

2-3 YEARS

Booklet 2

Supporting your family during your toddler's third year



2-3 YEARS

BOOKLET

2



YOUR TODDLER AT 2 - 3 YEARS

Healthy eating and active play are important for your toddler.

This booklet provides information on your toddler's health and tips for parents' health too.

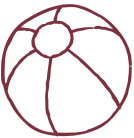
RECOMMENDATIONS

Nutrition



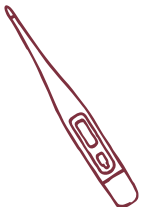
- Keep breastfeeding at 2 years of age and over if you and your child are happy to keep going
- It is best for your toddler to drink from a free-flow cup or an open cup and to stop all bottle feeds
- Drinks can include:
 - water
 - reduced fat cow's milk
 - soy or calcium enriched rice and oat milk can be used, but it is important to plan this with a health professional
- Toddlers need lots of different healthy foods every day. This includes aiming for 2.5 serves of vegetables and 1 serve of fruit

Active play



- **Lots of exercise and play:** Make sure your toddler spends at least 3 hours doing lots of different activities, every day
- **Staying active:** It's good for children to be active! Try to make sure they aren't still for longer than one hour at a time, unless they're sleeping
- **Screen time:** At 2 years, children should be limited to less than 1 hour of screen time in a day with an adult watching or playing with them on an educational program or an app. Spending less time on the screen is better
- **Sleep:** 11 - 14 hours of good quality sleep every day. This can include night sleeps and naps

Immunisation



- If your child has not yet had their 2 year Personal Health Record (Blue Book) check make an appointment with your Child and Family Health Nurse (CFHN) or GP soon
- Your child's next immunisation is at 4 years
Check www.nsw.health.gov.au/immunisations for more details
- Other immunisations are available, please discuss with your GP

YOUR TODDLER'S NUTRITION



From 2 - 3 years your child will continue to go through developmental changes, physically and emotionally. They will start choosing foods to eat and use words to express their thoughts and how they feel. They will let you know when they are hungry and stop eating when they are full. It is important they see you making healthy eating choices.

Family mealtimes

Family mealtimes are a great time to connect and talk with each other. Toddlers are learning good eating habits and are more likely to try new foods that the family is eating and sharing. They also learn and become more aware of taking turns in talking and listening: which are important social skills they need for life.

Tips for family eating

- Choose 1 meal at a good time so you can eat together each day. For example, spend 30 minutes enjoying eating dinner together
- Invite friends or family over for dinner, especially if they have children that are a similar age. Children that eat together may copy each other and learn how to eat well, and are also likely to try new foods
- Talk to your child about getting ready to make dinner and ask them to help you in the kitchen, or to set up the eating area
- If your child doesn't want to eat, don't stress about it. When they are hungry they will let you know. It is important not to bribe or punish them for not eating certain foods
- When sitting together during mealtimes either on the table or on the floor, encourage your child to sit with you instead of walking around. This will teach them to:
 - learn the difference between mealtime and play time
 - taste and try the food that the family eats
 - practise feeding themselves with a spoon, fork or fingers
 - listen to their body and tell you when they are full. If they sit with you, you will get to see and learn about their hunger and fullness signs
 - learn how the family has conversations





Making healthier choices: managing 'sometimes foods'

'Sometimes' foods, sometimes called 'junk foods' include takeaway foods, cakes, biscuits, lollies, soft drinks, fruit juice or anything that is high in fat, sugar and/or salt and is low in minerals and vitamins. Our bodies don't need these foods for good health.

As toddlers become more aware of what is around them, they may see these foods on TV advertisements, at birthday parties or celebrations, when they are out with you at the shops, or even see their family members eat them.

It is important to help children have a healthy relationship with food. This includes not labeling foods as 'good' or 'bad'. However, we can also help children understand that 'sometimes' foods are not part of an everyday diet. It is best that toddlers learn to enjoy healthy meals, snacks and drinks throughout the day.

Tips to help create a balance with 'sometimes' foods for you and your toddler

- Instead of buying these foods to have available at home, choose to only have them on special occasions
- Have healthy snacks cut up and ready to go in a cup in the fridge (e.g. vegetable sticks, cut up fruit, cheese cubes and crackers, boiled egg)
- Instead of using 'sometimes' foods to reward good behaviour, use other rewards such as encouraging words or a hug or play time in the park
- Eat a healthy meal before going shopping or take healthy snacks with you. You will have less of a temptation to buy takeaway food
- When going to a birthday party or celebration, eat a healthy meal before going so your toddler won't feel starving by the time you get to the party. You can ask them to choose only 3 'sometimes' foods they want to eat and enjoy having a small amount from each
- If you choose to eat takeaway, try choosing the healthier options such as salads, brown rice, grilled, steamed or stir fried lean meat, chicken, seafood, or vegetables and eat less fried food
- Soft drinks and juices are also 'sometimes' foods and include a lot of sugar. Having too much of these drinks can lead to many health conditions including oral disease: choose water instead
- Teach them to stop eating when they are full








Stopping all bottles and looking after your child's teeth

It is really important that your toddler is not given any milk in a bottle. This reduces the chance of tooth decay and ear infections. If they do not drink milk from a bottle they will be more hungry for healthy family foods.

If you need more help to stop your toddler having the bottle see your CFHN or call Tresillian PH: 1300 272 736 or Karitane PH: 1300 CARING helpline.

3 easy steps to keep your child's teeth and gums healthy

	Put your toddler to bed without a bottle Stop offering any bottles at this age
	Offer water or reduced fat cow's milk from a cup Formula milk, flavoured milk, fruit juice, soft drinks or other sweetened drinks are not recommended as they can cause tooth decay
	Help your child brush their teeth morning and night From 18 months, start using low fluoride toothpaste

YOUR TODDLER'S PLAY

Fundamental Movement Skills

Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) are the building blocks to help children learn skills they need to play different games, sports and activities during preschool and as they grow in primary and high school. Fundamental Movement Skills will help your toddler:

- improve their balance, coordination and strength
- develop and maintain flexibility
- develop their motor skills, using their muscles to move their body, arms, legs or feet to walk, crawl, run or jump
- improve their confidence, self-esteem in themselves and teach them to communicate and speak
- improve their concentration and thinking skills

Types of Fundamental Movement Skills

There are 3 types of Fundamental Movement Skills:

- Stability skill: moving while the body stays in place (e.g. stretching, bending, twisting, balancing)
- Locomotor skill: moving the body from one place to another (e.g. jumping, running, leaping, hopping)
- Manipulative skill: learning to control an object that comes to you (e.g. catching) or to push away from you (e.g. throwing or kicking a ball)



Teaching your toddler Fundamental Movement Skills

1. Start with teaching one movement at a time until your toddler does it well and feels confident
2. When you are teaching your toddler, do the movements with them to show them how to move, step by step
3. Practise doing these movements with them every day! The more they practise the better they will become at doing the movement
4. It is all about having fun with your toddler. Find different ways to practise the movement to make it fun for them (e.g. playing with the family, put on some music, dancing)




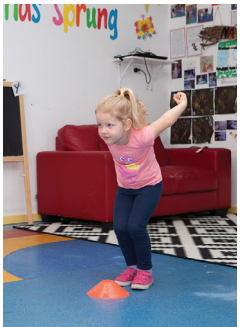





By around 2 years of age, toddlers will feel confident with walking and are ready to learn new skills and grow physically and socially. Indoor and outdoor activities, every day, can help them develop different Fundamental Movement Skills.

Indoor activities: helping you clean the house, singing and dancing, drawing or colouring, painting with non-toxic paint or crayons on paper, catching a balloon

Outdoor activities: gardening, walking or riding a toddler bike at the park, pushing a pram, kicking and throwing a ball, drawing outside on the concrete with chalk





Action	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Stability skill Sliding along a line	 <p>Stand with both feet together on a line</p>	 <p>Slide one leg along the line</p>	 <p>Bring legs together, then slide and repeat</p>
Locomotor skill Jumping	 <p>Swing your arms back and bend your knees</p>	 <p>Reach for the stars</p>	 <p>Bend knees to land</p>
Manipulative skill Kicking a ball	 <p>Look at the ball</p>	 <p>Keeping your eyes on the ball, step up next to the ball</p>	 <p>Step forward with one foot and kick using the side of the foot</p>



SLEEP

Bedtime routine

Bedtime routines are healthy for you and your toddler. Having a routine can help you both get the right amount of sleep and to have energy to do your day-to-day activities.

Tips to help with a bedtime routine

- Introduce 'quiet time' before bed to help your toddler relax
- Pack away all toys to prepare the bedroom as a place of rest
- Give them a bath, brush their teeth, read a bedtime story, cuddle them goodnight before they sleep in their bed



Moving your toddler from a cot to a bed

Moving your toddler from sleeping in a cot to a bed can be an exciting time for them. This is safest to do from the age of 2, but there is no set age on when you need to move them.

It might take some time for them to get used to the move, so you can try doing a number of things to help. Encourage them to get into bed themselves and let them pull up their blankets and fix their pillow. Having a small soft toy might help comfort them. Cuddle them and tell them it is time to go to sleep.

Some toddlers will climb out of their bed and come to you. If this happens take them back to bed straight away. Let them get in and pull up the covers and say to them in a calm voice "it is time to go to bed, see you in the morning". You may have to do this several times before they settle and stay in bed. Praise them if they do stay in their "big bed".

Night terrors and nightmares

It is very common for toddlers to experience sleep issues such as night terrors and nightmares.

Nightmares: When toddlers have bad dreams. This can happen at any time during their sleep. These dreams can be about real things they experience in life, like, fear of a dog or spiders or about things they imagine like monsters. It is important to go and cuddle them and tell them they are safe and that it was a bad dream. Let them know that it is ok to feel scared. Try not to tell them the fear is silly - for them it is very real and scary.

Night terrors: When toddlers suddenly feel restless while they are in a deep sleep. They might cry, scream, open their eyes or get out of bed and run around. Children don't know or remember this happening when they wake up in the morning. Try to stay calm and avoid waking or touching your child unless they are going to hurt themselves.

If you are still concerned you may want to talk to your CFHN or GP.



LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

Why it is important to be a good role model

Toddlers are learning about everything around them and at this age they will start to copy the behaviour they see from their parents or carers. It is not possible to be the perfect role model, but teaching our children how to look after their health from this age is the most valuable thing we can do for them. Your child will notice what you do, such as eating unhealthy foods, and they may want to eat them too. Time spent on your phone, or the other screens, is also something they will want to copy.

Behaviours that we need to be aware of which can influence children include:

- **What we eat and drink**
 - choose to eat a variety of healthy food every day like vegetables and fruit, wholegrains, lean meat, fish and dairy
 - limit how often the family eat 'sometimes' foods, foods high in fat, sugar and salt, like takeaway food, cake, chips, chocolate or biscuits which are not needed for our health
 - drink water instead of soft drink or fruit juice
- **The amount of physical activity we do**
 - it is easy to spend a lot of time on our phones or watching TV, especially during meal times. Limit screen use by setting yourself specific times to spend on your screen at home (e.g. TV, DVDs, computers, iPads, iPhones)
 - develop a healthy routine by finding different activities that your toddler and the family can spend time doing
 - **Physical activity:** develop an exercise routine with the family even if it is only a 10 - 15 minute walk every day
 - **Team sport:** many places offer team sports for children as young as toddlers and for adults at any age like swimming, tennis, soccer or gymnastics. It is beneficial for both and a good way to have scheduled physical activity in your week. It can also give you motivation and confidence to keep fit and to meet new people



- **Quiet time:** it is good for children and adults to feel bored sometimes. For children, this encourages them to use their imagination and give them the opportunity to learn and have fun with play materials around them like soft balls, buckets or cardboard boxes. For adults, it gives them time to relax, reflect, communicate and spend time with their children
- **Sleep time:** good quality sleep is important for everyone's health. It can affect our energy, mood and overall health. A healthy sleep routine for you and your family can include sticking to the same bedtime and wake up time. Doing things that will help your mind and body relax like having a warm shower, reading a book in bed and switching off all screens at least 30 minutes before you sleep

This is a good time to reflect on your own eating and physical activity habits and make positive changes if it is needed.

If you or a family member would like support with making healthy changes you can contact Get Healthy NSW for telephone coaching support.



www.gethealthynsw.com.au 1300 806 258

WHAT TO CONSIDER FOR YOUR TODDLER'S HEALTH



Keep me healthy, give me fruit and vegetables every day



Water in a cup is best for me and my teeth



Keep me active, I don't need screen time for play



I'm a toddler now, not a baby, I can sleep at night without any milk



Reward me with cuddles and praise, food rewards are unhelpful for me



NEXT BOOKLET
2-3 YEARS

BOOKLET
3

CONTACT



Healthy Beginnings
SLHD-HealthyBeginnings@health.nsw.gov.au
www.healthybeginnings.net.au
02 9515 9055



Health Direct Australia
www.healthdirect.org.au
1800 022 222

Acknowledgements The Healthy Beginnings program was funded by the NSW Health Translational Research Grant Scheme 2016 (ID number: TRGS 200) and NHMRC Partnership Project 2019 (#APP1169823). We sincerely thank participating partners of the project from the Sydney, South Eastern Sydney, South Western Sydney and Southern NSW Local Health Districts, and members of the advisory committee and project management team. This resource has been prepared with the guidance of health professionals. The information for this resource was obtained from NSW Health sources, National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Breastfeeding Association and Raising Children Network. The information in this resource is for general guidance only and should not be a substitute for professional advice.

