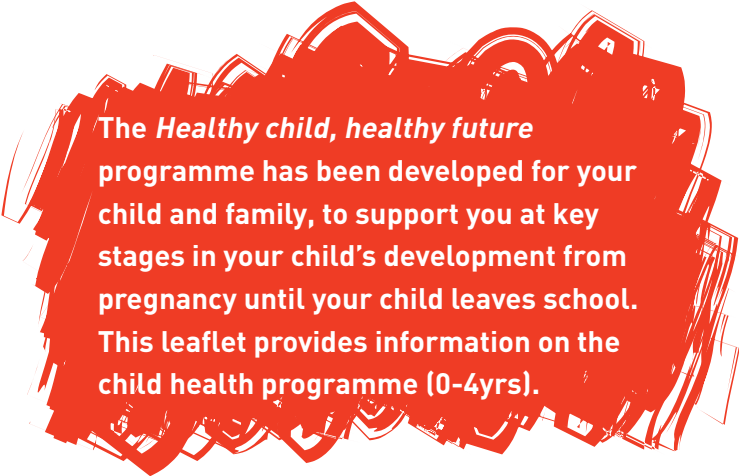


Healthy child, healthy future

Information on the child health
programme (0-4 years)



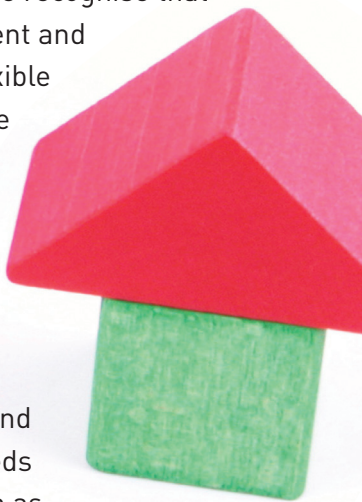


The *Healthy child, healthy future* programme has been developed for your child and family, to support you at key stages in your child's development from pregnancy until your child leaves school. This leaflet provides information on the child health programme (0-4yrs).

The programme will provide you with the information and opportunity to make the best choices for your child and family by giving you the necessary support and signposting you to any services in the health and social care trust, voluntary or community sector that can help you.

This leaflet outlines the first four years of the child health programme for all families, wherever they live in Northern Ireland. Some people may need more support than others. We recognise that individual families are different and that there is a need to be flexible to ensure that all families are able to access and benefit from the advice, support and services that are available to them.

Your family's needs will be assessed at regular stages and support tailored to those needs by health professionals, such as midwives, health visitors, school nurses and their teams and your GP. Please do not hesitate to contact any of these professionals if you feel you need advice or support.



Our aim is to provide you with the help you need at the right time. Contacts will vary depending on your family's needs. You will be visited at home and/or other places (eg health centres) most suited to your needs.

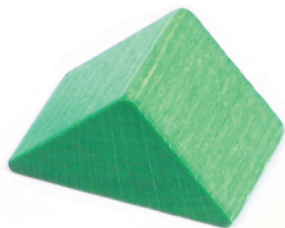


Pregnancy

During pregnancy, your midwife and health visitor will advise you about the most important things you can do to keep you, your family and your baby healthy and well. They will begin to assess any specific needs you may have at this time and in the future, and start to complete your family health assessment.

Soon after birth

You will be given a personal child health record (PCHR – red book) which can be used by yourself and healthcare professionals to record your child's progress.



Please make sure you keep this safe and bring it along to all clinics and at any time you have contact with a health professional.

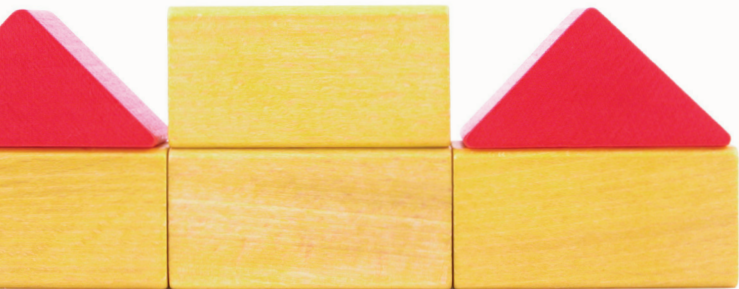
A general physical examination will be carried out on your baby by the doctor or midwife. An audiologist will carry out a newborn hearing screening test.

Days 0-5

Your midwife will visit you and your baby at home and on the fifth day will discuss any relevant issues you have and offer a “heel prick” test for your baby. This test screens for very rare but serious conditions, eg cystic fibrosis.

Days 6-10

The midwife will visit to check you are both well and if so will transfer you to the care of the health visiting service. If necessary, the midwife may continue to visit.



10–14 days

The health visitor will call with you at home to assess and discuss your needs as identified by yourself and respond to any questions you may have about your new baby. You and your partner will be given information on health issues, for example, breastfeeding, establishing routine, sibling rivalry, local groups, pre-school immunisation programme.

6–8 weeks

The health visitor will continue assessing your particular needs and will discuss any issues relevant to you and your family's physical, emotional and mental wellbeing and will signpost you to any services that may be of help.

The pre-school immunisation programme will be discussed, along with any issues you identify which will help you and your family at this early stage in your new baby's life.

8 weeks – at GP clinic

You will be asked to attend your GP clinic where your GP will examine your baby's physical health and start the immunisation programme.

14–16 weeks, 6–9 months, 12 months

A member of the health visiting nursing team will call to ensure that you and the baby are well and to determine what level of help you need. A review of your child's health, growth and development along with your own and your family's health will be carried out by your health visitor.

Information/support will be available for your family on health issues, eg bonding, baby massage, healthy feeding, sleep routine, play, dental health, and home and child safety.



At 2 years – 2½ years

At this stage, your health visitor will visit you at home to review your child's health, growth and development. Your family health assessment will be reviewed. Areas addressed will include your child's hearing, speech, vision, diet, play, emotional health and wellbeing, and pre-school education.



If you need any additional support, you will be signposted to the appropriate service and the health visiting team will continue to offer you support and keep in contact with you.



At 4 years

At this stage the health visitor will review your child's record and will decide in partnership if a phone call, clinic or home contact is required and transfer it to the school health nursing service.

It is important to let your health visitor know as soon as possible which school your child will be attending.

The health visitor can provide information on a range of health issues including pre-school immunisation programme or advise on who can help you best. You are welcome to contact your health visitor at any time in your child's life to access information.

Contact details

Midwife

Local baby clinic

Health visitor

Local breastfeeding group

Sure Start / community groups / voluntary groups /
other useful numbers



Public Health Agency

Ormeau Avenue Unit
18 Ormeau Avenue
Belfast

BT2 8HS

Tel: 028 9031 1611

Textphone/Text Relay: 18001 028 9031 1611

www.publichealth.hscni.net