



every day's a
learning day



Birth to 3 years

Health and Wellbeing, Literacy and Numeracy – **Give your Child a Great Start**





About this book



This book for parents and carers of children aged 0–3 years is designed to highlight that daily life is bursting with many learning opportunities for your child right from the moment of birth. Whether you are tidying up, getting dressed, going shopping or preparing a meal, you can find valuable learning possibilities for your child everywhere you look. This book will help you to see and make the most of these possibilities so that every day becomes a learning day. Even the most routine tasks can lead to learning which is not only enjoyable, but helps to give your child the very best start in life!

As a nation, Scotland recognises the importance of health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy as key to building positive lives. As a parent or carer, this book is to help you maximise your child's life chances now and in the future.

All children develop at different rates, so don't worry unduly if your child is not doing the same things as your friend's child. However, if you are concerned at any time that your child is not progressing as you think they should, then do not hesitate to contact your Health Visitor or GP for reassurance and support.



1

section

Health and Wellbeing is about learning how to lead healthy and active lives, becoming confident, happy and forming friendships and relationships with others that are based on respect. It is also about managing feelings and having the skills to meet challenges, make good choices and manage change.

Pages 12 – 21

2

section




section 3

Literacy is an essential part of our everyday lives. It helps us to understand and interpret our world through what we hear, see, say, write and read. Early literacy skills start with babies discovering that they can communicate their needs through their first sounds, facial expressions and body language. Literacy is also about using and making sense of technology, films and other media.

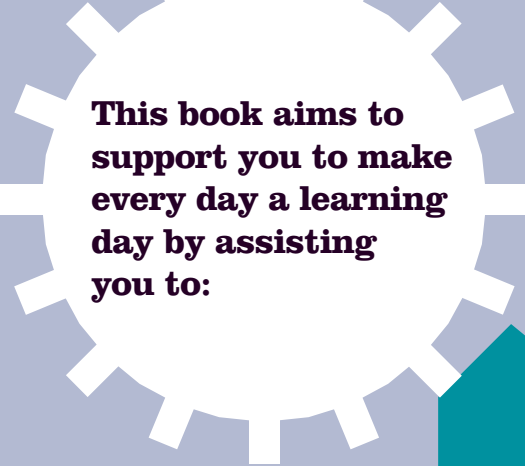
Pages 22 – 31

Numeracy is about counting and numbers as well as understanding measurement, money, weight, an awareness of time and how to handle information. It is important, from simple tasks like pairing your socks to paying for your shopping.

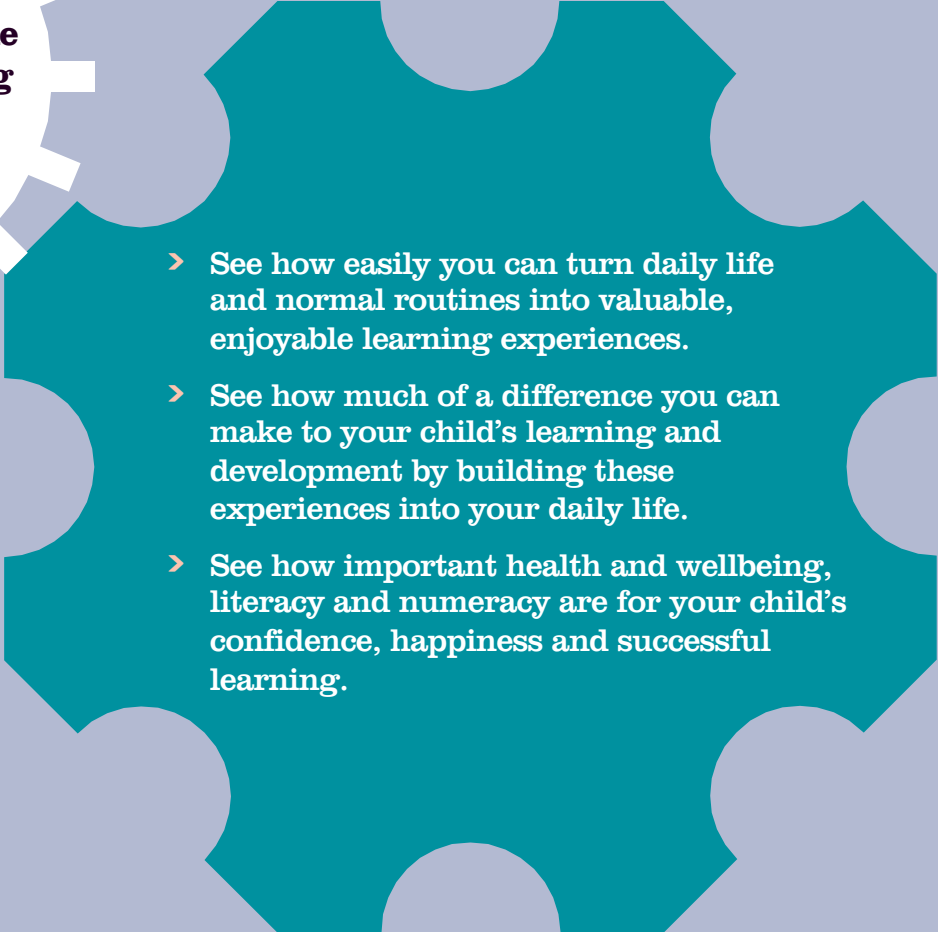
Pages 32 – 42

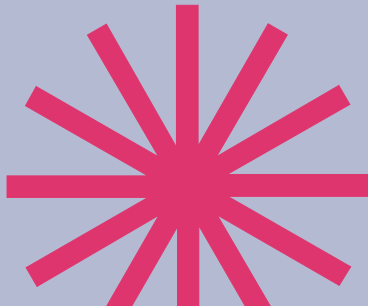


All parents and carers want the very best for their children. This book will assist you in understanding more readily how you can encourage your child, from the earliest days, to develop health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy skills.



This book aims to support you to make every day a learning day by assisting you to:

- 
- See how easily you can turn daily life and normal routines into valuable, enjoyable learning experiences.
 - See how much of a difference you can make to your child's learning and development by building these experiences into your daily life.
 - See how important health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy are for your child's confidence, happiness and successful learning.



By the time babies are born, they have already:

- Started to recognise familiar voices.
- Practised sucking movements which have built up muscles needed for speech development.
- Developed an awareness of your daily routine, such as mealtimes and bedtimes.
- Been communicating personal likes and dislikes through movements and kicks.
- Become aware of your differing feelings and moods.





Babies are born ready to continue to learn and make sense of their world.

The difference you can make is quite remarkable.

You can greatly improve your child's learning and life chances simply by:

- Including your child in everyday tasks and making them fun.
- Getting into the habit of talking, listening and playing together as you go about daily life.
- Caring about and showing an interest in your child's learning, reactions and communications.
- Using new and familiar words to extend and enrich your child's vocabulary, knowledge, awareness of sounds and language development.
- Showing your child how to play, share, take turns, make friends and develop positive relationships.
- Remembering that your child will learn lots by imitating you ... so be aware of what you do and say!

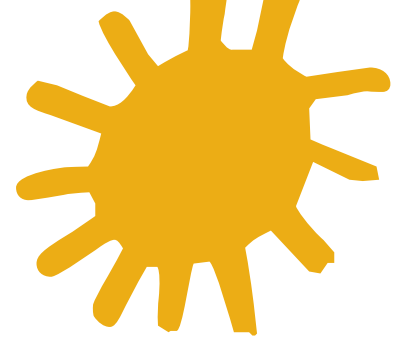


Health and wellbeing,
literacy and
numeracy
– taking a





section



1

Health and Wellbeing ...

is about learning how to lead healthy and active lives, becoming confident, happy and forming friendships and relationships with others that are based on respect. It is also about managing feelings and having the skills to meet challenges, make good choices and manage change.



Everywhere you go learning opportunities are all around you

Make the most of places such as the park to help develop your child's health and wellbeing skills.

Make the experience of being outside a positive one and use this opportunity to be active together. Walk, roll a ball, or enjoy playing on a slide. Get moving!

Look for ways to help your child learn about taking turns, being considerate and respecting others. Playing on the swings, slide or roundabout offers lots of fun opportunities.

Why not take a healthy snack to enjoy together at the park, for example, water and fruit?

Prams and buggies that are designed so that your baby faces you are great because this gives you a chance to smile, look at, chat and listen to one another as a natural part of everyday interactions. This leads to feelings of security and a positive sense of wellbeing for both.

Read more about forward facing buggies at <http://bit.ly/vuzWTa>



get active



Playing and moving around is essential for your child's learning, wellbeing and all round development, including healthy brain development.

Get moving indoors and outdoors in all weather. Looking out for opportunities for your baby or toddler to grasp, hold or pick up objects, will help to develop little fingers and hands.

Making lots of opportunities for larger movements, like crawling, rolling, walking and running will increase healthy development, learning and wellbeing.



- Collect interesting objects, like leaves, sticks or stones.
- Indoors or outdoors, look out for opportunities to stimulate senses, as children of all ages, especially babies, learn through their senses. What can you see, smell, touch, taste, hear?
- Create and take opportunities to play and socialise with others. This will encourage your baby or toddler to become confident and comfortable in different situations.
- As your baby begins to walk, leave the pram at home sometimes and walk short distances together.
- Walking instead of being in the pram or buggy will encourage your child to become more active and will provide lots of new and exciting learning opportunities to explore the world first hand.

You are supporting your child to learn about the world, develop interests, feel involved, become engaged and active ... and all the time, you are making every day a learning day!





Healthy foods help your child to grow and can improve concentration leading to higher levels of interest, curiosity and playful learning. Developing poor eating habits in early childhood can lead to unhealthy weight and other difficulties.

If you introduce children to healthy eating now, it is much more likely that they will continue to make healthy food choices as they grow up.

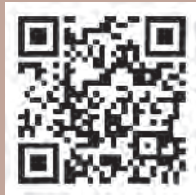
- › Involve your child in cooking and make sure your baby knows that it's ok when they play with and make a mess with food – your child is experimenting and being creative.
- › Eating can be an important, enjoyable and sociable activity. Try to make meal times a pleasant experience – and of course look out for the many learning opportunities!
- › Try to establish a regular pattern of eating together as a family. This is a valuable time for talking, listening, learning and sharing.
- › Plan for your baby or toddler to have different taste experiences. What do you notice about your child's likes and dislikes? Your baby will often need to try a new taste several times before starting to enjoy it.
- › Introduce different healthy food options so that your child can make choices. For example, offer different fruits and vegetables with a variety of colours, tastes and textures.



breastfeeding

Breastfeeding keeps your baby calm, warm and comforted. Research has also shown that the health benefits are wide-ranging and last beyond childhood.

The Scottish Government promotes breastfeeding as the most natural way to give your baby all the nutrients they need for the best start in life.



For more information and to hear mums' stories visit
<http://www.feedgoodfactor.org.uk/>

explore feelings

Try to notice and become tuned in to your baby so that you recognise the signs and sounds of developing feelings and emotions. Even new babies know what they like and dislike and will communicate individual preferences and feelings through body language, facial expressions, crying and sounds. As babies grow and develop, parents and carers can help them to recognise and start to manage their own feelings and emotions.



Find different ways to make your baby laugh, like play peek-a-boo as you both go about daily routines such as getting washed and dressed.



When busy around the house or garden, try to involve your child in what you are doing in some meaningful way. Children often enjoy responsibility and making a contribution. They also *learn as they do* while sensing that you enjoy and appreciate having them around.



Use quiet times like bed time to talk together with your child about feelings. They may be able to tell you something that has made them feel happy or sad. Children also love to know if they have done or said something that makes you happy.



abc

section

2

Literacy ...

is an essential part of our everyday lives. It helps us to understand and interpret our world through what we hear, see, say, write and read. Early literacy skills start with babies discovering that they can communicate their needs through their first sounds, facial expressions and body language. Literacy is also about using and making sense of technology, films and other media.





Reading stories,
rhymes and action
songs are great fun
and can support your
child's learning.

You can support early literacy development through everyday activities, such as a trip to the shops.

As you write your shopping list, it is likely that your child will want to imitate you by drawing and making marks to make their own list. Talk about what you need to buy.

On your journey to the shops draw your child's attention to print which is all around, such as signs, shop names and car registrations. Your child will become more aware of print and its purpose.

As you chat and consider what to buy, encourage your child to find different items on the list. This is likely to help your child feel involved, interested and valued as you shop.

talk



and listen...

Talking and listening together will help to develop your child's communication skills, strengthen relationships and build self-esteem.

If you spend time talking and listening to your child from birth, they will know many more words by the time they go to nursery.

- Babies love it when you talk to them, but they also love to be listened to. Talk about what you are doing, as you are doing it, such as when having a bath or changing the bedclothes. Your child will begin to match what they are hearing to what you are doing.
- As your baby babbles, show that you are interested and listening by treating it as a conversation. Remember to leave time for your baby to respond.
- Use all of the senses and talk about what your child can see, hear, feel, smell and taste. When outside, you may listen to and talk about the traffic sounds. At home, you could perhaps compare the different colours, sizes and textures of clothes as you load the washing machine.

read

Visit *Play Talk Read*, the Scottish Government's scheme to encourage parents to have fun and learn with their child from day one.

<http://playtalkread.org/>



together

Enjoyment of reading starts with sharing books together from birth.

Your child will enjoy listening to familiar stories over and over again. As they hear new words, they will also start to recognise sounds.



Share picture books with large, clear pictures and talk about what you see. Choose a variety of different types of books including those that have bits for your child to touch and feel.



Read stories to your child about all kinds of things. Although your baby or toddler may not understand all of the words in a story, your facial expressions, eye contact, body language and tone of voice will bring great pleasure and speak volumes!



Enjoy reading magazines and newspapers with your child. They will begin to recognise pictures, patterns of print, words and sounds.






Make storytime fun, for example use different voices and make funny faces and sounds.



**draw
and
write
together**

Long before children start to write, they enjoy, and become very accomplished at, using different materials to be creative. They may make patterns with food on the high chair tray or use the bubbles in the bath to make pictures.

-  Chat to your child – their picture may have a story to tell!
-  Encourage your child's interest in mark-making by playing together with pens, crayons, paints and paper. This will encourage them to express feelings, thoughts and ideas.
-  Ensure your child sees you when you are writing lists, birthday cards and letters. This will help them begin to understand the many purposes of writing.



section 3

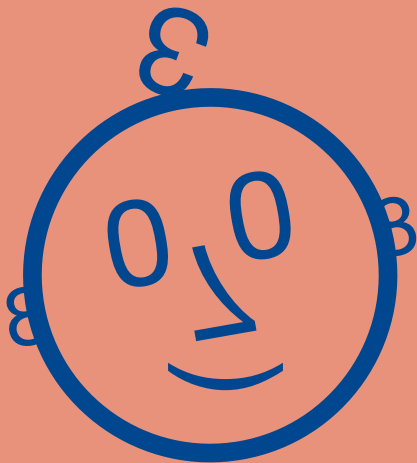
123

Numeracy ...

is about counting and numbers as well as understanding measurement, money, weight, an awareness of time and how to handle information. It is important, from simple tasks like pairing your socks to paying for your shopping.



Your daily activities are full of wonderful ways to support your child's learning about numeracy. Why not start thinking about the various possibilities all around you?



Everyday tasks like clearing dishes or sorting clothes offer chances to learn together as your child finds out about colours, sorting, matching and counting.

As you move around your home, chat and listen to your child, using position words such as *on top of*, *underneath*, *below*, *next to*, *beside*, *behind* and *above*. This will help your child to learn how to think about and describe where objects are in relation to other objects.

When you unpack your shopping or sort out your rubbish, your child could help to sort the items into types e.g. packets, plastic bottles, and talk about *shortest*, *tallest*, *biggest*, *heaviest* and *lightest*.



count together



Your child is more likely to enjoy counting and will want to find out more by the time they go to nursery, if they are used to talking about and playing with numbers in their daily lives.

Sing number songs and rhymes together. Tell stories that include numbers – it's fun to make up stories and your child will love listening. This will help your child to learn about the order of numbers.

- 1** Chat about numbers and look out for counting opportunities as you set the table or tidy up and your child will begin to understand what each number represents. For example, talk about about *more than* and *fewer than*.
- 2** Count fingers and toes with your baby when putting on gloves, socks and getting dried.
- 3** Encourage your child to place their finger on objects as you count out loud. This will help them to count objects only once, without missing anything out.

sort, share and match together



Encourage
your child to
sort, share out,
match and organise
everyday objects in
different ways as you
go about your tasks
and routines.

- Chat about what you are doing as you organise and sort everyday items by colour, shape, type of toy or clothes into 'same' bundles.
- Match objects that belong together, like shoes, socks and gloves.
- Use mealtimes with your child to sort, count and sing about numbers. It is surprising how many natural opportunities arise that are linked to learning about numeracy.
- When putting toys away, encourage your toddler to help as you use words such as *in*, *on top* and *behind*.
- Introduce the idea of *sharing out* and *same* and *different* as you prepare food.

time



and money

Help your child begin to learn about time by setting daily routines, like getting dressed and having breakfast, lunch and dinner at similar times every day.



Draw your child's attention to the different times of day, 'Let's get your chair – it's breakfast time', or talk about bathtime coming before bedtime.



Encourage your child to notice when it is dark and when it is daylight as this increases your child's awareness and understanding of time.



Talk to your baby about what you are doing, and what you are going to do next. Chat about what happened yesterday and last week. This helps your child to begin to understand past, present and future.



When shopping, encourage your child to help you as you buy things using money and other methods of payment. Your child will begin to understand and appreciate the purpose and value of money.



Look for opportunities to involve your child when using money so that your child begins to learn about it. You can draw your child's attention to the different size, feel and shape of the coins and notes.

measurement

As you go about everyday life, create and look for opportunities to measure, using words such as *bigger, smaller, different and same* as. Cooking, eating, getting ready and being out and about provide so many openings to learn about the idea of measuring.



- Involve your child in everyday tasks where possible. Your baby may enjoy holding a spoon and cup as they join in or watch you counting out and measuring ingredients. Your child will soon become familiar with the meaning and language of measurement.
- Collect empty plastic containers of different sizes, such as cups, jugs and bottles so that bathtime can be more fun as your child learns about pouring, filling, comparing and estimating.
- Put a height chart up on the wall. Measure your child regularly and talk about how much they have grown, what size they used to be and guess what height they may reach.
- Introduce your child to the idea of weight by pretending you can't lift the really heavy bags and asking your child to try. Compare with a lighter bag. Talk about weight using words like *heavier, lighter* and *about the same*.

Further Information for parents and carers – Scotland's National Guidance.

Pre-Birth to Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland's Children and Families.

This resource offers lots of great advice with links to film clips which have been designed to inform and support parents and carers of babies and young children.

To find out more visit

<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/earlyyears/prebirthtothree/parentsandcarers.asp>





Learning about **health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy** will equip your child with essential skills for life. You and your child are on an exciting learning journey together with every day full of learning opportunities that naturally present themselves – so make the most of them and make every day a learning day!



<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/earlyyears/resources/everydaylearning.asp>

The QR code and link above will take you to an online version of this book and links to other helpful resources.

If English is not your first language you can use the ideas and suggestions in this book with your child in your home language. All children will benefit from support and encouragement from parents and carers to develop their skills in health and wellbeing, literacy and numeracy.

This book is also available in Gaelic at the above web address.