



# HAND IN HAND BOOK

Information on Health and Education Universal Services  
for 0-18 year olds



# INTRODUCTION

“Every child deserves a champion, an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection, and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be.”

(Rita F. Pierson on TED Talks)

The *Hand in Hand Book* is designed for parents, whānau and foster carers to provide good information on health and education universal services so you can be more informed and better equipped to take action for the child’s future success.

Universal services are generally considered to be services available for all citizens, regardless of means or need.

The universal services described in this handbook play an important role in ensuring your child or the child in your care receives a base level of wellbeing that is necessary for good development. Universal services can be helpful to you as parents and foster carers and can also help you to access the specialist services that you or your child may need. While the vast majority of universal services are accessible to eligible families free of charge, some services may have a fee or part payment.

The *Hand in Hand Book* may also refer to resources that you already have such as the *Well Child Tamariki Ora Handbook* or the *Foster Care Handbook*. In places, it will also provide you with links to information or resources that are available online.

Thank you for using the *Hand in Hand Book* to support you to successfully navigate the health and education journey of your child or the child in your care. Every child needs a champion to support them to reach their potential. Be the champion in their life, so they learn how to champion others.

Note: The term 'your child' etc throughout this document, also includes 'the child in your care'.

Nā tō rourou, nā taku rourou,  
ka ora te iwi.

With your basket and mine,  
we will prosper.

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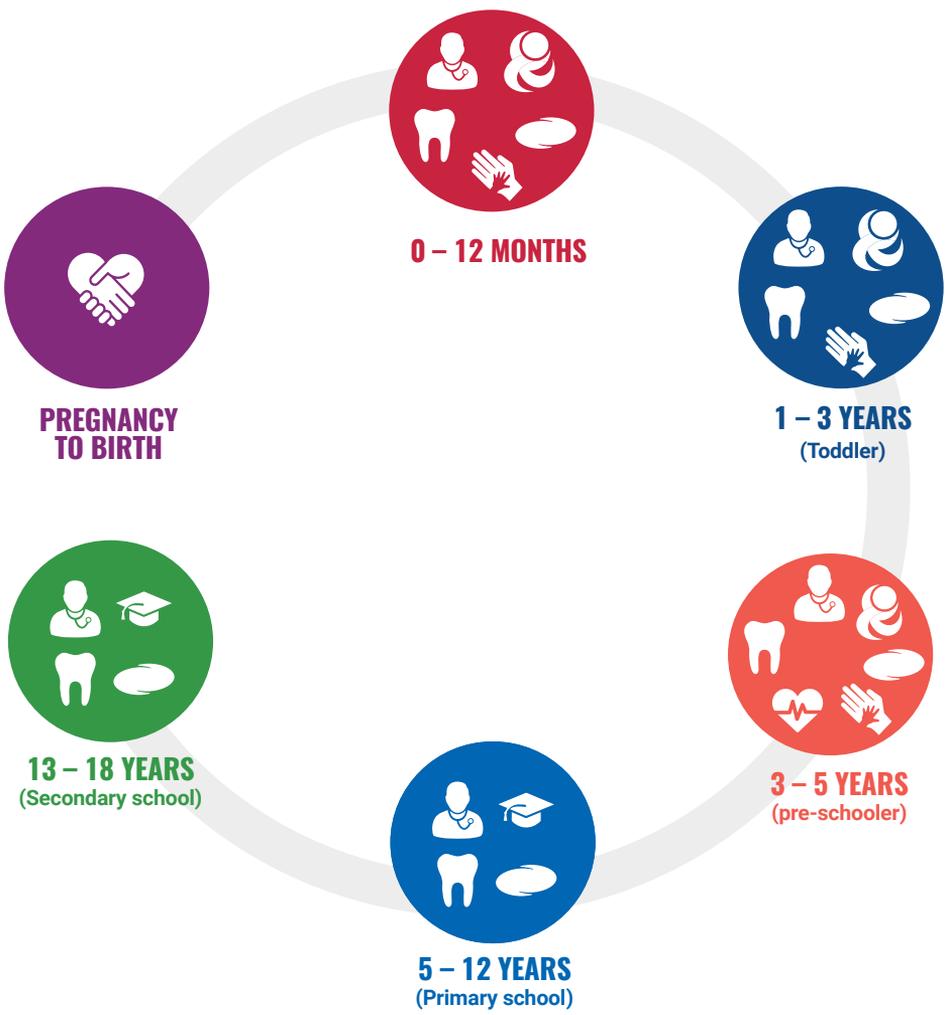
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# QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

to FREE health and education services for  
children up to 18 years





- **Maternity care:** For help finding a Lead Maternity Carer (a midwife) in your region, visit [findyourmidwife.co.nz](https://www.findyourmidwife.co.nz) or talk to your family doctor or nurse.



- **Doctor visits:** To enrol your child with a family doctor, ring your nearest general practice or call Healthline on **0800 611 116**.



- **Well Child checks:** For information on parenting, or child development, or to enrol your child in Well Child Tamariki Ora, call **0800 933 922**.



- **Immunisations:** For information on immunisations children need, visit [health.govt.nz/immunisation](https://www.health.govt.nz/immunisation) or call **0800 IMMUNE (0800 466 863)**. If you want to know if your child's immunisations are up-to-date, speak to your family doctor or nurse.



- **Dental checks:** To schedule an appointment or for help with enrolling your child in the Community Oral Health Service (from birth to school year 8) or with an adolescent contracted dentist (from school year 9 until their 18th birthday), call **0800 TALK TEETH (0800 825 583)**.



- **Early learning services (0 – 6 YEARS OLD):** For information on early services and what is available for your child, visit [education.govt.nz](https://www.education.govt.nz) and click on the **Parents** tab.



- **Before school checks:** If your child has turned 4, they are due for their B4 School Check now. If you haven't heard from your local B4 School Check provider, it is important that you contact them to make a booking – call **0800 933 922** to find out about the providers in your region.



- **Primary and intermediate school education (5-12 YEARS OLD):** For information on the types of schools that are available, how to choose one that suits your child, what they will learn and what you can do to help, visit [education.govt.nz](https://www.education.govt.nz) and click on the **Parents** tab.



- **Secondary school education (13-18 YEARS OLD):** For information and links to help choose a school and subjects, understand NCEA, help your teenager succeed and stay involved yourself, visit [education.govt.nz](https://www.education.govt.nz) and click on the **Parents** tab.



- **Further education (16+ YEARS OLD):** For information on further education and training options, student allowances and loans, different tertiary providers, and scholarships for further education and training you can visit [education.govt.nz](https://www.education.govt.nz) and click on the **Parents** tab.

# ELIGIBILITY FOR PUBLICLY FUNDED HEALTH SERVICES

This section provides information on your eligibility for publicly funded health and disability services, and what you need to prove your eligibility. Being eligible gives a person a right to be considered for publicly funded health or disability services (ie free or subsidised).

## Eligibility criteria for immunisations and Well Child Tamariki Ora services

Regardless of citizenship or immigration status, children are eligible for publicly funded vaccinations on the Immunisations Schedule and for Well Child Tamariki Ora services.

For more information on eligibility for immunisation and Well Child Tamariki Ora services, please visit the Ministry of Health website at [health.govt.nz](https://www.health.govt.nz) key phrase **Immunisation and Well Child Tamariki Ora**.

## Eligibility criteria for maternity services

Pregnant women are eligible for free and subsidised maternity-related services if:

- they are eligible for publicly funded health and disability services in their own right (see **Eligibility categories for any publicly funded health services** on the following page)  
**or**
- their husband, wife, civil union partner or de facto partner is:
  - a New Zealand citizen**or**

- a New Zealand resident or permanent resident visa holder  
**or**
- an Australian citizen or Australian permanent resident visa holder who has been living, or who intends to live, in New Zealand for two years or longer  
**or**
- a refugee or protected person, or is applying or appealing for refugee or protected person status, or is a victim or suspected victim of a people trafficking offence  
**or**
- a work visa holder able to stay in New Zealand for 24 consecutive months (time spent lawfully in New Zealand immediately before the start of the work visa counts toward the two year requirement) (work visas start on the person's first day in New Zealand)  
**or**
- an interim visa holder who was eligible immediately before the interim visa was issued  
**or**
- they are pregnant with a child who is found to be a New Zealand citizen by birth.

Partners of New Zealand Aid Programme students studying in New Zealand are eligible in their own right.

This funding is to provide the child of an eligible person, regardless of whether the eligible parent is male or female, with antenatal, labour and birth, and postnatal care, so that the baby will be as healthy as possible.

For more information on eligibility for maternity services, please visit the Ministry of Health website at [health.govt.nz](https://www.health.govt.nz) key phrase **pregnancy services**.

# ELIGIBILITY CATEGORIES FOR ANY PUBLICLY FUNDED HEALTH SERVICES

For more information on eligibility criteria for publicly funded health services, please visit the Ministry of Health website at **health.govt.nz** key phrase **Eligibility for publicly funded services**.

If your situation does not match any of the options listed above, you may still be eligible for a limited range of services in certain situations. To find out about this limited range of services, please visit **health.govt.nz** key word **eligibility**, or contact Healthline **0800 611 116** for more information.

Category	Eligibility for Publicly Funded Health Services	Proof of Eligibility
New Zealand citizens (including people from the Cook Islands, Niue or Tokelau)	NZ citizens are eligible for the full range of publicly funded health and disability services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– NZ passport</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li>– NZ certificate of identity</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li>– NZ birth certificate</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li>– Cook Islands, Niue or Tokelau birth certificate</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li>– NZ certificate of citizenship</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li>– Certified copy of a descent registration certificate</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li>– social security benefit papers (except emergency benefit)</li> </ul> <p><b>and</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– two forms of supporting identity information, one with a photo (unless passport is provided).</li> </ul>

Category	Eligibility for Publicly Funded Health Services	Proof of Eligibility
<p>New Zealand residence class visa holders</p>	<p>People who hold residence class visas are eligible for the full range of publicly funded health and disability services.</p> <p>Note: Australian citizens and Australian permanent residents are automatically issued resident visas on arrival in NZ, but their eligibility is dealt with in two sections below (ie full or limited eligibility).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Passport with resident visa</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li>– Passport with permanent resident visa</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li>– Social security benefit papers (except emergency benefit) and two forms of supporting identity information, one with a photo (unless main proof is passport).</li> </ul> <p>Note: If they became residents before December 2010, they will hold a residence permit. This is now called a residence class visa.</p>
<p>Australian citizens or permanent residents staying in NZ for two years or more</p>	<p>Citizens of the Commonwealth of Australia and people holding a current permanent residence visa (includes a resident return visa) issued by the Government of Australia are eligible for the full range of publicly funded health and disability services if they are able to demonstrate they have or intend to spend at least two consecutive years in New Zealand.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Australian passport</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li>– Other passport with Australian permanent resident/resident return visa</li> </ul> <p><b>and</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Evidence that New Zealand has been/will be their principal place of residence for at least two years (eg employment, house purchase). The two years is counted from their arrival date in New Zealand.</li> </ul>

Category	Eligibility for Publicly Funded Health Services	Proof of Eligibility
<p>Work visa holders in New Zealand for two years or more</p>	<p>Work visa holders whose visa or visas allow them to stay in New Zealand for at least two consecutive years are eligible for the full range of publicly funded health and disability services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– A current work visa that allows for a total continuous stay of at least two years</li> </ul> <p><b>or</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– A current work visa and other visa/permit held immediately prior that allows a consecutive 24 month stay.</li> </ul> <p>Note: If their visa was issued before December 2010, it will be called a work permit.</p>
<p>Interim visa holders</p>	<p>Interim visa holders who were eligible immediately before their interim visa started are eligible for publicly funded health and disability services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Interim visa letter plus evidence of eligibility before the interim visa (eg a letter from Immigration NZ with information on visas held prior to the interim visa, including time spent outside of NZ).</li> </ul>

Category	Eligibility for Publicly Funded Health Services	Proof of Eligibility
<p>Refugees, protected persons and victims of people trafficking</p>	<p>People who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– have refugee or protected person status in New Zealand</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li>– are in the process of having an application for refugee or protection status determined by Immigration NZ</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li>– are in the process of having an appeal against refusal of refugee or protection status determined by the Immigration and Protection Tribunal</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li>– are a victim or suspected victim of a people trafficking offence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Refugee travel document issued under the Passport Act 1992</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li>– Certificate of Identity (COI)</li> <li><b>and</b></li> <li>– Proof of refugee status/ application such as a recent letter from Immigration NZ confirming that the person: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- has been recognised as a refugee <b>or</b></li> <li>- has a current application for refugee status</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li>– A recent letter from the Immigration and Protection Tribunal confirming the person is appealing against a refusal of refugee status. <p>Note: If the COI states the person has residency status, the Immigration NZ letters are not necessary.</p> </li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li>– A letter from the Police stating the person is a victim or suspected victim of people trafficking.</li> </ul>

Category	Eligibility for Publicly Funded Health Services	Proof of Eligibility
Students	<p>NZ Aid Programme students studying in NZ and receiving Official Development Assistance funding, and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– their partner</li> </ul> <p><b>or</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– their dependent child, aged 17 years or younger.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Passport with a current NZ student visa</li> </ul> <p><b>and</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Documents that indicate the person is an NZ Aid Programme student, or the partner or child of one.</li> </ul> <p>For partners and dependants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– evidence of Official Development Assistance funding on the basis of relationship.</li> </ul>
	<p>Commonwealth Scholarship holders – students studying in New Zealand and funded by a New Zealand university under the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan are eligible for publicly funded services.</p> <p>Note: Children of Commonwealth Scholarship holders under this scheme are NOT ELIGIBLE for publicly funded health services unless they meet the eligibility criteria in their own right.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Passport with a student visa</li> </ul> <p><b>and</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Documents that confirm the person is currently studying under the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan.</li> </ul>

Category	Eligibility for Publicly Funded Health Services	Proof of Eligibility
Children	<p>Children under 18 who do not meet one of the above criteria, but whose parent, legal guardian, person applying to be their guardian or adoptive parent is eligible as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. a New Zealand citizen</li> <li>b. a New Zealand residence class visa holder</li> <li>c. an eligible Australian citizen/Australian permanent resident (as above – if staying two years)</li> <li>d. an eligible work visa holder</li> <li>e. an eligible interim visa holder</li> <li>f. a refugee or protected person or victim/suspected victim of people trafficking (as above)</li> <li>g. an NZ Aid Programme student.</li> </ol>	<p>– Evidence that the child is in the care and control of an eligible adult, who is their legal guardian, parent or in the process of adopting the child or becoming their legal guardian. (Birth certificate, adoption papers, guardianship papers or, for a child being adopted, Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children, social worker confirmation or NZ Family Court confirmation). See relevant section for proof of adult’s eligibility.</p>

Category	Eligibility for Publicly Funded Health Services	Proof of Eligibility
Foreign Language Teaching Assistantship Scheme	<p>Participants in the Ministry of Education Foreign Language Teaching Assistantship Scheme are eligible for publicly funded health and disability services while participating in this scheme.</p> <p>Partners and children of foreign language teaching assistants are NOT ELIGIBLE for publicly funded health services unless they meet one of the other criteria.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Passport with a current work visa</li> </ul> <p><b>and</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– ‘To whom it may concern’ letter signed by International Languages Aotearoa NZ or Uniservices stating that the person is currently a teacher on this scheme.</li> </ul>

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# PREGNANCY TO BIRTH

This section provides information on maternity services available during pregnancy, labour and birth and for 4 to 6 weeks after baby is born.

Pregnancy can be exciting and scary. There are lots of services to support young mothers. Talk with your family doctor or nurse about the options you have.

If you need support we encourage you to call the support services listed on pg 31.



## Eligibility

Pregnant women are eligible for free and subsidised maternity-related services if they are a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident.

If you are not a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident you may still be eligible for free maternity care if your husband, de facto or civil union partner meets certain eligibility criteria. Please refer to the eligibility criteria on page 12 under: **Eligibility criteria for maternity services.**



## Your choices

For some women pregnancy can be a difficult time. You may need someone to talk to or you may want some specific support.

Visit Abortion Services in New Zealand, or call **0800 ABORTION (0800 226 784)** or talk to your doctor or nurse if you want to know more about termination (abortion).



## Choosing a Lead Maternity Carer (LMC)

Maternity care is free for New Zealand citizens and permanent residents.

To find a Lead Maternity Carer in your region visit [findyourmidwife.co.nz](http://findyourmidwife.co.nz) or talk to your family doctor or nurse.

When you find out you are pregnant, one of the first things to do is choose a Lead Maternity Carer (a midwife or specialist doctor). This is really important for your health and for your baby.

### Maternity care

The LMC you choose will be responsible for your care throughout your pregnancy, labour and birth, and for you and your baby's care until baby is 6 weeks old. Your LMC (or their backup) will be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They will provide you with care and with information about the choices you can make.

You should expect your LMC to:

- develop a plan with you for your care, including your labour and birth
- talk to you about staying healthy during the pregnancy, including food and nutrition advice
- talk to you about how immunisations during pregnancy can protect you and your baby, including immunisations for influenza and whooping cough
- support you to quit smoking and to quit alcohol and drugs
- be with you during your labour and birth (or, in the case of a doctor, arrange for midwifery care during labour)
- refer you or your baby to a specialist, if needed
- visit you (or arrange for you to be visited) at the hospital and in your home at least seven times after your baby is born
- refer you to your chosen Well Child Tamariki Ora provider

after the birth of your baby

- help you to enrol your baby at a general practice for doctor and practice nurse services, including starting your baby's immunisations.

Your LMC will see you throughout your pregnancy. They will feel your tummy to check baby's growth, position and heartbeat, and take your blood pressure and test your wee/mimi.

Your LMC will explain how often you'll need to be seen during your pregnancy. These visits may be able to take place in your home, at a clinic, on the marae or in a hospital.



## Antenatal screening tests

Your LMC will offer free screening tests and scans to check that both you and your baby are healthy and well.

If you decide to have these tests and scans, your midwife or specialist doctor will arrange them for you and explain your results. You may need to pay for scans – but talk to your LMC about what scans and tests you should have.

The first test you can get is a free antenatal blood test – your LMC or family doctor or nurse can refer you for this test.

You will also be told about other screening you can get during your pregnancy, including screening for Down syndrome and other conditions.

You'll be offered:

- a first trimester combined screening – this involves a second free blood test, and a scan that you may have to pay for (talk to your LMC about the scan)

**or**

- another free blood test in your second trimester.



## Immunisations for whooping cough and influenza

Immunisations help to protect you and your baby before and after birth. While you're pregnant you can get:

- free whooping cough immunisation between 28 and 38 weeks of pregnancy
- free flu immunisation during the flu season – usually early March to the end of December.

You will need to be immunised during each pregnancy, even if you've been immunised before. Talk to your LMC or your family doctor about getting immunised.

You can get more information on immunisation by visiting [health.govt.nz/immunisation](https://health.govt.nz/immunisation) or [immune.org.nz](https://immune.org.nz) or calling 0800 IMMUNE (0800 466 863).



## Antenatal classes

You can get free antenatal classes through your local district health board (DHB). Antenatal classes teach you about pregnancy, labour, birth, breastfeeding and looking after a young baby.

The free classes fill up quickly, so book early in your second trimester (around week 16) to get your preferred class. The best time to attend antenatal class is early in your third trimester (from week 27).

Talk to your LMC about the free DHB antenatal classes available in your region.



## Labour and birth

The care that you receive immediately after your baby is born includes:

- a first check of your baby (usually within a couple of hours after the birth)
- your naked baby being put on your belly or chest straightaway ('skin-to-skin contact')
- help to start breastfeeding when your baby shows signs they are ready (usually within about 30 minutes after the birth)
- care of the whenua/afterbirth (placenta)
- a check to see that you are physically healthy soon after birth
- if needed, specialist medical or nursing care for your baby.

If you give birth in hospital you may want to stay for just the first few hours or for a couple of days. Discuss this with your midwife as part of your birth planning.

Once home, your LMC will visit you regularly (at least five visits at home). These health visits are to support you, including help with feeding your baby, and to check that you and baby are well.



## Newborn hearing screening

All babies born in New Zealand are offered free newborn hearing screening soon after birth. Screening is carried out by a specially trained 'screeener' and babies who do not pass the screen are referred to an audiologist for further testing.

A small number of babies are born each year with hearing loss. Finding this early is important for your baby's language development. This information may be shared with the family doctor and other Well Child Tamariki Ora providers or education programmes.

If your child has missed out on the newborn hearing screening, report any hearing concerns to your Well Child Tamariki Ora provider or your family doctor.

Its important to make sure your child has their hearing screening test at the B4 School Check at age 4.



## Newborn metabolic screening

All babies born in New Zealand are offered free screening for over 20 rare but life-threatening metabolic disorders. Metabolic disorders can occur in any family, even when there's no family history of disorders.

A blood sample is collected from your baby's heel when they are 48 hours old or soon after. On the rare occasions a disorder is found, early treatment can be started before the baby becomes ill or dies.

For more information, talk with your LMC about the Newborn Metabolic Screening test.



## Breastfeeding

The Ministry of Health recommends that you breastfeed your baby. Your LMC will help you prepare for breastfeeding and can help you with breastfeeding once your baby is born. Breast milk is the perfect food for your baby because it:

- provides all the food and fluid your baby needs for their first 6 months or so
- helps to protect your baby against colds, tummy bugs, infections and allergies, and also helps to protect your baby from dying suddenly in their sleep
- helps your baby feel safe and secure.

It is important in the first few days that your baby feeds whenever they need to, so that they get the first milk, or colostrum. This special milk is yellow in colour and is thick and sticky.

Colostrum protects baby from infections. Your baby feeds on colostrum for the first few days until your milk 'comes in'.



## Formula Feeding

The Ministry of Health recommends exclusive breastfeeding to around 6 months of age.

If a baby is not breastfed a commercial infant formula should be used until the baby is 12 months old.

Infant formula must be prepared and used as directed by carefully following the instructions on the formula tin. Incorrect or unnecessary use of infant formula can be harmful to the health of baby.

You can get more information by visiting [health.govt.nz](https://www.health.govt.nz) keyword **feeding your baby infant formula**





# SUPPORT SERVICES FOR PARENTS AND FOSTER CARERS

## Health advice

Healthline **0800 611 116** – registered nurses provide health triage and advice [healthline.govt.nz](https://www.healthline.govt.nz)

## Stop smoking support

Quitline **0800 778 778** – advisors provide support for people wanting to quit smoking [quit.org.nz](https://www.quit.org.nz)

## Alcohol and other drug counselling support

Alcohol Drug Helpline **0800 787 797**, text **8681** – advice, information or support from counsellors about drinking or other drug use [alcoholdrughelp.org.nz/helpline](https://www.alcoholdrughelp.org.nz/helpline)

## Mental health, depression and anxiety counselling support

Depression Helpline **0800 111 757**, text **4202** – counsellors provide support for people seeking advice on issues relating to mental health and wellbeing. Help is also accessible through National Depression Initiative resources – helping people find a way through depression [depression.org.nz](https://www.depression.org.nz)

The Journal – an online programme to help people learn skills to tackle depression **depression.org.nz/thejournal**

The Lowdown, text **5626** – helping young people to recognise and understand depression or anxiety **thelowdown.co.nz**

### **Gambling counselling and support**

Gambling Helpline **0800 654 655**, text **8006** – support from counsellors for those worried about their or someone else's gambling **gamblinghelpline.co.nz**

### **Poisons advice**

National Poisons Centre **0800 POISON (0800 764 766)** – advice and initial triage for the public **poisons.co.nz**

### **Immunisation advice**

Immunisation Advisory Centre (IMAC) **0800 IMMUNE (0800 466 863)** – providing immunisation advice to the public **immune.org.nz**

### **Parenting and child development advice**

For interactive parenting advice from birth to 3 years check out **parentingresource.nz**

Plunket – providing pregnancy and parenting education, information and resources **plunketppe.org.nz**

PlunketLine **0800 PLUNKET (0800 933 922)** – a free parent helpline advice service available to all families, whānau and caregivers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

For general parenting tips visit the SKIP website **skip.org.nz**

**For urgent help** for a child or young person in your care call Oranga Tamariki **0508 326 459**.





# 0–12 MONTHS

## Checklist

### Is your baby enrolled with a family doctor?

- Visits to your family doctor, after-hours services, medicines and immunisations are free for children under 13 years of age.
- If you need advice about a child of any age who is unwell or hurt, or has any symptoms of sickness, call Healthline free 24/7 on **0800 611 116** to speak with a registered nurse.

### Is your baby enrolled with the Community Oral Health Service?

- Oral health check-ups are free for children under 18 years of age.
- Call **0800 TALK TEETH (0800 825 583)** to enrol.

### Is your baby enrolled with a Well Child Tamariki Ora provider?

- The Well Child Tamariki Ora programme is a series of free health visits and support for children from around 6 weeks to 5 years old.
- Call **0800 933 922** to check your baby's enrolment or to find out the providers in your region.

**Has your baby received a free Well Child Tamariki Ora visit at:**



- 4 to 6 weeks old **and**
- 8 to 10 weeks old **and**
- 3 to 4 months old **and**
- 5 to 7 months old **and**
- 9 to 12 months old?

**Has your baby received a free immunisation at:**



- 6 weeks old **and**
- 3 months old **and**
- 5 months?

If not, or you're unsure which immunisations your baby has had, call your family doctor or nurse. If your child is not up to date with their immunisations your doctor or nurse can discuss this with you and arrange a follow-up appointment for your child.



## Primary health care

If your baby is eligible for publicly funded health services, visits to the family doctor and after-hours services are usually free until your child is 13 years old. Your baby's medicine prescriptions and immunisations are free, too.

To receive free primary care, it's important to enrol your baby with a family doctor at birth or as soon as possible after that. Babies and young children get sick often – it's a normal part of childhood.

Your family doctor and practice nurse will want to get to know you and your baby and give you the help you need – including the first set of free immunisations when your baby is 6 weeks old, 3 months old and 5 months old.

When you join a family doctor, you will receive:

- health advice and information to support your growing baby
- treatment for your baby or child when they are sick
- a prescription for medication for your baby if they are unwell and need help to recover from sickness
- ongoing support if your baby needs specialist care, or help in using other health services, such as a referral for your baby to specialist health care services (extra support services), if required.

If you need to enrol your baby with a family doctor, ring your nearest GP or call Healthline on **0800 611 116** to find out about the doctors and general practices in your area.



## Well Child Tamariki Ora

The Well Child Tamariki Ora programme is a series of free health visits and support that is available to all families for children from around 6 weeks up to 5 years of age.

When you join Well Child Tamariki Ora you will get:

- free health checks for your baby from a nurse or registered health practitioner
- information on breastfeeding and safe sleep practices
- information on protecting and improving your child's health and development
- a Well Child Tamariki Ora book (*My Health Book*) to track your child's progress and health record over the next 5 years
- help to find any other information or services your child may need.

It's free and it's easy to enrol in the Well Child Tamariki Ora programme – talk with your Lead Maternity Carer (or midwife) or call **0800 933 922** to check your baby's enrolment and to find out the Well Child Tamariki Ora providers in your region.



## Well Child Tamariki Ora visits (6 weeks to 12 months)

Your baby will receive free health and development visits with a Well Child Tamariki Ora nurse or registered health practitioner at:

- 4 to 6 weeks old **and**
- 8 to 10 weeks old **and**
- 3 to 4 months old **and**
- 5 to 7 months old **and**
- 9 to 12 months old.

Each visit provides an opportunity for you to talk with the nurse about your baby and your important role of being a parent/ caregiver.

You might find it helpful to talk about:

- starting your baby on solid food (at around 6 months)
- sleep – safe sleeping for your baby; sleeping patterns
- what your baby’s behaviour means (eg crying)
- ways to play, have fun and be active with your baby
- teething and tooth-brushing
- enrolling your baby with the Community Oral Health Service
- immunisation
- knowing when your baby is sick and what to do about it
- being smokefree
- keeping your baby safe – at home and while out and about
- car seats and car safety
- your feelings about being a parent/caregiver and where to get support
- whānau relationships
- returning to work
- choices for daycare, pre-school and kōhanga reo, and enrolling on time.

Your Well Child Tamariki Ora provider will support you to be the best parent you can be, and will help you to give your baby the best start in life. Your Well Child Tamariki Ora provider will also link you into community services, and will refer you to specialist health services (if required).

You can get more information on development milestones by visiting [plunket.org.nz/your-child/](https://plunket.org.nz/your-child/) or you can call **0800 933 922**.



## Immunisations

All children aged under 18 can be protected from infectious diseases with the free immunisations that are listed on the National Immunisations Schedule.

Your baby should have their first set of free immunisations at:

- 6 weeks old **and**
- 3 months old **and**
- 5 months old.

Make sure you take your baby to their family doctor to get immunised. It is important to immunise your child on time – this will give them the best protection against a number of diseases.

Consent for immunisation, given verbally (to the vaccinator) or written, from a parent or legal guardian is required before an infant or child can be vaccinated and is required for each vaccination event.

For children in care, your child's social worker will arrange to get consent from the parent or legal guardian. Once a child is able to understand the risks and benefits of vaccination they can give consent themselves. There is no particular age at which a child is considered competent to provide consent and the clinician will need to assess this for the individual child.

If your family doctor hasn't contacted you to arrange an appointment for your baby, call them to make an appointment and to check that your baby is enrolled with them. If you need to enrol your baby with a family doctor, ring your nearest GP or call Healthline on **0800 611 116**.

You can get more information on immunisation by visiting [health.govt.nz/immunisation](https://health.govt.nz/immunisation) or [immune.org.nz](https://immune.org.nz) or you can call **0800 IMMUNE (0800 466 863)**.



## Oral health

Your child is entitled to free basic oral health care through the Community Oral Health Service from birth to school year 8 (and an adolescent contracted dentist from school year 9 until their 18th birthday).

Brush your baby's teeth with a smear of regular strength fluoride toothpaste twice a day – morning and at night before bed.

It's important to enrol your child with the service from birth, or as early as possible, so that their first check-up can be arranged when due.

Your child's baby teeth save the space for adult teeth and are important for proper growth of your child's face and jaw. Baby teeth need to be looked after and valued.

Remember, healthy baby teeth usually mean healthy adult teeth too, so it's important to look after your baby's first teeth.

**It's free and easy to enrol your baby with the Community Oral Health Service – call 0800 TALK TEETH (0800 825 583).**



## Learning and development

Talking to baby is an important way to nurture them and build a great relationship. Talk or sing to baby about anything that's going on and give them a chance to talk back.

You can help support baby's learning by:

- spending time responding to their movements and sounds
- providing different objects and materials for them to explore using all their senses
- being playful together
- noticing and responding to their preferences

- taking time to talk to them.

Newborn babies need different things and places to look at every day. They

- are attracted to the human face more than any other sight
- see things best at a distance of 20-40cm away
- are attracted to patterns of contrasting colour (like black and white).

From 4 to 5 months young babies:

- learn mostly visually (about 80%)
- begin to see colour in the same way as adults
- learn well when they are looking at something together with their parent
- are beginning to see in three dimensions.

Take time to observe how your baby reacts to different things and at different times. Each baby is different and it can be hard if you have the opposite temperament to the baby, but recognising this will help you and baby to build a really positive relationship.

You can use different techniques to support baby to learn and develop, for example by:

- giving them very structured and predictable routines and experiences
- teaching them about sticking with doing things and not giving up
- encouraging them to be really active
- using patience to show and help them to learn about sticking with an activity for a while rather than being easily distracted.



## Safety checklist for crawling

Once baby starts crawling, get down on the floor to their level and look for things that might be tempting to them. Once you've identified possible dangers, use the checklist below to make your home safer.

### Check, move or secure

Power cords, plugs, and curtain cords	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pot plants and ornaments	<input type="checkbox"/>
Household cleaners, medicines and other poisons	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peeling paint, especially in older houses	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steps and stairs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Animal food, nappy buckets, and plastic bags	<input type="checkbox"/>
Anything sharp – needles, scissors, cutlery	<input type="checkbox"/>
Things that might topple over, such as lamps	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heaters, stoves and fires	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have any concerns about your baby's development or behaviour, remember there is support available.

You can talk to:

- a Well Child nurse or PlunketLine **0800 933 922**
- your family doctor
- an early childhood teacher at the child's kindergarten, kōhanga reo or childcare
- your social worker.



# 1–3 YEARS

## (Toddler)

### Checklist

#### Is your child enrolled with a family doctor?

- Visits to your family doctor, after-hours services, medicines and immunisations are free for children under 13 years of age.
- If you need advice about a child of any age who is unwell or hurt, or has any symptoms of sickness, call Healthline free 24/7 on **0800 611 116** to speak with a registered nurse.
- To check which practice your child is currently enrolled with, call the Ministry of Health on **0800 458 448**.

#### Is your child enrolled with the Community Oral Health Service?

- Oral health checks are free for children under 18 years of age.
- Call 0800 **TALK TEETH (0800 825 583)** to enrol.

#### Has your child had their first visit to the Community Oral Health Service at:

- 1 to 2 years of age.

### **Is your child enrolled with a Well Child Tamariki Ora provider?**



- The Well Child Tamariki Ora programme is a series of free health visits and support for children around 6 weeks to 5 years old.
- Call **0800 933 922** to check your baby's enrolment or to find out about the providers in your region.

### **Has your baby received a free Well Child Tamariki Ora visit at:**



- 15 to 18 months old?

### **Are your child's immunisations up to date? By now your child should have received a free immunisation at:**



- 6 weeks old **and**
- 3 months old **and**
- 5 months old **and**
- 15 months old.

If not, or you're unsure which immunisations your baby has had, call your family doctor or nurse and arrange a follow-up appointment for your child.

### **Is your child enrolled in an early learning service?**



Turn to page 73 for information on eligibility, and see page 60 for information on entitlements, types and how to enrol in early learning services.



## Primary health care

If your child is eligible for publicly funded health services, visits to the family doctor and after-hours services are usually free until your child is 13 years old. Your child's medicine prescriptions and immunisations are free too.

When your child is 15 months old take them to your family doctor to get their fourth set of free immunisations.

If you need to enrol your child with a family doctor, ring your nearest GP or call Healthline on **0800 611 116** to find out about the doctors and general practices in your area.

If you need to check which practice your child is currently enrolled with, call the Ministry of Health on **0800 458 448**.



## Well Child Tamariki Ora

When your toddler is 15 to 18 months old they will have a free health and development visit with the Well Child Tamariki Ora nurse or a registered health practitioner.

Movement and physical play are really important for toddlers. Little children love to move, and learn about themselves and their surroundings. Movement develops and strengthens their body and brain. Physical play lets them have fun, be energetic, and grow their imagination and sense of wonder.

The visit is a good time to talk with the nurse about your baby and about being a parent. You could talk about:

- feeding your child
- your child's behaviour and development
- ways to play, have fun and be active with your child

- teething, dental health and tooth-brushing
- immunisation
- knowing when your child is sick and what to do about it
- being smokefree
- keeping your child safe – at home and while out and about
- getting your child ready for using the toilet.

Your Well Child Tamariki Ora provider will support you to be the best parent you can be, and will help you to nurture your child and give them the best start in life. They will also link you into community services, and will refer you to specialist health services, if these are required.

It's free and it's easy to enrol in the Well Child Tamariki Ora programme – talk with your family doctor or nurse, or call **0800 933 922** to check your child's enrolment and to find out about the Well Child Tamariki Ora providers in your region.



## **Immunisations**

At the age of 15 months, your child will be due for their free immunisation. Take your child to their family doctor to get immunised.

Remember, immunising your child is free, and will give them the best protection against a number of diseases.

If your family doctor hasn't contacted you to arrange an appointment for your child, call them to make an appointment and to check that your child is enrolled with them.

You can get more information on immunisation by visiting [health.govt.nz/immunisation](https://health.govt.nz/immunisation) or [immune.org.nz](https://immune.org.nz) or calling 0800 IMMUNE (0800 466 863).



## Oral health

Your child's first oral health visit will usually be between 1 and 2 years of age. Remember, your child is entitled to free basic oral health care through the Community Oral Health Service.

Brush your child's teeth with a smear of regular strength fluoride toothpaste twice a day – morning and at night before bed.

Your child will have most of their baby teeth by now. Your child is at risk of tooth decay (holes) as soon as their teeth appear.

Tooth decay is easy to prevent by:

- brushing your child's teeth twice a day (morning and at night before bed) with regular strength fluoride toothpaste
- ensuring your child has a healthy diet that is low in sugar
- ensuring your child has regular dental check-ups with the Community Oral Health Service.

Accidents can happen at this age, so if your child accidentally bumps their teeth, take them to a dental therapist in the Community Oral Health Service or a dentist, even if the teeth still look alright.

If you haven't heard from the Community Oral Health Service, call **0800 TALK TEETH (0800 825 583)** to make an appointment and to check that your child is enrolled.



## Learning and development

You can help toddlers learn by:

- talking about and describing the things they see and hear in the world around them
- offering them props such as toy telephones and hats so they can imitate and pretend
- repeating favourite songs, stories and rhymes.

As toddlers grow and learn, they begin to explore, and make sense of their world and their place in it. They are quickly developing physical, social and language skills and this requires lots of time, practice and support. This can provide challenges as children become more active and adventurous.

Children's capabilities often fluctuate from day to day. Within minutes they can be both dependent and independent, influenced by temperament, health, the environment or people's expectations.

Each infant, toddler and child learns in their own way and at their own pace and, while there is wide variation, there are some general guidelines. Refer to your Well Child Tamariki Ora book to find out about these general guidelines.

***Much More than Words*** is a booklet for supporting communication development of young children. It includes information about typical communication development in young children and ideas for supporting them.

**[seonline.tki.org.nz/Educator-tools/Much-More-than-Words](https://seonline.tki.org.nz/Educator-tools/Much-More-than-Words)**

## **Tips for encouraging positive behaviour**

- Keep your statements brief, especially when your child is very young.
- Ensure they get your attention at other times. Be available for them so they can rely on you. If they only get your attention when they 'act up,' they will learn that difficult behaviours get what they want.
- It's important that children are given positive choices – support them to make empowering choices.
- Comments about a child's behaviour should be phrased impersonally.

## **Toddler frustration and tantrums**

It is important for you to recognise and understand your child's feelings.

Children don't like having tantrums – they're emotionally exhausting, frustrating and embarrassing. It's valuable to learn to predict what triggers their tantrums and to avoid those situations. It's not always necessary to directly stop the behaviour. Stay calm and help your child calm themselves down.

For example:

- if your toddler or young child is having a tantrum over not getting a biscuit, you can say you will ignore them until they calm down
- wait until they have stopped the tantrum and then get them to talk about the feelings that sparked the tantrum.

Children need to be given independence and choice over their lives, so that they don't feel a need to show their frustration by being stubborn or obstructive. Following this basic principle, remember not to offer rewards at tantrum times, because this sends a message that tantrums are successful and the way to get what they want.

## **Tips for handling tantrums**

- Speak quietly and in a non-aggressive tone. Be sympathetic – think about how the child got into the situation and their frustration at not being able to express themselves or to get their way.
- If you ignore the tantrum, in time they will learn that this is not how to get what they want.
- Give children some choices of their own. Even in ‘non-negotiable’ situations, variation and choice are possible. For example, wearing a seat belt is non-negotiable – you have to wear it in the car. However, there is choice in doing the seat belt up – “Do you want me to do it up or can I help you?” If your child refuses, you can get out of the car and not go. You can repeat this process calmly until the child keeps the seat belt on.
- Keep to routines. Some children are sensitive to changes and react quickly to them.

## **Support for your child’s development or learning**

Identifying concerns with learning and development early is important. If you have any concerns about your child’s development or learning, remember that support is available. A good first step is to talk to your child’s teacher, Well Child nurse or family doctor.

The Ministry of Education provides an early intervention service for young children 0 to 5 years old. The early intervention team works collaboratively with families, whānau, educators and specialists. They may work in your home and in your child’s early learning centre or kōhanga reo and will support you until your child has settled into school. This can include support from a number of specialists.

Ask your child's early learning service teacher what services may be available for your child. You can read more about the early intervention services from the Ministry of Education website at [parents.education.govt.nz](https://parents.education.govt.nz) and click on **Special education needs** on the top ribbon.

There is also a fact sheet you might find helpful – [parents.education.govt.nz/services-and-support-available](https://parents.education.govt.nz/services-and-support-available)

A map of local early learning services is available at [educationcounts.govt.nz/find-an-els](https://educationcounts.govt.nz/find-an-els)

For more information on early learning, go to [parents.education.govt.nz/choosing-an-ece-service](https://parents.education.govt.nz/choosing-an-ece-service)

**If you have concerns about your child's development or behaviour, remember you can talk to:**

- a Well Child nurse or PlunketLine **0800 933 922**
- your family doctor
- your early learning provider
- your social worker.



# 3 – 5 YEARS

## (Pre-schooler)

### Checklist

#### Is your child enrolled with a Family Doctor?

- Visits to your family doctor, after-hours services, medicines and immunisations are free for children under 13 years of age.
- If you need advice about a child of any age who is unwell or hurt, or has any symptoms of sickness, call Healthline free 24/7 on **0800 611 116** to speak with a registered nurse.
- To check which practice your child is currently enrolled with, call the Ministry of Health on **0800 458 448**.

#### Is your child enrolled with the Community Oral Health Service?

- Oral health check-ups are free for children under 18 years of age .
- Call **0800 TALK TEETH (0800 825 583)** to enrol.

#### Has your child received their free oral health check-up at:

- 4 years old?

If not, call **0800 TALK TEETH (0800 825 583)** today to make an appointment.

### **Is your child enrolled with a Well Child Tamariki Ora provider?**

- The Well Child Tamariki Ora programme is a series of free health visits and support for children from around 6 weeks to 5 years old.
- Call **0800 933 922** to check your baby's enrolment or to find out about the providers in your region.

### **Has your child received a free B4 School Check at:**

- 4 years old?

If not, call **0800 933 922** today to make an appointment.

### **Has your child received a free immunisation at:**

- 4 years old?

If not, or you're unsure which immunisations your baby has had, call your family doctor or nurse. If your child is not up to date with their immunisations, your doctor or nurse can discuss this with you and arrange a follow-up appointment for your child.

### **Is your child enrolled in an early learning service?**

Information on eligibility, entitlements, types of early learning services and how to enrol is included in this section of the *Hand in Hand Book*.



## Primary health care

If your child is eligible for publicly funded health services, visits to the family doctor and after-hours services are usually free until your child is 13 years old. Your child's medicine prescriptions and immunisations are free too.

When your child turns 4 years old take them to your family doctor to get their final set of childhood immunisations.

If you need to enrol your child with a family doctor, ring your nearest GP or call Healthline on **0800 611 116** to find out about the doctors and general practices in your area.

If you need to check which practice your child is currently enrolled with, call the Ministry of Health on **0800 458 448**.



## Well Child Tamariki Ora

When your child turns 4 years old they will receive a free B4 School Check visit. The B4 School Check is the last Well Child Tamariki Ora visit.

The B4 School Check consists of several different components all aimed at identifying any issues that may negatively impact on the child's capacity to participate and learn in the school environment to the best of their ability.

During the check your child will receive:

- 45 minute appointment with a nurse – you'll be able to talk with the nurse about your child's wellbeing and can ask about anything that is worrying you
- health and development, teeth, height, weight, social and emotional wellbeing, and immunisation assessment
- vision and hearing assessment by a vision and hearing technician (this may happen at a different time).

If you or the nurse think your child has any health or development issues that need further assessment the nurse will discuss this with you and offer to refer you to other services that may help. The nurse will also help if your child needs any catch-up immunisations.

If your child has turned 4, they are due for their B4 School Check now. If you haven't heard from your local B4 School Check provider it is important that you contact them to make a booking – call **0800 933 922** to find out about the providers in your region.



## Immunisations

When your child turns 4 years old, take them to your family doctor or nurse to get their immunisations. Remember, immunising your child is free, and will give them the best protection against a number of diseases.

If your family doctor hasn't contacted you to arrange an appointment for your child, call them to make an appointment and to check that your child is enrolled with them.

All early childhood centres are required to maintain an immunisation register to help manage the spread of vaccine-preventable disease, especially when there is an outbreak.

You will need to show a completed immunisation certificate when you enrol your child, even if your child is not immunised. The certificate will show whether your child's immunisations are all up to date. The immunisation certificate can be found in your Well Child Tamariki Ora *My Health Book* or can be obtained from your family doctor or nurse.

You can get more information on immunisation by visiting [health.govt.nz/immunisation](https://health.govt.nz/immunisation) or [immune.org.nz](https://immune.org.nz) or calling **0800 IMMUNE (0800 466 863)**.



## Oral health

Your child is entitled to free basic oral health care through the Community Oral Health Service from birth to school year 8 (and an adolescent contracted dentist from school year 9 until their 18th birthday).

Brush your child's teeth with a smear of regular strength fluoride toothpaste twice a day – morning and at night before bed.

By about 3 years of age your child will have their first set of teeth – 20 'baby' teeth. These teeth will help your child to eat and speak well.

As your child gets older it's a good idea to let them try using their toothbrush after you have cleaned their teeth for them. Children need help to clean their teeth until they are around 8 or 9 years old.

If you haven't heard from the Community Oral Health Service, call **0800 TALK TEETH (0800 825 583)** to make an appointment and to check your child is enrolled.



## Learning and development

### Early learning services

At this age you may be looking at enrolling your child in an early learning service. Enrolling a child in early learning can add to what you already do at home to help them learn. What a child learns in their early years makes a big difference to how they learn for the rest of their lives. Information on what happens at the centres, different options and how to enrol is included below.

An early learning service helps your child to:

- interact with new people and form relationships
- trust adults and other children
- play and learn with people outside their immediate family
- take turns and negotiate
- take part in learning experiences in a group
- ask questions and find out more
- see themselves as 'learners'.

## **Types of early learning services**

### ***Parent-led centres***

In parent-led early learning services, parents, whānau or caregivers provide the education and care for their children. They are generally licensed and/or chartered, with the exception of playgroups and puna kōhungahunga.

Parent-led centres include:

- Playcentre
- Playgroups
- Te Kōhanga Reo
- Ngā Puna Kōhungahunga
- Pacific playgroups.

### ***Teacher-led centres***

In teacher-led centres, one or more of the adults providing education and care are registered teachers. All teacher-led centres are licensed and/or chartered.

Teacher-led centres include:

- education and care centres
- kindergartens
- home-based education.

### ***Te Kura (formerly The Correspondence School)***

Te Kura provides learning programmes for 3 to 5 year old children who are not able to attend early childhood education centres for various reasons, such as living in a remote area.

To learn more about Te Kura go to [tekura.school.nz](http://tekura.school.nz)

## Choosing an early learning service

When you are choosing an early learning service, it might help to think about what will work best for you and your child and what's important to you both.

You could consider:

- how long you want your child to attend
- the kind of service you want
- whether the fees are affordable
- the location of the service
- your and your child's needs, including their culture, identity and language.

When choosing an early learning service for your child, do some research, think about what you need.

Do you want a service that offers:

- education in a home setting or at a centre
- the option of attending the service with your child
- the opportunity for your child to attend without you
- a location close to home or work
- opening times that suit you?

Every licensed early learning service is reviewed regularly by the Education Review Office (ERO). When choosing an early learning service for your child, it might help to read their latest ERO report. This gives you an independent view of the quality of the centre and its strengths and weaknesses. ERO reports are available free online.

Go to **[ero.govt.nz](https://ero.govt.nz)** if you would like to access an ERO report for an early learning service in your area.

For information about enrolment see **[parents.education.govt.nz/early-learning](https://parents.education.govt.nz/early-learning)**

## What to bring when you enrol a child

Ask your child's early learning service for a list of what you need to bring.

For example, you'll need:

### Checklist for enrolling in an early learning service

Proof of your child's age (eg a birth certificate or passport)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Immunisation certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical information (about things like allergies)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your doctor's contact details	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any legal documents, such as court orders related to access or custody of your child	<input type="checkbox"/>
Details of how to contact you during the day	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any emergency contacts, or people who are not allowed to pick up the child	<input type="checkbox"/>

You can talk to your child's social worker if the child in your care doesn't have some of these documents.

## Childcare Subsidy

The Childcare Subsidy is a payment that helps families with the cost of pre-school childcare for children under 5 years old attending an early learning service for three or more hours per week.

More information on the Childcare Subsidy can be found at Working for Families

[workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/childcare-subsidy](https://workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/childcare-subsidy)

## **Starting early learning**

While it is an exciting time, starting at a new early learning service can be stressful for both you and your child. To help with the transition, talk to the early learning service about their safety procedures, what information they can give you to support your child and any special arrangements you need to put in place.

## **Make them feel at home**

Take as much time as possible to help your child become familiar with their new early learning service before you leave them there for the first time. It may take a couple of weeks or more before you both feel happy about this. Most services will work with carers to ensure a smooth transition.

## **Saying goodbye**

It's normal for your child to be upset or unwilling for you to leave, especially in the early weeks.

Some things you can do to help include:

- being positive about the day ahead and the things they'll be doing
- giving yourself plenty of time – rushing doesn't help
- having a short routine, such as reading a story together or waving to each other through the window, can be reassuring for you both

- always telling your child you're going, then saying goodbye and leaving straight away. If you're worried, arrange to ring later and check that they're happy
- making sure you always return to pick your child up at the time you've promised. For the first week or so, try to be a bit early.

Each child is different. Some children will settle in straight away, while others will take longer. The teachers have lots of experience with this – talk to them about the best ways of helping your child settle.

### **Taking an interest in their day**

Making time to talk with your child about their day is important.

Talk to them about what they did today.

Include your child in the conversation when you're talking to the teachers about your child's activities.

Display their paintings and other work at home.

## What to pack for their first day

Services have different requirements. You should also check your service's policy about sunhats and sunscreen.

Check whether you need to bring:

### Checklist of what you may need to bring to an early learning service

Morning tea and lunch or formula	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nappies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wipes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bedding	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dummy or favourite toy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sleepwear	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extra clothes for messy play or when they get wet or dirty	<input type="checkbox"/>
Winter clothes (coat and hat) or summer clothes (sunhat, togs and rash vest)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sunscreen	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **Getting to know your early learning service**

Your child will learn best when the learning and experiences they have at home are joined up with their early learning service.

There are many ways you and the teacher can support your child's learning, including:

- sharing news about what has happened at home and at the service
- bringing special treasures/taonga from home to share
- having your child make things at the service that they can bring home
- sharing photographs of special people, important events and everyday learning between the early learning service and home
- parents learning more about how the early childhood centre or kōhanga reo runs
- teachers learning more about the wider families/whānau and communities that are part of your child's life.

## **How early learning services share with you what your child has learnt**

Working together with your child's early learning teacher helps you keep in touch with their progress, tells you what they are doing well and lets you deal with any problems early.

There are many different ways of sharing examples of your child's learning with you. Some early learning services have digital cameras where children choose what pictures to take and share at home.

All early learning services collect examples of children's work and play, sometimes in a book or portfolio, and write about what children are learning to share with parents or foster carers.



# 5 – 12 YEARS

(Primary and intermediate school)

## Checklist

### Is your child enrolled with a family doctor?

- Visits to your family doctor, after-hours services, medicines and immunisations are free for children under 13 years of age.
- If you need advice about a child of any age who is unwell or hurt, or has any symptoms of sickness, call Healthline free 24/7 on **0800 611 116** to speak with a registered nurse.
- To check where your child is currently enrolled, call the Ministry of Health on **0800 458 448**.

### Has your child received their free oral health check-up this year?

- Your child should have regular check-ups with the dental therapist at a Community Oral Health Service.
- Call **0800 TALK TEETH (0800 825 583)** today to make an appointment and to check that your child is enrolled with the Community Oral Health Service.

**By now, your child should have completed all of their Well Child Tamariki Ora visits at:**

- 4 years old (the B4 School Check).

If your child has not received their B4 School Check, call **0800 933 922** to schedule an appointment with your Well Child Tamariki Ora provider as soon as possible.

**By now, your child should have completed their early childhood immunisations at:**

- 6 weeks old **and**
- 3 months old **and**
- 5 months old **and**
- 15 months old **and**
- 4 years old.

If not, or you're unsure which immunisations your child has had, call your family doctor or nurse. If your child is not up to date with their immunisations your doctor or nurse can discuss this with you and arrange to catch your child up.

**If your child is 11 or 12 years old, check to see if they've received the following free immunisations:**

- Year 7 Immunisation – tetanus, diphtheria and whooping cough
- Year 7 or 8 Immunisation – human papillomavirus (HPV).

**Has your child enrolled in and started school?**

For information on eligibility, enrolment and choosing the right school see from page 73.



## Primary health care

If your child is eligible for publicly funded health services, visits to the family doctor and after-hours services are usually free until your child is 13 years old. Your child's medicine prescriptions and immunisations are free too.

If you need to enrol your child with a family doctor, ring your nearest GP or call Healthline on **0800 611 116** to find out about the doctors and general practices in your area.

If you need to check which practice your child is currently enrolled with, call the Ministry of Health on **0800 458 448**.



## Immunisations

When your child turns 11 or 12 years old, they will receive their last set of childhood immunisations. These are often given through a school-based immunisation programme in Year 7 or 8, but you can also choose to take your child to their family doctor or nurse. Either option is free.

If your child is being offered school-based immunisation, they will bring a consent form home for their parent or guardian to sign. Children will only be vaccinated at school when they have completed and returned a consent form agreeing to vaccination.

**Tetanus, diphtheria and whooping cough vaccine** boosts the protection children received when they were younger. School based programmes in most parts of the country give this vaccine in year 7.

**Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine** protects against nine strains of HPV responsible for cervical and some other HPV-related cancers that develop later in life. The vaccine is given as two injections, in school-based programmes nationwide in either Year 7 or Year 8.

For those who choose to be vaccinated by their family doctor or nurse, tetanus, diphtheria and whooping cough vaccine is free until a young person turns 18, and HPV vaccine is free until a young person turns 27.

**Chickenpox immunisation** is free from the family doctor for children turning 11 years of age from 1 July 2017 who have neither had chickenpox or been immunised against it.

If you are unsure whether your child has received any of the above vaccines, call their family doctor to check, and make an appointment if they need to catch up.

You can get more information on immunisation by visiting [health.govt.nz/immunisation](http://health.govt.nz/immunisation) or [immune.org.nz](http://immune.org.nz) or calling **0800 IMMUNE (0800 466 863)**.



## Oral health

Your child should receive a free oral health check-up at the Community Oral Health Service – usually once a year, depending on assessed need.

Brush your child's teeth with a regular strength fluoride toothpaste twice a day – morning and at night before bed.

By visiting the Community Oral Health Service for regular check-ups and advice, oral health problems can be prevented or treated early.

If your child has a toothache or an injury to their teeth or gums, take them to see the dental therapist at the Community Oral Health Service, even if the teeth still look all right. Remember, your child is entitled to free oral health check-ups until they turn 18.

If the Community Oral Health Service hasn't contacted you to arrange an appointment for your child, call **0800 TALK TEETH (0800 825 583)** to make an appointment and to check that your child is enrolled with them.



### **Year 7 vision checks**

Your child will have their distance vision checked at school when they are Year 7 (either 11 or 12 years old).

If the screening picks up a problem, your child will be referred for a full assessment.



## **Learning and development**

### **School eligibility**

Every child between the ages of 4 years and 10 months and 19 has a right to enrol in a state school if they are a domestic student.

Domestic students include:

- New Zealand citizens
- residents or Australian citizens
- foreign students who hold a Domestic Student Visa.

Domestic students have an entitlement to free state-funded education. Eligibility ends on 1 January after a student's 19th birthday or when a Domestic Student Visa expires.

Students funded through the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme are eligible until the end of the year that they turn 21 years of age.

Your child can start school or kura in New Zealand anytime from 4 years and 10 months old to 6 years old.

### **Type of primary schools**

There are lots of different kinds of primary schools and kura in New Zealand, but your choice will depend on where you live and the needs of your child and your family.

As a parent or foster carer, think about your child's culture, language, identity and learning needs and decide what you want to share with the school to help promote this. Most children in New Zealand go to government-funded state or state-integrated schools, but there are also private schools available in some areas.

Within the state school system there are:

- English and te reo Māori options
- schools with different age groups
- Partnership Schools/Kura Hourua
- Te Kura (formerly The Correspondence School)
- regional health schools.

To help you decide what type of school is best suited for your child, you can go to **[parents.education.govt.nz](https://parents.education.govt.nz)**

**The education information below that is included in the 13-18+ years (Secondary School) section of this handbook is relevant also to this section.**

- Years 9 and 10, page 100
- NCEA made easy – Years 11-13, page 101
- NCEA Subsidy, page 102
- Transitioning to a new school, page 103
- Boarding school allowance, page 103
- Bullying, page 105
- Truancy, page 105
- Standdown, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, page 106
- Teen parent schools, page 107
- Career and training options, page 107
- Supporting a young person’s mental health and wellbeing, page 108

**Finding a school**

Choosing a school that is right for you and your child is important. Most children attend the school closest to home but they can enrol at any state school that doesn’t have an enrolment scheme.

If you need help finding a school for your child, go to [education.govt.nz](https://www.education.govt.nz) and look for the **Quick Links** on the right-hand side. There, you will find a link called **Find a school**. This is a school directory that identifies every school in New Zealand.

## Tips on choosing a school

When choosing a school for your child, you might have different priorities depending on their needs, for example:

- how will the school support you and your child’s needs or talents, such as maths, learning English as a second language, sporting activities or trauma experience?
- can they support the cultural needs of your child?
- talk to other families whose children go to the schools you are thinking of enrolling your child in and ask them what they think
- have a look at the schools’ Education Review Office reports **ero.govt.nz**
- request each school’s enrolment information, which might include an enrolment package, information booklet, prospectus
- check out the schools’ websites, if they have one
- visit each school and the classroom your child or young person might be in during the school day.

You can go to the Ministry of Education’s website to find out more about enrolment and changing schools: **parents.education.govt.nz**  
key word **enrolling**.

Ask the teacher if they have a buddy system and/or peer mentoring. Encourage participation in after-school clubs.

## School years and levels

Sometimes it’s hard to work out the ‘years’ at school because they have changed since many of us were there.

School years are ranked numerically from Year 0 (formerly Primer 1 or J 1) to Year 13 (formerly Form 7). If your child starts school in the second half of the year, and is aged between 5 and 6, they will be classed as Year 0. If they start school in the first half of the year, they will be classed as Year 1.

Previously Called	Now Called
Primary	
J 1	Year 1
J 2	Year 2
J 3 / S 1	Year 3
S 2	Year 4
S 3	Year 5
S 4	Year 6
Intermediate	
F 1	Year 7
F 2	Year 8
Secondary	
F 3	Year 9
F 4	Year 10
F 5	Year 11
F 6	Year 12
F 7	Year 13

New Zealand's curriculum is child-centred and not tied to year, level or age.

### **Enrolment or changing schools**

Children can start at different times throughout the school year, depending on when their birthday is, or when it suits you.

You enrol with the school or kura by contacting them directly to find out their enrolment process. They will let you know what paperwork you'll need to provide and fill out.

This might include:

Documentation Type	
Identification	A copy of your child's birth certificate or passport as proof of age <input type="checkbox"/>
Immunisation	A copy of their immunisation certificate <input type="checkbox"/> You can contact your child's GP if that information is available to you
Medical	Medical information including your doctor's contact details, and information on your child's allergies or other health issues <input type="checkbox"/>
Legalities	Any legal documents, eg custody, guardianship, or access agreements the school should know about <input type="checkbox"/>
NSN	If your child has been enrolled in early childhood education, their National Student Number (NSN), and early learning leaver's record <input type="checkbox"/>
Contact details	Your family phone numbers and address and someone the school or kura can call in an emergency if they can't get hold of you <input type="checkbox"/>

If you don't have the right documentation or are having difficulties enrolling the child in your care at school or kura, contact your social worker, who can help.

If your child is starting at a new school or kura, you need to enrol them in the new school and let the school they are leaving know.

## Donations, fees and subsidies

### ***Donations and fees***

State schools do not charge school fees – education in New Zealand state schools is free.

State-integrated schools usually charge compulsory fees called ‘attendance dues’. These schools usually own their own land and buildings, and this fee is for property costs.

Private schools receive limited government funding, so they charge a set fee each term, or for the year. The fees should be clearly set out in their enrolment information or prospectus.

Schools may ask parents or caregivers for donations, which are voluntary contributions to help with running the school. It is not compulsory to pay donations.

You can discuss with your school what the donations and fees are and what payment options are available to you.

Depending on the school, some items you may be prepared to pay for are:

- materials and equipment such as exercise books, pens, pencils
- school uniforms
- before-school and after-school care if you need it
- a laptop, Chromebook or tablet.

Refer to the ***Foster Care Handbook*** page 19 for information on financial support.

## ***Tax rebate***

You may be able to get a tax rebate from Inland Revenue for the voluntary school donations you have paid, if you:

- have earned taxable income
- have lived in New Zealand at any time over the tax year
- are an individual (not a company or partnership for tax purposes) and
- have paid voluntary donations to a state or state-integrated school.

You can find out more about this, and apply for a rebate, by visiting the page about donations on the Inland Revenue Department's website

**ird.govt.nz** key phrase **school donations**.

## ***Out of School Care and Recreation (OSCAR) Subsidy***

The Out of School Care and Recreation (OSCAR) Subsidy is a payment through Work and Income which helps families with the costs of before-school and after-school programmes for up to 20 hours a week, and school holiday programmes for up to 50 hours a week.

To see if you are eligible for this and how to apply, go to **workandincome.govt.nz**

## **Getting ready for primary school**

It is helpful, but not essential, if your child has gained some basic knowledge before they start school – such as the names of colours, the letters of the alphabet, the numbers 1 to 9, and how to hold a picture book and turn the pages carefully. However, their teacher can help with this when your child reaches school.

Their teacher will develop a learning programme once they have worked out what your child can already do. For example, if your child already reads some words, their teacher will take that into account when developing their learning programme.

You may also want to share any of your child's portfolios (assessment of learning) with the teacher.

You can help your child prepare for their first day of school by:

- keeping the whole thing in perspective, so they don't feel anxious
- talking about school positively and as something they will enjoy
- downplaying any unhelpful comments that people make about school
- introducing your child to their new school before they start. Many schools organise visits before your child's first day. If not, take your child to see their classroom and meet their teacher a few times. Try leaving them for a short time so they get used to the idea.

Don't forget to prepare yourself. You may feel unexpected emotions, like relief, grief or nervousness. Make sure you have your own supports in place to help you handle the event.

### **What your child's teacher will need to know**

The teacher will need to know:

- after-school plans and who picks up your child
- if your child has any special health needs, and what to do
- what your child likes to do, what they're good at, and what makes them happy.

## Starting school

With the start of school and other changes in your child's life you may see signs of stress appearing.

You'll be able to tell from their behaviour if your child is stressed. Sometimes they will do things over and over again, or go back to a behaviour they had when they were younger and had grown out of, like wetting the bed at night or not sleeping right through the night. They may seem sad or angry or withdrawn.

Too much stress gets in the way of your child's wellbeing and learning. However, they do need to learn to cope with some stress. This helps them learn to be resilient as they start to have relationships with people in the world outside your family.

## Helping your child to manage stress

Your role is to acknowledge that they are upset and name the feeling. This helps them learn to talk about their feelings as they get older.

- Help them identify their feelings and name them.
- Comfort them the best way you can – sing, hold them and cuddle them, talk to them in a quiet and gentle voice and remind them that they will feel better soon.
- Sometimes there is a stress loop between you and your child, so when one of you is stressed, the other one gets stressed. Try to break this loop. Always try to give your child as much positive attention as you can. And tell them what you want them to do, rather than what you don't want them to do.

For more information on issues for children in care and tips on how you can deal with the challenges, you can see the *Foster Care Handbook* pages 33-39.

## **You can influence your child's learning**

You can help your child by understanding how they learn, how your school works and knowing your teachers.

Taking an interest in what your child is learning at school and finding out ways to support that learning at home will also help.

Listen to them and listen to their behaviour.

Your child's learning is a partnership between you, your family and whānau, the community and the school. The experiences children have out of school are very important. You can help by making what your child learns at school relevant to everyday activities at home and outside school.

It helps to know what your child is learning at school. You may want to ask your child what they learned and liked today. Ask your school to let you know what they are teaching, why they are teaching it and if you can help in any way.

Encourage children or young people to participate in other activities outside of school (eg kapa haka or a sports group), ask what they are doing at school, and reinforce the importance of education. It shows you care about what they are doing and that what they do is important.

Remember that community consultation is a very big part of how schools develop the curriculum and work with it – your child's school should regularly let you know what's happening and ask you what you think. So make sure you contribute your ideas and comments whenever you get a chance.

## Reading, writing and maths

Learning how to write and do maths provides the building blocks for successful learning. If you get these right then your child has more opportunities.

Reading, writing and maths (literacy and numeracy skills) are important skills for all children. Primary (and intermediate) schools focus on these because your child needs to have good reading, writing and maths skills to be able to do well in every area of learning at school and in life.

The school assesses your child's reading, writing and maths skills against national standards. They will report to you twice a year on the progress your child has made and whether your child has gained the skills they need to meet the standards for their particular year.

To find out what literacy and numeracy skills your child will be learning each year, you can go to [parents.education.govt.nz](https://parents.education.govt.nz) key phrase **reading writing and maths**. Each year also has a PDF booklet about how you can support your child's learning.

## Tips for learning at home

Your child's learning isn't just done at school. There are a lot of things you can do to encourage and support their reading, writing and maths at home.

- Give lots of praise.
- Make it fun. Think of creative ways you can encourage your child to write, read or do maths.
- Give them reasons to write – create lists like 'my favourite things' or write a letter to someone they care about.
- Make maths part of everyday life, from counting the socks while folding the washing, to asking them to help work out savings when you buy items on sale.



## Supporting your child's wellbeing

### Help support your child to learn to make new friends

We all need friends. They are fun to hang out with and they look after you when you're down. Friends make school a fun place. Even if your child enjoys spending a lot of time alone, sometimes they'll feel lonely if they don't have friends and will wonder if there's something wrong with them.

Like any skill, social skills and confidence can be learnt.

#### Help your child learn to:

- have the confidence to start conversations or interactions with new friends
- listen to and have an interest in other people
- say nice things and give compliments; laugh and make jokes
- be easy-going – asking is better than demanding
- help other people
- invite others to join in or do things
- be friendly and welcoming
- have a go at new things
- participate in activities outside school like sports, music, swimming or art.

## **Be patient**

The child in your care may have experienced a lot of disruption moving into their new home. Making friends is scary because you risk being rejected, so it may take a little time, but it will get easier the more they try.

Start off small by supporting them to make one or two new friends. Remember, 'a bit today will help them on their way'. Always praise your child for being brave and let them know you're proud of them when they are nice to others.

## **Be active**

Physical activity plays a really important role in helping children reach their potential. By encouraging your child to be active, you help their body to develop and their confidence to grow, and that helps their learning.

Active homes and schools help children choose and enjoy physical activity and contribute to an active community.

Carers, family and whānau play a key role in providing opportunities for physical activity, and reinforcing what the children are learning at school.

Participating in team sports can also help build trust and friendships for your child.

Ask your child what sports they enjoy playing. Talk to your school, friends, family and whānau, or other carers to see what sporting opportunities are available in your school or community.

### **If your child is disruptive**

- Talk to your child about their behaviour and try to work out why it's happening.
- Encourage them to give learning their best shot. Let your child know it's important to respect others by not disturbing them.
- Together work out some ideas if they start to feel like disturbing someone.
- Team up with your child's teacher and work out a plan to manage your child's behaviour at home and at school.

### **If your child is disrupted by others**

Your child is entitled to a classroom environment where they can learn. Most classroom disruptions are caused by a child having a bad day or adjusting to a new place. If it goes on too long, there are several ways you can help your child.

- Ask your child what's happening and together work out some practical ideas so they can focus on their work.
- Talk with the teacher about your concerns.
- Let your child know that you and their teacher are working together to improve things for them for them.



## Support for learning

Children learn in different ways and at different rates. But if your child doesn't seem to be learning in the same way as other children, or is having difficulty with speaking, hearing, seeing, moving about, or with their behaviour, they may need some extra support to learn and develop.

If you're concerned about your child's learning and development, talk with your child's teacher or the learning support co-ordinator, if your school or kura has one. They will support you and work through your concerns with you.

If it is identified that your child has learning needs, there is a range of services and support available at school or kura or through the Ministry of Education's Learning Support team. You, the school or kura and the Learning Support team will make decisions about which specialist services your child needs most and when.

### Extra support for high needs

If your child has high or very high needs and is at school or kura they might get extra support from our Oranga Tamariki Learning Support team through a range of services as agreed upon with your child's teacher or principal.

Most school-aged children with additional learning needs go to their regular school or kura. They may also be able to get help with transport to school, extra equipment and modification of school buildings.

If you think your child's needs would be best met by going to a special school, you and the school will need to complete a formal agreement with the Ministry of Education to do this. This is called a Section 9 Agreement. Talk to the our Oranga Tamariki Learning Support team or social worker if you are considering this – they'll be able to help you to decide, and help you through the process of enrolling in a special school.



## Being safe online

Technology and the internet are fantastic tools that connect us to the world, where we can interact and learn from others, share ideas, be entertained and meet new people in ways we could never have imagined a generation ago.

Because of this, it's important that we raise successful digital citizens who are responsible, knowledgeable and skilled online users. To do this, you may also have to build your knowledge and skills around technology and understand how your child might be interacting with others and what they can access online.

[Netsafe.org.nz](https://www.netsafe.org.nz) is a website that provides information, advice, how to guides and tips about a range of online issues like bullying, scams, safety and security. Here you'll find information to help build both your child's and your own knowledge on how to keep safe online.

### Tips for online

- Build your own digital knowledge so you can understand and help your child navigate the digital world.
- Have an agreement with your child on what expectations you have as a family around online use and safety.
- Talk with your child regularly about their online activity and sites they visit.
- Speak with other caregivers and parents to see how they monitor their child's online activity.
- Importantly – agree that they will come to you if something goes wrong or doesn't feel right.



## Sexuality education

Age-appropriate sexuality education is part of the Health and Physical Education learning area of the New Zealand Curriculum from primary school through to secondary.

You have a very important role to play by answering questions, talking to your child about what's on their mind, and what they are learning, and connecting the learning with your life at home.

Children's confidence and knowledge grow when schools, parents or caregivers, whānau and family work in partnership. If your child comes up against a difficult situation, they will draw on all they have learned at home and at school or kura.

Children and young people learn about themselves and develop knowledge and skills about acting in positive and respectful ways with others.

Sexuality education also has an important role in the wider school by helping to create a safe physical and emotional environment for everybody.

Effective sexuality education takes a positive view of sexual development as a natural part of growing up. It is vital to the overall wellbeing of children and young people.

The kinds of things your child will learn will be appropriate for their age or stage of development. What children learn at each level is guided by the New Zealand Curriculum, but individual schools and communities decide how this will be taught.

At primary school children are likely to learn about:

- friendships
- different kinds of families
- respect for each other and people who are different from them.

In the later years of primary they may also learn about:

- puberty
- body development and image
- human reproduction
- risks and issues that can arise online and when using social media.



# 13 – 18 YEARS

## (Secondary school)

### Checklist

#### Is your teenager enrolled with a family doctor?

From 16 years of age, teens can sign forms to enrol with a family doctor.

- Call Healthline on **0800 611 116** to find out about the doctors and general practices in your region.
- For help with the costs of health care, call **0800 559 009** to see if you are eligible for a Community Services Card.

#### Has your teenager received their free oral health check-up this year?

- You will need to enrol your teen with a private dentist who is contracted to your local district health board.
- If you need help finding a private dentist contracted to the district health board call **0800 TALK TEETH (0800 825 583)** to find out who the providers are in your region.

### **By now, your child should have completed their immunisations with the:**

- Year 7 Immunisation for tetanus, diphtheria and whooping cough
- Year 7 or 8 Immunisation for the human papillomavirus (HPV).

If your child turned 11 years old on or after 1 July 2017 and has not had a chickenpox infection or the chickenpox vaccine (varicella vaccine) then they can also have this vaccine for free from your family doctor.

If your child has missed an immunisation or you're unsure which immunisations your child has had, call your family doctor or nurse. If your child is not up to date with their immunisations, your doctor or nurse can discuss this with you and arrange to catch your child up.

### **Your child will be engaging with secondary school**

- Talk to them about subject choices and career options at this age.
- Detailed information about your child's right to education is included in this section.



## Primary health care

Funding for primary care changes once your child turns 13 years old. The cost of their visit to a family doctor is now subsidised by the government.

### Subsidised family doctor visits

If your child is eligible for publicly funded health services, once your child has turned 13 years old the cost of their visit to a doctor is usually subsidised by the government. This means that the family doctor is likely to charge you a fee every time your child (aged 13+ years) visits the doctor.

### Cost of a family doctor visit

You can get assistance to help with the costs of health care. Call **0800 559 009** to see if you're eligible for a Community Services Card.

Most general practices are privately owned and set their own fees (costs for each visit). The cost of the visit will be lower if you're enrolled with the general practice, because the government subsidises the fee for patients enrolled with a general practice.

If you're not enrolled with a general practice, you may be charged a higher fee, often called a casual rate. This is for patients who aren't enrolled at the general practice they are visiting.

### Enrolling with a family doctor

From 16 years of age, teens can sign forms to enrol with a family doctor. It is good for parents, caregivers and whānau to encourage this as part of the pathway to transitioning into adulthood.

## Help with the costs of health care

- The Community Services Card can help you and your family with the costs of health care. You will pay less for some health services and prescriptions simply by showing your card.
- The Community Services Card is distributed by the Ministry of Social Development. Call **0800 559 009** to see if you're eligible for one.



## Sexual health services

All general practice providers should provide sexual health services for their patients; however, some youth prefer to see a specialist sexual health provider. Access to these services varies by region.

Family Planning is available in many regions (see **familyplanning.org.nz/clinics** for details) and all their clinics have standardised appointment fees for New Zealand residents.

These are:

- no charge for patients under 22 years of age
- \$5 for those older than 22 who have a Community Services Card
- \$27 for all other New Zealand residents.

Extra charges for prescriptions will apply.

The National Sexual Health Society Incorporated (see **nzshs.org/clinics**) also has clinics across New Zealand; the cost of appointments will vary between clinics.

You can get more information on talking with your teenager about safe sex by visiting [health.govt.nz](http://health.govt.nz) keywords **healthy living sexual health**



## Immunisations

Teenagers should have completed all their free childhood immunisations, including tetanus, diphtheria and whooping cough, human papillomavirus (HPV) and two doses of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR). These are all free for everyone aged under 18, regardless of citizenship status; HPV and MMR are also free for young adults.

Delaying immunisation beyond the recommended age leaves young people at risk of disease if they are exposed. HPV immunisation is given as two doses to those aged 9 to 14; those aged 15 or older will need three doses of HPV vaccine to be fully protected.

If you're not sure whether your teen has been fully immunised, call your family doctor or nurse to discuss. Once a teenager is able to understand the risks and benefits of vaccination they are able to consent for themselves.

You can get more information on immunisation by visiting [health.govt.nz/immunisation](https://www.health.govt.nz/immunisation) or [immune.org.nz](https://www.immune.org.nz) or calling 0800 IMMUNE (0800 466 863).



## Oral health

Your teenager should receive free basic oral health care from a private dentist once a year.

Make sure your teenager brushes their teeth with a regular strength fluoride toothpaste twice a day – morning and at night before bed.

When your teenager starts high school (Year 9) you will need to enrol them with a private dentist who is contracted to your local district health board.

If the dentist hasn't contacted you to arrange an appointment for your teenager, call your dentist to make an appointment and to check that your teen is enrolled with them.

If you need help enrolling with a private dentist who is contracted to your local district health board, call **0800 TALK TEETH (0800 825 583)** to find out about the dental providers in your region.



## Learning and development

### School eligibility

Every child between the ages of 4 years and 10 months and 19 years has a right to enrol in a state school if they are a domestic student.

Domestic students include:

- New Zealand citizens
- residents or Australian citizens
- foreign students who hold a Domestic Student Visa.

Domestic students have an entitlement to free state-funded education. Eligibility ends on 1 January after a student's 19th birthday or when a Domestic Student Visa expires. Students funded through the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme are eligible until the end of the year that they turn 21 years of age.

Your child can start school or kura in New Zealand anytime between the ages of 4 years and 10 months and 6 years old.

## Types of schools – secondary schools

There are lots of different kinds of secondary schools and kura in New Zealand, but your choice will depend on where you live and the needs of your child and your family.

As a parent or foster carer, think about your child's culture, language, identity and learning needs and decide what you want to share with the school to help promote this.

Most children in New Zealand go to government-funded state or state-integrated schools, but there are also private schools available in some areas. Within the state school system there are:

- English and te reo Māori options
- schools with different age groups
- Partnership Schools/Kura Hourua
- Te Kura (formerly The Correspondence School)
- regional health schools.

To help you decide what type of school would be the best match for your child, you can go to **parents.education.govt.nz** for more information.

## Find a school

- Choosing a school that is right for you and your child is important. Most children attend the school closest to home but they can enrol at any state school that doesn't have an enrolment scheme.
- If you need help finding a school for your child, go to **education.govt.nz** and look for the **Quick Links** on the right-hand side. There, you will find a link called **Find a school**. This is a school directory that identifies every school in New Zealand.

**The education information below that is included in the 5-12 years (Primary School) section of this handbook is relevant also to this section.**

- Tips on choosing a school, page 75
- School years and levels, page 75
- Enrolment and changing schools, page 77
- School donations and subsidies are on page 79
- Tax rebates, page 80
- Learning support (including Special Education) on page 88
- Being safe online, page 89
- Sexuality education, page 90

### **Years 9 and 10**

It might be useful for you to have a talk with the teacher or dean of the year your young person is going into to discuss what support your young person may need, especially if they have had difficulty learning or staying at school.

During Years 9 and 10, young people start making important decisions about their education, such as choosing subjects and gaining skills and qualifications that will hopefully lead on to a career. Your support for their learning and achievement matters.

Often Years 9 and 10 are about trying out a number of topics so they can experience a broad array of subjects before they pick their NCEA subjects. They may find a subject that they really like that they hadn't considered before.

## **NCEA made easy – years 11-13**

Some of you will already be aware of NCEA (National Certificate of Education Achievement) and know how it works. Some of us may have gone through school knowing about School Certificate, University Entrance and Bursary, and so NCEA may be new.

From Year 11, your young person is likely to be doing NCEA subjects. There is a lot you and your young person need to know about how NCEA works, but understanding what it's all about will help provide them with the best support during their NCEA years.

The websites below will give you all the information you need to help you understand NCEA. Often the young person has some of the best knowledge or understanding about NCEA.

For NCEA Achievement Standards that are internally assessed, ensure that your young person receives and has understood the processes and procedures contained in the school's *Guidelines for Managing Assessment*.

You might want to support your young person by:

- asking the school to update you regularly and let you know promptly if milestones during the assessment period are not being met
- asking the teacher about opportunities for resubmission and reassessment
- checking with the school to see if they run information evenings about NCEA.

New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) and Careers New Zealand have information on NCEA.

To find it, go to **careers.govt.nz** or **nzqa.govt.nz** key phrase **understanding NCEA**.

## **NCEA subsidy**

If you go to [nzqa.govt.nz](https://nzqa.govt.nz) and search **financial assistance**, you'll find advice about how to get help to cover the cost of NCEA subject fees.

## **Get involved with your secondary school**

Having a positive relationship with your young person's teachers and/or the principal supports your young person to navigate what can be a challenging time for them.

Sometimes it takes a while for a young person to figure out what they want to do, and this is ok. You can help them make great decisions at secondary school that will give them career options later on by encouraging them to talk to the careers advisor at the school, or ask other parents/carers how they have supported their young person.

The more support you and the young person have, the quicker any problems or issues that arise can be addressed. It is useful for the teacher to know if there are any issues that are happening at home that maybe affecting their behaviour at school.

Go to [parents.education.govt.nz/secondary-school/getting-involved-in-your-childs-school](https://parents.education.govt.nz/secondary-school/getting-involved-in-your-childs-school)

## Transitioning to a new school

Any information you can share with your new school or kura about your child's health, learning and emotional needs will be helpful so they can plan with you how best to support your child's transition into a new school.

If your child or young person is transitioning from another school they may be anxious or nervous. At enrolment, as the carer of the young person, you can ask the school to involve their pastoral care team (this might be the school guidance counsellor) to help with a transition plan. You, the young person and the school have input into and agree on this plan. It includes who at the school communicates with you, as the carer, on any day-to-day issues that might occur.

Keeping young people engaged in education is critical if we want to support them to successfully transition into employment, training or further education. Your support as someone who advocates for their right to a good education and positive future will help them stay engaged.

For example, if your young person is a new student, ask the school (the teacher or dean of the young person's year) to take a sensitive and proactive approach to ensure successful entry and to allow subjects of interest to be chosen where possible.

ERO also provides information on what to ask a school – go to [ero.govt.nz](https://ero.govt.nz) key phrase **what to ask for**.

## Boarding school allowance

The boarding school allowance is funding from the Ministry of Education so that your child can board away from home, either at a boarding school or in a private boarding arrangement with someone who is not your child's legal guardian.

There are two different types of boarding allowance – access barrier or multiple barriers.

### ***Access barrier***

This is for students in New Zealand who live too far away from an appropriate school and the Ministry's school transport does not provide a solution.

### ***Multiple barriers***

This is where a student experiences more than one of the following difficulties in their life that makes it hard to go to school or do well at school:

- poor participation at school
- poor relationships
- behavioural issues
- low educational achievement
- environment issues.

To find out more, go to **parents.education.govt.nz** key phrase **boarding school allowances**.

### **Other types of support**

The Sorted website offers impartial information about financial matters. You can use its planning tools and calculators to put a realistic budget in place **sorted.org.nz**

If you're working and the child you are caring for is sick or injured, you can use your sick leave to care for them. Check your contract to see your domestic leave entitlement.

## **Bullying**

At some point in your young person's school life the subject of bullying may come up. We know bullying can and does have a profound effect on our children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. Being able to know who to talk to and what to do is important.

You can also ask the school what policies and processes they have for dealing with bullying.

You can get support from **WHATSUP**, a free counselling service just for children and young people – call **0800 942 8787** between 1pm and 11pm, 7 days a week or visit **[whatsup.co.nz/kids](https://whatsup.co.nz/kids)**

For more information on bullying please visit **[parents.education.govt.nz](https://parents.education.govt.nz)** key word **bullying**.

## **Truancy – not attending school**

Going to school or kura regularly is key to young people getting the most out of their education.

Some young people need extra help to keep them engaged and at school. If you think your young person is truant (not going to school), it's important to talk to the school about it straight away. You and the school should work together at the earliest signs of a problem so that the young person can get back to school before their learning is affected and truancy becomes a serious problem.

You can meet with the school wherever you feel most comfortable – it can be at home, or another neutral place, or at school. It also gives you a chance to help your young person with other issues they might be struggling with.

A plan between you and the school can include:

- keeping in regular contact with the teacher
- asking the teacher to keep a close eye on the young person and letting you know if they turn up late to class or aren't in class at all
- the school getting in touch if the young person is away without a note from you
- some ways to address the problem that's keeping the young person away from school
- strategies and steps to take if the young person continues to skip school.

It is important to know that you are required to make sure that your young person goes to school or kura every day unless they're sick, or need to be away with good reason.

### **Stand-down, suspension, exclusion, expulsion**

Removing a child or young person from school or kura should always be the last resort after a range of other interventions have been tried and have failed to improve the situation. If your child or young person is stood down or suspended from a state or state-integrated school or kura you can find out what to do next and where to go to get advice and support here:

**parents.education.govt.nz** key word **standdown**.

Community Law has developed a guide for parents and carers of children and young people about your rights at school – called *Problems at School*. You can also get advice from **communitylaw.org.nz** – key phrase **problems at school**.

YouthLaw Aotearoa also has information on rights at school. To find out more, go to **youthlaw.co.nz** and click on **School** on the left-hand side of the home page.

Student Rights Service: **0800 499 488**

YouthLaw: **0800 884 529**

## Teen parent schools

If your teen is pregnant, they can still be enrolled in their local school. You will need to ask the school how they are able to support the young person if they don't have a teen parent unit on site. If you have any issues enrolling, talk to your social worker.

There are teen parent schools across the country, which support young people to succeed as a student and a young mum.

For more information about teen parent units you can go to **[teenparentschools.org.nz](http://teenparentschools.org.nz)**

## Career and training options for 16+ years

As your teen gets to senior secondary school your attention will turn to what they want to do after school, and what their education, training and career options are.

Education after secondary school isn't limited to universities and institutes of technology or polytechnics. There is a wide range of opportunities that include tertiary study, vocational training, apprenticeships and on the job training.

The **[parents.education.govt.nz](http://parents.education.govt.nz)** website has more information to help you and your young person find the best option for them.

Young people will start to think about the next steps into work, training or tertiary education, if they haven't already started the conversation at school. Transitioning from school into training, work or tertiary education can be a challenge if they have had intermittent, or have attended multiple schools.

Finding something they really enjoy can help them start to identify what they may want to do. Check with the school about work-based placements for your young person.

The links below may help you and your young person make some informed decisions.

### **Youth Guarantee**

The Youth Guarantee initiatives are about improving the transition from school to further study work or training.

[youthguarantee.net.nz/start-your-journey](https://youthguarantee.net.nz/start-your-journey)

### **Youth Service**

The Youth Service aims to get young people into education, training or work-based learning. [youthservice.govt.nz](https://youthservice.govt.nz)

### **Careers New Zealand**

Careers New Zealand helps you and your young person to make informed choices about learning and work (they also have information on NCEA) [careers.govt.nz/plan-your-career](https://careers.govt.nz/plan-your-career)



### **Supporting your young person's mental health and wellbeing**

Wellbeing and learning are linked. Your young person's learning is directly affected by their health, happiness and wellbeing. If a young person is feeling secure and safe this builds a good platform for them to learn.

### **Where young people can get help for their mental health**

Primary mental health services are a critical element of the continuum of care for infants, children, adolescents and their families. All DHBs now fund primary mental health services for adolescents (12 to 19 year olds) regardless of PHO enrolment (ie enrolment with a family doctor).

Primary mental health services can refer to specialist mental health services as required. You can also access primary mental health services through your local family doctor.

Primary mental health encompasses health promotion, prevention, early intervention, and treatment for mental health and/or addiction issues.

Young people may prefer to seek help from a place that guarantees anonymity and privacy and offers a degree of responsiveness. A range of youth-focused tools is available online, via free text and by phone.

Examples of youth focused e-health include SPARX – [sparx.org.nz](http://sparx.org.nz) – an award-winning website that helps young people learn skills to deal with feeling down, depressed or stressed.

**TheLowdown.co.nz** and via free text **5626** – is specifically for young people and offers information and tools for handling life issues, stress, depression and anxiety. A safe forum is available where teens can ask questions.

### **For older teens and adults there's:**

**Depression.org.nz 0800 111 757** and free text **4202** – support to help people recognise and understand depression or anxiety.

These phone services are free and are part of the National Telehealth Service. They are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and are staffed by an expert team of mental health professionals and overseen by a team of clinical psychiatrists.



## Sexuality

Often for young people understanding their sexuality can be confusing but it can also be an affirming time for them.

Ask your school what programmes and support groups they run for young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex (LGBTI+) who are starting to explore and understand their sexuality.

There are some useful websites to help you understand what they may be experiencing or thinking. This includes ways you can support them. Visit **familyplanning.org.nz** and click **Advice**.



## Healthy relationships

Navigating relationships, both friendships and intimate relationships, can be challenging for young people.

Ask the school your young person attends what programmes they are providing for their students on relationships and keeping themselves safe.

You can also get more information by visiting Family Planning at **familyplanning.org.nz** click **Advice**, or visit the Ministry of Health **health.govt.nz** key phrase **talking with your teen**.

VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai is the independent connection and advocacy service for care-experienced children and young people. The name stands for “Voice of the Young and Care Experienced –



### Listen to Me

VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai believes children and young people in care need to be heard and their voices kept at the centre of all the decisions made about them. It provides an independent voice from children and young people to the care system, rather than an adult voice speaking for them.

The VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai service provides a positive community for children and young people in care to be part of (if they wish to be) through fun events and leadership opportunities. Over time it connects the tamariki and rangatahi to advocates and trusted adults to further support them and bring the collective voice to the care system.

We encourage you to discuss VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai with the child or young person in your care, and support them to check out the website at [voyce.org.nz](http://voyce.org.nz). There are some great videos on the site, details for upcoming events, and more information about what the service is all about and how it will be implemented.

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