



“Hope is the companion
of power and
the mother of success,
for those of us who
hope strongest
have within us
the gift of miracles”

~ SYDNEY BREMER

Life's Little Treasures Foundation Ltd,
PO Box 476, Chadstone Centre RP, VIC 3148
PHONE: 1300 MYPREMMIE (1300 697 736)
EMAIL: contact_us@lifeslittletreasures.org.au
www.lifeslittletreasures.org.au

The Short Way Round

A GUIDE TO COMMUNITY SUPPORT
SERVICES AND RESOURCES IN VICTORIA
FOR FAMILIES OF PREMATURE
BABIES/CHILDREN

Life's Little



Treasures

Foundation

"Supporting Families of Premature Babies"

“There are only two ways
to live your life.
One is as though nothing
is a miracle.
The other is as if everything is.”
~ ALBERT EINSTEIN

DISCLAIMER

Life's Little Treasures recommends that you should consult your doctor or other health care provider if you have any concerns about your baby's or child's health or development. All opinions are those of the authors or contributors and are not necessarily those of the Life's Little Treasures. The editors take care to avoid mistakes but don't accept liability for clerical or printer's errors.

LLT Parents guide to Community Support Services & Resources Copyright

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Dear Reader,

This booklet was produced with the aim of being a quick and easy reference guide to some of the many services available in the community that you might require. This short version “The Short Way Round” aims to give you a snap shot of what the complete booklet contains. This booklet’s contents are more relevant to you now while you are in hospital.

The complete booklet “The Quick Way Round” which is available with membership of LLT covers other areas such as:

- Women’s Health Centres
- Community Services & Support
- Early Parenting Centres
- Feeding Support & Advice
- Infant Health
- Continence
- Speech / Hearing/ Vision
- Support for home
- Emotional & Behavioural Development Services
- Private Therapy Services
- Child Development Services
- Child Safety
- Play groups & Toy Libraries

Keep this guide handy, as from the experience of being parents of a premature baby, it can take time to navigate your way around these services, to find out what you are entitled to or need. We hope this booklet will assist you in some small way and make that part of your journey a little easier.

Best Wishes

The LLT Girls

WHO ARE WE

Life's Little Treasures Foundation Ltd is a charity which provides support, friendship and assistance throughout Victoria to families of children born prematurely. Our services are available in the hospital (neonatal and special care units) and in the community when families come home. Life's Little Treasures Foundation Ltd is run by volunteer parents who themselves have had a premature baby and understand the challenges that these babies and families face.

OUR MISSION

To improve information, support and encouragement to families with premature babies, empowering them to achieve the best outcomes for their children.

WHAT CAN WE PROVIDE?

We provide support and information to parents via:

- Supportive parent network to match like parents together for support
- Morning teas/Support groups at various venues including hospitals and community settings
- Quarterly newsletter providing parents with updated and relevant information on premature baby issues
- Informative web site
- Parent Information guide and parent packs providing relevant tips and information specific to families
- Social occasions

For details on membership or further assistance you can contact us on the details located below.

HOW CAN YOU CONTACT US?

Address:

Life's Little Treasures Foundation Ltd
PO Box 476,
Chadstone Centre RP,
VIC 3148

Phone: **1300 MYPREMMIE/
1300 697 736**

Email: contact_us@lifeslittletreasures.org.au

www.lifeslittletreasures.org.au



"Supporting Families of Premature Babies"

A founding member of the
National Premmie Foundation

www.prembaby.org.au

DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION

‘FORE WARNED IS FORE ARMED’

Every day we meet families who have said ‘I wish I knew about ‘Developmental Delay’ and ‘Early Childhood Intervention’ and how important it is’. Having a premature baby is a completely new experience and we learn new things as we go. Not all premature babies experience developmental delay but there are those who do. This isn’t about scaring parents but informing and providing them with information which then allows them to make informed decisions and be a better advocate for their child’s needs.

WHAT IS THE CAUSE OF DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY?

A baby’s rate of development is determined largely before birth. Every baby/child develops at a different rate, some roll or crawl earlier than others and as long as their development is within the range of what is considered normal then there is no need for concern. Most babies have a cosy nine months to grow and develop, however a baby who is born premature has had this development time interrupted.

This is where early childhood intervention plays a very major role. The sooner an issue is tackled, the quicker a child’s development can be addressed leading to improved outcomes for both the child and their family.

A child’s development can be negatively affected by three basic factors:

- (i). Something that interferes with the brain
- (ii). Something that interferes with the child’s body (and these two are often closely connected)
- (iii). An environment that does not provide the essentials for the child to develop the skills that are commonly needed in our society.

It’s only when a baby/child consistently reaches developmental milestones much later than other children that parents need to take action and seek professional advice.

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY BABY IS DEVELOPMENTALLY DELAYED?

The key element here is addressing the issue as early as possible. A mother does know best, you are after all the person who spends most of the time with your child.

Areas a child may have difficulties in are:

- Gross motor skills (e.g. Crawling, walking),
- Fine motor skills (e.g. Grasping and manipulating objects),
- Speech and language (e.g. Understanding and speaking),
- Self-help (e.g. Feeding, dressing, toileting),
- Social and play skills
- Behaviour
- Sensory integration (Processing everyday senses)
- Unusual behaviours (Such as avoiding or seeking out touch, movement, sounds, and sights)

WHAT IS EARLY INTERVENTION AND HOW CAN IT HELP?

The very early years of a child's life provide a unique opportunity to influence their development. When children are still very small, many parts of their brain and body are still developing, and that development can be facilitated along in certain directions. The specialists select from various approaches to develop a program that is specific to the needs of each child and family, and that has the appropriate intensity and timing, plus ongoing evaluations of its effectiveness.

Early intervention programs aim to intervene as early as possible to:

- (i) Minimise the impact of the child's disability
(e.g. Learn to use toes instead of fingers)
- (ii) Minimise ongoing risk factors
(e.g. Teach parents helpful ways of understanding and helping their child)
- (iii) To help present development go in the direction that will be the foundation for future development
(e.g. Strengthen muscles that will help a child walk in the future)
- (iv) To strengthen families
(e.g. Help them cope with the stresses and strains).

HOW DO I GET HELP?

The intervention itself will depend on assessments that need to be made of the child and the family. The very first line of assessment is the Maternal and Child Health Nurse (MCHN) in your area, your paediatrician or GP. They, along with Kindergarten teachers may make a referral for you to an appropriate early childhood intervention service.

In Victoria the public system services may be called the Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS) or Specialist Children's Services (SCS), which have teams of specialists who may all assess the child and then work out an intervention that targets that child's specific difficulties.

This booklet lists a lot of those services available to parents in Victoria.

SOURCES:

Connecticut Birth to Three
(0-3 years of age) Local School system
(3 yrs of age & above) - Elizabeth L. Hart
Ph.D Clinical Child Psychologist,
Premmie Press, September 2005

SUPPORTIVE PARENT NETWORK

If you would like to talk to someone on a confidential basis about any of your concerns or just want a chat, you can contact us on 1300 MYPREMMIE/ **1 300 697 736** or email us at contact_us@lifeslittletreasures.org.au

We will then forward your details to the parent with the most similar experience.

MOTHER	BABY	DETAILS	SUBURB
Shusannah	Molly-Rose 25 weeks	MUM: IVF with complications, hospitalised for term of pregnancy, severe haemorrhaging BUB: Chronic lung, respiratory and feeding issues. In hospital for 117 days, on oxygen at home for 1mth, long term expressing. Toilet training issues until 5 years old. Now wears glasses and is asthmatic	Glen Iris
Wendy	Sophie 24 weeks	Birth Weight: 585g MUM: Spontaneous labour due to bicornuate uterus, emergency c-section BUB: PDA, apnoea and bradycardias, septicemia, feeding issues and long term expressing. Multiple hospital readmissions as a toddler due to bronchiolitis (RSV)	Macedon
Allison	Twins 26 weeks	Birth Weight: 955g and 915g. BUBS: Home oxygen, chronic lung disease, mild cerebral palsy and glasses	Sunbury
Anne-Marie	Hannah, 24wks+5 days	Birth Weight: 675g MUM: Hemorrhaging, infection behind placenta	Ascot Vale
Cathy	Christopher 30 wks	Birth Weight: 1600g MUM: Spontaneous labour BUB: Chronic lung disease, left and right pneumothorax, cerebral haemorrhage. Hydrocephalus with a permanent shunt, very mild cerebral palsy resulting in delay in gross motor development. Epilepsy controlled with medication. Now an adult, working with computers. Also a full-term daughter, Jenny (now an adult), with Juvenile Arthritis	Mooroolbark
Karen	Morgan 35 wks+2 days Dylan 32 wks 6 days	BUB: Few complications. Home at 39 weeks BUB: Required CPAP at the Mercy Hospital, Melbourne in NICU and SCU and then Ballarat SCU. Home at 39 weeks. Some neurological and hearing concerns	Ballarat

MOTHER	BABY	DETAILS	SUBURB
Emma	Twins: 24wks +5 days Lily and Charlotte	Birth Weight: 685g and 667g MUM: Spontaneous labour BUBS: Chronic lung disease, A's and B's. One twin home before the other. One twin home on apnoea monitor	Hoppers Crossing
Julia	Ronan 27wks+3 days	Birth Weight: 1140g MUM: PPROM and spontaneous labour BUB: Chronic lung disease, PDA, Hernia, Jaundice. On oxygen for 3 months, came home off all oxygen. Spent 110 days in hospital	Wantirna
Karin	Robbie 32 weeks	Birth Weight: 1334g MUM: Emergency c-section due to severe pre-eclampsia and HELLP syndrome BUB: IUGR and sepsis infection. Gross motor issues requiring physiotherapy	Croydon
Parool	Luke 27 weeks	Birth Weight: 915g BUB: Apnoeas and bradycardias, delay in gross motor development	Armadale
Nancy	Identical Triplets 27 wks Thomas, Joshua and Luke	Birth Weight: 910gms, 780gms and 920gms BUBS: Born early due to one placenta, TTS - Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome. Two babies intubated, one on CPAP for 6 days. 11 days in NICU and 12 weeks in SCU. No major long term problems or complications	Watsonia
Rachael	Hunter 35 wks+2 days Deegan 32 wks+2 days	Birth Weight: 1705gms MUM: Preterm Labour, PE, IUGR, Bicornuate Uterus, Fetal Distress. Emergency C-Section BUB: 5wks in SCN. Mild Speech Delay, Tongue Tie, Constitutional Growth Delay Birth Weight: 2133gms MUM: Preterm Labour, BU, PPROM, Placental Abruption, Fetal Distress. Emergency C-Section BUB: 6wks in NICU/SCN, Respiratory Distress Syndrome, Jaundice, Small hearing loss and Speech/Developmental Delays	Romsey

“Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another: What! You too? I thought I was the only one”

~ C.S LEWIS

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE SUPPORT AND COUNSELLING SERVICES

- AUSTRALIAN BREASTFEEDING ASSOCIATION
Ph: **(03) 9885 0653** (24hrs)
24 hour recorded message with names and phone numbers of breastfeeding counsellors.
- CARE-RING (FORMERLY CRISIS LINE)
Ph: **136 169**
Care-Ring provides 24 hour telephone crisis counselling service.
- GRIEF LINE
Ph: **(03) 9596 7799** (24hrs)
- HOPE LINE
Ph: **1300 36 4673** (24hrs)
Counselling for families facing life threatening illnesses
- LIFE LINE
Ph: **13 11 14** (24hrs)
www.lifeline.org.au
- LIFE'S LITTLE TREASURES
Ph: **1300 MYPREMMIE/ 1300 697 736** (24hrs)
Charity supporting families of premature babies
www.lifeslittletreasures.org.au
- MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH LINE
Ph: **132 229** (24 Hrs)
Advice line for families with children up to 6 years
- MENSLINE
Ph: **1300 789 978**
- NATIONAL ASTHMA COUNCIL
Ph: **(03) 9929433**
- NURSE ON CALL
Ph: **1300 60 60 24** (24hrs)
- PARENTLINE
Ph: **13 22 89** (24hrs)
www.education.vic.gov.au/earlychildhood/parentline
- POISONS INFORMATION LINE
Ph: **13 11 26**
- RELATIONSHIP AUSTRALIA
Ph: **1300 364 277** (cost of a local call)
www.relationships.com.au
- ROYAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL
Ph: **(03) 9345 5522**
- SUICIDELINE, VIC (24hrs)
Ph: **1300 651 251**
www.suicideline.org.au
- TELEPHONE INTERPRETER SERVICE
Ph: **13 14 50**

PREMATURE BABY AND MULTIPLES SUPPORT GROUPS

- **AMBA (AUSTRALIAN MULTIPLE BIRTH ASSOC.)**
P.O. Box 914 Glen Waverley VIC 3150
Ph: **(03) 9752 5536**
1300 88 64 99
www.amba.org.au
- **AUSTPREM**
Supports parents and caregivers of premature infants and children.
www.austprem.org.au
- **LIFE'S LITTLE TREASURES**
Supporting families of premature babies in Victoria
Ph: **0437 254 360**
Email:
contact_us@lifeslittletreasures.org.au
www.lifeslittletreasures.org.au
- **L'IL AUSSIE PREMS**
Australia's online support site for parents and families of premature babies
www.lilaussieprems.com.au
- **LODDON MALLEE KIDS**
Support for parents and families of premature babies in regional Victoria (Loddon Mallee)
Ph: **1300 PREMBABY**
1300 773 622
www.loddonmalleekids.org.au
- **NATIONAL PREMMIE FOUNDATION**
PO Box 2681, Bendigo D.C 3554
National Phone: **1300 PREM BABY**
1300 773 622
Email: contact_us@prembaby.org.au
www.prembaby.org.au
- **TWINS AND MULTIPLES**
www.twinsandmultiples.org

PREGNANCY LOSS

- **BONNIE BABES FOUNDATION**
(Counselling)
P.O. Box 2220
Rowville VIC 3178
Ph: **(03) 9758 2800**
Email: enquiry@bbf.org.au
www.bbf.org.au
- **SANDS**
(Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Support)
Suite 208, 901 Whitehorse Road
Box Hill 3128
Ph: **(03) 9899 0218** (Business hours)
Email: info@sandsvic.org.au
www.sandsvic.org.au

EMOTIONAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES

- **BEYOND BLUE**
(Post Natal Depression)
Ph: **(03) 9810 6100**
www.beyondblue.org.au
- **(PaNDa) POST AND ANTENATAL DEPRESSION ASSOCIATION INC.**
Ph: **(03) 9482 9400**
www.panda.org.au/
- **CENTRELINK - SOCIAL WORK SERVICES**
Social Workers are available to help customers in Centrelink Customer Service Centres and Call Centres. They provide counselling and support to Centrelink customers with difficult personal or family issues
www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/services/social_worker.htm

FEEDING SUPPORT AND ADVICE

Most public maternity hospitals run a breastfeeding support service or clinic. For further advice and assistance with breastfeeding issues it is best to contact them directly for information and support.

To locate and contact your closest hospital you can use the links below:

Metropolitan: **www.healthcollect.vic.gov.au/directories/MetroHos.htm**

Rural: **www.healthcollect.vic.gov.au/directories/ruralHos.htm**

- **AUSTRALIAN BREASTFEEDING ASSOCIATION**
Information, support, discounted electric breast pump hire and a linked phone or email help line. 'Breastfeeding your premature infant' booklet is available through their Mother's Direct Shop or stocked at the RWH kiosk.
1818-1822 Malvern Rd, East Malvern, Victoria 3145,
Ph: **(03) 9885 0855** - 9am-5pm

Breastfeeding help line service:
1800 MUM 2 MUM
(1800 686 2 686) - 24hrs
www.breastfeeding.asn.au

TRANSPORT

IN AN EMERGENCY CALL 000

- **AMBULANCE SERVICES**

The Metropolitan Ambulance Service and Rural Ambulance Victoria provide medically necessary ambulance transportation free to Centrelink Health Care Card holders who do not have access to another entitlement through other Government agencies. The ambulance concession covers all medically necessary ambulance transport services, including the air ambulance www.ambulance-vic.com.au

Did you know that Medicare or Private Health Insurance does not cover Ambulance services in Victoria.

Ambulance Victoria Membership provides 100% cover for all ambulance treatment and transport Australia-wide.

Ph: **1800 64 84 84**

www.redcross.org.au/vic/services_communityprograms_patienttransport.htm

- **RED CROSS**

Patient Transport in Victoria
Metropolitan Office

23-47 Villiers Street
North Melbourne 3051

Ph: **(03) 8327 7700**

Info Hotline: **1800 246 850**

www.redcross.org.au

- **RURAL AMBULANCE VICTORIA (RAV)**

Provides pre-hospital patient treatment in emergency and non-emergency situations and ambulance transport services, along with various public education services, across regional Victoria.

Ph: **(03) 5338 5000**

Email: rav@rav.vic.gov.au

- **VICTORIAN PATIENT TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE SCHEME (VPTAS)**

Provides partial reimbursement for travel and accommodation cost incurred by rural Victorians accessing specialist medical services.

To be eligible for VPTAS assistance patients must be a Victorian resident living in a Department of Human Services (DHS) designated rural region, and need to travel more than 100 kilometres one way or on average travel 500 kilometres for a minimum of five consecutive weeks, to access services from their nearest approved medical specialist.

Ph: **(03) 9096 2005**

www.health.vic.gov.au/ruralhealth/downloads/vptas_claimsep06.pdf

EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION

- **RONALD MACDONALD HOUSES**

They provide a 'home-away-from-home' for families of children with serious illness, along with the support of experienced House Managers, volunteers and other families in a similar situation.

For a list of their houses around the country, contact their head office:

21–29 Central Avenue

Thornleigh NSW 2120

Ph: **(02) 9875 6666**

www.rmhc.org.au/house

MELBOURNE OFFICE

They can assist with accommodation through themselves or can provide a venue list of alternative accommodation in close proximity to the hospital.

22 Gatehouse Street, Parkville,

Mon - Fri: 9am - 4.45pm

Sat/Sun/ public holidays: 10.30 am- 4pm

Ph: **(03) 9345 6300**

- **ROYAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL**

Ronald McDonald House and

Royal Children's Hospital –

parent accommodation,

Unit 22, Gatehouse Street,

Parkville, VIC 3052

Ph: **(03) 9345 6300**

Fax: (03) 9345 6275

They assist with accommodation at the following venues:

– Ronald McDonald House –

Located at 16 Gatehouse Street, directly across from the hospital's Emergency entrance.

*Priority is given to country and interstate families.

– Ronald McDonald House

28 Gatehouse Street, opposite the hospital's Emergency entrance.

*Priority is given to families with children who have a life threatening illness or cancer related disorders.

– 5TH Floor F.E.B Accommodation.

Rooms located within the hospital.

Priority is given to parents of children in the Neonatal Unit, nursing mothers from other wards and ICU.

– North Melbourne Flats.

100 Courtney and 44 Harcourt Streets

North Melbourne.

*Priority is given to parents whose children are long term admissions from Victorian country, interstate and overseas and parents whose child may require a heart, liver or bone marrow transplant.

- **POST NATAL MOTHERS UNIT**

Within the hospital for post natal mothers Day 1 - Day 7

- **INDIGENOUS FAMILIES**

RCH have access to

Kevin Combs Hostel,

155 Flemington Road

North Melbourne VIC 3051.

The hostel caters for Indigenous people who require accommodation at a subsidised rate - where part of the fee is funded by Aboriginal Hostel League. AHL provides a culturally supportive network where most staff and all residents are Indigenous people.

- ROYAL WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

The service provides temporary accommodation for patients and families from rural or interstate areas and /or experiencing extreme crisis. The flats are located on Grattan Street.

How to refer:

Self referral, referral letter and directly by teams and departments at The Women's.

Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm

After Hours Service Contact Manager

Ph: **(03) 9344 2436** Pager: **2436**

www.thewomen's.org.au/

FamilyAccommodation

- MONASH HOSPITAL

Families can stay at Ronald McDonald house as long as they live more than 100kms from Monash, and they can stay the entire time the baby is in the unit.

Cost is \$10 per night and capped at \$50 per week.

Ph: **(03) 95943588**

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

You may not have thought about accessing financial support while in hospital, however the cost of having a premature baby can mount up quickly. Carer Allowance and Carer Payment application forms are available through Centrelink. Application for these payments can be made much easier if your Paediatrician signs these forms while your child is in hospital. If turned down, you should discuss with Centrelink why.

CARER ALLOWANCE

If your child is hospitalised for an extended period and/or your child comes home on oxygen you may be eligible. A fortnightly payment not means tested.

- **CARER PAYMENT**

You may qualify for this as well. Means tested and you should get a health care card (HCC) with both of these payments too. Forms available from Centrelink. Ph: **1800 050 004**
1800 810 586 (TTY)
www.centrelink.gov.au

- **FAMILY ASSISTANCE OFFICE:**

Ph: **13 61 50**

- **DISABILITY, SICKNESS AND CARERS LINE:**

Ph: **13 2717**

- **HEALTH CARE CARD (HCC)**

Health Care Card entitles you to cheaper medicines under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). You may also be entitled to some extra concessions from state and local government authorities. Call Centrelink's Disability, Sickness and Carers line on **13 2717** or visit: www.centrelink.gov.au You may also be eligible for concessions

with gas and electric companies and get cheaper prescription medications for your child and receive the kindergarten fee subsidy. Other discounts include admission discounts to various recreation facilities such as national parks, the zoo, National Gallery, State Galleries, the Museum, some cinemas and AFL games.

www.cyf.vic.gov.au/concessions or see Centrelink

- **MEDICARE SAFETY NET**

Register your child for the Medicare Safety Net. The Medicare Safety Net is designed to help individuals and families with medical costs, once the safety net threshold is reached. The Medicare Safety Net covers a range of doctor visits and tests received out of hospital. Some examples of services that count towards the safety net are GP and specialist consultations, ultrasounds, x-rays and blood tests. There are three thresholds to help protect people. Each threshold is calculated differently and depends on personal circumstances. The type and frequency of the medical expenses determine how soon a person will reach a threshold. Details of the thresholds are available by contacting Medicare on Ph: **132 011** or visiting the Health Insurance Commission web site at www.hic.gov.au (external link)

- **CLEFT LIP AND CLEFT PALATE MEDICARE SCHEME**

Medicare Australia recognises that the treatment for a person with a cleft may last into their adult life. The Cleft Lip and Cleft Palate Scheme helps families to meet treatment costs for specialised services for cleft lip and cleft palate conditions.

www.medicareaustralia.gov.au

HOTLINE Ph: 1300 652 492

PARKING CONCESSIONS

You may be eligible for car parking concessions at some hospitals.

For example, when your child is an inpatient at the Royal Children's Hospital for three or more days, you may obtain a Parent Discount Parking Card which gives a discount rate from the third day.

If your child receives a disability allowance you can receive a RCH car park discount card valid for 1 year. Cards are available from the Information Desk in the front entry building.

At Monash Medical Centre, use your blue outpatient booklet for a reduced parking fee when attending outpatient appointments, as a public patient. If your child is an inpatient, your admitting nurse can give you a form that entitles you to park for a week for the cost of a day ticket.

If your child is receiving treatment from another hospital, be sure to enquire about parking concession arrangements and eligibility.

PHARMACEUTICAL SAFETY NET AND SAFETY NET CARD

If you or your family need a lot of medicine in a calendar year, the PBS Safety Net helps you with the cost of your medicine. Once you reach a safety net threshold, you can apply for a PBS Safety Net card. Your PBS medicine will be less expensive or free for the rest of the calendar year. It is advisable to try and use the same pharmacy as it can make the process of claiming much easier as all your information is at the one location, making it easier to get a detailed statement of all the items you have purchased throughout the year. It can also enable your pharmacists to gain an understanding of your child's health issues and therefore be in a position to offer valuable guidance to you.

The Safety Net Card is an official record of all the national health prescriptions you have had filled and the associated costs incurred. When your medical out-of-pocket expenses exceed a designated amount, the medicare rebate increases to reduce your payments.

You need to keep a record of your PBS medicine on a Prescription Record Form (PRF), which you can get from your pharmacy. Each time you have a PBS medicine supplied, hand your form to the pharmacist so it can be recorded. Your pharmacy might be able to keep a record for you on their computer, but if they can't or if you visit different pharmacies, it's best to keep your own records. If you have a family, ask your pharmacist about combining the amounts you spend for your safety net total.

>> FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- PRIVATE PRESCRIPTIONS MAY BE CLAIMED THROUGH PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE.

Find out how you can apply and how the card works,

Ph: PBS enquiries: **1 800 020 613**

Email: pbs@medicareaustralia.gov.au
www.hic.gov.au/public/services/scripts/pbs.jsp#NI0025

- TAX REBATE

It is wise to keep all your medical based receipts as you may qualify for a tax rebate on them. You can also get Medicare to give you an end of financial year statement on how much you have spent on medical costs to submit with your tax return.

You may be able to claim items such as

- infants' formula (if bub has a diagnosed feeding type problem but it must be bought at a chemist not supermarket).
- Petrol and parking expenses for specialist appointments and hospitals visits
- Over the counter pharmaceuticals
- Contributions you make toward the cost of equipment
- Visits to doctors who do not bulk bill
- Private appointments with Occupational Therapists, Speech Pathologists, Physiotherapists etc

Your Paediatrician may need to write a supporting letter. Contact the ATO who can advise what can be claimed.
www.ato.gov.au

- VICTORIAN STATE CONCESSIONS
State Concessions are designed to improve the affordability of key services to low income households. Areas covered are Health, Energy concessions, Private transport, Public transport, Rates, water and property charges, Recreation concessions.

The Concessions Information Line

Ph: **1 800 658 521**

Email Odete.Rodrigues@dhs.vic.gov.au
www.cyf.vic.gov.au/concessions

RESOURCES THAT MAY HELP YOU

- **FINDING A GP**
Better Health Channel
Find a GP online at the Dept of Human Services database of GPs in Victoria.
Type a postcode or suburb then choose 'General practitioner'.
www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcsite.nsf/pages/service_directory
- **FIND A PAEDIATRICIAN**
The RCH Department of Medicine has an online database of paediatricians in Victoria.
www.rch.org.au/genmed/apps/index.cfm?fuseaction=paedlist.mainlist
- **FIND A PUBLIC HOSPITAL**
METROPOLITAN: www.healthcollect.vic.gov.au/directories/Metrohos.htm
RURAL: www.healthcollect.vic.gov.au/directories/ruralHos.htm
- **ROYAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL KIDS HEALTH INFO**
Kids Health Info (KHI) is the Royal Children's Hospital web site for medical information written for parents.
These fact sheets may help you to better understand or care for your child with a health problem.
www.rch.org.au/kidsinfo/factsheets

PUBLICATIONS

- **EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION DIRECTORY**
Call the Department of Human Services (DHS) statewide number, ask for Children's Services. Request a copy of their early learning services directory or anything else they may produce about services for children with a development delay and / or disability.

Alternatively, if you know which DHS region you live in, you can contact your local service using the following phone numbers:
Northern Metro Ph. **(03) 9457 0578**
Southern Metro Ph. **1300 720 151**
Eastern Metro: Ph. **1300 662 655**
Western Metro: Ph. **(03) 9275 7500**
Barwon South Western (Warrnambool) Ph. **(03) 5561 9444**
Geelong Ph. **(03) 5226 4540**
Gippsland Ph. **(03) 5136 2400**
- **Grampians Ph. 1800 783 783**
Hume Ph. 1300 650 152
Loddon-Mallee Ph. 1300 363 514
- **COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES INFORMATION SHEETS**
These are produced for each region by the Association for Children with a Disability (ACD). These fact sheets provide phone numbers and information for services to families of with children who may have extra needs.
www.acd.org.au/information/keycontact.htm
- **PREMMIE PRESS**
A quarterly magazine written to give parents knowledge about prematurity issues.
For subscription details call
Ph: (03) 9496 4496 or
email: carol.newnham@austin.org.au

“Friendship is born at that moment
when one person says to another:
What! you too?
I thought I was the only one”

~ C.S LEWIS



“Supporting Families of Premature Babies”