



# The National Healthy Childhood Programme

*Making every contact count*

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# What do we need to be healthy?



# Early Years Last a Lifetime



## Early Childhood Trajectory

# What we know about children in Ireland

- ❖ 25% of population are children-approx 68,000 births per year
- ❖ The child population of Ireland increased by 13.4% between 2002 and 2011
- ❖ Family profile in Ireland has changed
  - Between 2006 and 2011 there was a 12% increase in the number of families
  - Family size has declined to an average of 1.4 children
  - Almost 20% of private households are lone parent households-the vast majority of lone parents were mothers (87%) and almost 58% were one-child households.
  - 23% of births were to mothers born outside Ireland, compared to 15% in 2004

# Universal Child Health Programmes

- ❖ The delivery of child health programmes varies from country to country both in term of content and provider.
- ❖ The key components of child health programmes internationally are:
  1. Screening
  2. Child Health Reviews/surveillance
  3. Immunisations

# National Healthy Childhood Programme

- ❖ The provision of the Irish universal child health services is enshrined in various laws passed between 1907 and 2004 , supported by policies and underpinned by strategies
- ❖ Service is free to all children
- ❖ In Ireland our model is currently based on Best Health for Children/Best Health for Children Revisited 2005
- ❖ 2014-2016 BHFC reviewed and updated, framework in draft



# National Healthy Childhood Programme

	Maternity & Infant Scheme		Free GP Care for under-6s		HSE Child Health, Immunisation Screening & Surveillance - Public Health Nurses(PHNS), Community Medical Doctors(CMDs), Dental
	Hospital	GP	Immunisations	GP Under 6s contract	
Antenatal	6	6			
0 to 2 years	1 ♣ ♠ ♦	2 (mother & baby)	5		4 (♠)
2 to 5 years				1	3 contacts 1 CHSS preschool 1 school screening 1 school immunisation*
5 to 14 years				1	2 Dental** 1 immunisation (+ 2 HPV for girls)
Total	7	8	5	2	13*

- ♣ Neonatal Examination & Hearing Screening
- ♠ Bloodspot Screening can be done in hospital or by PHN
- ♦ BCG

\*GPs in Donegal/Sligo/Leitrim give these imm.  
\*\*Dental at 2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> class but provision varies between CHOs

# Key Components of our National Healthy Childhood Programme

1. Health Promotion
2. Infant and Maternal Mental Health Assessment and Promotion
3. Screening
4. Surveillance of Physical health
5. Developmental Surveillance
6. Growth Monitoring
7. Immunisations
8. Needs Assessment
9. Dental



# National Healthy Childhood Programme

## Key Issues

### Key issues emerging

1. Acknowledgement that the wider determinants of health play a significant part in child and adult health
2. The benefits of a Child Health Programme based on a model of *progressive universalism* – help for all and more for those who need it
3. The impact of the antenatal period on the development of the foetus
4. The importance of maternal mental health on infant mental health and development
5. The pivotal role of the parents in child development
6. Early identification of issues can improve the outcome for the child.

# HSE Implementation Context

## ❖ Key Enablers:

- The Nurture Programme-Infant Health and Wellbeing
- Healthy Childhood Policy Priority Programme as outlined in *Healthy Ireland*



THE NURTURE PROGRAMME  
Infant Health and Wellbeing



# The Nurture Programme – Infant Health & Wellbeing

- ❖ Three year integrated programme of work (2016-2018) to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for infants and their families.
- ❖ Primarily within the HSE's Health and Wellbeing and Primary Care Divisions.
- ❖ Aims to support the strategic reform of universal health and wellbeing services for infants and their families.
- ❖ Implemented through a grant from Atlantic Philanthropies to the Katharine Howard Foundation (KHF).
- ❖ Delivered by the HSE with support from the Centre for Effective Services (CES).
- ❖ Atlantic Philanthropies is committed to providing €6.5m to the HSE towards the delivery of an agreed Implementation Plan.
- ❖ The HSE has committed to contributing leveraged budget, resources in kind and elements of matched funding to the delivery of the Programme.

Making Every Contact Count  
0-3 years

	24 - 36 m	GP	
	21 - 24 m	PHN	CMD
	13 m	GP	
	12 m	GP	
	9 - 11 m	PHN	CMD
	6 m	GP	
	4 m	GP	
	3 m	PHN	CMD
	2 m	GP	
	6 w	GP	
	2 w	GP	
	<1 w	PHN	
	Birth	H <sup>+</sup>	
	Antenatal	H*6	GP*6



25 contacts

HSE Child Health, Immunisation (5), Screening and Surveillance Service (4)

Free GP Care for under 6s (incl 1 periodic assessment/growth monitoring)

GP (2 – Maternity & Infant Scheme)

Birth (1)

Maternity and Infant Scheme – 6 hospital (*antenatal*) and 6 GP

PHN= Public Health Nurse;

CMD = Community Medical Doctor

# The Nurture Programme – Infant Health & Wellbeing

- ❖ The Programme has six key components;
  - Knowledge and Communications
  - Antenatal to postnatal
  - Health & Wellbeing Promotion and Improvement
  - Infant Mental Health and Supporting Parents
  - Standardised Health Records for Parents and Professionals
  - Training and Resources
- ❖ Currently developing a detailed implementation plan, with key deliverables, building on existing good practice.

# Interventions

## ❖ Based on the premise that:

- Parent – child relationship cannot happen in isolation- parenting requires support:
  - parents may be isolated - family units are smaller; removed from extended families with little support network.
- We empower parents as the primary educators during the critical early years of a child's development
- Health and wellbeing of parents influences health and wellbeing of child
- Other inter-related contexts (family relationships, community, environments) influence and impact on the child's life
- Interventions will be universal (but the need for targeted interventions will be identified)
- Staff delivering service need appropriate training, support and resources



# Practical things we will see over the next 2 -3 years

- Development of a new parenting and child health website
- Provision of information and advice to people planning a pregnancy
- Development of a new Healthy Pregnancy book and online content, adding to the existing Caring for your Baby and Child books and website
- Development of standards for antenatal classes and resources to support delivery
- Provision of universal access to the Child Safety Awareness Programme to guard against accidental deaths and unintentional injuries to babies and infants
- Training for practitioners to identify when a parent needs additional support, advice or information and access to effective referral pathways to specialist services when needed
- Promotion of Infant Mental Health, covering topics like bonding with baby, parent-child communications and supporting baby's early learning and development
- Provide additional supports to mothers to breastfeed whenever possible



# Impact of the Nurture Programme

- ❖ Enable the transformation of the child health service – this is a quality improvement programme
- ❖ Improved child health and wellbeing outcomes
- ❖ Maximise our communications and interactions with parents
- ❖ Every parent will be confident that they are receiving an evidence-based service
- ❖ Harness the passion of the clinical teams
  - Many clinical leaders have shown that they are ready for the challenge through their participation on the implementation teams
- ❖ Improve staff morale through engagement, training and support
- ❖ Embed and sustain the changes using an implementation science approach





*“The foundations for virtually every aspect of human development – physical, intellectual and emotional – are laid in early childhood.*”

*What happens during these early years (starting in the womb) has lifelong effects on many aspects of health and well-being – from obesity, heart disease and mental health to educational achievement and economic status.”*

Michael Marmot



*We can change our children's future*

## Further information

Caring for your Baby books

[www.hse.ie/caringforyourbaby](http://www.hse.ie/caringforyourbaby)

Child Safety Awareness Programme:

[www.hse.ie/childsafety](http://www.hse.ie/childsafety)



The Nurture Programme – Infant Health and Wellbeing

[www.hse.ie/nurtureprogramme](http://www.hse.ie/nurtureprogramme)

GP under-6 card - GP U6 card

<http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/1/schemes/mc/gpvc/under6.html>

Maternity and Infant scheme

<http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/3/maternity/combinedcare.html>

Breastfeeding

[www.breastfeeding.ie](http://www.breastfeeding.ie)



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