

Don't let one setback colour your day. Pause and feel it, then – keep going. – **Unknown**

APRIL  
2025

## ON *this* MONTH

AT LITTLE ASSETS

Easter Egg Hunt Event----- 17  
Good Friday public holiday-----18  
Easter Monday public Holiday-----21  
ANZAC Day public holiday-----25

### AROUND THE COUNTRY

World Autism Day ----- 2  
Nature Play Week-----2-13  
Baisakhi-Sikh-----14  
International Day of Culture-----15  
Earth Day-----22  
World Immunization Week Starts-----24  
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Pay It Forward Day ----- 28

## April is here!!!

Dear Families,

Welcome to April newsletter.

A quick reminder to all our families to update us your address if you have recently moved address so we can update your enrolment record accordingly.

Also kindly let us know if there is any changes to be made to your emergency/ authorized contacts. If you need to remove someone or add someone, we need to be notified of this in writing asap.

Families, we are getting really busy with our bookings and have already taken enrolments up until September. If you plan to add your child's number of booked days or change their days please talk to us in the office and we can advise you if that is possible.

With colder months about to start, please ensure you review flu vaccinations that will be available at your locals GPs. Kindly also refer to Staying Healthy 6<sup>th</sup> edition to find guidelines on how we manage illness and exclusion periods applicable for various sickness. You can find it on our Storypark under "About" section.

Please also remember to call us, email us or notify us via Storypark if your child is going to be absent due to sickness or you are intending to take a leave. Thank you.





### ANZAC DAY – APRIL 25

Anzac Day goes beyond the anniversary of the landing on Gallipoli in 1915. It is the day on which we remember all Australians who served and died in war and on operational service past and present.

The spirit of Anzac, with its qualities of courage, mateship, and sacrifice, continues to have meaning and relevance for our sense of national identity.

### PAY IT FORWARD DAY – APRIL 28

Pay It Forward Day is a global initiative that exists to make a difference by creating a huge ripple of kindness felt across the world. Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people can literally change the world for the better — and on April 28, let's set out to prove it! Leave a kind note, help someone out in need. Make a work mate a cuppa, host pay it forward activities in your office, school, church or community!



## CREAMY DIJON CHICKEN WITH BACON AND MUSHROOMS

PREP 30 mins | COOK 20-25 mins | SERVES 6

### INGREDIENTS

3 chicken breasts	salt and pepper
1 cup plain flour	3 tbs butter
3 tbs olive oil	250 ml cream
250 ml chicken stock	2 tbs Dijon mustard
2 cups button mushrooms, sliced	
150 grams bacon, finely diced	
1/2 cup parmesan cheese, grated	
2 cups baby spinach leaves	

### METHOD

Halve chicken horizontally. Season generously with salt and pepper. Dredge chicken in flour, shaking off excess. Heat 1 tbs butter and a drizzle of olive oil in a pan over medium-high heat. Working in batches, add 2-3 pieces of chicken to the pan and cook for 3-4 minutes or until golden. Carefully turn chicken and cook for another 2-3 minutes or until cooked through. Remove chicken and transfer to plate.

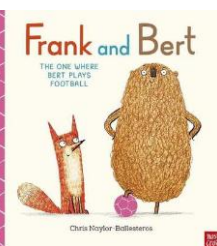
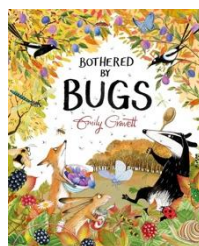
Repeat steps 3-6 and cook remaining chicken. Heat 1 tbs butter and 1 tbs olive oil in the fry pan over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms and bacon and cook for 5-7 minutes or until golden and cooked. Transfer cooked mushrooms and bacon to a plate. Add stock to the pan, bring to the boil and cook for 4 minutes, stirring occasionally scraping the brown bits off the bottom of the pan for added flavour.

Reduce heat to gentle simmer, add cream and Dijon mustard and stir to combine. Add parmesan and stir until melted. Add spinach and stir until wilted. Return chicken, mushrooms and bacon to pan, garnish with parsley. Serve immediately. Enjoy x

Source: Image & recipe 'My lovely lunchbox'

## Book reviews

Fresh stories for the food lovers!



### BOTHERED BY BUGS | EMILY GRAVETT

A very funny picture book story in which Pete the Badger, star of Emily Gravett's award-winning books *Tidy* and *Too Much Stuff!*, learns valuable lessons about the importance of all creatures, big and small, in maintaining the harmony of nature. Pete the Badger is choosing a delicious recipe from his new fruit cookbook when his peace is interrupted by a teeny tiny fly. The fly becomes a swarm and soon all the animals are being bothered by bugs and insects of all kinds . . . Richly detailed, wonderfully humorous illustrations will keep readers coming back for more.

### FRANK AND BERT | CHRIS NAYLOR-BALLESTEROS

Frank is teaching Bert to play football. But things keep going a little wrong... Then Frank goes off for a kick-about with Barbara, the best football player in the world, and Bert feels a little... betrayed. But will Bert still be there for his best friend when things go terribly wrong? Of course he will be!

This big-hearted story about friendship and forgiveness is guaranteed to get children giggling!

### THE GARDEN OF BROKEN THINGS | FREYA BLACKWOOD

From award-winning creator Freya Blackwood comes a beautifully tender story about curiosity and the joy of listening. One day, curious Sadie follows a cat into the tangled vines behind the lonely house at Number 9, Ardent Street. Deep in the undergrowth, past all the twisted, rusted things, Sadie finds the cat sitting on the lap of a woman, bent with time and weariness. Sadie has found the Garden of Broken Things.



# HEALTH & SAFETY: Stranger Danger – Tricky People

For generations, kids have been taught stranger danger: the principle that all strangers can potentially be dangerous. But a certified child safety educator says stranger danger doesn't work. In fact, it actually works against a parent. Safely Ever After founder Pattie Fitzgerald says 90% of sexual abuse or harm comes from someone the child knows, not a stranger. "Stranger danger doesn't teach kids about that. Stranger danger is looking in the wrong direction here."

**Strangers can be confusing to kids** Speaking to News Regional Media, Pattie says kids also have a different perception of what a stranger is. "If someone wants to offend against a child, they will often make themselves friendly or introduce themselves and then that child doesn't think they are a stranger. Kids also see their parents talking to strangers all the time. With learning stranger danger, when there is no danger perceived kids don't see that stranger as a threat which is why we need tricky people and why tricky people makes more sense."

**Learning to spot 'tricky people'** Tricky people is Pattie's philosophy; one she has been teaching to families all over the world for 15 years. "The main principle of tricky people is a tricky person can be someone you know or don't know but it is someone who breaks a safety rule or asks you to do something that makes you feel uncomfortable." But before we rush out and teach kids about tricky people, Pattie says it is important to teach kids safety rules first. "My whole philosophy it is a process." The first thing parents need to do is teach kids what is okay and not okay and anyone who breaks those rules is a tricky person. "I call them thumbs up/thumbs down. Someone doing something thumbs down - breaking a safety rule - they're a tricky person."

**Pattie recommends these 10 rules for kids:**

1. I am the boss of my body!
2. I know my name, address and phone number and my parents' names too (don't forget kids need to know their parents' mobile phone numbers)
3. Safe grownups don't ask kids for help (they go to other grownups if they need assistance)
4. I never go anywhere or take anything from someone I don't know
5. I must "check first" with my safe-smarts grown-up for permission before I go anywhere, change my plans, or get into a car even if it's with someone I know. If I can't check first, then the answer is NO!
6. Everybody's bathing suit areas are private
7. I don't have to be polite if someone makes me feel scared or uncomfortable. It's okay to say no even to a grown-up if I have to
8. I don't keep secrets especially if they make me feel scared or uneasy (no adult should tell a child to keep a secret)
9. If I ever get lost in a public place, I can freeze and yell or go to a mum with kids and ask for help

I will always pay attention to my special inner voice, especially if I get an "uh-oh" feeling.

## Teach your kids to be the boss of their bodies

Pattie also has a list of tips for parents on her website here but says the most important things parents can teach their kids is that they are the boss of their bodies, there are no secrets and to always check first. "Teach kids at an early age that they the boss of their private parts. Do this using anatomically correct words, not cutesy names. Predators have said if a child says, 'that's my penis' it is harder to coerce them." Also, make sure your child knows there are to be no secrets from mum and dad and to check first if someone asks something of them. "And teach kids what to do not what to do. Show them how to respond in a situation." Pattie recommends doing this through role-play. Show them what asking first or checking first looks like. "Practice makes perfect. You have to remind them every time you go somewhere."

While role playing is good, Pattie says if we're really going to keep our kids safe from tricky people, it is up to us to pay attention. "Don't let your kids run around unsupervised." And notice who is paying attention to your kids. Safe adults, especially ones who work with your kids, don't look for extra alone time for your kids. "My mother asking to take my daughter to the movies, that makes sense. A maths teacher asking to make my daughter to the movies doesn't make sense." Pattie has an extensive list of red flags for parents here. For parents looking for guidance on how to get the safety dialogue started with their kids, Pattie has written two books. You'll find these on her website here.



**More information via the QR code.**

Source: *The 'tricky people' lesson you need to teach your kids.* (2019). Retrieved [www.kidspot.com.au](http://www.kidspot.com.au)

## Easter Alphabet Hunt

**You will need:** Plastic easter eggs, alphabet magnets, permanent marker, tray, paper.

Write the letters on construction paper and tape it to the cookie sheet. Place the alphabet magnets into the Easter eggs. Hide the Easter eggs around the house and let your kids find them.

Once the eggs are all found (or as they are found) your child will need to crack them open and find the matching letter on the paper. Then do it all over again!

Source: [busytoddler.com](http://busytoddler.com)





# FOCUS: Kids need to learn self-regulation now more than ever

Twenty years ago, children would meet up with friends in person, play outside, do puzzles and read books. Things have changed a lot since then. We are constantly on electronic devices. And kids are tech-savvy. I've seen second graders demand mobile phones from their parents to take photos or go on social media. But it's not so much the access kids have that worries me. It's the lack of self-control and self-efficacy regarding the access. How much time should kids have on a digital device? How often should they use it? What should they be doing on it? Self-regulation isn't just about screen time. It ultimately helps them become more capable and confident in all aspects of their lives.

**How parents can help kids self-regulate** Self-regulation begins to develop rapidly in the toddler and pre-schooler years, so the sooner we start teaching it, the better.

**1. Model a healthy relationship with technology.** Think of the last time you were eating lunch while typing an email while listening to a podcast and checking your phone each time it dinged. We've all been there. Children can have a hard time self-regulating because their parents model this behaviour. Remember, our kids are constantly watching and copying us!

Even worse, a survey of over 6,000 participants found that 54% of kids thought their parents used their devices too frequently. Thirty-two percent of kids felt "unimportant" when their parents were on the phone. *Unimportant*. That makes me sad. How many of us adults have felt that way when someone checked their phone during a conversation? Yes, phones are addictive, but for our children's sake and ours, we must set boundaries.

**2. Teach them to be patient.** Self-regulation is made up of many skills, and one of them is patience. A study on delayed gratification found that kids who are able to wait longer for rewards tend to have better life outcomes. Here's the opposite of teaching patience: letting a kid be online for the entire day — in the car, in restaurants, at the dinner table.

For my girls, waiting and saving were part of our lives. We didn't have much money when they were growing up, so we saved for what we wanted. They each had their own piggy bank, and they filled them penny by penny. We even cut coupons from the newspaper every Sunday. When they were able to purchase something, they wanted because of their patience, they felt a sense of accomplishment.

**3. Let them be bored.** As a teacher, my students would sometimes complain to me that I couldn't hold their attention during lectures. But I never got upset or offended. I seized it as a learning opportunity and said: "I want you to go home and ask your parents if they are ever bored at their jobs. If you come back tomorrow with the answer that they are never bored, you can skip my lecture." That got their attention. "Being bored is

preparation for life," I told them. "You are practicing right now." They laughed, but they all understood. Life is sometimes, or often, boring. But you can learn a lot during those moments. You can either go straight to your phone, or you can dream: What are your goals? What are your next steps? What obstacles are in the way? Where do you feel the most excitement, the most hope?

**4. Set tech rules.** This is a no-brainer, but surprisingly, many parents don't establish the ground rules.

Here some top rules for technology:

1. Set up a plan *with* your kids, not *for* your kids.
2. No phones during meals, whether in your house or someone else's.
3. No phones after bedtime. Explain the importance of sleep for brain development and remind them that their bodies grow when they sleep.
4. Use discretion with small children. Younger kids, starting at age four, should be taught how to use a mobile phone in case of an emergency.
5. Children should come up with their own mobile phone policies for family holidays, or any kind of social activity where they need to be present. Be sure to choose a penalty for disobeying their own policy (e.g., losing a certain amount of time on a device).
6. Discuss what pictures and audio are appropriate to share online. Explain that whatever they post leaves a digital footprint.
7. Help them understand what cyberbullying is, and its negative impact on others. I always say: "Laugh *with* your friends, not *at* them."
8. Teach them to not give out personal identification information.

The goal is to empower them and teach self-efficacy. When kids can self-regulate, they are more likely to have more successful relationships with themselves and with others.



Read the article via the QR code.

Wojcicki, Esther. (2022). *I raised 2 successful CEOs and a doctor. Here's the No. 1 skill I wish more parents taught their kids today*. Retrieved from [cnbc.com](https://www.cnbc.com)

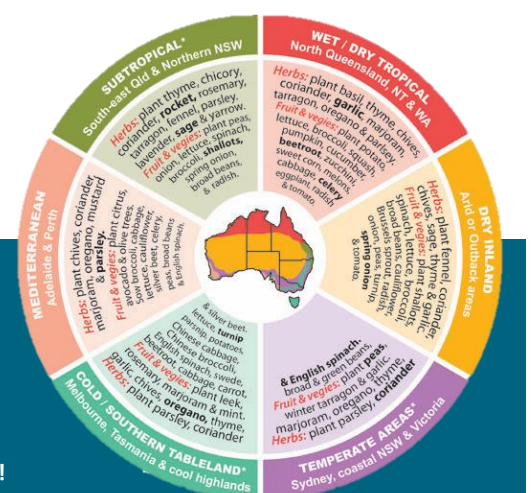


## START A VEGETABLE GARDEN

April is also a top time to get into the patch! There is a little bit of rain around, the weather is cooling down, and shed loads of stuff is ready to plant! So, don't be a bunny, get into gardening this April! Hop to it!

Starting a veggie patch can be daunting. What do I plant? Where? Etc Bunnings has a very simple guide to get you started. You can find it here!

Use this chart to know what to plant this Autumn.



Source: Chart-zones / Vegetable-Herb details



## ROUGH AND TUMBLE PLAY

*Rough-and-tumble play is when children do things like climb over each other, wrestle, roll around and even pretend to fight. Rough play is probably a basic human instinct that helps children develop many skills – but mostly children like this kind of play because it's fun!*

Rough play helps young children:

- understand the limits of their strength
- explore their changing positions in space
- find out what other children will and won't let them do
- work out social relationships as they play roles, take turns and sort out personal boundaries
- burn off energy and let go of tension.

### *Play fighting or real fighting?*

You might worry that your child is being aggressive, but you can usually tell rough-and-tumble play or play fighting from the real thing. **In rough play, children smile and laugh.** You might see excitement and pleasure on their faces. No-one gets bullied, hurt or forced to do anything. Once children are finished with rough-and-tumble play, they keep playing together.

If you see **frowning, crying, fear or anger**, it isn't play. And children who are really fighting move away from each other once the fight is over.

Rough play can sometimes lead to real fighting, so try to set some rules about what is and isn't OK during play. You can get even young children involved in working out what the rules should be. For example, you and your child might make rules about checking that everyone is happy with playing this way and stopping if anyone seems uncomfortable. This is important because it helps to keep everyone safe.

### **Rough-and-tumble play: ages and stages**

**Babies and toddlers** enjoy exciting movement, as long as they feel safe. Babies and toddlers like to be bounced on their parents' knees or lifted into the air. It's best to **be gentle with young children**, though, to avoid any accidental injury.

**Toddlers** love playing chasey or tiggy, spinning around and dancing. Some toddlers like gentle wrestling on a safe, soft surface with you or other toddlers. This kind of active play works best when children are wide awake and not expected to go to bed or sit quietly any time soon.

**Primary school-age children** are the biggest rough-and-tumblers, particularly with their friends. Like toddlers, they often enjoy wrestling on safe, soft surfaces where they can fall or roll around. At this age, it's important to talk with children about keeping rough play respectful, safe and fun.

Source: raisingchildren.net.au

## Families standing up to shame and stigma by making home a safe haven

### EMERGING MINDS, AUSTRALIA, AUGUST 2024

When our family experiences shame and stigma, it can be overwhelming. Often, it is in tricky circumstances that may be beyond our control.

But if it is possible to create safety and belonging within our family, even in the smallest of ways or briefest of moments, it can help us – and especially our children – get through tough times and remember we are worthy, valuable and loveable.

If you are experiencing homelessness or have to move around a lot, home might just mean being wherever your family is.

### **Before you continue, take a moment to think about ...**

- What little things can we do to help the people in our family feel loved, accepted and valued?
- How do we create a space where our children feel more comfortable talking about their experiences and emotions?
- How do we celebrate our children's and family's achievements and strengths?
- What are the ways we try to have quality time together, and especially when we are stressed, unwell, struggling with money or experiencing homelessness?

We appreciate that questions like these can be difficult to answer.

A safe haven will look different for different families. There is no manual on how to create one, but you know your family best. Start small, try things out – it is OK if not everything you try fits for your children or it takes time to learn new skills and ways of doing things.

### **What if we didn't grow up with safety?**

It can be especially tough to imagine how to make our families feel safer if we didn't grow up experiencing home as a safe place. But sometimes, those of us who have grown up having really tough experiences learnt even more than other families about how to make our children feel safe when they are facing shame and stigma. It is important we value what we know and trust in our skills, but also ask for help when we feel like we don't know the answer.

For more information please refer to:

<https://emergingminds.com.au/families/bullying/>



### I'll time you

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

Say to a child "I'll time you" and it evokes a crazy competitive drive to beat that time over and over and over again! Why not join in?

It could be a run around the house. 10 jumps or skipping to a location. It doesn't matter. Choose a movement activity and time one another completing the activity. See if you can beat one another! Of course, the real time doesn't matter, have fun with it.