

# HEALTH

There are many health services which you and your child may need. In this section we describe the various professionals who can help, depending on the age of your child, and the way in which you can access their services.

If you have any concerns about your child's health or development, you can either contact your own GP, your health visitor (if your child is under 5), or your school nurse.

## WHO CAN HELP:

### **General Practitioners (GPs)**

Your family GP practice is staffed by qualified doctors and other health professionals. You can ask that your child sees a doctor who has had paediatric training to specialise in helping children.

### **Health visitors**

The health visiting service is a workforce of specialist community public health nurses who provide expert advice, support and interventions for families expecting a new baby or those with children under 5 years old.

The health visiting service provides advice and support on a range of topics such as those listed below:

- growth, physical and emotional development and learning through play
- breastfeeding, introducing solid foods and healthy eating
- immunisations
- common infections, skin problems and minor illnesses in children
- challenges such as teething, temper tantrums, sleeping, eating and toilet training
- post-natal depression, bereavement and violence in the family
- reducing accidents in the home.

The health visiting service provide support in a number of places including in the home, in health visiting clinics, via programmes run

from children centres and through local phone lines.

The service is responsible for making sure that all children under 5 are offered a health review at specific times. The service has qualified staff who have skills in detecting those children who will require extra help from health services and other agencies.

In families where there is a child with special educational needs and disabilities, the health visitor will provide support in partnership with parents/ carers and in conjunction with other agencies.

You can contact the service direct or you can be referred by a GP or healthcare professional. Contact details of your local health visiting team are provided in your red book and are available at [www.kentcht.nhs.uk/service/kent-baby/health-visiting-service/](http://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/service/kent-baby/health-visiting-service/)

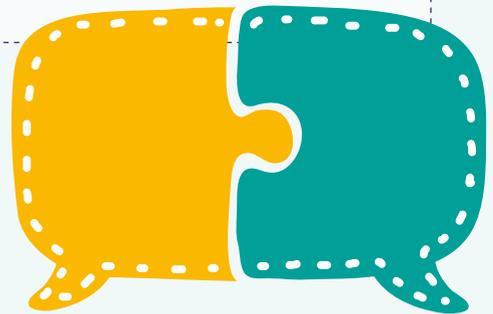
## GETTING HELP WITH YOUR PRE-SCHOOL CHILD

Often, developmental issues only become apparent once a child is in a more social setting, such as a playgroup, pre-school or nursery, at which point the leader may raise concerns with you.

You can discuss your concerns with your own GP, health visitor or pre-school/playgroup workers.

The NHS Health Visiting Service will have offered you regular health and development reviews from birth. They will contact you to arrange a final check of your baby's development when they are between 24 and 30 months old. This review will cover general development, including movement, speech, social skills and behaviour, and hearing and vision.

Your health visitor will discuss any concerns you may have and suggest any actions you can take or further help you can get. You can share any concerns raised by your health visitor at this health review with your child's lead at their pre-school/playgroup, to help inform their progress review of your child.



## School Nurse

The school public health service is a workforce of specialist community public health nurses who provide expert advice, support and interventions for families with a child of school age (5-19). You do not have to be in school to use this service if, for instance, your child is home schooled.

School nurses offer support for schools to develop a whole-school approach to improve the health of all children at school.

School nurses are available for individual health advice and support on a wide range of health needs including: daytime and night wetting and soiling, behaviour management, healthy eating and lifestyle, emotional health and wellbeing, puberty and growing up, stopping smoking, drug and alcohol misuse, sleep and complex health needs.

School nurses support parents and children to complete an online health assessment at key transition points. This makes sure that children receive any support they need as soon as possible.

At primary school, school nurses weigh and measure children in the Reception Year and Year 6 and undertake hearing and vision screening in Reception Year.

If you have any concerns about your child's health, development or well-being you should discuss these with your school nurse.

At secondary school the adolescent health and emotional wellbeing school health service offers health assessments, as well as a range of support for both physical and mental health, plus referral to specialist services when needed.

Each school has a named school nurse who can be contacted through the school.

More information can be found from visiting: [www.kentcht.nhs.uk/service/school-health/](http://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/service/school-health/)

## ACCESSING HEALTH SERVICES AND INFORMATION

Information about local services available including occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, physiotherapy and specialist nursing care can be found on the Local Offer [www.kent.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.kent.gov.uk/localoffer)

More information about the diagnosis of ADHD can be found here: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd/diagnosis/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd/diagnosis/)

### The Pod:

■ [www.kentcht.nhs.uk/childrens-therapies-the-pod/](http://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/childrens-therapies-the-pod/)

An online resource for children's therapies (physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and care coordination).

Find out more about how you can support your child's learning and development, watch online films and resources to show you how to help your child to grow and learn. You can also make a referral to children's therapy services on the pod.

### Moodspark

■ [www.moodspark.org.uk/](http://www.moodspark.org.uk/)

A place where young people aged 10-16 can learn how to look after their emotional and mental health and find ways to help them bounce back when life gets tough. Provided by HeadStart Kent.

## The Kent Resilience Hub

- [www.kentresiliencehub.org.uk](http://www.kentresiliencehub.org.uk)

A resource that helps young people, parents and carers and professionals to understand emotional growth and resilience. Sometimes it can be hard to know how best to support a child or young person in difficult times. HeadStart Kent have made this one place to go to increase your understanding and awareness, find approaches and tools or navigate your way to appropriate support and services. They have tried to find the best and most reliable information, articles, tools and resources relating to resilience and emotional wellbeing but would welcome suggestions and comments for other things that have helped you.

## Children and Young People's Mental Health Service

- [www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-kent-children-young-peoples-mental-health/](http://www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-kent-children-young-peoples-mental-health/)

For a consultation or to make a referral call the single point of access on: **0300 123 4496**.

The Children and Young People's Mental Health Service (CYPMHS) provides emotional wellbeing and mental health advice and support for young people and their families across Kent.

This service is available to children and young people up to the age of 18 and up until the age of 25 for young people with special educational needs or as part of a wider network of support for children and young people in the care of the local authority.

CYPMHS offers advice and support for stress, low mood and depression, anxiety, self-harm or difficult to manage behaviours and assessment for neurodevelopmental difficulties such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

## OTHER SPECIALISTS AND SERVICES THAT YOUR CHILD MAY NEED

### **Children's continence products service**

This is a team of nurses and support workers who support children and young people assessed as needing support with continence products to help with bed and day wetting or soiling.

■ 01227 594633

### **Dental care clinics**

Dental care can be provided for children with special needs at clinics. If you have a dentist who cannot treat your child, the dentist can refer you to the Community Dental Service. If you do not have a dentist, your GP, the school nurse or other healthcare worker can refer.

■ 0330 123 9438

### **Dietitian**

Advice and support on food and nutritional issues may be obtained from a dietitian. When working with children with complex eating and nutritional problems, a paediatric community dietitian may work with a team of people such as doctors, psychiatrists, speech and language therapists and occupational therapists.

Anyone involved in the case of your child can refer you to the dietitian, like your GP, health visitor, specialist nurse adviser or paediatrician.

## Audiology and Vision

If you have any concerns about your child's hearing or sight contact your GP or the paediatrician involved in their care. They may refer your child for further hearing and vision testing.

## INFORMATION

### Life Saver Pods

■ [www.lifesaverpod.com](http://www.lifesaverpod.com)

A tough, waterproof yet small enough to fit on a key

ring pod which contains 10 emergency contact numbers, all your allergy alerts and illnesses and any other emergency or health details you want to put on.

### Medicalert

■ [www.medicalert.org.uk](http://www.medicalert.org.uk)

Supports people with medical conditions and allergies, keeping them safe in emergency situations, by providing the full medical ID service and custom-made medical ID jewellery.

## QUERIES, CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

Everyone who provides an NHS service in England must have their own complaints procedure. You can often find information in waiting rooms, at reception, on the

service provider's website, or by asking a member of staff. For more information visit: [www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/about-the-nhs/how-to-complain-to-the-nhs/](http://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/about-the-nhs/how-to-complain-to-the-nhs/)

