

"FAMILIES ARE LIKE BRANCHES ON A TREE. WE GROW IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS YET OUR ROOTS REMAIN AS ONE." — ANONYMOUS

AUGUST
2022

ON *this* MONTH

AT LITTLE ASSETS

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day ----- 4th
Koo Wee Kapers Musical Incursion-----12th
Multicultural Dress Up Day-----17th
Book Week Dress up Day-----22nd-26th

AROUND THE COUNTRY

Homeless Persons Week ----- 1-7
Dental Health Week ----- 1-7
National Aboriginal & Torres Islander Children's Day - 4
International Day of the World's Indigenous People ---- 9
International Youth Day ----- 12
World Elephant Day ----- 12
National Science Week ----- 13-21
Keep Australia Beautiful Week----- 15-21
Book Week ----- 20-26

AUGUST IS HERE!!!

Hi Everyone,

Another exciting month has now begun.

We are going to have a range of activities this month too.

Something we are extremely excited about is the "Multicultural Day" on August 17th. This one is going to be big as we are requesting all families and children and educators to dress up. We are going to have a multicultural lunch and afternoon tea. We are open for suggestions from your end. If you can think of something, please do comment on our Educa post.

As per our educators, we are going to have a multicultural fiesta too. Everyone is requested to bring in a plate full of flavours from their culture and we can together enjoy it.

At Little Assets we pride in providing a culturally diverse environment for our children to thrive and this event is a small testament towards our goal of reaching cultural competence.

The multicultural day will be celebrated together with our children, families, and educators from our South Morang Branch. We are excited; hope you are too!!!!

Kind Regards,
Anjali Rauniyar





NATIONAL ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN'S DAY – AUGUST 4

Children's Day is a time for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to celebrate the strengths and culture of their children. The 2022 theme for Children's Day is 'My Dreaming,

My Future'. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are born into stories of their family, culture, and Country. They carry with them the song lines of their ancestors and culture, passed down by generations. Their Dreaming is part of our history, while their futures are their own to shape. [Find out more here](#)

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE – AUGUST 9

'The Role of Indigenous Women in the Preservation and Transmission of Traditional Knowledge'. Is the theme for 2022. Indigenous women are the backbone of indigenous peoples' communities and play a crucial role in the preservation and transmission of traditional ancestral knowledge. [Find out more here.](#)

PUMPKIN MAC AND CHEESE



PREP 25 min | COOK 25 min | SERVES 6-8

INGREDIENTS

- 500 grams **orecchiette pasta** (or any small shaped pasta)
- PUMPKIN CHEESE SAUCE:
 - 4 tbs **butter**, 4 tbs **plain flour**, 2 cups **milk**
 - 1 can (400 grams) **pumpkin puree** (or homemade puree)
 - 1 tsp **granulated garlic**, 1 tsp **dry mustard**, 1/4 tsp **cayenne white pepper**, *to season*, grating of fresh **nutmeg**
 - 125 grams **mozzarella**, *grated*, 100 grams **parmesan**, *grated*
- PANKO CRUMBS:
 - 1 1/4 cups **panko style breadcrumbs**
 - 100 grams **mozzarella**, *grated*

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 200 C. **To cook the pasta:** Bring a large pot of water to the boil. Add salt and pasta and cook according to packet instructions. Drain and set aside. **To make the pumpkin cheese sauce:** Place the butter into a large saucepan over medium heat and melt. Add flour and whisk to create a smooth paste. Slowly add milk, whisking continuously. Continue to whisk until slightly thickened, approx. 3 minutes or until the mixture coats the back of a spoon. Reduce the heat to low and whisk in the pumpkin puree, garlic, mustard, cayenne and pepper. Add the cheeses and stir until melted. Take off the heat. Add cooked pasta to the pumpkin mac and cheese sauce and mix thoroughly to combine. Pour the pasta mixture into a large baking dish (approx. 45cm x 45cm). **To make the panko topping:** Sprinkle the panko breadcrumbs and mozzarella cheese evenly over the pasta. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until the cheese is melted and breadcrumbs are golden.

Recipe and image from mylovelylittlelunchbox.com

Podcast Reviews

Family health podcasts, the stuff you want to know.



WATCH YOUR MOUTH | ADA

ADA's oral health education podcast, *Watch Your Mouth*, includes easy to understand oral health information that can be listened to on-the-go. The first series focuses on infant and young child oral health, hosted by Jimmy Rees, aka Jimmy Giggle from Giggle and Hoot.

RCH KIDS HEALTH INFO | RCH

Based on the hugely popular RCH Kids Health Info fact sheets, the *Kids Health Info* podcast explores common topics and concerns with experts in children's health. Hosts Margie Danchin, Lexi Frydenberg, and Anthea Rhodes are all paediatricians and mums, so they know first-hand what keeps parents up at night. Every episode features guest experts in a range of child and adolescent health specialties, and lots of practical tips and advice.

HAPPY FAMILIES | DR JUSTIN COULSON

The *Happy families* podcast with Dr. Justin Coulson is designed for the time poor parent who just wants answers now. Every day Justin and his wife Kylie provide practical tips and a common-sense approach to parenting that Mums and Dads all over the world are connecting with. Justin and Kylie have 6 daughters and they regularly share their experiences of managing a busy household filled with lots of challenges and plenty of happiness. For real and practicable advice from people who understand and appreciate the challenges of a time poor parent, listen to Justin and Kylie and help make your family happier.



FOCUS: Prosocial behaviour: children and teenagers being helpful and valuing others

Prosocial behaviour: what is it?

Prosocial behaviour is **doing something to benefit, help or care for someone else** because you believe that other people's feelings and experiences are important.

For example, it might be:

- showing kindness by speaking gently to someone or considering their feelings
- comforting someone who's sad or hurt
- sharing things like books or toys
- donating money
- volunteering time
- offering to help someone
- cooperating with other people in a game or task
- showing care for animals and the environment.

Why prosocial behaviour is important

Prosocial behaviour is **good for children of all ages**. For example, children with prosocial behaviour tend to:

- get along with other people
- feel confident about their relationships with family and friends
- feel that they belong in their communities
- have good mental health and wellbeing.

And it's good for **people and communities** because children with prosocial behaviour tend to:

- contribute to their communities
- care for and help other people
- be role models for other people
- be nice to be around
- follow rules that help people get along
- care for animals and the environment.

How prosocial behaviour develops

At around 2 years, children start learning that other people think, feel and experience things differently from themselves. Prosocial behaviour develops when children see other people's thoughts, feelings and experiences as important.

Prosocial behaviour starts with small actions that show consideration for others. For example, a toddler might see someone else upset, feel upset too and want to fix the problem.

Older children and adults tend to share, be kind and cooperate because they believe that it's important to contribute to other people's and society's wellbeing.

Helping children develop prosocial behaviour: relationships, role-modelling, practice and praise

A warm, loving relationship with you helps your child feel valued and worthwhile. And when your child feels this way themselves, they're also likely to see other people this way.

You're also your child's most important role model. If you treat people kindly, share, volunteer and help others, your child is likely to want to do those things too.

Children of all ages also need a lot of practice playing and learning to get along with others. They might sometimes need you, or other grown-ups like teachers and sports coaches, to help them resolve differences or see other people's points of view.

And at any age, your praise and encouragement helps your child develop prosocial behaviour. Eventually your child will do things for others because they believe that behaving this way makes the world a better place.

Pre-schoolers developing prosocial behaviour

For pre-schoolers, prosocial behaviour can be helping others. They might also be aware of and care about how other people are feeling. For example, a pre-schooler might help another child complete a puzzle or tell a grown-up when another child is hurt.

School-age children developing prosocial behaviour

At this age, children are often very keen on rules. They might show prosocial behaviour by expressing strong feelings about fairness in a game or standing up for another person who isn't getting a go.

Preteens and teenagers developing prosocial behaviour

Pre-teens and teenagers are getting better at considering how their behaviour affects others. They might show prosocial behaviour by cooperating in a group for a school project or organising a social gathering.

You can find out more by following the link below.

Source: RaisingChildren.net.au (2022). Prosocial behaviour: children and teenagers being helpful and valuing others. Retrieved from <https://raisingchildren.net.au/teens/behaviour/encouraging-good-behaviour/prosocial-behaviour-kindness-children-teens>

PRE-WRITING LINES

Pre-writing lines are lines and shapes that toddlers and preschoolers learn in a developmental sequence that help them to form letters later on for handwriting. Lines down, across, cross shapes, circles, squares, diagonal lines are all considered pre-writing lines. Pre-writing lines are typically copied and trace on paper, however, here are some fun, non-conventional ways to practice them: Use a paintbrush in a sand tray, Use a finger in shaving cream, Peel stickers and trace the pre-writing lines, Use fine motor tweezers and use pom-poms, Use playdough to form pre-writing lines...Read about these activities in detail [here](#).



HEALTH & SAFETY: Childhood fitness can lead to a better mental outcome for adults

The “Real” 7-Up – the 30-Year Study Linking Childhood Obesity and Fitness to Midlife Cognition

The world’s first study of the impact of childhood fitness and obesity on cognition in middle age, followed over 1200 people who were children in 1985 for over 30 years, has found that better performance on physical tests is related to better cognition later in life and may protect against dementia in later years.

Importantly these findings are not impacted by academic ability and socioeconomic status at childhood, or by smoking and alcohol consumption at midlife.

It is known that children who develop muscular strength, cardiorespiratory fitness and endurance due to sport and activity have better health outcomes later in life. Higher adult fitness is also associated with better cognition and reduced risk of dementia later in life.

Following over 1200 people from 1985 when they were between 7 and 15 years old all the way to 2017-19, this is the first significant study to look for links between objectively measured fitness and obesity in childhood with cognition in middle age, with the idea that early activity levels, fitness and metabolic health may protect against dementia in our older years.

In 1985, 1244 participants aged 7–15 years from the Australian Childhood Determinants of Adult Health study were assessed for fitness (cardiorespiratory, muscular power, muscular endurance) and anthropometry (waist-to-hip ratio).

These participants were followed up between 2017 and 2019 (aged 39–50, average age 44) in respect to their cognitive function using a series of computerised tests.

The researchers found that children with the highest levels of cardio-respiratory and muscular fitness and lower average waist-to-hip ratio had higher midlife scores in tests of processing speed and attention, as well as in global cognitive function.



Associate Professor Callisaya states that it is important to identify factors in early life that may protect against cognitive decline during later life.

“Developing strategies that improve low fitness and decrease obesity levels in childhood are important because it could contribute to improvements in cognitive performance in midlife,” she said.

“Importantly the study also indicates that protective strategies against future cognitive decline may need to start as far back as early childhood, so that the brain can develop sufficient reserve against developing conditions such as dementia in older life.”

The 1985 Australian Schools Health and Fitness Survey was a nationally representative sample of 8498 Australian children aged 7–15 years. Participants have been followed up at three time points in 2004-06, 2009-11 and 2014-19 as part of the Childhood Determinants of Adult Health study (CDAH), a prospective cohort study based on the Survey participants. The study has been funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council and the Heart Foundation.

Source: Child magazine (2022). Childhood fitness can lead to a better mental outcome for adults. Retrieved from www.childmags.com.au/childhood-fitness-can-lead-to-a-better-mental-outcome-for-adults/

Sustainability CORNER

SEVEN DAY PLASTIC PLEDGE

About one million tonnes of Australia's yearly plastic consumption are single use products, a concerning trend that harms the environment. Plastic in nature can take hundreds of years to decompose and the waste threatens to pollute waterways, parks and bushland.

What can you do?

1. **Make a pledge:** Choose what plastic item you're giving up for the week and commit!
2. **Lead by example:** Swap out your single-use plastic item with eco-friendly alternatives.
3. **Spread the word!** Share how you're ditching plastic and tell your friends about it.

Breaking the habit can be hard, here are some easy alternative suggestions for the most common uses of single use plastic:

- ✗ Coffee cups and lids > Reusable keep cups or ask for no lid
- ✗ Takeaway packaging > BYO containers
- ✗ Single-use cutlery > BYO reusable cutlery
- ✗ Plastic water bottles > BYO refillable water bottles
- ✗ Pre-packaged fruit and veg > Buy loose or BYO mesh/canvas bags

Once your 7 days is done, reflect on your challenge. How much do you rely on convenience? Was the change hard? What can you do next?

Source: www.people4ocean.com/blogs/blog/keep-australia-beautiful-week-take-the-7-day-plastic-pledge



BUILDING PLAY

Building play lets kids bring their creative ideas to life. It develops fine motor skills and spatial reasoning skills. And it's fun for all ages, making it a great way for parents and kids to play together, building bonds while building with toys. While you build together, you can model problem solving and creative thinking without saying a word about it. While your hands are busy building, you're free to talk and share and laugh about anything.

Let the kids lead. Take a lesson from Lord Business (AKA the dad voiced by Will Ferrell) in "The LEGO Movie" and don't be a control freak, micromanaging the creations or getting stuck, figuratively and literally (remember Kragle?) in building only one way. Let kids try out their own techniques to build what they envision. It's OK to let them fail — that's where the learning comes in!

Try a variety of building tools. You don't have to wait until kids are old enough for LEGO to start bonding while building.

Classic wooden blocks: are fun for everyone and great for toddlers. Little builders may start just by stacking blocks to build a tower, but they'll mimic your building structures eventually and then start to build more complex creations as well.

Magnetic tiles are beautiful and fun to build with, and they're preschool friendly. The brightly coloured shapes are a bit more precarious, with structures collapsing easily, so kids have to use a careful hand while building. Kids will see, hands on, how two triangles can make a square, and they'll learn about magnetism.

Think outside the box, too, for building together — put together marble runs, train tracks or gingerbread houses.

Mix it up. You don't need to limit building play to one toy at a time. Dump all the parts from all the LEGO kits into one pile and build from imagination instead of the instructions. Put some buildings or a little city made from wooden blocks alongside the train set. Make a landing strip from magnetic tiles for your flying LEGO creations to land on.

The trickiest one for some parents will be letting the kids take the lead. Parents should remember that when families build together, the learning isn't one way; you'll learn quite a bit from your kids as well!

Amanda Bindel. (2022). *Families Build Bonds While Building Together*. Retrieved from <https://tocaboca.com/magazine/building-together/>



Free Parenting Mini Series

Free Parenting Mini Series commencing TONIGHT.

There are now 4 topics:

- Responding to Children's Anxiety - **Monday 1 August**
- Sibling Relationships/Healthy Family Relationships - **Monday 8 August**
- Managing Change - **Monday 15 August**
- Helping Children Manage Big Emotions - **Monday 12 September**

Bookings <http://www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Events/Parenting-Mini-Series>



Floor is lava

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

This simple game can be played by anyone, just about anywhere. It's a great way to infuse a dash of humour into your day. You can set up your room and play by throwing a bunch of pillows or blankets on the floor, and let your players jump from one to another. Or you can walk into a room and yell "floor is lava" and Everyone has 5 seconds to get both feet off the ground in any way possible. It's sure to be an afternoon of fun and giggles!