

OCTOBER
2021

THE LINK COMMUNITY HUB

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INTERNATIONAL DAY OF OLDER PERSONS – OCT 1

International Day of Older Persons *aims to help eliminate ageism and age discrimination.* The United Nations International Day of Older Persons 2021 theme “Digital Equity for All Ages” affirms the need for access and meaningful participation in the digital world by older persons. **Find out more.**

CHILDREN’S WEEK – OCT 23 - 31

Children's Week celebrates the right of children to enjoy childhood. It is also a time for children to demonstrate their talents, skills and abilities. The Children’s Week Council of Australia strongly advocates for and promotes the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child. Each year an article is selected by the Children’s Week Council of Australia. The theme for 2021 is ‘Children have the right to choose their own friends and safely connect with others.’ Follow the link [here](#) to find events happening in your state or territory.

LAMB BIRYANI



PREP 5 min | COOK 25 min | SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

500g lamb: mince or diced
 150g pumpkin, peeled and diced
 3 cloves garlic
 1 onion, diced
 2cm piece ginger, peeled and grated
 2 cups basmati rice
 1-1.5L stock
 1/3 cup sultanas
 1.5 tbsp Madras spice blend or Garam Masala
 1 head broccoli
 Fresh coriander and mint to serve
 Greek yoghurt to serve

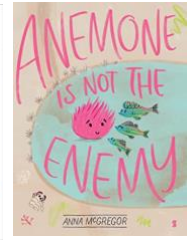
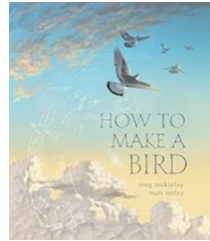
METHOD:

Heat some olive oil and add the onions and garlic to the pan. Cook until soft. Add the lamb and cook until browned. Mix in the spice blend and ginger and cook until fragrant. Add the rice, stock, pumpkin, and broccoli and cook until the rice and vegetables are cooked through. Stir in the sultanas and serve with the coriander on top. **To serve:** Serve in a bowl with a dollop of Greek yoghurt, fresh coriander and mint and some slivered or chopped almonds

Jo Kate is a realistic nutritionist offering simple & effective ideas, tips and recipes to inspire healthy living. Find more delicious recipes at jokatenuitrition.com

Book reviews

Enjoy a few of this year’s CBCA award winners.



HOW TO MAKE A BIRD

AUTHOR MEG MCKINLAY | ILLUSTRATOR MATT OTTLEY

Extraordinary imagery and rich language spark the reader's imagination as they enter the creative world of a young girl.

A moving and visually stunning picture book that celebrates the transformative power of the creative process from inception through recognition to celebration and releasing into the world.

YOUR BIRTHDAY WAS THE BEST

AUTHOR MAGGIE HUTCHINGS | ILLUSTRATOR FELICITA SALA

This is the story of a plucky young cockroach who gate-crashes a birthday party – with hilarious results. Funny, silly and surprisingly cute, Your Birthday Was the BEST! is the perfect blend of downright gross and delightfully entertaining.

ANEMONE IS NOT THE ENEMY

AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR ANNA MCGREGOR

Anemone lives alone in the rock pool. The tide comes in and the tide goes out. Anemone wants a friend, but friends are hard to make when you accidentally sting everyone who comes near you. Perhaps Clownfish has a solution to the problem... A funny tale of mishap, misunderstanding, and the search for true friendship in an ocean rockpool.



FOCUS: A Golden Rule of Parenting – *Stop Thinking Everything You Do Is Wrong.*

Parenting is hard, we are inundated with parenting advice from every man and their dog daily... in the news, on social media, from other parents, or from overheard conversations in the grocery line. It's no wonder that seeking out parenting advice, in general, can be a very overwhelming experience. So, an article in *The New York Times* brings up a single, inspiring piece of advice that can be universal to all concerned parents: **Stop thinking everything you do is wrong.**

A survey conducted in the United States this year found that many adults feel that young people today face more hardships than they did when they were young. Particularly in terms of stress, anxiety, depression and other mental health issues. This is an interesting reversal of the traditional dynamic, in which adults 'recall the hardships and dangers of the old days and conclude that kids these days have it easy', says paediatrician Dr Matthew M. Davis.

And yet the paradox is understandable...On the one hand, children are 'cushioned, shielded [and] protected from the literal and figurative bumps and bruises of the real-world playground'. But on the other, kids are overscheduled, overstressed, and increasingly anxious. These challenges are often a result of trying to succeed in an increasingly competitive academic climate, with the hopes of gaining employment in an increasingly oversaturated job market. This contrast leads to a confusion of which parenting approach is best, and an inevitable and ongoing confusion of what kind of parenting style we should adopt.

Do you hover like helicopter parents to protect your children from the difficulties they face, so they can focus on their studies? Or do you leave them to deal with everything on their own, in the hopes they'll rise up to the challenge?

Most parents — including yourselves — rightly sit somewhere in the middle. But there's always going to be times when unexpected challenges throw your parenting style off course. This is not a reflection of your parenting as much as a reflection of being human!

And from our point of view, the fact that you're reading this article, or any article, shows that you're not doing everything wrong. Investing the time and energy into researching advice is a testament to your commitment to being the best parent you can be. **The point is: Congratulate yourself** on trying to be the best parent you can be. *Show your child* what you believe is right and wrong by example. And when you slip up in one way or another, *forgive yourself and move on*, because it's likely to happen again (and again



TAKE A MOMENT, TAKE A BREATH.

Stress-Relief Mantra #3: All experiences are helping me grow.

How and when to recite this mantra: Recite this mantra four times either out loud or quietly to yourself as often as needed.

How this mantra can help you: This mantra is perfect to use when you are searching for answers to challenges that have come your way. Life is a journey of growth, and by acknowledging this, you can see the higher purpose in everything that happens. It may not always be easy to see exactly how you'll grow from a particular situation but understanding that all experiences are contributing to your growth and development can be reassuring and can help you tackle things from a place of curiosity rather than despair.

Viewing all experiences as opportunities to grow allows you to focus on the bigger picture and helps you avoid getting caught up in all the details. You'll be able to take a step back and not put so much pressure on yourself to have everything figured out. You are here to learn, and part of that process requires you to go through experiences that are indeed challenging and confusing—but also ultimately joyful. The more you can approach life as a learning experience that you simply cannot fail at, the freer you will feel to explore things with a sense of adventure.

THE SNACK ATTACK

Whether you are still home schooling, or it is simply the weekend kids go through stages where snacking becomes a full time activity. What can you do to help curb this habit?

1) Stick to a (flexible) meal/snack routine. Talk to your kids about it so they know that after breakfast we won't be eating again until 9.30 snack. **2) Keep busy.** If you're just sitting around the house, you get bored and head to the kitchen, right? It's understandable that your kids will do the same. **3) Limit the number of packages snacks in your cupboard.** When the options abound, your kids will want to try all of them. **4) Plan & prep ahead.** Besides meal planning your dinners for the week, make a list of healthy snack options for the kids (and yourself!). A few ideas written on a post-it on your refrigerator and a few pre prepped snacks will help you to offer a nutritious snack at snack time. **5) Don't allow snacking close to mealtimes.** Kids always seem to ask for snacks right before dinner! Distract instead, suggest an activity they can do. Take out the Legos, play dough, colouring books, or matchbox cars. Keep a few toys and activities put away and only take them out during dinner prep time.

HEALTHY
KIDS

HEALTH & SAFETY: What is the Vestibular System and why is it important?



Most kids learn about the 5 basic extrinsic senses of sight, sound, taste, touch, and smell. Many, however, are not as familiar with two hidden intrinsic senses: the vestibular and proprioceptive senses. The vestibular sense is one of the first to develop in a growing fetus and is stimulated by the movement of a carrying mother's body. By only 5 months in utero, this system is well developed and provides a great deal of sensory information to a growing fetal brain. This system is very important to a child's early development. Its role is to relay information to the brain as to where a person is in space, as related to gravity; whether they are moving or still, if they are moving how quickly, and in what direction. The vestibular system gathers that information from a set of fluid filled canals and a sac-like structure in the inner ear. These structures respond to movement, change in direction, change of head position, and gravitational pull.

4 Ways the vestibular system may impact your child:

1. The vestibular system coordinates eye and head movements. Without this coordination, it may be challenging for children to complete everyday activities such as copying from a white board in their classroom, following a moving object such as a softball through the air; or visually scanning across a page to read. The vestibular system helps the brain to register and respond to whether the object the child is looking at is moving or if their head is moving.

2. The vestibular system also helps to develop and maintain normal muscle tone. Muscle tone is the ability of a muscle to sustain a contraction. Without a proper functioning vestibular system, it may be challenging for a child to hold their body in one position.

These children may oftentimes prefer laying on the floor instead of sitting up during circle time or leaning on their elbow or hand while seated at their desk.

3. The vestibular system also impacts a child's balance and equilibrium. As your child moves throughout their environment, so does the fluid in their inner ear canals. As the fluid in their inner ear moves, your child's brain is receiving information as to the position of their head in space. Depending on that signal, the brain then sends a message to your child's body signalling it to move in a way that will help them to respond to and compensate for any planned or unplanned movements. Without efficient vestibular processing, your child may appear to be clumsy and have trouble staying on their feet during routine play.

4. Finally, the vestibular system helps a child to coordinate both sides of their body together for activities including riding a bicycle, catching a ball, zipping a coat, or cutting with scissors.

If you suspect that your child is having difficulty processing sensory information by way of their vestibular system, do your best to be sure that activities including a lot self-propelled movement are incorporated into their day. Activities may include swinging, sliding, or using other equipment at the park. Do your best to avoid activities with excessive spinning or twirling as movement in these planes can have negative effects including over-stimulation, lethargy, or changes in heart rate or breathing. It may also be challenging for your child to pace themselves during these quick paced movement patterns. Encourage activities in which your child lays on their belly to participate in games or play with toys. Throughout your day, take note to see if your child seems better able to focus after completing physical activity or partaking in activities that get them up and moving.

The vestibular system may be less commonly discussed than other sensory tracts, but its impact on your child's ability to complete day to day activities are vast.

Sustainability CORNER

AUSSIE BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

Most children have a fascination with the environment and the things they find living in it. Giving children opportunities to explore and interact with their local environment develops respect and appreciation for the natural spaces and animals.

This October take part in the Aussie Backyard Bird count, discover the huge range of birds living right above you. Last year Australia counted 4.6 million birds in 7 days!

To complete the Aussie Backyard Bird Count, spend 20 minutes standing or sitting in one spot and noting down the birds that you see.



You will need to count the number of each species you spot within the 20-minute period. For example, you might see 4 Australian Magpies, 2 Rainbow Lorikeets and a Sulphur-Crested Cockatoo. You can record your results online or simply download the app. The app can also be used as a field guide/ bird finder. aussiebirdcount.org.au





Albert Einstein is regarded as one of the most brilliant minds of modern time. So, it's a surprise to learn that Einstein's parents were very concerned about his cognitive development as a child. He spoke slowly for his age and would sometimes say words to himself before saying them out loud creating a delayed response.

He was also not that well behaved during his formative years even managing to get himself expelled from one school.

We're always so fascinated by these stories of achievement in the face of adversity. And it serves as an important reminder that children need the opportunity to thrive. Einstein's parents gave him that opportunity. They taught him he was of value, and they believed in him. They encouraged his experiments and his learning. They didn't listen when one school master said he wouldn't amount to much.

It's important to know that all children will respond positively to being taught their value. Once their basic needs of food, shelter and safety are achieved, children need a sense of belonging and significance. When they feel that they matter they have everything they need to achieve their individual potential. So how can we help them?

A child with a sense of belonging knows they fit in with the people they care about most. And when they're young, their most important people are those in their family. When they fit in, feel accepted, and feel an emotional connection to individual members of their family, they feel like they belong.

We can give our children a sense of belonging in a number of ways.

1. Consciously interact with your children every day. Do any activity they want to do. It could be reading a story together or dancing to their favourite song in the lounge room.
2. When interacting with your children, put aside everything else to give them your full attention. Don't cook dinner at the same time. Don't look at your mobile phone. For those few minutes they must have your full attention.
3. Actively and regularly point out the ways in which the child belongs in the family. Tell them you enjoy their company, you're interested in their day, you value their opinion.

A child with a sense of significance feels they are a capable and meaningful contributor to the family unit. They want to know they make a difference, their thoughts matter, and importantly they need to believe they have some personal influence within the family unit.

When a child is under seven years old, that's the time to give them a taste of independence around the house. They're too young to realise they're doing chores but old enough to be capable of achieving small goals. Teach them to:

- Unstack the dishwasher
- Help with dinner preparation
- Set the table
- Put on a load of washing (this is easier if you have a front loader that they can reach!)

Small things, insignificant to parents, make a huge difference to a child. Allow children to make some decisions themselves. For instance, give them two options of convenient parks they could visit and allow them to choose the one they prefer.

Giving children a sense of responsibility early on will work wonders for them later in life. They will eventually realise that it's not fun to unstack the dishwasher. But until then, you have a captive audience!

