

Ten key areas of public health practice

From Blair, M., Stewart-Brown, S., Waterston, T., and Crowther, R. (2003). *Child Public Health*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Area of practice	Child health practice
1. Surveillance and assessment of the population's health and well-being	Overseeing the routine child health surveillance system; collecting health data on special groups such as looked after children or those with disabilities; developing shared databases with other agencies
2. Protecting and promoting health and well-being	Managing communicable disease outbreaks in schools or colleges; overseeing immunisation programmes; facilitating local health promotion activities such as "Five a Day" schemes; encouraging the use of smoke alarms
3. Developing quality within an evaluative culture which gets evidence into practice and manages risk	Promoting evidence-based practice in child health for community nurses or GPs; evaluating local services or systems such as inter-agency child protection practice or children's experience in A&E departments
4. Managing, analysing and interpreting information, knowledge and statistics	Includes collecting and using national and local data, both routine and ad hoc (e.g. using infant mortality data to monitor UK national inequalities targets) and undertaking literature reviews to gather, summarise and disseminate evidence on a particular topic, such as accident prevention
5. Prioritising and providing professional advice in health and health care	Advising commissioners of health care on priorities for development within child health; helping service providers make use of pooled budgets to deliver more effective respite care services for families
6. Policy and strategy development and implementation	Includes both local and national levels e.g. membership of Children's Task Force or National Service Framework Implementation Group; developing a local strategy for health care of young asylum seekers or other vulnerable children
7. Developing communities, advocating for health, and reducing inequalities	"Healthy Schools" initiatives; "SureStart" schemes; involving young people in feedback on health services and service planning; advocating for children's rights; developing peer education schemes on smoking and alcohol or open access health advice services such as "BodyZones" in schools
8. Strategic leadership for health and well-being across all sectors	Effective coordination of multi-agency projects, such as developing innovative child and adolescent mental health services in conjunction with local social services, education departments and voluntary organisations; making sure children's health and well-being is on the agenda of local government
9. Education, research and development	Teaching epidemiology and public health principles to health care students and practitioners and others; research on the efficacy of interventions or health services (new vaccines, parenting programmes, preventive dentistry, smoking cessation services for young people)
10. Managing self, people and resources, and practising ethically	Effective management of "grass roots" staff such as health visitors and community nurses to maximise the public health benefit of their work; ensuring confidentiality and promoting children's rights