

NSPCC

look say sing play



Copy cat

Like you, children experience many different emotions every day. Make faces that mirror how your child seems to be feeling.

Talk to them about why you're making those faces. "You're smiling and seem happy, and I am smiling and happy too."



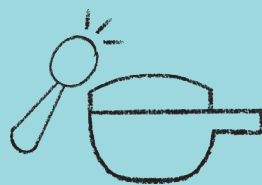
Trolley vision

As you shop for food, think about what your child might be seeing and discuss it with them while paying attention to sights, sounds, and smells. "Do you hear someone talking? It's the lady over there." "What do you smell? It smells yummy." "See that red thing? It's a tomato we're going to buy."



Outdoor stretches

Hold your child or put them on a blanket. Gently guide their body to stretch. Lift their arms up and say, "You're tall like a tree!" You can sway back and forth like the wind or flap arms like a bird. As they get older, encourage them to lead the stretches.



Homemade sounds

Give your child safe everyday items that make noise to explore sounds. You can give them different objects, like pieces of cereal in a coffee can with the lid taped closed or pots to bang with a spoon. Comment on what they're doing, like, "Shake that can fast!", join in and move to the beat together!



Sights and sounds

As you travel, begin to describe to your child what you see and how it sounds. The car engine makes a loud noise like "vroom vroom!" Make the same noise every time a car goes by. What other objects do you see and what sounds do they make? Create a sound journey!



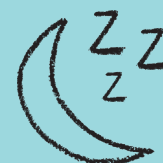
Sponge sensation

When you're doing the dishes, let your child play with a clean sponge in a place where they won't get everything wet. They will love the texture. Show them how they can squeeze and absorb water with the sponge. Ask them to describe this experience.



Happy song

As you get your child dressed, sing "If you're happy and you know it" and change the words to tell them what you're doing. "If you're happy and know it, pull your sock on!" After they're dressed, you can keep singing and imitate the movement of pulling a sock or a shirt on.



Story snuggle

Your child loves snuggling and hearing your voice. Get close and cuddle with them while sharing a story or song. Use a calm, quiet, and soothing voice to help them fall asleep quickly. This can become a nightly routine that lets them know it is time for bed.



The science bit

Talking to your child about what they see, hear, and smell — even before they can talk much — is how they learn to make sense of experiences, and how they learn words and what they mean. By describing their trolley vision, you're also helping them feel important and understood.

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The science bit

When you imitate the face your child makes, you help them express what they think and feel even though they can't speak yet. These 'conversations without words' begin to help them learn about others' feelings and emotions.

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Right from birth, every time you play with your baby, talk to them, or even sing, you're not just bonding, you're building their brain.

Find loads more tips at
[nspcc.org.uk/](https://nspcc.org.uk/brain-building)
brain-building

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Registered charity England and Wales 216401.
Scotland SC037717. J20181354.

Tips and other brain-building resources provided by the
early-learning experts at Vroom™, an initiative of the
Bezos Family Foundation.



The science bit

When your child looks for new objects and listens for the sounds they make, they're making connections between sights and sounds that help them learn to observe and listen more carefully, which are all key learning skills.

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The science bit

Your child is making new connections using everyday objects, which increases their ability to think flexibly — an important part of creativity and problem solving. They build skills of focus and self-control as they move to the rhythm and pay attention to your words.

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The science bit

Your child learns best when they're active and engaged. When you guide their body through movements and give them the words for these experiences, you're promoting focus and self-control, as well as building their vocabulary.

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The science bit

Creating a trusting relationship, with feelings of closeness and security, sets up an environment for learning. By talking back and forth, sharing words and sounds with them, in stories, and songs you're helping them develop into a lifelong learner.

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The science bit

When you sing and make movements, your child is learning new words and actions. This happy song also gives them the chance to interact with you, which is fun for both of you. Children learn best when they're interested.

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The science bit

When your child feels new things and hears new words in conversations like these, they're building connections in their brain that are the foundations for reading and maths. They're learning from your words and actions, especially when they're having fun.

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Together time

Take a few minutes today to turn away from technology and just be with your child. You may want to sing, hum, talk, make noises back and forth, make funny faces, or just snuggle. We all need a little time just to be together.



Mini massage

When you're sitting down, watching TV or just holding your child today, give them a mini massage. You can gently rub their feet, legs, hands, arms, and back. You can be quiet or talk back and forth about the part of their body you're massaging.



Bathtime boogie

At bathtime, make up a silly song about your child. You can sing something like, "Here is your little arm. Here is your little leg." As they get older, you can sing about their left elbow or right hand and encourage them to sing along.



How are you?

In a joyful voice ask your child how they are today. Tell them how you are, "I am happy today to see you!" Ask them again and go back and forth. "I am excited today because the sun is shining!" Keep taking turns!



Park sensations

As you play at the park, describe what you're doing and how it feels "The sun is warm on our faces" or "The sand is rough on our hands." Watch where your child looks or points and describe how that feels.



Chew and choose

At mealtime, encourage your child to make choices about what they will eat next. You can say something like, "What will you have first? Your carrots or your sandwich?" You can also ask them to decide how many bites they will have — "Will you have two or three bites now?"



Face sound effects

As you change your child's nappy, make different sounds for each part of their face. Touch their nose and say, "Your nose says 'beep!'" or say, "Here's your chin. Pop!" and touch their chin. Then give them a turn to touch your face. Encourage them to make the sounds with you.



Counting day

Make today a counting day. How many things can you count throughout the day? Count the number of buttons on your child's clothes, the stairs you climb, or the number of kisses you give each other. As they get older, encourage them to count with you or to take turns counting with you.



Body language

Practice using gestures with your child as another way to communicate. You can wave your hand and say "hi!" or shake your head and say "no." Or you can clap your hands and say "yay!" See if they will mimic your actions and sounds. Try going back and forth like a conversation.



The science bit

Your voice is one of your child's favourite things to listen to. As you sing, they're paying close attention to your sounds, motions, and facial expressions to take in as much information as they can. They're learning about themselves by sharing this fun experience with you.

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The science bit

As you give your child a mini-massage, you use the sense of touch to deepen your connection with each other. You also build your child's awareness and knowledge of their body — its different parts, and their names.

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The science bit

Technology can be great. But a small amount of time just for you and your child can be a good break from technology and wonderful for both of you.

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The science bit

Your child feels a sense of control when they're involved in making decisions. You're supporting their independence while also helping them practise planning and critical thinking.

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The science bit

As your child hears and sees new ways to describe the everyday things they experience and how they feel, they're learning new words and concepts that help them understand their world.

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The science bit

When your child hears about your feelings and thoughts and shares their own, they're learning the skill of thinking about the feelings and thoughts of others. This is an important skill in learning to understand and get along with others.

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The science bit

Many children use gestures before they speak. When you show your child how gestures and words work together, you add to their understanding of what it means to communicate. You also help them make connections between words and actions — an important part of talking, reading, and writing.

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The science bit

Counting everyday things helps your child understand early maths ideas — that numbers have an order, go from smaller to larger, and stand for a certain amount of things. Your child is also using focus to pay attention and working memory to remember numbers as you count together.

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The science bit

Taking time in your daily routine to connect with your child supports their learning and encourages curiosity. When you play with words and sounds together, you build language skills and show them how much fun learning can be!

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