

It's time to get serious about giggling

PLAYTALKREAD

Everyone enjoys a good laugh, but there is nothing quite like the sound of a little one giggling.

In celebration of Scotland's Big Laugh on Saturday, an entire day dedicated to laughter, PlayTalkRead is encouraging parents and carers to enjoy a giggle with their wee one.

Laughter is proven to prevent illness, boost energy levels and help build a closer bond between you and your child.

Whether it's being a tickle monster or making a bubble beard, chuckles and smiles from your baby will help make a positive difference to their health and happiness – and yours too.

The Scottish Government's PlayTalkRead campaign highlights easy, fun ways to give little ones the best start in life through simple, free activities.

A few minutes spent laughing together can easily fit into daily routines such as changing time, on the bus or keeping them contented in their high chair.

You don't need lots of toys or extra equipment – simply singing songs, playing peek-a-boo or pulling funny faces is all it takes.

Acting Minister for Children and Young People, Fiona McLeod said: "Laughter really is the best medicine; it boosts the immune system and im-

proves your little one's quality of sleep.

"PlayTalkRead has lots of ideas to make your little one laugh and children of all ages can get involved. Babies learn to laugh before they learn to talk, crawl or walk – so you can do it from day one."

What makes your little one giggle? Why not share with PlayTalkRead on Facebook [Facebook.com/PlayTalkRead](https://www.facebook.com/PlayTalkRead) or Twitter @PlayTalkRead?

Visit www.playtalkread.org to download the '30 things to laugh at before you're three' list.

Registered BACP Counsellor Sarah Wheatley gives parents advice on playing, talking and reading with their little one

She said: "It can feel daunting thinking you have to come up with more activities to play with your child, as well as all the other things you have to do as a parent, and you wouldn't be the first worried about not spending enough

'quality' time with your child.

"Children do need time where your attention is focussed solely on them, but research shows this doesn't need to be all the time for a secure attachment to form.

"Interacting with your child during your daily activities creates an ongoing habit of communication that will continue as your child develops."



Sarah Wheatley

