

Help me
grow and learn



Help me grow and learn

Children need help to grow and learn from their mothers and fathers, grandparents, aunts, uncles and other special people in their lives.

Play is an important way in which children learn. You can include play and learning into your everyday activities right from birth.

Ideas for play:

- > singing simple songs
- > naming and playing with toys
- > making games of finding things
- > counting things.

Children benefit from you talking, reading and sharing picture books with them from birth.

Ideas for talking:

- > when you are bathing them or changing their nappy
- > when you are preparing their meals
- > when you are out for a walk.

Children respond well to consistent ways of doing things and being responded to. This will help them understand what is happening and what to expect. Let them know about what is going to happen that day and when plans change.

If you need further help or are worried about anything else, visit a Child and Family Health Service nurse or your doctor.



It's never too early to start reading to your child. Find out more at www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au

Sleep

Babies and toddlers vary a lot in how much they sleep. Newborns wake at night several times for feeds. As they get older they sleep more and wake less at night. Toddlers may still wake and need your help to go back to sleep.

Regular quiet activities in the lead up to bedtime can help children of all ages go to sleep. Consider including things like bathing, cleaning teeth, reading a story, singing a song, and having cuddles.

Providing a safe sleeping environment is really important – it reduces the risk of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome), suffocation, falling and being injured by other hazards.

Whenever you put your baby down to sleep make sure they are:

- > on their back (never on the front or side) with their head and face uncovered and their feet at the end of the cot
- > in a cot that meets Australian Standards without any soft items that could suffocate them (for example pillows, doonas, bumpers, sheep skins and soft toys)
- > not exposed to cigarette or other smoke
- > in a cot away from curtain and blind cords and other hazards, with light bedding tucked in securely or in a baby ‘sleeping bag’
- > in the same room as the parents for the first 6 to 12 months.

Babies	Toddlers	Preschoolers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > give signs such as eye rubbing, yawning and grizzling when they are tired and need sleep > cry as part of normal development. This seems to increase around 6 to 8 weeks and settle by 12 weeks > can sleep about 5 hours (Midnight to 5.00 am) which is considered to be ‘sleeping through the night’. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > may still wake at night, and be unable to get back to sleep without your help > may give up their day sleep around 3 years > may start climbing out of their cot. Move them to a bed when this happens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > usually grow out of night waking by the time they are 3 or 4 when they feel more secure being by themselves > may find it harder to relax and go to sleep. Avoid exciting or stimulating activities before bed.

For information on sleep and helping your child to settle, go to www.cyh.com or www.sidsandkids.org or see your Child and Family Health Service nurse.

Settling

Babies often cry more than their parents expect. You may need to try different ways to try and settle your baby.

Ways to settle and calm your baby, include:

- > feeding
- > rocking (in your arms, in a rocker, in a pram, in a baby carrier / sling)
- > patting
- > gentle talking, humming, singing
- > gentle massage
- > settling holds such as over the arm or in a 'C', see www.cyh.com for examples
- > wrapping – make sure the wrap is cotton or muslin and not too tight. Leave enough room for their legs to bend with knees apart to help their hips develop normally. Visit www.sidsandkids.org for more information on how to safely wrap your baby
- > a safe infant sleeping bag – these can be used from birth and are recommended when they start to roll from their back to their front (they need to fit the neck well, have armholes, no hood and have enough room for their legs to bend with knees apart).

If you are feeling tense, frustrated and upset place your child safely in a cot, take a break and give yourself time to calm down, or get someone else to help you.

See your Child and Family Health Service nurse if you are having problems with settling your baby.



Healthy eating

Children will grow best when they are well fed. Breastmilk is the healthiest way to feed your baby. The only safe alternative is infant formula.

Signs that your baby is feeding well are that they are gaining weight, have plenty of wet and pooey nappies each day, have pale wee, and are alert and content at least for some of the time.

In hot weather your baby may need more feeds to keep them hydrated.

Eating together as a family can help your child learn to enjoy healthy foods.

As they grow older encourage them to help you choose fruit and vegetables, watch or help you make meals, or play games and read stories about good food.

Choking is a risk at any age. Children under 4 do not have back teeth to chew and grind food. It is important to supervise your child when they are eating. Make sure they don't eat when they are running or playing, laughing or crying.

Babies	Toddlers	Preschoolers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Every extra month you feed your baby breastmilk is a bonus for their health. > If you are breastfeeding, avoid drinking alcohol. > For more information on breastfeeding and alcohol visit www.breastfeeding.asn.au > For information about expressing breastmilk visit www.breastfeeding.asn.au > Babies need solids from about 6 months. Try different family food types and textures as they grow older. > If your baby is drinking formula milk, they can stay on their first type and don't need to change to 'follow on' formulas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > The best drinks are breastmilk, cool boiled tap or rainwater, or full cream cow's milk from a cup. > Encourage them to drink about 2 cups of milk (or equivalent yoghurt or cheese) a day. > Drinking too much milk will take up the tummy space they need for healthy food. > Encourage them to feed themselves, to eat slowly and chew well. > It is common for them to be fussy with food. > Avoid fruit juice – offer fresh fruit instead. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Let your child decide when they have had enough to eat – don't force them to eat or bribe them with dessert as a reward. > Take healthy snacks like fruit and vegetables, sandwiches, cheese and crackers when you're on the go or for childcare or preschool. > For more information on healthy eating visit www.raisingchildren.net.au/nutrition/newborns_nutrition.html and www.gofor2and5.com.au > For information about preventing choking visit www.cyh.com

Safety

Babies and children need their mothers and fathers and other important people to keep them safe.

Watch out for your baby / child at all times.

Smoking around your child can damage their health. One of the best things you can do for your child is to quit smoking. For help call the Quitline on 13 78 48.

Babies

- > Make sure they sleep on their back (never on the front or side) in a cot. It is recommended that the cot is in the same room as the parents for the first 6 – 12 months.
- > Check the cot is safe and meets Australian Standards.
- > Keep the cot clear of items that could cause suffocation such as pillows, quilts, doonas, bumpers. Less in the cot is best!
- > Keep blind cords and other hazards up and away from the cot.
- > Use a correctly fitted capsule / car seat on every car trip.
- > Never leave them unattended on the change table or any raised surface – they may roll and fall off.
- > Protect your baby from burns and scalds from things like hot water, hot drinks and the sun.
- > Never leave them unattended in a bath or with animals such as cats and dogs.

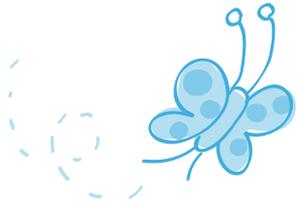
Toddlers

- > Watch them at all times when they are near water (including baths, buckets, wading pools, swimming pools).
- > Empty baths, buckets and wading pools after each use and fence backyard pools.
- > Keep hot things out of reach to prevent burns.
- > Use a full harness with high chairs, swings and prams.
- > Put a safety gate at the top and bottom of stairs to prevent falls.
- > Keep all medicines and household chemicals (such as those used for cleaning) up high and out of reach in a locked cupboard.
- > Watch them in the driveway. Make sure you know exactly where they are before moving the car.
- > Secure TVs and heavy furniture like bookshelves and cabinets so they don't topple on children.
- > Supervise your child with animals / pets.

Safety

Preschoolers

- > Set up play equipment on a soft surface and close to the ground.
- > Teach your child their full name and address and get them to practise it.
- > Always supervise your child crossing the road and in car parks, when they are around dogs (especially when the dog is eating) and when they are in the kitchen (keep them away from hot stoves, sharp knives, detergents).
- > Make sure your child wears a helmet every time they ride a bike or scooter.
- > Children must be in a car seat until they are 7 years old. Use an approved car seat on every trip.
- > Young children should not use a stove or microwave as they may burn themselves. Keep matches and lighters out of reach.
- > For more information on keeping your child safe visit www.kidsafesa.com.au or www.sidsandkids.org.safe



Caring

A child's brain develops best when someone is there to care and meet their needs. Responding to them lovingly and quickly helps to develop their trust and security – it does not mean you are spoiling them.

The involvement of dads and other family members is important for children's development. They can share the parenting and get involved in play, reading, bathing and settling.

Babies	Toddlers	Preschoolers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > communicate what they want by sounds and movements > have times when they develop faster. These times are called 'wonder weeks' and they can be a bit fussier at this time. Find out more about wonder weeks from www.cyh.com > love to play – try to fit play times in during your day and while you're doing everyday activities. > need loving care and your attention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > are full of energy, are curious and love exploring their world > like to be active, play games with balls, go for walks, and practice jumping, and running > like to help with household tasks > are interested in other children but don't really understand how to play together > commonly have temper tantrums when they are frustrated or cross > are generally ready to be toilet trained between 2 and 3 years old. Be patient with accidents as they learn. > show or tell you what they prefer – give choices that you are happy with, set limits and be consistent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > are learning to follow simple rules but may need gentle reminders > are increasing their attention span and can stay 'on task' for a while > are still learning to manage their feelings and may shift suddenly from being happy to sad > may show their independence by making demands or bossing others > may be getting ready to go to school – help them by talking about school and showing them where it is.

Caring for your baby takes a lot of your time but try to find some time for other important people in your life as well.

For ideas on fun games and activities for you and your child, visit www.cyh.com or www.raisingchildren.net.au

Teeth and dental health

Looking after your baby's teeth helps give their adult teeth a good start.

Care for your baby's teeth by:

- > cleaning their teeth when they first appear with a small soft toothbrush or clean cloth
- > avoiding toothpaste until 18 months
- > using only breastmilk, water or formula in their bottle. Avoid fruit juice, cordial and fizzy drinks.
- > not putting your baby to bed with a bottle – this is the main cause of tooth decay in children under 5 years.

If your baby uses a dummy, clean it under running water (not in your mouth) to avoid the transfer of germs that cause tooth decay.

For your toddler or preschooler:

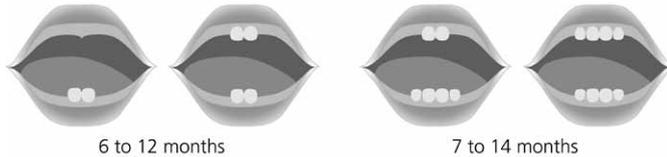
- > Brush teeth twice a day, after breakfast and before going to bed. Use a low-fluoride children's toothpaste and a small soft brush.
- > Lift your toddler's lip once a month to check for early signs of tooth decay. White lines on the tooth near the gum line can be the beginning of decay. See your dentist or visit the SA Dental Service if you are concerned.
- > Choose food and drinks that are low in sugar. Sugary food and drinks cause tooth decay.



Your baby can start to drink from a cup from 6 months and after 12 months can have all drinks from a cup.

Your baby's tooth chart

This chart is a guide but every baby is different and your baby's teeth may come through in a different order or at a different age. Don't be concerned if this is the case.



This material has been reproduced with the permission of the SA Dental Service.

At around 12 – 18 months arrange a time with the School Dental Service or your private dentist for their first dental check.

To contact the School Dental Service visit www.sadental.sa.gov.au for a list of school dental clinics or telephone (08) 8222 8222.

All dental care provided by the School Dental Service for babies, toddlers and preschoolers is free.