



Australian Government
Department of Health and Ageing

Letter for Parents and Carers regarding the Healthy Kids Check

Dear Member,

Please find attached a copy of a letter from the Hon Nicola Roxon MP, Minister for Health and Ageing about the Healthy Kids Check.

This letter will be sent to the parents/carers of approximately 800,000 children between 2 and 5 years of age, identified from the Medicare Australia client database, from 23 January to 6 February this year.

This initiative was launched by the Minister in 2008 and the purpose of the letter is to raise awareness of the availability of the Check. The letter also includes information about immunisation and outlines the *Get Set 4 Life Guide*, a publication that provides practical information on key areas of health and age appropriate development.

As the contact number for the Immunise Australia information line is included in the letter to parents and carers, the Information Line will be ready to field inquiries about the initiative.

We appreciate the flow-on effect this letter may have on service providers in the States/Territories and therefore request that this notification is circulated as widely as possible through your networks to ensure that general practitioners and practice nurses are informed of the mail out.

For your information this advice has also been provided to the Child Health and Wellbeing Subcommittee of AHMAC, which provides national leadership on child health and wellbeing issues.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jenny Bourne'.

Jenny Bourne
National Immunisation Committee Chair
Assistant Secretary
Targeted Prevention Programs Branch
Population Health Division

8 January 2009



**THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP
MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AGEING**

Dear Parents/Carer

There is nothing more important to the future of this country than our children and their health. This is why the Rudd Government has introduced the Healthy Kids Check and the *Get Set 4 Life - habits for healthy kids* Guide. These two initiatives are a key part of the Government's Plan for Early Childhood and demonstrate that this government is serious about improving the health of our children.

I recently launched the Healthy Kids Check, which will provide every 4 year old child in Australia with a basic health check to ensure that they are healthy, fit and ready to learn when they start school. The Healthy Kids Check is now available to all 4 year olds at or around the time of their 4 year old immunisation and can be delivered by your local general practitioner or practice nurse.

As part of the Healthy Kids Check, you will be provided with a copy of the *Get Set 4 Life -- habits for healthy kids* Guide. The Guide provides practical information on your child's health and covers techniques and tips for teaching your child healthy habits that could last a lifetime. Key areas of health and age appropriate development covered in the booklet include: healthy eating, regular exercise, speech and language, oral health and more. I hope that the Guide provides you with valuable information on what general behaviours you can expect from your 4 year old at this time, the importance of establishing healthy life habits and how to develop and promote good health for you and your child.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind you that it is recommended that children receive further immunisations at 4 years of age to ensure long-lasting protection of their health. If you have not already done so, I encourage you to see your general practitioner or immunisation clinic to take advantage of this program.

Immunisation is a simple, safe and effective way of protecting children against harmful diseases before they come into contact with them in the community. By immunising your child at 4 years of age, you are not only protecting them, but also others in the community, by reducing the spread of disease. For more information about immunisation talk to your doctor or other health care provider, call the Immunise Australia Infoline on **1800 671 811** (Freecall) or visit the website at immunise.health.gov.au

The start of school is an ideal opportunity to make sure all children are as fit and healthy as they can be, since the basic foundation of good learning is good health and the establishment of healthy life habits will assist children now and into the future.

Yours sincerely

NICOLA ROXON