

BEDTIME STORIES BEAT PRICEY TOYS

SIMPLE bedtime stories or games in the park, rather than expensive toys, make a significant difference to a young child's development, according to a new report.

The Growing Up in Scotland (Gus) report on early cognitive development showed benefits to children who were often read to at just ten months, and who took part in activities such as painting and singing aged almost two.

They scored better on language development and

problem-solving skills by the time they were nearly three.

Adam Ingram, the children's minister, said:

"There's often a notion that parents need to spend lots of money on expensive toys and activities to stimulate their children, but this report shows that's just not the case.

"It's the simple things that really make a difference."

Gus is currently tracking 5,000 babies and 3,000 toddlers through childhood and into their teens.