

Let's Go Out and About

With daily walks having become one of our main forms of exercise, your local community is a great environment for discovering and exploring with your child. There are so many opportunities to learn and a relaxing stroll is good for the whole family!

How to Do It

This is about spending time with your child, noticing and chatting about the world around you.

Next time you take a walk around your local community, ask or chat with your child about what they can see. Talk about what you can see. You could count the letterboxes that you pass or, if your child is older, see if they can read or recognise the numbers on them.

Count how many green cars are parked along the road. What can you hear, or what can your smell? Can you see a cyclist on your walk? Wonder together where they may be going. Can you see someone running? Any animals? Do you see a plane? What does it sound like? There are many wonderful opportunities to develop storytelling and imagination while out for a stroll. Can your child imagine who might live in the big white house on the corner and the smaller house next door?

Your community is full of reading opportunities, in the form of street signs and shop signs. Start by identifying single letters and developing your child's awareness that signs convey meaning. Soon enough you will notice that your child begins to recognise frequently passed signs and words and will begin to try and read these familiar words. Look for signs that use images and symbols and show your child they can "read" these signs, just like reading words.

What Learning is Occurring?

- Familiarity with your **community** and creating **connection** with others you might see out and about, people you know and those you might meet.
- **Language and communication** skills as you and your child chat, ask questions, pause to wait and listen for the answer, take turns in conversations, listen to new sounds etc.
- Early **literacy** and **numeracy**, the **extension of vocabulary**, opportunities to count, to identify things that are the same or different, discover and identify known symbols or wonder and chat about what new words and symbols might mean.
- Respect for the **environment**
- **Physical exercise and wellbeing** finding a space for peaceful and enjoyable moments together out of the house.

Things you will need

- Clothing appropriate for the weather, e.g. jacket if it's cold, sunhat and sunblock if it's hot
- Buggies for transporting tired legs, if necessary
- Camera to record your favourite findings
- Bag to carry leaves or other treasures you may gather along the way

Tips

- Take a camera with you and take some snaps of your discoveries. These photos could be used at home to make a book or maybe as reference for children to check if drawing or recreating a scene from your community with blocks.
- Try jumping, skipping or hopping from place to place

Age Considerations

- **Baby:** a walk outside with your baby is so good for your whole family. While you are out, offer your baby things from nature to hold and touch.
- **Toddler:** go on a colour hunt! How many red, green or blue things can you hunt for and find on a walk? Challenge your child's thinking by pointing out yellow or red leaves. Why are they different?
- **Kinder:** write letters to your neighbours and deliver them. Write a letter or draw a beautiful picture to brighten someone's day.
- **Transition to school:** create a map of your street, or the route to the park, shops or local café. Take pen, paper and a clip board out with you on your next walk, a camera too.

