

Child Health factsheet

Maternal and Infant Health

Key and current messages

- There is clear evidence to indicate the vital importance of pregnancy and the first 2 years of a babies life – what has been termed the first 1001 critical days.
- It shows that keeping well in pregnancy and later, responsive parenting enable healthy infant brain develop, which in turn supports babies to develop strong attachment relationships. This ultimately forms the bedrock for all social and emotional functioning as an adult.

Key Facts

- 80% of brain development occurs before the age of 3
- More than 1 million new connections between neurons per second in the first year of life
- Antenatal education and early postnatal support have been shown to improve attunement, reduce anxiety in mothers and lead to a more positive birth experience.

Key tools and resources

Family Information Service (www.familyinformationleeds.co.uk/) for information about Leeds antenatal education programme: Preparation for Birth and beyond

Breastfeeding

Key and current Messages

Breastfeeding is a protective factor for the health of mothers and babies. It reduces the risks of some illnesses including osteoporosis, breast and ovarian cancer for mothers; asthma, eczema, diabetes and gastroenteritis for baby.

Key facts

Breastfeeding contributes to reductions in infant mortality and increases children's chances of the best start in life and leading a future healthy life.

Key tools and resources

Contact your local Early Start team (Health Visiting and Children's centre services) for more information about what's available in your local area

Child Obesity

Key and current messages

- Child obesity is a major public health concern and one which has grown in importance over the last few decades.
- The lifestyle choices made by individual families are complex and habits are laid down early in life. Overweight children are more likely to become overweight adults and are at a higher risk of associated health problems including cardiovascular disease, strokes, high blood pressure, diet related diabetes and some cancers.

- Children may also experience bullying which can be emotionally distressing and impact on school attainment.

Key Facts

Collecting data can improve our understanding of the causes of child obesity and aid the development of interventions for its prevention and treatment. The National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) is a national initiative designed to gather these valuable data and in Leeds this is collected by the school nursing service.

In reception 22.8% of children are overweight/very overweight and 1% underweight. This shows that child obesity is much more common than being underweight.

Key tools and resources

The HENRY (Health Exercise and Nutrition for the Really Young) programme is central to the cities response to the issue of child obesity and is the main source of support for families with young children. HENRY uses a strengths based solution focussed approach which enables families to identify their goals and develop strategies which will work for them.

For further information contact your local Early Start team or Jackie Moores in the Children and Families Public health team at technorth jackie.moores@ntlworld.com

HENRY is a national programme so further information is available from their website <http://www.henry.org.uk/homepage/>

Oral Health

Key and current message:

Tooth decay causes children pain unnecessarily. Early loss of first teeth means that the adult teeth cannot grow through normally. A child should go to the dentist as soon as the first tooth erupts and regularly from then on.

Key facts:

Tooth decay is nearly entirely preventable in children.

Consuming sweet foods and drinks causes bacteria to grow on the teeth, which causes tooth decay. Supervise your child brushing their teeth for 2 minutes twice a day with fluoridated toothpaste.

Key tools and resources:

- www.leedssmiles.co.uk - The website provides an animated video about how to brush teeth effectively; a game and song to engage young children; lots of advice and tips to support children's oral health.
- www.nhs.uk - NHS choices Search for a dentist near where you live.

Where to go / who to contact?

0845 063 1188 if you are experiencing difficulties finding an NHS dentist taking new patients.

Drugs and Alcohol

Key and current messages

Regularly drinking over the guidelines can lead to serious health problems, from liver damage to a greater risk of getting cancer or having a heart attack. Alcohol also contains calories, so it can help to give you a bit of a spare tyre.



That's no more than a standard 175ml glass of wine (ABV 13%)

That's not much more than a pint of strong lager, beer or cider (ABV 5.2%)

Because young people's bodies are still growing, alcohol can interfere with their development. This makes young people particularly vulnerable to the long-term damage caused by alcohol. It is recommended that young people under the age of 15 should not drink any alcohol at all.

Key facts

In 2013, around two-fifths of pupils (39%) had drunk alcohol at least once. Boys and girls were equally likely to have done so. The proportion of pupils who have had an alcoholic drink increased with age from 6% of 11 year olds to 72% of 15 year olds.

In 2013, 16% of pupils reported that they had ever taken drugs, down from 29% in 2001. 11% had taken them in the last year and 6% in the last month. Pupils were more likely to have taken cannabis in the last year than any other drug.

Key Tools & Resources

There are so many myths about alcohol and other drugs—sometimes it's hard to know what to believe. For the facts please visit:

- www.drinkaware.co.uk
- www.talktofrank.com
- www.forwardleeds.co.uk

Public Health Resource Centre

The Public Health Resource Centre (PHRC) is a specialist knowledge and resource hub, offering support to anyone in Leeds with a responsibility or professional interest in public health or promoting health and wellbeing. The PHRC holds a large selection of books, DVDs, report, games, teaching packs, interactive

and visual models on a wide variety of public health topics, all of which are available to loan free-of-charge. In addition, we have a variety of leaflets and posters which you can order free-of-charge.

To register with the PHRC, or for more information, please visit www.leeds.gov.uk/phrc or visit the PHRC anytime during opening hours. You can also follow the PHRC on Twitter and Facebook.

Public Health Resource Centre, Technorth, 9 Harrogate Road, Chapel Allerton, Leeds, LS7 3NB

Telephone: 0113 37 86200

Email: phrc@leeds.gov.uk

Website: www.leeds.gov.uk/phrc

Twitter: @phrcleeds

Facebook: phrcleeds