



BUGK

In the First 1000 days

HANDOUTS





Bringing Up Great Kids in the First Thousand Days

The first thousand days has been identified as beginning at conception and continuing until the child is two years old. Starting from conception, the baby is actively responding to changes in the environment, using cues provided by the mother's physical and mental state to 'predict' the kind of world they will be born into and altering their bodily structures accordingly. Research has identified that a positive start for all involved in the first thousand days has significant impacts across the lifespan of the child.

The approach to parenting in the first thousand days is critical to the relationship between parent and child and has an impact on the health and wellbeing outcomes for the child in later life. Research on the importance of the first thousand days identifies a warm, responsive, mindful, reflective and supportive parenting style as providing the best outcome of children's overall development and impacts positively on their later life skills and health.

The Bringing Up Great Kids (BUGK) in the First 1000 Days Parenting Program has been adapted from the original Bringing Up Great Kids Parenting Program. The original program addressed parenting of children from birth to eight years. This program has a more specific focus on the pre-natal period and first two years of life.

BUGK in the First 1000 Days is a mindful, respectful and reflective program that enables parents to go on their own parenting journey in a non-judgemental safe space. All materials and resources come from a strength-based philosophy that has all members of the family at its core.

BUGK in the First 1000 Days emphasises the importance of living in a nurturing and safe environment. It provides parents with knowledge about brain development and an understanding of how children grow and what they need, the centrality of family relationships and an opportunity for parents to reflect on their own childhood and how to connect to their children. It seeks to build parent confidence and promotes help seeking behaviour.

BUGK in the First 1000 Days materials and resources will support parents to:

- develop an understanding of the importance of the first thousand days and the needs of babies and young children during this period;
- learn more about brain development both during pregnancy and after in the context of the growth and development of children;
- understand the origins of parenting styles and recognising the importance of a positive start in the first thousand days;
- identify the importance of giving positive nurturing messages to babies and young children and how to achieve this;
- discover how to overcome some of the obstacles getting in the way of being the kind of parents they would like to be; and,
- explore ways for parents to take care of themselves and to find support when they need it.

The program focusses on building positive relationships and interactions between parents and their unborn babies as well as parents and their infants and young children. It works from a child-centred perspective and aims to resource parents to:



- identify and evaluate the source of their parenting approach and philosophy;
- understand their child's developing needs in early life and how to meet these;
- develop an increased understanding about their values, beliefs and attitudes and the 'messages' that they communicate to their child;
- increase their ability to understand and acknowledge the impact of these messages on their child;
- develop skills in identifying and managing their stress associated with parenting and develop wellbeing and self-care practices; and,
- to seek further professional assistance about their parenting if required.

Stop...Pause...Play



When we can relate to our children with mindful awareness we activate a part of the brain (the medial pre-frontal cortex) which allows our defensive systems to switch off, putting us in a more relaxed state and allowing us to think and act more rationally and to step outside our own experience so that we can **BE MORE PRESENT TO OUR CHILDREN'S NEEDS.**

This is an exercise that we will practice every week or use any time you need to take time out to calm down before you respond to whatever is going on.



Stop

- Stop what you are doing.
- Make sure your feet are placed firmly on the ground.



Pause

- Focus on your breath.
- Breathe in slowly, right down into your belly, then exhale completely.
- Take 5 more slow breaths, being aware of each breath in and each breath out.
- Smile and enjoy standing like this for a moment. Feel your body relax.
- Reflect. Ask yourself "What do I need?" and "What does my child need?"



Play

Respond to your child with new understanding.



Pause on Positives



★ My favourite moment with my kids this week was...

★ One way that I stayed in touch with friends this week was...

★ One way I was kind to myself this week was...

One of life's secrets:
Learn to pause
Emerge positive

★ One person who supported me this week that I feel grateful for is...

★ One way I could connect more with my kids next week is...

★ A simple pleasure I could treat myself to next week is...



Check In



★ 'What has your baby told you about her/himself since we last met?'

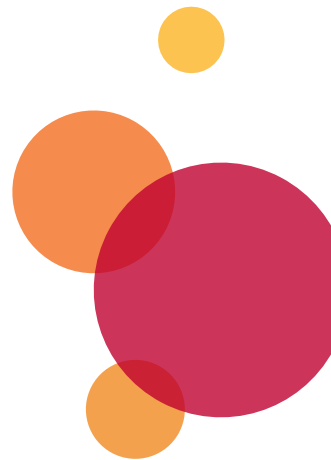
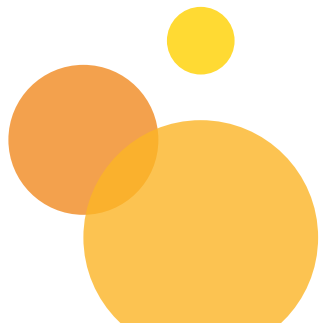
★ 'Has your baby changed in any way that you can tell?'

★ 'Have there been any times when you have felt worried about your baby?'



★ 'Have there been any times that you have felt really close to your baby?'

★ **Extra question for this week:**



Babe-ometer



Conception

Pregnancy

First scan

First movements

Boy or girl?

Preparing for the birth

Birth



Babe-ometer



Use any of the statements below to identify how you are feeling at each stage of the pregnancy on the BABE-OMETER over the page. Add your own feelings if they are not written here.

1. Finally!

2. This is amazing!

3. Finally, I feel like a grown-up

4. Let's have five children!

5. We made a real person!

6. I can't wait to kick a footy with my child

7. Having a baby won't change my life

8. I'm not sure how I feel about this

9. My life's not my own any more

10. Will I be a good parent?

11. I can't wait to meet you!

12. How will I cope?

13. I won't be able to go out with my mates as much

14. Who will the baby look like?

15. There goes my sex life!

16. I hope the baby's alright

17. I wonder if the baby will grow to like the things I like?

18. What were we thinking?!

19. This is terrifying!

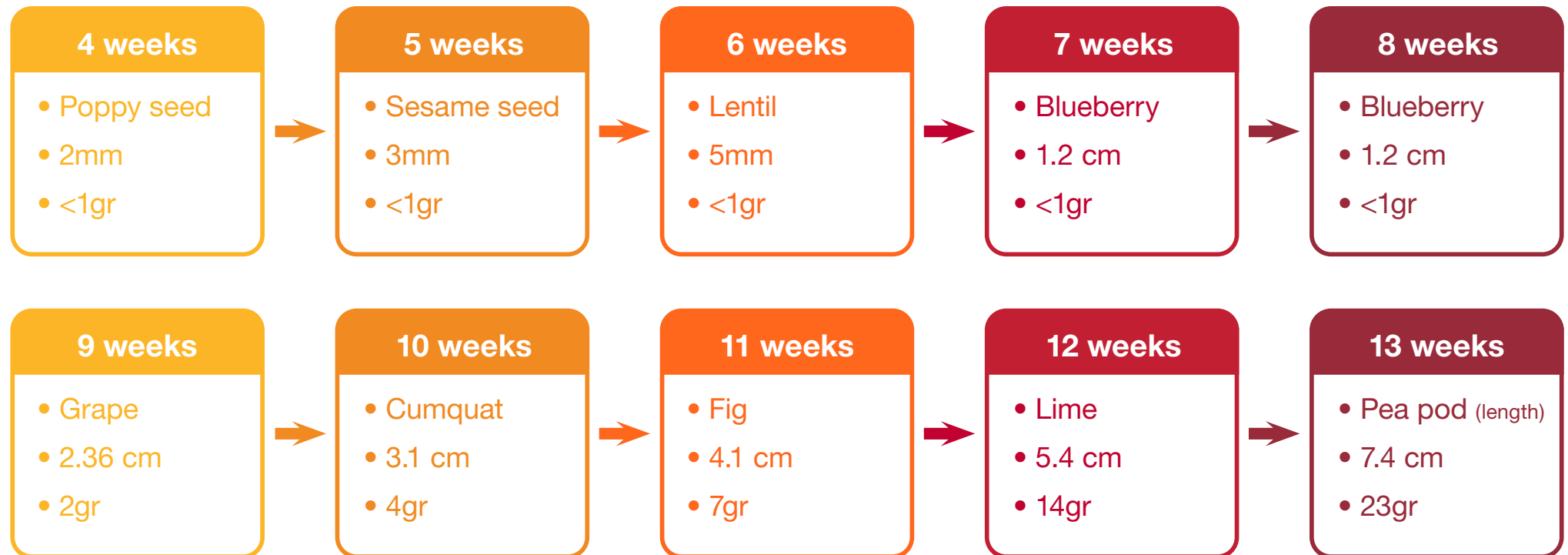
20. Oh no!



Growing like a mushroom - Tracking the growth of your baby in utero



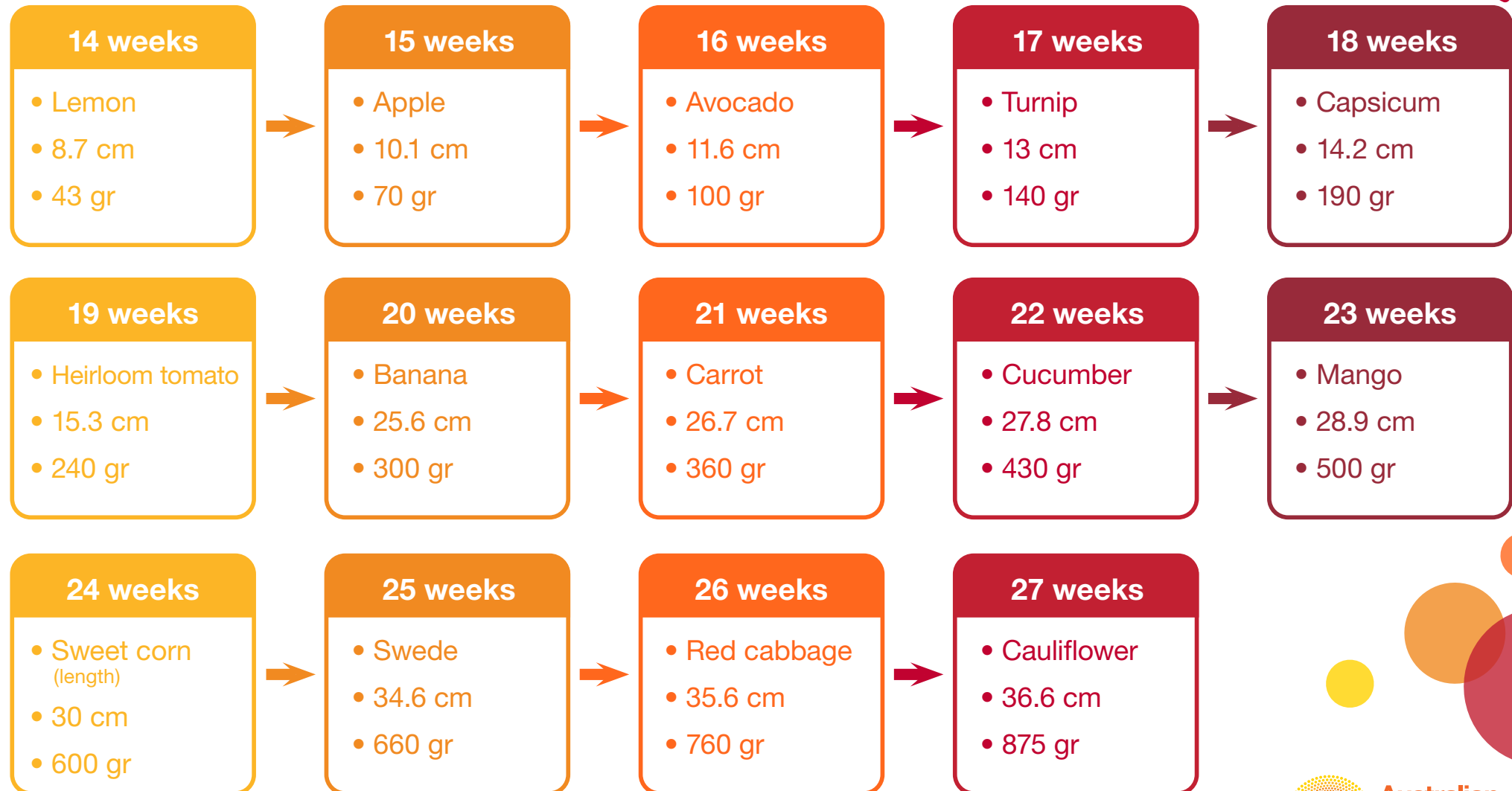
First Trimester



Growing like a mushroom - Tracking the growth of your baby in utero



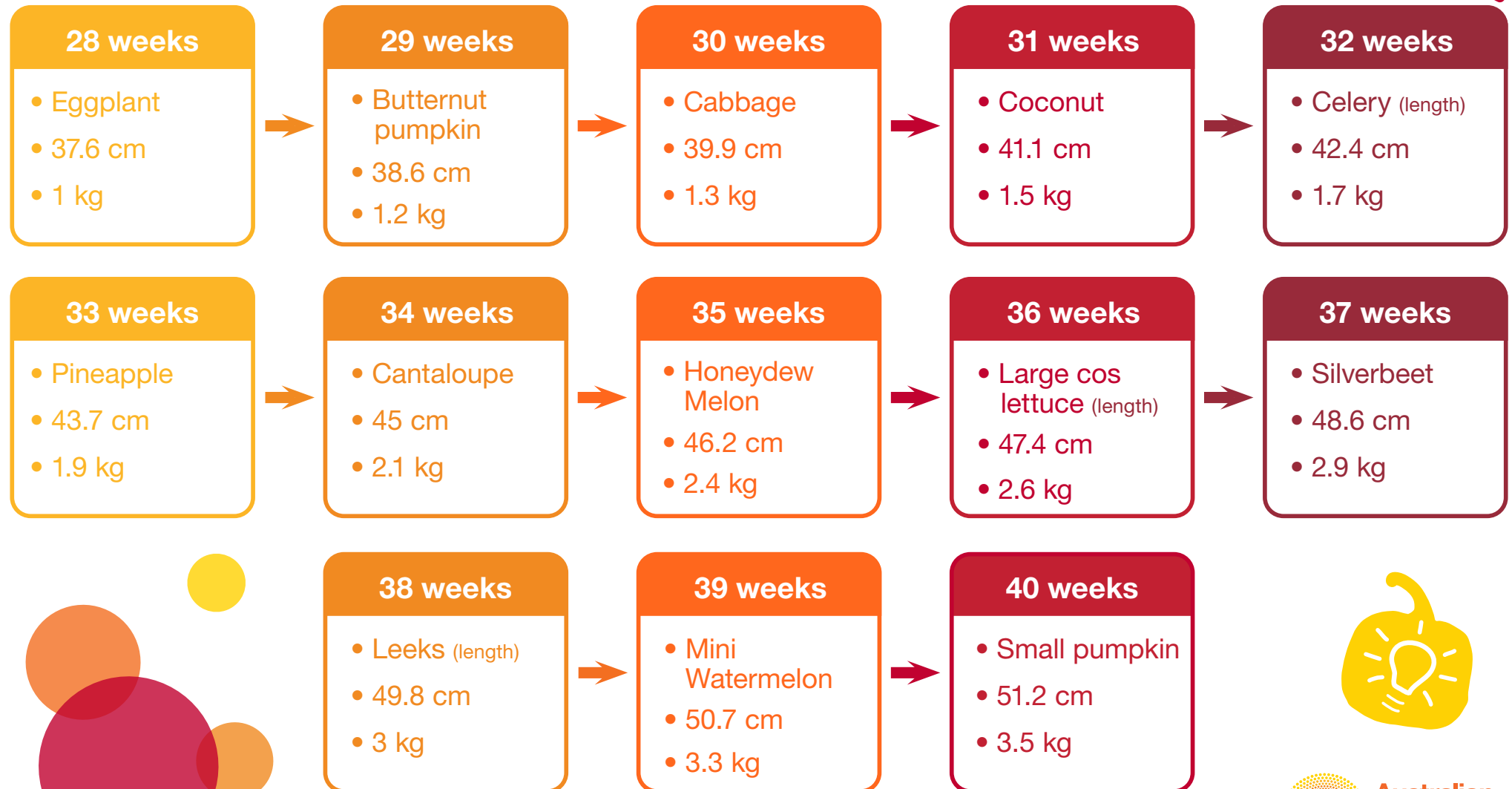
Second Trimester



Growing like a mushroom - Tracking the growth of your baby in utero



Third Trimester



Baby brain – development in utero



Brain Stem

- Hindbrain
- Midbrain
- Forebrain

Neural Tube
(forms spinal cord)



25 Days



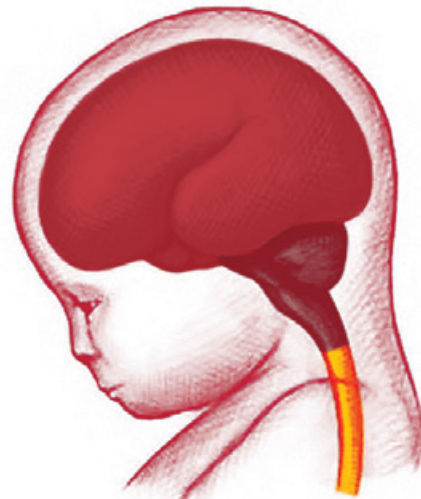
50 Days



100 Days



20 Weeks



28 Weeks



35-40 Weeks (full term)



Baby brain – development in utero



Cerebrum

Pituitary Gland

Hypothalamus

Cerebellum

Brain Stem



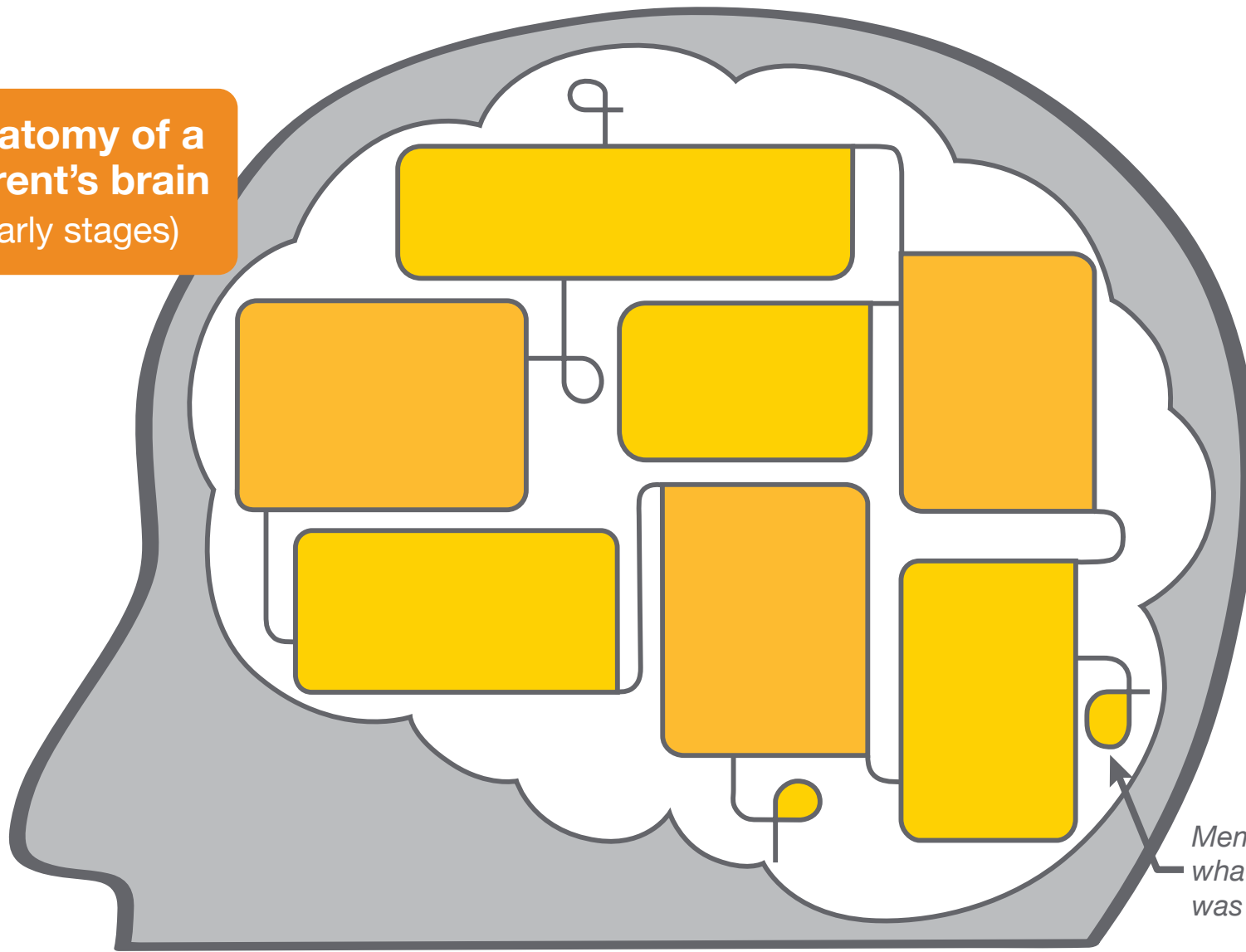
35-40 Weeks (full term)



Incomplete Parent Brain



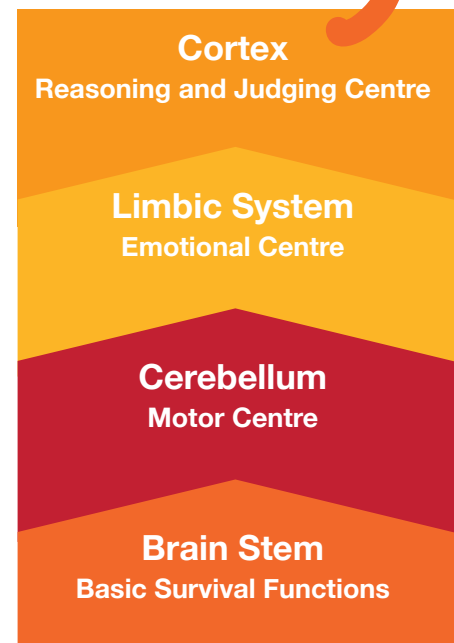
Anatomy of a Parent's brain (early stages)



Memory of what life was like



Bottom-Up Brain Development



The brain is comprised of different structures that grow and develop at different rates and different times.

The **brain stem** area of the brain develops first and is responsible for basic functions that **keep us alive** such as heart rate, breathing and regulating our body temperature. The brain stem is fully developed at birth. It is the part of the brain that is 'hard wired' and least susceptible to change.

Connected to the brain stem is the **cerebellum** or motor centre of the brain. This area is responsible for **movement** and develops over the first few years of life. Development in this area is seen in babies gaining head control, sitting, crawling and walking. In the next few years, children will gain greater co-ordination, learn to skip, kick a ball, ride a bicycle, cut, draw and eat with cutlery.

The **limbic system** is the **emotional** centre of the brain and rules the lives of young children up to around four years. During the toddler years, the limbic system goes through a period of rapid development. This helps explain their bursts of irrational behaviour and tantrums. Toddlers need our help to manage their **strong** feelings. Young children **feel** then **act**, they **can't think** then **act**. This is due to the emotional centre of their brain developing before the cortex, or the thinking part of their brain. Young children basically view the world through an emotional lens.

The **cortex**, or thinking part of the brain, is the last part to develop. This is the part of the brain responsible for reasoning, planning and problem solving. This is the part of the brain that enables humans to **think** before they **act**. As children grow and develop, the cortex is gradually able to help us to pause when we are flooded by **strong** emotions, thus allowing us to **feel, think, then act**.

Unlike the brain stem, the limbic system and cortex are highly susceptible to change due to experience and the environment in which the child lives.




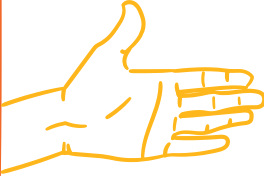



Have I told you lately that I love you?



Each of us has our favourite ways of receiving messages of love.

Use the chart below to show how you and your partner prefer to receive love. Then wonder about what you can do for your baby so that he/she gets the message, 'I am loved'.

	My Preferences	My partner's preferences	Wondering about our baby
Kind Words 			
Quality time 			
Gifts 			
Doing helpful things 			
Loving touch 			

Adapted from Chapman, G. (2010), *The Five Love Languages*

10 Breaths

When something wonderful touches you, savour the experience by offering it 10 full breaths. By paying close attention to special moments, we come to see that opportunities for happiness present themselves many times each day.

Give your 10 breaths to anything that seems wonderful to you

- Something beautiful from Nature
- A special moment with your child/partner/friend
- A piece of music
- Eating something delicious
- A work of art

- 1 Stop whatever you are doing
- 2 Close your eyes, place a hand on your belly and take 3 deep breaths to calm yourself.
- 3 Open your eyes and focus on your special object/person/experience
- 4 Stay focused on whatever has caught your attention as you 'count with your body', 10 slow breaths, by pressing and releasing in turn, each finger resting on your belly.
- 5 If you are still entranced by your special moment, repeat the 10 breaths practice.

Connecting with your unborn baby

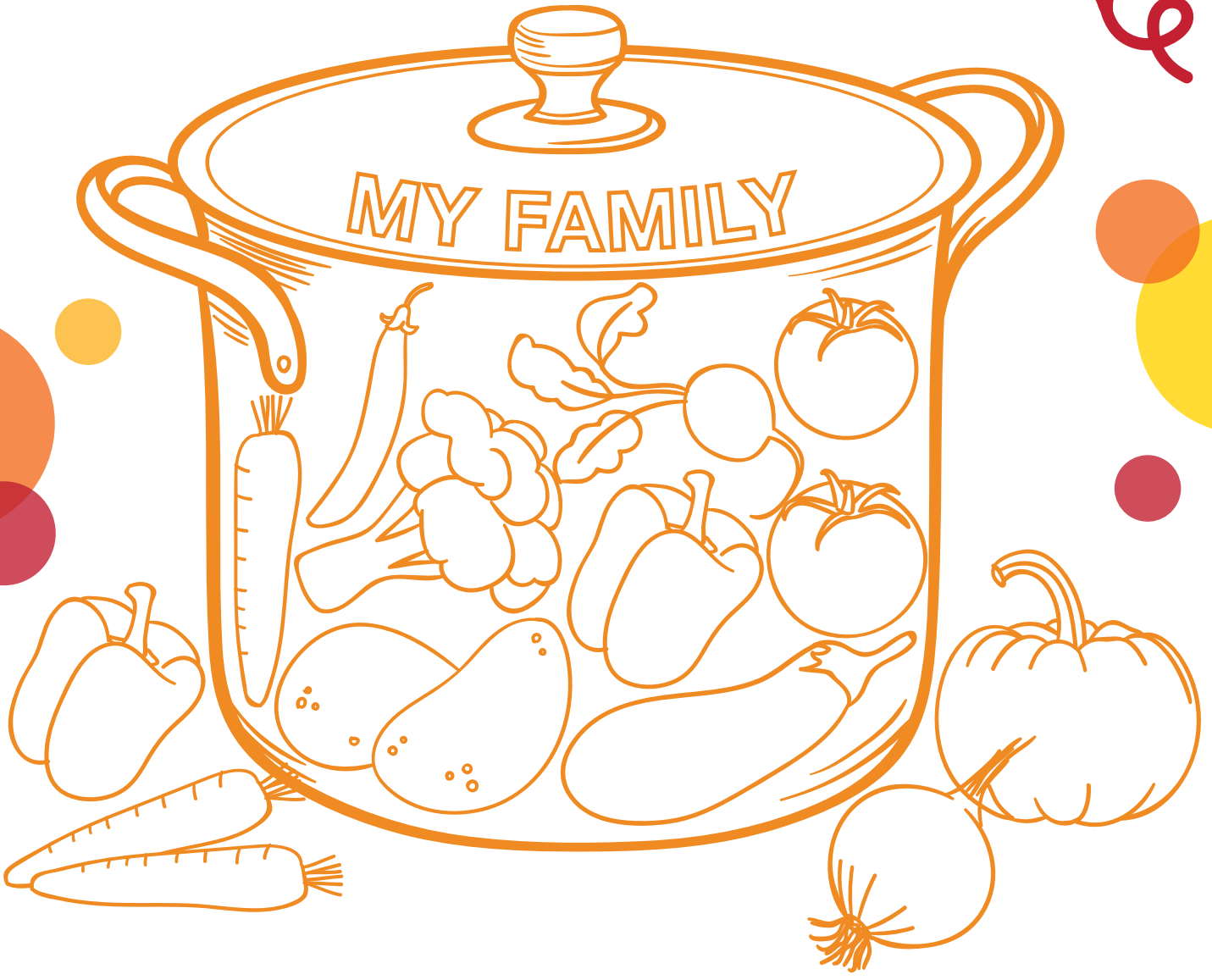


Research findings show the importance to children and families, of supportive father involvement:

1. When fathers have been with their newborn for at least the first hour after birth, they are able to identify their own baby apart from two others, while blindfolded. (Kaitz et al 1992)
2. A father's presence at the birth of his child, and contact (particularly skin contact), with the baby in the first hours after birth, deepens his involvement with his child in the early months of life. (Rodholm M 1981)
3. Children have strong feelings about what they want in their dads: men who are positive role models, who offer support, stability, guidance, and respect, who spend quality time with them and who show their love and affection through physical contact. (Milligan & Dowie 1999)



Family Soup



Notes



Reflections on Culture



Name three values you have learnt from your family.

1

2

3

Then ask yourself:

- Do you still hold these values today?
- How might they have influenced the way you/ your grandparents/ parents raised their children?
- Are they something you intend to pass on to your own children?

Name three customs that you and your family have around events such as birthdays, Christmas, weddings or funerals.

1

2

3

Then ask yourself:

- Are they different from what other people do at these times?
Think about your friends, people you work with, or people from a different culture.
- How are they different?
- Where do these customs come from for your family?



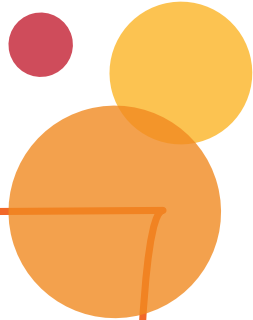
Reflections on Culture



Draw a visual representation of your own culture.

Try to include some aspects of:

- your beliefs, values and philosophies and ambitions
- your symbols, languages
- your customs, traditions, dress, food, home, lifestyle, behaviours, health practices

A large, empty rectangular box with a hand-drawn orange border, intended for drawing a visual representation of one's culture.

Share your drawing with another participant from a different culture (is possible).
Talk about how different or similar your culture is from that of the other person.



Six theories



If you were asked to name your own 'Six Theories About Raising Children', what would they be?

1

2

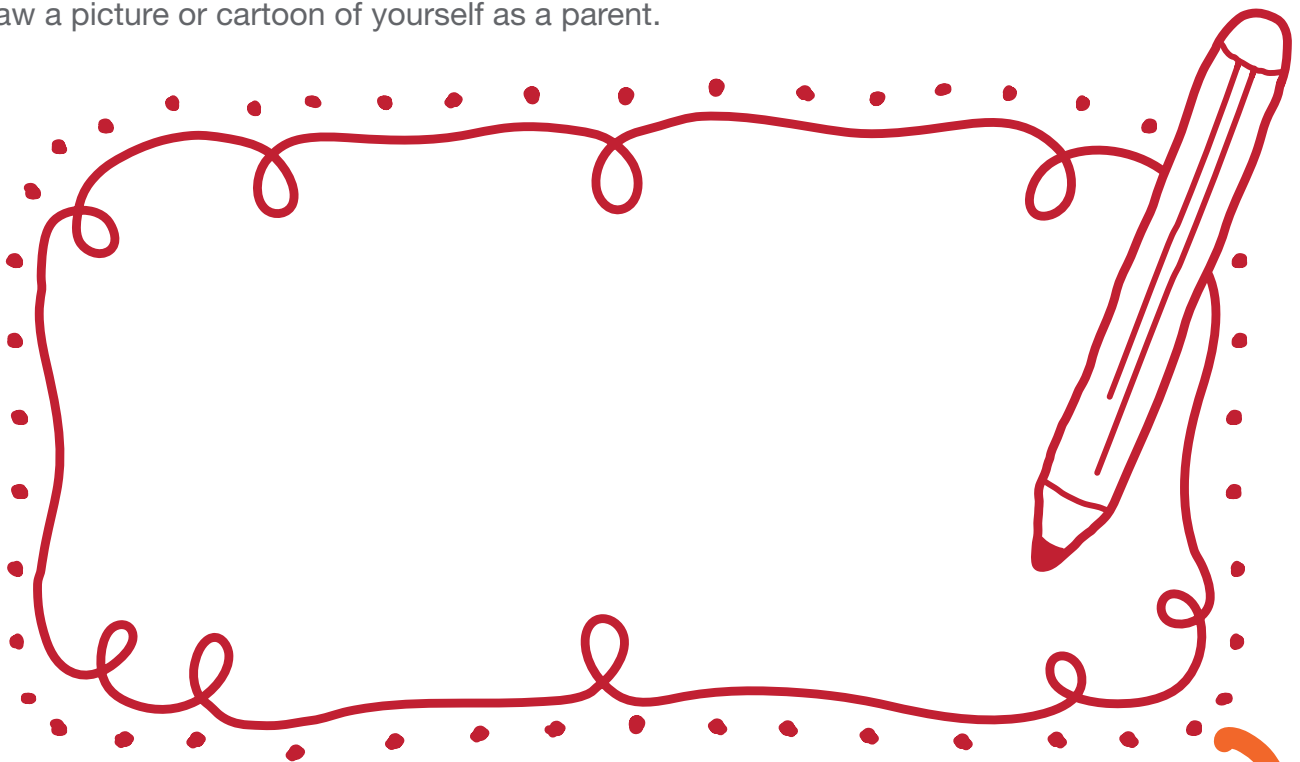
3

4

5

6

When you imagine yourself as a parent what do you see?
Draw a picture or cartoon of yourself as a parent.



My Favourite Things



What's your favourite...?

Make sure you experience at least one of your favourite things each day.

Food
A simple line drawing of a hamburger with a bun, cheese, and a slice of tomato.

Hobby
A simple line drawing of a camera with a lens and a flash.

Game
A simple line drawing of a video game controller with buttons and a joystick.

Friends
A simple line drawing of a photograph showing two people's faces.

Music
A simple line drawing of a pair of headphones.

Pet
A simple line drawing of a dog sitting down.

Place
A simple line drawing of three trees with trunks and foliage.

Reading
A simple line drawing of a closed book.



Asking for help



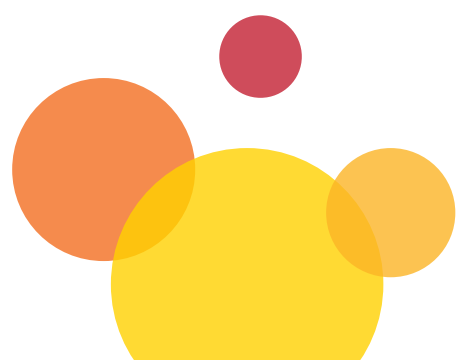
1 How easy do you find it to ask for help?

2 When you are upset or having problems, are you more likely to go away by yourself to try to solve the problem, or talk to someone else?

3 How do you feel when you leave your child in the care of someone else?

4 How well do you think your cries for help were answered when you were a child?

5 What might have got in the way of people meeting your needs as a child?



Asking for help



6 How do you feel about these statements?

“It’s my job to look after my children, no one else’s job.”

“It takes a village to raise a child.”

“Every parent needs help at times.”



7 Who do you feel comfortable to ask for help with your children?



The Wellbeing Plate

★ Design your own wellbeing plate by using the different ingredients provided or by adding your own ideas, shapes and pictures.



The Wellbeing Plate



**Physical
Time**

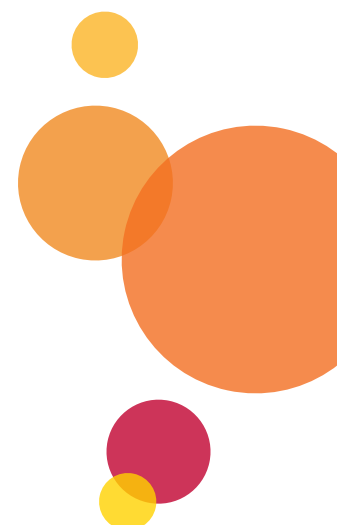
**relationship
time**

**Sleep
time**

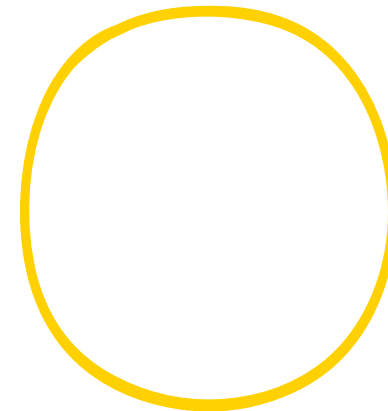
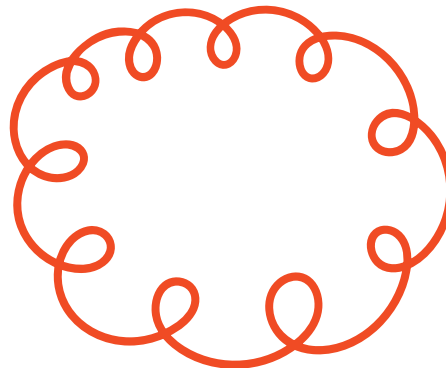
**Nurturing
time**

**Play
time**

**Nature
time**



**Personal
time**



Self-care Prescription

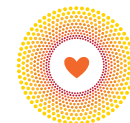


Prescription (My self-care activity)	Dose (How long?)	Frequency				
		Daily	Weekly	Fortnightly	Monthly	Yearly
Call or visit a friend or family						
Practice breathing / muscle relaxation						
Walk, play sport or exercise						
Have a bath						
Read a book or magazine						
Have one-to-one time with your partner						
Watch a movie						
Listen or dance to music						
Write, paint or play an instrument						
Cook your favourite meal						
Go out for dinner						
Do some gardening						
See a counsellor						
Go away for a weekend						
Go on holiday						



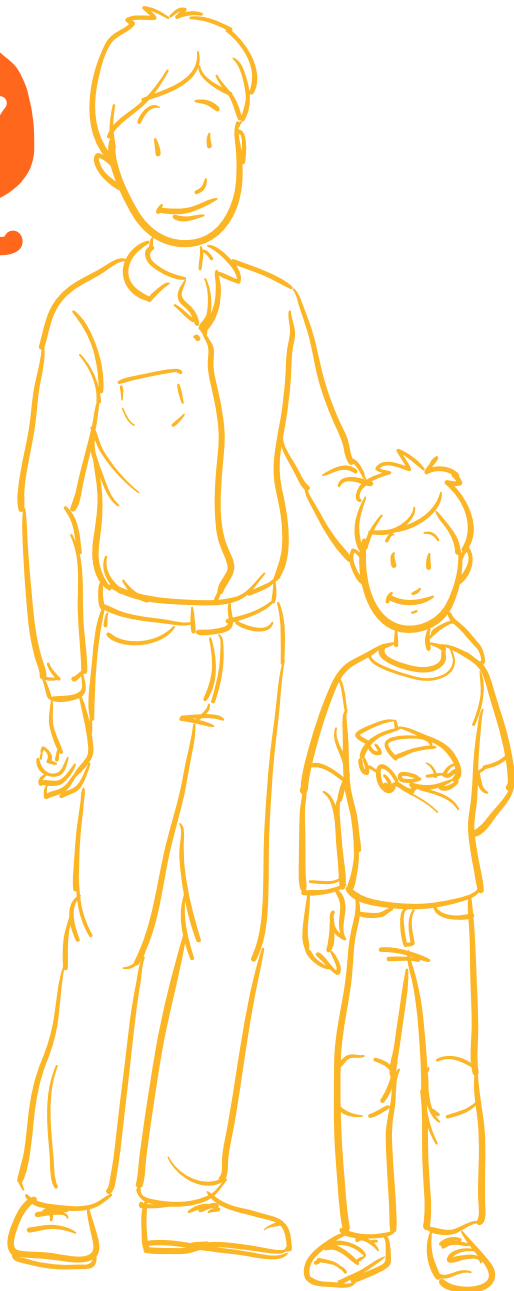
Name: _____

Witnessed: _____

Displayed: 

Australian
Childhood
Foundation

'Daddy Cool'



- ★ How do you feel about becoming a Dad?
- ★ What are you excited about?
- ★ Who will you talk to about these feelings?
- ★ What are some of your fears?
- ★ Who will you talk to about these fears?
- ★ What kind of dad do you think your kids would like you to be?

