

Information For Parents

The Primary School Nursing Program is a free service offered by the Department of Education to all prep/foundation students and their families during their child's first year of school.

The program aims to assist in the early identification of children with potential health and development related learning difficulties and offers health and development screening (such as hearing, vision, speech, dental and motor skills) as well as advice, information and referrals to other health and support services.

Your child will receive information regarding the School Entrant Health Questionnaire in their first year at school.

Parents / carers can support their child's participation in the program by completing an online School Entrant Health Questionnaire.

You can access and complete this questionnaire on a mobile phone, computer, or tablet.

A paper version of the questionnaire is available from your child's school if you prefer.

If you do not wish for your child to be seen by the School Nurse you can select 'No' on the questionnaire.

Transition to School- changes for your Child

Starting school involves a number of changes for children and families. Some useful tips to assist in the transition to school include:

Getting familiar with your child's new school

In the months and weeks before starting school, it's good for your child to get familiar with the school environment. This includes routines and rules as well as the classroom, playground, toilets, drinking fountains and so on.

Managing feelings about starting school

Starting school can be a big change for your child, and they might feel a bit anxious as well as excited. Letting your child know that you think they'll go well at school, this can help them feel positive. Give your child lots of love and support. -Be excited and enthusiastic about your child starting school. This sends your child the positive message that school is exciting and that they'll manage well and have fun.

Starting school: the early weeks

Here are some simple things you can do to help the first few weeks go smoothly:

- Try to drop off your child at school before the bell goes in the morning. Also pick your child up on time. If you're late it could make your child feel a bit anxious.
- Try to make after-school time a bit special, with a snack and time for the two of you to chat. -You could try saying something like, 'Tell me one good thing about your day'.
- Don't expect too much academic progress too soon. If your child is happy and seems to be enjoying school, that's a real achievement. The rest will come later.
- Remember that it's normal for children to play with lots of different children, and even to play on their own sometimes. It takes a while before they settle into a group of friends.



Information and Support for Parents:

Anglicare/Parentzone parenting courses-
03 9781 6729

parentzone.southern@anglicarevic.org.au

Parentline- 1300 30 1300

Homelessness assistance: 1800 825 955

SafeSteps Family Violence support:

1800 015 188 or www.safesteps.org.au

Orangedoor- [1800 271 170](tel:1800271170)

Food Security: www.askzizzy.org.au/food

Royal Children's Hospital- 9345 5522

www.rch.org.au

School Health Plans : Do you have your child's health plans ready for school?

Allergies & eczema plans available at:

www.allergy.org.au

Asthma plans available at:

www.asthma.org.au

Please discuss your plans with your Family Doctor and once completed give them to the school.



When should my child's eyes be tested?

Optometrists Association Australia recommends that children have a full eye examination with an Optometrist before starting school and regularly as they progress through primary and secondary schools.

An eye examination with an Optometrist takes approximately 25 minutes and attracts a Medicare rebate- no referral is required.

Please record any vision testing and/or family history of vision problems on the School Entrant Health Questionnaire.

If there has not been any vision testing prior to starting school the Primary School Nurse is able to check you child's distance vision and provide a referral if needed.

Signs that could indicate a possible vision problem:

- One eye turns in or out while the other points straight ahead.
- Frequent blinking/rubbing of the eye
- Red or watery eyes
- Sensitivity to light
- Tilting head noticeably
- Poor hand eye co-ordination
- Covering or closing one eye
- Difficulty learning to read
- Holding a book very close to read
- Leaving out or confusing words when reading
- Squinting or sitting very close when watching TV
- Complaints of headaches, blurred/double vision

Regular dental check-ups (6-12monthly) are recommended as part of your child's dental health routine. Healthy teeth and gums are vital to your school-age child's general health. Dental care for children's teeth starts with cleaning your child's teeth twice a day.

Dental Health

Your child may be eligible for the Commonwealth Child Dental Benefits Schedule, which provides \$1000 worth of basic dental care over a 2 year period for eligible children. Contact Monash health Dental Services on 1300 342 273 to make an appointment.



Tips for better sleep:

1. Set up a regular bedtime routine
2. Relax before bed
3. Keep Regular wake times
4. Make sure your child feels safe at night
5. Check noise and light in your child's bedroom
6. Limit screens/ TV before bed



Sleep and Learning

About sleep and learning

Good-quality sleep helps your child concentrate, remember things and behave well. These all help them to be a successful learner.

Poor sleep or not enough sleep affects concentration, memory and behaviour, making it harder for your child to learn. Children who don't sleep well are more likely to feel sleepy and to have difficulties with learning.

Concentration

Children who are sleepy have trouble concentrating during the day. If your child can't keep their attention on what they're trying to learn, whether it's climbing a tree at the park or singing a song at school, it will affect their learning.

Memory

Remembering things is part of learning. When your child is tired, it's harder for them to remember basic information such as learning the alphabet, numbers, words and following instructions.

Our brains create and strengthen different types of memory in different sleep cycles. Just before your child wakes in the morning, their brain uses the last stages of REM sleep to sort and store memories and information from the previous day and get ready for the day ahead.

Behaviour

Sleepy children tend to have more problems with behaviour school- and at home too! For example, a sleepy child might play up in class or refuse to follow the teacher's instructions. A sleepy child might miss out on learning because the teacher is busy managing their behaviour. The child might also miss out on playing with other children if they don't like the way s/he's behaving.

If your child is having problems with their concentration, memory or behaviour, checking their sleep is a good place to start.

If you're worried, or the problems go on for more than 2-4 weeks, talk to your doctor, Primary School Nurse or Maternal and Child Health Nurse.

Information taken from the Raising Children Network- www.raisingchildren.net.au