How to raise a healthy and happy child



health
Department:
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Side-by-Side®

2030 NDP

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Place a picture of your child here

CHILD'S NAME: _____

This book is for you – the caregiver. It gives you advice on how to raise a happy, healthy child. For children to grow and develop best, they need:

1. Good nutrition
2. Lots of love, playing and talking
3. Protection from disease and injury
4. Health care when they are sick or injured
5. Extra care and support if and when they need it

Read this book from cover to cover to learn how you can help your child grow and develop.

Remember, you can ask your health worker about your child's health, growth and development anytime you visit a clinic, a hospital, or when a community health worker visits your home. Your health worker is side by side with you, and cares about your health and your child's health. Speak to your health worker about any concerns you have.

Remember!

This book **does not** replace your Road to Health book. Always keep your Road to Health book in a safe place and take it with you every time that your child visits a clinic, hospital, doctor, or other health facility.

These are words that you may find difficult to understand. The meaning of these words are explained at the back of the book.

Danger signs!

Take your child to the nearest clinic if you see any of the following.



Child is coughing and breathing fast (more than 50 breaths per minute)



Child under 2 months old has a fever and is not feeding



Child is vomiting everything



Child has diarrhoea ? sunken eyes, and a sunken fontanelle



Child is shaking (convulsions) ?



Child has signs of malnutrition ? (swollen ankles and feet)



Child is not moving or does not wake up



Child is unable to breastfeed

Good nutrition to grow and be healthy

Your child needs the right foods to be healthy and grow well. Ask your health worker if your child is growing well and speak to them if you are worried about anything.

Birth to 6 months

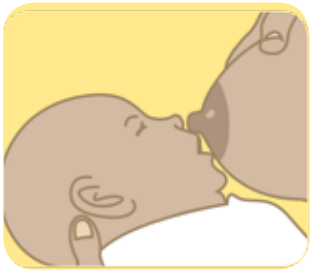
- Breastfeeding is the best way to feed your baby. It is the ideal food for your baby to grow, develop and be healthy.
- Give your baby ONLY breast milk for the first six months of life. Do not give porridge, water or any other liquids. Do not give any other home or traditional medicines or remedies. Only give your baby medicines they receive from the clinic or hospital.
- Breastfeed as often as your baby wants, both day and night.
- Breastfeed your baby at least eight times in 24 hours. The more your baby feeds the more milk you will produce. Almost all mothers will produce enough milk for their baby not to need anything else for the first six months.
- You can express (pump) breastmilk for other carers to give to your baby while you are away. They should use a clean cup, rather than a bottle. Store expressed breastmilk in a clean glass or plastic cup with a lid. Defrost in a fridge or at room temperature over 12 hours or by standing in water. Do not boil or microwave.

How long can you safely store expressed breastmilk?

Temperature	Duration
Room temperature. Choose the coolest place in your house.	Up to 8 hours
Fridge	Up to 6 days
Ice box freezer in fridge	3 months
Deep freezer (-18°C)	3-6 months

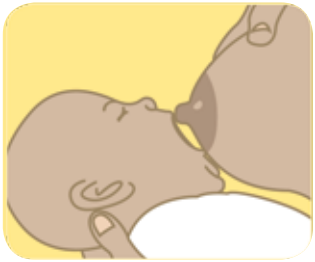
- It is best not to use bottles or artificial teats (dummies). Some babies find it difficult to suckle at the breast after using a dummy. Bottles are also difficult to clean and may have germs that can make your baby sick.
- If you are HIV-positive, remember to always take your HIV or antiretroviral treatment. This makes breastfeeding safe.
- Breastfeeding mothers should eat healthy food. They must not drink alcohol, smoke or take other harmful drugs.

a



Bring your baby to the breast as opposed to leaning forward to stretch your breast into your baby's mouth. Support your baby's head and neck.

b



Let your baby's head tip back a little so their top lip can brush against your nipple.

c



Wait until your baby opens their mouth really wide with their tongue down. You can encourage them by gently stroking their top lip. Your baby needs to get a big mouthful of breast.

d



Place your thumb on the top part of where the dark ring around your nipple meets your breast. Place your remaining fingers below where the dark ring around your nipple meets your breast. To express milk, press your pointing finger and thumb together. Make sure that your hand is pushing your breast towards, and not away, from your body.

! Remember!

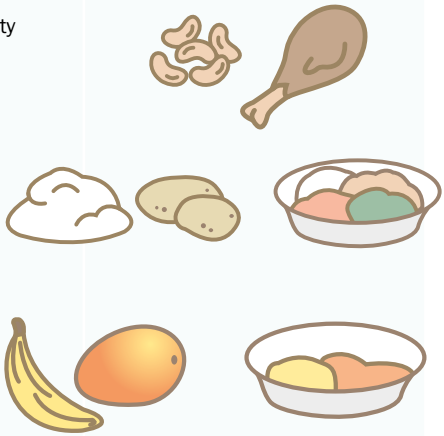
Before you make the decision not to breastfeed, discuss the matter with a health worker. If you are really unable to breastfeed, you will need to learn how to use formula safely.



Why should I give only breastmilk during the first six months of life?

- Breastmilk contains all the nutrients your baby needs for the first 6 months of life.
- Baby's tummy (intestine/gut) is not yet ready for any other foods, water or other liquids before 6 months.
- Babies may get diarrhoea, constipation, infections and allergies if other foods, or other liquids – including water – are given before the baby is 6 months old.
- Breastmilk contains enough water to quench your baby's thirst during the first 6 months of life, even in hot weather.
- Breastmilk contains special properties that keep your baby healthy. Breastfeeding reduces the chance of your baby getting pneumonia and diarrhoea.
- Giving other foods before six months will cause you to produce less breastmilk and your baby will not get all the nutrients they need to grow and develop well.

6 months to 5 years

Your child's age	What foods to give	How much?
6 – 8 months	**Continue breastfeeding on demand. Breastfeed first, then give other foods.** Your baby needs iron-rich foods (dried beans, egg, minced meat, boneless fish, chicken or chicken livers, ground mopane worms). These foods must be cooked and mashed to make them soft and easy for your baby to swallow. Also, give your baby: ● Starches (such as fortified maize meal porridge, mashed sweet potatoes or mashed potatoes) ● Mashed, cooked vegetables (such as pumpkin, butternut, carrots) ● Soft fruit without pips (such as avocado, bananas, paw-paw, cooked apples) Give your baby clean and safe water to drink from a cup, regularly	Start with 1–2 teaspoons, twice a day. Gradually increase the amount and frequency of feeds. 
9 – 11 months	**Continue breastfeeding on demand. Breastfeed first, then give other foods.** ● Iron rich foods are very important for your baby's growth ● Increase the amount and variety (different kinds) of foods ● Food doesn't need to be smooth as in the past months ● Give your child small pieces of foods they can hold (bananas, bread, cooked carrots) ● Avoid small hard foods that may cause choking like peanuts. ● Give your baby safe water to drink from a cup, regularly 	● About a ¼ cup, then increase to half a cup by 12 months ● 5 small meals a day 

Your child's age	What foods to give	How much?
12 months up to 5 years	**Continue breastfeeding as often as your child wants up to 2 years and beyond. Give food before breastmilk.** • Give a variety (different kinds) of foods (iron rich foods, starches, vegetables, fruits) • Give foods rich in vitamin A (liver, spinach, pumpkin, yellow sweet potatoes, mango, paw-paw, full cream milk, maas) • Give Vitamin C rich foods (oranges, naartjies, guavas, tomatoes) • Cut up foods in small pieces so that your child can eat on their own • Stay next to your child and encourage them to eat • If not breastfeeding, you can start giving pasteurized full cream cow's milk/maas or yoghurt. Follow up formula is not necessary • Give your child clean, safe water to drink from a cup, during the day	• About 1 full cup • 5 small meals a day (A child has a small stomach, so they will not eat enough to last many hours)



! Remember!

- From the age of 6 months, give your baby clean, safe-to-drink water from a cup during the day. Boil the water and cool before you give it to your child.
- Always stay next to your child when they are eating.
- Keep food and cooking utensils very clean to prevent diarrhoea.
- Always wash your hands and your child's hands with soap and water before preparing food, before eating, and after using the toilet and changing nappies.
- It's not necessary to buy baby food or baby cereals. Homemade foods are good.
- Don't give your child Rooibos tea or any other tea, coffee, creamers, condensed milk, flour water, sugar water, and cold drinks. These foods and drinks do not contain any nutrients and will not help your child to grow.
- Avoid giving your child unhealthy foods like chips, sweets, sugar and fizzy drinks.
- Infant formula increases risk of your baby getting diarrhoea, allergies, and breathing problems.

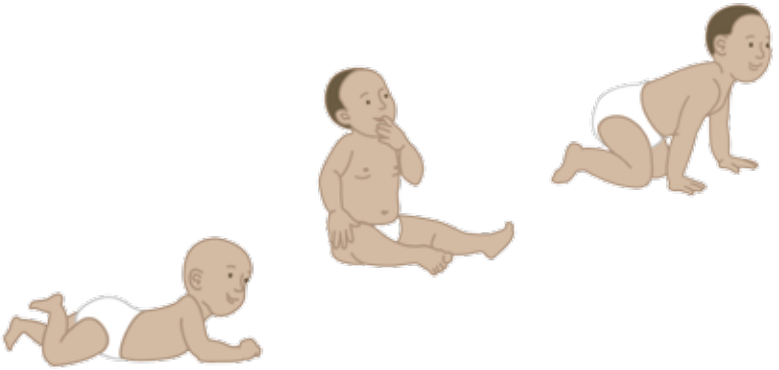
Love, play and talk for healthy development

Young children need a safe environment and loving caregivers who can help them explore the world around them. Ordinary loving things that you do such as holding, talking, playing and reading to your child are what helps them grow and develop.

There are some basic things you can do to help your child develop and learn:

- **Be there for your child.** You are the most important person in your child's life. All children want to feel safe, loved and cared for.
- **Bond with your child.** Keep your baby close to you as much as possible in the first weeks of life. This will help to calm them and help them to sleep, grow and feed well.
- **Be responsive.** Pay attention to your child's interests, emotions and their likes and dislikes and respond to them – this will help you to understand them better and to best meet your child's needs.
- **Your baby learns from birth.** Hold, hug, sing, and talk to your baby, especially during feeding, bathing and dressing.
- **Children learn through playing, exploring and interacting with others.** Give your child the chance to explore and play in a safe space and to play with clean household objects or toys.
- **Tell stories and read to your child.** Talk about the pictures, let them ask questions, allow them to tell you a story or what happened in the storybook as you go along.







Always ask a health worker about your child's development if you are concerned about any of the following:

Eye problems:

- A white pupil/spot on the pupil
- Eyes are not able to fix on and follow a moving object such as a finger or toy
- One or both eyes being bigger or smaller than usual
- Crossed eyes or one eye looking in another direction

- Hearing problems:
  - Hearing loss
  - Not responding to loud noises
  - Seems to hear some sounds and not others
- Your child can no longer do tasks that they could before
- Your child is not communicating through speech or gestures at 18 months
- Not walking at 18 months
- Head looks large
- Head looks small
- Does not use both sides of the body/limbs equally
- Stiff arms and legs
- Floppy arms and legs

Protection from preventable childhood diseases and injuries

Children should NOT only be taken to the clinic when they are ill. You should also take your child for their full course of immunisations/ vaccines and routine treatments according to the timetables in your Road to Health book.

- Immunisations are free. They protect your baby from common childhood illnesses and disease. Make sure your baby gets all his or her immunisations.
- Go to the clinic for your follow-up visits for you and your baby within six days of birth and at six weeks.
- Make sure that you know when your baby needs to return to the clinic for immunisations or other care. If you miss the date for your clinic visit, make sure that you return as soon as possible.
- If you are HIV-positive, get your baby tested for HIV at birth and at 10 weeks.
- All children between 6 months and five years should receive vitamin A and deworming medicines every six months. This helps to keep them healthy.
- Remember to wash your hands after using the toilet, changing nappies, before preparing meals and before feeding children. Wash your hands properly - wash both sides of your hands, between your fingers and your wrists with soap and clean water.
- Many serious injuries can be prevented if parents and other caregivers supervise young children carefully and keep their environment safe.
- A child should not be left unattended or unsupervised. Make sure that there is always a responsible adult taking care of your child and that you know where your child is at all times.
- Protect yourself too. Decide on a contraceptive method of choice and also use male or female condoms to prevent both unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (dual protection).
- Good oral health will keep your child's teeth healthy and strong and prevent unnecessary pain and discomfort.

Protect your child's teeth

- Use a small, clean cloth to clean your baby's gums before the first teeth appear.
- Start to clean your baby's teeth as soon as the first tooth comes through.
- Once teeth appear, use a small, soft toothbrush with a small fingernail sized amount of child toothpaste to brush teeth.
- Brush teeth and along the gum line twice a day; in the morning and at night before bed.
- Discourage the giving of sugary snacks and drinks especially in between meals.
- Look in your child's mouth regularly to spot early signs of tooth decay and consult a dentist or other health worker if you notice anything abnormal.
- Never put your baby to sleep with a feeding bottle (remember that breastfeeding or cup-feeding is always better than bottle-feeding).

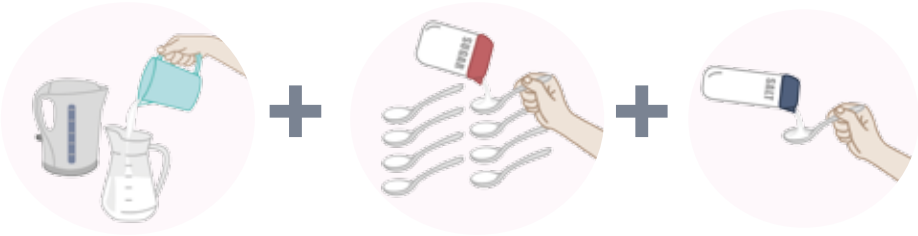


Health care for sick children

Children need health care when they are sick. Look out for the danger signs listed below. Take your child to the nearest clinic immediately if you see any of the listed signs.

- If your child is sick and is not able to drink or breastfeed, vomits everything or has convulsions (?) (shakes) they should be taken to the clinic or hospital immediately.
- Young babies (especially those less than two months) can become very sick very quickly. If your young baby is not feeding properly or has a fever, take them to the clinic immediately.
- If your child has diarrhoea (?) (loose stools) you should give them a sugar salt solution to drink after each stool.
- If your child has diarrhoea or is drinking poorly or has eyes that look sunken or blood in the stool, take them to the clinic immediately.
- If your child has a cough or cold and has fast or difficult breathing they should be taken to the clinic immediately.

How to use a sugar-salt solution for children with diarrhoea



1 litre of cooled boiled water

8 level teaspoons of sugar

half a teaspoon of salt (level)

- Give a sugar-salt solution (SSS) in addition to feeds.
- Give SSS after each loose stool, using frequent small sips from a cup.
  - Half a cup for children under 2 years.
  - 1 cup for children 2–5 years.
- If your child vomits, wait 10 minutes then continue, but slower.
- If your child wants more than suggested, give more.
- Continue feeding your child.

Special care for children who need a little more help

Your baby's development, growth and health depends on so much more than just good health care. It depends on the daily care and protection you and your family provide to your baby from the moment that he or she is born (and in fact from when your baby is still in the womb and even before your baby was conceived).

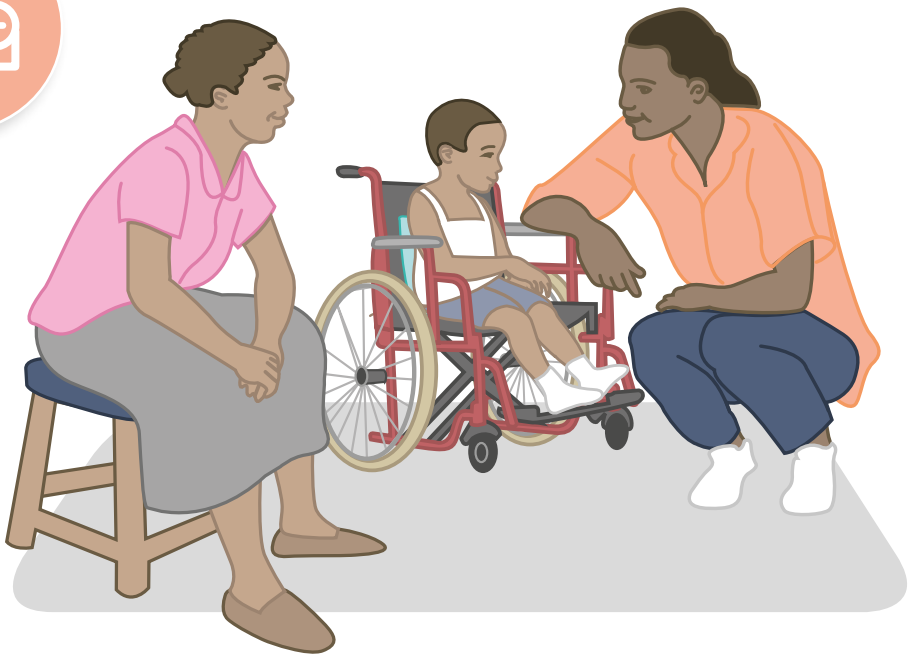
HIV – If you are HIV positive, make sure that you get the treatment that you and your baby need to stay healthy. If you are unsure of your status, ask the health worker for HIV counselling and testing for you and your baby.

TB – TB is common. Tell the nurse at the clinic if you have a cough lasting longer than two weeks, weight loss or night sweats, or if there is someone in your household with TB. If there is, your baby should receive medicine to prevent TB for six months.

Serious injuries – Many serious injuries can be prevented if you look after your child carefully and keep their environment safe.

Supervision – Your child should not be left alone, unattended or unsupervised. Make sure that there is always a responsible adult taking care of your child and that you know where your child is at all times.

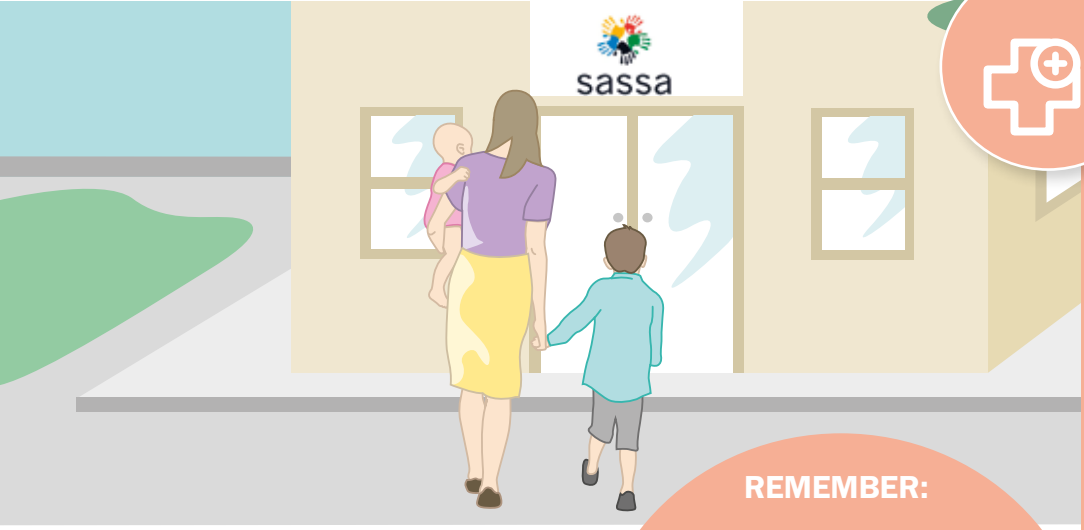
Disability – Children with mental and physical disabilities need extra care. If your baby has a disability you will need support with caring for and protecting your baby. Tell your health worker and they will refer you to a social worker for parenting support. It is good to join a support group so you can share your experiences.



Risks to your child's development

There are some home circumstances that create a risk to the health and wellbeing of your child. This is because they may limit your ability to care for, and protect your child. If you are experiencing any of the following circumstances, tell your community health worker, nurse or doctor and they will give you advice and refer you to the right support-provider.

- If you are a teen mother or a grandparent looking after a young child it is important to tell your health worker so that they can refer you for extra support if you need it.
- If you are exposed to violence or abuse in your home, you must let your health worker know. They can refer you to a social worker and the police if necessary to protect you and your baby from physical harm.
- If you or your partner, use drugs or alcohol, this is a risk to your baby. Tell your health worker so that they can refer you for support.
- If you are feeling that you are not coping, you are stressed or have been sad for a long period of time (depressed)?, talk to your health worker so that they can advise you on what to do or refer you for extra care and support.



REMEMBER:

The law says you must register your baby's birth before they turn one month old. Take your ID and baby's father's ID book to the hospital where you will give birth. Many hospitals offer a birth registration service.

Register your baby's birth

It is important to make sure that your baby has a birth certificate as soon as he or she is born. All babies have a right to a birth certificate, even if you are not South African.

The Road to Health book is not proof of identity; every child has a right to be registered at birth and to get a birth certificate. Getting a birth certificate for your child will help you access services and support.

Support and Care Grants

- If you are not working or do not earn enough money every month to provide food, clothing or transport for your child, you may qualify for the **Child Support Grant (CSG).** If you do qualify, you can get the CSG from when your baby is born. It is important that you get it as early as possible as this will help provide for good development in the first months of baby's life.
- If you have a disability or your baby has a disability, the government provides either the **Disability Grant** for you, or the **Care Dependency Grant** for your baby to help cover the costs of the additional care that is required. Ask your health worker or a social worker about this grant.
- If you are fostering a child in your care, you will be able to claim a **Foster Care Grant** to help with the costs of providing for the child.

List of difficult words

allergy	when your body reacts to things around you that are harmless for most people; like food, medicine, dust, pets, pollen and insects
constipation	when you struggle to poo, it takes a long time to poo and/or your poo is very hard
convulsions	sudden uncontrollable shaking of the body, the person usually “faints” and falls to the ground
depression	a mood problem where you feel sad and not interested in life all the time
diarrhoea	having at least three loose or liquid poos each day
malnutrition	when your body doesn’t get enough healthy things from your food because you’re not eating the right food or there is a problem with how your body uses the food you eat
nutrients	the things in food that your body needs to grow and stay healthy

Health services	
Your local clinic	
Your doctor	
AIDS Helpline	0800 012 322
Depression/Mental Health helplines	0800 12 13 14/011 262 6396, sms 31393
Emergency ambulance	10177 From a mobile: 112
Poison information centre	0861 555 777
MomConnect	*134*550#
Birth registration and identity documents	
Home Affairs Toll Free helpline	0800 601 190
Child protection and safety	
Police emergency number	10111
Childline toll free	0800 055 555 0800 123 321
Grants	
SASSA Toll Free helpline	0800 601 011 0800 600 160 GrantEnquiries@sassa.gov.za
Child care and education	
Your local ECD centre, creche, preschool, child minder	
Other numbers	

Danger signs!

Take your child to the nearest clinic if you see any of the following.



Child is coughing and breathing fast (more than 50 breaths per minute)



Child under 2 months old has a fever and is not feeding



Child is vomiting everything



Child has diarrhoea, sunken eyes, and a sunken fontanelle



Child is shaking (convulsions)



Child has signs of malnutrition (swollen ankles and feet)



Child is not moving or does not wake up



Child is unable to breastfeed