



Supporting parents and caregivers with children birth to five years with early learning and development at home

Focus for the Week 1: Staying healthy while we play and learn

## Have fun! Learn about healthy habits

### PLAN YOUR DAY

#### WHY WASHING HANDS IS IMPORTANT



As part of the **morning routine** let your child wash his or her hands with soap and clean water for **20 seconds**.

It takes **20 seconds** to sing 'happy birthday' twice or to sing the first verse of our national anthem, *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika*.

Let your child make hand washing an important part of the day.

### BOOK OF THE DAY



**The Little Hare** is a book that helps parents and young children to describe issues related to illness and family support in a simple manner.

Download this book (its for free) on your smart phone. [https://www.unicef.org/southafrica/SAF\\_publications\\_littlehare.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/southafrica/SAF_publications_littlehare.pdf)

### For PARENTS

The correct way to prevent the spread of germs that are carried in droplets is by coughing or sneezing into your inner elbow, or by using a tissue to cover your mouth and nose. Put all tissues in the rubbish bin straight away, and wash your hands with either soap and clean water or an alcohol-based hand sanitiser.



Teach your child to do the same.

### CREATE A BOOK CORNER

In the play space put a few books, magazines or even old brochures that can be "reading material" as well as a cushion or small blanket to make the **book corner**.

Show the child/ren the book corner and talk about the books that are there. Invite her to sit on the cushion and read a 'book' whenever she would like to.



Today's colour is **BLUE**

Look around in the house with your child for all things that are blue.

## Learning together is FUN

Here are some playful activities to do with your young child today (and other days too)

### Getting active in the morning

**Play the game "Follow the leader"**. Have your family take turns being the leader. The leader gets in front of the line with everyone else behind them copying the leader's actions. Wiggle your arms while walking, march, bunny hop, or any other similar action.

*This game helps children to listen and follow instructions which is a very important communication skill which develops language.*

### Younger than 18 months

Baby **watches** and **listens** to simple songs about healthy activities, for example "This is the way we brush our teeth, wash our hands, stamp our feet".

Children understand words and language that they hear long before they start speaking. *By singing songs and doing the actions about healthy living, children will learn about how to care well for themselves.*

### 18 months to 36 months

**Let's play House:** Let your child take care of 'sick' dolls by keeping them warm and wiping their noses. Encourage her to use clean paper (small pieces) for each doll and to **throw the used ones in the bin** explaining **why** it is hygienic to do that.

Let her **wash her hands** after she has wiped their noses.



### 3 to 5 years

**Let's play House:** Older child washes and dries dolls and other play objects and squeezes out the cloth. She also washes the doll's clothes from time to time.

Not only does this help your child to develop her **fine motor control** (control and use of small muscle in the hands), but it also stresses the **importance of cleanliness**. While they are doing this, you can either wash or iron clothes for the family and sing / talk about what you are doing.

*By playing 'House', children are learning how to think critically, solve problems and form concepts that help them to understand cause and effect, for example, if they wash the clothes then they will be clean and healthy.*

### BATH TIME



Put some **items in the bath** that she can use to pour water from one item to another. Pouring water from one container to the next helps her with her first understanding of Mathematics and Science as well as developing the skill of linking what her hand is doing and what she is seeing. While doing that, talk to her about the day.

**Make bath time, FUN time!** For you and your child.

### HEALTHY HABITS

Wash your hands often to stay healthy!

Remember to keep it **PLAYFUL** and **FUN**. That is how young children learn.