Teenagers and communication
Negative communication is a common cause of conflict between a parent and teenagers. Appreciate that your teenager has a different view of the world and respect their opinions. Establish reasonable house rules in consultation with your teenager.

Teenage years can be difficult for many families. Young people may develop ideas, values and beliefs that are different to those of their parents. This is part of the normal process of moving towards independence. Parents may struggle with how much independence they should allow their children at different ages and in different circumstances.

There is no prescription for this. Each young person is an individual and needs different advice. Communication with teenagers is different from communicating with younger children and can cause conflict and stress.

If you follow some simple tips, it may help to improve communication with your teenager. However, always seek professional advice if you are concerned about your family relationships.

Issues that can affect communication with teenagers

Adolescence is a time of rapid change, not just for the young person but for the parents too. It might be hard to let go sometimes, but parents need to recognise that:

- A child’s job is to grow up and become an independent adult. As a parent, you need to help young people through this process.
- Decisions can now be made together. Try to discuss issues to reach an outcome that you and your teenager can both accept.
- Young people may have viewpoints that are different from yours or may take up activities that you don’t understand. Try to see this as good thing. They are learning to be their own person.
- You will always feel responsible for your child’s wellbeing and safety, no matter how old they are. When children reach their teenage years, they start to make their own decisions. Sometimes they make the wrong ones. Try to be supportive and not criticise. They will (hopefully!) learn valuable lessons from their mistakes.
- During this time of constant change, both parents and young people need to take time to care for themselves.
- You need to show you value your teenager and their uniqueness – show them your unconditional love.

General communication tips with teenagers

The most important thing is to keep the lines of communication open. Suggestions include:

- **Listen more than you speak** – remember that we are all given two ears and one mouth. This is to remind us that we should spend twice as much time listening as talking. This is especially important when talking to teenagers, who may tell us more if we are silent long enough to give them the opportunity.
- **Make time to spend together** – teenagers are often busy with school, friends and other interests, but you can have a conversation with them over breakfast and dinner. Offer to take them to or pick them up from places; this will provide other opportunities for conversations.
- **Give them privacy** – teenagers need their own space. For example, knock before you go into their room.
- **Keep up with their interests** – listen to their music, watch their television shows with them and turn up to their sports practise sessions. Continue to take an active interest in their life.
- **Be a loving parent** – adolescence is a time when young people often struggle with their changing sense of identity and need to feel loved. Tell them often.
- **Have fun** – make time for leisure and laughter. Good feelings help to build good rapport.

Negative communication with teenagers

Conflict is inevitable when people with different views live together so the occasional clash with your teenager is normal and to be expected. However, ongoing conflict can undermine the relationship between a parent and a young person.

Negative communication is a common cause of chronic conflict. Examples of negative communication include nagging, harsh criticism or ‘stand over’ tactics such as yelling to force compliance.

It’s not always easy to recognise negative communication. For example, well-meaning parents may criticise because they want their child to try harder. You are using negative communication if:

- The conversation rapidly deteriorates into nagging, yelling or fighting
You feel angry, upset, rejected, blamed or unloved
The issue under dispute doesn’t ever improve.

Turn negatives into positives

You can change negative communication into positive communication. Suggestions include:

- Negotiate how you communicate with each other. Work out strategies to improve your communication. Brainstorm solutions together.
- Select what is important to argue over. A basic guideline is that safety issues, like not getting into a car with a driver who has been drinking, are always worth fighting over. Other things, like cleaning up the messy bedroom, might be best to ignore – just keep the door shut!
- Offer constructive criticism. Acknowledge and celebrate their achievements. They will know themselves when they have got it wrong and don’t need to be reminded by you.
- Set a good example by apologising when you’re wrong.

Update your opinion of their rights and freedoms

You need to willingly give teenagers the right of more freedom when they are ready to behave responsibly. For every right they gain, there is a responsibility that goes with it. Suggestions include:

- Establish reasonable house rules in consultation with your teenager. For example, decide together on an appropriate curfew for Saturday night.
- Be prepared to compromise when negotiating house rules with teenagers. (Try to give ground on the least important issues.)
- Stop and consider before you say ‘no’ to a request. Is your teenager now old enough or responsible enough for you to say ‘yes’ this time?
- If you do say ‘no’, tell them why – but remember, the parental cliché ‘because I said so’ is just asking for a fight! Give good reasons, such as using the safety argument.
- Help them to take care and responsibility for themselves. For example, talk about issues such as drink spiking or safe sex. Browse the Better Health Channel for appropriate fact sheets. Read the fact sheets together and talk about any concerns you both may have.

Listen more and talk less

Take the time to listen – you may be surprised how much teenagers will confide in you if they feel they are really being listened to. Suggestions include:

- Really listen when they talk to you. For example, stop what you’re doing, look them in the eye and don’t interrupt.
- Avoid angry or impatient body language. For example, don’t roll your eyes or sigh.
- Appreciate that your teenager has a different world view. Treat them as you would a friend and respect their opinions. They may have very well-thought-through opinions that are just different to yours.
- Use ‘I’ statements rather than ‘you’ statements. For example, don’t say: ‘You’re so inconsiderate, you never tell me where you’re going’. Instead, say: ‘If I don’t know where you are, I worry about you’.
- Avoid sarcasm, criticism and yelling.
- Don’t assume or mind read. Listen.
- Young people will stop talking if you don’t listen respectfully.

Professional help

There are services available to help you and your teenager to work through difficult issues. Your doctor is a good starting point for information and referral.

Where to get help

- Your doctor
- Parentline Tel. 13 22 89
- Family Relationship Advice Line Tel. 1800 050 321
- ABCD Parenting Young Adolescents Tel. (03) 8660 3500

Things to remember

- Negative communication is a common cause of conflict between a parent and teenagers.
- Appreciate that your teenager has a different view of the world and respect their opinions.
- Establish reasonable house rules in consultation with your teenager.

References

- Living with young people, Parenting and Child Health SA. More information here.
- Parenting traps, ABCD Parenting Young Adolescents. More information here.

Send us your feedback

- Rate this website
- Your comments
- Questions
- Your details

1/4 How would you rate this website?
Send us your feedback

- Rate this website
- Your comments
- Questions
- Your details

Please note that we cannot answer personal medical queries. If you are looking for health or medical advice we recommend that you:

- talk to your doctor or pharmacist
- dial triple zero (000) in an emergency
- ring NURSE-ON-CALL Tel. 1300 60 60 24.

2/4 Your Comments

Tell us who you are Select an option

Enter your comments below (optional)

Send us your feedback

- Rate this website
- Your comments
- Questions
- Your details

3/4 Questions

What are you here to do? Looking for information on

Did you find what you were looking for?

- Yes
- No

Send us your feedback

- Rate this website
- Your comments
- Questions
- Your details

4/4 Your details

Postcode

Email Address

Send us your feedback

Thank you. Your feedback has been successfully sent.

More information

Parents

The following content is displayed as Tabs. Once you have activated a link navigate to the end of the list to view its associated content. The activated link is defined as Active Tab

- Parenting basics
Parenting basics

- Children and health services
  There is a range of subsidised and free health services, including services for mental health and dental health, available for children in Victoria.

- Family and child support services
  There are many government funded family support services available to help parents and young people deal with family issues.

- Happy families
  It might be valuable to occasionally evaluate the dynamics of your family to ensure that everyone is as happy as they could be.

- Healthy budget - tucker talk tips
  You can buy more food if you spend most of your money on basic healthy foods like bread, cereals, fruit and vegies.

- Parenthood and your relationship
  The birth of your first child can significantly change your relationship with your partner and may impact on other relationships.

- Parenting children through puberty
  Puberty is a time of great change for your child, and for you as a parent too. You can help your child in many practical ways, mostly by being reassuring.

- Parenting on your own
  A person can become a single or sole parent for many different reasons. You may have chosen to start a family on your own, you may be separated or divorced, or your partner may have died. As a...

- Parenting services
  Parenting is one of the most important tasks we undertake but it doesn't always come naturally.

- Raising Children Network
  Raising Children Network is an online parenting resource providing research-based information.

- Travelling with children
  If your child is old enough, involve them in planning a trip so they can get excited about it.

Family structures

- 10 tips for happier step-parenting
  Give your undivided attention when your child asks for it... 10 tips for happier step-parenting.

- Adoption
  Adoption can give a secure family life to children who can't live with their birth family.

- Empty nest syndrome
  The grief of empty nest syndrome often goes unrecognised, because an adult child moving out of home is seen as a normal, healthy event.

- Foster care
  Foster care is temporary care of children up to 18 years by trained, assessed and accredited foster carers.

- Kinship care
  Kinship care is the care provided by relatives or a member of a child's social network when a child cannot live with their parents.

- Moving out of home – tips for parents
  If you don't approve of your child's reasons for moving out, try to keep the lines of communication open.
• Parenting on your own
  A person can become a single or sole parent for many different reasons. You may have chosen to start a family on your own, you may be separated or divorced, or your partner may have died. As a...
• Parenting when you’re a foster carer
  As a foster carer, you are providing a safe and supportive home for a child or teenager who can’t live with their family of origin. You may face challenges that affect you physically, emotionally and...
• Permanent care
  After experiencing abuse, neglect or rejection, many children are slow to put their trust in anyone...
• Single parenting
  In single-parent households, issues such as holidays or major family purchases are more likely to be decided with the children...
• Stepfamilies
  Becoming part of a stepfamily involves adjusting to a number of changes...
• Surrogacy
  Surrogacy is a form of assisted reproductive treatment (ART) in which a woman carries a child within her uterus on behalf of another person or couple...

Communication, identity and behaviour

• 10 tips for managing sibling rivalry
  Teach your children to sort out minor differences themselves... 10 tips for managing sibling rivalry...
• Body image and young people - staying positive (video)
  The pressure on young girls and boys to be physically perfect is creating an epidemic of children and teenagers with low self-esteem and negative body image. Reporter Flip Shelton introduces us to the...
• Body image – tips for parents
  Give your child opportunities to appreciate their body for what it can do, rather than what it looks like...
• Bullying
  Parents can help with bullying by supporting their child and involving the authorities to find solutions...
• Children and shyness
  If your child's shyness is especially debilitating, you may like to consider professional help from a counsellor or psychologist...
• Children and sibling rivalry
  Sibling rivalry is a common problem, particularly among children who are the same sex and close together in age...
• Discipline and children
  Disciplining your child means teaching them responsible behaviour and self-control...
• Family conflict
  It is normal to disagree with each other from time to time and occasional conflict is part of family life...
• Internet addiction
  Internet addiction refers to the compulsive need to spend a lot of time on the Internet, to the point where relationships, work and health suffer...
• Parenting on your own
  A person can become a single or sole parent for many different reasons. You may have chosen to start a family on your own, you may be separated or divorced, or your partner may have died. As a...
• Partying safely – tips for parents
  With a few simple plans in place, a good time can be had by all at a teenage party – even the parents...
• Peer pressure
  Peer groups can be a very positive influence on your teenager's life...
• Sex education - tips for parents
  Mothers are more likely to talk about intimate, emotional and psychological aspects of sex than fathers...
Talking to primary school children about sex
Some parents find it hard to talk with their primary age children about sex, but help is available...

Teenagers and communication
Accept that your adolescent may have a different view of the world and respect their opinions...

Young children and communication
Children thrive with words of encouragement and praise.

Raising healthy children

A Healthy Start to School
A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...

Children – keeping them active
A young child is naturally active, so build upon their inclinations to use their body...

Children’s diet - fruit and vegetables
If you eat and enjoy fruit and vegetables every day, your child may eventually follow your lead...

Dr Margaret's Story (video)
Access to vaccines has changed lives and protects our children from crippling diseases such as polio...

Eating disorders and adolescents
Often, an eating disorder develops as a way for an adolescent to feel in control about what’s happening in their life...

Healthy eating tips
A good balance between exercise and food intake is important to maintain a healthy body weight...

Immunisation – deciding which vaccines you need
Everyone's immunisation needs are different and are influenced by your health, lifestyle, age and occupation...

No Jab No Play
No Jab No Play – from 1 January 2016, all parents/guardians seeking to enrol their child at an early childhood service in Victoria must provide evidence that the child is fully immunised for their age...

Obesity in children - management
If your child is overweight, you can help by making healthier lifestyle choices for yourself...

Parenting on your own
A person can become a single or sole parent for many different reasons. You may have chosen to start a family on your own, you may be separated or divorced, or your partner may have died. As a...

Parent's guide for active girls
Physical activity is an important part of health and wellbeing, and girls should remain active as they grow up...

Soft drinks, juice and sweet drinks - children
Encourage children to drink and enjoy water. Sweet drinks such as juice, cordial and soft drinks may cause health problems for children if consumed in large amounts...

Youth suicide – the warning signs
All suicide threats are serious. You don’t have to be a trained professional to help a person contemplating suicide...

Common childhood health concerns

Abdominal pain in children
Children may feel stomach pain for a range of reasons and may need treatment...

Allergies explained

Allergy occurs when the body overreacts to a 'trigger' that is harmless to most people.

- Anxiety and fear in children
  You can help your child overcome anxiety by taking their fears seriously and encouraging them to talk about their feelings.

- Asthma, children and smoking
  Exposure to second-hand smoke increases the risk of children developing asthma and provokes more frequent asthma in children with asthma.

- Asthma in childhood - triggers (video)
  Parents and children talk about some of the factors that can cause a child's asthma to flare up.

- Back pain in children
  Children with back pain may grow into adults with chronic bad backs, so it is important to encourage sensible back care.

- Bedwetting
  Bedwetting is a problem for many children and punishing them for it will only add to their distress.

- Behavioural disorders in children
  Untreated behavioural disorders in children may mean they grow up to be dysfunctional adults.

- Bronchiolitis
  Bronchiolitis is a common chest infection in babies under six months of age.

- Chest infections
  A chest infection affects your lungs, either in the larger airways (bronchi) or in the smaller air sacs (pneumonia).

- Chickenpox
  Chickenpox is highly contagious, but it is generally mild and gets better without the need for special treatment.

- Children and vomiting
  Mild vomiting is normal in most babies and improves over time.

- Children's feet and shoes
  A child learning to walk receives important sensory information from the soles of their feet, and shoes can make walking more difficult.

- Choking
  Don't slap a choking person on the back while they are upright - gravity may cause the object to slip further down their windpipe.

- Colds
  Cold viruses are spread by sneezing, coughing and hand contact.

- Colic
  Caring for a crying baby with colic can be stressful, so take some time out to calm down.

- Constipation and children
  A healthy diet, plenty of fluids, exercise and regular toilet habits can help relieve constipation in children.

- Coughing and wheezing in children
  Coughing and wheezing in babies can be distressing for you and your baby, but in most cases symptoms can be relieved at home.

- Cradle cap
  Cradle cap is not contagious and it is not caused by poor hygiene or bad parenting.

- Croup
  Croup is a viral infection of the throat and windpipe that causes noisy breathing, a hoarse voice and a harsh, barking cough.

- Cysts
  Cysts may be as small as a blister or large enough to hold litres of fluid.

- Dental anxiety and phobias
  Dental anxiety is common, but there are ways to help you manage it. Talk to your dentist about which strategies are right for you.

- Dental treatment
Modern techniques mean that dental and oral health treatment is almost always painless.

- **Depression explained**
  The most important thing is to recognise the signs and symptoms and seek support.

- **Ear infections**
  It is estimated that around four out of five children will experience a middle ear infection at least once.

- **Feet - problems and treatments**
  Correctly fitted shoes help you avoid foot and leg pain or injury.

- **Fever - children**
  Fever is a way in which the body fights infection. A fever is not dangerous and does not always indicate a serious illness.

- **Fever - febrile convulsions**
  A febrile convulsion is a fit that occurs in children when they have a high fever.

- **Food allergy and intolerance**
  Food allergy is an immune response, while food intolerance is a chemical reaction.

- **Gastroenteritis in children**
  Gastroenteritis or Gastro can be dangerous for very young babies. Gastro is common in young children and spreads easily. Gastro is a bowel infection which causes diarrhoea (runny or watery poo) and...

- **Growing pains**
  Growing pains may cause a lot of pain but they are harmless and can respond to simple treatments.

- **Hand, foot and mouth disease**
  Good personal hygiene is essential to prevent the spread of hand, foot and mouth disease to others, both for those infected and their carers.

- **Head lice (nits)**
  No product can prevent head lice, but regular checks can help prevent the spread.

- **Hearing problems in children**
  The earlier that hearing loss is identified in children, the better for the child’s language, learning and overall development.

- **Immunisation history statements for children**
  By law, parents or guardians must provide an Immunisation History Statement when enrolling children in any childcare service, kindergarten or primary school in Victoria.

- **Immunisations - vaccinations in Victoria, Australia (video)**
  Vaccinations are encouraged for all individuals living in the state of Victoria, Australia. The immunisation program in Victoria may be different than other countries, and individuals who have moved.

- **Jaundice in babies**
  If your baby is full-term and healthy, mild jaundice is nothing to worry about and will resolve by itself within a week or so.

- **Lactose intolerance**
  Symptoms of lactose intolerance include bloating, gas, abdominal pain and diarrhoea.

- **Male Circumcision**
  Male circumcision involves the surgical removal of the foreskin of the penis.

- **Melissa’s story (video)**
  Melissa shares her story of how her baby caught chickenpox at 5 weeks old.

- **Meningococcal disease**
  Do not leave young adults alone if they suddenly develop a fever because they may become seriously ill very quickly.

- **Nappy rash**
Most babies get nappy rash at some stage, no matter how well they are cared for.

- No Jab No Play

No Jab No Play – from 1 January 2016, all parents/guardians seeking to enrol their child at an early childhood service in Victoria must provide evidence that the child is fully immunised for their age.

- Obesity in children - causes

Once children are overweight, it takes a lot of effort for them to return to a healthy weight.

- Obesity in children - management

If your child is overweight, you can help by making healthier lifestyle choices for yourself.

- Oral conditions - young children

Oral thrush, mouth ulcers and cold sores are common oral conditions in babies and young children.

- Pain management (acute) - children

If you think your child is in pain, always see your doctor for diagnosis and treatment.

- Pinworms

Despite the unsavoury reputation, a pinworm infection (worms) is relatively harmless and easily treated.

- Tooth decay - young children

Every child is at risk of tooth decay, but good feeding habits and oral care can help prevent decay in baby teeth.

- Whooping cough

The major symptom of whooping cough is a severe cough, which is often followed by a 'whooping' sound.

**Immunisation**

- No Jab No Play

No Jab No Play – from 1 January 2016, all parents/guardians seeking to enrol their child at an early childhood service in Victoria must provide evidence that the child is fully immunised for their age.

- Flu (influenza) – immunisation

Influenza immunisation is recommended for people in known high risk groups.

- A Healthy Start to School

A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school.

- A Healthy Start to School

A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school.

- Fight flu this winter

Fight flu this winter. Protect yourself – get vaccinated.

- Pre-immunisation checklist

This immunisation checklist will help you prepare so you know what to expect and what information you will need to give your GP or clinic staff before your immunisation.

- Immunisation history statements for children

By law, parents or guardians must provide an Immunisation History Statement when enrolling children in any childcare service, kindergarten or primary school in Victoria.

- Childhood immunisation

Being immunised from an early age helps protect your child against serious childhood infections.

- Immunisation – common questions

We answer some common questions about immunisation, including how immunisation works, why it’s important and where you can be immunised.

- Immunisations for older people

Immunisations are important for you as you get older, because your immune system can become less effective at protecting you from some diseases.

- Why immunisation is important

betterhealth.vic.gov.au
Immunisation saves lives. It protects you, your family and your community. And it also helps protect future generations by eradicating diseases.

- Immunisation – deciding which vaccines you need
  Everyone’s immunisation needs are different and are influenced by your health, lifestyle, age and occupation.

- Immunisations – catch-ups and boosters
  If you’ve recently arrived in Australia or missed out on an immunisation for any reason, you may need catch-up doses.

- How to find your vaccination records
  If you’ve recently arrived in Australia or missed out on an immunisation for any reason, you may need catch-up doses.

- Melissa’s story (video)
  Melissa shares her story of how her baby caught chickenpox at 5 weeks old.

- 10 tips for secondary students on how to deal with immunisation
  10 tips for secondary students on how to deal with immunisation.

- Immunisation – DTP, polio, hep B and Hib
  A number of combined immunisations against diphtheria, tetanus and other infectious diseases are available to provide protection at various life stages.

- Immunisations for work
  Some jobs have a higher risk of exposure to infectious diseases, so if your job is one of these, it’s a good idea to check your immunisation status.

- Immunisation and pregnancy
  Immunisation can protect a woman and her unborn baby against many infectious diseases.

- Dr Margaret’s Story (video)
  Access to vaccines has changed lives and protects our children from crippling diseases such as polio.

- Ros’ Story (video)
  Talk to a qualified medical expert like your doctor to find out more about immunisation.

- Caitlin and Liam’s story (video)
  Find out how important you and your child’s immunisation is to the most vulnerable members in our community.

- Immunisations - vaccinations in Victoria, Australia (video)
  Vaccinations are encouraged for all individuals living in the state of Victoria, Australia. The immunisation program in Victoria may be different than other countries, and individuals who have moved.

- Immunisation in secondary schools
  Some immunisations are recommended for all Australian teenagers.

- Time to immunise - free vaccines for men who have sex with men
  Immunisation is one of the best ways you can protect yourself and others from infectious diseases in our community. In partnership with Thorne Harbour Health (formerly Victorian AIDS Council), the...

Keeping yourself healthy

- 10 tips for happier step-parenting
  Give your undivided attention when your child asks for it...

- 10 tips for managing sibling rivalry
  Teach your children to sort out minor differences themselves...

- 1300 60 60 24 - NURSE-ON-CALL
  NURSE-ON-CALL is a free, confidential telephone helpline that provides immediate health advice from a registered nurse, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- 1800RESPECT
  1800RESPECT is a national sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service.

- Abdominal pain in children
  Children may feel stomach pain for a range of reasons and may need treatment.

betterhealth.vic.gov.au
• Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service
  The Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria helps Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experiencing or recovering from family violence or sexual assault.

• About child, family and relationship services (video)
  Services include parent education to maternal and child healthcare, child care, crisis support, child protection, family violence and relationship services.

• Adoption
  Adoption can give a secure family life to children who can't live with their birth family.

• A Healthy Start to School
  A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school.

• A Healthy Start to School
  A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school.

• Allergies explained
  Allergy occurs when the body overreacts to a 'trigger' that is harmless to most people.

• Animals and child safety
  Children should always be closely supervised near animals and taught how to behave safely around pets.

• Anxiety and fear in children
  You can help your child overcome anxiety by taking their fears seriously and encouraging them to talk about their feelings.

• Association for Children with a Disability
  ACD works to change the lives of children with a disability through information, support and advocacy.

• Asthma, children and smoking
  Exposure to second-hand smoke increases the risk of children developing asthma and provokes more frequent asthma in children with asthma.

• Asthma in childhood - triggers (video)
  Parents and children talk about some of the factors that can cause a child's asthma to flare up.

• Asylum Seeker Resource Centre
  The ASRC is committed to upholding the human rights of all people seeking asylum.

• Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency
  The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) implements the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme, which oversees 14 national health practitioner boards including the Chinese.

• Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)
  ASD is a complex disorder that affects a person's ability to interact with the world around them.

• Autism spectrum disorder - tips for parents
  Autism spectrum disorder is a lifelong condition, but you are not on your own and there are plenty of professionals and groups who can help.

Children with special needs

• Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)
  ASD is a complex disorder that affects a person's ability to interact with the world around them.

• Autism spectrum disorder - tips for parents
  Autism spectrum disorder is a lifelong condition, but you are not on your own and there are plenty of professionals and groups who can help.

• Cognitive disability and sexuality
  People with intellectual disability can express their sexuality in satisfying ways.

• Disability - schooling choices
  If your child has a disability, you need to consider extra issues when your child starts school.

• Down syndrome and family support

betterhealth.vic.gov.au
For a person with Down syndrome, being included in all aspects of family life can lead to a successful life within the community...

- **Down syndrome and health**
  
  There are a number of significant health and medical issues that are more common in people with Down syndrome...

- **Down syndrome and learning**
  
  You should focus on what your child with Down syndrome can do, rather than what they can't do...

- **Physical disability and sexuality**
  
  Sexuality is a key part of human nature. Expressing sexuality in satisfying ways is important for everyone, including people with a disability. Some people with disability may need additional support.

- **Sex and chronic illness**
  
  Sexuality is a key part of human nature. Expressing sexuality in satisfying ways is important for everyone, including people with a disability. Some people with disability may need additional support.

**Child safety and accident prevention**

- **Animals and child safety**
  
  Children should always be closely supervised near animals and taught how to behave safely around pets.

- **Bicycle safety and children**
  
  As they grow and develop, and with the help of adults, children become increasingly aware of how they can manage their own safety and become safer road and bicycle users.

- **Body image – tips for parents**
  
  Give your child opportunities to appreciate their body for what it can do, rather than what it looks like.

- **Bullying**
  
  Parents can help with bullying by supporting their child and involving the authorities to find solutions.

- **Child safety and injury prevention**
  
  By making a few practical changes to your home, you can dramatically reduce the risk of injury to your child.

- **Child safety – at home**
  
  The best way to reduce the risk of injury to children is to remove a potentially dangerous item or add a safety product.

- **Child safety in the car**
  
  Taking care to restrain children correctly while travelling in a car is the best way to prevent injuries.

- **Farm safety – children**
  
  Children who live on farms are at greater risk of injury and death than their parents or other farm workers.

- **Hot weather and child safety**
  
  Babies and children can quickly lose body fluids in hot weather, which can lead to dehydration.

- **Internet safety for children**
  
  A child's digital footprint can be as easy to follow as their real footprints.

- **Mobile phone safety for children**
  
  Teach your child strategies for responding to mobile phone bullying.

- **Playgrounds and child safety**
  
  Play environments can be safe and beneficial for your child. With proper planning, you can make sure your child gets plenty of playtime activity.

- **Poisoning and child safety**
  
  Call the Poisons Information Centre on 131126 immediately if you suspect your child has been poisoned or given the wrong medicine or the wrong dose of medicine.

- **Road and traffic safety for children**
  
  As they grow and develop, and with the help of adults, children become increasingly aware of how they can manage their own safety, and become safer road users.

- **Water safety for children**

betterhealth.vic.gov.au
Toddlers are most at risk of drowning because they are mobile and curious but don't understand the danger of water.

**Child protection and family violence**

- **Bullying**
  Parents can help with bullying by supporting their child and involving the authorities to find solutions.

- **Child Protection Service**
  Child Protection provides child-centred, family-focused services to protect children from harm caused by abuse within the family.

- **Family violence - tips for children**
  Kids are not to blame for violence at home, it's not your fault and it's not a special secret.

- **Parenting support to help prevent abuse**
  There is a range of non-government agencies available to help families under stress in caring for their children.

- **Recognising when a child is at risk**
  Too many children are physically, sexually and emotionally abused and when this happens, it is up to adults to speak up.

- **Sexual abuse - helping your child**
  As a parent, you have an important role in helping your child recover from sexual abuse.

**Grief and trauma**

- **Death of a baby**
  Miscarriage, stillbirth or neonatal death is a shattering event for those expecting a baby, and for their families. Grief, relationship stresses and anxiety about subsequent pregnancies are common in.

- **Grief and children**
  It can be difficult to talk to a child about death, but it is important to be honest with them.

- **Grief – support services**
  People who have support from family and friends are less likely to suffer poor health after bereavement and loss.

- **Recent arrivals, asylum seekers and family support services**
  Provides an overview of family support programs and health services available to refugees and asylum seekers living in Victoria.

- **Sudden unexpected death in infants (SUDI and SIDS)**
  You can reduce your baby's risk of sudden unexpected death by providing a safe sleeping environment and avoiding tobacco smoke.

- **Trauma and children - newborns to two years**
  Babies and toddlers can be as affected by trauma as any other family member.

- **Trauma and children – tips for parents**
  Tell your child the facts about a distressing or frightening experience using language they can understand.

- **Trauma and children - two to five years**
  Preschoolers may not have the words but will show their distress at traumatic events through changes in behaviour and functioning.

- **Trauma and families**
  When a family is affected by trauma, everyone will react in a different way.

- **Trauma and primary school age children**
  Children look to their parents or carers to judge how to deal with a crisis.

- **Trauma and teenagers - common reactions**
  A teenager may be deeply upset by a traumatic event, but not share their feelings with their parents.

- **Trauma and teenagers - tips for parents**
  Teenagers may turn to friends rather than parents for support in times of trauma and distress.

- **Trauma - reaction and recovery**
It is normal to have strong emotional or physical reactions after a distressing or frightening event, and help is available...

- Youth suicide – the warning signs
  All suicide threats are serious. You don't have to be a trained professional to help a person contemplating suicide...

Support for parents

- About child, family and relationship services (video)
  Services include parent education to maternal and child healthcare, child care, crisis support, child protection, family violence and relationship services...

- A Healthy Start to School
  A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...

- A Healthy Start to School
  A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...

- Children and health services
  There is a range of subsidised and free health services, including services for mental health and dental health, available for children in Victoria...

- Community health centres
  A community health centre is publicly funded and offers a range of health services to local residents...

- Early support for a child with disabilities
  For children diagnosed with a disability, getting the support they need as early as possible will give them the best chance of minimising the long-term effects of the disability...

- Family and child support services
  There are many government funded family support services available to help parents and young people deal with family issues...

- Foster care, permanent care and adoptive parent support services
  Provides an overview of the financial and family support services available to foster carers, families providing permanent care and adoptive parents...

- Maternal and child health services
  Your local maternal and child health service will be a great source of support after your baby is born...

- Parenting centres support families
  Early Parenting Centres help families whose children have sleep, feeding or other difficulties...

- Parenting children through puberty
  Puberty is a time of great change for your child, and for you as a parent too. You can help your child in many practical ways, mostly by being reassuring...

- Parenting on your own
  A person can become a single or sole parent for many different reasons. You may have chosen to start a family on your own, you may be separated or divorced, or your partner may have died. As a...

- Parenting support to help prevent abuse
  There is a range of non-government agencies available to help families under stress in caring for their children...

- Phototherapy at Home
  Jaundice is very common in newborns, so it’s nothing to be too worried about. Treatment is very easy and safe. It all happens using blue light from a special blanket that you wrap your baby in. The...

- Recent arrivals, asylum seekers and family support services
  Provides an overview of family support programs and health services available to refugees and asylum seekers living in Victoria...

- Relationship support services
  You may need outside help to resolve problems and ensure your relationship stays healthy and strong...

- Year 12 exams - managing stress
  Help your child manage stress during exams by getting them to use good study habits, eat well, exercise, relax, sleep and keep things in perspective...

Related Information

- A Healthy Start to School

betterhealth.vic.gov.au
A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...

- **No Jab No Play**
  
  No Jab No Play – from 1 January 2016, all parents/guardians seeking to enrol their child at an early childhood service in Victoria must provide evidence that the child is fully immunised for their age...

- **A Healthy Start to School**
  
  A Healthy Start to School – a guide for parents of children in their foundation year of school...

- **Internet addiction**
  
  Internet addiction refers to the compulsive need to spend a lot of time on the Internet, to the point where relationships, work and health suffer...

- **Mobile phone safety for children**
  
  Teach your child strategies for responding to mobile phone bullying...

**Home**

**Related information on other websites**

- Department for Community Development WA – Parenting tips.
- Parenting Research Centre.
- Parenting South Australia.
- Parentlink ACT.

**Content Partner**

This page has been produced in consultation with and approved by: NAPCAN

**NURSE-ON-CALL**

Provides immediate, expert health advice from a registered nurse. Call 1300 60 60 24

**NURSE-ON-CALL**

Service Search

Find services near you

Service: Select a service
Location:

Type a minimum of three characters then press UP or DOWN on the keyboard to navigate the autocompleted search results

**betterhealth.vic.gov.au**