Get Hackney Healthy
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Welcome to the Hackney Active Kids Guide

Healthy children are active children. Kids who learn to love being active when they are young are more likely to grow up to be healthy active adults. Encouraging your children to move more and have fun playing games and sport will create healthy habits that will last a lifetime. Active children also perform better in school and are more confident and sociable.

Healthy Hackney

Hackney is a fantastic place to get active. The borough has some of the best parks and playgrounds in London along with indoor and outdoor swimming pools, football pitches, tennis courts and leisure facilities.

Whatever you and your kids want to do – walking, cycling, rugby, basketball or just a game of tag in the park – Hackney is the perfect place to do it.

Using the guide

This free guide will help you make the most of what’s on offer for the whole family. It’s aimed at younger children but is packed full of ideas for where all the family can play, run, cycle or take part in sports. It has plenty of maps and listings to help you find what you are looking for. It includes advice from some of Hackney’s health experts as well as the latest news from the national Change4Life campaign.

Stuck for what to do? There’s loads of ideas for fun physical games to play with children of different ages – indoors and out. Look for the star icon throughout this guide!
The ‘Great British Weather’ is often the deciding factor in planning what to do on a particular day, and it’s often used an excuse for sitting in front of the TV. So the guide is arranged into two sections – outside activities that make the most of Hackney’s green spaces and activities that can be done ‘whatever the weather,’ including things you can do indoors.

Check out the index at the back, which has listings divided by your children’s age, your location and the amount of time you have to help you find the right activity for you at a glance.

If you have any feedback on this guide or any ideas on how you and your family get active please email publichealth@hackney.gov.uk or visit facebook.com/hackneyfis

Let’s get Hackney Healthy!
It’s Great Outdoors
Explore outdoors – the natural way to get active

Hackney is inner London’s greenest borough. We have a whopping 56 parks, gardens and open spaces covering about 3.3 million square metres. That much green space could fit 450 football pitches!

Hackney does have plenty of sports pitches – there are 82 football, rugby and cricket pitches on Hackney Marshes and Mabley Green alone, including pictures designed for children. That’s the largest concentration of football pitches in the whole of Europe. Head down there on a Sunday to see the football action in full swing.

If football’s not your families’ thing, you could try a game of basketball or netball. There are Multi Use Games Areas – or ‘MUGAs’ – on many estates and in parks – why not try the ones in Clissold Park, London Fields and Hackney Downs. Those who wish to try their hand at tennis – regular or table – are also well served.

Learning about nature is as important for kids in the city as those living out in the countryside.

Exploring the wilder parts of Hackney is a great way to keep your family active and your children interested. That could mean climbing trees at Springfield Park, spotting ducks on the Stoke Newington reservoirs, hunting for insects in Wick Woodland or pond-dipping in Haggerston Park. There are many places where you might just forget you are in a city altogether.

Take a step back into Hackney’s history with a visit to Clissold Park, which has been open to the public for more than 125 years and was once a country estate. Enjoy the peaceful setting of 100-year-old Springfield Park, with formal gardens and fountains as well as an outdoor chess board.

The lesser-known parks and secret gardens have a treat in store for those keen to explore outdoors. Did you know about the wild woodland in Allen’s Gardens, Stoke Newington? Have you visited the community orchard at Butterfield Green? Or discovered St Mary’s Secret Garden in Hoxton?

Don’t forget the miles of waterways - streams, rivers and canals with pretty towpaths and colourful boats.

Whatever kind of outdoor activity you are after – Hackney’s the place to be. And if you are short of ideas of what to do in our great outdoor spaces, check out the games and activities in this guide.
Get some Parklife!

This section will give you all the information you need to make the most of Hackney’s 56 parks and gardens.

**Springfield Park**
Good hill to roll or sledge down

**Daubney Fields**
Check out the Hackney Bumps Wheels and Skate Park

**Clissold Park**
Best for butterflies, birds and animal spotting

**London Fields**
Home of the Lido and hundreds of wildflowers in summer

**Well Street Common**
Swings and wide open spaces

**Hackney Marshes**
Best for Wild Adventures

**Mabley Green**
Can you conquer the giant climbing boulder?

Most parks are open from dawn until dusk, so opening hours change depending on the season. Call 020 8356 8428 to check.

Any green space with the word ‘common’ in the name is open 24 hours a day.
CLISSOLD PARK

Clissold Park, in Stoke Newington, is one of Hackney’s best-loved traditional parks. Its animal enclosures, ponds, aviary and butterfly dome make it an ideal spot for nature lovers.

What’s Available

Children
✓ Children’s play area for all ages of children and young people
✓ Paddling pool May to September
✓ One o’clock club for under fives. Free drop-in to play with other families. For more information, call 020 8809 6700
✓ Dog-free areas

Sports
✓ Tennis courts – to book a tennis court, phone 020 7254 4235 or go to hackneycitytennisclubs.co.uk
✓ Multi-use games area
✓ Table tennis table
✓ Wheels park for skaters and BMXers

Café and other facilities
✓ Café in Grade II building open seven days a week
✓ Refreshment kiosk
✓ Clissold House function rooms (near the café)
✓ Toilets

Nature
✓ Aviary and animal enclosures
✓ Butterfly dome open May to September
✓ Organic food growing area
✓ River and ponds with dipping platform
✓ Fountains

Clissold Park User Group
A local community group for those who love the park clissoldpark.com

Green Lanes, N16 9HJ
For parks enquiries phone 020 8356 8428
Key

Children
1  Children’s play area
2  Paddling pool
3  One o’clock club
4  Dog free area

Sports
5  Tennis courts
6  Multi-use games area
7  Table tennis table
8  Wheels park for skaters and BMXers

Café and other facilities
9  Café in grade II building
9  Clissold House
9  Toilets
10 Refreshment kiosk

Nature
11  Aviary and animal enclosures
12  Butterfly dome
13  Organic food growing area
14  Pond
15  Fountains
16  Dipping platform
HACKNEY DOWNS

Hackney Downs is at the geographical centre of Hackney and first opened to the public in 1884. It has a wide range of newly refurbished facilities, including a pavilion, team changing rooms and a community room.

What’s Available

Children
✓ Children’s play area

Sports
✓ Basketball courts
✓ Floodlit multi use games area
✓ Community room (available for hire)
✓ Team changing rooms
✓ Tennis courts (hard courts, two floodlit)
✓ Athletics track (seasonal)

To book, phone 020 8986 7955 or visit hackney.gov.uk/sports-pitches-courts

Did you know?
Hackney employs Park Keepers to open and close the parks and keep the parks and their users safe. They are also responsible for filling up paddling pools and cleaning toilets. Some of our larger parks have a permanent keeper, but they also patrol smaller parks on a regular basis.

Please help keep our parks clean and tidy and help our busy park keepers by clearing up after your visit and putting your litter in the bins provided.
Key

Children
1  Play area

Sports
2  Basketball courts
3  Floodlit multi use games area
4  Community room
5  Team changing rooms
6  Tennis courts
7  Athletics track
HACKNEY MARSHES AND MABLEY GREEN

With more than 80 pitches, this area is the spiritual home of Sunday league football. A recent multi-million pound investment has improved the pitches, changing rooms, footpaths, cycleways and community facilities.

What’s available

Sports
✓ Football and mini football pitches on Hackney Marsh – call 020 8986 7955 to book pitches
✓ Rugby pitches
✓ Cricket pitches
✓ Synthetic football pitch and full-size grass pitches at Mabley Green
✓ Changing rooms at both sites
✓ Cycle paths
✓ Trim trails (wood multi-gym apparatus) and an Adizone outdoor gym at Mabley Green
✓ Climbing rock at Mabley Green

Children
✓ Staffed adventure playground in Daubeney Fields, just North of Mabley Green – see page 37
✓ Children’s play area

Nature
✓ Bird hide
✓ Conservation area
✓ River Lee – with walks and cycle paths
✓ Tree nursery
✓ Wildflower meadow on Mabley Green

Other facilities at the Hackney Marshes Centre
✓ Café/bar
✓ Toilets
✓ Park Warden office
✓ Education/meeting rooms at the Marshes centre

Hackney Marshes User Group is made up of local people who aim to protect and enhance Hackney Marshes, including East Marsh and Wick Woodland. Find out more at: sustainablehackney.org.uk/hmug

Lee Valley
Hackney Marshes links into the 26 mile long Lee Valley Park - a chain of green spaces along the River Lee. You can walk, cycle, go horse-riding, ice-skating, canoeing and more...

Visit leevalleypark.org.uk to see what’s on.

Off Homerton Rd – Marshes to the north, Mabley Green to the south – E9 5PF
For parks enquiries phone 020 8356 8428
Key

Sports
1 Football and mini football pitches
2 Cricket pitches
3 Rugby pitches
4 Synthetic football pitch
5 Changing rooms
6 Trim trail
7 Adizone outdoor gym
8 Climbing rock

Café and other facilities
9 Café/bar
9 Toilets
10 Education/meeting rooms

Nature
11 River Lee – with walks and cycle paths
12 Tree nursery
13 Wildflower meadow
14 Adventure playground
15 Play area
HAGGERSTON PARK

Haggerston Park is in the south west corner of Hackney, bordered by Queensbridge Road, Hackney Road and Goldsmith’s Row. It has landscaped formal gardens, a much-loved city farm, football and multi-use courts and loads of open space for play.

What’s Available:

Children
✓ Children’s play area
✓ Hackney City Farm – see page 25

Sports
✓ Artificial pitch – phone 020 8986 7955 to book
✓ Athletics track (seasonal)
✓ BMX cycle track. Hackney BMX club run training sessions. You can find them on twitter @hackneybmx, and visit them on Facebook.
✓ Multi-use games area for tennis, football, basketball, and netball. To book, phone Hackney parks service on 020 8356 8428
✓ Sports changing rooms
✓ Trim trail (wood multi-gym apparatus)
✓ Outdoor table tennis table (bring your own bats and balls)

Other facilities
✓ Café at the City Farm
✓ Toilets

Nature
✓ Conservation area
✓ Orchard
✓ Pond
✓ Extensive gardens (near Whiston Road)
**Key**

**Children**
1. Play area
2. Hackney City Farm

**Sports**
3. Artificial pitch
4. Athletics track
5. BMX
6. Multi-use games area
7. Changing rooms
8. Trim trail
9. Outdoor table tennis

**Other facilities**
10. Café at the City Farm
11. Toilets

**Nature**
12. Conservation area
13. Orchard
14. Pond
15. Gardens
LONDON FIELDS

London Fields is one of Hackney’s most popular parks, with a friendly feel particularly when the weather is fine. It has great exercise facilities, including swimming and tennis, and loads of space to relax. It even has free table tennis.

What’s Available:

Children
✓ Two children’s play areas
✓ Cricket pitch
✓ Paddling pool – May - September, 11am - 7pm, closed Mondays (except bank holidays)

Sports
✓ Lido (outdoor swimming pool) – see page 58
✓ Table tennis table
✓ Sports changing rooms
✓ Two tennis courts (hard court)– to book, call 020 7254 4235 or go to hackneyctennisclubs.co.uk
✓ Petanque (French bowling game)

Café and other facilities
✓ Café beside the Lido
✓ Two sets of toilets (open day time)
✓ Park Warden office

Nature
✓ Wildflower meadow in summer

London Fields User Group
Visit the parks users’ community website at londonfieldsusergroup.org.uk or search for the London Fields User Group on Facebook.
Key

Children
1  Children’s play areas
2  Cricket pitch
3  Paddling pool

Sports
4  Lido
5  Table tennis
6  Changing rooms
7  Two tennis courts (hard courts)
8  Pétanque (French bowling game)
9  Multi-use games area

Café and other facilities
10  Café beside the Lido
11  Toilets
12  Park Warden office

Nature
13  Wildflower meadow in summer
SHOREDITCH PARK

A green space in the urban area of Shoreditch that was created on the site of houses destroyed by bombing during World War II. It is a large and popular park with lots of facilities for children and adults alike.

What’s Available:

Children
✓ Play area
✓ Shoreditch adventure playground - see page 37

Sports
✓ Football pitch
✓ Rugby pitch
✓ Tennis courts – to book a tennis court, phone 020 7729 4485 or email britannia@gll.org
✓ Beach volleyball court
✓ Two ping pong tables
✓ Giant boulder for rock climbing
To book other courts (not tennis) and pitches phone 020 8356 8428

Other facilities
✓ Transport for London cycle hire docking station next to the play area
✓ Amphitheatre

Shoreditch Park User Group

Originally formed in 1966 to fight for the creation of the park, the users’ group has been active for almost 50 years. Email parks@hackney.gov.uk if you are interested in joining.
Key
Children
1. Play area
2. Adventure playground

Sports
3. Football pitch
4. Rugby pitch
5. Tennis courts
6. Beach volleyball court
7. Table tennis
8. Giant boulder for rock climbing

Other facilities
9. TfL cycle hire
10. Amphitheatre
SPRINGFIELD PARK

A hilly, beautifully landscaped park beside the river Lee, with lots of facilities and good views down to the water.

What’s Available:

Children
✓ Outdoor chess boards
✓ Children’s play area

Sports
✓ Table tennis table
✓ Cricket pitch – to book, phone 020 8986 7955
✓ Tennis courts – to book, phone 020 7254 4235
   or go to hackneycitytennisclubs.co.uk

Other facilities
✓ Toilets
✓ Café in mansion house
✓ Fountains
✓ Bandstand
✓ Park Warden office

Nature
✓ River
✓ Pond with fountain

Dogs in Parks
Hackney’s green spaces and parks are for the whole community and there are lots of places that are loved by dogs and their owners. But some people, especially small children, can find dogs intimidating. There are a number of dog control orders in place that mean dogs are not permitted in children’s playgrounds, sports courts, multi-use games areas, and some dog-free areas in parks and that they must be kept on leads in small parks and gardens, communal areas on estates and churchyards. For more information visit www.hackney.gov.uk/dogs-in-parks
Key

Children
1 Outdoor chess boards
2 Children’s play area

Sports
3 Table tennis table
4 Cricket pitch
5 Tennis courts
6 Rugby pitch

Café and other facilities
7 Toilets
7 Café in mansion house
7 Park warden office
8 Bandstand

Nature
9 River
10 Pond with fountain
BEST OF THE REST: HACKNEY’S OTHER PARKS

Millfields – Lea Bridge Road, E5 OAR
Much loved by its community, this large park is formed of three green spaces dissected by the Lea Bridge and Chatsworth roads. The River Lee runs along one side and there is a community orchard and conservation area. For children there’s a play area and loads of sports facilities including a trim trail, an athletics track (seasonal), basketball, a football pitch, cricket pitch and tennis courts – to book, phone 020 7254 4235 or go to hackneycitytennisclubs.co.uk
To find out more visit hackney.gov.uk/millfields-park.htm

Allens Gardens – Bethune Road, N16 8SB
Hidden away behind blocks of flats in Stoke Newington, these gardens are one of Hackney’s more unusual green spaces with mature trees and areas of woodland interspersed with grass and play areas.

De Beauvoir Square, N1 4LG
This is a classic London square. Come to wander and admire the beautiful rose beds and lawns, and get the kids active in the play area and exploring the wildlife garden. The square regularly hosts small neighbourhood events.

Abney Park Cemetery – Stoke Newington High St, N16 0LH
No longer an active cemetery, this wonderful tree-filled space became a nature reserve many years ago. There are lots of overgrown paths to explore and fascinating history around every corner. A range of walks and children’s events runs throughout the year. Open from 8am to dusk (closing times vary).

Visitors Centre
Telephone: 020 7275 7557
Email: info@abneypark.org
(open 10am – 2pm, Monday – Friday)
EXPLORE MORE OUTDOORS

Hackney has even more to offer with special spots to explore for those with a sense of curiosity and adventure. Check out some of these hidden gems in the borough.

St Mary’s Secret Garden
50 Pearson Street, London, E2 8EL. Corner of Appleby Street and Pearson Street, just off Kingsland Road, behind the Geffrye Museum.

St Mary’s Secret Garden is a small but beautiful and busy garden in the middle of Haggerston. It is a very peaceful place but welcomes children to come and explore the four interlinking areas – a natural woodland, a food growing area, a sensory garden and an area of beautiful flower beds.

Telephone: 020 7739 2965
Email: info@stmarysgarden.org.uk (check for opening hours)

Dalston Eastern Curve Garden
13 Dalston Lane, E8 3DF. Entrance to the garden is located next to the Hackney Peace Carnival Mural, two minutes’ walk from Dalston Junction Overground Station.

The Dalston Eastern Curve Garden has been created on an old railway line. Wildlife-friendly trees and shrubs, including hazel, hawthorn and birch have been planted alongside butterfly bushes, bracken and other plants. The garden has beds for growing food, which are brimming with tomatoes, peppers and herbs grown by Dalston residents. A series of events, workshops, outdoor cooking sessions and gatherings are hosted throughout the year in a wooden pavilion.

Email: info@dalstongarden.org
Twitter: @easterncurve

Hackney City Farm
Haggerston Park at 1a Goldsmiths Row, London E2 8QA

If your children love animals, then a trip to the farm could get them active for hours without them even realising. Hackney has all the farmyard favourites right in the heart of the city with ginger pigs, donkeys, golden Guernsey goats, sheep, rabbits, chickens and ducks. The farm also has smaller animals and you can spot rabbits and guinea pigs in their hutches.

Telephone: 020 7729 6381
Email: farm@hackneycityfarm.co.uk
Twitter: @hackneycityfarm
Elastic jump rope

Also called Elastics, China Skips, Chinese Skipping or Rubber Band skipping, this game is popular all over the world, including playgrounds and parks in Hackney.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Four upwards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Players:</td>
<td>Three or more people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space:</td>
<td>Playground, pavement, park, hallway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment:</td>
<td>A piece of elastic, buy at a sewing shop or haberdashery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How to play

1. Make a loop using a piece of elastic about three to four metres long and one centimetre thick. Tie the knot very tight.

2. Two players stand opposite each other about two metres apart with the elastic around their ankles and feet apart so the elastic makes a rectangular loop. If you don’t have enough players, use sturdy chairs to hold the elastic.

3. The third player then jumps in and out of the elastic band loop or on top of it forming a pattern with their feet. A routine is suggested on the opposite page, but your child can invent their own.

4. Players take it in turns to perform the routine. If they complete it successfully, the two players holding the elastic bring it higher — moving it from around their ankle level to their knees, thighs, hips or waist level. The third player has to jump higher each time. If they don’t complete the routine, they are out and another player swaps in.
Variations

- To increase the difficulty, only let the player jumping touch the elastic when they have to, or they are out.
- Players holding the elastic can help by saying instructions out loud.
ELASTIC SKIPPING 1

Start with the basics
This simple routine will get you used to the game and where the elastic is.

1. Outside – Start with one foot either side of the elastic loop

2. Inside – Jump so that both feet are inside the loop

3. Outside – Both feet outside again

4. Right foot in

5. Left foot in

6. Outside – Back to the start

7. On – Finish by landing with one foot on either side of the elastic
ELASTIC SKIPPING 2

🌟 Over and Out
This routine is a bit more difficult and involves hooking the elastic over your feet and then jumping free.

1. Start with both feet outside on the same side facing the loop
2. Jump over the loop, hooking the nearest side of the elastic over your feet as you go
3. From where you land jump forward again, releasing the elastic. Repeat on the other side.
4. Jump back over one more time, hooking the elastic,
5. Now pivot one foot and open your feet to form a diamond
6. Next the tricky bit, jump completely out of the loop releasing the elastic
7. Finish in the outside position

IT'S GREAT OUTDOORS
**Tag – You’re it!**

Tag is the perfect game for a day in the park. You can play this simple game almost anywhere, with no equipment but you need a bit of space to run around.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Three and up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Players:</td>
<td>Better with three or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space:</td>
<td>Can be done indoors, but the more space the better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment:</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once you’ve found a safe place to play, chose one player to be ‘it’. They shut their eyes and count to ten while the other players start running. When they reach ten the player who is it opens their eyes and starts to chase the others. When they tag another player, that player becomes it.

**Variations on tag:**

**Zombies**
One child is a zombie and the rest are humans. When the zombie tags another child they too become a zombie. The child who avoids becoming a zombie the longest is the winner. Groaning and walking like a zombie is optional – but a lot more fun!

**Stuck in the mud**
When a child is tagged they stand still with their feet apart and arms out. They can only be released if another player crawls through their legs. The game is up when everyone is stuck.

With a load of trees to run behind and between, the forest in Haggerston Park is brilliant for a game of tag. Or try Wick Woodland for a wilder adventure. Or what about the tree circle in Millfields park, which sometimes doubles as an outdoor cinema.
Pair tag
Players run in pairs with linked arms. The child who is “it” tries to link arms with one of the pairs. If they are successful, they join that pair, and the person on the other side lets go and becomes “it.”

Snake tag
The children form a snake by holding hands or shoulders in a line. The “head” of the snake has to try and tag the “tail”, while staying together. If the “head” tags the “tail”, they swap ends.

Traffic lights
Another variation of tag that can be adapted to suit all ages – it can help children with their colours or can teach older children about road safety.

How to play:
1. There are three commands – ‘Green’ means go, ‘Amber’ means slow, ‘Red’ means stop. You can shout the commands or hold up coloured circles.
2. When you shout ‘Green’ players should run around as fast as they can. When you shout ‘Amber’ they should creep slowly and quietly. When you shout ‘Red’ they should stop still like statues. If you catch someone moving they are out or you can start again.
3. With older children, choose one player to be the ‘Traffic Light’. They stand a short distance away from the others with their back turned. On green the others run around as usual but on amber they start creeping towards the traffic light and try to touch them on the shoulder. Then the traffic light says ‘Red’ and turns around. The others must stand still. If the ‘traffic light’ sees anyone move, they have to return to the starting positions. If no one moves the traffic light must turn back around.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 until one of the other players reaches the traffic light and touches their shoulder. This person then becomes the traffic light and the game starts from the beginning.

Adem Akanel, a Hackney Playworker, says:
“The best game for getting kids running around and working up a sweat is 40-40. You choose somewhere as “home” – we normally use a wooden structure in the playground, but a wall or a tree would work. Then whoever is ‘it’ shuts their eyes and counts to 40 while the rest run away. The person who is it must protect “home” by chasing the others, while they try to get back and touch it without getting tagged. Whoever gets back last is ‘it’ the next time.”
**Treasure Hunts**

Collecting or hunting for treasure is a fun way of exploring your surroundings, whether indoors or out.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>Change the type of treasure to suit the age of the child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Players:</td>
<td>One child or many</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space:</td>
<td>Can be done indoors, but the more space the better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment:</td>
<td>None – use the materials around you</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How to play a basic treasure hunt**

Find something to hide – a brightly coloured toy, a scarf or even a plastic spoon will do. Ask the child to cover their eyes while you hide it – how well you hide the object depends on how old the child is. You can give clues by saying “warmer” when they’re getting closer to the object or “colder” when they are moving away. Or you could tell the child “Sky” if the object is high up, “sea” if it’s low down or “land” if it is in between.

**Got a group of children – not try the roses game!**

1. Divide into two teams – the white roses and the red roses.
2. The white roses go first and hide the treasure. The treasure can be anything from a ball to an apple or a smooth stone.
3. To find the treasure, the red roses chase the white roses and when they catch one, they are given a clue. Once the white rose player has given a clue they are released and can run away again.
4. Once the red roses find the treasure, it is their turn to hide it.
**Collecting treasure**

Rather than hiding an object, challenge your child to find treasure of their own outside or around the house. Ask your child for certain things to bring back to you, for example a yellow leaf, a flat stone or something green. If your child is younger you could look at the treasures together and talk about what they are and where they found them.

Depending on the age of the players you can choose themes, for example textures (bring back something dry, something cool, something soft), shapes (something long, something round), colours, etc.

Pretend you are all explorers. When you are out on a walk, why not give them a list of things to find or collect along the way?

**A Hackney Scavenger Hunt**

There’s plenty to see in Hackney – your child will be so busy looking for everything on their list that they won’t realise they have walked miles. Why not try one of these seasonal lists as a starter. If your child is a little older they could take photos with a camera or mobile phone when they find them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer</th>
<th>Autumn</th>
<th>Winter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Sunglasses</td>
<td>✓ A red leaf</td>
<td>✓ A blue hat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Ice cream van</td>
<td>✓ An acorn</td>
<td>✓ Ear muffs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ A tartan blanket</td>
<td>✓ Spider’s web</td>
<td>✓ A red scarf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Someone mowing the lawn</td>
<td>✓ A squirrel</td>
<td>✓ A stick that looks like a Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Three pigeons</td>
<td>✓ A heart shaped leaf</td>
<td>✓ A perfectly round puddle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Red flip-flops</td>
<td>✓ A stripy scarf</td>
<td>✓ A snowball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Someone reading a book</td>
<td>✓ A brown bird</td>
<td>✓ A tree that is still green</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ A Barbeque</td>
<td>✓ A chestnut or acorn fallen from a tree</td>
<td>✓ Salt for gritting the road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Ice cubes</td>
<td>✓ Someone collecting leaves</td>
<td>✓ A shovel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ A stripy T-shirt</td>
<td>✓ The trail of an airplane in the sky</td>
<td>✓ Footprints</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GAMES WITH EQUIPMENT

Buying equipment for your children to play with needn’t cost the earth. For a few pounds you can buy a simple skipping rope, a ball or a hula hoop that will keep your child active for hours. A cheap box of chalks can lead to hours of fun in a paved area.

🌟 Hula-Hula!

Hula-hooping is a fun way to get active. It takes coordination and fitness to get the hula hoop spinning around your waist. But don’t stop there. It can be spun around the legs, arms and hands too.

**Hula shoots**

Use the hula hoop as a target. Ask younger children to throw a ball or bean bag into a hoop on the floor or hang it in a tree to make it more difficult. Vary the level of difficulty by moving the hoop further away, angling it horizontally or hanging it higher.

**Hula hoopla!**

Place different markers on the floor – this can be cones, toys, water bottles. Then take it in turns to toss the hula hoop and try to get it around one of the markers. Make it more complicated by giving different scores for different coloured markers.

**Hula catch**

Throw the hula hoop in the air and then catch it. How high can you get the hula hoop? Great for developing hand-eye coordination.

**Hula race**

Keeping the hula hoops upright, spin and roll them along the ground. How far can you get them to roll before falling over? Whoever rolls their hula hoop furthest is the winner. Can your child roll the hoop away and run past to catch it before it falls over?

🌟 Skipping

Skipping is fun, versatile and doesn’t take that much room. It can be done with one child or with groups of friends and is great for developing balance and coordination skills.
Start with the basics and then come up with variations, for example try running as you skip, skipping backwards, or have two people skip with the same rope at the same time.

There are lots of different skipping rope games and rhymes to go with them. Ask your child if there are any rhymes that are popular with children at their school or look up ideas on the internet.

**Ball Games**

An inexpensive ball can keep children occupied for hours. As well as football, volleyball and netball, there are lots of simple variations on catch games.

For example, try ‘Categories’ – get all the players standing in a circle and decide on a category for that round, for example animals. Each player must say the name of an animal before they catch the ball. If they can’t come up with a name, or if they miss the ball, they are out. The ball is thrown randomly. The last player remaining wins the game and a new category is chosen.

**Chalk it up**

If the only place your children have to play is a patch of concrete, you can liven up their games with a few sticks of chalk. You could try the traditional hopscotch or make a life-size board-game with numbered squares. Use a bean bag as part of the game, throwing it to a certain square and getting the players to collect it.
ADVENTURE PLAYGROUNDS

You may have seen these large interesting spaces, many with unusual climbing structures, where children and young people can play after school and in the holidays. They allow children to play freely and take risks, knowing that friendly staff are there to help if needed. Adventure playgrounds are fenced off but are open access, with registered children free to come and go as they please.

Creating camps, building dens and other self-made constructions, growing plants and vegetables, making fires and cooking on them, and making friends are just some of the things your children can do. In adventure playgrounds children are there first of all to have fun, but they are also learning for themselves how to deal with challenges and risks and build the resilience needed to cope with life’s challenges.

Adventure Playgrounds are generally for children aged six to sixteen but some are open to younger children if accompanied by an adult.

Find out more about your local adventure playground by calling one of the numbers on the opposite page.
Pauline Wilson has run the Shoreditch Adventure Playground for the last five years. She says:

“A lot of kids grow up in this playground – it’s like a little family. It’s lovely to see kids who at six years old didn’t have much confidence now climbing up to the top of the highest tower. The kids can run around here, which many don’t have space to do at home.

It helps them learn their limits and we are always here – offering a little encouragement or stepping back when needed.”

Name and address of Adventure Playgrounds

Apples and Pears Adventure Playground
Pearson Street, E2 8EL
020 7729 6062

Evergreen Adventure Playground
Beehive Close, off Richmond Road, E8 3JT
020 7275 9004

Hackney Marsh Adventure Playground
Daubeney Fields, off Kingsmead Way, E9 5P
020 8986 7245

Homerton Grove Adventure Playground
Wardle Street, E9 6BX
020 8985 9202

Shakespeare Walk Adventure Playground
Shakespeare Walk, N16 8TB
020 7249 8405

Shoreditch Adventure Playground
Mintern Street, N1 5EF
020 7729 3770
PLAY AREAS

Play is an essential part of every child’s life and is vital for the enjoyment of childhood. Many of Hackney’s play areas benefited from major investment a few years ago, and have quirky, fun equipment, lovely landscaping and space for parents to relax whilst children enjoy new experiences.

Hackney’s best playgrounds were designed by some of the world’s foremost play experts to provide the very best play time for children. They are designed to get imaginations fired up and keep children interested and active on many repeat visits throughout their childhood and early teens. There are play areas all over Hackney in parks, estates and public spaces. More than 30 of them have been modernised in the last five years – check them out.

The play area at Frampton Park Estate, off Frampton Park Road, E9, was redesigned in 2009 and features a sand pit and boulders, climbing trees and a net swing, plus a play garden for all the family.

Stonebridge Gardens, Haggerston Road, E8 4EP, has been home to a blue mosaic snake since 2010. The play area is located by the brand new Haggerston Station, part of the East London Line. The play space includes nest swings and monkey bars built onto the existing trees, a sand pit, multiple person swings, a three person seesaw, hammocks and a trampoline.

Many of the play areas are dog-free and some are designated smokefree areas, to protect children at play. Some include accessible structures, with ramps and low-level activities for children with disabilities. Call 020 8356 2749 for details.
### List of Play Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area Name</th>
<th>Address Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allen Gardens</td>
<td>Bethune Road, N16 5BD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aske Garden</td>
<td>Pitfield Street, N1 6JX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banister House</td>
<td>Banister House, Homerton High Street, E9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadway Market Green</td>
<td>Jackman Street, off Broadway Market, E8 4QX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butterfield Green</td>
<td>Shakespeare Walk, N16 8TX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buxton Court</td>
<td>Windsor Terrace, off City Road N1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clapton Square</td>
<td>Clapton Square, off Lower Clapton Road, E5 8HP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clissold Park</td>
<td>Greenway Close, off Green Lanes, N4 2EY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daubeney Fields</td>
<td>Meeson Street, E5 0EA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Beauvoir</td>
<td>Portelet Court, De Beauvoir Estate, N1</td>
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<tr>
<td>De Beauvoir Square</td>
<td>De Beauvoir Square, N1 4LG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evelyn Court</td>
<td>Amhurst Road, E8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frampton Park Estate</td>
<td>South of estate, off Frampton Park Road E9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hackney Downs</td>
<td>Downs Park Road, E5 8NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haggerston Park</td>
<td>Audrey Street, off Goldsmith’s Row, E2 8QH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harman Estate</td>
<td>Kingsland Road, N1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landfield Estate</td>
<td>Evering Road, E5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Springfield Park-Lea View</td>
<td>Lea View House, Springfield, E5</td>
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<tr>
<td>London Fields (x2)</td>
<td>London Fields Westside, E8 3EU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Melbourne Green</td>
<td>Daubeney Street, Clapton Park Estate, E5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Millfields Park</td>
<td>Lea Bridge Road, E5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Milton Gardens</td>
<td>Shakespeare Walk, N16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nye Bevan</td>
<td>Nye Bevan Estate, Overbury Street, E5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portland Rise Estate</td>
<td>Portland Rise, off Seven Sisters’ Road, N4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regents Court Estate</td>
<td>Regents Court Estate, Haggerston, E8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhodes Estate</td>
<td>Dalston Lane, E8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoreditch Park</td>
<td>Mintern Street, N1 5EF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somerford Grove</td>
<td>Somerford Grove, N16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stamford Hill (Guinness Trust)</td>
<td>Stamford Hill, N16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stonebridge Park</td>
<td>Haggerston Road, E8 4EP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trowbridge Village Green</td>
<td>Eastway, Hackney Wick, E9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wenlock Barn</td>
<td>Murray Grove Shoreditch, N1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GET CYCLING, IT’S WHEELY GOOD!

Did you know that Hackney is London’s cycling borough? More people cycle in Hackney than anywhere else in London, and we have the fourth highest levels of cycling in the country!

That’s because riding a bike in Hackney is really easy once you know how, just like the saying, ‘as easy as riding a bike’.

If your family like cycling you can cycle from Regent’s Canal in the south of the borough, up past the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and to Hackney Marshes without going on a road. You can then carry on right out of London for a bigger adventure by just staying on the towpath! And you could even get the train home again.

Learning to cycle

There are lots of ways to learn how to ride a bike in Hackney.

Bring the whole family to a free Family Cycle Training session. For details of where and when call 020 7232 4383. Booking ahead is recommended, especially during busy summer months.

Pupils can take a Bikeability course at school in year five or six and some schools offer practice sessions for younger riders. Ask at your school if this is on offer.

When children are old enough to move up to secondary school, they can take a transition cycle lesson. An instructor will help to plan a route from home to the new school and they’ll practice the journey with you. To arrange a free lesson, contact 020 7232 4383 or cycletraining.co.uk
HEALTHY SNACKS ON THE GO

With all that activity, your children might need to refuel on the run. To make sure your picnic doesn’t undo all your good healthy intentions, follow this advice from Jane Wilson, Head of Dietetics in Hackney.

The main event

Making a sandwich? Make sure to add some salad, which is a great way to help meet your five a day. Wholemeal or granary bread is best – go for thick slices. If you don’t like this type of bread, have you tried half and half bread?

Try a couscous or pasta salad as your source of carbohydrate.
Crunchy vegetable sticks like celery or carrots with a reduced fat hummus or beetroot dip can be a good alternative to sandwiches.

Drinks

Have a carton of 100% fruit juice (unsweetened) as a drink. This counts towards your five a day.

Have a bottle of water instead of a fizzy drink. Watch out for flavoured waters, many have a lot of sugar added. Have you tried adding cucumber, slices of lemon or strawberries to your bottle of tap water? It’s flavoured water without added sugar.

Cheese and pineapple on sticks. Cheese or dairy foods are high in protein and calcium which young people need to help build strong healthy bones and teeth. So do include some diary food in your picnic.

Potato salad – try new potato salad leaving the skin on. This helps to increase the fibre.

Snacks

Instead of a biscuit or a sweet as a snack try an apple, a pear or carrot sticks or baby tomatoes. Fruit makes one of the best snacks. Have a currant / fruit bun instead of a pastry or cake.

A small helping of nuts with seeds can be good. Nuts do contain fibre and protein but also a lot of fat, so be careful not to eat too many.
MAKE YOUR STREET A PLACE FOR PLAY

Would you like your children to be able to play out near home?

Hackney’s Play Streets scheme means you can apply for regular, short road closures, so children have the chance to play out more safely, make friends and get a healthy dose of activity. But Play Streets aren’t just for the youngsters. They also bring the grown-ups together – making the neighbourhood friendlier for all.

How Play Streets work

On the day, residents close the road using lightweight ‘Road Closed’ signs provided for free by the Council. People living in the street can still drive in and out at five mph, guided by neighbours volunteering as stewards. Through traffic is redirected.

Children can bring their own toys such as bicycles, scooters, hoops, skipping ropes and chalk. Street play gives them the chance to play energetically – running or racing around on their bikes, playing football and skipping.

Halima Begum’s family took part in an after-school Play Street outside Princess May School: “My children were very excited when they saw they could play in the street with their friends. They loved riding up and down on their bikes and doing chalk drawings. Afterwards all they wanted to know was: When can we do it again? And they were much calmer and easier to settle when it was bedtime!”

How to apply

Start by discussing the idea with your neighbours, and if possible hold an informal meeting. If there is support, you can apply to Hackney Council using the downloadable application form and petition template.

You can apply to do it weekly, monthly, quarterly or as a one-off session – the choice is yours. Do bear in mind you need to ensure you have enough people available to steward.

Support and advice

For free advice and practical help with getting started, visit playingout.net, email hackney@playingout.net or call 07947 095069. For an application form go to: hackney.gov.uk/play-streets
Whatever the weather
**RAIN OR SHINE**

Hackney has lots to offer young families looking to get active whatever the weather. There are plenty of ways that you can get your kids moving around and being active whether that’s at home or by visiting one of Hackney’s great leisure centres or swimming pools.

Children’s Centres are a fantastic resource for young families. Or check out your local church or community centre to see if they run any exercise classes that children can get involved in. Or try some of the simple activities and games that can be done at home.

**Children’s Centres**

Children’s Centres are designed specifically for children under five and their families in Hackney. There are more than 20 in Hackney, each offering a huge range of free, fun activities for children. Make the most of your local children’s centre where you can get health, family support and education services for you and your children. Children’s centres offer free stay and play sessions; some of them have themes such as music, dance, cooking or messy and creative play. You can also seek advice on parenting or your child’s health; find childcare; learn new skills or just make friends!

Contact any of the children’s centres opposite to get a timetable of what’s on locally.

**Remember:** There’s an old saying that there is no such thing as bad weather – just the wrong clothing. With a pair of wellies and a waterproof coat, going out in the rain and splashing about in all the puddles can be one of the most fun things to do if it’s raining.
Ann Tayler Children’s Centre  
1 - 13 Triangle Road, Westgate Street, E8 3RP  
020 7275 6020

Brook Children’s Centre  
Brook Community School, Dalston Lane, E8 1AS  
020 7923 9819

Clapton Park Children’s Centre  
161 Daubeney Road, E5 0EP  
020 8986 7437

Comberton Children’s Centre  
10 Comberton Road, E5 9PU  
020 8806 0680

Comet Nursery School and Children’s Centre  
20 Halcomb Street, N1 5RF  
020 7749 9850

Daubeney Children’s Centre/ Homerton Sure Start  
Daubeney Road, E5 0EG  
020 8525 7040

Factory Children’s Centre (Islington)  
107 Matthias Road, N16 8NP  
020 7923 9879

Fernbank Children's Centre (link to Jubilee Primary School)  
1A Fountayne Road, N16 7EA  
020 8806 6622

Children's Centre at Gainsborough  
Berkshire Road, E9 5ND  
020 8525 9020

Hillside Children’s Centre  
1 Leatherhead Close, Holmleigh Road, N16 5QR  
020 8800 7325

Ihsan Children’s Centre  
66-68 Cazenove Road, N16 6AA  
020 8806 1147 ext. 3

Linden Children’s Centre  
86-92 Rectory Road, N16 7SH  
020 7254 9939

Lubavitch Children’s Centre  
1 Northfield Road, N16 5RL  
020 8809 9050

Mapledene & Queensbridge Children’s Centre  
54 Mapledene Road, E8 3LE  
020 7249 8139

Millfields Children’s Centre  
Elmcroft Street, E5 0SQ  
020 8525 6410

Minik Kardes Children's Centre  
53-55 Balls Pond Road, N1 4BW  
020 7923 7226

Morningside Children’s Centre  
Chatham Place, E9 6LL  
020 8525 2400

Sebright Children’s Centre  
Haggerston Park, Queensbridge Road, E2 8NP  
020 7749 1210

Thomas Fairchild Children’s Centre  
Napier Grove, N1 7HX  
020 7253 9469

Children’s Centre at Tyssen  
Oldhill Street, N16 6QA  
020 8806 4130

Wentworth Nursery School and Children’s Centre  
Granard House, Bradstock Road, E9 5EX  
020 8985 3491 ext. 2

Woodberry Down Children’s Centre  
Spring Park Drive, Green Lanes, N4 2NP  
020 8815 3270
Whatever the Weather

One way to get your baby moving is to put toys down just in front of them to encourage them to crawl. Babies want to move, so get them out of their buggies and cots and create a safe place for them to move around at home or outside – or bring them to a children’s centre where they can play with other babies and new toys in a space designed for them. It also gives mum or dad a chance to make new friends.

**Children’s Centre Fit Kids games**

Fit Kids is an activity class for children, which runs weekly at certain children’s centres. One of the children’s favourite games is ‘Feed the lions’. First spread some coloured rings out on the ground – these are the lions’ mouths (you could also use circles of card or empty boxes if you don’t have rings). Then give each child a beanbag – this is the lions’ food.

Ask the children to run around and when you shout ‘Feed the lions!’ they must freeze on the spot and then throw their food into the lion’s mouth. If they miss they must perform a forfeit, which can be a burst of activity like running on the spot for ten seconds or doing jumping jacks. For the next round, instead of running around, the child must tiptoe or walk while bending down to touch their heels, or walk in slow motion.

Ola Osinowo has been a Health Visitor in Hackney for five years and says she can tell the babies and children who are regular visitors to Children’s Centres. She says:

“You can see the difference in a baby that is well stimulated and active. They are more contented and sociable. As they develop, their speech is better and they have more confidence.”
Chris Coker, a Fitness instructor who runs the Fit Kids classes around Hackney, says:

“With children, it’s often the simplest things that are most effective. There are lots of easy games that you can play at home, in a park or on a patch of concrete that will help develop speed and reaction times, helping with development.”
ISLAND HOPPING

Get your child’s imagination going, as well as their feet, by turning your living room floor or your local park into a sea of islands. The aim of the game is to get from one end to the other, while staying off the ground. That’s why the game is also known as ‘off-grounding’.

🌟 How to play

1. First get your children to create their ‘islands’. Indoors you could scatter cushions on the floor or cut island shapes from pieces of newspaper. Outdoors try using rugs, cardboard boxes, hula hoops or plastic sheets. Anything that is big enough for your child to jump onto or into.

2. Pretend that the space you are in is the sea. Explain that the aim of the game is to get from one end to the other, by jumping or hopping across the islands without getting their feet wet by touching the floor.

3. To help spark their imagination, point out boats, mermaids, fish and sharks. Watch out – the alligators might eat you if you step in the swamp!

Variations:

- Number each island and shout which one the child has to jump to next.
- Throw a beanbag onto one of the islands and ask the child to hop from one island to the other to collect it and hop back without the other foot touching the floor.
- Make different coloured islands and create new rules where the child can only land on one foot or two feet, or their left foot or right foot depending on the colour.
- Turn your islands into lily pads on a pond. You could cut simple lily pads out of green paper. Now your child is a frog and must jump and land with two feet. Ribbit! Ribbit!

Age: As soon as they can toddle and jump
Players: 1 or more
Space: Anywhere with a few metres of floor space, indoor or out
Equipment: Use your imagination
**Obstacle courses:**

Make the game harder by creating a mini obstacle course. Try using some of these things from around the house.

- place a stick or a mop or broom handle across two chairs – the child must jump over or crawl under without it falling down.
- use a skipping rope, garden hose or dressing gown belt on the floor to follow like a tightrope – or use two to create a river to jump across.
- Use a blanket or bed sheet to crawl under.
- Use toys, books, tins or cereal boxes to create a slalom course to weave in and out of.

**Did you know?**

All Hackney’s adventure playgrounds are great for kids who love ‘off-grounding’. They can jump across different platforms and structures, navigate wobbly planks, and swing from hoop to hoop without once touching the floor. See page 37 for details.

Clissold Park has some wooden stepping stones by the old bowls pavilion and in Victoria Park, just south of Hackney, there are musical stepping stones in the pools playground. Why not pay a visit and give the game a musical twist?

**Raining & pouring? – go puddle hopping!**

Why not try playing this game outside with wellies and raincoats on! Hop or jump from puddle to puddle to get from one place to another.
SOFT PLAY

For an alternative indoor play time visit one of Hackney’s three soft play areas. Prices range from £2 to £5 depending on your child’s age – some are only open during the week and opening hours change in school holidays so please call to check opening hours.

Kidz Mania
28 Powell Rd, E5 8DJ
020 8533 5556

An indoor children’s playground in the heart of Hackney with extensive equipment for climbing, running, balancing, jumping and sliding on.

Pirates Playhouse
Green Lanes, N4 2HA
020 8800 1771

A five-level play frame with slides, ball ponds, rope bridges and soft play area.

Soft Play at Queensbridge Sports & Community Centre
30 Holly Street, London, E8 3XW
020 7923 7773

A fun-filled, soft ‘n’ squidgey environment with innovative play sessions for children between the ages of six months to under five years.
**HACKNEY PLAYBUS**

Hackney Playbus is a mobile play project that has been taking exciting and stimulating play opportunities onto housing estates in Hackney for over 40 years. The playbus runs from a brightly painted double decker bus, fully converted for early years play, with lots of toys and games on board. Playbus sessions are fun for all the family, providing a chance to be healthy, get active, play out and make new friends.

The playbus runs sessions for children aged under five years old in term time and under eight years old in school holidays with their parents/carers.

For details, call **020 8510 3335** or **07973 183607** or email **info@hackneyplaybus.org**

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**ALBION KIDS SHOW**

The project visits estates in Hackney and set up play areas where no play facilities exist. Their specially adapted vehicles and trailers enable them to take play opportunities into the child’s own environment. They engage and involve children in music, dance, games, circus skills, face painting, arts & crafts and sports. Their sessions allow children a safe place to play and get to know each other.

For details, call **020 8533 3101** or **020 8533 0114** or email **admin@albionkidsshow.org.uk**
PLAY FOR EVERY CHILD

All children and young people – whatever their ability, age or culture – should have the same opportunities to play and enjoy leisure and sporting activities.

Playing helps children learn how to negotiate, take risks and overcome obstacles and gives them opportunities to make friends. This is particularly important for disabled children, who can feel excluded and overprotected.

Many activities can be made suitable for all children by making small adjustments to the rules, the equipment used or the place the game is played. The most important thing is letting children and young people choose for themselves and allowing them to interact with each other.

The following checklist includes things to consider when encouraging children with special educational needs or disabilities in games and playing.

- Are there any potential barriers around the play area such as steep slopes, kerbs, narrow and uneven paths?
- Is there enough space in the play area and around the equipment for a wheelchair user to join in easily?
- Is there shade/shelter in case of strong sunlight or bad weather?
- Can you use colours or symbols instead of written signs?
- Does the play equipment offer a mix of interesting textures, shapes, solidity, weight, flexibility and temperatures to touch? Do they make a noise or vibrate?
- Is there a quiet area away from the more active areas for children who need a break?
- Where are the nearest toilets and changing facilities?
INCLUSIVE PLAY FOR DISABLED CHILDREN

Trinity Centre Saturday Club
Trinity Centre, Beechwood Road
Dalston, E8 3DY,
020 7249 6061

Sensory play sessions and regular days out run by fully qualified workers. Offers childcare and a safe play and learning environment for children of all abilities aged between 4 and 10 years old.

The Huddleston Centre
30 Powell Road, Clapton, E5 8DJ
020 8985 9089

Offers a range of activities including music, residential trips and taking part in fun and educational sessions on topics like independent living and health.

For disabled young people aged 9-25 years old.

Adventure Playgrounds
All of the adventure playgrounds in Hackney are accessible and have some equipment that is suitable for children who have a disability – see page 37.

S Pinter Youth Project
91 Fairholt Road, London, N16 5EP
020 8800 1662

Improve your skills and confidence whilst taking part in fun activities including drama and sports. Children with special educational needs or disabilities are integrated into all programmes. For children aged six to 12 years old.

Forest Road Hub
29 Forest Road, E8 3BY
020 8356 2200

For eight to 18 year olds. Give wheelchair basketball a try or set yourself a climbing challenge on the climbing wall. The climbing wall is accessible, so there are no limitations for who can give it a go.

Step By Step
Fourth Floor Offices, 97 Stamford Hill
London, N16 5DN
020 8802 2362

Offering fun and challenging activities such as swimming, ice-skating, African drumming and lots more. For children aged two to 11 years old who are Orthodox Jewish and/or have a disability.

Short Breaks Hackney
Visit the Short Breaks website for more ideas of inclusive places to go.
shortbreakshackney.com

KIDS Adventure Playground Hackney
Spring Lane, Big Hill, Clapton, E5 9HQ
020 8806 6149 www.kids.org.uk

An accessible green space within an urban environment, where children can freely choose their play in a setting that is supportive of their requirements.
ACTIVE INDOOR FUN

Don’t let the weather get the best of your best active intentions. There are still plenty of ways that you can get your kids moving around at home.

🌟 **Bad weather? It’s time to make music and dance!**

Pick a song or piece of music and get your children coming up with a dance routine.

- What about starting a dance-off? If there are a few children, they can work in teams and come up with their own routine to perform.

- See if you can gather together an audience – or an X-factor style judging panel. For younger children it might just be a gang of teddy bears.

- Make a home-made band or orchestra – sing into a hairbrush, play the saucepan drums, the tennis racket guitar or the keyboard on the coffee table.

- Make a simple musical instrument by finding a small plastic bottle or spice jar and adding different things to make different noises (pebbles, rice, paper clips, etc).

Nkiru Egwuonwu, mother of four is a volunteer at the Morningside Children’s centre near Morning Lane, E8. She says:

“My daughter loves to dance. If it’s bad weather we’ll put music on in the house and she will dance all day - even if her brothers are sitting with their fingers in their ears.”

🌟 **Building a secret den**

Children as young as two can enjoy the fun of creating their own secret world on a rainy day. This game can be a good way for different age groups to play together and get imaginations going. All you need is a sturdy table or a couple of chairs and some sheets, blankets or towels to drape down the sides of the table. Children will often think of their own adaptations depending on their age. Why not make a healthy picnic to eat in the den?

Playing cards can be used to make being active fun. Have a child pick a card and they must perform as many repetitions of a move as the number they pick. Pick a move that suits the age and skill of the child such as hop on one leg 10 times, bounce a ball and catch it three times, jumping jacks.
GROUP GAMES

If you have a big family or you are spending the day indoors with a group of children, try one of these group games.

🌟 The circle game

Children stand in a circle and take it in turns to copy a move by one of the players. To make it more complicated get the children to throw a ball to each other in a circle. When a child catches the ball, they make a move which everyone else has to copy, then they throw the ball to someone else who makes up a new move.

🌟 Follow the leader

Ask the children to walk around the room in a long line. The first child makes a move – such as hopping, clapping above their head, doing a twirl – that the rest of the children in the line have to follow. After a while, the children swap round so that the first in line moves to the back of the line and there’s a new leader. This can be done by playing music and swapping the leader when the music stops.
LEISURE CENTRES

Hackney has leisure centres in every corner of the borough providing a great range of fitness facilities, activities and classes. There are many activities just for kids including Toddlers’ World for the under fives, crèches, watersports, martial arts and holiday clubs.

Queensbridge Sports and Community Centre
30 Holly St, E8 3XW
020 7923 7773
better.org.uk/queensbridge

Queensbridge Sports and Community Centre is a small centre between Dalston and London Fields.
• Four badminton courts
• Exercise classes
• Sports hall
• Table tennis
• Basketball
• Volleyball
• Soft play area for under fives
• Specialist gymnastics equipment

Kings Hall Leisure Centre
39 Lower Clapton Road, E5 0NU
020 8985 2158
better.org.uk/kingshall

Kings Hall Leisure Centre in Clapton has a large gym, swimming pool, studio and sports hall.
• Large gym
• Two swimming pools (free swimming for disabled people, carers, under 18’s, and over 50s)
• Studio with a full range of exercise classes
• Sports hall
• SHOKK youth gym 8-15 years old

Britannia Leisure Centre
40 Hyde Rd, N1 5JU
020 7729 4485
better.org.uk/britannia

Britannia Leisure Centre, next to Shoreditch Park in Hoxton, is a fantastic local facility offering a wide range of activities for the whole community.
• Gym/fitness centre
• Climbing wall
• Sports hall for badminton, basketball, netball and much more...
• Swimming pool and swimming lessons (free swimming for disabled people, carers, under 18’s, and over 50s)
• Leisure pool with slide and wave machine
• Outdoor tennis
• Five-a-side football
• Netball courts
• Group exercise studio
• Squash court
• Women only sessions
• Facilities for children’s parties
Clissold Leisure Centre
63 Clissold Road, N16 9EX
020 7254 5574
better.org.uk/clissold

Clissold Leisure Centre is in Stoke Newington and has three pools, a gym and studio with fitness classes.
- Two 25m swimming pools (free swimming for disabled people, carers, under 18’s, and over 50s)
- Toddler pool
- Soft play
- Swimming lessons including people with disabilities
- Squash
- Gym with over 100 stations
- Sports hall
- Exercise classes
- Café/bar
- Crèche
- Birthday parties
- Improved disability access
- Holiday play scheme clubs and multi-sport drop-ins every school holiday
SWIMMING POOLS

Swimming in the indoor pools is FREE for under 18s, disabled people, carers, 50+ and over. Children have to pay a one-off £1.20 fee to register, before they can use the pool. All the indoor pools have swimming lessons. For opening hours, and information on costs contact the individual centres. You can also ask about the women’s only sessions, which are available at most pools.

Swimming at Britannia Leisure Centre
40 Hyde Road, N1 5JU
020 7729 4485
better.org.uk/britannia

- Leisure pool with wave machine

Swimming at Clissold Leisure Centre
63 Clissold Road, N16 9EX
020 7254 5574
better.org.uk/clissold

- Two 25m pools and a toddler pool

Swimming at Kings Hall Leisure Centre
39 Lower Clapton Road, E5 0NU
020 8985 2158
better.org.uk/kingshall

- 25m swimming pool

London Fields Lido
London Fields Westside, E8 3EU
020 7254 9038
better.org.uk/london-fields-lido

- 50m outdoor heated swimming pool
- Free swimming for people with disabilities and carers, no free swimming for under 18s

Paddling pools for toddlers in parks
These shallow paddling pools are open on certain days in the summer.

London Fields – see page 18
Clissold Park – see page 10

Parent and baby swim sessions
Most swimming pools have separate areas or times for parents with babies or toddlers. Babies will love the feel of being in the water, as well as gentle play or splashing in the pool. Just like adults, they use different muscles in the water so it’s good for their development too.
FUN IN THE WATER

If your kid loves to be in the swimming pool, but finds swimming lengths boring, why not try one of these fun water games?

🌟 Shark & fishes

A watery variation of tag. One player is the shark, who swims around trying to tag the others players who are the fishes. If someone is tagged, they become the shark. If the pool is quiet, see if all the fish can get from one side to the other without getting tagged.

🌟 Piggy in the middle

Pass a ball between two players while a third stands in the middle and tries to catch it. If they catch the ball, they swap places with the person who threw it.

🌟 Water dancing

Come up with a watery dance routine. You could split into two groups and have a dance-off. Why not create your own team of synchronised swimmers?

🌟 Sunken treasure

Some pools provide weights for diving games, which are great for kids with goggles. The idea is easy – throw one or more small weights into the pool. Have the kids race to find the object and pick it up first. Toss it into the shallow end for those who aren’t confident, deeper for those who are strong swimmers.

If the pool has floats, challenge your child to get one from one side of the pool to the other without using their hands. Can they do it with just their head or just their feet?
GET GOING WITH CHANGE4LIFE

Change4Life: Eat Well, Move More, Live Longer

These days, ‘modern life’ can mean that we’re a lot less active. With so many opportunities to watch TV or play computer games, and with so much convenience and fast food available, we don’t move about as much, or eat as well as we used to.

Why Join Change4Life?

Would you like loads of ideas and help to make the many small changes that add up to a happier, healthier future for you or your family? Then you already know why you should join Change4Life. More than a million people have already made a Change4Life - and more are joining in every day.

As part of Change4Life, you will receive tons of helpful information, recipes, tools, tips, and games for the kids. Once you register you’ll also receive a free welcome pack – one for the whole family, or one just for you. Search online for Change4Life to sign up.

Get going

Whatever our age, being physically active helps us to lead healthier and happier lives. By the time children start school, they need at least 60 minutes of activity daily but this can be done in short bursts of 10 minutes throughout the day. But it doesn’t have to be sport – dancing, running around and having fun outside count too.

Why should I encourage my kids to be active?
Don’t they get enough at school?

Kids should enjoy 60 minutes of activity on top of their school day. While kids are active at school, most of the time they are actually sitting down and can be happy just to chat to their friends in the playground instead of running around. It’s more fun if you make activity something the whole family can do together, and kids are more likely to join in if they see mum or dad doing it too.
10 Minute Shake Up

Change4Life with Disney has launched a major new campaign to help the four in five children who currently do not achieve the recommended 60 minutes of exercise per day and the 40% who do less than 30 minutes per day, by helping to break it down into 10 minute bursts of fun!

Through the 10 Minute Shake Up campaign, Change4Life and Disney will bring a little magic to families, with the ambition of getting kids across the country moving more and having fun.

Sign up for 10 Minute Shake Up and you will receive a free pack containing loads of FREE 10 Minute games, activities and moves inspired by children’s favourite Disney characters. Search online for Change4Life to sign up.

Mickey’s water race

• Get two containers.
• Fill one with water and then put them at opposite ends of the outdoor space.
• Using a small plastic cup, see how quickly the children can transfer all the water from one container to another.
• If they spill some water, ask them to do 20 star jumps on the spot as a forfeit.

Tip: Make it more fun by adding obstacles
THE BEST START IS AN ACTIVE START

Babies and toddlers really benefit from being active from a very young age – it builds their brains as well as their muscles. Give your baby’s development a boost by encouraging them to explore and helping them move around freely and safely. Once your child can walk without holding on to something, try to keep them active for about three hours a day. Here are some ideas for games and activities to try with babies and toddlers.

Wiggles and wriggles
Getting babies out of their cots or pushchairs for a cuddle or a game of peek-a-boo is a great way to get them moving. Babies love to kick their legs and wiggle about so make sure they have enough space when they are lying down.

Tummy time
Tummy time for young babies is an important way for them to build up their strength and posture. They’ll learn to roll over, and will start to try to crawl.

Crawling
Place a colourful ball just beyond your babies reach and encourage them to get the ball. From about three months, they will start crawling towards the things that catch their eye. From six months onwards you can try rolling the ball – lie on your tummies facing your baby. Roll a ball to the baby and encourage them to push it back to you. Increase the distance to make it more difficult.

Get your baby moving and stretching with the post box game:
Reaching for, pulling and pushing toys or other objects are all simple ways to stimulate your baby and improve their coordination. Make a slot in a cardboard box and spread a few things on the floor for them to post into the box. Choose objects that have a different textures or weights to make different sounds when they drop into the box – for example a wooden spoon, a bunch of keys. Put the objects just out of the toddler’s reach so that they have to stretch to reach them and put them in the box – just before the post man arrives to empty it.
**Toddling around**

Practice makes perfect, and it’s an important part of growing up, so it’s good to try and make sure your baby is free to have a toddle when they get the urge. Let them try walking with you, rather than using the buggy.

Lianne and Vernessa are part of a team running Health Exercise Nutrition for the Really Young (HENRY) courses in children’s centres.

They said: “In the HENRY programme we spend a lot of time discussing ways in which children can be more active. We encourage parents to praise their children for being active and discuss lots of ideas for getting active inside and outside the home.”

“One idea is to encourage your child by turning toddling into a game – ask them to walk to the lamppost and wait for you there, then give lots of praise when they do. Give them choices – ask which way do they want to go? Do they want to hold your hand to cross the road or hold onto the buggy? These things can help keep the child interested and engaged.”

To find out more or sign up for the free fun eight week HENRY course contact 020 7683 4098.

**Next Steps**

When they are a bit more sure on their feet, it’s time to get them dancing! You can play music or sing songs to dance to.

Toddlers love animals - say different animal names or point to pictures. Then get your child to act out the movement – a monkey, an elephants trunk, a chicken’s flapping wings- don’t forget the noises.

For more info search online for Start4Life.
Keep Exploring
Exhausted all the ideas in the guide? These websites should give you enough ideas to keep your children active all year round.

**Hackney Family Services Directory**
A new website will be launched in autumn 2014 listing all kinds of family services: from things to do, to support for parents, services for children with disabilities and more. It’s called the Hackney Family Services Directory, and will be available at hackneyfsd.co.uk. It is brought to you by Hackney Family Information Service.

**Change4Life**
nhs.uk/change4life
With a whole section dedicated to getting your family going, Change4Life is the place to find activities as well as healthy eating advice.

Check out the interactive ‘Fun Generator’ with over 100 different ideas for indoor and outdoor activities.

**Live well**
nhs.uk/livewell
This website is crammed full of the best free advice from the NHS on how to get all the family fit and healthy including exercise plans and advice on child health.

**Project Wild Thing**
Project Wild Thing is all about getting kids to reconnect with nature – so they can get the benefits of ‘wildtime’ rather than screentime. There’s loads of wildtime ideas that could be done while exploring Hackney – why not give your child a ‘Yellow Day Out’ asking them to use a camera or smartphone to photograph anything of that colour – flowers, leaves, or even double yellow lines. Visit projectwildthing.com/wildtime or download the app.

**Nature Detectives**
naturedetectives.org.uk
Run by the Woodland Trust, this has downloadable resources including tips on how to find the best tree to climb, a worm charming kit and a leaf hunters guide. This site has hundreds of ideas to keep children entertained outdoors whatever the weather and will help you find woodland areas near you.

**Geocaching.com**
Geocaching turns a walk into a challenge. It combines the latest mapping technology, which is available on most smartphones, with a good old fashioned treasure hunt. Use a GPS device to discover treasures hidden by other geocachers – there are many hidden all over Hackney. A basic version of the app is free to download and use.
Move1

‘Sitting is the new enemy’, is the campaign call of a new social movement designed to get kids active for an hour a day. Visit them on Facebook (facebook.com/MOVE1HOUR) or twitter (@move1hour) and join the online community to share ideas.

Playing Out
playingout.net
This website is for anyone who wants children to be able to play out in the streets where they live.

You’ll find ideas, information, advice, stories and inspiration gathered from people all round the UK and beyond, to help you make this possible where you live.

Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park
queeneлизabetholympicpark.co.uk
The Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park is right on Hackney’s doorstep and offers a range of family activities and events throughout the year. The info-packed website lists all the facilities in the park including the Tumbling Bay Playground and the Canal Park plus all the Olympic venues that are now open to the public.

London Wildlife Trust
wildlondon.org.uk
The London Wildlife Trust is a charity dedicated to protecting the capital’s wildlife, wild open spaces and nature reserves. It has links to outdoor activities, a ‘species explorer’ to help you identify the wildlife you spot and lists of local nature reserves. The trust runs regular events and tours of nature hotspots so look out for them on the ‘What’s On’ page.

Outdoor People
outdoorpeople.org.uk
Outdoor People is a social enterprise, with a mission to make it easy for everyone, and in particular for families, kids and communities, to get outdoors. Outdoor People have a passion for camping, picnicking, walking, scrambling, hiking up mountains, wandering round cities, playing in the street, building dens and staring at clouds. The website lists events and projects that you can get involved in, and you can meet the team to chat and play in Broadway Market Schoolyard every Saturday.

LDNEast Children and Families
ldneast.com/
The LDNEast blog aims to make the lives of families in east London easier by creating a “one stop shop” of local news, events and activities that can be use to keep them and children entertained and engaged within the local community. It publishes a regular Weekend Top Five to provide inspiration and ideas for things to do locally.

Explore More with a Wild Walk
Young Hackney hikers can explore one of three fun routes in the Hackney Wild Walks guide. Download the walks, which start from either Haggerston, Woodberry Down or Hackney Marshes, at news.hackney.gov.uk/wild-walks or pick up a copy at children’s centres and libraries while stocks last.
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**10 mins**  
Try a 10 Minute Shake Up  
---  
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Visit your local play area  
---  
**One hour**  
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The information in this booklet was accurate to the best of our knowledge at time of print. Please contact the services and the organisations in this booklet for further details and to check what is being offered.

Visit www.learningtrust.co.uk/fis, call 020 8820 7590 or just pop in and see us at Hackney Learning Trust, 1 Reading Lane, London E8 1GQ Monday to Friday 9am-5pm
For free internet access, visit your local library. To find your local library, call 020 8356 1665

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