

100+ More Messages

Health Messages to Learn & Share



About

Children for Health is dedicated to the promotion of health education in developing countries, focused on developing children as agents of change and communicators of essential health messages in their families and communities. We originally created 10 messages for 10 topics, but soon realised that there were more topics that could help children, their families and their communities. So far we have created messages for:

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In this book, you will find that each topic section has one or two pages with the essential messages. We've also included any posters that are currently available. While children are learning these messages, we encourage them to:

- **MAKE** the messages their using their own words in their own language!
- **LEARN** these messages so they never forget them!
- **ADD** these messages to their collection!
- **SHARE** these messages with other children and their families!

On the Children for Health website we have advice on the best ways to teach these messages, ideas for what children can make, do and ask to better understand each topic and games/activities.



12 Anaemia Messages



1. Anaemia is caused by a shortage of iron (haemoglobin) in the blood. It causes weakness, fatigue, a pale face & ears & brittle nails.
2. Malaria, intestinal worm infections, HIV/AIDS and TB and other infections can lead to a loss of iron in the blood and then anaemia.
3. People with anaemia lack healthy blood cells to carry oxygen around the body. This leads to weakness in the body (physical) and mind (cognitive), and even death.
4. Anaemia is especially serious for babies, young children, pregnant women and adolescents.
5. A finger stick test at a health clinic can quickly test for anaemia.
6. Prevent anaemia by getting iron from food each day. Iron supplements can be used in emergency but can cause stomach-aches and constipation.
7. Breastfeeding prevents anaemia & gives babies iron stores for many months even after the introduction of solid foods.
8. Cow's milk is low in iron and too much can even cause loss of iron. This is especially serious for babies & young children.
9. Eat iron rich food like red meat, poultry, fish, cereals, dark green leafy veg, eggs, nuts & seeds, dried fruit, peas, lentils plus foods with vitamin C (helps us absorb iron).
10. Potato skins are rich in nutrients and contain five times the amount of iron as the flesh. Leave skins on fries, jackets, baked, roasted and boiled potatoes.
11. Mix iron rich grains like amaranth, quinoa & barley grains with wheat flour when you cook.
12. Limit caffeine, aerated drinks, alcohol and sugary drinks which reduce absorption of iron in the body.

Anaemia

What can children make, do and ask?

A **POSTER** showing iron rich foods that they should eat every day.

WRITE a play about someone who starts to feel unwell and goes on to be diagnosed with anaemia. What happens next? What treatments do they try? Do they work?

WATCH loved ones for symptoms and encourage them to visit a health worker if they show any signs.

FIND out what iron rich foods could be added to their everyday diet at home and ask parents for them.

ASK a health worker or a science teacher to tell them more about blood is made of and how anaemia impacts people.

SURVEY their family members to find out if anyone they know has anaemia. Ask how they were diagnosed and treated. Ask how they felt before and after treatment.



14 Coronavirus Messages



1. Coronavirus has many names: Coronavirus, Covid and Covid-19.
2. A virus is a harmful germ which is so small we cannot see it. When a virus is inside a body it makes more copies of itself and this makes us cough, feel tired and have fever.
3. Coronavirus spreads easily from one person to another via droplets through the air when an infected person talks, sings, coughs or sneezes.
4. Coronavirus affects everyone differently. Some feel fine, some feel a little bit ill, others feel very ill and have to go to hospital and some get so ill that they die.
5. Coronavirus moves into someone's body through the T zone (eyes, mouth, nose) so we should try not to touch our faces.
6. Coronavirus has infected people all over the world and although vaccines and anti-viral treatments can help minimise the effects of Coronavirus there is currently no cure.
7. Some people have Coronavirus without knowing or feeling ill, but they can spread it to others.
8. Children and young people do not seem to get ill as easily as adults BUT they can spread the virus to adults.
9. People who are elderly, chronically ill or have a weakened immune system are particularly vulnerable to Coronavirus.
10. We should use rapid lateral flow (LFT) tests when we feel unwell or before we visit someone vulnerable to ensure that we do not spread the virus.
11. When we return home from being out we should wash our hands properly and clean anything that was touched by others.
12. If someone in your home falls ill, everyone in the house should avoid mixing with others until they're better. This is called self-isolation.
13. To stop droplets spreading we catch a cough or sneeze in our elbow or a tissue (which we then throw away) then wash our hands.
14. If someone is unwell, they should wear a face masks or covering to help reduce droplets spreading to others.

10 Type 2 Diabetes Messages



1. Our body breaks down what we eat and drink into fuel that our bodies need to grow, move and think. This is called digestion.
2. During digestion, some of what we eat and drink is turned into a sugar called glucose. Food like rice, bread, French fries, and noodles and snacks like candy, crackers, desserts and sweet drinks turn into glucose quickly.
3. When we move, our bodies use energy from glucose. If we stay still for too long, the glucose is not used and too much is left in the body.
4. There are different types of diabetes. Type 2 is the most common. It is mainly caused by eating too many processed foods, sugary foods, drinking too many sugary drinks and not moving enough.
5. Type 2 Diabetes is a health condition that happens when there is too much glucose in the blood. It can make a person tired, weak, thirsty and feel ill but some people do not feel any symptoms.
6. Prevent Type 2 Diabetes! 1. Eat and drink less sugar. 2. Eat meals with colourful fruits and vegetables. 3. Move more. 4. Drink mostly water. 5. Get eight hours of sleep at night.
7. Type 2 Diabetes affects the circulation of the blood. If not controlled it can damage the eyes, heart, kidneys, nerves, skin and lower limbs.
8. To make sure our body is strong inside and out, we must be as active as we can.
9. Prediabetes happens when sugar levels in the blood are high. It can be reduced by eating well and moving more. More and more children have prediabetes which can lead to Type 2 diabetes.
10. Changing what we eat and drink and moving more can be HARD at first. Help from friends and family can make eating healthy and moving more fun for everyone. Start today with one small change.

Diabetes

What can children make, do or ask?

USE song, dance and drama to share Diabetes messages with others!

MAKE posters about how to prevent Type 2 Diabetes.

MAKE up stories or plays about a family where their lifestyle changes reduced prediabetes.

CREATE stories or dramas showing children teaching others how to make the changes to eat better and move more and why this is important. Don't forget it's hard.

CREATE stories or drama about why people get stuck in their habits and do not want to change.

TRACK what you and a friend eat and drink for a week. It's fun to do this in pairs, groups or as a family.

MAKE A LIST of activities that you enjoy – like dancing, jumping, swimming. If you don't like sports and exercise – just moving or 'fidgeting' more throughout the day makes a big difference and everyone can do that!

TALK to the person who decides what food and drink to buy and cook.

HAVE healthy sleep habits and try not to worry about things you can't change.

ORGANISE a campaign to warn others about the impact of Type 2 diabetes on a person and a family.

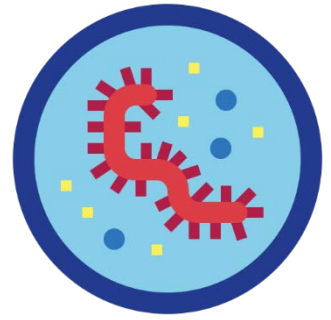
INVITE a health worker to visit the school and talk about the different types of diabetes.

LOOK at labels on food that is commonly bought in your family.

CALCULATE how much sugar is in this food per serving.



20 Ebola Messages



1. Ebola is a disease that makes people very ill and sometimes die.
2. Ebola is caused by a virus you can't see which stops a person's body working properly.
3. The Ebola virus lives inside fluids of an infected person (like blood, spit, pee, poo and vomit).
4. There are many signs of Ebola: headache, fever, pains in the stomach and muscles, diarrhoea & vomiting.
5. Ebola spreads when someone who is well touches the fluids of a person who has the Ebola virus.
6. Someone can have the Ebola virus in their body for three weeks before they start to feel ill.
7. It is only when a person starts to feel ill that they can spread Ebola to someone else.
8. Do not touch people who are infected or anything they have touched or used. Keep young children away from those who are sick.
9. Do not touch or eat bushmeat (wild meat like bats or monkeys) as this can have Ebola.
10. Wash your hands with soap often and always after having a pee or poo.
11. When someone has the signs of Ebola, a health worker is called to help to take the sick person to a clinic.
12. At the clinic, health workers take a small amount of blood from the sick person to look for signs of Ebola in the blood. This is called testing.
13. Health workers looking after people with Ebola wear special suits, masks and gloves so that they do not catch Ebola.
14. Health workers are brave, kind people trying to stop Ebola spreading to others and making them sick.

Ebola Messages Continued

15. At the moment (January 2025), there is no medicine to cure people with Ebola, but scientists are working hard to create medicine and a vaccine.
16. When someone dies from Ebola the body has a lot of the Ebola virus, so it should be put carefully into a bag and taken for burial.
17. When someone gets well from Ebola and has been checked by a health worker and comes home they can be treated as normal.
18. Someone who has recovered from Ebola is safe to touch and is no different to anyone else.
19. If your relatives get Ebola, they need comforting words, but not to be touched or hugged.
20. Young children do not understand Ebola and not to touch people they love. Help comfort them: play and sing.



20 Eye Health Messages



1. Keep eyes healthy by: 1. Keeping hands, face and eyes clean and free from flies. 2. Eating food rich in Vitamin A like eggs and milk, yellow and orange vegetables, fruits and leafy greens. 3. Being immunised. 4. Getting help for itchy, red or infected eyes. 5. Walking carefully when holding sharp objects.
2. Wash your hands properly before touching the T-zone on your face (eyes, nose and mouth), as this is where germs enter the body. Avoid touching the T-zone when you can.
3. To have a balanced healthy diet eat different foods of different kinds. Go, Grow and Glow for strong bodies and healthy eyes.
4. For the best eye health babies need just breast milk for the first 6 months. Breast milk contains Vitamin A.
5. Vitamin A pills can be given to young children once or twice a year. It helps protect their eyes.
6. Millions of parents all over the world take their children to be immunised to make sure they are safe, strong and protected from diseases like measles that can harm the eyes.
7. Our eyes are shaped like a small ball. The front part of the eye has a coloured circle, the iris and a smaller black part, the pupil.
8. The pupil lets in light, like a window, so that we can see. Structures inside the eye focus light so that we can see clearly. The eyelid helps to protect the eye and keep out light when we sleep. Tears carried by the eyelid across the eye, wash away dirt and help keep our eyes clean. That is why we blink. Eyelashes help to keep out dust, dirt and flies.
9. There are several different kinds of eye health personnel. Some treat eye diseases, others test eyes and choose ways to help a person see better.
10. Children who cannot see clearly may need an eye test. They may hold a reading book too close, look at the floor, seem shy, don't want to play or copy class notes from another book close by.

Eye Health Continued

11. Some children are born with white dots in their eyes. This causes blindness and can be treated.
12. Eye checks find out why a person cannot see clearly and show eye health personnel what to do to improve vision.
13. Spectacles are the simplest way to correct short and long sight and help people see clearly.
14. Healthy children can have vision problems. As they get older, most healthy adults need spectacles or lenses to improve their vision.
15. Wearing spectacles to improve vision is vital for children and adults with vision problems to lead a normal happy life. Friends and family must encourage them.
16. When children get spectacles at first there may be many reasons why they do not wear them. Friends, family and teachers can help to support them.
17. If an eye is hurt in an accident, wash with clean water and cover the eye with something clean and get help from a health worker fast.
18. When an eye looks pink or red, this might be conjunctivitis. The eye feels itchy, hot and sticky. Get help after a week if it is not better.
19. Conjunctivitis spreads easily so a child with it must not touch others without washing hands properly. Do not share cloths used to clean infected eyes or share towels or bedding until the eyes are better.
20. If the eye has white or yellow sticky discharge, the germs might be bacteria. Antibiotic ointment must be used for 7 days or as instructed by a health worker.

Eye Health

What can children do?

EAT lots of different fresh colourful food every day or week.

ASK for more eggs, beans and orange and yellow fresh food like orange sweet potatoes.

WASH their face and eyes with soap and help younger children too.

MEMORISE the messages and **SHARE** the messages with many others.

Create a **STORY** or **SERIES** of **IMAGINARY PICTURES** to help remember the messages.

FIND OUT and **RECORD** the answers to questions like: Which mothers in your community breastfeed their babies and why? Are the children in our family immunised against measles?



10 Inclusion Messages



1. We all need the chance to feel included and be part of a group to feel accepted, just as we are.
2. Some people are born with extra challenges that affect how they see, hear, move, speak, or think. Anyone can face physical or mental challenges at different times in their life, due to accidents or disease.
3. For healthy, happy development, every child needs to feel they belong in all family, community, school, class, and club activities and be part of a group of friends.
4. Children who have difficulties with one thing often have abilities in others. Let's think about our own difficulties and strengths.
5. Here's how you can help me: 1. Get to know me. 2. Ask if and how I need help! (I might not.) 3. Listen to me. 4. Ask what else might help.
6. We all feel unhappy when we are excluded. If you know someone who is struggling, pay attention, and see if you can help.
7. If you see someone bullying, hurting, name-calling, laughing at or neglecting someone then do something to help or report it to someone you trust.
8. With an adult, check that everyone can get in and out of places in school and in the community, especially, classrooms, toilets, play areas, and handwashing stations.
9. So I have challenges! Don't you? See what I can do, not what I cannot. Play with me, learn with me. Let's be friends.
10. If I don't know how to include someone, I will ask them, their family or others in the community to help me.

Inclusion

What can children make, do and ask?

MAKE a lists of ideas for ways they can include others.

CREATE a poster and display it in your classroom to remind all children of the part they play to support each other every day.

SHARE STORIES of the times when we have felt included and excluded and how this made us feel.

TAKE a game you know and change it or play it in a new way so everyone can play it.

Ideas to support children facing **extra challenges**

- Make sure the children who need it are supported by a local CBR service.
- Notice and ask when a child seems isolated, quiet or sad.
- Help a child catch up with lessons after an illness and absence.
- Prepare activities and lessons carefully, making adaptations so all children can participate.
- Some children may have more than one challenge to deal with e.g. speaking and moving.
- Be ambitious for children with extra challenges now and for their future.

Ideas to support those with **vision challenges**

- Keep the home and school environment the same and predictable and explain when there are changes.
- Do you best to enable children to understand what is on a blackboard, a screen and a notebook.
- Paint clear and rich mental pictures with words when explaining or reading aloud.

Ideas to support those with **hearing challenges**

- Learn some sign language.
- Speak clearly and slowly.
- Respond patiently and in a friendly way if a child asks for a direction or explanation to be repeated.

Ideas to support those with **movement challenges**

- Make sure there is easy access to all areas of the home and school.
- Move around inside calmly and steadily.
- Play stimulating activities and games that all children can join in.

Ideas to support those with **learning difficulties**

- Involve all those important to the child to help them set goals and milestones together.
- Adapt activities so that the pace is right.
- Give extra time and extra support.

10 Anti-Bullying Messages



1. Bullying is when someone keeps hurting, teasing, or threatening another person on purpose. It can happen at school, on the way home, at home, in the community, or even online.
2. Bulling can happen between individuals or in groups, and it affects everyone – making children feel scared, lonely or sad, families worry, and schools are unsafe for learning.
3. Types of bullying are: Physical (hitting, kicking, pushing); Verbal (name-calling, teasing or using mean words); Social/Emotional (leaving someone out, spreading rumours or embarrassing someone in front of others); Cyberbullying – through phones, messages or social media.
4. Every child deserves kindness and respect. Everyone is unique and differences are what makes us special.
5. Say NO to bullying when we see it. Don't be a bystander. Stop bullying by helping and supporting others.
6. If you feel bullied, don't fight back. Walk away and tell an older child, or a trusted adult like a teacher or parent.
7. Never share or send hurtful messages online. Show an older child or an adult if it happens. Don't stay silent.
8. Everyone is responsible to ensure children feel safe. Together we can make our school a 'bullying free zone'.
9. Children who bully others can change with support, leadership responsibilities, clear boundaries, and consequences to learn better ways.
10. Children who bully others often do it to gain control or seek attention. Stop a child bullying by standing together.

Anti-Bullying

What can children make, do and ask?

STAND together and promise to make the school a “Bullying Free Zone”.

START a Child Rights Club to support kindness, respect, and safety for everyone.

PLAY the Resilience Dance: “Fall Over! Get Up! Forward 1, 2, 3! Back one! Super Better!” (See **Our True Colours storybook** for more).

LISTEN to and **DISCUSS** stories about bullying – how it happens, how it makes people feel, and what can be done to stop it.

WITH ADULTS, set up a “time-out” space where children who bully can reflect, talk, and join training led by older children or teachers.

ASK each other important questions:

- Have you ever seen or experienced bullying?
- How does bullying make people feel?
- If you are bullied, what can you do and who can you talk to?
- What does it mean to be a bystander?
- How can you step up and help instead of staying silent?
- What can we do together to make a difference at school?

WORK together on a school plan to prevent bullying. Think about:

- what each child can do for themselves,
- what one child can do for another,
- and what children can do together as a group.

CREATE colourful posters with strong anti-bullying slogans for our classrooms and playgrounds.

MAKE our own Anti-Bullying messages using our own words and in our own language.

MEMORISE the messages so we never forget them.

MEMORISE and use these 10 slogans, one for each finger:

1. Be a Friend, Do Not Bully Others
2. Speak Up, Stand Strong
3. Words Can Hurt, Choose Kindness
4. You Are Not Alone
5. Online or Offline, Bullying is Never Okay
6. Different is Cool
7. Helping Someone is Never Wrong
8. Strength is in Kindness
9. Be the Reason Someone Smiles Today
10. Together We Can Stop Bullying

SHARE the anti-bullying messages and slogans with friends, families, and neighbours.

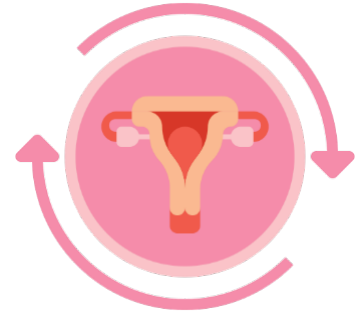
INVITE a social worker, police, teacher, or community leader to answer questions about how bullying harms children, families, schools, and the community.

MAKE UP and **ACT OUT** a play to show what happens when someone sees another child being bullied and how to help.

OBSERVE playtime and **NOTICE** if different types of bullying happen. Record what you see and discuss it.



11 Menstruation Messages



1. Menstruation is a normal and healthy process that affects all women. It is bleeding through the vagina each month for 3-6 days in a cycle. Cycles do not happen the same every month – especially at first.
2. Menstruation is one of the signs of puberty in the female body alongside visible signs such as the growth of breasts, hair under the arms and between the legs (pubic hair) and changes in body size and shape.
3. Menstrual bleeding over 3-6 days is sometimes called a 'period'. Periods start when girls are between 10 and 16 years old. It's normal for periods to start at different ages.
4. Periods start when the brain sends chemical messengers called 'hormones' to parts of the body which are used to create babies.
5. A period happens when the female eggs have not 'met' a male sperm during sex. It is like a nest inside the womb and when this is not needed it comes out as blood.
6. Periods stop when a pregnancy starts. It is one of the first signs that an egg has been fertilised by a sperm inside the womb.
7. Bleeding is heavier at the start of a period and some people feel pain in their stomach, have headaches and they can feel sad, angry or frustrated.
8. Pads made of cloth or toilet paper, sanitary towels, tampons and menstrual cups can all be used to catch the menstrual blood.
9. No one should be shy or embarrassed when buying or asking about pads or sanitary options at schools, shops or clinics. Bleeding happens to all women and it's normal.
10. It's important to wash and keep your body clean and fresh and change the pads or tampons or empty the cup as least twice a day or more at the start of the period.
11. For some, period pain is very bad. Friends and family can help and encourage girls when they miss school or other activities and make sure they drink enough fluids and eat a good diet. If it continues to be very painful, they should see a doctor.

Menstruation

What can children make, do and ask?

MAKE a chart tracking how they (boys and girls) feel every day (mentally and physically) for a month. A few keywords is all that's needed. They'll be able to see that it is normal to have mood and pain variations. This will help girls track their period properly when it starts.

FIND out what period products (pads, tampons, rags, cups) are available in the home, local shops and the school and how to access them if needed.

ASK a health worker or a science teacher to tell you more about how human reproduction works and the changes that happen during puberty.

GIRLS can ask their mother, sister, aunt, grandmother or other trusted woman about their experiences with periods.



10 Oral Health Messages



1. We get two sets of teeth. The first baby teeth fall out between 6 and 12 years. The second is our last and final lifelong set.
2. We have two different kinds of teeth. Front teeth are for biting and back teeth for chewing and grinding.
3. When teeth and gums are not brushed properly, germs grow in our mouth and live in something called 'plaque' that causes bad breath, tooth decay and cavities.
4. Having teeth checked by health workers or dentists can help prevent problems and catch problems quickly.
5. Tooth decay is painful. Eating and drinking sweet things cause children's teeth to decay fast.
6. Brush teeth properly twice a day with fluoride toothpaste to remove plaque, prevent decay and have strong, healthy teeth and gums.
7. Give young children water or milk in a cup. Sugar in drinks like fruit juice and sodas cause teeth to decay.
8. As the first teeth push through, brush baby's gums and teeth at least twice a day with safe, clean water and a soft clean cloth. At six months, add a small squeeze of toothpaste.
9. Imagine your mouth divided into four parts. In each one, brush at a 45-degree angle, from the bottom up, front and back. Brush the tongue. Spit, but do not rinse out the toothpaste.
10. Fluoride is a chemical that strengthens teeth and prevents decay. Use toothpaste containing fluoride.

Oral Health

What can children do?

CHECK the health of the teeth of younger brothers and sisters.

STOP babies and young children sipping sweet liquids from a bottle or cup for any more than a few seconds.

HELP to clean the teeth of a baby or young child with clean water and a clean cloth.

SHARE stories of having tooth pain and what happened.

USE a tooth dye that shows how well they brush their teeth. Remaining plaque will be visible.

DEMONSTRATE good tooth brushing in the classroom and to younger children.

PLAY a game to label a picture of the inside of the mouth.

What can children make?

CREATE a short play about when they need to call a health worker or dentist to help.

MAKE a chart that records the snacks or drinks that children in our class eat each day, are they tooth kind or sugary?

MAKE a poster showing 'tooth-friendly' snacks.

CREATE a song or drama about losing our baby teeth, gaining our lifelong teeth and caring well for this one special set of lifelong teeth.

MAKE a snakes and ladders game with messages that help us learn how what to do and what NOT to do, to prevent tooth decay.

What can children ask?

ASK parents, teachers or health workers where people go to have teeth checked.

ASK family members: What happens when one of our family has toothache? What is the best way to care for our teeth? What toothbrushes do people use in our community? Do we need toothpaste with fluoride in our community?

FIND OUT what tools they need to care for their teeth and where they can get them.

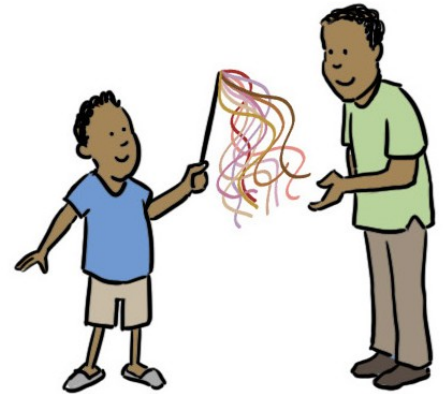


DAY	SAFE SNACK	SUGARY SNACK
1	x	x
2	x x x	
3	x x	x x
4	x x	x x x
5	x x x	x

Other Resources

We suggest using **Rainbow Sticks** when teaching these messages.

When a child learns and shares a message and returns with a story about how they shared that message, a teacher or other adult rewards the child with a strip of coloured fabric to tie to their stick. Children for Health has 100 messages and every child can leave primary school holding their Rainbow Stick with 100 coloured 'ribbons' tied on it showing everyone that they know 100 health messages. Learn more:



<https://childrenforhealth.org/rainbowstick>

There is a **another book** covering our original 10 topics with 100 messages:

Caring for Babies & Young Children
Coughs, Colds & Pneumonia
Immunisation
Malaria
Diarrhoea

Water, Sanitation & Hygiene
Nutrition
Intestinal Worms
Accidents & Injury Prevention
HIV & AIDS

<https://childrenforhealth.org/100messages/>



Check out our Closing Games & Activities book to help keep children interested, engaged and excited about learning these messages.

<https://childrenforhealth.org/Games>



**There is so much more available
for free on our website!**

<https://ChildrenForHealth.org>