



# HandBook

## For Parents

1<sup>st</sup> Edition



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# Department of Psychology

Inclusion, Dignity and Respect

## Meet the Team

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Joining us  
soon



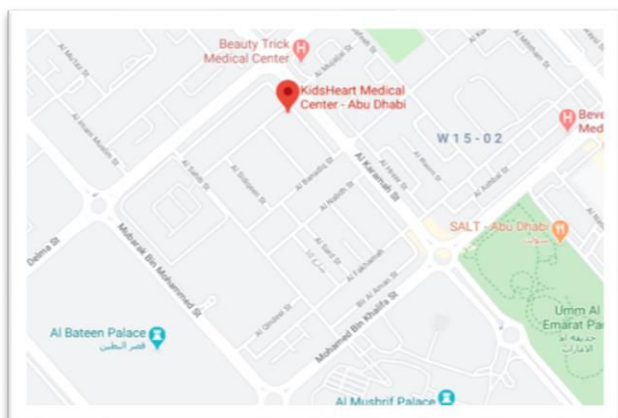
**Amna Javaid**  
Clinical Psychologist



**Nimi K Tomy**  
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## Location & Contact Details

We are conveniently located in the heart of Abu Dhabi City for everyone to reach us. Our client friendly facility is safely equipped and our staff highly trained are always ready to accommodate all age groups.



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## Our Mission

The Psychology Department was established in KidsHeart Medical Centre with a special aim to provide very comprehensive services to children, adolescents & adults. Our approach is child-centered by providing evidence-based psychological assessment and intervention by tracking and developing their milestones of development. We ensure that our patients receive utmost respect, attention and care during our therapy solutions. We strongly believe and **encourage Early Intervention in children** based on their needs identified **as opposed to Early Diagnosis**.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	Intellectual Disability	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	Learning Disability
Psychosomatic and Stress Management	Social Communication Disorders	Multimedia Addiction	Drug and Alcohol Abuse / Addiction
Sleep Disorders	Depression	Behavior Problems	Anxiety and Mood Disorders
	Anger Management	And many more...	



## Preparing your Child for School

- Take your child to see the new school and teachers and show your child pictures of the new classroom.
- Talk about school and people they will meet in school.
- Introduce classmates (if possible).
- Use visual schedules if your child is nonverbal.
- Read books or social stories about school.
- Teach them about school rules/routines and about listening and following instructions.
- Encourage your child to be more independent.
- In the weeks before, get your child used to waking up/eating in line with school days.
- Shop for schoolbags, lunchboxes etc. with your child.

## Deciding on a School

### Some aspects to consider...

- Class size.
- Distance from home.
- Resources/ support/therapies for children with special needs.
- Physical environment of the school and classroom.
- Staff attitudes especially for children with special needs.
- Visit schools (e.g., mainstream/special schools/special class in mainstream school).
- During school visit, ensure to speak to class teacher and principal about resources and enrolment.



### Preparing your Child for the Pandemic (COVID 19)

It is normal for children to be anxious during the pandemic and parents play a major role in educating them and preparing them to handle the situation. Parents can help reduce anxiety among children by listening and understanding their feelings.

The UAE are due to open their schools back on the 30<sup>th</sup> of August 2020. COVID-19 precautions are in place which could vary from pre-pandemic times. The schools are still offering an option of online studies. Before you send your child to school, ensure that your child is prepared to adapt to the new safety regulations. Also to confirm with the school that they have taken all the necessary precautions .

#### FACE MASKS

- Kids over 6 years are required to wear masks at all times. It is important to get your child used to wearing a mask and practice it as they will be wearing it for longer periods.
- You may make it a family art activity to keep their interest.
- Teach good mask hygiene by ensuring they cover their nose and mouth whilst being outside.
- Ensure they dispose their own masks properly or clean reusable ones daily

#### PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- It can be hard for kids to maintain a 1.5 m distance at all times which is very important so teach your child by practicing it.
- Teach them alternate ways of greeting instead of hand shake & hugging.

#### TOILET HYGIENE

- School toilets are a major risk factor, make sure a supervisor can keep a 10 minutes gap between students.

#### CLEANLINESS

- Tell your child to avoid sharing utensils or other belongings.
- Encourage your child to wash his/ her hands often.

#### IMMUNISATIONS & OVERALL WELLBEING

- Although the virus does not have a cure yet, it would be best if you get your child updated with his/her immunizations
- Build your child immunity by making sure he / she eats a balanced meal and get plenty of exercise.





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## Avoid the Three Cs



Be aware of different levels of risk in different settings.

There are certain places where COVID-19 spreads more easily:



### Crowded places

with many people nearby



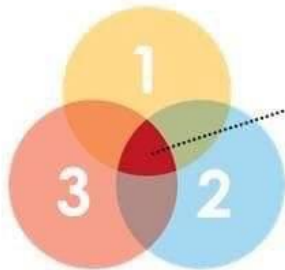
### Close-contact settings

Especially where people have close-range conversations



### Confined and enclosed spaces

with poor ventilation



The risk is higher in places where these factors overlap.

Even as restrictions are lifted, consider where you are going and #StaySafe by avoiding the Three Cs.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?



Avoid crowded places and limit time in enclosed spaces



Maintain at least 1m distance from others



When possible, open windows and doors for ventilation



Keep hands clean and cover coughs and sneezes



Wear a mask if requested or if physical distancing is not possible

**If you are unwell, stay home unless to seek urgent medical care.**



## Toilet Training

**Prior to starting school it is important that your child is potty trained.**

### Here are some general tips to get your child started

- Keep a log of your child's dirty nappies. When you begin toilet training, you will have a rough estimate of when your child will need to go to the toilet.
- Tell your child that you will be toilet training him/her.
- Get your child interested in the toilet (e.g., showing them how to flush the toilet etc.). Make the bathroom a positive place.
- On the day of toilet training, give your child lots of liquids and high fiber foods!
- Set a timer for every hour – when the timer goes, bring your child to the toilet
- It is advised that children do not wear nappies during toilet training.
- Support your child's feet when sitting on the toilet (use a foot rest).
- REWARDS!! When your child uses the toilet, make sure to give him/her a reward straight away. First—Then boards may even work for your child...'First toilet, then sweets'
- Use social stories/visuals to provide step by step guidance on using the toilet, if necessary.

### Suggestions for children who do not communicate verbally

Create a picture card for your child to communicate when he/she needs to use the bathroom.

Log in to YouTube and let them enjoy a potty training video

- Elmo potty training
- Cocomelon potty training
- And many more







# Track your child's developmental milestones

### Learn the signs and act quickly

It is important to know that each child is unique in his or her own way and most of the time they develop beautifully on their own. However, there might be some areas a child might require help and it is important to consult a professional.

### 6 months

- Mimics Sounds
- Begins to sit without support
- Likes to play with others, especially parents
- Responds to own name
- Strings vowels together when babbling ("ah," "eh," "oh")

### 12 months (1 year)

- Uses simple gestures such as shaking head for "no" or waving "bye-bye"
- Copies gestures
- Responds to simple spoken requests
- Says "mama" and "dada"
- Pulls up to stand

### 18 months (1.5 years)

- Says several single words
- Walks alone
- Knows what ordinary things are for; for example telephone, brush, spoon
- Plays simple pretend such as feeding a doll
- Points to show others something interesting

### 2 years

- Says sentences with 2-4 words
- Gets excited when with other children
- Follows simple instructions
- Kicks a ball
- Points to things or pictures when named

### 3 years

- Copies adults and friends (like running when other children run)
- Carries on a conversation using 2-3 sentences
- Climbs well
- Plays make-believe with dolls, animals and people
- Shows affection for friends without prompting

### 4 years

- Hops and stands on one foot for up to 2 seconds
- Would rather play with other children than alone
- Tells stories
- Draws a person with 2-4 body parts
- Plays cooperatively

These are just a few of many important milestones to look for. The information above was sourced from CDC.



### Autism Red Flags

- If your baby cries incessantly and for no reasons.
- If the baby is too passive and does not respond.
- The child does not respond to smile when approached by parent/caregiver.
- The child is oblivious of his environment and does not respond to sound/name.
- The child has no interest in imitating sounds or movements of others.
- Speech is significantly delayed and does not make any sound.
- Does not use gestures for communication.
- Eye contact is very poor.
- Seeks your attention infrequently and need based.
- Tendency to stiffen arms, legs or displays unusual body movements.
- Does not reach up toward you when you reach to pick them up.
- Delays in motor development.
- No interest in toys or only interested in a part of a toy.
- Interested to be spun around.
- Obsessional engagement in activity/objects.

### Learning Disability Red Flags

- Struggle to read and write.
- Difficulty with calculation.
- Slow to process.
- Not performing well in the class.
- Difficulties to focus and attend to tasks.
- Problems with communication and processing of instructions.



### Speech and Language Disorder **Red Flags**

- Delay in acquiring words.
- Difficulties with pronunciations
- Delay in forming sentences.
- Delay in following instructions.

### Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) **Red Flags**

- Very active and do not have control over activity levels.
- Cannot sit still and is always on the go.
- Cannot pay attention and concentrate on tasks both at home and school.
- Difficulties to finish a task because of not paying attention to understand the instructions.
- Disorganized or messy and a tendency to lose things.
- Interrupts others while talking and likes to talk a lot.

### Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) **Red Flags**

- Being angry or losing temper
- Arguing
- Refusing to comply with adults' rules or requests
- Resentful or spiteful
- Annoying others or getting annoyed
- Blaming others for one's own mistakes or misbehavior

### Behavior/Conduct Problems **Red Flags**

- Argumentative
- Aggressive.
- Lies
- Steals
- Difficulty to make friends.



## Anger Red Flags

- Excessive temper tantrums
- Hitting
- Fighting
- Crying
- Kicking
- Biting
- Pinching

## Anxiety Red Flags

- Feeling nervous, restless or tensed
- Having a sense of panic
- Feeling weak or tired
- Trouble concentrating
- Increased heart rate
- Breathing rapidly
- Trembling
- Sweating

## Depression Red Flags

- Persistent sadness — two or more weeks
- Withdrawing from or avoiding social interactions
- Hurting oneself or talking about hurting oneself
- Talking about death or suicide
- Outbursts or extreme irritability
- Out-of-control behavior that can be harmful
- Drastic changes in mood, behavior or personality
- Change in eating habits
- Loss of weight
- Difficulty sleeping
- Difficulty concentrating
- Changes in academic performance
- Avoiding or missing school



### INTERVENTION AT HOME

After visiting our clinic and getting a better understanding of what we can do for your child, parents are often unsure how they can support their child at home.

In order to maximize your child's development, play is considered to be vital and following are some of the tips to engage with your child positively:

### Importance of PLAY



#### Puzzles and Blocks!

- ✓ Helps to think and create.
- ✓ Helps improve fine motor skills.
- ✓ Helps build visual spatial skills.

#### Board Games

- ✓ Helps build executive functioning.
- ✓ Helps inhibit impulsive behavior.
- ✓ Helps to work in collaboration.
- ✓ Helps to be a team member.
- ✓ Helps being patient.
- ✓ Helps learn turn taking and sharing.



#### Play and get messy

- ✓ Develops fine and gross motor skills.
- ✓ Teaches creativity by making things out of nothing.
- ✓ Develops patience.
- ✓ It is okay to be disorganized at times.
- ✓ **Of all it teaches to learn FUN.**
- ✓ Makes one more tolerant and helps to learn more about nature.

#### Physical Sports

- ✓ Helps physical agility, gross and fine motor development.
- ✓ Teaches team work, flexibility, and coordination.







### POSITIVE PARENTING

DID YOU KNOW that your words can cause more harm than good?

**It is important to use words carefully while speaking to a child.**

Below are some examples of how you can change some of your statements.



## NEVER

- You are very annoying
- I am sick of you.
- I don't like you right now.
- I hate you
- Will you stop crying!!
- You have made our lives miserable.
- You are very bad.
- Your brother/sister never gave me problem.
- If you don't stop misbehaving I will tell your father/mother.
- Your brother/sister is so good at that
- If you don't stop throwing then I will.....
- If you hit again then I will...
- Only if you are good
- I will put you on the bold chair

## ALWAYS

- Are you upset with something?
- I love you.
- Let's talk, you can speak to me.
- You are my darling.
- What is making you upset?
- You are a beautiful addition to our family.
- What is making you angry?
- You always help me like your brother/sister
- Talk to me nicely and I will listen to you.
- You are so good like your brother and sister.
- No Throwing
- No hitting.
- You are always good.
- Come and sit by my side and I will tell you your favourite story.



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## POSITIVE PARENTING

Here are some tips on dealing with your children.

### No to Punishment

Punishment in any form can be detrimental to a child's psychological growth.

### Establish Rules when Young

Set up rules when they are young, they will have a hard time learning how to manage themselves when they get old.

### Ignore Mischievousness

Pay less attention to unwanted behaviors.

### Distract Child

If a child is exhibiting an unwanted behavior, use distraction/ offer them choices

### Foster Independence

Encouraging independence helps the child develop a sense of self-direction

### Be kind to Children

Children treat others the way their parents treat them

### Parents are Role Models

Children imitate their parents; whatever you do will have an impact on shaping their personality

### "If and then" strategy works well to set up boundaries

For example "if you study then you may enjoy free time".

### Quality Time with Kids

Spend quality time with your children. Understand them and show interest in activities they like by joining them.

### Be Consistent

Inconsistency in dealing with behavior sends a wrong message to children and they tend to get confused.

### Keep Rules Clear & Simple

Avoid giving lectures. Only one word or a short sentence can help at times.

### Treat Children Respectfully

Your relationship with your children is the foundation for their relationships with others. Respect their opinion.

### Praise Your Child

Encourage a positive behavior by praising your children as they will try to continue to exhibit the same behavior to get your praise.



## We are **Here** for you!

We are here to help when you're feeling stuck and do not know what to do.

Our family friendly atmosphere guarantees to have quick response to your queries and issues.

To Learn more, please contact our team and we shall have you see one of our consultants.

- **Team Psychology**

Thank you for taking your time to read this booklet. We hope this was useful for you.

Please let us know if you have any further questions and suggestions by contacting us  
on [psychology@kidsheart.ae](mailto:psychology@kidsheart.ae)

