



# STEPPING OUT

## WALK, TALK, PLAY!

*A new approach that increases physical activity and supports emotional wellbeing*

The onset of lockdown and Covid-19 restrictions required Play Gloucestershire to be flexible and balance risk with the undoubted benefits of outdoor play. This resulted in our idea of 'Stepping Out' - playful, socially distanced walks around local communities, promoting the Five Ways to Wellbeing, as illustrated below.

### CONNECT

Stepping Out walks enable children to meet up in small groups with trusted adults (the Play Rangers) and go for an everyday adventure in their home community. New friendships form around these shared experiences.

### BE ACTIVE

Physical activity in children is in decline and Covid-19 restrictions have accelerated this downward trend. During Stepping Out sessions, children are busy chatting, playing and having fun. Being active happens naturally.

### LEARN

Whether it's social skills, physical literacy, mastery of play equipment, exploring new places in their neighbourhood, learning about nature and wildlife or discussing new topics, Stepping Out helps children to develop new skills and learn about the world around them.

### GIVE

Stepping Out encourages simple acts of kindness such as holding a friend's bag, sharing some snacks or letting them go down the slide first. It also encourages social action – such as litter picking and telling the council about park maintenance issues.

### TAKE NOTICE

Many journeys made by children are led by adult agendas where time is of the essence and children have to walk quickly and are denied moments of curiosity. Stepping Out gives children the opportunity to pause and take notice of their local environment.

Five Ways to Wellbeing (NEF, 2011)



## WHAT CHILDREN TELL US

*"My best day ever! Charlie, aged 9*

*"This gives you exercise and helps your mental health. Children always need help with their mental health. Covid has made it worse for us."*

*Kerry, aged 13*

*"I don't really play much sport but I have done loads today. I like how we turned football into netball into basketball." Rhian, aged 10*



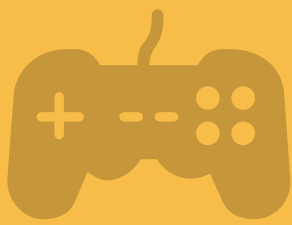
*"This is a whole different vibe to being based in a park. It is child led, they choose where they go and it's their local area. They talk lots as they walk, much more than when we are in a group in the park."*

Tom, Play Ranger



*"This is good exercise and fun as well. And it gets me off my PlayStation."*

Tyler, 12



*"I'm noticing new things with you. I do this walk every day to school and never seen that weird tree before!"*

Ashleigh



## WHAT PARENTS/CARERS TELL US

*"This is a great idea. Even though we live here we don't really go out and about. It's so good that they know more about their area now". Heidi, Mum*

*It's great knowing that you will just come and collect the kids for the walk, it gets expensive driving them here there and everywhere. The fact this is on their doorstep makes a huge difference." Alex, Parent*

*"He had a great time with you. I think it has definitely helped with his confidence and was great for him to get out and about with different people too. It was also really good for us to get a bit of extra time for ourselves whilst he was having fun doing things with you all". Foster Carer*

*"The girls thoroughly enjoyed their time out with you both. It gave them both much needed time out away from home and time to let off steam in a safe and healthy environment" Emma, Mum*



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Transforming lives through the power of play

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