

4.1. Recognise general signs and symptoms of illness in children

Key signs and symptoms of illness	Childhood illnesses		Key signs and symptoms of when to seek emergency medical help
		Signs and symptoms	Treatment
<p>To successfully recognise and treat common childhood ailments and diseases, you need to know about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – General signs of illness – Common childhood ailments and diseases – Caring for a sick child – When to seek treatment from a doctor – When to seek emergency medical help. <p>Children might display the following signs and symptoms of illness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Vomiting and diarrhoea – High temperature – Tiredness/disturbed sleep – Reduced appetite – Flushed or pale complexion/lip area – Irritable/fretful behaviour – Lack of desire to play – Headache – Swollen glands – Runny/blocked-up nose – Cough. <p>A child displaying any of these symptoms will need monitoring and sympathetic care.</p>	Mumps	Pain, swelling of the jaw in front of the ears, fever, eating and drinking is painful	Fluids given via straw, hot compresses, oral hygiene
	Measles	High fever, fretful, heavy cold – running nose and discharge from eyes, a cough later	Rest, fluids, tepid sponging, shaded room if light in uncomfortable to eyes
	Tonsillitis	Very sore throat, fever, headache, pain on swallowing, aches and pains in back and limbs	Rest, fluid, medical aid, antibiotics, iced drinks to relieve the pain
	Chickenpox	Slight fever, itch rash, mild onset then child feels ill, often with severe headache	Rest, fluids, calamine lotion on rash, cut child's nails to prevent secondary infection from scratching
	Common cold	Sore throat, sneezing, running nose, headache, slight fever, irritability, partial deafness	Treat symptoms
	Gastroenteritis	Vomiting and diarrhoea, signs of dehydration	Replace fluids – water (or rehydrating remedy), seek urgent medical aid
	Meningitis	High fever, vomiting, headache, stiff neck, drowsiness, confusion, dislike of bright lights, seizures	Antibiotics, fluids, oxygen if necessary, steroid medication, seek treatment in hospital
<p>The following sign and symptoms of illness indicate that you need to act calmly and quickly to call for urgent medical attention - i.e. call an ambulance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Breathing difficulties – Child is unresponsive - cannot be easily or fully roused from sleep, or a state of drowsiness – Baby becomes unresponsive and/or their body seems to be floppy or limp – High fever/temperature that cannot be lowered – Seizures/fitting 			
How to support the child			
Breathing difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Sit the child upright and leaning forwards in a comfortable position - they should never lie down – Stay with them – If the breathing difficulties don't improve, persists or worsens, call for an ambulance 		
High temperatures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Take the child's temperature with a digital or scan thermometer to monitor their illness – Help lower their temperature by removing warm clothing so that just a cool layer is worn – Help lower their temperature by providing a cool drink, either water or another drink diluted with water – Some children may be given paracetamol syrup by parents/carers 		
Seizures/fitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Call an ambulance – Do not restrain the child – Clear the immediate area and surround the child with pillows or padding for protection – Cool the child gradually – If the seizures stop before help arrives, place the child in the recovery position 		




J809 – Cambridge Nationals Level 1/2 Child Development
R057 – Health and Wellbeing for Child Development
TA4: Childhood illnesses and a child-safe environment

4.2. How to meet the needs of an ill child

Physical needs

- When a child is sick, they will need plenty of rest. Their routine will need to be adjusted to allow for extra naps.
- Their diet will need to be adjusted if they have an upset stomach. Always ensure that plenty of water (or diluted juice) is taken.
- Always monitor a sick child carefully, as conditions can worsen suddenly, and be ready to call for medical help if necessary.
- Be aware of a child's medical conditions and that you know what to do if there is a problem.
- Know how to care for a child with high temperature or fevers as they are often seen in young children.

Social and emotional needs

- Show empathy
- Give plenty of reassurance
- Gently explain the illness to a child, and if appropriate, let them know that they will feel better soon
- Talk positively about any medication
- Provide company by doing activities together to cater for their social needs
- If appropriate, visits from family and friends for social contact.

Intellectual needs

- Quiet activities to keep them amused and stimulated while they are not up to more active play such as, stories, colouring activities etc.
- If the illness or recovery period is long, activities which will help their learning and development to continue as expected need to be considered.

4.3. How to ensure a child-friendly safe environment

When caring for a child, it is vital to know:

- How to maintain a safe environment for children
- How to provide safe equipment
- About the most common childhood accidents, and issues relating to social and internet safety.

What a hazard is

A hazard is an item or situation that could cause harm to a child. They include:

- Physical hazards** - such as unsafe objects, items which can be tripped over.
- Security hazards** - such as insecure exits and windows.
- Fire hazards** - such as heaters and electrical appliances.
- Food safety hazards** - such as a faulty refrigerator, unsafe produce.
- Personal safety hazards** - such as stranger danger, busy roads.

A risk is the likelihood of a hazard actually causing harm.

Recognise common hazards and how these can be prevented

Within the home

Roads

Kitchen

- Unsafe chemicals from cleaning products
- Food safety hazards, e.g. raw meat
- Dangerous hot equipment, e.g. oven
- Sharp equipment, e.g. knives

**Toilet/
bathroom**

- Access to hot taps and hot water
- Access to water (drowning risk)
- Access to unhygienic items, e.g. toilet brush
- Risk of slipping on items when wet, e.g. bath, floor

Stairs

- Risk of tripping
- Risk of falling
- Tripping over items left on stairs
- Faulty/missing handrail

**Play
areas/
gardens**

- Insecure gates, sheds or boundary fences
- Possibility of strangers or animals coming into contact with children
- Problems caused by weather, e.g. icy patches
- Play equipment not assembled safely or not age appropriate

Follow the five point Green Cross Code and make children aware of it:

1. First find the safest place to cross
2. Stop just before you get to the kerb
3. Look all around for traffic and listen
4. If traffic is coming, let it pass
5. When it is safe, go straight across the road - do not run



4.3. How to ensure a child-friendly safe environment







Preventing hazards

Key safety equipment can be used to prevent hazards.

Equipment	Purpose
Harness and reins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prevent falls from prams, push chairs and high chairs. – Prevent young people escaping and/or running into the road when out walking.
Safety gates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prevent access to kitchens, stairways, outdoors. – Always place a guard at the bottom and top of stairs for babies and young children.
Locks for cupboards and windows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prevent children from getting hold of dangerous substances or falling from windows.
Safety glass/safety film	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prevent glass from breaking into pieces, causing injuries.
Socket covers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prevent children from poking their fingers into electrical sockets.
Play pens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Create a safe area for babies.
Smoke alarms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Detect smoke and sound the alarm.
Cooker guards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Prevent children pulling pans from the cooker.
Firefighting equipment such as fire blankets or extinguishers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – May be used to tackle minor fires.

Safety labelling

Safety labelling tells you whether a product or piece of equipment is safe for use by children.

Safety Mark	Label	Explanation
BSI Kitemark™		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Used to identify products where safety is paramount, e.g. bicycle helmets and smoke alarms. – It gives assurance that the product should be safe and reliable, but manufacturers are not legally required to display this label.
Lion mark		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Developed by the British Toy and hobby Association (BTHA). – It was developed to act as a recognisable consumer symbol denoting safety and quality.
CE symbol, UKCA mark and UKNI mark		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The CE symbol was previously the most common toy label and the first one to look for. – By law, it has to be displayed on all new toys on the market in the EU. – The CE logo proves that the toy has been tested for compliance with EU standards and meets all toy safety requirements. – The CE symbol has been phased out in Great Britain. From January 2022, the UKCA mark will be used and UKNI in Northern Ireland.
Age advice symbol		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Identifies when equipment or a product isn't suitable for children under the age of 36 months. – It is mainly displayed on toys which that might not pass a 'choke hazard test'. – It is also seen if a product has small parts that could be removed and swallowed by children under 3 years.
Children's nightwear labelling		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Nightwear can burn quickly if set alight by contact with an open fire, gas or electric fire, or another heat source. – Thus, you should look for a label confirming that children's night garments meet the flammability performance requirements.