HEALTHY HEARING IMPROVES LEARNING

A child with a hearing loss means that he or she has lost some hearing in one or both ears. This could range from a mild hearing loss to a profound hearing loss. Any degree of hearing loss can impact on speech and learning development.

There are many causes of hearing loss in children but one of the most common is middle ear infections.

Observations that may indicate the possibility of a hearing loss are:

- Inattention, day dreaming or behaviour concerns
- Talk loudly or have television up loud
- Concerns regarding progress with school work
- Difficulty with speech articulation
- Frequent need for repetition
- Mistakes carrying out simple instructions
- Turning of head to one side when listening
- Lip reading

If you have any concerns regarding your child’s speech or hearing please seek assistance from your local doctor or an audiologist. This does not require a referral letter and most of the cost is covered by Medicare. These health professionals can refer you to an Ear, Nose and Throat specialist if required.

Sources: www.cyh.sa.gov.au
       www.betterhealthchannel.vic.gov.au
KEEPPING TEETH HEALTHY

Dental problems, such as dental decay and caries are largely preventable. However, many young children suffer pain from and complications associated with dental decay.

Healthy Primary or baby teeth are important as they:

- Are part of a child’s general health and well being
- Assist in the development of a child’s eating ability and speech patterns
- Are a guide to positioning of permanent teeth
- Impact on a child’s physical appearance and self esteem.

Dental Health Services Victoria advises that dental checks start with toddlers and then dental reviews should be on a regular basis as advised by the dental professional. If there is a problem, there should be no delay in seeking treatment to prevent the onset of pain and complications.

Dental professionals are either private dentists or dental therapists at the School Dental Service.

The location of the School Dental Service in your area is:

ISIS Primary Care  
117-`129 Warringa Crescent  
Hoppers Crossing  
Phone: 8734 1400

This service is free for parents who have a valid health care card.

Source: www.dhsv.org.au
HEALTHY VISION IMPROVED EDUCATION

The Optometry Association recommends that children have their eyes checked by a vision health professional (optometrist or ophthalmologist) prior to starting school and every two years after that or as advised by the vision health professional.

Vision assessments by an optometrist do not require a referral letter and in most cases are covered by Medicare. Optometrists are located in all areas. A list of optometrists, including those that speak other languages can be found on www.vicoptom.asn.au.

If you wish to see an ophthalmologist a referral can be organised through an optometrist or local doctor.

Reasons why children should be seen by a vision health professional are children may:

- not be aware that there is a problem with their vision and rarely complain of vision problems
- not always show or have symptoms of vision problems
- have a weakness in one eye which may not be obvious.

If parents have a history of a vision problem as a child or are now wearing glasses, there is an increased likelihood that their children will have a vision problem.

Some facts about vision issues being present and not treated:

- It may lead to severe vision loss or blindness
- The earlier the diagnosis and treatment of a vision problem the better the outcome

Source: www.vicoptom.asn.au