUTH AND NOSE

When you cough and sneeze. Use a tissue, or else your elbow.



### TRY NOT TO TOUCH YOUR FACE



### TELL A GROWN UP

If you feel sick - like if have a cough, or feel really hot and tired for no reason.



## - AND REMEMBER...

Loads of clever people are working hard to get things back to normal. Be careful, be good, be kind and...  
**WASH YOUR HANDS!**

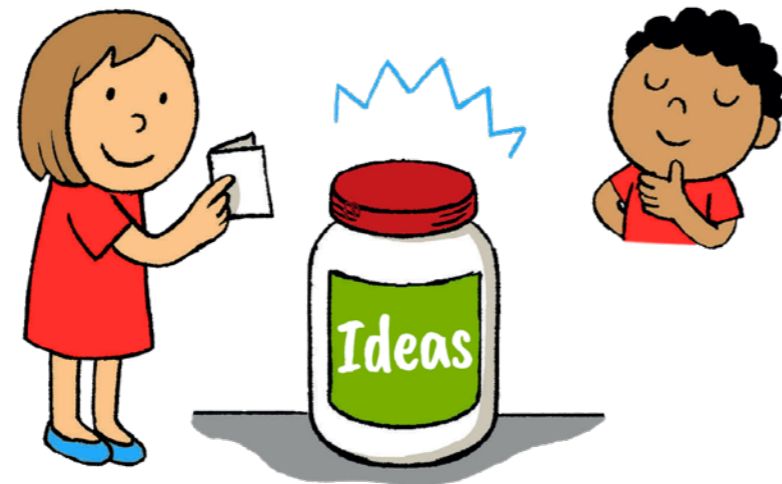


# IDEAS BANK

## STEP 1

### FIND A CONTAINER FOR YOUR IDEAS

It could be a jar, a box or a tin. It could be something you could decorate. This is going to be your ideas bank, which you're going to fill with fun ideas of things to do.



## STEP 2

### YOU'LL FIND LOTS OF FUN IDEAS OPPOSITE. CUT OUT AND PUT IN YOUR IDEAS BANK.

We have also put some blank ones in so you can write down your own ideas too. Cut out all of the shapes, fold them in half and put them into your ideas bank.

## STEP 3

### PICK OUT AN IDEA AND HAVE FUN!

USED ROLLED UP SOCKS FOR BALLS

PRETEND YOU ARE A FEATHER FLOATING

MAKE A MODEL OUT OF BITS AND PIECES

READ TEDDY A STORY AT BEDTIME

### TOP TIPS

If you really like an activity, why not put it back in so you can do it again another day?

If you don't like the activity you've picked out, you can swap it for another idea.

If you run out of ideas, you can make some new shapes yourself and write your ideas on, colour, cut out and put in.

# IDEAS BANK

## IDEAS TO USE

### CUT OUT THE IDEAS BELOW AND PUT INTO YOUR IDEAS BANK

#### JUNK MODELLING

Make a model out of bits and pieces. Think about how you can make the pieces fit together and what parts you need to make the model. Good things to use are toilet roll inners, cereal packets, tissue paper, foil, pencils and pens.

#### BEDTIME STORIES

Read a story to your teddy by following the pictures in a book. Maybe you can read teddy a story at bedtime every night. Enjoying books and stories is a good thing to do with your family too.

#### FEATHERS AND STATUES

Pretend you are a feather floating through the air for ten seconds. Suddenly you freeze and transform into a statue. Don't move! Then slowly relax as you transform back into the floating feather again. Repeat, making sure to finish as a floaty feather, nice and relaxed.

#### MINDFULNESS

A teddy can be a breathing buddy and help keep you calm. Lie down and put teddy on your chest and watch teddy go up and down as you breathe. If you don't have a teddy, you can just use your hand. Count up to as many breaths as you can.

#### HOME MADE BASKETBALL




Use rolled up socks for balls and something to catch the balls in - like a clean bucket or basin. Take turns throwing the socks at the target. Move the bucket higher and further away to make the game harder. Use three containers and try to get one ball into each.

#### PEGS

Count out enough wooden pegs to match the number of people in your family. If you don't have pegs, icicle sticks or pieces of card will do. Draw a face on each one and use them to make up stories about the peg family. You can add in props like other toys and bits and pieces to extend your stories. Maybe the family can go on an adventure.

#### TEDDY HIDE AND SEEK

Take it in turns to hide teddy and give clues/directions about where the teddy can be found.

These activities support:  Wellbeing  Numeracy  Literacy

# IDEAS BANK

## IDEAS TO USE

CUT OUT THE SHAPES BELOW AND ADD YOUR OWN IDEAS

A collection of dashed-line shapes for cutting out, including two large rectangles, two smaller rectangles, and a long horizontal rectangle. A small scissors icon is located at the top right corner of the first large rectangle.

# NURTURED

## BITE SIZE INFO

Children can play and learn best when they are in a nurturing environment with someone who cares for them. They can also learn about the importance of caring from others by observing and helping to care for younger siblings and looking after pets or even plants.

## ACTIVITIES

### PRACTISE HELPFUL PRAISE WITH YOUR CHILD

You will need:

- Paper or card - try recycling a cereal box
- Any craft materials
- Glue, scissors, Sellotape
- Coloured pens, sweet wrappers, tissue paper, etc

### PART 1

#### Making a Superstar award together

Make a certificate or medal together - let your child take the lead as much as you can. Allow them to choose the materials to use, and the medal's shape, colour and size. Then help them to decorate it. Praise their efforts as they go - even simple things like squeezing hard to get out the glue, or concentrating when cutting. Your child will be proud of the end result, regardless of how it looks.

### PART 2

#### Giving the award using helpful praise

You and your child can now decide how often you'll give out the award and what it'll be for. Could be every day or just once a week, maybe for remembering to brush their teeth or playing well or working hard on learning activities from nursery or school. Use it to recognise their positive efforts rather than the end product. So maybe "you've worked really hard on that picture" rather than "that's a nice picture".

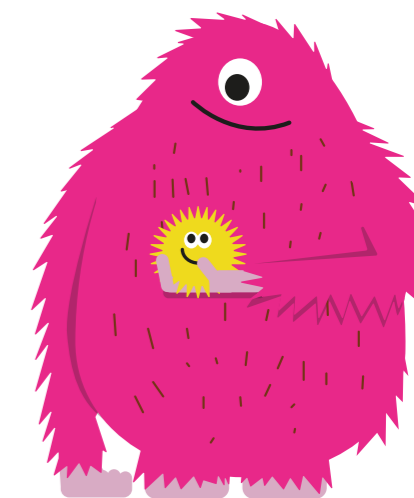
## MORE IDEAS

**BUILD PRAISE INTO MEALTIMES** - each family member could compliment, thank or do something kind for someone around the table.

**ENCOURAGE YOUNGER CHILDREN TO PRAISE THEIR TEDDIES, TOYS OR PETS**, making praise a regular part of family life.

**ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO DRAW A PICTURE OF THEMSELVES.**

Then you or your child can write down their achievements and effort on post-its, or pieces of paper, and stick them onto the self-portrait. This will create a visual image of what they have achieved.



# ACTIVE

## BITE SIZE INFO

Being physically active and using their whole bodies in play is important for developing children's muscles and co-ordination skills. Playing outside develops strength and stamina. Arts, crafts and messy play are great for developing small hand muscles which are needed for drawing and writing.

## ACTIVITIES

### WATER PLAY

Water play can be great fun and it's easy to do. Almost fill a large basin with water, gather props like plastic measuring jugs and spoons. Water can be coloured with a bit of food colouring to make it more interesting. What about experimenting with toys in the water to see if they sink or float?

Or making up stories about the toys in the water while giving them a wash?

### KEEP YOUR BALANCE

It's good fun to balance along small walls or even just follow the joins in paving stones or pavements. If you're not in too much of a hurry, try doing this and see if you can keep your balance.

If you have an adult with you, they can join in too! Using chalk outside on pavements can be great to set up hopscotch and flat obstacle courses.

## MORE IDEAS

### THREADING

Poke some holes in a piece of cardboard and encourage your child to thread wool or string in and out of the holes. Old shoe laces are also great for this.

### HAVE A REGULAR ACTIVITY TIME

Be active often, even if it's for a short time. Do star jumps, sing "head, shoulders, knees and toes", play "Simon says" together after sitting down for a while. It's great fun and good for our bodies and minds.



# RESPECTED

## BITE SIZE INFO

Listening to children helps us to understand how they see the world. Being listened to and having their right to play respected and supported is very important for children's sense of self and confidence. Children communicate in different ways; through words, body language, and creative expression. If we listen to the small things that matter to children, they will share the big stuff as well.

## ACTIVITIES

### PRACTISE LISTENING WITH YOUR CHILD

#### PART 1

##### Make a pair of shakers

Set out a range of materials and ask your child which ones they want to use for the shakers. Once they've decided on the container, encourage them to choose what to stick on it and where. Make a shaker for yourself too - but don't make it too perfect, as your child may want to copy you! Follow their suggestions instead, commenting on their good ideas and creative thinking. Now you can add your noise-makers (rice, beads, pebbles) and secure the top. Just putting the noise-makers in the container is fine if your child doesn't want to get crafty.

#### PART 2

##### Call and response

Now it's time to make some noise! Ask your child to shake theirs first and listen to the sounds. Repeat their rhythms back to them. Take turns making different types of noises: loud/quiet, long/short, fast/ slow, funny/boring - and any more that you can think of.

You will need:

- A cardboard box, a bottle with a lid, or a Tupperware box for your shaker
- Things to go in the shaker - dried lentils, rice, cereal, pebbles or beads

For decorating:

- Coloured paper, sweet wrappers, tissue paper, etc
- Any craft materials
- Glue, scissors, Sellotape

## MORE IDEAS

### MAKE MUSIC

Use the shakers with your child to sing nursery rhymes together. Take it in turns to sing a line each with the other person doing the percussion. Try making up your own songs together when you are doing chores and things around the house.

### STORY TIME

Sharing a book together is a great way to start conversations. Children love to hear a story lots of times, but you can also take a favourite character and make up a new story, taking it in turns to say a part. Find the right time when you are relaxed and have some time to spare. Often it is easier for children to talk if they have an item to focus on, like a teddy. You can take turns talking about teddy's feelings and worries and make up stories and adventures together.



# RESPONSIBLE

## BITE SIZE INFO

Children need to practise managing their emotions and behaviour and playing games with simple rules can be a good way to do this. This takes time and sometimes it can be difficult when emotions become overwhelming - for a young child this could mean a temper tantrum! Making choices and learning through trial and error are great ways to learn responsibility.

## ACTIVITIES

### THROW AND CATCH

Stand opposite each other and throw a ball back and forth. Then add a rule - you have to touch your head with the ball before you throw, then you have to turn around before your throw. Either do one rule per turn or build up the rules so there's lots of things to remember and do.

### HAVE A BOARD GAMES EVENING

Board games are sometimes forgotten but they can be great fun, and some of the old favourites are the best. Snakes and ladders, kerplunk and frustration are great for having conversations about things going wrong and what happens next.

### BUILD A DEN

Whether inside or out, big or small, building a den is a great fun activity. You can make a den out of things you might have in the house, sheets/towels, cardboard boxes. Be as creative as you like. Will your den have a secret door?

## MORE IDEAS

### MODEL RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR

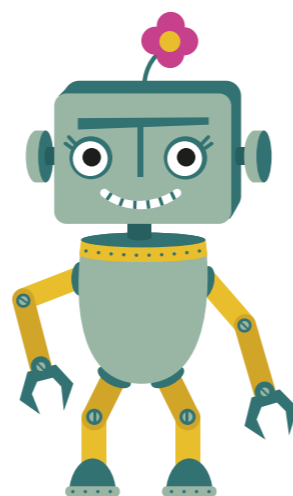
If you interact with your child in a way you regret, say you're sorry. You'll be teaching them something important about respect and taking responsibility for your actions.

### INVOLVE CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD CHORES

Lots of activities can be made into a game.

You can give children a greater sense of security and control by involving them in routine jobs around the house, problem solving and including them in everyday decisions about what you do as a family, even simple decisions when they are young.

Involving children in conversations makes children feel valued and less likely to argue with the decisions that are made.



# INCLUDED

## BITE SIZE INFO

Through play children learn the skills they need to communicate with others and be included in activities in the way they choose. Learning how to communicate with others is key to successful relationships.

## ACTIVITIES

### SINGING AND NURSERY RHYMES

Can you remember the actions to nursery rhymes? Here is one to try. "Incy wincy spider climbed up the water spout, down came the rain, and washed the spider out. Up came the sunshine and dried up all the rain, so incy wincy spider climbed up the spout again." Ask an adult if they remember any from when they were little.

### MAKE PUPPETS

Making puppets is easy and you can use lots of different things to make your puppet. Try socks/gloves/lolly sticks and give your puppets a name. They could go on a different adventure every day and you can make them talk to each other.

### WIGGLE DRAWINGS

What you need: Paper and pens or pencils

How to play: One person draws a wiggle with a pen or pencil. It could be any shape and size! The other person uses a different colour pen or pencil to turn the wiggle into a picture. Take turns drawing a wiggle and passing it to the other person to create pictures.

## MORE IDEAS

### PRACTICE STORYTELLING WITH YOUR CHILD

Make up your own stories with your child using photos, pictures from magazines and/or everyday objects. It's OK for your stories to be silly, or to even not make much sense. Collect some interesting pictures and objects that mean something to your child and put them in front of you.

Think about who is in your story, where they are and what they will do. Include a beginning, middle and end. Start off with "Once upon a time...", then choose one of the objects and add it into your story.

SEE HOW LONG YOU CAN KEEP A STORY GOING or have a go at making a series of short sections of stories - different beginnings, middles and ends.

Your child will like it if the story includes people and places they know and things they like to do. Let your child take the lead in choosing what sparks their imagination and build the story from there.

If you end up using a mixture of objects, dressing up and pictures that's even better.





# HOW AM I FEELING? WHAT ARE THE CLUES? WHAT IS MY FACE SHOWING?



**HAPPY**

**DELIGHTED  
PLEASED  
EXCITED**



**SAD**

**UNHAPPY  
HURT  
UPSET**



**WORRIED**

**SCARED  
FRIGHTENED  
ANXIOUS**



**EXCITED**

**EAGER  
THRILLED  
ENTHUSIASTIC**

Naming feelings is the first step to learning how to manage them.  
Make faces in a mirror with someone and see if they can guess the feeling you are showing.  
What are some other feelings you can name?



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot



Committed to PLAY



Design: Vote Pedro | Illustrations: Save the Children

This resource was produced by Cherie Morgan and Susan Revie for Play Scotland and Save the Children

ISBN no: 978-1-8381514-0-9 | Play Scotland Registered Company no: SC197785 | Scottish Charity no: SC029167