

# Health and development checks in preschools and long day care services

## Information sheet for ECEC services

The NSW Department of Education and NSW Health are rolling out free 4-year-old health and development checks in early childhood education and care (ECEC) services in partnership with NSW Health local health districts.

By offering the program at your service, we can increase the number of 4-year-olds getting this important check and identify any support they may need early – before they start school.

### What to expect

Health professionals from NSW Health will check children's health and development in your ECEC service.

This might include:

- their listening and talking skills
- their social skills and behaviour
- their gross and fine motor skills
- their learning, thinking and problem-solving skills
- how their bodies are growing: their vision, hearing, height, weight, and teeth.

No vaccinations are given.

Educators will be present to support children during the checks.



### Opt in and spread the word

ECEC services are invited to participate in the program.

If you opt in, there are some resources for you to share with families with 4 year-old children to let them know about this exciting program.

These include:

- information sheet
- newsletter
- poster.

# Frequently asked questions

## Q: Why bring health and development checks into ECEC services?

We know many children in NSW are not getting their routine 4-year check. As well, about 2 in 5 children are starting school developmentally off-track. We also know that many 4-year-olds attend preschool or long day care.

Offering checks in ECEC services will ensure more children receive this important check and are supported if they require further care.

This is an extra option to getting the check through a doctor or local [child and family health service](#).

## Q: What type of health professionals will conduct the checks?

Health professionals from NSW Health will be doing these checks. These might be child and family health nurses, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists.

## Q: What do ECEC services need to do if they opt in?

Your local health district will contact you to discuss bringing the program into your service. They will also work with you to deliver the checks.

Once ECEC services have agreed to participate in the program, they are encouraged to share the information sheet and newsletter with eligible families and display the poster in their service.

Educators will be responsible for distributing and collecting the signed consent form from families.

## Q: Do ECEC services need to do anything during the checks?

Educators will support children during the checks.

Where families have given consent, educators can share information on the child's development with the visiting health professional.

## Q: Do ECEC services need to do anything after the check?

Families will receive information on how they can keep supporting their child's growth and development. This might include further support from health professionals and ECEC staff.

Where families have given consent, health professionals may share information with educators on how they can support that child's development in their service.

## Q: How was the health and development checks in ECEC services program developed?

The program was co-designed by the NSW Department of Education and NSW Health in consultation with stakeholders including ECEC and health professionals, academics and families. The model being rolled out is based on findings from the Health and Development Checks in Preschool Study conducted from November 2022 to March 2023.

## Q: When will the program be available in all ECEC services?

The program is starting in 6 local health districts: Illawarra Shoalhaven, Hunter New England, Mid North Coast, Nepean Blue Mountains, South Eastern Sydney and South Western Sydney.

More services will join throughout 2024 as the program expands to all local health districts.

## Q: What if a child has already received their 4-year check?

Any child that has already had their 4-year check will not need to repeat it through ECEC services.

## Q: Can 5-year-old children receive the checks?

Yes, if they have not already had their 4-year check and are enrolled in a participating preschool or long day care service.

## Q: Can parents/carers attend the check?

Yes, parents and carers can attend the check with their child if they like.