



Developmental Surveillance Scheme



Why do we need to monitor children's development?

Children undergo rapid changes in growth and development during their first few years of life. For most children this is an uneventful process. However, for some, problem may arise. By monitoring children's growth and development regularly, we aim to identify timely any growth, development or behavioural problems, so that appropriate management can be initiated.

What is "Developmental Surveillance Scheme"?

The Family Health Service has launched Developmental Surveillance Scheme (DSS) in all MCHCs since 2007. Developmental surveillance is a continuous process. DSS emphasizes partnership with parents, teachers and other caregivers and aims to enable parents and other caregivers to be competent and effective in promoting and observing children's development. Information on child development and parenting is provided to parents and other caregivers through discussion with professionals, leaflets, videos and web-based resources as well as parenting activities and public talks. Parents can also join the Parent-Child e-Link to receive electronic information relevant to the age of their children.

How is DSS carried out?

For the convenience of parents, surveillance interviews will be scheduled together with other essential services such as **immunization**. Visits at other ages will be arranged if your child needs closer monitoring.

During the interviews, our nurses will **ask you questions** to understand your perceptions of the child's development and behaviour at home (or at school, if applicable), identify your concerns and **make necessary observation** of the child. It covers different developmental areas like gross and fine motor, language and communication, social behaviour and play, self-care, vision and hearing as well as general concerns. We rely a lot on your information to arrive at a reasonable conclusion about your child's development.



Department of Health

How can my child join DSS?

All children registered with MCHCs will automatically be covered by the DSS.

Will I get any feedback on my child's progress?

At the end of the interview, the nurse will **explain** to you about the progress of your child in different areas of development, **provide necessary guidance** on his/her future development and address any concern you may have. If the nurse considers that your child's development is comparable to children of the same age, she will give you an appointment for the next routine visit and all you need to do is to continue with your own observation. If you have any query or worry before the next scheduled visit, please do not hesitate to make an appointment to discuss with our nurses.

What will happen if there is a problem?

If your child does not perform as expected in certain areas of development or the nurse suspects a problem either from your report or her own observation, she will give you an appointment for a follow up visit, or arrange a consultation by doctor for a more detailed developmental assessment. Referral to specialist will be arranged if needed.

How can I help to promote and monitor my child's development?

As parents or caregivers, you have constant access to and interaction with your child. We depend a lot on your partnership. We have a series of child development, parenting and other related leaflets, public talks, 24-hour pre-recorded Parenting Hotline as well as web based resources. These provide you with useful information to better understand your child's development and parenting needs. If you are concerned about your child at any stage, please let us know. We do take your concern seriously.

If you have any concerns or queries, please discuss with nurses and doctors in any MCHC.



Website : www.fhs.gov.hk

24-hour Health Information Hotline : 2112 9900

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