

Maternal and Child Health Service: Fact Sheet for General Practice

“The Maternal and Child Health Service is a free universal primary care service for all Victorian families with children aged birth to school age.”

The Maternal and Child Health Service is provided in partnership with the Municipal Association of Victoria through local government and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. It aims to promote healthy outcomes for children and their families.

The service works in partnership with families, communities and service providers with the focus being on the prevention, promotion, early detection and intervention of health and wellbeing concerns of children and their families.

The program is underpinned by Birth Notification Legislation, which ensures that all mothers and babies have contact with a nurse from birth with an ongoing relationship available until school age.

Maternal and child health nurses deliver:

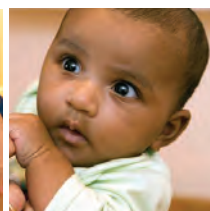
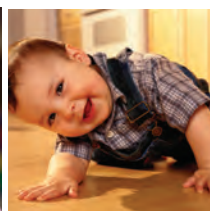
- Ten Key Ages and Stages consultations over four years
- Additional consultations either in the home or the office; and
- First time parent groups

The Key Ages and Stages consultations provide:

- Monitoring of growth and physical development
- Parents Evaluation of Developmental Status (PEDS) as a tool to discuss a child’s development
- Brigance screen as a secondary tool when concerns are identified through the PEDS
- Relevant health information
- Interventions that include a SIDS risk assessment, quit smoking intervention and family violence risk screen
- Anticipatory guidance in response to other concerns or clinical judgement

The **Enhanced Maternal and Child Health Service** is able to provide a more focused and intensive outreach support for vulnerable families experiencing significant early parenting difficulties and children identified as being at risk of harm.

The **Maternal and Child Health Line** is a 24 hour, 7 day a week state wide telephone service available to all Victorian families with children from birth to school age. It is staffed by qualified maternal and child health nurses who provide information, support and guidance regarding child health, nutrition, breast feeding, maternal and family health and parenting. The number is **13 22 29**



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Working with General Practice

The Maternal and Child Health Service works collaboratively with families and their key health professionals, including General Practice. Maternal and child health nurses refer to or recommend that families attend a General Practice as required to address issues that have become apparent during the Key Ages and Stages consultations.

The 3.5 year Key Ages and Stages consultation is a comprehensive consultation with clinical domains consistent with the *Healthy Kids Check* (MBS items 709/711).

The 3.5 year Key Ages and Stages Consultation

Assessment

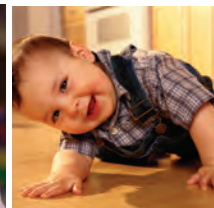
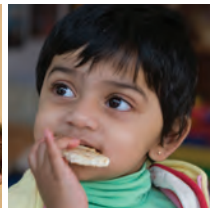
- **Physical examination**
 - Weight & height
 - Hips / Gait
 - Oral health
 - Vision screening (using Melbourne Initial Screening Test)
 - Nutrition
- **Developmental**
 - Parental Evaluation of Developmental Status – PEDS
 - Brigance Screening if required
- **Family Health & Wellbeing**
 - Physical health
 - Emotional health
 - Social wellbeing
 - Family Violence screen

Interventions

- Promotion of Healthy BMI
- Response to Assessment
- Starting Kindergarten including enrolment

Health and Development Promotion

- Communication, language and play
- Healthy eating and play for kindergarten
- Immunisation
- Injury Prevention – Kidsafe Information



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A few ways to work in partnership with the Maternal and Child Health Service to achieve the best outcomes for each child and family

Ask parents if their child has attended the maternal and child health nurse for the 3.5 year old Key Ages and Stages consultation

Remind parents to bring their Child Health Record along to all medical appointments (Record of Illness Events Throughout Life)

Record the Healthy Kids Check in the Child Health Record (Health Assessment Section 4 -5 years)

Record all immunisations in the Child Health Record (Immunisation Details)

Check with parents if they are up to date with their maternal and child health Key Ages and Stages consultations for their younger children

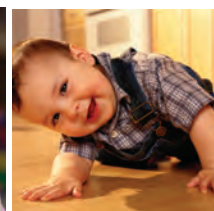
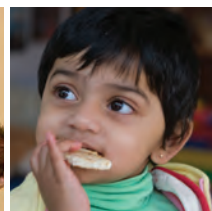
Refer parents back to their maternal and child health nurse where appropriate

Inform the maternal and child health nurse if there has been a referral to another local service, where it is appropriate

At all consultations nurses will:

- respond to parental concerns eg parenting, safety or health issues; and
- act on professional observation and judgement, including notifications under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*.

Further information and location of the nearest Maternal and Child Health Nurse:
www.education.vic.gov.au/ocecd/maternal-child-health.html



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