

AT THE END OF THE DAY YOUR FEET SHOULD BE DIRTY, YOUR HAIR MESSY AND YOUR EYES SPARKLING - SHANTI

STRAWBERRY AND MANDARINE MUFFINS – BREAKFAST OR MORNING TEA SORTED

SING AND DANCE THAT STRESS AWAY! – HOW MUSIC CAN BECOME A GREAT COPING TOOL

Little Assets Melbourne City



On this month

AT LITTLE ASSETS

Mother's Day Afternoon Tea-----11th

AROUND THE COUNTRY

International Star Wars Day-----4th
Play Outside Day -----6th
Int'l Composting Awareness Week ---7th – 13th
World Migratory Bird Day -----7th
Mother's Day -----14th
National Families Week -----15th – 21st
National Sorry Day-----26th
Ramadan -----25th

Welcome!!

*"Join us for Mother's Day
afternoon tea"*

Dear Parents,

Welcome to our 5th edition of our monthly newsletter!!!

We have organized an afternoon tea for all our mums on Thursday 11th of May so please do not forget to RSVP for the same by Friday 5th of May.

As a part of the regulatory assessment process, the Victorian Department of Education and Training (the Department) has informed us that the assessment and rating visit for our service will commence on 1 May 2017 (today) and is proposed to be for a minimum of 1.5 days.

It is anticipated that the authorised officer, Verity Pritchard, will conduct the assessment and rating visit of your service. The authorised officer will arrive at our service at approximately 08:30AM.

We are excited about the whole process but if you have any questions regarding this, please feel free to see me. Thank you.





NATIONAL FAMILIES WEEK – 15TH - 21ST

National Families Week is a time to celebrate with your family, make contact with your extended family and friends, and share in the enjoyment of family activities within the wider community. Go to nfw.org.au for more information.

NATIONAL SORRY DAY - 26TH

National Sorry Day is an Australia-wide observance held on May 26 each year. This day gives people the chance to come together and share the steps towards healing for the Stolen Generations, their families and communities.

Find out more at reconciliation.org.au

INT'L COMPOSTING AWARENESS WEEK – 7TH - 13TH

We can compost to help scrap carbon pollution by avoiding landfilling organic materials and helping to build healthier soils.

Go to compostweek.com.au



STRAWBERRY MANDARINE MUFFINS

PREP 10 min | COOK 15 min | SERVES 12

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- Zest of 3 large mandarins
- 1-cup buttermilk
- 3/4-cup vegetable oil (any lightly flavoured oil is fine)
- 2 eggs
- 1-teaspoon vanilla essence
- 2 cups wholemeal plain flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 punnet strawberries, hulled and diced PLUS 4 strawberries hulled and quartered for decoration

METHOD - Preheat oven to 180 degrees Celsius. Place the brown sugar and mandarin zest into a large bowl and mix to combine. Add the buttermilk, vegetable oil, eggs and vanilla and whisk to combine. Add the flour and baking powder and lightly mix until just combined. Gently fold through the diced strawberries. Use a 1/4 measuring cup to ladle the muffin batter into a 12-hole muffin tin lined with papers. Gently press a piece of strawberries into each muffin. Bake for 15 minutes or until golden and cooked. www.mylovelylittlelunchbox.com

SAFETY – Remember to always supervise kids in the kitchen.



Source: Recipe and images belong to mylovelylittlelunchbox

Book reviews

A few books to add some laughter to your day



This book just ate my dog!

Richard Byrne

A great book for sharing

In this wonderfully inventive book, Bella is taking her dog for a stroll across the page but halfway across, he disappears! Unable to quite believe what's just happened Bella watches, transfixed, with changing emotions.

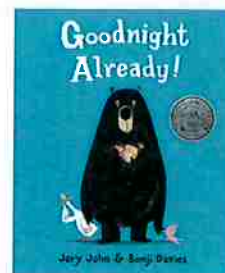
This book just ate my dog! is inventive, ingenious, and just pure kid-friendly fun! Enjoy with the whole family.

Goodnight already

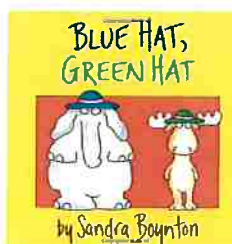
Benji Davies

Giggles at bedtime

Meet Bear. He's exhausted. All he wants is to go to sleep. Meet Duck, Bear's persistent next-door neighbour. All he wants is to hang out . . . with Bear.



Enjoy the playful comic tension through the beautiful nocturnally toned images



Blue hat, Green Hat

Sandra Boynton

Great for babies and toddlers

Three earnest animals and one misguided turkey learn colors and clothes in this Sandra Boynton classic. For more 'baby friendly' stories check out Sandra's large range of funny board books.



FOCUS ARTICLE: Toddlers not sleeping because of technology. It's not that simple

Giving Ella or Charlie the iPad at bedtime may not be the best idea, two London universities have found.

Researchers from Birkbeck, University of London and King's College London asked 715 parents about their babies' and toddlers' touchscreen usage. After analysing the data, they discovered children as young as six months were sleeping less, and taking longer to fall asleep, than their peers who didn't use touchscreen devices as much.

Each hour of touchscreen use equated with 16 minutes' less sleep. The results were published in *Scientific Reports*. Though the study didn't control for other variables, and therefore didn't establish that touchscreens caused less sleep, senior lecturer in early childhood education at Western Sydney University Joanne Orlando thinks it's an important step in the right direction. "There's a lot of uncertainty about the impact of technology on children's learning, health, and emotional states," she said.

Orlando, a children and technology expert, cautioned that devices themselves aren't harmful. It's that what?, when? and why? that matter. What is the child watching/playing, when is this occurring and – perhaps most importantly – why has the parent given the child the device? To help them sleep, or simply to keep them quiet? To illustrate the impact of these nuances, Orlando offered that if a child is playing a highly stimulating game five minutes before bedtime, it's obvious that might disrupt or delay the child's sleep.

Current screen-time guidelines are unfortunately vague in this respect. They don't, for instance, provide recommended daytime or nighttime quotas. "They put the onus on parents," Orlando explained. "This means it's important that people read widely and sort out what's best for their family."

Though Dr Drew Dawson, director of the Appleton Institute at Central Queensland University's Adelaide campus, thinks there's a simpler solution to this potential problem: blue light filters that dim devices' screens. "Many tech companies have already introduced blue-depleted night mode for tablets and phones," he stated. "This will solve the problem without the need to reduce screen time due to circadian disruption."

Orlando isn't convinced. The evidence on the effectiveness of this in improving sleep is, she said, "minimal". So, for now, for well-rested kids, guideline-supported common sense must suffice.

NEW SCREEN-TIME RULES

American screen-time standards, provided by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), have just been revised for the first time since 1999. (Australia's standards are based closely on these so Australia, take heed).

To the probable delight of exhausted parents and carers, the AAP has proposed a shift in focus to quality, not quantity, of screen time, via three crucial statements. If you have time reading them is highly recommended.

AAP recommendations include limiting screen time to one hour a day for children 2 to 5 years old. For children 6 and older, be consistent with the amount of time they can look at the screen and don't let it interfere with sleep, physical activity and other actions essential to good health.



In case you don't have time to read the statements here are the highlights – eight facts you should know:

1. The average age at which children begin to interact with media in 1970 was 4 years; today, 4 months.
2. You have to teach your toddler to talk, a device can't. Limit solo screen time until 2 years of age.
3. For a child under 18 months of age, allow video chat only; at 18–24 months, choose high-quality apps and use them with the child. Re-teach what they are learning if you want them to experience any benefit.
4. Children must learn to soothe themselves without a screen. Don't hand the phone over at the first sign of trouble.
5. Screen-free zones are critical: during meal times; in bedrooms; and during play-time (yes, parent or carer, that means your phone, too).
6. Kids aren't the only ones struggling with these issues. Distracted parenting is a real problem as well, across all child ages.
7. If you want to succeed, you must have a plan. Try out this free tool from the American Academy of Pediatrics: healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan
8. Just because an app or show is listed as educational, doesn't mean that it is. Do your own research and watch or play it with the child first.

Article source: *Tots wired, sleeping less after touchscreen use*
By: *Loren Smith* in *Health+Development Top Stories* April 18, 2017

Article source: *A look at new screen time rules* By: *Justin Smith* in *Opinion Top Stories* November 1, 2016

<https://www.earlylearningreview.com.au>



HEALTH & SAFETY: Sing And Dance That Stress Away

Stress. We all deal with it from time to time...and friends, so do our kids. Don't forget – we have a *lifetime* of experience in managing stress – and even *then* we can have a hard time with it. Our kids deal with stress, too...and they are stress *novices*. It's up to us to help them develop the skills and methods to cope with stress in their young lives. As it turns out, and this is in no way by accident, music and movement, the very things at which we are experts, are fantastic ways to alleviate stress. Science lights the way. Let's check it out!

Dance Lowers Cortisol Levels and Increases Endorphins.

Here's the science: dancing actually lowers levels of cortisol in the body. While cortisol, a hormone produced by the adrenal glands, does many other things for us, it is associated with stress. High stress leads to high levels of cortisol, which can lead to reduced immune system function. So...dancing can reduce the presence of cortisol in the system that otherwise might negatively impact your ability to fight off a cold or fight infection.

Dancing also causes the body to produce endorphins, which basically run interference with pain receptors and cause feelings of euphoria, reducing both physical and emotional pain. It's our body's way of self-regulating. Kids can get their own body on their side in dealing with stress levels – literally by dancing the stress away (or at the very least reducing its negative effects).

And How Does Music Fit In?

As it turns out – singing and dancing are twins. They are both art forms that are temporal, meaning they unfold and reveal their beauty over time. They are dynamic. They change. They engage the entire body and mind. They both require conscious control over the breath. The breath must be purposeful to have enough fuel to do the task at hand. All the mental health benefits of dance can be



found in singing – increased endorphins and lower cortisol levels among them. When making music with a group, empathy for those around you increases and heartbeats become synchronized (a really amazing phenomenon called biological entrainment).

The Combination of Movement and Music develops:

- The Vestibular System
- Neural Pathways
- Fine motor skills
- Physical confidence
- Creativity and imagination
- Thinking skills

A child that can express herself when dealing with stress, and then have an outlet to safely and physically work that stress out, encouraging the body to self-regulate, is a happier child.

Source: <https://www.kindermusik.com/mindsonmusic/kindermusik/sing-and-dance-that-stress-away/>

BEDTIME STORIES

Materials: Favourite picture books

Children love to read the same stories night after night, why not challenge them to use their memory to predict and recall parts of the tale. **How to:** Read the first page, ask your child to predict what will happen next. 'Why?'. Ask them questions about individual characters, what would they like to see happen, you can even ask Simple questions about colours, activities and feelings.



BIRDS, BIRDS, BIRDS!

World Migratory Bird Day is on the 10th of May. It is an annual awareness-raising campaign highlighting the need for the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats.

Plastic in bodies of water has a variety of effects on the animal kingdom. Plastic has become a fixed part of the natural habitat. Several species of animal have learned to use this material for their own purposes. But in most cases the consequences of encountering plastic are negative, and represent a major threat both to individual animals and to the ecological system as a whole.



Hundreds of tons in birds' stomachs - According to Jan van Franeker, researcher at the IMARES Institute, migratory birds also function as transformers and transporters of plastic: three-quarters of the plastic in the stomach of a fulmar is ground down and excreted elsewhere. The scientist reckons that in this way the birds distribute hundreds of tons of plastic worldwide and process it into microplastic.

Things you can do: Take 3 – *Whenever you're at a beach, waterway or anywhere in the great outdoors, simply take 3 pieces of rubbish away with you and you've made a difference. Always be a conscious recycler.*



FOREST SCHOOL

SEATTLE: *Three-year-old Desi Sorrelgreen's favorite thing about his preschool is "running up hills." His classmate Stelyn Carter, 5, likes to "be quiet and listen to birds — crows, owls and chickadees," as she put it. And for Joshua Doctorow, 4, the best part of preschool just may be the hat he loves to wear to class (black and fuzzy, with flaps that come down over his ears).*



All three children are students at Fiddleheads Forest School here, where they spend four hours a day, rain or shine, in adjacent cedar grove "classrooms" nestled among the towering trees of the University of Washington Botanic Gardens.

A typical day at Fiddleheads starts at 9 a.m., with Desi, Stelyn, Joshua and fellow students zipping up waterproof suits so they can climb on, and sometimes slip off, sopping-wet logs; create secret forts under dripping boughs of bright green, and examine squirming earthworms in grubby hands.

Students go on "listening walks" with their teachers during which they stand in a circle with their eyes closed and name the things they can hear, like wind and rain, when they don't talk. The children also eat lunch, sing songs and occasionally squabble under the open sky and towering trees.

While the children are carefully supervised by trained teachers, the school has a choose-your-own-adventure attitude toward learning. "We kind of just think and find what we want to do in our head, and we just do it," Stelyn said.

Fiddlehead is one of at least 18 similar preschools founded in the greater Seattle area since 2005. To read more about these schools go to the source link below.

Source: Preschool without walls – Lillian Mongeau
https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/31/fashion/outdoor-preschool-in-nature.html?ref=education&_r=4

ANJALI ON ANNUAL LEAVE

Dear Parents,

I would like to inform you all that I will be on annual leave from May 29th to June 23rd.

I am planning a much needed holiday to visit my family back in Nepal. To those of who already know about my last trip to Nepal which didn't go exactly as I would have liked but nevertheless I am very excited about visiting my home and family yet again.

The earthquake 2015 brought a lot of devastation to Nepal and having witnessed it so closely, it was scary to plan a holiday again there but I am excited to see how the country has pulled together and rebuilding themselves after the tragic natural calamity of April 2015.

In my absence, Sam will be in the office Monday to Friday. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to see her.

Thank you.

*Kind Regards,
Anjali Rauniyar*



Short simple activities to get some active minutes in the day.

This activity can be undertaken anywhere, the more obstacles the better. Your child may have well and truly left crawling behind, but this activity calls for a revisit. You will often see crawling in bootcamp style training for a great reason, it is an awesome aerobic and strength activity.

The exercise is simple... you and your child crawl and use your imagination. Crawl around the obstacles in your home or outside. Are you crawling like a baby? Or on your hands and toes? Ask your child what animals walk on all fours? What Animals could we pretend to be? It sounds easy but you will be puffing in no time. Have fun.

Feedback
is always welcome



How can we make our newsletter even better?

What information would you like us to include?

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