

## Health Promotion

All paediatricians have a role in health promotion and it is relevant to all children irrespective of their background or health conditions. Many children and young people seen in community paediatrics are vulnerable and may have difficulty accessing services for a variety of reasons it is therefore particularly important that attention is given to health promotion.

In March 2020 the RCPCH published the *State of Child Health Report*<sup>1</sup>. This identifies key priorities for improving child health outcomes are:

1. Reduce child health inequalities
2. Prioritise public health, prevention and early intervention
3. Build and strengthen local cross sector services

### Child health profiles:

Data relating to child health in your local area are available from the office of national statistics:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/2020-child-health-profiles>

### Healthy Child Programme:

Aims to: <sup>2</sup>

- Help parents develop and sustain a strong bond with children
- Support parents in keeping children healthy and safe and reaching their full potential
- Protect children from serious disease, through screening and immunisation
- Reduce childhood obesity by promoting healthy eating and physical activity
- Identify health and wellbeing issues early, so timely support and early interventions can be provided
- Ensuring children are school ready
- Ensure children are supported to be 'ready to learn at two and ready for school by five'

Delivery of the healthy child programme requires good communication and joined up working between relevant teams (including maternity and midwifery, primary care, mental health, early years education). All children access universal services and targeted services are offered based on assessed need.

### Routine child health promotion activities include:

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| - Antenatal care (including assessment of maternal health, social needs and antenatal screening) | - By 12 months: health review   |
| - Soon after birth: full physical examination (newborn check)                                    | - 1 year: immunisations   |
| - 5-8 days: heel prick blood spot  | - 2-2.5yrs: health review   |
| - 10-14 days: new baby review  | - 3yr 4m: immunisations   |
| - In first month: hearing screening  | - Early school years: sight check, hearing check and measurements (height and weight) |
| - 6-8 weeks: full physical examination   | - 10-11 yrs: measurements   |
| - 8, 12, 16 week: immunisations  | - 12-14 yrs: HPV vaccines   |
|  | - Around 14 yrs: immunisations  |

**Other important health promotion considerations:**

- Promotion and support of breast feeding
- Additional immunisations including flu vaccination (where not included in national programme)
- Promotion of healthy lifestyle and identification of and intervention for obesity
- Safe sleep
- Accident prevention including home safety
- Identification of abuse and support for families
- Sexual health
- Lifestyle choices including smoking, alcohol and recreational drugs
- Mental health and wellbeing

**Health discussions with families:**

- Keep messages simple
- Keep changes simple
- Avoid lectures
- Multiple factors influence behaviour; unless you have an understanding of motivators, effecting change is difficult.
- Listen to children and families and respond appropriately
- Consider what your recommendations actually require from the family (e.g. to attend a recommend intervention do parents have to have time off work or take 3 buses to get to it?)
- Have knowledge of local services and how to access them
- Using tools for psychosocial information gathering such as the HEADSS screening tool can help start conversation

**Further information:**

1. RCPCH State of child health report 2020. <https://stateofchildhealth.rcpch.ac.uk/evidence/at-a-glance/>
2. PHE 2018. Best start in life and beyond: Improving public health outcomes for children, young people and families: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/686928/best\\_start\\_in\\_life\\_and\\_beyond\\_commissioning\\_guidance\\_1.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/686928/best_start_in_life_and_beyond_commissioning_guidance_1.pdf)
3. NHS Healthy child programme 2020. <http://www.healthychildprogramme.com/>
4. RCPCH webinar: Health promotion – what’s a paediatrician to do? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LKo-hPOJRWc&feature=youtu.be>
5. Information about the HEADSS screening tool: <https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/best-practice-examples-health-transition>
6. Public Health functions to be exercised by NHS England. Children’s public health services from pregnancy to age 5 years. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/192978/27\\_Children\\_s\\_Public\\_Health\\_Services\\_\\_pregnancy\\_to\\_5\\_\\_VARIATION\\_130422\\_-\\_NA.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/192978/27_Children_s_Public_Health_Services__pregnancy_to_5__VARIATION_130422_-_NA.pdf)
7. Healthy child programme – RCPCH online learning: <https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/healthy-child-programme-online-learning>
8. Healthy development in young people – RCPCH online learning: <https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/healthy-development-young-people-substance-misuse-online-learning>
9. E learning for health – multiple relevant modules