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## **‘Love, Talk, Sing, Read, Play’ App helps track children’s development**

For many parents, marking developmental milestones for their child is very important. It validates and reassures them that they are providing the skills, information and ideas needed to raise a happy, healthy and well-adjusted child. It also helps provide a child and parents with some extra support, through early childhood intervention, when needed, so a child can meet their full potential.

South Eastern Sydney Local Health District has launched an interactive app called ‘Love, Talk, Sing, Read, Play,’ that lets parents know about their child’s development milestones, immunisations and health checks.

It can be downloaded for free from Google Play or the App Store.

Initially released as a flipchart, the app provides information on a child’s brain development in a personalised format that engages parents.

Tania Rimes, Families NSW Program Co-ordinator, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, said the app is based on early brain development research from birth to five years of age.

“Research shows that the early years of a child’s life has a significant impact on their physical, behavioural and social development into adulthood,” Ms Rimes said.

“The brain is not mature at birth; different areas of brain develop at different stages during childhood. Whilst genes provide the initial map for brain development, it is an infant’s early experiences and relationships that literally sculpt the brain.

“The app takes this a step further by providing age-specific information at the right time by letting parents know about the developmental milestones their child should be reaching at each age and how to encourage their development.

“It also reminds them about immunisations and health checks with their child and family health nurse.”

The ‘Love, Talk, Sing, Play’ app contains information for parents to help their child learn and develop:

- Parents receive personalised messages on how their child is learning and developing.
- Parents can personalise the app by adding their child’s name and photo to create a memory book.
- Parents are sent reminders on immunisations and blue book checks.
- The app contains a list of useful state-wide parenting contacts and parents can add their local contact.

The app has been developed as a Families NSW project in partnership with South Eastern Sydney Local Health District, Sydney Local Health District, South Western Sydney Local Health District, Families NSW St George Child and Family Interagency and Resourcing Parents. For more information go to: [www.lovetalksingreadplay.com.au](http://www.lovetalksingreadplay.com.au)