



I sincerely hope you had a great Christmas and New Year with your families.

Don't forget about Children's Day on the 7th March and Well Child Week running from 8th to the 14th March. A great time to get involved with your kids.

Bronwyn van Hooijdonk
Company Director



Duped by Baby Einstein videos? Get a refund
Julie Deardorff, Chicago Tribune, Health.

If you were duped into thinking that Baby Einstein videos were helping your baby's brain, you can now get your money back. Three years after Walt Disney Co. stopped claiming the videos were educational for children under 2, it has announced it is offering a refund to anyone who bought a Baby Einstein video in the last five years.

The offer is a victory for the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood, which filed a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission that accused Baby Einstein of making false and deceptive claims about the educational value of its products.

In fact, research has found that an hour a day of watching Baby Einstein was associated with slower acquisition of new words.

The videos' popularity was fueled by the "Mozart Myth," the idea that playing classical music to an infant can make the child smarter. One study done on college students showed a short-term beneficial effect that was gone in half an hour, according to Princeton University neuroscientist Sam Wang, who co-wrote "Welcome to Your Brain" with Sandra Aamodt.

"Though babies don't have the wiring to process all the complexity in classical music, they are mesmerized by it, which might be why they seem to like 'Baby videos' like Baby Einstein," they wrote.

"Much better is for your child to learn a musical instrument," wrote Wang and Aamodt. "This activity involves active learning and is associated with increased cognitive achievement."



antenatal classes

pregnancy, childbirth & early parenting information
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bronwyn@hbdoulas.co.nz

What About the Children? newsletter states:

"The research shows interactions between parents and infants are significantly increased when they are placed in face to face buggies.

As a consequence of the research findings, demand for this style of baby carrier has increased and manufacturers are seeking to produce more affordable two way travel systems.

What About the Children is pleased to report that Boots, Mothercare, Babies R Us and Chicco have introduced a symbol to indicate the face to face buggies and promote the increased opportunity for interaction between baby and "pusher" that these designs provide."

"You are a midwife. You are assisting at someone else's birth. Do good without show or fuss. Facilitate what is happening rather than what you think ought to be happening. If you must, take the lead. Lead so that the mother is helped, yet still free and in charge. When the babe is born the mother will rightly say, 'We did it ourselves.'"

Lao Tzu, in Tao Te Ching

"The body is movement. Breath is life. And the base of our being is the support of others."

Harold Dull

Scientists at the University of Wuerzburg in Germany have discovered that parents' language patterns are evident in a baby's cries at even just a few days of age.

Researchers analyzed the cries of 60 newborns (30 born to German-speaking parents and 30 to French-speaking parents), recorded when the babies were three to five days old.

They found that the "melodies" of the babies' cries distinctly followed the patterns of each child's mother tongue, suggesting that babies begin picking up language patterns while in the womb.

The full report of this study was published in the November 5 issue of *Current Biology*.

Head back to school without head lice

If you have school-aged children, you'll know that head lice often become a hot topic for many parents. Head lice are small, flat insects about three millimetres long that live on the human scalp. They cannot jump, fly or swim but are spread when people have their heads close together or by sharing combs, brushes and hats.

The female lice lay eggs called nits close to the scalp and these are glued firmly to each hair. The eggs hatch in about a week and live for up to 40 days. The most obvious sign of head lice is itchiness while nits appear as white specks in the hair close to the scalp. The best places to look for nits are behind the ears and along the hairline at the back of the neck.

If you discover head lice they should be treated immediately. There are a variety of treatments available from preparations that contain insecticides to products containing herbs and/or essential oils. Ensure the treatment is rubbed thoroughly into the scalp and then combed through from the roots to the tips of the hair. It is important to repeat any treatment seven days later to kill off any lice that have hatched since the first treatment. Use a metal fine-toothed comb to comb out lice.

Rinsing the hair in a half water, half vinegar solution after treating may help dissolve the glue that sticks the eggs to the hair and make combing them out much easier. Wash hair brushes, hair ties etc in hot water or soak in disinfectant solution.

Tea tree oil may help prevent infestation of head lice. Simply place 20 drops into the conditioner bottle and use regularly.

The information provided in this column is to be used as a guide and is not intended as a comprehensive medical service. It should not be used as a substitute for seeking professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

Claire Wallis is a pharmacist from Gilmours Pharmacy (Havelock North) and Ahuriri Pharmacy (Napier). If you have any questions you'd like answered, I'd love you to email me on gilmours.pharmacy@hdl.net.nz, phone on 835 7948 or check out www.gilmourspharmacy.co.nz .

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Benefits of breastfeeding

There is nothing more healthy and natural for your baby than breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding helps lay the foundations of a healthy life for a baby and also makes a positive contribution to the health and wellbeing of mothers.

Benefits for baby

- Breastmilk is easily digested and is free, always fresh and immediately available.
- A mother with a healthy diet provides breastmilk with a perfect blend of nutrients and protective antibodies (although it doesn't replace the need for immunisations).
- Breastfeeding helps baby grow and develop physically and emotionally.
- Breastfeeding and breastmilk helps protect a baby from chest infections, meningitis, ear infections and urine infections.
- Breastfeeding decreases the risk of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI).
- Breastfeeding and breastmilk may protect a baby from chronic tummy problems and some childhood cancers - there is also evidence of a reduced risk of allergies, eczema and asthma.
- Breastfeeding helps reduce the risk of obesity and may help reduce the risk of diabetes in baby's later life.

Benefits for mother

- Breastfeeding helps mothers recover from birth.
- Skin-to-skin contact is a wonderful way to start intimately connecting with your baby and a great boost to breastfeeding.
- Breastfeeding reduces the risk of pre-menopausal breast cancer in mothers.
- Breastfeeding may reduce the risk of ovarian cancer, osteoporosis and hip fracture in mothers later in life.
- Breastfeeding may help mum to lose the weight gained through pregnancy.
- Breastfeeding can be part of a healthier lifestyle for mum.

Exclusive breastfeeding

- Exclusive breastfeeding is recommended until babies are around six months (only breastmilk, from the breast or expressed, and prescribed medicines have been given from birth), with breastfeeding continuing until at least one year or beyond.
- Exclusively breastfed infants can meet their fluid requirements with breastmilk and do not need water or any other drinks or food until around six months of age.
- After around six months of age, exclusive breastfeeding alone is not enough for baby to grow and develop – complementary foods (solids) should be introduced with breastfeeding continuing until at least one year or beyond.
- When away from baby, giving expressed breastmilk to baby is better than using infant formula.