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**To interact, follow the QR Code to the**

**Hampshire Healthy Families website**

July 2023

Dear parents and carers of 3 – 3.5-year-olds,

**Are you curious about school readiness for your child?**

When you are thinking about your very young child starting school, it can raise many questions and emotions for you and your family; these thoughts and feelings can cause both worry and excitement about this big milestone. Some questions may be:

* What does school readiness mean?
* Will my child be physically and emotionally ready for school?
* What will I need to do to make sure my child feels prepared?
* What will my child need to support them with starting school?
* How can I find the advice I need?

**How to contact your 0-19 Service**

The 0-19 Service offer a text messaging service for parents called ChatHealth:

* Parents and carers of children under 5 years for advice please text your message to 07520 615720 between the hours of 9am-4pm, Monday - Friday. Your message will be responded to within these hours, so if your message comes in after 4pm, it will be responded to on the next working day.
* Parents/carers of children 5 – 19 please text 07507 332417.

A ChatHealth professional will respond to you within one working day. The support that we offer may include signposting you to other services as necessary.

Text messages sent to the ChatHealth numbers will be charged at your normal call rate; please read the bounceback message carefully as timings will vary.

**Top tips for helping your child be ready for school**

Starting school is an important and exciting time for your child. To help prepare your child to enjoy school and be ready to learn you may find it helpful to look at the top tips and websites below.

Your child’s Early Years setting (eg nursery or child minder) can also be a helpful source of support.

**Information and resources to help you prepare your child for school:**

Hampshire Healthy Families - [hampshirehealthyfamilies.org.uk](http://www.hampshirehealthyfamilies.org.uk); follow the QR code at the top of this letter to take you to the HHF school readiness page.

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**Dental care**

If your child hasn’t yet seen a **dentist**, this is a good time to get them registered and start booking regular check-ups; scan this QR code if you don’t have a family dentist:

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For information about dental care and hygiene, google **Top Tips for Teeth** or scan:

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**Vaccinations**

Has your child had their 2nd MMR vaccination and pre-school booster? Now is the time to check their immunisations are up to date and to ensure your child’s contact details are up to date with your GP; just scan the QR code below.

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**Sleep Routines**

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**Toileting**

Children need varying levels of support to become independent with toileting, and reach these milestones at different ages. If you need support and advice with this, or for further information, visit Hampshire Healthy Families or search for **eric:** [eric.org.uk](http://www.eric.org.uk) . You can also try downloading **‘Poo goes home to Pooland’** app, available from app store. Please remember, children also need to learn about good hand hygiene.

**Dressing Skills**

The more independent your child is with getting dressed and undressed, the easier it will be for them to manage preparing for playtime and PE at school. You can help them by letting them practice at home, and remember young children are likely to need help with fiddly buttons and fastenings.

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**Be active for a healthy lifestyle**

Children should be physically active for three hours over a day, including one hour or more of energetic play such as running and jumping games. Make it fun!

Try to complete some local journeys with children in a physically active way such as walking or skipping. (It’s good for adults too!)

Try to minimise the amount of time your child spends sitting for extended periods, (e.g. watching T.V, playing on tablets).

Allow your child the opportunity to try a variety of healthy foods, sit at a table for meals and encouraging your child to use a knife, fork and spoon. This will give your child the confidence to face the new experiences during a school lunchtime period.

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Offer a variety of healthy family foods including a range of fruit and vegetables in appropriately-sized portions for your child.

**Road Safety**

Rehearsing walking to school will help your child learn important road safety skills and is a good way of keeping the whole family healthy.

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**Free Workshops and Courses**

School Readiness Workshop – During this session you will explore and discover what it means to be school ready. A one-off session to help the whole family prepare and adjust to school life.

School Readiness Course – This four-week course expands on the topics covered in our hour and a half session. Exploring in greater depth the fascinating way in which your unique child develops and how as a family you can support their journey.

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**30 hours Free Childcare and Pupil Premium Funding**

The Government provides various levels of **funding for childcare** depending on your child's age and your circumstances. See if you qualify:

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Your child may also be entitled to receive **Pupil Premium funding**. Check your eligibility here:

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**PiP Parent Information Portal**

SHFT are launching a new parent information portal where you can have access to view your child’s immunisations and other information. If you wish to register for the portal please email pip@southernhealth.nhs.uk

**Other resources and services available to support your family’s wellbeing can be found at:**

Hampshire Healthy Families [hampshirehealthyfamilies.org.uk](http://www.hampshirehealthyfamilies.org.uk)

Child & Adolescent Mental Health [hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/help/young-people](http://www.hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/help/young-people)

Wessex Healthier Together [what0-18.nhs.uk](http://www.what0-18.nhs.uk)

Every Mind Matters [nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters](http://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters)

Hampshire County Council [hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/admissions](http://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/admissions)

Yours faithfully,

*0-19 Children and Family Service*