

Helping Families

GP Resources



A child's early development is a critical time during which optimal care should be provided. Psychosocial issues of families, such as lack of support, relationship issues, post-natal depression, family violence and other stresses can effect a child's optimal development. Providing support services to families at the early signs of difficulty will achieve the best possible short and long-term health and social outcomes for children and their families.

This booklet includes:

- Current immunisation schedule
- Prompt questions for GPs to ask at immunization visits to assess psychosocial risk
- Tools for rating risk and lists of vulnerabilities
- Contact details for appropriate support services

Please use the information in this booklet to assist families to receive appropriate support.

Immunisation Schedule & Suggested Questions

Immunisation visits provide an excellent opportunity to connect with parents and discuss their psychosocial needs. These questions are suggested prompts to assist such discussions as appropriate.

Age	Disease	Vaccine	Suggested Questions
2 months	Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis Haemophilus influenzae type B (Hib) Hepatitis B Polio Pneumococcal	Infanrix hexa Prevenar	<i>Are you seeing an early childhood/baby health nurse?</i> <i>Do you have supportive friends and family?</i> <i>Are you feeling depressed or sad?</i> <i>Are you breastfeeding?</i>
4 months	Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis Haemophilus influenzae type B (Hib) Hepatitis B Polio Pneumococcal	Infanrix hexa Prevenar	<i>Do you talk or sing to your baby?</i> <i>Are you having problems with anxiety?</i> <i>Have you ever felt like harming yourself or your baby?</i>
6 months	Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis Haemophilus influenzae type B (Hib) Hepatitis B Polio Pneumococcal	Infanrix hexa Prevenar	<i>Have you attended your local early childhood centre (baby health centre)?</i> <i>Do you take your baby out of the house?</i> <i>Do you get physical exercise?</i> <i>Are you having any difficulties in your relationship?</i>
12 months	Measles, Mumps, Rubella Haemophilus influenzae type B (Hib) Meningococcal C Pneumococcal	Priorix Hiberix Meningococcal C Prevenar (Medical at risk children)	<i>Have you had any recent feelings of sadness or anxiety?</i> <i>How are you/your family coping with working/not working?</i>
18 months	Varicella (Chicken pox)	Varilrix	<i>Do you read to your baby?</i> <i>Have you joined a playgroup? Have you thought about child care options?</i>
4 years	Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis Polio Measles, Mumps, Rubella Pneumococcal	Infanrix-IPV Priorix Pneumovax 23 (Medical at risk children)	<i>Do you read to your child?</i> <i>Do you know about transition to school programs?</i>

Services for Families

Supporting families and intervening early around known vulnerabilities can improve health and social outcomes for families. The following chart identifies how to link families with support services.

Level 1: Low Risk

Family seems well supported and engaged with services. Families may benefit from these services listed below:

If family is not attending early childhood centre GP can fax referral to 1300 308 893 for:

- Maternity services and early childhood health services

Encourage families to use:

- **24 hour Parent Help Lines** – Karitane 9794 1852 Tresilian 9787 0855
- **Parentline** – 132 055 (9-4:30 Mon- Sat)
- **Breastfeeding** – Lactation Consultant St George Hospital – 9350 1111 (page 181)
Australian Breastfeeding Association Help line - 8853 4999
- **Parenting programs** – Triple P (Positive Parenting) 9350 3999
- **Playgroups** – Playgroup Association 9604 5513
- **Child care, preschools, libraries and community services and groups**
Hurstville Council 9330 6222, Rockdale Council 9562 1666, Kogarah Council 9330 9400

Level 2: Medium Risk

Mothers and families who require additional support.

Vulnerability Factors:

- Young (under 19 years)
- Unsupported parent
- Single, unsupported parent
- Late antenatal care
- Multiple birth
- Complicated birth
- Premature birth
- Child/parent with disability/chronic illness
- Adjustment to parenting issues
- Relationship issues
- Financial stress
- Unstable housing
- Partner unemployed
- Isolated – eg. geographic, no telephone
- Refugee, recent migrant, limited English
- Aboriginal people



Support Services:

- **Perinatal Mental Health Worker**
Antenatal - 9350 1111 (page 664) or 9350 2488
Postnatal - 9113 4444
- **Family Care Services** – Possum Cottage (day, stay, sleep, feeding, counselling, advice and information) 9540 7321
- **Whispers Cottage** –
Day stay, sleeping, settling, fees apply – 9528 4837
- **Counselling Services** – Child and Family Team
Sylvania 9522 1000, Engadine 9520 4644,
Menai 9534 1111
- **Volunteer Home Visiting** –
Sutherland Family Network – 9544 7057
- **Family Support Service** – assistance with housing, finances, domestic violence, advocacy – 9528 2933
- **Pregnancy Help Line** – 1300 139 313
- **Relationship Counselling** –
Individual and couple counselling –
Interrelate 9545 3566, Centacare 9545 1233
- **Southern Community Welfare** – 9545 0299
- **Premature Babies Group** meets at Cronulla – 9523 5927
- **Young Parents Group** –
Engadine District Youth Services 9548 2734
- **Credit Line Financial Counselling Services** – 9951 5544
- **Southern Sydney Multiple Birth Association** – 9773 0302
- **Disabilities Services Information** –
Early Childhood Intervention Info line 1300 65 68 65
- **Cross Cultural Workers for Maternity and Early Parenting**
Indonesian – 0410 517 254 (Tues – Thurs)
Arabic speaking – 0405 505 275 (Wed-Fri)
- **Migrant Services** – Gymea Community Aid and Information Services 9524 9559
- **Aboriginal Liaison Officer** – 0410 476 856



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