





Health in your Family









Introduction

This booklet is designed to help you to support your family with understanding health literacy and family learning. It will also give you some ideas of how to enjoy learning about health together with your children at whatever age they are. All the activities are intergenerational.

The topics have been chosen because they are key to enjoying family learning. We hope that the health literacy activities we suggest will stir your imagination so that you and your children come up with many more activities of your own.



Have fun and enjoy health literacy with your family.





Health literacy

What is health literacy?



We are all thinking about health at the moment. Most of us have learnt a lot of new words because of the pandemic, words like pandemic, co- morbidities, asymptomatic, transmission, herd immunity etc. Understanding language used to talk about health is what health literacy is all about.

Why is health literacy important?

This is an example of what health literacy is and why it is important. Imagine you have had a Covid 19 test and have just received the results.

Step 1: You need to be able to read the words (this is not always easy as many of them are ancient Greek or Latin words).

Step 2: Understand what you are being told. The message says you have tested positive for COVID-19. Does that mean you have COVID or don't have COVID? 'Positive' means you have the COVID-19 disease.

Step 3: Understand what to do next. What are the rules you have to follow? e.g. not leaving your house, keeping away from other people.

Step 4: But it is not just about following rules. Decisions need to be made for example if you live with several generations of people do grandparents stop telling bedtime stories to their grandchildren? Do you stop eating meals together? Which shops to you feel you can safely visit? Do you wear a mask whenever you leave your home?

Reading the information, **understanding** what you are told, **following instructions** and **making choices** are what health literacy is about and why it is so important.

Tips to encourage health literacy at home

- Home and the family are the best place to practice health literacy
- Make use of daily opportunities to focus on health literacy e.g. meal times can be an opportunity to talk about the importance of eating a variety of foods, or which kind of food is healthier.
- Make sure your child understands the reason why they have to do certain things e.g. why it is important to take regular breaks from the screen.
- Make health literacy fun e.g. when you are going shopping play spot the health messages such as no smoking signs, ...



Health literacy

Games and activities

0-5 years

Rainbow: Look at a plate of food together and identify the colours. Is it a healthy rainbow plate? Talk about how there should be a lot of different colours for every meal.

Read books and tell stories that talk about health and looking after ourselves.

Name emotions: Make different face expressions to your child and ask them to name them for example happy, sad, funny. Ask them to have a turn too and for you to guess.



Make a **healthy food collage** together by cutting out pictures from magazines and food packaging. Talk about what makes the foods healthy.

6-11 years

Make a map: Ask your child to hide some fruit in the house and draw a map to help you find it. When it is found eat the treasure.

Guess the sugars: Look at different sweet drinks together in a supermarket and guess how many teaspoons of sugar they have. Look at the labels to find the answer or research on the internet.

12-15 years

Make fun posters for around the house for example *screen-free* zone for the dinner table area or *sugar-free cupboard* and *snack* cupboard or my thinking space for bedroom door etc

Health wordsearch: Complete the wordsearch on page 21 & 22. Talk about what the words mean or share interesting facts.

Together draw a simple outline of a human body and identify where the following organs are: heart, lungs, stomach, pancreas, liver, kidneys. Try and guess what each one does. Check your answers on the internet. Find out what their functions are.



Family Learning

What is family learning?



Family is where learning starts. As soon as we are born we begin to learn from all the people that surround us (usually our family). As babies we learn that when we cry, we get food and attention, we learn to smile because then people are happy and give us more attention.

Think back to your own childhood and remember something someone in your family taught you. It might be a recipe, for example your grandmother's best chicken recipe, a bit of advice, for example don't stop wearing warm underwear until the end of April, or you might have been taught to recite the names of your ancestors generations back. All of those are examples of family learning.

Why is learning in the family important?

- Children spend more time at home than anywhere else
- The family and home are full of opportunities for learning,
- Learning in the family can be less formal and more relaxed than school learning



Tips for successful family learning

- Make learning fun, safe and rewarding
- Personalize the learning, relate it to things your child is interested in and to experiences they had
- Be patient, things need to be repeated often for learning to happen
- Make family learning a natural part of what you're already doing, so talking about hygiene when you are cooking and asking your child to wash their hands before touching food
- Allow your child to make mistakes, it will help them learn
- If a child finds something difficult, remind them that they can't do it **yet** but will be able to do it soon, for example 'you can't chop onions **yet** but with practice you will be able to soon'
- If your child begins to lose interest, stop and do something else
- Let your child ask questions and answer them but don't give them so much information that they lose interest



Family learning



Games and activities

many teeth you both have.

0-5 years

Sing the handwashing song to the tune of baby Baby Shark on page 17. Ask about why it's important to wash your hands after going to the toilet. Talk about germs and how they spread.

Watch children's programmes together that teach children experiences like going to the dentist or a hospital on page 17

Draw a set of teeth on a piece of cardboard and then use a toothbrush to show your child how to brush their teeth. Count how

6-11 years

Traffic lights: Look at food packaging together, some of the labels will have the traffic light system. Set the challenge of who can find the healthiest foods first

Who do you go to for? Match the body part with the specialist you would go to see. See page 23

Height chart: Stick pieces of paper together to the height of your child and measure how tall they are. You could use a space in your home on the wall so they can compare how tall they once were.

12-15 years

Make a quiz about daily recommended amounts for salt, fat, sugar and saturated fats. Research the recommended daily and make a quiz with the facts you find for friends or family to try.

Healthy menu: Ask your child to design a menu with their favourite foods on it. Cook one of the healthy favourite meals together.

Active me: Write down 7 fun active things on individual pieces of paper that you and your child like to do. It could be skipping or bike riding. It can be things you can do in the home or things you can do outside. Fold the pieces of paper up and put them in a hat. Each day pick one out of the hat and do the active activity together.



Quality Time

What is quality time?



Quality time (sometimes called 'special time') is when you give someone or something your undivided attention. It is a time to focus on each other and to do something you enjoy without other distractions. Quality time in the family is how you share your time together and actively making time to do so. It strengthens relationships and gives your child the opportunity to talk and be listened to.

Why is quality time important?

It helps your child's self-esteem, strengthens family bonds and encourages positive behaviour and communication. Quality time or "special time" is free and can be at any point of the day you can spare. You could have a routine for special time for example reading a book together at bed time or playing board games after supper. This will help your child to know what to expect and they can look forward to when they have your attention. Quality time is important for both adults, teenagers and children and helps us to take time out of our day to have fun and enjoy our families.



Tips for quality time

- Find a time in the day when you have 10minutes to an hour (or more), available to have one to one time with your child/teenager. Turn off or put aside electronic devices (televisions, phones, tablets, etc.) and avoid a time when you have other tasks to do.
- Ask your child to choose an activity they would like to do or join in with their play. With teenagers you can suggest something to do together.
- Go with your child's lead. Your child may want you to play trains for example, so enjoy sitting down with them and engage in the play.
- Use the time as an opportunity to talk to your child, you can talk about what you are doing, share stories, laugh and learn from each other.
- If you have more than one child find a convenient time in the day that you can spend individual time with each of them.



Quality Time

Games and activities

0-5 years

Go on a teddy bear healthy picnic. Prepare a healthy picnic together and bring along some teddy bears or your child's favourite toy to enjoy eating together outside.

Draw portraits of each other and ask your child to name the different parts of the body they have drawn.

Play games outside and be active. Make it fun and interesting



Do experiments together and talk about how things work. For example, soak old copper money in coca cola and see how shiny it gets after 2 days.

6-11 years

Enjoy baking/cooking together talk about the healthy ingredients you can use.

Make a family tree with pictures of important people in your lives and talk about relationships.

12-15 years

adventure.

Go to a café for a treat and spend time chatting together.

their interests are for example TikTok or computer games, you can talk about staying safe online but do not lecture, learn together.

Go for a hike/long walk. Pack a rucksack of what you will need to take with you. Spend time talking together and having fun. Give your child some responsibility to organise the route and plan your

Watch something with your child that they enjoy and notice what



Curiosity

What is curiosity?



Babies are born curious little learning machines. Very young babies are curious about faces and stare at them. Later, babies begin to use their hands and mouths to explore whatever they can get hold of.

At around a year-old babies start pointing at things. They are being curious. It's their way of asking a question, "what is that?" or "can I have that?". Toddlers will start using language to ask questions.

Teenagers need to be curious too. They need to find out how to fit in to the adult world, they also need to learn so they can lead successful adult lives.

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Why is curiosity important?

Curiosity is what makes human beings learn. If adults are positive about their children's curiosity and give them lots of opportunities to be curious, they will continue to be curious as they grow and as they become adults. So, they will continue to learn. The more we provide babies and children with things to be curious about, the more they will learn. We need to provide opportunities for children of all ages to be curious. We also need to answer their questions or search for answers with them. The more a child is curious the more they learn.

Tips to encourage curiosity

- Reward a child's curiosity by saying things like 'that's such a good question'
- Let your child see that you too are curious and want to learn
- Do not 'over' answer e.g. if your four-year old asks 'How did the baby get into Aunty Maya's tummy?' start by saying, 'Uncle TJ and Aunty Maya really wanted to have a baby because they really love each other'. That might be enough. If the child asks again, 'But how did the baby get inside?' say something like, 'They kissed and cuddled a lot because they love each other'. For now, this will probably be enough but keep giving a little bit more information until they stop asking you more questions or they move on to something else.
- Don't be frightened to answer 'I don't know' to difficult questions' but add 'let's find out' and use the internet or the library to find answers
- if your child asks a question it can sometimes be useful to answer with another question. For example, 'why is it important to go to the dentist?' can be answered by, 'why do you think it is important to visit the dentist?'.

Remember curiosity is the key to learning



Curiosity

Games and activities

Sensory play: Put safe household items in a small basket for your baby to explore, include things with different textures, sounds, colours and smells for your baby to use their senses.

0-5 years

What do my fruit and vegetables do for me? Ask your child to draw pictures of fruit and vegetables and talk to them about why they are good to eat, for example oranges and lemons have Vitamin C which helps fight colds.

Animals: Find different animals in a book or outside and ask your child to identify them. Ask your child questions about the animal's young, e.g. Do they lay eggs or have a 'live birth'?



Ask your child to tell you what they think happens to the food they eat. Draw round their body and draw a very simple diagram to help them visualise the **digestive system**.

6-11 years

Guess the taste: Put a variety of foods on individual plates and blind fold your child. Get them to taste each food while they are blind folded and ask them to guess what they can taste.

Watch documentaries or videos or read books related to health and discuss what you have watched together. Let your child ask questions. See page 17 for *Operation Ouch*.

12-15 years

Research a health topic that you are both interested in together. You could use the internet or go to the library.

Complete the **dentist test** together on **page 19 & 20.** Talk about what you have learnt.

What makes us different? Ask your child to draw the outline of a male and a female. Ask them to write what they think the physical and emotional characteristics are of a male/female.



Learning Through Play

What is learning through play?



We have all learnt about and made sense of the world around us. A lot of that learning happened when we were playing. Do you remember playing outdoors as a child and working out how to climb that tree? You were working out how high you needed to go and how to make your way up and down instinctively using your maths' skills. You were also building your self-confidence in trying out new experiences and environments. Through play children use their imagination, creative skills and develop their language and understanding. All play helps children learn. It is a natural fun way of learning and should be a positive experience.

Why is learning through play important?

Elijah age 4, has started his first year at school. His teacher asks him to write his name. Elijah has not had to read and write on his own before. He tries to write his name and is able to form the letters and hold the pen correctly. It is fun for him and he is able to do it.

All the play Elijah has done at home and in nursery has been preparing him to learn to write. By playing Elijah has developed his fine motor skills (small muscles in fingers). He has made shapes in the sand with his fingers, squeezed play dough, made actions with his hands for songs, picked up and put together small objects. He has his fine motor skills which now helps him to control a pen. He has developed his hand-eye coordination through play like catching a ball or reaching out and grabbing objects.

Tips to encourage learning through play at home

- Use the outdoors as your free space there is so much to explore and learn
- Play should be child led and interesting for them. Observe your child, for example if they are building a tower with blocks, rather than doing it for them, talk lots about the activity you are doing together.
- Play can be as creative and imaginative as you and your child want (it does not have to follow rules).
- Make sure that what your child is playing does not cause frustration or a feeling that they cannot do it.

Play is for all ages, free and can be as creative as you want!



Learning Through Play

Games and activities

0-5 years

Play doctors and nurses together. You can dress up and pretend to be visiting a doctor or looking after someone who is unwell. You could use dolls or teddies. Talk about what you are doing.

Sing songs that name the parts of the body (head, shoulders, knees and toes).

Ask your child to lay on the floor outside and use chalks to draw around their body. Ask them to name the different parts of their body or draw more details on their outline.



6-11 years

Playdough body: Make playdough together from the recipe on page 17. Mould the different parts of the human skeleton and then connect together. You could also make organs and muscles.

Make masks and hats. Use craft materials to make masks and hats of different health professionals. Play pretend with your child. For example, they can be an *ambulance driver* asking you questions about a *broken leg*.

Online safety game: Stick danger signs around the house. Give your child a starting point and where they need to reach to. When they get to a danger sign they have to tell you something that will keep them safe online to get passed it and eventually to the finish point.

12-15 years

Set challenges for your child to do for example "run up the small hill". Ask them to predict if their heart rate will increase or not. If you have a smart phone you can download apps (see page 17) that can tell you what your heart rate went to.

Watch Television together and write down how many healthy and unhealthy adverts you notice in an hour. For example, an *unhealthy* burger advert or a *healthy* sports advert.

Martial arts. Look up different types of martial arts and try some of the breathing techniques together on page 17. You can even learn some moves!



Behaviour

What is behaviour?



When we are children, we hear the word "no" all the time, but why? We are taught from a very young age to learn right from wrong. We also learn how to behave in different situations.

The way we behave with other people and how we deal with emotions is all part of our social and emotional development. It is very hard for a two-year old to learn to share but by playing and with the help of adults and older children, a toddler will learn that they can share a toy and it will be given back afterwards.

Why is behaviour important?



Through our behaviour, we communicate and show others how we feel. This is why, when we are faced with challenging behaviour from our child, they need support to understand how they are feeling and how to deal with their emotions. We all have to learn how to deal with our emotions and communicate feelings. Adults must act as role models and teach "good behavior" by being honest about feelings and talk about how they deal with them.

Routines are important in families as they create security and they help children to know what to do when (and how to behave). They help children to understand what will happen next like taking their shoes off and hanging up their coat when they come home from school. Routine helps to give a sense of order.

Boundaries are also an important part of developing positive behaviour. Children, teenagers and even adults need boundaries. Boundaries allow us to feel safe. Boundaries give us guidance on how to behave in different situations. Talking to your child and understanding their needs, likes and dislikes will help you to communicate better with each other and help you to respect personal boundaries too.

Tips to encourage positive behaviour

- Make eye contact with your child and listen to what they have to say
- Spend time giving your child your attention and show an interest in them
- Praise your child's good behaviour by saying what they have done well. For example: "good girl for sharing your food"
- Help your child to name their emotions e.g. I know you are maybe feeling frustrated, because this is a very difficult game
- Set reasonable and responsible rules and boundaries with your teenager



Behaviour

Games and activities

0-5 years

Sharing and turn taking: Use the Pelmanism cards on **page 18**. Place them face down and take turns trying to match a pair, turning only two cards over at a time.

Fruit sharing: Cut up fruit with your child and ask them to divide it for yourselves and other household members. They can make faces with the fruit pieces.

Puppets: Use or make puppets together. You can use them to talk about feelings, being active, eating well. Use different voices for the puppets and be creative and imaginative together.

6-11 years

Ask your child to **draw cartoons characters** and use different face expressions to represent the character's feelings.

Read a book together that teaches your child about **empathy**. Ask them to write a book review and to reflect on the emotions the story included.

Play outside to allow your child to stomp their feet and be able to talk loudly. Do a sports activity that your child likes.



12-15 years

Make a regular screen break chart together for your household to follow. Write down how much time you spend on screen and how often you take a break. Who will be able to use the screen the least? Get active with music and dancing: Dance together and listen to each other's music.

Positive hands: Draw around your own hand and then swap them so you have each other's. On each finger write something you love and appreciate about the person whose *hand drawing* you have. Put them up in your home for you both to see every day.



Bilingualism

What is bilingualism?



Many children are lucky to grow up speaking or understanding more than one language. This is often because at least one of their parents grew up in another country. Children who speak, or even just understand, more than one language are 'bilingual' children.

Why is bilingualism important?



Being bilingual can really help children with their school work (yes, you can be better at English because you can speak Somali). It also helps children to understand who they are and feel they belong to their wider family. Later on, being bilingual is also an advantage when looking for jobs.

Children should be proud of their home languages. If possible, share books in your home language and always tell lots of stories from back home. Play games and sing songs together in your home language.

Children can cope with learning more than two different languages.

So, if you and their other parent both speak different languages don't think that three languages will be too much for them.

Tips to help your children be bilingual

- Speak your home language as much as possible
- Do not worry about teaching your child English (they will learn it very easily when they start nursery or school)
- Let your child know how proud you are of their bilingualism
- Make sure your child knows the name of your home language
- Avoid mixing your languages (speaking a bit of English with a bit on your home language)
- Encourage your child to feel proud of their bilingualism
- Make bilingualism fun
- Avoid laughing at your child's mistakes or accent
- If possible, find websites, cartoons, videos of things that interest your child in your home language
- As soon as your child is old enough explain the benefits of bilingualism

Bilingualism is a free gift you can give your child



Bilingualism

Games and activities

0-5 years

Talk to your child in your home language as much as possible. Sing songs and tell stories in your home language. Make sure your child learns to count in your language.

Flash cards: Show your child the *pelmanism cards* on **page 18** and ask them to name the pictures in your home language.

Have a tea party. You can use pretend food or real food. Host the tea party in your home language only.

6-11 years

Together draw a map of your country or where a family member comes from. Research the foods that grow in the country and what traditional dishes they have.

Ask your child to write a shopping list of things you need but in your mother language or a language they have learnt at school different to their first language.

Medical history facts. Research on the internet or go to your local library and find people in history who contributed to the health care and technology we use today. Which country were they born in and what languages did they speak? Ask your child to draw a picture of the people they find.

11-15 years

Cook a healthy meal together, include traditional dishes and share stories about your heritage.

Find **fun websites** in your **home language** (look at museum websites, television channel websites). Watch cartoons or films in your home language that are related to health.

Etymology activity – Many medical words have their roots in Latin or Greek. Try and guess the roots of these words and then look them up to check you answer. Possible words:

Menstruation, faeces, diarrhoea, phobia, doctor, prescription



Useful online links and websites

These are some useful links that you can use for more fun games, activities, videos and information on health to enjoy and learn with your family.

Websites

- http://healthathome.net Free online comics and Webquests related to health literacy
- https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/playdough-recipe Playdough recipe
- https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/shows/my-world-kitchen Healthy recipe ideas from around the world made by children.
- https://www.kidzone.ws/ANIMALS/animal classes.htm
- Poop Shooter | Games | Health for Kids
- https://www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/smallpox-vaccines
 History of vaccinations
- https://www.verywellmind.com/reduce-stress-quickly-with-karate-breathing-meditation-3145201



Apps

- Playground Buddy app: gives you access to a worldwide directory of over 200,000
 playgrounds in 170 countries. Search for playgrounds near you, across town, across your
 country and across the world!
- **Strava**: Strava can be used to track activities than, from cycling through to windsurfing, and walking. With the help of GPS it can measure distance, time, elevation gain, calories and route. You can track your heart rate if you sync the app up with a heart rate monitor.
- https://change4life.service.nhs.uk/change4life/food-facts/sugar A sugar facts app
- https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.phe.c4lfoodsmart Scan food to see the salt/fat/sugar and saturated fat content.
- https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=steptracker.healthandfitness.walkingtracker.pedometer Keep track of how many steps you have walked and get fitness tips.

Videos:

- https://youtu.be/3MOFv 8A3S0 CoComelon is a YouTube channel that has lots of nursery rhymes and children's songs related to health.
- https://youtu.be/3ZTgsDsLIRE Get Well Soon is a show based on children's experiences of going to the doctor.
 - Operation Ouch Digestion | Biology for Kids YouTube
- Wash Your Hands with Baby Shark | Baby Shark Hand Wash Challenge | @Baby Shark Official YouTube and (76) How to wash your hands NHS song | NHS YouTube



Pelmanism cards and flash cards

Print and cut out the cards. Lay them face down spread out on a table or floor. Take turns trying to match a pair. If you find a pair you get another turn. The winner is the person who gets the most pairs. Use as flash cards by showing your child the picture and asking them to name what they see.







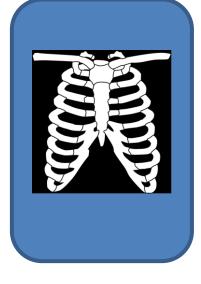


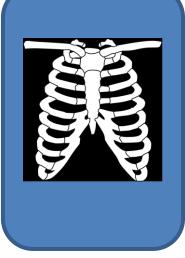


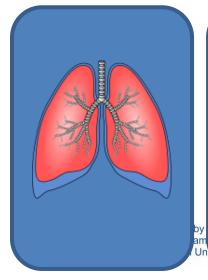


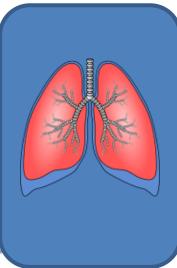














Dentist Test

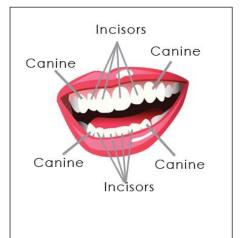
Read this article about human teeth and complete the test on the next page.

Human teeth

Human beings have two sets of teeth during their lives. The first set appears when they are babies and are called primary teeth. Children have 20 primary teeth. The second set of teeth are called permanent teeth. Adults have 32 permanent teeth.



We have different kinds of teeth which perform different functions. The canine teeth are sharp and pointed and used for tearing food.



We have four canines. Molars are big and strong and are used for grinding food so it can be swallowed. We have 12 molars. Wisdom teeth are the last teeth to grow. We have four wisdom teeth. Incisors are used to snip and cut bite-sized pieces of food. Adults have eight incisors.

The part of the tooth which can be seen

above the gum is called the crown. The hard tough and shiny substance which covers the crown is called enamel. The cementum makes up the root of teeth and fixes them on to the jawbone.



Test

What I know about teeth

- 1. What are the sharp teeth at the side of the mouth which are used to tear food called?
- 2. How many teeth do children have?
- 3. What are children's first teeth called?
- 4. What are the big front teeth used to cut food into bite-sized pieces called?
- 5. What is the substance which covers the visible part of teeth called?
- 6. What is the substance which forms the root of teeth and attaches them to the jawbone called?
- 7. What are the last teeth to grow in an adult?
- 8. What are the big strong teeth used to grind food so it can be swallowed called?
- 9. How many teeth do adults have?
- 10. What is the part of the teeth which can be seen above the gum called?



Health word search

d	е	p	а	n	d	i	С	S	m	е	g
е	g	а	е	е	n	i	С	С	а	V	r
n	n	n	S	S	е	n	t	i	f	е	а
t	i	d	0	С	t	0	r	е	С	С	е
S	е	е	g	е	m	S	b	n	d	С	0
i	b	m	i	S	m	r	е	g	0	i	h
t	I	i	m	t	е	i	d	b	С	n	r
n	I	С	b	е	1	n	g	i	t	е	r
е	е	X	е	i	m	m	u	n	е	d	а
d	w	е	S	е	r	С	i	S	а	X	i
i	d	е	X	е	r	С	i	S	е	i	d
t	r	i	d	а	е	0	h	r	r	0	m

pandemic	resilience	exercise
diet	vaccine	immune
doctor	dentist	germs
diarrhoea	fitness	wellbeing



Word search answers

		р									
	g	а		е	n	i	С	С	а	V	
	n	n	S	S	е	n	t	i	f	е	а
t	i	d	0	С	t	0	r		С		е
S	е	е						n			0
i	b	m		S	m	r	e	g			h
t	I	i		t	е	i	d				r
n	I	С			I						r
е	е			i	m	m	u	n	е		а
d	w		S								i
		e	X	е	r	С	i	S	е		d
	r										



Matching game

Draw a line to match the body part with the person you would go to see.

