

Flying Start for kids

Healthy Start: The 3-year-old Child Health
and Development Check

Presented by Claire Murray,
Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS)



Government of
South Australia

Acknowledgement of Country

From the heart:

We acknowledge the Aboriginal peoples as the First peoples of South Australia and as custodians of the lands, waters, skies and communities where we live, learn and raise children.

We recognise Aboriginal peoples as having the longest living culture, raising children safe and strong in their Identity, Community, Culture, and connection to Country.

We pay our deep respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge their role as the first knowledge sharers for children.

Aboriginal peoples, working with and for children, are central in shaping our work. Their wisdom, advice, and guidance enrich our practices and help create more inclusive and culturally safe environments for children and families.

We respect Aboriginal peoples' ways of being, doing and wise practices guiding our continual learning.

Together, we walk alongside Aboriginal communities to build stronger and more supportive futures for all children.



What we will cover



- ✓ The importance of partnership between CaFHS and early childhood educators to support better outcomes for children
- ✓ What is CaFHS role?
- ✓ Why age 3 matters
- ✓ The 3-year-old Child Health and Development Check
- ✓ Advice to support you to confidently guide families

Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS)

- Free, trusted service supporting children's health, development and wellbeing
- Family-centred and non-judgemental, providing reassurance and practical advice
- Helps families feel confident and informed about their child's development
- Supports all families across South Australia with children from birth to 5 years
- Home visits, clinic appointments and place-based services
- **Key services:**
 - Child Health and Development Checks (CHDCs)
 - Parenting and feeding support
 - Early Parenting Groups
 - Parent Helpline
 - Place-based community outreach



How CaFHS supports diverse families

CaFHS offers inclusive, family-centred care through:

- Providing free access to interpreters and longer appointments
- No Medicare card required
- Culturally safe and welcoming services
- Accessible health literacy resources
- Additional support for Aboriginal children and families



The important role of Early Childhood Education and Care services

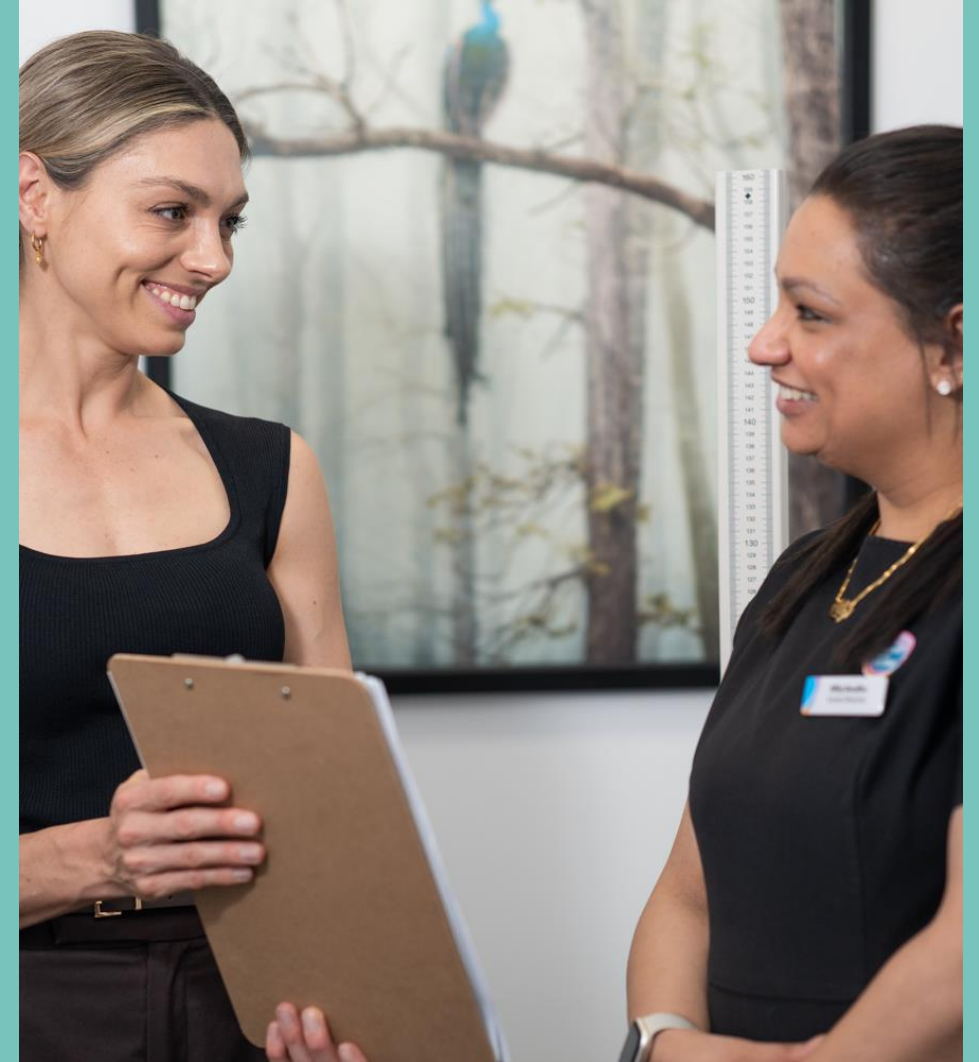
- Key service staff know children and families deeply and often notice changes first
- Your relationships with families position you as a trusted and influential voice
- Parents and caregivers look to you for guidance, reassurance and advice
- You play a vital role in early identification and support



The opportunity for partnership

- Shared goal
- Complementary roles
- Stronger together
- Trusted pathways
- Early action
- Mutual respect

Together, we can create meaningful and lasting impacts for children and their families.



Child Health and Development Checks (CHDCs)

- The early years of a child's life are an exciting time of huge growth, development and change
- Every child grows in their own way and at their own pace, and families know their children best
- These checks offer a chance to pause and look at a child's growth, health and development - physically, emotionally, socially and in how they learn and communicate
- All CaFHS checks are free and available to families across South Australia

When is your child due for their **FREE** health and development check?

1-4
weeks

8
weeks

6-9
months

12
months

18-24
months

3
years

4-5
years

Child and Family Health Service (CaFHS) offer free health and development checks to make sure your child is healthy and developing as expected for their age.

To book an appointment call
1300 733 606

Parent Helpline
1300 364 100



Government of South Australia
Women's and Children's
Health Network



What is included in a CHDC?

CHDCs are **free** and include:

- Discussion of family concerns (e.g. sleep, behaviour, feeding)
- Holistic health and development check
 - Speech and language development
 - Social and emotional wellbeing
 - Developmental screening (ASQ)
 - Hearing/vision screening (4-5yo CHDC)
- Reassurance, early support, practical advice



The 3-year-old CHDC

- Around the age of 3, children go through a period of significant change, with big leaps in their development
- Children may be adjusting to preschool and new routines, and this can also come with:
 - Big feelings
 - Increased autonomy
 - Navigating friendships and relationships

This is a critical time to identify any potential development concerns and connect children with support before they start school.



What we've heard

- **79%** of families seek information and reassurance about their child's health and development from their childcare/preschool
- **50%** of families lack information and knowledge about the later stage Child Health and Development Checks
- **46%** of families are not aware the 3-year-old check exists

Case Study

OFFI



Bookings

Families can make a booking at their local CaFHS site by calling

1300 733 606

For further information, families can visit www.cafhs.sa.gov.au



How you can support families

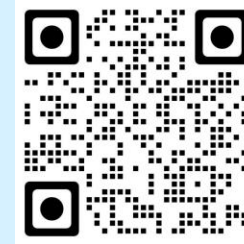
- Simple conversations about child development and wellbeing
- Recommend Child Health and Development Checks as a normal and helpful step
- Use positive language: “Many families find this check really reassuring”
- Share information about CaFHS as a free, trusted support service
- Normalise seeking support — not just when there are concerns
- Gently guide families if you notice changes or developmental differences
- Reinforce that CaFHS is there to support, not judge
- Help families feel confident and comfortable taking the next step



What's next?



- **Promote Child Health and Development Checks** as a positive and valuable opportunity for families to connect with trusted support and gain reassurance about their child's development.
- Encourage families to **download the [Early Years SA app](#)** for trusted information and reminders on when checks are due.
- Direct families to earlychildhood.sa.gov.au/healthchecks for information specific to Child Health and Development Checks, or flyingstart.sa.gov.au for general information about the reforms.



Stay informed and connected



- Stay up to date with our fortnightly **Flying Start partners e-bulletin**, delivered straight to your inbox.
- Visit the **Flying Start Partner Page** for key information, and resources to support you in delivering Flying Start Preschool.
 - Password: FlyingStart!
- Connect with us on social media:
 - Instagram [@earlychildhoodsa](#)
 - Facebook [@earlychildhoodsa](#)
 - LinkedIn [Office for Early Childhood Development](#)
- Please contact oe.cd.chdcinfo@sa.gov.au if you have questions.

