

SCHOOL READINESS

Healthy children learn better



Department
of Education



PRIMARY SCHOOL NURSE PROGRAM



Department
of Education

- The Primary School Nursing Program (PSNP) is a free service offered by the Department of Education to all children attending primary schools and English Language Centre schools in Victoria.
- Primary School Nurses visit schools throughout the year to provide children with the opportunity to have a health assessment, provide information and advice about healthy behaviours and link children and families to community-based health and wellbeing services.
- The PSNP is designed to identify children with potential health-related learning difficulties and to respond to parent/carer concerns and observations about their child's health and wellbeing. Parents or carers complete the School Entrant Health Questionnaire (SEHQ) which is distributed during the first year of school. With parent/carer consent, follow-up health assessments are conducted by the school nurse as indicated.
- Other activities offered by the program may include formal and informal health education and health promotion to the school community.



PRIMARY SCHOOL NURSE PROGRAM

Early identification and intervention

Link families to appropriate services

Enhance coordination across service system



Free health, wellbeing and development checks for prep students

What does the service provide?

A universal health assessment for children at school entry

Referral and follow-up for children and families with additional needs

Support for communication between family, school and health provider

Information and advice for both families and schools

Student Entrant Health Questionnaire (SEHQ)

Welcome to VicStudents - a Victorian Government portal for parents and carers of school aged children.
We're beginning to move some paper forms online making it easier for you to provide important information.



Enrol in a Victorian Government School

> Click here to submit your enrolment application, accept an offer and upload documents



Primary School Nursing Program

> Complete a School Entrant Health Questionnaire for your child - please complete the SEHQ ONLY if your child is currently attending a Foundation (Prep) class and when your child's teacher has provided you with information regarding this program.

Student Entrant Health Questionnaire (SEHQ) consent

Steps

Student

Consent

Primary School Nursing Program - School Entrant Health Questionnaire

The School Entrant Health Questionnaire is for children attending a Foundation (Prep) class. Please acknowledge that your child is attending a Foundation (Prep) level class before proceeding.

* I acknowledge the above statement

* First name of student

* Last name of student

* Date of birth

* Gender

Please type first few letters of the school your child attends and THEN SELECT the school from the drop down list.

* School

Part 3 - Consent form

| Name of student | School name |
|-----------------|-------------|
| | |

I confirm the following:

- I have read Parts 1 and 2 of this Primary School Nursing Program Information Booklet.
- I have the information I need to make an informed decision about the offer of a School Nurse conducting a health assessment of my child.
- I understand how my child's personal and health information, obtained from this survey and from any health assessments conducted, will be collected, used and disclosed within the department, and stored and retained by the department in accordance with the Health Records Act 2001 and Public Records Act 1973.
- I understand that I may withdraw my consent for my child to participate in the Primary School Nursing Program at any time.

Please select one of the following options:

Yes I CONSENT to the School Nurse conducting a health assessment of my child, if required (this may include checking my child's vision, hearing, speech and teeth).

No I DO NOT consent to the School Nurse conducting a health assessment of my child.

| Signature | Relationship to child (Parent/Legal Guardian/Carer) |
|-----------|---|
| | |

| Name | Date |
|------|------|
| | |

Who may sign this School Entrant Health Questionnaire (SEHQ) Consent form on behalf of a child?

One of the following people can sign this form:

- a person with parental responsibility for "major long term issues" as defined in the Family Law Act 1975 (Cth)
- a person appointed as "guardian" under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic).

If neither of the above people are available, an informal carer may sign this form. An informal carer is a relative or other responsible adult with whom the child lives, and who has day to day care of the child. Informal carers should sign an 'Informal Carer' statutory declaration, which is available at: www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/decision-making-responsibilities-students/resources

Withdrawing consent

You may withdraw consent to your child receiving services under the Primary School Nursing Program at any time, by writing to your child's Primary School Nurse. Before withdrawing consent, we recommend discussing this first with school staff or the School Nursing Program Manager for your region. Withdrawing consent means that services under the Primary School Nursing Program will cease from the time the Primary School Nurse receives the withdrawal. Where there are safety concerns or risks, other activities may occur.

For more information, please contact the School Nursing Program Manager at your local regional department office, locations are listed on the last page.

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What may happen after I return the SEHQ?



Who might the school nurse refer my child too?

GP/Paed

Optometrist

Audiologist

Family Support
Agencies

Private Speech
Pathologist,
Occupational Therapist,
Psychologist,
Physiotherapist

Asthma

What parents can do

- Complete the appropriate action plan with your local doctor and return it to the school
- Ensure you have provided in date medication e.g. Ventolin and working equipment e.g. spacer are provided





Finding out more

Visit www.asthmaaustralia.org.au or www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

or speak with your doctor



Asthma First Aid


- 1 Sit the person upright**
 - Be calm and reassuring
 - Do not leave them alone
- 2 Give 4 puffs of blue reliever puffer medication**
 - Use a spacer if there is one
 - Shake puffer
 - Put **1 puff** into spacer
 - Take **4 breaths** from spacer
 - Repeat until **4 puffs** have been taken
 - Remember: **Shake, 1 puff, 4 breaths**
- 3 Wait 4 minutes**
 - If there is no improvement, give **4 more puffs** as above
- 4 If there is still no improvement call emergency assistance (DIAL 000)***
 - Say 'ambulance' and that someone is having an asthma attack
 - Keep giving **4 puffs** every **4 minutes** until emergency assistance arrives
 - *If calling triple zero (000) does not work on your mobile phone, try 112.

Call emergency assistance immediately (DIAL 000)

- if the person is not breathing
- if the person's asthma suddenly becomes worse, or is not improving
- if the person is having an asthma attack and a puffer is not available
- if you are not sure if it's asthma

Blue reliever medication is unlikely to harm, even if the person does not have asthma

Asthma Australia
To find out more contact your local Asthma Foundation
1800 ASTHMA 1800 278 462 | asthmaaustralia.org.au
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Translating and interpreting Service
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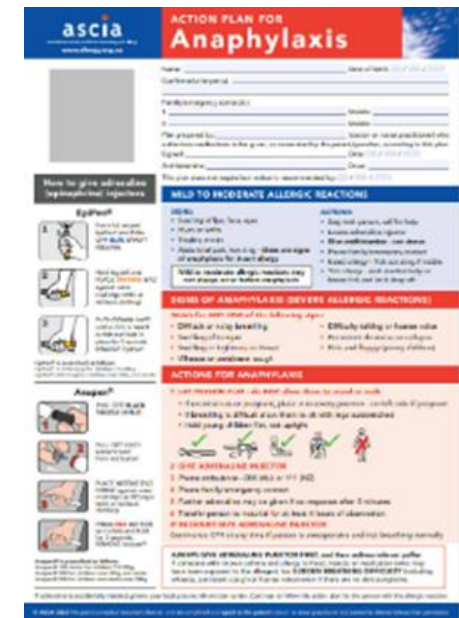
Allergy and Anaphylaxis

What parents can do

- You and the school need to work together to establish and maintain good communication
- Complete the appropriate action plan with your local doctor and return it to the school
- Ensure you have provided in date medication e.g. epipen or antihistamine

Finding out more

Visit www.allergy.org.au or www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au or speak with your doctor



Vision

Children are very good at compensating poor vision – and often this goes unnoticed.

It is recommended that all students see an optometrist just prior to starting school.

These assessments can be undertaken by an optometrist in the community and is covered by Medicare.

If no concerns are identified, you should take you child to see an optometrist every 2 years.

If concerns are identified, the optometrist will discuss treatment options with you and will plan more regular reviews.



Hearing

Children are very good at compensating for poor hearing.

Some common reasons for reduced hearing include wax, fluid, ear infections or congenital hearing loss.

Signs of reduced hearing include increased volume when watching TV or devices, talking in a loud or soft voice, ear pain, children asking you to repeat questions/directions, difficulty with following instructions, or turning their head when listening.

If you are concerned about your child's hearing, you can have this checked by an audiologist.



Teeth and Oral Health

Children should brush their teeth every morning and every night with a soft toothbrush and fluoride toothpaste.

It is recommended that once children commence school that they see a dentist annually.

All children under 12 years old are eligible for Victoria's public oral health service, which provides check ups, advice and treatments from community based dental clinics.

Find out more

To find your nearest community dental clinic

click on 'find a clinic' at www.dhsv.org.au or phone 1300 360 054

Search www.raisingchildren.net.au for Children's teeth

and how to brush them



Toileting - Day Wetting and Soiling

“Most children have gained daytime bladder control by the age of four. If a child regularly wets during the day after this age professional advice is necessary” Continence Foundation of Australia

What parents can do

Put a change of clothes in your child’s school bag and talk about who they can tell at school if they need help after an accident

Seek help from a health professional such as your local doctor or continence clinic

Find out more

Visit Continence Foundation of Australia www.continence.org

or speak with your doctor



Toileting- Bedwetting

Bed wetting is common. About one in every five children in Australia wet the bed. *Continence Foundation of Australia*

What parents can do

Seek help from a health professional such as your local doctor or continence clinic when

- A child who has been dry suddenly starts wetting at night
- The wetting is frequent after school age
- The wetting bothers the child or makes them upset or angry
- The child wants to become dry



Find out more

Visit Continence Foundation of Australia www.continence.org or speak with your doctor

You may wish to listen to the Royal Children's Hospital podcast on bedwetting www.rch.org.au/kidsinfo/Podcast

Sleep

School aged children need 10 – 13 hours sleep a night from around 7:30pm.

Getting a good night's sleep helps your child to be ready for school the next day. Poor sleep can effect mood, behaviour, attention, memory, decision making, reaction time and creativity.

What parents can do

A bedtime routine is very important. Have a predictable, enjoyable routine with calm activities. A bath and reading to them a set number of stories

Avoid stimulating activities such as watching TV, running around and computer games the hour before bedtime

Make sure they get enough exercise during the day



Find out more

Visit Raising Children Network www.raisingchildrennetwork.net.au; and search 'sleep' or 'bedtime routines'; [Sleep strategies - Sleep with Kip](#); or speak with your doctor

Screen Time - How much? And making the most of it

“There is a lot of conflicting advice and emerging research around screen time. But, the right amount of screen time can depend on a range of factors like your child’s age and maturity, the kind of content they are consuming, their learning needs and your family routine. It can be easy to focus only on the clock and how long your child is spending in front of the screen, but the quality and nature of what they are doing online, and your involvement are just as important.” (esafety.gov.au)

What parents can do

Lead by example by limiting your own screen time

Turn the TV off before school and during dinner time

Have a range of activities and objects to entertain and stimulate your children so they don’t look to the screen

Be active while you watch – dance to the music or move like the animals on the show

Talk about the program – what is real and pretend, which characters they liked or disliked and how it made them feel

Find out more

Visit Raising Children Network www.raisingchildrennetwork.net.au and search ‘screen time’



Healthy Eating and Exercise

- More energy
- Learn better
- Feel better
- Better mood and behaviour
- Healthy weight
- Healthy teeth
- Better habits for later in life

“Children and young people should aim for at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day involving mainly aerobic activities that makes their heart beat faster—more is better.

The 60 minutes can be made up of shorter bursts of activity throughout the day that add up to 60 minutes or longer.”

Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Young People (5 to 17 years)



Social and emotional development - Making friends

Some children make new friends easily, while others take a while to warm up. Both types are normal.

What parents can do

- Let your child know that if one child doesn't want to play with them, they still have friends and people who care about them
- Don't be alarmed to discover that children's friendships are often very up and down
- Help them to understand that conflict is a normal part of everyday life, and that they can cope
- Help them to maintain friendships outside of school so they know the world is a bigger place than the school playground
- Talk to your child about forgiveness. Being able to overlook mistakes and upsets are sure ways to keep good friends

Find out more

Visit Raising Children Network website

[Resilient Families Program — Smiling Mind](#) (Resilient Families and Kids Program App) -content designed for kids and parents to build foundational mental fitness skills through age-appropriate activities about emotions, relationships and self-worth, and provides parents with the tools to help build a resilient family.

Social and emotional development

Good social and emotional skills help children learn academic skills and are as important for school starters as being able to write the numbers from 1 to 10 or the alphabet

Skills that are helpful include:

- Getting along with others
- Following directions
- Identifying and regulating one's emotions and behaviour
- Thinking of appropriate solutions to conflict
- Persisting on tasks
- Engaging in social conversation and cooperative play
- Correctly interpreting other's behaviours and emotions
- Feeling good about oneself and others



What parents can do

- Make home a safe and happy place and protect your child from adult problems
- Praise your child for good behaviour
- Set clear rules/limits and stick to them
- Behave how you would like your child to behave in your relationships with family and friends
- Make special time to talk with and listen to your child

Find out more

Visit Raising Children Network or Betterhealth Channel; Or speak with Parentline or your local doctor about parenting strategies

Encouraging your child to get ready for school

ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENCE

- Dressing self – buttons, zips, shoes, socks and jumpers
- Unpacking lunch and open drink bottle
- Using the bubble tap
- Washing hands
- Blowing nose
- Wiping own bottom and using a urinal

HELP THEM RECOGNISE THEIR NAME

- Write their name on everything they do
- Point out their name on things
- Help them find the letters of their name in other words

SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT AND TO START ON NOW

- Read aloud with your child – visit the library for book borrowing and story time
- Explore the world around you – talk about what you see and do, ask your child questions, listen carefully to their answers, and encourage them to ask why
- Play games where you have to take turns, encourage them to play with other children
- Spend time drawing, cutting, doing craft together and praise their efforts
- Ask them to follow instructions
- Teach your child their full name, date of birth, and address

Separation Anxiety

If it is already a concern at kinder start working on strategies now.

What parents can do

- Tell your child when you are leaving and when you'll be back. Don't sneak away
- Ask your child to say goodbye nicely, say your goodbyes briefly - avoid drawing it out
- Keep a relaxed and happy expression on your face when you're leaving your child
- Leave promptly
- Try meeting with a friend and going into class with the friend
- Be on time for pick up
- Encourage friendships outside of school hours so your child has a good friendship group at school
- Transition days are helpful as they give the child the opportunity to become familiar with the school environment and staff
- Read books or make up stories about separation fears
- If difficulties parting persist try another person bringing your child to school



Find out more

Visit Raising Children Network or Betterhealth Channel and search “separation anxiety/distress”

Or speak with Parentline or your local doctor about parenting strategies

The first week of school...

- Prepare the night before
- Clear your schedule – identify the jobs you and your child are to do – picture jobs lists may help
- Make time for a good breakfast
- Be aware of possible distractions
- Listen to your child – avoid asking too many questions straight after school
- Expect tiredness – limit after school activities
- Expect swings in appetite – a healthy after school snack is just as important as dinner



Morning Routine Checklist

Drag and drop items to add, delete, or reorder them. Click the text to rename an item.

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|---------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | Eat breakfast |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | Brush teeth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | Get dressed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | Pack homework |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | Get backpack |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | Put on shoes |

www.thetripdip.com



Exclusion

Keeping unwell children out of school (known as 'exclusion') is the most effective way of limiting the spread of infection in the school.

What parents can do

Teach your child to blow their nose, wash their hands properly and cover their mouth

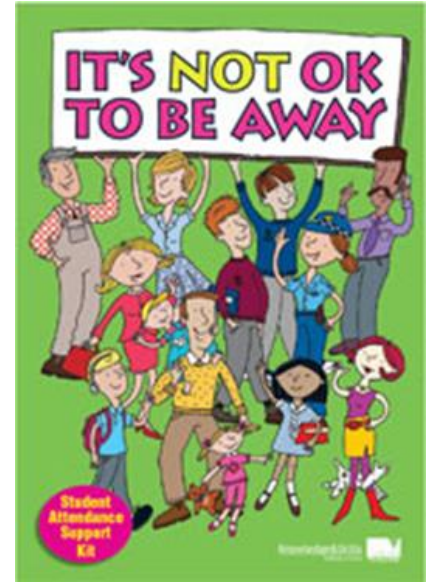
Your doctor will let you know if your child has an 'excludable' condition. You will need to let the school know as soon as possible and keep your child home for the length of time that your doctor advises.



Attendance

1 or 2 days a week doesn't seem much but

| If your child misses... | That equals ... | Which is ... | And over 13 years of schooling that's... | Which means the best your child might perform is... |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--|---|
| 1 Day per fortnight | 20 Days per year | 4 weeks per year | Nearly 1.5 years | Equals to finishing in grade 11 |
| 1 Day per week | 40 Days per year | 8 weeks per year | Over 2.5 years | Equals to finishing in grade 10 |
| 2 Days per week | 80 Days per year | 16 weeks per year | Over 5 years | Equals to finishing in grade 7 |
| 3 Days per week | 120 Days per year | 24 weeks per year | Over 8 years | Equals to finishing in grade 4 |



Communication

It is important that if your child has been diagnosed with a medical condition, or if they are seeing a health professional, that you communicate this with your child's classroom teacher.

Schools are great at implementing support strategies at school for children with identified needs, they just need to know how they can support your child.

The school can implement different types of plans and regular meetings to support students with additional needs, and this enables the student, family and school to discuss shared goals and strategies on a regular basis.

Update the school regarding any appointments or changes to your child's health care plan.



For more information

Betterhealth Channel – www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

Raising Children Network – www.raisingchildren.net.au

BeYou – www.beyou.edu.au

Parentline – Ph: 13 22 89

Online program, research backed – Positive parenting strategies – Triple P (triplep-parenting.net.au)

Headlice - www.health.vic.gov.au/headlice

Healthy Together Victoria -
www.healthytogether.vic.gov.au

Contenance Foundation of Australia –
www.contenance.org.au

Sunsmart – www.sunsmart.com.au

Dep't of Education – www.education.vic.gov.au

Asthma – www.asthma.org.au/

Allergy – www.allergy.org.au

DHSV – Dental – www.dhsv.org.au



Visiting Primary School Nurse

If you'd like more information on anything covered today, please contact the school to ask for the Visiting Nurses contact details.

The health questionnaire (SEHQ) link will be sent to all parents at some stage during the year in 2025 before the Visiting Nurse attends the school.

