



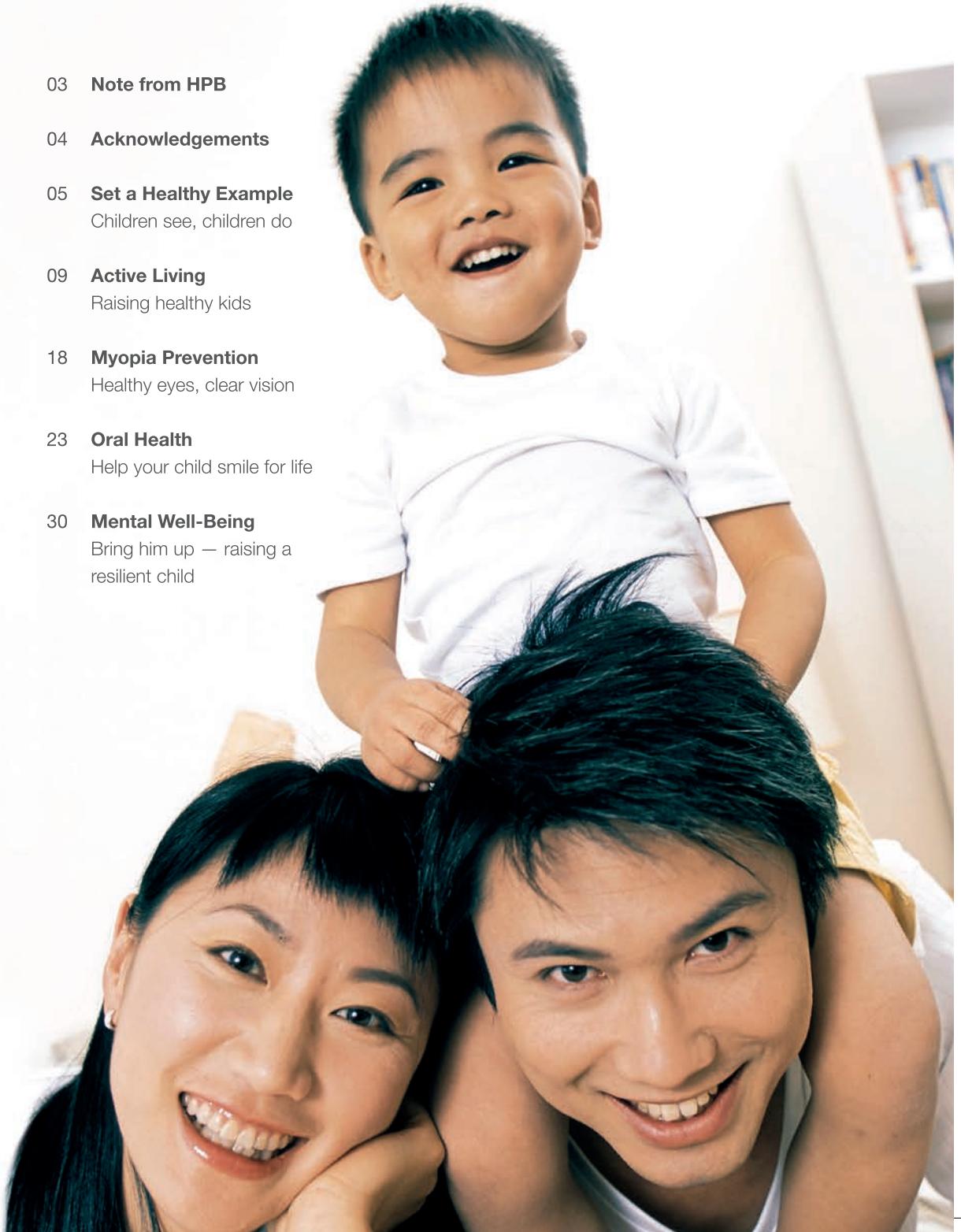
Healthy Start For Your Growing Kid

Healthier Child, Brighter Future

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Your toddler is now a preschooler!

You and your spouse will have many dreams and aspirations for your growing child. To realise those dreams, it is crucial for your child to be in good health to maximise his potential.

Your child looks up to you as a parent, and will model his habits and behaviour after you. Setting a healthy example is fundamental towards helping your child cultivate healthy habits early. These habits are likely to follow him through to adulthood and impact his health and quality of life in the future.

The Healthy Start For Your Growing Kid is a guide that covers essential health information and practical tips needed to raise a healthy and happy preschooler. Parent-child activity ideas are included to make it easy for your child to understand the key messages of each health topic.

We hope that this guide will enable you to lead your preschooler towards healthy living. Have a wonderful and healthy journey with your child!

Health Promotion Board



Acknowledgements

The Healthy Start For Your Growing Kid was conceptualised by the Health Promotion Board as part of our Healthier Child, Brighter Future initiative. It was developed in collaboration with KK Women's and Children's Hospital.

The Health Promotion Board would also like to express our sincere thanks to Children's Services, National Library Board for their contributions to the development of the book.



Children see, children do

Being a positive role model for your child can help instil the right attitude and habits from an early age for your child to nurture a healthy lifestyle



You teach your child to speak by having him* imitate the sounds and words that you form with your mouth. You teach him to walk by showing him how to place one foot in front of the other. In the same way, you teach him how to grow as an individual as he imitates how you behave, act and perform.

As a parent, you are your child's role model. He will look up to you in everything you do.

But just as children learn the good things from you, they will also pick up your bad habits. The next time you reach out for that pack of cigarettes or that can of beer, ask yourself if you are setting a good example for your child.

Read on for tips on how to be a positive role model for your child.

• Do what you want your child to do

Whether you realise it or not, your child is constantly observing and watching you for behavioural cues. Model the healthy habits you would want him to pick up: it could be eating fruits and vegetables, washing hands, limiting time on the television (TV) and computer, or maintaining a positive attitude.



* For the sake of simplicity, he/his/him are used to represent both genders.



• You eat, I eat

Since your child was a toddler, he has been trying to eat the food on your plate. Being mindful about what you eat is important, so that your child can model after you to eat a well-balanced diet. After all, you want your child to have all the essential nutrients to grow up healthy and happy.



A vertical column of 20 empty square checkboxes on the right side of the page.

• Let's get active together

The weekend is coming and you wonder what you can do as a family. Your child might just want to watch TV or play computer games. Why not plan activities to do as a family? Your child can discover with you the joys of going to the park, the playground and even the supermarket to pick out healthier choice food items. Outings with family can be fun and healthy.

• Handle stress

When things get too much for you, and when you feel tired, upset, or angry, find a healthy, non-violent way to express your feelings and sort them out (through exercise, meditation, writing, baking and so on). Explain to your child that you need some time out to manage your stress. Show your child that all of us can manage negative feelings in a positive manner.



• Keep your child away from harmful substances

Survey findings suggest that children are using tobacco products and alcohol at an early age. Cultivating a good relationship with your child can help prevent him from falling into the traps of tobacco products and alcohol. See a TV character lighting up on screen or an alcohol advertisement? Seize on these opportunities to discuss the harms of tobacco products and alcohol with your child. If you are a smoker, engage your child in your attempts to quit smoking. And if you have a drinking problem, get professional help and do not let your child bear the consequences of your addiction.

“Outings with family can be fun and healthy.”



Raising healthy kids

Living healthily is probably the best lesson you can teach your child — and it is one that will stay with him for life





A healthier child has the potential for a brighter future. Hence it makes perfect sense to start cultivating the habit of maintaining good health from young. Helping your child develop and maintain good habits from young can help prevent health problems when he grows up.

All about eating

One habit that is important to encourage is the habit of eating healthily. Some parents have kids who are picky eaters. On the other end of the spectrum, some kids simply eat too much.

Chubby children may be cute, but not all children will eventually grow out of their chubbiness. All that excess weight may lead to chronic health problems such as high blood pressure and diabetes. An

overweight child may suffer from issues with self-esteem if he gets teased by his friends because of his size.

The main rule of thumb when it comes to maintaining weight is energy balance:

Energy input = Energy output	
(from what he eats)	(from the activities he does)

If he eats more than the energy he uses, he will gain weight. The energy that is not used is collected in the body as fat.

There are two easy ways to help your child live a healthy lifestyle and keep obesity at bay:

1. Eat healthily
2. Stay active



Eat healthily

Knowing what kind of food to eat more or less of can help to keep your child on the path to good health. My Healthy Plate is an easy-to-understand guide to better nutrition.

My Healthy Plate



There are four food groups:

- Brown Rice & Wholemeal Bread
- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Meat & Others

Enjoy a variety from each group at every meal. A good mix of these will provide the nutrients that your child needs.



“An overweight child may suffer from issues with self-esteem if he gets teased by his friends because of his size.”

What and how much should your child eat

When planning your child's daily meals, it is important to include the right number of servings from the following food groups to ensure your child obtain the nutrients he needs.

Food Groups	Recommended number of servings per day
Brown Rice & Wholemeal Bread	3-4
Fruit	1
Vegetables	1
Meat & Others	2
<i>of which</i> <i>Dairy foods or calcium-rich foods</i>	1

Know the serving sizes

The table below illustrates the size of one serving for each of the food groups.

Examples of one serving*

Brown Rice & Wholemeal Bread	Vegetables
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 slices wholemeal bread (60g) • ½ bowl** brown rice (100g) • 2 bowls** brown rice porridge (500g) • ½ bowl** whole-grain noodles, beehoon or spaghetti (100g) • 4 plain wholemeal biscuits (40g) • 2 wholemeal chapatis (60g) • 1½ cups*** whole-grain breakfast cereal (40g) • ⅔ bowl** uncooked oatmeal (50g) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 150g raw leafy vegetables • 100g raw non-leafy vegetables • ¾ mug*** cooked leafy vegetables (100g) • ¾ mug*** cooked non-leafy vegetables (100g) • ¼ round plate+ cooked vegetables
Fruit	Meat & Others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 small apple, orange, pear or mango (130g) • 1 wedge papaya, pineapple or watermelon (130g) • 10 grapes or longans (50g) • 1 medium banana • ¼ cup*** dried fruit (40g) • 1 cup*** pure fruit juice (250ml) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 palm-size piece meat, fish or poultry (90g) • 2 glasses*** milk (500ml) • 2 small blocks soft bean curd (170g) • ¾ cup*** cooked pulses (peas, beans, lentils) (120g) • 5 medium prawns (90g) • 3 eggs (150g)

NOTE:

* All weights listed are for edible portions only.

** rice bowl *** 250ml + 10inch plate

Healthy Snacks for Kids

Here are some ideas of what you can give your child between his meals if he is hungry:

Healthy trail mix

Mix one cup of whole-grain cereal with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of chopped nuts (almonds, walnuts, cashews) and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of chopped dried fruit (apricots, prunes, raisins and cranberries) for a healthy snack that you can take anywhere.



Frozen treats

Freeze fruits such as seedless grapes, kiwifruit or strawberries for an icy-cool treat that is low in sugar and high in vitamins. For extra fun, skewer a few fruit pieces on a satay stick or toothpick before freezing.

Yoghurt pots

Top a cup of low-fat, low-sugar yoghurt with granola or fresh fruit for a quick calcium boost.

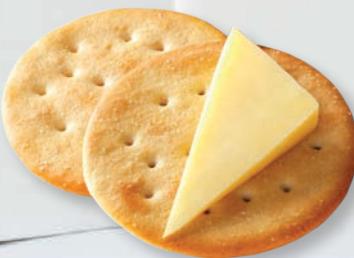


Easy guacamole

Mash a ripe avocado with a squeeze of lemon juice, a pinch of salt and some chopped ripe tomatoes to make a mild, nutritious guacamole that even your picky child will love. Serve with plain tortilla chips or whole-grain crackers.

Cheese and crackers

Top whole-grain crackers with a soft cheese spread or a piece of tasty cheddar for an easy-to-prepare snack that is rich in calcium.



Veggies and dip

Cut cucumber, celery, carrots and/or capsicums into sticks and serve with a small side of low-fat dressing. This is a savoury snack that is easy to prepare in advance — just prepare the veggies and store in an air-tight container in the fridge.





Eat All Foods In Moderation

Want to provide healthier options for your child and for your family? Do look out for the Healthier Choice Symbol (HCS) on your next trip to the supermarket.

Food products with HCS are generally:

- Lower in fat.
- Lower in salt.
- Lower in sugar.
- Some of them are also higher in calcium and whole-grains compared to similar products.

You can include a variety of HCS products as part of a healthy, balanced diet. However, like all food, they should be eaten in moderation.

Tips on introducing a healthier diet

- Provide your child's meals at regular times every day. He is less likely to snack if he knows when his next meal is coming.
- Use healthier cooking methods such as steaming, boiling and grilling. Avoid deep frying.
- Select lean cuts and remove the skin from meat and poultry.
- Choose snacks with the Healthier Snack Symbol or cut up some crunchy fruits and vegetables for a mid-day snack.
- Offer water to your child. Water is best for quenching thirst. Add lemon slices or mint to add flavour or variety.
- Use sweetened and fat spreads such as jam, kaya and margarine sparingly.
- Choose fresh food rather than preserved food. Most fresh food contains glutamate, a natural taste enhancer

which provides natural flavours without the need to add salt and sauces.

- Spice up meals by using natural seasonings such as parsley, coriander, onions and garlic. They can enhance the flavour of dishes without increasing its salt content.
- When introducing a new food to your child, do so in small portions over a period of time. Your child may not accept these food the first time. Be patient as it may be necessary to introduce a new food to your child several times before he accepts it.
- Pace the meal. Avoid rushing through the meal by encouraging your child to chew well and savour the flavour. This will help your child avoid over-eating.
- Shop together at the supermarket and show your child how to make healthier food choices and show him how to watch out for HCS products (see box).
- Cut the vegetables in interesting shapes and sizes to make these more appealing to your child.
- Replace white rice, white bee hoon or pasta with brown or red rice, brown rice bee hoon or whole-wheat pasta.
- Do not use food to reward or punish your child for his good or bad behaviour. By using food as a reward or punishment, you may increase his desire to consume these food.
- Eat healthily and be a good role model for your child.



Stay active

As a parent, you want your child to be active and healthy. Your preschooler should be encouraged to have at least 180 minutes of physical activity spread out over the course of a day. Consider spreading the physical activity in between periods of inactivity.

Have a fun, active day with your child with this example of a healthy schedule:

8am: Breakfast

9am: Have two hours of learning, reading or playtime

11am: Play an indoor game or get your child to give you a hand in preparing lunch

Noon: Lunch

1pm: Nap time

2pm: More learning, reading or games

5pm: Take your child outside for some physical fun. Walk to the neighbourhood playground or arrange an indoor play date with a friend for the kids to play games and dance to their favourite songs.

6pm: Dinner

7pm: Free-and-easy activities to wind down the day. Enjoy a stroll in the park or read a book with your child.

9pm: Bedtime



However, if a child has a physical limitation or medical condition, parents should seek the doctor's advice on the types and amount of physical activity that are best for the child.

Here are more tips to keep your child active:

- Have fun with play. Try various games and sports to find one that your child likes and will enjoy over and over again.
- Make it fun. You can even put your child in charge and let him choose an activity to play. The most important part is to do



something active together.

- Keep moving. Break up long periods of inactivity (i.e. lack of physical activity) by injecting 5 - 10 minutes of fun and play in between.
- Limit your child's time spent on watching TV, playing computer or video games to less than two hours each day.
- Commit to a specified amount of time for outdoor activities/games each day. It could be something as simple as a walk in the park or a visit to the neighbourhood playground.
- Praise your child. Motivate your child by letting him know that you like what he is doing.
- Gifts to 'move it, move it'. When choosing a present for your child, pick one that encourages activity, such as a bicycle, a hula hoop, balls, kites and so on.
- Set a good example and participate enthusiastically in different types of physical activities with your child. Get the whole family involved and be active!



Children should engage in play in a safe environment under supervision.

Children at this stage are full of energy and it is amazing what they can do. Although their ability to run, jump and climb is good, their judgement and self-control are still developing. Be aware of your child's surroundings and never underestimate what he might try to do.


 Parent-Child Activities

Take time out to bond with your child while enjoying these fun-learning activities

Have fun with food!

Rhyme riddles

Make up riddles and prompt your child to answer with a rhyming food item.

For example:

It's a wholegrain.

It's long and brown.

It's _____ .

(Possible answers: Brown rice, wholemeal noodles, wholemeal bread)

You need protein to be healthy and fit.

What should you eat?

I'd say it's _____ .

(Possible answers: Any food item from the "Meat & Others" food group such as meat, fish, eggs)

It can be green, red, orange, or yellow in colour.

It's a type of vegetables.

It's _____ .

(Answer: Capsicum)

Build a meal

Shop for groceries with your child and prepare a meal together. Your child can help to perform easier tasks like washing lettuce or scrubbing the potatoes.



About half the children in Singapore have myopia — also known as short-sightedness — by the time they are 12 years old. If you have myopia, things that are close to you can be seen clearly, but objects that are further away will look blur. Myopia can lead to problems like amblyopia (lazy eye) and glaucoma (where there is increased fluid pressure in the eyeball).

Can myopia be cured?

Currently, there is no cure for myopia. Spectacles or contact lenses are needed to correct it in order to see distant objects clearly.

Laser surgery such as LASIK does not cure myopia. The procedure shapes the cornea to act like a focusing lens. It does not treat the elongated myopic eyeball. Also, LASIK is rarely performed in children as their eyes are still developing.

Who is likely to develop myopia?

Your child is more likely to develop myopia if you and/or your spouse suffer from myopia. Unnecessary near work is also known to contribute to myopia.

Near work are visual activities that are done at close distance, up to an arm's length away. This includes:

- Reading
- Writing
- Using a computer
- Drawing and painting
- Playing with games on handheld devices, such as mobile phones
- Doing craft work using small objects



What complications could arise from myopia?

High degrees of myopia could lead to potentially blinding complications such as:

1. Amblyopia or “lazy eye”

There is reduced vision in an eye that did not develop normally during early childhood. Unless treated, vision in the weaker eye will be permanently blurred.

2. Cataract

The lens in the eye becomes cloudy, causing blurred vision.



3. Glaucoma

There is increased fluid pressure within the eyeball. Left untreated, this can cause blindness.

4. Retinal detachment

This is a serious condition when the retina has separated from the eyeball. If left untreated, it can lead to blindness.

5. Macular degeneration

The central part of the retina that gives the clearest vision degenerates.

Good eye care habits

Spending time outdoors has shown to have a protective effect against myopia. Let your child engage in outdoor fun every day. You can play a sport together, have a picnic, go for walks in the park — or just have fun in the playground. An active lifestyle also has other benefits. It offers your child:

- A fun way to stay healthy.
- Relaxation.
- Opportunities to make new friends.
- Self-awareness through play.
- Life skills such as communication and sociability.

Healthy habits

• When reading

Ensure that there is adequate lighting. Choose books with larger print. Hold the book at least 30cm away from the eyes. Sit upright.

• At the computer

Ensure that there is adequate lighting. Place the screen 50cm away from eyes. Reduce monitor glare. Encourage your child to take breaks.

• Watching TV and playing video games

The bigger the TV screen, the further your child should sit. The centre of the screen should be at eye level. TV time and gaming should be limited.





Encourage your child to take frequent breaks when he is engaged in near work. He should stop and relax his eyes for 3-5 minutes after 30-40 minutes of near work activities.

The role of parents

You can help to delay your child's onset and progression of myopia. Here are some tips:

- Encourage your child to spend time outdoors every day.
- Do not let your child engage in near work for long, continuous stretches.
- Encourage your child to take a break after 30 minutes of near work.
- Get your child's eyes checked annually.
- Teach your child how to take care of his spectacles, if he wears them. Also teach

him how to use his spectacles in the correct manner (see next section).

Spectacles: what you need to know

Here are some tips on how to maintain your spectacles, if you or your child wears them.

- Wash them in warm water.
- Dry them with soft cotton or cleaning cloth.
- Do not use tissue paper or your T-shirt to wipe as these can scratch the lenses.
- Wash or blow off dust or grit.
- Do not place your spectacles with the lenses facing down.
- When not using them, store your spectacles in their protective case.
- Do not put your spectacles in your pocket - they may fall out or get bent out of shape.
- Put on or take off your glasses with both hands.

“When not using them, store your spectacles in their protective case.”



Parent-Child Activities

Engage in these fun activities with your child to help exercise his eyes

Get Active!

Let's play ball

Play ball games to improve eye-hand coordination. Use balloons or light beach balls to play toss-and-catch with younger children. Teach older kids how to play racquet games like badminton and set up games with friends and neighbours. Let your child have fun practising how to hit with a kid-sized racquet and a shuttlecock.



home, you can print the photos and collate them in an album or display them on a wall or pin them to a noticeboard.

"I spy"

Play the "I Spy" game with your child when you are out, walking in a park, or taking a bus or car ride. This will encourage him to look at things in the distance and also develop his observation skills.

A snappy reminder

Go outdoors and play to help your child keep myopia at bay. Take your child outside to a park or playground. Encourage your child to take photos of interesting things he sees around him. To enable the activity to be more interesting, you can set a theme for your child. For example, the theme can be "pictures of green and clean things". Alternatively, if your child is interested in drawing, he can choose to draw interesting objects. Back





Help your Child Smile for Life

Teach your child tips to take good care of his teeth

Your baby's first teeth begin to appear when he is about 6 months old. By the time he is 3 years old, the whole set of 20 baby (or milk) teeth will be fully erupted.

From the age of 6, these will gradually be replaced by adult teeth. Practising proper dental care will help your child keep his adult teeth permanently.

Why does your child need regular dental check-ups?

Many parents think that children do not need to visit the dentist, but you are encouraged to arrange regular dental check-ups for your child from his first birthday. Your child needs to see the dentist by age 2 or 3, when all the baby teeth have erupted.

Your child could have a dental problem even if he does not have any symptoms, and this could eventually lead to pain and swelling that will affect eating, speaking and even sleeping. A visit to the dentist can help to detect problems early, fixing them before the condition worsens. The last thing any parent should do is to introduce a child to a dentist when he is already in pain.

A dental check-up: what happens?

First, the dentist will discuss oral hygiene and dietary habits with you to ensure that you are doing the right thing for your child at home.

The dentist will check your child's teeth and gums to look out for things like decay or cracks, and whether the gums are healthy. Bleeding gums are a sign of gum disease.

The dentist will also look at your child's facial bones, cheeks, tongue, and palate to see if there are any unusual swellings. If there are any problems, or if your child requires further treatment, he will discuss follow-up options with you after the examination.



“Your child needs to see the dentist by age 2 or 3, when all the baby teeth have erupted.”

School Dental Centre

If your child requires basic dental treatment, you can consider bringing him to the School Dental Centre. This is located at the Health Promotion Board.

Three ways to make an appointment:

- By telephone: 6435 3782
- By fax: 6435 3775
- By email: HPB_Dental_Counter@hpb.gov.sg

Please book your appointment early.

Bring the following documents for verification and registration on the day of your appointment:

- Birth certificate (for Singaporeans)
- Passport/entry permit (for permanent residents and foreigners)

Opening hours are:

- 8.00am to 5.30pm (Monday to Thursday)
- 8.00am to 5.00pm (Friday)
- 8.00am to 12.30pm (Saturday)

Location is on Level 4, Health Promotion Board, 3 Second Hospital Avenue, Singapore 168937.

“If your child requires basic dental treatment, you can consider bringing him to the School Dental Centre.”

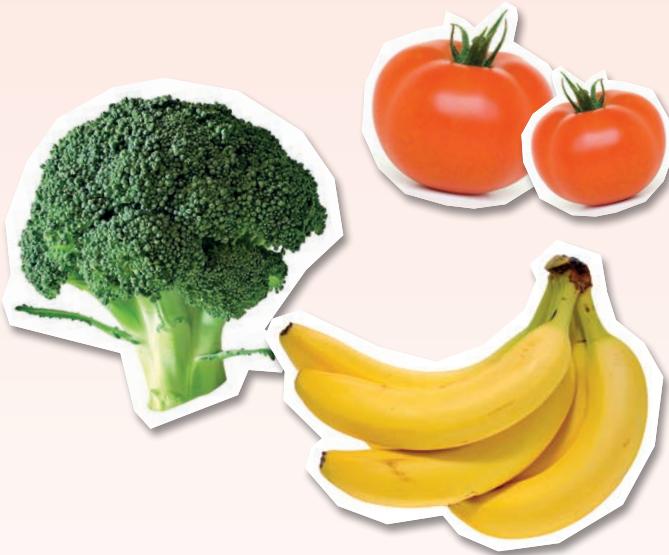


Parent-Child Activities

Get Active!



Bond with your child while enjoying these tooth-some activities



Sort Your Food

Cut out a large white tooth and a large yellow tooth from construction paper. Cut out different types of food from magazines. Have your child sort out the food according to those that are good for teeth (place these on the white tooth), and those that are harmful to teeth (place these on the yellow tooth). Talk to your child about eating more of the food on the white tooth.

Brush Your Teeth

Draw a picture of a mouth with teeth. Shade the teeth using a pencil and have your child erase away the black stains with an eraser, to highlight the effects of toothbrushing.



Build him up – raising a resilient child

We all want our children to be happy and healthy. Boosting their self-esteem and teaching them to manage their emotions can help enhance their mental well-being



A happy, healthy child can concentrate well in school and cope with challenges positively. He will also have higher immunity levels and fall sick less frequently.

A child with positive self-esteem

- is confident of his own abilities.
- sees setbacks as temporary.
- learns from mistakes.
- is optimistic.
- engages in positive coping strategies.
- manages emotions effectively.

Build your child's self-esteem

Here are some ideas on how you can help your child build positive self-esteem as well as manage his stress and anger.

How to!

Help your child build positive self-esteem

1. Find strengths. Encourage him to try different activities to find out what he is good at. Explain that different people excel at different things and he should be proud of what he has achieved.

2. Praise generously. Always praise your child's efforts whenever he performs a task well, no matter how small it is. This helps to reinforce the positive behaviour, increase his motivation and build self-esteem.

3. Spend time together. Put aside some time for your child and make him feel that he is important to you. Give your child full



attention when playing with or listening to him.

4. Manage expectations. Every child progresses at a different rate. Do not compare your child with other children. Praise his efforts for trying so that he feels motivated to work harder next time and explore ways on how he can improve his performance.

5. Encourage independence. Give your child manageable tasks to complete by himself. Support and guide him through any problems and praise him when he completes the task. Encourage him when he faces difficulties.

6. Build friendships.

Give your child opportunities to socialise. Take him to the playground and introduce him to the kids in the neighbourhood. Let him invite his friends home to play.



7. Avoid labels. Do not use negative words like "lazy", "naughty" or "stupid". Explain to your child that it is the action that you do not like. Help him realise that the problem is not him, but the behaviour.

Teaching kids how to handle stress

Stress can affect a child's physical, emotional, social and intellectual well-being. Help your child face his problems by teaching him the necessary skills to deal with them.

Is your child stressed? Look out for sudden changes in his emotions, behaviour, thoughts and routines:

- He is usually happy but suddenly becomes sad.
- He has always enjoyed going to school, but now hates it.

How to!

Help your child cope with stress

- 1. Sleep well.** Make sure your child gets enough sleep every night. Maintain a regular bedtime and wake-time.
- 2. Relax.** Let your child do things that he enjoys, be it playing outdoors with friends or listening to music, so as to enhance his mood and to relax himself.
- 3. Model positivity.** Children learn by watching their parents. Show him that stress is normal and can be handled effectively and healthily, for example, going for a jog helps to relax and reduce stress.
- 4. Teach him how to handle criticism.** Whether it is teasing from friends or comments from teachers and other parents, let your child know that no one is perfect and that we can learn from every experience.



- 5. Develop a routine.** Children need predictability and routines. Let your child know what to expect. This gives him a sense of control so that he feels less helpless and stressed.

- 6. Teach problem-solving skills.** Sit with your child and teach him how to identify a problem, come up with possible solutions, and brainstorm for the best. Eventually, he will learn to do this on his own.



7. Speak to a trusted adult. Encourage your child to speak to a trusted adult at different settings whenever he faces problems so that he does not bottle things up. Help him identify the people whom he can talk to (such as his teacher or school counsellor) and practise ways of asking for help.

Managing anger – for kids

Anger is a normal emotion, and one that even some adults have problems managing. Children are quick to flare up, but most get over the heat of the moment quickly. Some, however, may not be able to control their feelings as well as others.

How to!

Teach your child to deal with anger

1. Identify triggers. Ask your child what or who made him angry and why. Help him express his feelings. This will enable him to

understand that it is the behaviour and not the person that has upset him. Discuss how to resolve the conflict constructively.

2. Positive affirmation. Teach him to think positively. Your child can learn to tell himself: “Relax! I don’t need to get angry about it”, “I am not going to let him bug me” and “I am okay”.

3. Relaxation helps. Teach your child breathing techniques to calm himself down. Engage in physical activities, such as jogging, to release tension. If your child prefers, he can draw or write to let his feelings out.



4. Speak to a trusted adult. Encourage your child to talk to someone if he cannot resolve a conflict and continues to be in anger. Tell him that talking to someone helps him feel better and allows him to find more ways to solve the problem.

Building parent-child relationships

Spending quality time with your child is one of the best ways to build a strong and happy parent-child relationship. Always make it a point to allocate time for your child, no matter how busy you are.

How to!

Establish a positive parent-child relationship

- Make it a point to set aside time for your child. Stick to it.

- Find out more about your child's likes and dislikes, such as his favourite toys, cartoon characters, school friends, and so on.
- Give your child your undivided attention when talking to him.
- Connect with your child during playtime, for instance, you can ride a bicycle with your child.
- Make time for your child to show your love and appreciation.

“Connect with your child during playtime, for instance, you can ride a bicycle with your child.”





Parent-Child Activities

Get active!

Try these parent-child activities that will help foster stronger and happier relationships. You can find these – and more – at [HPB Online](#)¹

Decision time

Let your child participate in making a decision, such as which story to read, what outfit to wear or where to go during the weekend. Start with two options at a time because very young children may get confused when there are too many choices.

What this achieves

Your child learns to be independent and will enjoy the time spent together more when engaged in decision-making.

Let us all move it, move it

Regular physical activity is a good way to help your child relieve stress and stay healthy. If he experiences a particularly stressful day, you can consider taking him for a jog, cycling in the park, or go for some active play at the playground to relieve your child's stress.

Kitchen helper

Get your child to join in the fun when you are baking or cooking simple meals. Contributing in small ways such as kneading the dough or pouring the mixture will be a fun-filled activity for your child.

What this achieves

This builds your child's confidence as he learns to make something by himself. Your little one will feel proud in contributing to something that both of you can share.

Make books come alive

Read to your child. Make it an interactive session by encouraging your young one to point out different things such as letters, shapes or colours.

What this achieves

By getting your child to participate, it will make learning more enjoyable. Soon, your child will begin to look forward to such sessions together.



¹ Ways to build a happy and lasting relationship with your child. <http://www.hpb.gov.sg/pregnancy parenting/article.aspx?id=3008>.



Children are naturally curious and love to explore. Even the most dedicated parent cannot keep an eye on her child all the time, so bruises and bumps are part and parcel of childhood. While it is impossible to completely child-proof your home and environment, there are ways to maintain safe and child-friendly surroundings for your child. We have broken it down for you by stages.

Preschoolers

These 3 - 6 year-olds are very energetic, you might probably wonder if something is wrong when you do not hear a sound from them. They can run and jump, but are still developing self-control and judgement. Hence, accidents can easily happen. Do not underestimate your child's desire to try everything.



Things to do:

- Keep window grilles and balcony doors closed and locked with latches.
- Store flammable items (matches, lighters, cigarettes) and sharp objects (scissors, knives, pen knives) out of sight.
- Cover electrical outlets with safety caps.
- Teach your child to remain seated when there is food in his mouth.
- Keep your child out of the kitchen. Turn pan handles inwards and cook using the inside burners, keeping hot pots and their contents out of reach.
- Restrain your child from jumping on sofas or beds.
- Teach your child to pack up his toys after a play session.





“ Do not underestimate your child’s desire to try everything.”



General play

Children at this stage love to play with their friends, but they need to learn how to do so safely.

Things to do:

- Keep potentially harmful items such as plastic bags, cleaning detergents, pills and sharp objects out of reach.
- Teach your child about the dangers of fire, and keep flammable items away from him.
- Be aware of your child's location and what he is doing.

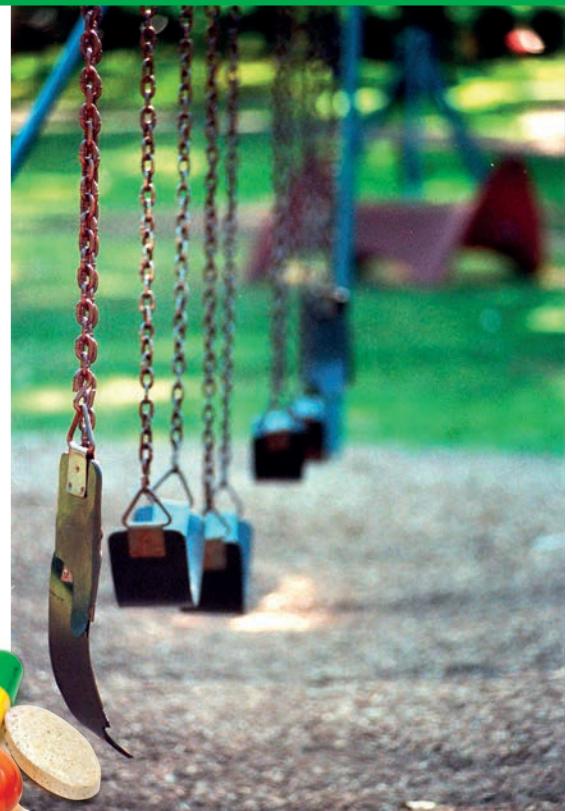


At the playground

With these simple guidelines, playgrounds can be excellent places for your child to develop physical and social skills.

To reduce risk of injury:

- Check that the playground equipment is suitable for the age of your child. Teach your child to be careful and supervise him to prevent serious injuries.



- Do not dress your child in clothes with drawstrings or cords, in case the strings get caught and pose a danger to the child.
- Look out for damaged equipment that may pose a danger to children playing at the playground.
- Teach your child to use handrails and stay within barriers for his own safety.
- Teach your child to take turns and not push while using swings or slides at the playground.

Tell your child...

- No walking across a moving swing or see-saw.
- Slide down feet first, in an upright position. Ask him to wait until the child before him gets off the bottom of the slide before sliding down.
- Wait for his turn. No pushing or shoving.
- Hold on with two hands when swinging or climbing.
- Do not play on wet equipment as it may be slippery.





“ Teach your child water safety and water survival skills before letting him participate in open water (the sea and other non-pool) activities. ”

Keep germs away!



Protect your child from contagious diseases like influenza and Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease





Flu fighters

Teach your child to fight flu with these tips.

1. Keep hands clean

Your child's hands tend to get dirty as he explores his environment, thus his hands are exposed to germs. Wash his hands regularly and thoroughly with soap and water. Alcohol sanitisers can be used when there is no soap and water.

Wash your child's hands

- Before and after meals.
- Before handling food.
- After using the toilet.
- After blowing his nose.
- After touching common surfaces like tabletops, doorknobs, handrails, etc.

2. Cover up

Cover your child's nose and mouth with tissue when he coughs or sneezes. Each time he coughs or sneezes, germs are spread into the air. If the water droplets from his cough or sneeze land on surfaces that are touched by others, this can cause them to fall sick.

3. Wear a mask to protect others

If your child has the flu, please let him wear a mask to prevent other people from being exposed to the germs. Wash his hands before putting on the mask and after disposing it. His mask should be changed every eight hours, or when it becomes moist.



4. Take your child's temperature

Your child's body temperature will increase when it is trying to fight an infection. If his body temperature hits 38°C or more, he could have the flu. And if he experiences other flu symptoms such as a sore throat, runny nose, cough, muscle aches and tiredness, please see a doctor. Make sure he puts on a mask before he leaves the house.





5. Live healthily

Once your child is well, practise good personal hygiene and be socially responsible. This includes covering his nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, and using a serving spoon when sharing food from a common plate.

Tips for healthier living and building immunity for your child:

- Eat a balanced diet, with fruits and vegetables.



- Undertake 180 minutes of physical activity daily spread out over the course of a day.
- Get enough sleep and rest.
- For parents, do not smoke. If you do, quit.

Keep your child at home if he is ill. Avoid crowded places such as schools, child care centres, hospitals and malls.



Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease

HFMD is commonly caused by virus. It is infectious and can happen to anyone, but young children, especially those aged 5 years and below, are most susceptible. HFMD is usually mild, but it can lead to complications and even death.

How it spreads

HFMD spreads by direct contact with fluid from skin lesions, nose and throat secretions, or stools of an infected person. It can also spread by indirect contact with objects used by infected persons. There are cases where people who have HFMD do not show any symptoms, but they can still spread the disease as the virus is still active.

Does my child have HFMD?

A child with HFMD usually presents with the following symptoms:

- Fever for 2-3 days
- Sore throat and runny nose
- Mouth ulcers
- Rash (flat or raised red spots, some with blisters) on the hands (especially the palms), feet and occasionally on the buttocks
- Lack of appetite
- Vomiting and/or diarrhoea
- Tiredness and weakness

Complications

In most cases, HFMD is mild. However, please bring your child to the Emergency Department of the nearest hospital immediately should he present with the following signs and symptoms:

- Disorientation, drowsiness and/or irritability
- Severe headache, giddiness or neck stiffness

- Breathlessness or turning blue
- Dehydration — this can happen due to continuous vomiting, diarrhoea or poor fluid intake as a result of painful mouth ulcers



What should I do if my child has HFMD?

- Bring him to your family doctor or nearest polyclinic.
- Encourage him to drink plenty of fluids.
- Feed him with a soft diet, such as porridge, mashed potatoes or pureed fruits.
- Give him medication prescribed by the doctor.
- Keep him away from school, the child care centre, and public places such as shopping malls.
- Inform his school or child care centre. They can monitor the other children and take precautions to prevent the spread of HFMD.
- Keep his toys, books, eating utensils, towels and clothes separate from others.
- Keep him at home until he has fully recovered, even though the medical certificate (MC) given by the doctor has expired.
- Look out for signs and symptoms in other family members, both children and adults. Ensure his siblings are well before sending them to school or the child care centre.

Children who are sick should be resting at home to help them recover faster and reduce the risk of complications.

Parent-Child Activities

Infection Invaders

Bond with your child as you both learn how to fight viruses and stay healthy

Sing your hand clean!

This fun “washy washy clean” song will teach your child the right way to get his hands squeaky clean. You can also download the song at www.hpb.gov.sg/studenthealth

Chorus

So we washy washy clean, scrub scrub
 We washy washy clean, scrub scrub
 It’s fun to wash your hands and I know you’ll understand
 We washy washy clean, scrub scrub

Washy Washy Clean

(sing to the tune of “If You’re Happy and You Know It”)

Chorus/Intro

It’s fun to wash your hands
 And I know you understand
 So we washy washy clean, scrub scrub

Verse

We start with washing palm to palm
 Between each finger, let us rub
 Now the back of the hands, it’s such a simple plan
 We washy washy clean, scrub scrub

Clean the base of the thumbs one by one
 Then the back of the fingers, this is fun!
 Don’t forget your fingernails, it’s about details
 We washy washy clean, scrub scrub

Now move on to the wrists, let us rub
 I think we’re nearly done, so now what
 Just rinse the soap away, dry our hands and we’re ok
 We washy washy clean, scrub scrub



Mum, dad, where do I come from?

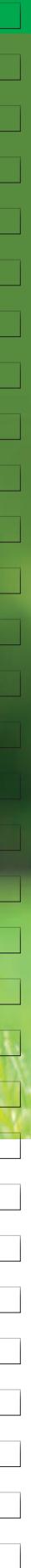
**You are the best person
to teach your child
about sexuality**



Sooner rather than later, your child will ask you one of those dreaded questions, “How are babies made?” Do not panic. Be glad that your child has come to you for information, rather than ask his friends or go online to find answers. In answering your child’s questions, you can help him address any inaccurate messages or perceptions that he may have heard from others.

When to start?

From an early age, children start to get curious about sexuality. For example, where does he come from? Studies have shown that children who talk to their parents about sexuality issues are less likely to engage in risky sexual activities than those who do not do so. So don’t be afraid. Sexuality education is an ongoing process.





How to start?

1. Be prepared

What are your own attitudes towards sexuality issues? What values do you want to impart to your child? Ask family and friends about how they spoke to their children about sexuality. Read up. It is easier to talk about something that you are confident about. If you feel uncomfortable talking to your child about the issue of sexuality, admit it. However, do let your child know why you are not comfortable talking about it. Let him know that you will overcome this discomfort by addressing this issue together with him.

2. Say it simply

Answer your child's question. Get the facts right, be open and honest. There is no need to venture into the history and intricate mechanisms of sexuality at this point. If your child wants to know more, he will ask.

For example, teach your child from toddlerhood to use proper terms such as "penis" and "vagina" when naming parts of the body. Picture books about the body can help you along. And when your child is in preschool, talk to them about where babies come from.

3. Keep it going

Try to engage your child during "teachable moments". For instance, when you come across a pregnant lady while walking at the shopping mall, use this opportunity to start a discussion. It is likely that your child will come back to you with more questions after that. Stay open and available, and remain honest. This will help you to send a message to your child that sexuality is not a taboo topic, which he can discuss with you just like any other issue.

How to prepare?

- Discuss with your spouse what both of you want him to know about sexuality.
- Be prepared with answers. If your child's question stumps you, tell him that you need to read up and will get back to him — do not forget to do so.
- Keep your answers simple.
- Anticipate "teachable moments" and use them to communicate your family's values and beliefs.

“Studies have shown that children who talk to their parents about sexuality issues are less likely to engage in risky sexual activities than those who do not do so.”



The right touch

Teach your child what is a “good touch” and “bad touch”. It is fine to hug and kiss people whom your child knows and loves (and for your child to be hugged and kissed in return by them).

It is important, however, for your child to know what to do if:

- **He feels uncomfortable about the way that he is being touched.**

For example, when someone touches his genitals or forces a hug on him.

- **He is warned never to tell anyone about the encounter.**

Tell your child that he does not have to blindly follow whatever an adult says, even if the person is a family member. Tell your child: “It is wrong for a grown-up to ask you to lie or steal. It is wrong for a grown-up to ask you to touch his genitals.”

- **He is forced to touch another person.**

A “bad touch” may refer to touching any area that the child may not be comfortable with, not just the genitalia. For example, caressing a child’s back or playfully slapping his bottom.

If something happens and makes your child feel uncomfortable, teach him to do the following:

- Say “no!” and get away as quickly as possible. Do not be alone with that person again.
- Call or scream for help.
- Inform an adult whom he trusts, like his parents or a teacher.



Need more help?

For more information on sexuality education, you can go to HPB Online at www.hpb.gov.sg and search for “your role in sex education”.

The Health Promotion Board has a programme called “Love Them. Talk about Sex” that helps parents talk to their children about sexuality and its related issues. The programme is conducted at workplaces, schools and other community settings.

What you will learn:

- Sexuality questions children are asking today.
- How do you prepare to talk about sexuality with your child?
- Building blocks of good communication.
- How to initiate the conversation and how to react to questions.

If you are interested to attend “Love Them. Talk About Sex”, request your company’s Human Resource Department to email hpb_shp@hpb.gov.sg to request for the programme to be conducted at your workplace.



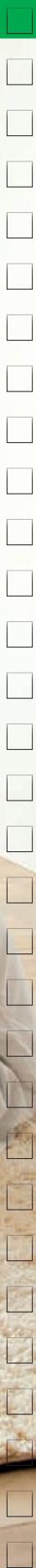
“ Anticipate “teachable moments” and use them to communicate your family’s values and beliefs.”



A smoke-free environment for a healthier family



Your young child looks up to you; he wants to be all that you are. And this includes copying your habits — including bad ones, such as smoking. Prevent your child from picking up this nasty habit and keep him safe from tobacco-related harm



Every year, up to 5.4 million people in the world die as a result of tobacco-related diseases. That is one person in every six seconds! Smoking-related diseases are among the top killers in Singapore. These diseases include cancer, heart disease, stroke and lung diseases. Non-smokers can succumb to these diseases too, as a result of second-hand and third-hand smoke.

What is second-hand smoke?

Second-hand smoke (SHS), also known as passive smoke, involuntary smoke or Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS), is a harmful form of air pollution that causes twice as many deaths as all other types of air pollution put together.

SHS is the combination of two forms of smoke from burning tobacco products:

- **Mainstream smoke:** This is inhaled by the smoker through the filter tip of a cigarette, and then exhaled.
- **Sidestream smoke:** This comes from the burning tip of the cigarette and goes directly into the air that we breathe.

SHS consists of around 85 per cent sidestream smoke and 15 per cent mainstream smoke. Non-smokers who are exposed to SHS absorb nicotine and other compounds just as smokers do. Research has shown that health risks can arise from inhaling SHS.



Why is SHS dangerous?

At least 400 chemicals in cigarette smoke are harmful to humans, and up to 60 are cancer-causing. A non-smoker's lung cancer risk is increased by 25 per cent if he is exposed to SHS at home or at work, and up to 50 per cent in the case of heavy exposure. A non-smoker is also at risk of developing eye, nose and throat irritations, respiratory tract infections and heart disease.

How does SHS affect children?

Children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of ETS because they are still developing physically, have higher breathing rates than adults, and have little control over their indoor environments. Mothers who smoke expose their children to the greatest relative risks of damaging health effects.

Children exposed to SHS suffer from:

- Greater incidence of coughs and colds.
- Higher chance of eye and nose irritation.
- Reduced lung growth and function.
- Increased susceptibility to coughs, wheezing and asthma. Children are more likely to develop asthma if a parent smokes.
- More severe and frequent asthma attacks.
- Higher risk of ear and chest infections.

Younger children who are especially sensitive could develop lung diseases such as pneumonia and bronchitis.

As a result of these ailments, a child can miss school, which may result in him performing poorly in school.

What is third-hand smoke?

Opening windows and doors does not protect children from second-hand smoke. Research has shown that toxins from tobacco smoke settle on surfaces such as sofas, curtains, carpets, walls, floors as well as clothing and hair. These toxins, now referred to as third-hand smoke, can take a long while to go away. These particles may get into young children's bodies, through contact while they play or crawl, or while being carried by a smoker.



Why is third-hand smoke harmful?

Infants and preschoolers are especially susceptible to third-hand smoke because they may breathe near, crawl and play on, touch, and lick contaminated surfaces. Children's developing brains are affected by very low levels of toxins and they are exposed to the risk of swallowing twice the amount of particles from contaminated surfaces as compared to adults.

Modelling a smoke-free life

There is evidence to show that parental smoking can result in children picking up smoking at an earlier age. The Student Health Survey 2009 conducted by HPB showed that 50 per cent of youth smokers had at least one parent who smoked. Similarly, a study by researchers at Dartmouth College revealed that children with parents who smoked were four times more likely to purchase cigarettes, as compared to children with non-smoker parents.

Quit smoking if you smoke

Therefore, if you do not want your child to pick up the smoking habit, it is crucial to be a positive and tobacco-free role model yourself! If you smoke, it is best to quit.

There is a variety of methods to quit smoking, and you can choose the method which is most suitable for your lifestyle. For more information, call QuitLine at 1800 438 2000 or log on to www.hpb.gov.sg/smokefree. It would be good to also explain to your child why you are quitting and involve him in your journey to quit smoking.

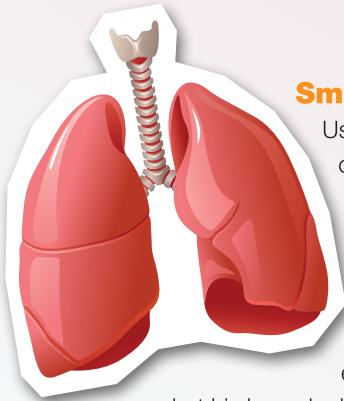
“Infants and pre-schoolers are especially susceptible to third-hand smoke because they may breathe near, crawl and play on, touch, and lick contaminated surfaces.”




**Parent-
Child
Activities**

Get Active!

With these games, you can help your child learn about the importance of a tobacco-free life



Smoker's lungs

Using pink cardboard or construction paper, cut out a set of lungs. Show them to your child and explain that this is

what his lungs look like – pink and healthy. Give your child a sponge and some black paint, and ask him to dab the paint over the paper lungs. Explain to him that this is what a smoker's lungs would look like as a result of tar, one of the substances found in cigarette smoke, being deposited on the lung tissue. Explore with your child on how he can have healthy lungs. Use this opportunity to discuss with your child what he can do to prevent his lungs from being damaged – for example, refrain from smoking, encourage family members who smoke to quit so that your child can breathe in fresh & clean air, exercise regularly.

Smells like smoke

Smokers tend to get more coughs and colds because of the toxins that they inhale. So they have stuffy noses and cannot smell or taste well. Lay out an array of snacks for your

child. Have your child taste one, and taste it again while holding his nose. Explain to him that this is why smokers cannot enjoy what they eat because smoking interferes with their sense of taste and smell.

Limited lungs

Give your child a skipping rope and a face mask. Help him put on the mask and skip 10 times. Have him remove the mask and skip another 10 times. Ask him to contrast the experience of skipping with and without a mask – it should have been easier for him to skip without a mask. Use this experience to explain how smoking affects stamina and how smokers may have difficulty breathing as a result of the toxins inhaled. Tell him that over time, smokers can develop diseases, such as chronic bronchitis, a lung infection that is caused by viruses that affect the air passages in the lungs, which can cause lung damage if left untreated.

What's your choice?

Download interesting anti-smoking advertisements and video clips from YouTube. View the advertisements or video clips together with your child and get him to rate and explain the anti-smoking advertisement or video clip that he likes most.



Studies have shown that children who have witnessed their parents drinking or being drunk have a greater risk of drinking during their teenage years compared to children who have not been exposed to such behaviour.

Keep them informed about the dangers

Did you know that children can be influenced by alcohol from a very young age? Reports have found that children as young as three years old could develop opinions about alcohol and cigarettes.

Binge drinking is defined as having more than four alcoholic drinks on one occasion for males and more than three drinks for females. Short term effects of binge drinking include getting drunk, nausea and vomiting, blurred or double vision and hangovers. If very large amounts of alcohol are consumed, binge drinking can lead to alcohol poisoning and death.

Long term consequences of heavy and frequent drinking include alcohol addiction, malnutrition, liver disease, brain damage, stomach cancer, kidney damage and erectile dysfunction.

Do not forget, if you choose to drink at home, avoid drinking beyond the recommended limits for men and women. For tips on responsible drinking, log on to www.hpb.gov.sg.

Set a healthy example

Is it all right to drink in front of my child? Just a sip of alcohol would not hurt, would it?

As a parent, you want to be a positive role model for your child. If you choose to drink, avoid drinking in front of your child.

“Long term consequences of heavy and frequent drinking include alcohol addiction, malnutrition, liver disease, brain damage, stomach cancer, kidney damage and erectile dysfunction.”



“If you choose to drink, avoid drinking in front of your child.”



Such attitudes about alcohol use become increasingly positive as they get older. By the age of 10, most children associate drinking with being liked by peers, feeling good and having increased confidence.

To prevent your child from drinking at a young age and/or having drinking problems in future, it is important to communicate openly with him.

Some tips on keeping your child alcohol free

You may wish to adapt the following suggestions to suit your family values and cultural circumstances.

- Keep alcohol inaccessible to your child at home.
- Read about the effects of drinking alcohol so that you can teach your child the right facts.
- Keep the lines of communication open. Use real-life incidents to help explain the facts about alcohol. For example, when someone is seen drinking or if an alcohol advertisement appears on TV, take the opportunity to discuss the facts of alcohol abuse with your child.
- Offer non-alcoholic drinks at parties and other social events instead. Show your child that you do not need alcohol to have fun.



“ Offer non-alcoholic drinks at parties and other social events instead. Show your child that you do not need alcohol to have fun.”



Who needs alcohol to have fun?

Dizzy catwalk

This is one activity you can do with your child to let him experience how alcohol consumption can affect one's balance and coordination.

You will need:

- A baseball bat or stick which is slightly shorter than your child
- A roll of masking tape

You can demonstrate this to your child first before letting him try it:

Step 1: Using the masking tape, prepare a straight line about 1-2 metres in length.



Step 2: At one end of the line, hold the bat or stick upright.

Step 3: Bend down, and rest your child's forehead on the top of the stick.

Step 4: Keep his head down and spin him around the stick 10-15 times.

Step 5: Encourage him to walk in a straight path along the line!



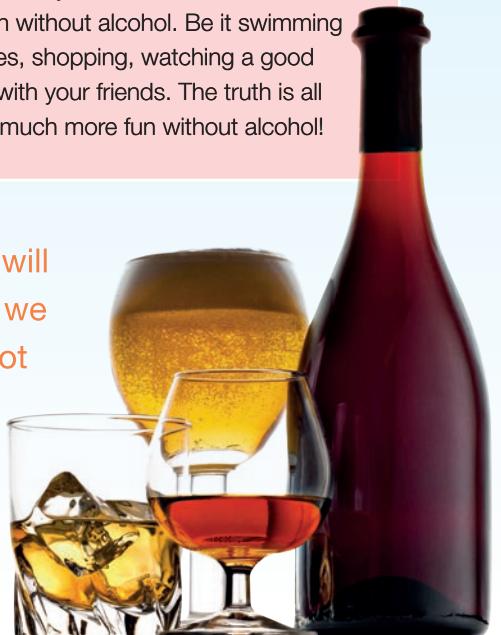
Parent-Child Activities

Myth buster

Debunk marketing myths about alcohol. Use these talking points with your child when alcohol advertisements are screened on TV.

Four Myths Alcohol Advertisers Want Us to Believe	Four Myth Busters!
Alcohol is a magic potion that can transform you.	What the alcohol advertisements do not show is how alcohol can also make people lose control of their emotions or behaviour. This is because alcohol affects the brain and causes changes to a person's mood and behaviour.
Sports and alcohol go hand-in-hand.	Although there are sports events and players who are sponsored (paid) by alcohol companies, the truth is that drinking alcohol can cause someone to run slower or not jump as high! In fact, it can also affect one's muscle growth.
Drinking is a risk-free and fun activity.	While every alcohol advertisement will show that drinking is safe and fun, we should be aware of what they do not show — for example, the vomiting, getting into fights, accidents when one is drunk.
You cannot survive without drinking.	Advertisers want you to believe that alcohol is important to a great party or outing with your friends. However, there are many ways to have fun without alcohol. Be it swimming or other sports activities, shopping, watching a good movie, or just playing with your friends. The truth is all these activities are so much more fun without alcohol!

“While every alcohol advertisement will show that drinking is safe and fun, we should be aware of what they do not show — for example, the vomiting, getting into fights, accidents when one is drunk.”



Growing up healthily in a child care centre

Find out more about how your child's nutritional needs
will be met at the child care centre



Going to child care is a new and often a scary experience for children. Before your child starts attending a child care programme, spend a few weeks talking to him about the experience.

- Tell him about how exciting it will be, how he will learn many new skills, and make many new friends.
- Reassure him that there will be teachers to look after and take care of him, and that there will be lots of new toys to play with.
- Visit the centre with your child and familiarise him with the place, so that he will not be frightened on his first day.



- If he needs you to, accompany him for the first few days. You can leave once he settles in and starts to take an interest in the surroundings and the people around him. Do not hang around too much, as this will make it harder for him to let go.

- Your child may cry. This is normal. Reassure him that you will be back in the evening to bring him home. Once he is familiar with the routine and knows that you will be there after school each day, he will gradually adjust to attend lessons at the child care centre.

Healthy eating at the child care centre

Research has shown that when it comes to food, children develop their preferences for food and tastes mostly before and during their preschool years, and that these eating habits and preferences tend to stay with them as they grow up. The preschool phase is the best time to help your child inculcate good eating habits that can benefit him for life.





If your child attends a child care programme, he probably takes at least two out of three meals a day there. This is why the child care centre also plays an important role in educating your child about nutrition, and shaping his eating habits.

To help child care centres provide healthy meals to the children and cultivate healthy eating habits among them, the Health Promotion Board (HPB) introduced the “Healthy Meals in Child Care Centres Programme” (HMCCP).

There are two parts to this programme – food service and nutrition education.

Food Service

Participating child care centres are required to comply with food service guidelines which aim to cut down fat, sugar and salt and serve whole-grains, fruit and vegetables in the meals; and serve healthy set meals. These healthy set meals incorporate the appropriate portions

of food from the four main food groups – brown rice & wholemeal bread, meat & others, fruits and vegetables – thereby ensuring that when children consume meals at the centres, they will receive the right nutrients necessary for their growing needs.

Nutrition Education

Participating child care centres are provided with guidelines to educate children about healthy eating. The education is done through curriculum, exhibits at the centres, involvement of parents as well as field excursion for the children. Educational wall murals are installed in the child care centres to remind the children to eat healthily.

Under HMCCP, culinary training and consultation with nutritionists and professional chefs are provided for child

Choose a child care centre that participates in HMCCP for your child.





care centres. The cooks are advised on menu planning and are trained on healthier cooking methods. They are also taught how to prepare healthier ingredients such as brown rice and the appropriate portioning of food for the children. HPB monitors

participating child care centres regularly and provides feedback for continuous improvement.



CHERISH Junior

A CHERISH (Championing Efforts Resulting in Improved School Health) Junior

School provides a health promoting environment for your growing child.

The CHERISH Junior Award recognises child care centres and kindergartens that have done well to promote and improve the physical, social, mental and emotional well-being of all students, staff and the school community.



Entering Primary School – Growing Up Healthily in School

Find out about the health care services offered for students from primary school onwards



Soon, your child will be attending primary school. Besides enrolling him into school, it is also important for you to know the primary health care services that are available for your child. The health needs of your child is as important as his academic needs in school.

School Health Service

The Health Promotion Board provides primary health care to all school-going children. The following services are offered:

- Height and weight measurements
- Vision screening
- Medical screening
- Immunisation
- Health education on healthy lifestyle practices

Healthcare professionals from the School Health Service (SHS) conduct annual free-of-charge medical check-ups and immunisations for the children at the school premises.

Your child will be given a referral letter to visit the Student Health Centre for further assessment and case management, should he be assessed to have any health-related issues.

Student Health Centre

The Student Health Centre (SHC) offers preventive and screening services for school children referred by the SHS healthcare professionals.

Your child can be screened at SHC for health issues such as:

- growth and development issues (such as short and tall statures, underweight, overweight and pubertal problems)
- defective vision
- hearing loss
- scoliosis (curved spine)
- heart conditions (such as heart murmurs)

If your child requires further specialist assessment, he will be referred to the in-house specialist clinic or appropriate specialist clinics in the restructured hospitals.



“Healthcare professionals of the School Health Service (SHS) conduct annual free-of-charge medical checkups and immunisations for children at the school premises.”

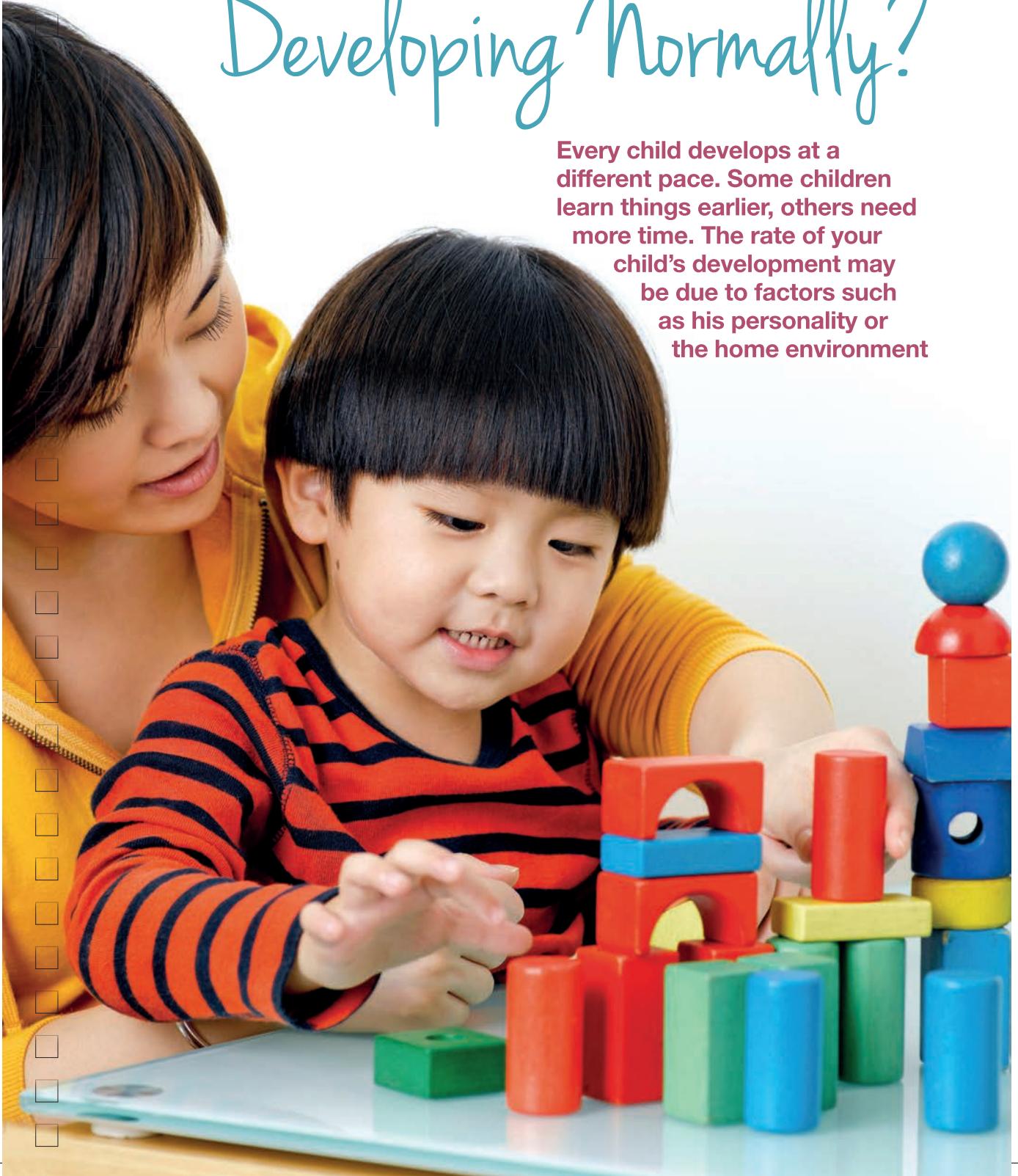
School Dental Service

The School Dental Service (SDS) provides school-based oral health care services. Our dental therapists provide dental screening and treatment to pupils in primary and secondary schools, as well as dental health education and health promotion for your child. Students who require more complex dental treatment will be referred to a Zonal Centre or to the School Dental Centre located at Health Promotion Board.



Is My Child Developing Normally?

Every child develops at a different pace. Some children learn things earlier, others need more time. The rate of your child's development may be due to factors such as his personality or the home environment



At some point, you might ask, “How do I know if my child is developing normally?” and you may compare your child’s physical, intellectual and behavioural development to that of your relative or neighbour’s child of the same age.

What is normal development for a preschooler

A preschooler likes to explore the world around him by jumping, running and playing. He learns to do many things on his own, like feeding and dressing himself, and may prefer to use the toilet alone. Speech-wise, he progresses from single words to complete sentences. Socially, he will be more aware of his environment and learn how to interact with people and establish relationships with family members and peers.

Awareness and early detection of developmental delays and disabilities

We know some children cannot sit still, cannot pronounce words well, do not follow instructions no matter how you phrase them, or blurt out inappropriate comments at inappropriate times. Some children who display such behaviours may have developmental delays or developmental disabilities.

You can track your child’s developmental milestones using the Student Health Booklet, or by using the checklist on the next page.

What is a developmental delay

The term “developmental delay” is used to describe a child who is slower to

reach developmental milestones than other children in the way he moves, communicates, thinks, learns and behaves. Developmental delays can be temporary or permanent.

What is a developmental disability

Developmental disability is a term that refers to a permanent mental and/or physical impairment that occurs in the early years of life. This disability usually results in the child being affected in the way he moves, communicates, thinks, learns and behaves. Common developmental disabilities are Autism Spectrum Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Dyslexia.

It is important for parents to be aware of and detect developmental delays and developmental disabilities early, so that the child can receive help on time and maximise his potential in the long run.





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Red Flags for Autism Spectrum Disorder

Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) have difficulties in communication, problem-solving and social skills.

Below are the red flags for ASD in the areas of social interaction, communication, behaviour and sensory experiences.

Socially, a child with ASD

- does not consistently respond to his name.
- does not show interest in other children.
- does not enjoy or engage in games.

In terms of communication, a child with ASD

- does not use eye contact to get someone’s attention.
- does not point to show people things or indicate that he wants something.
- does not sound like he is having a conversation with you when he babbles.
- does not understand simple one-step instructions, eg. ‘Give the block to me’.

Behaviour-wise, a child with ASD

- focuses narrowly on objects and activities, such as turning the wheels of a toy car only.
- is easily upset by change and must follow routines, for example, leaving the house must be done in the same way every time.

For sensory experiences, a child with ASD

- seeks sensory stimulation, for example, he may like to rock himself back and forth for hours.

Red Flags for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) children are over-active and display impulsive and inattentive behaviour. This behaviour is generally more frequent and intense than in other children of the same age.

A child with ADHD may

- be unable to sit through games, stories, and circle time. He may roll around on the floor or crawl under tables.

A 3-5 year-old child with dyslexia may

- seem uninterested in playing games with language sounds, such as repetition and rhyming.
- have trouble learning nursery rhymes.
- frequently mispronounce words and persist in using baby talk.
- fail to recognise the letters in his name.
- have difficulty remembering the names of shapes and colours, letters and numbers.

A 5-6 year-old child with dyslexia may

- fail to recognise and write letters, use inverted spelling for his name and other words.
- have trouble breaking spoken words into syllables, such as “cowboy” into “cow” and “boy”.
- have trouble picking out or recognising words that rhyme, such as “cat” and “bat”.
- fail to connect letters and sounds, such as “b” makes the sound “ba”.
- have a hard time learning letter names and sounds.

A 6-7 year-old child with dyslexia may

- have difficulty recognising letter names and sounds.
- fail to read common one-syllable words, such as “mat” and “top”.
- make reading errors that suggest a failure to connect sounds and letters.
- fail to recognise common, irregularly-spelled words, such as said, “two” and “where”.
- complain about how hard reading is and refuse to do it.
- have a tough time learning to write his name.
- have problems with fine motor skills, such as colouring and writing.

How to seek help

You may wish to speak to your child’s caregivers and preschool teachers to check your observations against different settings. You might want to find out about your child’s behaviour and learning during lessons, and how he gets along with his classmates.

You may wish to bring your child to your family doctor, doctor at the polyclinic or paediatrician for a check-up. Developmental screening is provided free-of-charge at the polyclinics for Singapore Citizens. Permanent Residents (PRs) will bear 50% of the screening cost.

The doctor may refer your child to one of the following for follow-up:

- Department of Child Development, KKH
- Child Development Unit, NUH
- Child Guidance Clinic
- Private paediatricians/ child psychiatrists/ psychologists.





Here are some references if you need any help and advice on your child's growing and learning needs

HEALTH & SPORTING ACTIVITIES

Sport On! Kids Club

 www.sportonkids.com.sg

Let's Play

 www.singaporeports.sg

National Parks Board

 www.nparks.gov.sg

COMMUNITY CENTRES

People's Association

 6345 6163

 www.one.pa.gov.sg

CHILD CARE SERVICES

For one-stop portal to child care information and services, visit www.childcarelink.gov.sg or call 6258 5812.

CHILDHOOD IMMUNISATION & DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING

Singhealth Polyclinics

 6236 4800

 <http://polyclinic.singhealth.com.sg>

National Healthcare Group (NHG) Polyclinics

 6355 3000

 www.nhgp.com.sg/

SPECIALIST OUTPATIENT CLINICS**KK Women's and Children's Hospital
Department of Child Development**

☎ 6225 5554

🌐 www.kkh.com.sg/services/children**National University Hospital
Child Development Unit**

☎ 6779 5555

🌐 www.nuh.com.sg**Child Guidance Clinic
(for developmental screening only)**

☎ 6389 2200/ 6389 2000

🌐 www.imh.com.sg/clinical**HEALTH PROMOTION BOARD****HEALTHLINE**

For more information or advice on general health issues, call HealthLine at 1800 223 1313* to speak to the experienced Nurse Advisers.

QUITLINE

For advice on how to quit smoking or how to help someone quit, call QuitLine at 1800 438 2000* to speak to the Quit Consultants.

QUITLINE SMS

Text your questions or concerns on quitting smoking to +65 9463 3771*.

Standard connection charges apply.

*Operating hours

Monday to Friday: 8.30am to 5.00pm

Saturday: 8.30am to 1.00pm

SCHOOL DENTAL CENTRE

To make an appointment, you can call

Tel: 6435 3782

Or Fax: 6435 3775

Or Email: HPB_Dental_Counter@hpb.gov.sg

For more information, visit www.hpb.gov.sg/pregnancyparenting/

Books for your growing child

Let your child learn and grow through reading

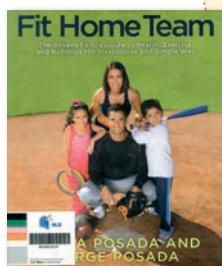
Nurturing a Healthy Lifestyle

Fit Home Team

Author: Laura Posada and Jorge Posada

Publisher: New York: Atria Book, c2009

Call Number: 613.7 POS
-[HEA]



All Rights Reserved
Atria Book, c2009

Jorge and Laura Posada are not the kind of parents who say to their children, "Do as I say." Their parenting mantra instead is, "Let's do it together," and the Posadas have always made good nutrition and fitness a core element of their family lifestyle. Fit Home Team is their formula for getting parents and kids off the couch, arming families with key tools for optimal health, wellness and overall balance by offering: a simple guide to eating right, nutrition-packed kid-friendly recipes, tips for taking the "work" out of "working out", inexpensive seasonal activities for staying fit, and an easy-to-follow family progress chart.

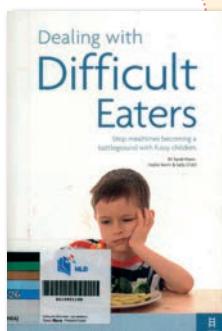
Helping Your Child Grow: Eating a Variety of Food

Dealing with Difficult Eaters

Author: Sandi Mann, Hollie Smith, Sally Child

Publisher: Richmond: Crimson Pub., 2009

Call Number: 618.928526
MA -[HEA]



All Rights Reserved
Crimson Pub., 2009

This guide provides tips and advice to ensure your child gets the nutrition they need. It covers all eating issues parents face. Advice is given on how to set the right parameters in place, and the difference leading by example can make.

More Peas Please

Author: Kate Di Prima, Julie Cichero

Publisher: Crows Nest, N.S.W: Arena/ Allen & Unwin, 2009

Call Number: 613.2083
DIP-[HEA]



All Rights Reserved
Arena/ Allen & Unwin, 2009

An authoritative and practical guide about feeding children, with easy recipes and information on why kids sometimes react to certain food and how parents can overcome them. It aims to help children learn to eat healthily.

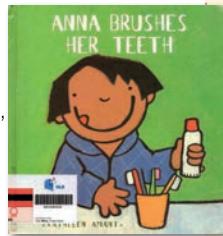
Oral Health

Anna Brushes Her Teeth

Author: Kathleen Amant

Publisher: New York: Clavis, c2010

Call Number: JP AMA-[BA]



All Rights Reserved
Clavis, c2010

After getting ready for bed, Anna picks out the right toothbrush, has her mom add some toddler toothpaste, and brushes her teeth with mom's help. This book includes information for parents on helping children brush their teeth.

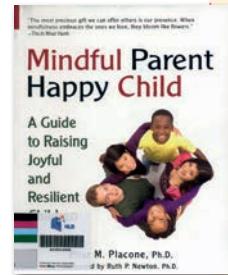
Raising a Resilient Kid

Mindful Parent, Happy Child

Author: Pilar M. Placone

Publisher: Lexington, Va: Alaya Press, 2011

Call Number: 649.1 PLA-[FAM]



All Rights Reserved
Alaya Press, 2011

This book helps to improve parent-child connections by presenting practising principles and models. When parents practise these methods, they are on a path of not only growing joyful and resilient children, but they are directly participating in growing a more compassionate world.

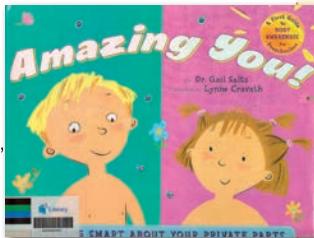
Sexuality Education

Amazing You!

Author: Gail Saltz

Publisher: New York: Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, c2006

Call Number: JP 612.6 SAL



All Rights Reserved
Charlesbridge, c2006

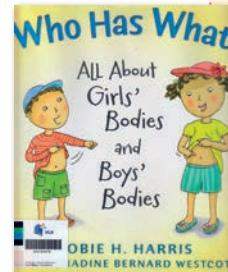
Teach your child basic body awareness and sexuality education. This book offers a simple explanation of how babies are made without explicit reference to sex. Cravath's sunny cartoons show the various parts in a straightforward manner, with side-by-side illustrations of a boy and girl in the baby, preschool and adult stages. An author's note advises parents on the finer points of discussing these delicate issues.

Who has what?

Author: Robie H. Harris

Publisher: Somerville, Mass: Candlewick Press, c2011

Call Number: JP 612.6 HAR



All Rights Reserved
Candlewick Press, c2011

This series for young children provides easy-to-understand facts and answers. "Who Has What?" is a simple story following Nellie and Gus on a family outing to the beach. Humorous illustrations, conversations between the siblings, and clear text all reassure young kids that whether they have a girl's body or a boy's, their bodies are perfectly normal, healthy, and wonderful.

Disclaimer: Parents' discretion will be needed in the selection of suitable reading materials for you and your child.

Making It Better

The **Healthy Start For Your Growing Kid** has been designed to help you make informed choices on giving your child a healthy start to life. Help us make this guide better so that it can further benefit others. Please be assured that all information gathered will be kept confidential. The collected information will be aggregated and may be used by the Health Promotion Board for programme planning, official reports, publications and enhancement of this guide.

Please complete the survey and mail it to the Health Promotion Board using the return envelope attached at the back. You will receive a **token of appreciation** from us. Completed survey must reach us before **30 June 2015**.

Part I

How far do you agree with these statements? Place a tick in the appropriate box.

BEFORE reading the *Healthy Start For Your Growing Kid* guide

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I am a role model for my child. My current lifestyle habits (eg. diet, physical activity, smoking) will have an effect on my child.					
2. I intend to adopt healthy lifestyle practices to positively influence my child.					
3. My child's lifestyle habits will follow him through to adulthood, and impact on his health and quality of life in the future.					

AFTER reading the *Healthy Start For Your Growing Kid* guide

1. I am a role model for my child. My current lifestyle habits (eg. diet, physical activity, smoking) will have an effect on my child.					
2. I intend to adopt healthy lifestyle practices to positively influence my child.					
3. My child's lifestyle habits will follow him through to adulthood, and impact on his health and quality of life in the future.					

Part II

How far do you agree with these statements? Place a tick in the appropriate box.

1. The <i>Healthy Start For Your Growing Kid</i> guide is useful to me.					
2. I would use the height chart. <i>(enclosed with the guide)</i>					
3. I would recommend this guide to my friends.					
4. I would buy this guide off the shelf.					
5. I would like to have discount coupons on child-related products in this guide.					

Part III

1a) What is your biggest concern for your child now that he is a preschooler?

b) Is this concern addressed adequately in the *Healthy Start For Your Growing Kid* guide? If not, why?

c) Which topic(s) should there be more information on?

2) Where do you get information on child health from? You may tick more than one box.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Books | <input type="checkbox"/> Events / fairs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Magazines | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internet | <input type="checkbox"/> Family / relatives |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Online forums | <input type="checkbox"/> Others: _____ |

3) Any other comments about the *Healthy Start For Your Growing Kid* guide?

Personal Particulars

Name: _____

NRIC/Passport number: _____

Age: _____

Nationality: _____

Ethnicity: _____

Relationship to child: Father/Mother/Other: _____

Contact number: _____

Email address: _____

Address: _____

Would you like to be on our mailing list to receive updates on health-related information and workshops?

Yes No

If yes, what is your preferred mode of receiving such information?

E-mail SMS Newsletter

Others: _____

Thank you for taking the time to do this survey. Please mail it to the Health Promotion Board using the attached return envelope. You will receive a token of appreciation from us. Completed survey must reach us before **30 June 2015**.

* Delete where appropriate.

Terms and Conditions:

Your child must be between 3 to 6 years old. Multiple entries are not encouraged as each participant is entitled to one token only. The original copy of the survey must be duly completed and sent to us to qualify for the token.

Child's Particulars

Child's name: _____

Date of birth: _____

Birth certificate number: _____

Birth order of child: *1st child/2nd child/3rd child and above



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Health Promotion Board
3 Second Hospital Avenue Level 4
Singapore 168937**

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