

Healthy Start:

Advice for Early Years Centres and nurseries

Healthy Start (HS) is a simple way to support families on benefits/ low income to access healthy food & vitamins.

The number of appⁿs for Healthy Start has fallen over the past year. A 2,000 children in Lothian currently miss out.

To order the Healthy Start leaflet, call **0300 123 1002** and ask for HS01

Further information is available at www.healthystart.nhs.uk/

Watch Healthy Start film at: <https://vimeo.com/102126052> or www.youtube.com/watch?v=hYgCaYH8k7Y



1. It's worth telling all families about Healthy Start

Family circumstances change and it's worth offering every family the Healthy Start leaflet at key points, including when they register at a nursery. Taking the period from 10 weeks' pregnancy to the child's 4th birthday the vouchers are worth £899.

Remember: a woman will need to complete an application with each pregnancy.

2. A healthcare professional needs to sign part B of the application form (at back of leaflet)

This could be a health visitor, midwife, GP or practice nurse. Some families will need help in making this contact.

3. Families cannot claim vouchers retrospectively

If you think that a family is eligible, then encourage & support them to sign up right away.

4. If unsure about eligibility, refer to a welfare rights advisor

There are advisors across the city. They may identify additional financial support & have advice for the family (e.g. debt management).

5. If possible keep a record of families applying for vouchers

50% families will struggle with appⁿ. Check with them after a week or two. Following appⁿ apply again if no response after 3 weeks.

6. Families may need to complete a Child Tax Credit application first

This is particularly relevant for families with a new baby. PTO for flowchart to check details

7. A woman receiving vouchers during pregnancy needs to phone the Healthy Start help line (0845 607 6823) after the birth of the child (ASAP)

Otherwise the vouchers may stop

Who qualifies?

Women more than 10 weeks' pregnant, and families with children under four years old, qualify for Healthy Start if the family is receiving:

- Income Support, or
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, or
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, or
- Child Tax Credit (but not Working Tax Credit unless the family is receiving Working Tax Credit run-on only*) AND an annual family income of £16,190 or less in 2013/14.

Women also qualify for the whole of their pregnancy if they are under 18 when they apply, even if they don't get any of the above benefits or tax credits.

* Working Tax Credit run-on is the Working Tax Credit received in the four weeks immediately after a person has stopped working for 16 hours or more per week (single adults) or 24 hours per week (couples).

Note

Benefits are changing. Information about how the changes affect Healthy Start will be available at www.healthystart.nhs.uk