Good start to life
Healthy kids
1 to 4 years of age
COOK ISLANDER
The circle of fifteen stars, found in the national flag, represent the unity between all fifteen Cook Island nations. These nations are Tongareva, Rakahanga, Manihiki, Pukapuka, Nassau, Suwarrow, Palmerston, Aitutaki, Manuae, Takutea, Aitu, Mitiaro, Mauke, Rarotonga and Mangaia.

FIJIAN
Masi cloths are deeply embedded in Fijian culture. The distinctive floral decorative patterning can help pinpoint exactly where in Fiji the Masi was created. The cloth itself contains the spirit of the land it comes from and the essence of the people who created it.

FIJIAN INDIAN
Indian heritage and Island living come together through intricate Henna (Mehandi) patterning. The rounded ‘mango’ shape (Ambi) represents Indian origins and is known as the national fruit of India. Mangoes represent abundance, as trees become laden when they come to fruit. Embedded within the Ambi is a shell, representing island life.

MAORI
Kowhaiwhai patterning is often used to enhance the original creator’s story. Inspired by nature, this patterning may be interpreted to represent growth and new beginnings.

PAPUA NEW GUINEAN (PNG)
The distinctive Bird of Paradise features on the PNG flag, representing the country’s independence. In full flight, this beautiful bird suggests freedom.

SAMOAN
The Sennit and talking stick bring with them power, wisdom and blessing from all of the high chiefs across Samoa. Only a high chief (Matai) or their appointed orator have the authority to use them when speaking.

TONGAN
The Manulua symbol has many permutations across Tonga. All are abstract symbolisations of either two birds in flight or the frangipani flower. Both are potent natural symbols in Tongan culture.

The pattern used in this booklet and described below has been developed in consultation with elders and leaders of their respective communities. It is only a symbol of each community and is not a representation of the vast, diverse and rich cultures, languages and values of Maori and Pacific Islander nations.

Healthy Kids – 1 to 4 years is the fourth of four booklets in the Good Start to Life series. It outlines important information for Maori and Pacific Islander Mums and Dads to plan for a healthy pregnancy.
Healthy kids will be healthier adults.

Teach your kids healthy habits now to help them become healthy adults.

Key tips to remember:

» Kids will copy what Mum and Dad do, so if you eat healthy food and drink lots of water, the kids will too

» Eating junk foods means kids are missing out on healthy foods

» Make and store food safely to make sure you and your family don’t get sick

» Water is the best drink for kids

» Active kids are healthy kids

» Kids who are overweight can have lots of health problems

» Take your kids for their growth checks and vaccine shots

» A happy and healthy home will give kids the best start to life

» Dad-time is valuable time for kids
Healthy foods

By the time your kid is one year old, they should be eating the same foods as the rest of the family.

Kids will copy what Mum and Dad do, so you need to set a good example. Making healthy food choices, drinking water and being active is the best way to help your kids make the right choices.

The whole family needs to have healthy foods and drinks.

Kids have small stomachs. Remember to give kids smaller serves than adults and don’t force them to finish the meal if they are full.

- Give young kids time to eat
- Eat together at the family dinner table
- Turn the TV, computer, radio and phone off while the family is eating
- Use kid friendly bowls with edges, small plates and kid size cutlery
- Learning to eat can be messy and fun
- It’s a good time for kids to learn manners like saying please and thank you after eating
FOR A HEALTHY KAI, CHOOSE FROM THESE 5 FOOD GROUPS EVERY DAY

- Reduced fat milk, yoghurt & cheese
- Lean meat, fish, poultry, eggs, nuts & legumes
- Bread, cereals, rice, pasta & noodles
- Choose sometimes in small amounts
- Eat a wide variety of fruit
- Drink plenty of water
- Eat a wide variety of vegetables
- Use in small amounts
- Eat a wide variety of vegetables
- Drink plenty of water
- Eat a wide variety of vegetables
- Drink plenty of water
Learning to eat new foods

All foods are new for kids who are learning to eat.

Kids need to learn how new foods taste, feel and smell

- Some foods taste sour like lemon or sweet like grapes
- Some foods taste hard like apples, cold like yoghurt, or soft like banana
- Some foods smell fishy like tinned sardines or fruity like pineapple

Kids may need to try a new food many times before eating it. If they don’t like a new food the first time, try it again another time.

Offer a new food:

- With a favourite food
- With other foods that your kid already enjoys eating
- When other kids and adults are eating that food
Fussy eating

Kids may refuse to eat when they:

• Have too much food on their plate
• Have filled up on drinks and/or junk food
• Want to feed themselves
• Are too tired
• Don’t feel well

Be patient! Keep on giving your kid healthy foods. They will not starve themselves.

Things not to do:

• Don’t give kids adult size servings
• Don’t force your kids to eat or finish the food on their plate
• Don’t give your kids drinks or snacks before a meal
• Don’t feed your kids junk food and sweet drinks
• Don’t use junk food or sugary drinks to reward them or keep them quiet
Healthy family foods

Breakfast ideas:
- Porridge
- Wheat biscuits with milk and banana
- Boiled eggs and baked beans on toast
- Brown or grainy toast with cheese, avocado & tomato, or peanut butter
- Fruits like pawpaw, banana and kiwifruit with yoghurt

Lunch or dinner ideas:
- Chicken and veggie curry with brown rice
- Sandwiches with meat, or fish, or egg, and some salad veggies
- Meat, sweet potato and veggies
- Lean beef and veggie chop suey
- Boil up with lean meat and lots of veggies
- Steamed fish cooked with pele/aibika/kapisi and tomatoes with cooked green banana
- Raw fish salad with lots of veggies

Fresh, frozen and tinned vegetables are all good to use. Add different coloured veggies when you are cooking traditional recipes.
Healthy snack ideas:
- Fresh fruit like bananas, pawpaw, mango and grapes
- Chopped carrot or cucumber with dip
- Yoghurt or cheese
- Brown or grainy bread with cheese or peanut butter
- A boiled egg
- A small piece of chicken (no skin)
- Left over dinner

Pack a healthy lunch box for yourself and your kids before you go out. It’s healthier and cheaper.

Foods that are not good for the family:
- Tinned corned beef, turkey tails, meat pies, and chicken nuggets have too much fat and salt and not enough lean meat
- Junk foods like chips, biscuits, coconut buns, fried bread, island donuts and takeaway foods

If your kids are eating junk foods they are missing out on healthy foods.
Food for strong blood

Kids need lots of iron for strong blood and energy.

These foods are very high in iron. If you can, choose from this list first.

- Beef, lamb, pork
- Fish (no bones)
- Chicken (no skin)

Other foods which have some iron are:

- Baked beans
- Eggs
- Green leafy veggies like taro leaves, pele/aibika, kapisi/cabbage and watercress
- Peanut butter

There is no iron in the fatty parts of meat. The iron is in the lean meat.
Keep food safe to eat

Making and storing food safely makes sure you and your family don’t get sick.

Preparing food

- Wash your hands in warm soapy water before cooking or eating
- Wash fruit and veggies well before eating them
- Keep cooked food separate from raw food
- Use ONE clean cutting board for raw meat, fish or chicken. Wash it well with hot soapy water before using it to cut anything else

Storing food

- Store chilled foods like milk and cheese in the fridge straight away
- Put raw meat, chicken and fish into a covered container and store them on the lowest shelves of the fridge
- Thaw frozen meat and other foods in the fridge. Do not thaw food on the kitchen bench or in water
- Don’t leave foods to cool down on the stove or bench. Put them in the fridge after the steam has gone
- If you don’t have a fridge, use an esky with ice
Healthy drinks

Healthy drinks are just as important as healthy food.

Water
- Water is the best drink for kids
- Water has no sugar and won’t rot their teeth
- Keep cold water in the fridge, especially in hot weather

Milk
- Milk is good for strong bones and teeth
- Kids can continue to have breastmilk
- From one year old kids can drink fresh or powdered cow’s milk
- From two years old kids can drink reduced fat milk
- Limit milk to no more than 2 cups a day

At one year old kids don’t need infant formula or toddler milks. Spend the money on healthy food and drinks instead.
Kids will copy what Mum and Dad do, so if you drink lots of water the kids will too.

Drinks that are bad for kids:

- Fizzy drinks, energy drinks and sports drinks
- Cordial and fruit juice
- Flavoured milks like chocolate and strawberry milk

These drinks have lots of sugar. They can rot kids' teeth and are not good for their health.

Tips for drinks

- Offer your kids milk or water after meals
- Teach your kids to drink from a cup
- Get kids to take water bottles with them when they are away from home

Give kids a piece of fruit instead of fruit juice.
Healthy teeth

Looking after your kids teeth

Strong, healthy teeth will help kids chew the right foods to help them grow. It helps them to talk properly and want to smile.

Tips to keep teeth clean

• Brush your kids' teeth twice a day using a small soft toothbrush
• Use a small (pea sized) amount of kid's toothpaste
• Spit out the toothpaste but don’t rinse mouth out with water
• Drink plenty of water
• Eat raw veggies like carrots, cucumber and tomato
• Try not to use any dummies

Foods that cause teeth to rot

• Sweet and sticky foods like chocolates, lollies and ice blocks
• Sugary drinks like fizzy drinks, fruit juice and cordial
Being active

Kids need lots of physical activity – at least three hours, spread throughout the day

Tips for keeping kids active

- Let them walk with you instead of pushing them in the pram all the time
- Dance around to music
- Play in the backyard with skipping ropes and hula hoops
- Play games with balls and bats like touch footy, cricket and volleyball
- Walk the kids to the park or playground

Walking is a good daily family activity.
Kid's growth checks

Your kids will need regular checks to make sure they are growing strong and healthy. Take the kids to the doctor or health centre for their checks-ups.

Measurements

- It is best to weigh kids wearing light clothing
- For kids 0-2 years old, their height will be measured lying down
- For kids older than 2 years, their height is measured standing up straight
- All kids’ measurements will be plotted on the growth charts in their personal health record book

Kids get their growth checked at:

- 12, 15, 18 and 21 months old
- 2, 3 and 4 years old

If you are worried about your kid’s growth speak to your doctor.
Overweight kids

Stop our kids from becoming overweight

Kids who are overweight can have health problems at a young age and when they become adults. Overweight kids can face problems like:

- Bullying in the playground
- Trouble learning and sleeping
- Diabetes later on in life

Breastfeeding

The longer you breastfeed Baby, the less likely they will be an overweight kid.

Healthy food and drinks

- Choose foods from the 5 food groups on the Healthy Taro Leaf every day
- Give kids water or plain milk instead of sugary drinks

Healthy habits

- Be an active family
- Be a good role model
- Spend quality family time together
- Spend less time watching TV and playing video or computer games

If you think your kid might be overweight, speak to your doctor - they can help.
Dad time

Dad-time begins right at the start.

Dad plays a big role in raising healthy kids. Simply just be there as much as you can.

As a dad, you get to choose what kind of dad you want to be for your kids. Dads are the first male role models for their son or daughter.

Think about:
• What your Dad was like
• Doing things the same or differently

Less money is okay

Mum and Dad are usually worried about money. Don’t freak out!
• Sort out what you really need and what you want
• Kids grow out of clothes really quickly. You don’t have to buy new or branded clothes and shoes
• There’s nothing wrong with hand-me-downs or shopping at garage sales and op-shops

Kids need Dad-time, not lots of toys.
A great Dad gives time and attention to their son or daughter.

Dad-time with kids

• Hold, cuddle and make eye contact
• Comfort kids when they are crying or upset
• Spend time talking or singing to kids
• Spend time playing games or reading books with the kids
• Change nappy, bathe and dress kids
• Tell stories and put kids to bed

Extra ways to help Mum

• Go with Mum to the kids growth checks and vaccine shots
• Eat healthy and be active with Mum and the kids
• Help around the house and with cooking so Mum can rest up
• Talk to Mum about what help she might need
Happy healthy homes

The first few years of your kids life are really important. What they hear, feel and see around a happy and healthy home will give them the best start to life.

Healthy kitchen

You and your family are more likely to eat better if you have healthy foods at home.

- Always have veggies and fruit in the fridge
- Have a fruit bowl on the table/bench
- Keep water in the fridge ready for everyone to drink
- Try not to keep junk foods like chips, biscuits and sugary drinks in your cupboard

Screen time

Limit the time kids spend watching TV, playing video games, on the computer and Internet to no more than one hour a day.

A happy and healthy home is good for you and your kids.
Passing down cultural traditions

- Talk to your kids - It’s a good time to pass on your stories
- Teach cultural dances, songs, arts and crafts
- Help kids learn the language
- Teach them new things – let them help you even if it takes a bit longer
- Show your kids how to be respectful

Language in the house

Arguing or using bad language around the home can make kids feel scared and upset even if it wasn’t aimed at them. Try to use happy and kid-friendly words when the kids are around.

Smoking and Drugs

Smoking around your kids is just as bad as your kids smoking themselves. Kids are more likely to get sick with chest infections, asthma and ear infections if adults smoke around them. Ask smokers to smoke outside.

Drugs are not safe. Using drugs around your kids is harmful and you are not able to look after them properly.

Alcohol and Kava/Yaqona/’Ava/Wati

If you have had too much to drink you are not able to care for yourself, your kids or your family properly. If you want to have a drink, make sure you don’t have too much and make sure that your family will be safe and well cared for.

For help to quit smoking call Quitline on 13 78 48 or to stop using drugs/alcohol call the Alcohol and Drug Information Service on 1800 177 833 or talk to your doctor.
Kid's vaccine shots

Vaccine shots protect your kids from sickness. This helps to protect other kids and adults around them as well.

Vaccine shots train your kid's body to find and clear out bad germs.

In Australia, vaccine shots are free for kids from birth to four years of age.

**Kids need their shots at different times:**
- Birth (usually at the hospital)
- 2, 4, 6 months
- 12 months
- 18 months
- 4 years

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Make sure your kids' don’t miss their shots. Talk to your doctor about getting the kids shots on time.
Acknowledgements

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These services are confidential with experienced professionals. They can be contacted 24 hours a day 7 days a week.