



# ERASMUS + VET STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP IENE 8 - EMPOWERING MIGRANT AND REFUGEE FAMILIES WITH PARENTING SKILLS

Bite sized Learning Tool no. 4.2.

HEALTHY CHILD (AGES 2-6 YEARS OLD)

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# HEALTHY CHILD AGED 2 TO 6 YEARS OLD

## WHAT DO WE MEAN BY HEALTHY CHILD?



- Having a healthy lifestyle, eating well and being physically active helps children to: a) build strong bones, b) grow and develop healthily, c) improve their concentration at school, d) maintain a healthy weight, and e) be alert and active.
- Being unhealthy can lead to later life, such as: a) Type 2 diabetes, b) high blood pressure and cholesterol levels, c) some types of cancers, d) heart disease, e) stroke, f) joint problems and breathing problems, and g) being overweight and obese.

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## WHAT IS HEALTHY CHILD DEVELOPMENT?



- Early Childhood - 2 Through 6 Years At the beginning of this developmental period, a child's understanding of the world, people, and objects is bound by what he can see, hear, feel, and manipulate physically.
- By the end of early childhood, the process of thinking moves beyond the here and now to incorporate the use of mental symbols and the development of fantasy. For the infant, mobility is a goal to be mastered. For the active young child, it is a mechanism for exploration and increasing independence.
- The 2-year-old is beginning to use the art of imitation in his repetition of familiar sounds and physical gestures.
- The 6-year-old has mastered most of the complex rules of the languages that are spoken in the home and can communicate thoughts and ideas effectively.

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## WHEN TO CALL A DOCTOR



- Call your doctor anytime you have a concern about your child's physical or emotional health. Be sure to call if your child: Is not reaching developmental milestones as expected. Is not growing at a steady pace. Has lost skills he or she used to have, such as talking or running. Is overly aggressive, violent, or abusive. Doesn't seem to be doing well, even though you can't pinpoint what makes you uneasy.

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## IMPORTANT ASPECTS



- Regarding key aspects for a Healthy Child, we need to note:
- General physical health
- Emotional, behavioural and social development
- Physical development
- Speech and language development
- Self-care skills and independence
- Immunisations

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## DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES

- The young child is beginning to develop a sense of himself as separate from his parents or primary caregivers.
- By the end of early childhood, the well-adjusted child, having internalized the security of early bonds, pursues new relationships outside the family as an individual in his own right.
- Understanding and respecting this evolving independence is a common parental challenge.
- Because children in this age group grow and progress rapidly, parents anticipate and analyze how their child is reaching developmental milestones such as walking, talking, and socializing.
- When parents express concerns about how their child is developing, the health care professional should listen and observe carefully.
- A wait-and-see attitude will not suffice, particularly if the child falls into an at-risk group.
- A proactive approach is essential.

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## SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT



- More is known today than ever before about the neurological development of infants, and the impact of poor attachment and negative parenting on a child's physical, cognitive and socio-emotional development – not only in childhood, but also as a key determinant of adult health.