



Healthy Hints for Tots

He kōrero hauora mō kā mokopuna

This newsletter aims to provide health information and tips for the early childhood community in Otago and Southland. Use it as you wish – copy and distribute information to parents and whanau, use parts in your own newsletter. Previous newsletters are available at www.southerndhb.govt.nz/pages/newsletters/

Reminder – this newsletter is now only available electronically! If you know of anyone who would like to receive this newsletter, please reply with their email address and we will add it to our mailing list.

Play time!

Regular active play, limited sitting and enough good-quality sleep are important for a child's healthy growth and development. Play is an important way for a child to grow physically, socially, emotionally and spiritually, all of which are vital for their future health and wellbeing.

Are you up to date with the latest recommendations from Ministry of Health?

Sit Less, Move More, Sleep Well: Active play guidelines for under-fives (May 2017) have been prepared to support health practitioners, early childhood providers, regional sports trusts and others who provide advice to parents, caregivers and whānau on activity and sleep for this age group. The guidelines are one approach in the Ministry's Childhood Obesity Plan to make healthier choices easier choices for New Zealanders.

Practical ideas to help meet the guidelines:

Sit Less, Move More

- Encourage regular tummy time
- Water-based play outside
- Interactive games such as Simon Says
- Maori games such as ti rakau (traditional stick game)
- Encourage active movement habits such as walking to the shops, park or

Sleep Well

- Have a dark and quiet room
- Create consistent bedtimes
- Develop a bedtime routine such as having a bath, brushing teeth and reading a story
- Avoid TV or other screens for at least one hour before bedtime

kindergarten

- Play at the local playground or park
- Put on music and dance
- Be a role model and reduce your own screen use
- Do not have screens in bedrooms
- Plant a vegetable garden

Age	Hours of sleep (over a 24-hour period)
Babies – up to 3 months	14 to 17
Infants – 4 to 12 months	12 to 15
Toddlers – 1 or 2 years	11 to 14
Preschoolers – 3 and 5 years	10 to 13

Download the guidelines from the Ministry of Health:

<http://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/active-play-guidelines-for-under-fives-may17.pdf>

For more information contact Elynn Robertson, Health Promotion Advisor, Public Health South on elynn.robertson@southerndhb.govt.nz or 03 217 8620

Lets Play Southland



A playful initiative in Invercargill is aiming to create lifelong healthy habits for young Southlanders. Let's Play Southland is the result of a collaborative effort between Healthy Families Invercargill, ILT Stadium Southland, Early Childhood Education, Murihiku marae and various health organisations.

The concept, which recently received \$5500 funding from the Invercargill Licensing Trust, will see Let's Play Southland play bins established at ILT Stadium Southland from late March for use by early childhood centres and the public on weekdays between the hours of 9am-3pm at a discounted rate.

The bins will include a range of equipment designed to stimulate and encourage children with active play. Go to www.healthyfamiliesinvercargill.org.nz/newsarticle/57770 to learn more about this exciting initiative.

To book you can contact Stadium Southland on 03-219 9310 from the end of March.

Brain Food!

A recent Australian study (2017) has investigated whether certain dietary behaviours were associated with academic achievement in more than 2000 school-aged children. The study explored five areas of children's diet (fruit intake, vegetable intake and the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, breakfast and takeaway foods) and compared those dietary habits with reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy tests.

They found:

- That **eating vegetables** at the evening meal more nights a week was associated with significantly higher spelling and writing scores.
- That **consuming breakfast** was positively correlated with writing scores.
- Higher consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages was associated with significantly lower scores in reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy.

The results of the recent research are good reminder of the importance of eating our **5+ a day, every day**. Fruit and vegetables supply valuable vitamins and minerals for growth and development. So aim to have you and your child's plate filled with veges at dinner time. **Remember to include fruit at breakfast time – canned with no added sugar is a good option too.**



Good-quality breakfasts also provide our kids with fuel for our brain. Our brains prefer glucose as their fuel source which we get from carbohydrate foods. Consuming high-fibre and whole sources of carbohydrate is best. **Choose carbohydrates such as potato, kumara, taro, green banana, pasta, rice, wholegrain noodles, pumpkin, corn, wholegrain bread, whole fruit and legumes like chickpeas, lentils and beans to keep fuller for longer.**

Diets high in sugar or saturated fats may place extra stress on the brain. Takeaway foods are often high in saturated fats and excess calories, as are with chips, cakes and biscuits. Sugar-sweetened beverages such as fruit drinks, cordials and soft drinks are high in sugar. Limit these to occasional foods, not daily.

Boost those reading and writing skills and encourage children to eat fruit, veges and long lasting carbohydrate foods daily, and limit the high fat and sugar options to occasional foods.

For more information see article published in the ODT by Kirsty Fairbairn, Dietitian.
<https://www.odt.co.nz/lifestyle/magazine/food-thought-0>

Easter ideas:

Remember infants and toddlers will be just as happy (if not more) playing with arts and crafts- they don't need mountains of chocolate to feel special this Easter!



Bunk Beds

We would like to draw to the attention of Early Childhood Education Services the following advice on bunk beds -

The Ministry of Health advises that *“Bunk beds are not suitable for children under 9 years of age – even if you plan to let them sleep in the lower bunk”*.

Refer to: <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/pregnancy-and-kids/under-fives/1-2-years/your-childs-first-bed>

The Ministry for Business Innovation and Employment notes that *“bunk beds can be dangerous, especially for very young children. Most bunk bed injuries happen when children fall from the top bunk. Children can also get stuck in gaps or get their clothes caught on tall corner posts. This can often lead to serious or even fatal injuries. “Bunk bed” refers to either beds which have one bed stacked over the top of another or which has the upper surface of a mattress over 700 mm from the floor. Bunk beds are not suitable for children under 9 years of age”*.

The relevant New Zealand Standard for bunk beds - AS/NZS 4220:2010: *Bunk beds and other elevated beds* is clear about the dangers of bunk beds for children under 9 years - *“The safety standard specifies to manufacturers that each bunk bed shall include a warning and statement in a leaflet, or other printed material, which is to be supplied with the bunk bed, as follows: WARNING: TOP BUNKS AND ELEVATED BEDS ARE DANGEROUS AND ARE NOT RECOMMENDED FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 9. Falls from elevated beds can be fatal and deaths have occurred where children have fallen from elevated beds. This is relevant for all ages. The risk is greater for younger children”*.

Refer to: <https://www.standards.govt.nz/touchstone/consumer-safety/2013/jul/new-zealands-standard-for-bunk-beds/>

Kids Health (a joint initiative between the Paediatric Society of NZ and the Starship Foundation) makes the same recommendation.

Refer to: <https://www.kidshealth.org.nz/bunk-beds-tips-safe-use>

For any enquiries, please contact your Education Advisor or phone (03)471-5225 or email: enquiries.dunedin@education.govt.nz

Queens Park give Little Lungs a thumbs up!

Queens Park Early Childcare Centre completed the Little Lungs - Pūkahukahu Iti workshop in 2017. The Centre is now embracing Smokefree environments with their tamariki and their families.

We had a great discussion about the importance of Smokefree environments including cars and homes and how as a centre staff can help achieve Smokefree Aotearoa 2025. At Queens Park ECE they aim to include Smokefree in their staff meeting agendas and intend to promote Smokefree messages to families through newsletters and at centre events.



Staff reported they found the workshop very informative and relevant with some alarming stats about second hand smoke. Queens Park ECE is pleased to showcase their new Smokefree signage which they are hoping will decrease the second hand smoke drift from pedestrians walking by on this busy corner!

Little Lungs aims to introduce simple, practical ways in which Early Childhood Educators can raise awareness of the positive benefits of smokefree cars and homes for whānau and learn about the government's goal of Smokefree 2025.

If you are interested in Smokefree Professional Development for staff at your centre in the Invercargill area please contact:

Ellyn Robertson
Ellyn.Robertson@southerndhb.govt.nz
 Phone: 03 211 8620

Or:
 Bridget Rodgers
Bridget.rodgers@wellsouth.org.nz
 Phone: 03 214 6436

National Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Outbreak

There has been a significant increase in the number of pertussis cases reported recently. Pertussis epidemics occur regularly every three to five years, with young babies at highest risk of

severe disease. Our main focus is on protecting them.

In 2017, 1315 cases of whooping cough were notified around the country with 82 babies aged under one year old. Half of these babies were hospitalised. From 2011 to 2013 there were four deaths from whooping cough, three were babies too young to have started their immunisations.



The free maternal immunisation programme provides the best protection for mothers and newborn babies. When pregnant women are immunised, they pass their immunity on to their baby, protecting them for their first few months of life, until baby is fully immunised. The protection the baby gets from their mother is temporary so it is very important to start baby's immunisations on time at 6 weeks.

- **Receiving the free whooping cough booster during pregnancy is the best way to reduce the risk of a newborn being hospitalised from whooping cough.**
- **On-time immunisation of babies at 6 weeks, 3 months and 5 months is the next important way of reducing the risk to our young children.**

Immunisation is free; talk to your Family Doctor, Practice Nurse, Plunket Nurse or Public Health Nurse or visit www.immune.org.nz or <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/conditions-and-treatments/diseases-and-illnesses/whooping-cough>

Coming up!

March 20th
World Oral Health Day

April 7th
World Health Day

April 30th – May 6th
Immunisation Week

May 31st
World Smokefree Day

Resources



What, when and how to introduce solid foods to babies pamphlet and fridge magnets. Available at <https://order.hpa.org.nz/collections/eating-activity>.

For any other resources contact Judy Sibbe at Public Health South, Dunedin 03 476 9870



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