



JULY
2021

THE LINK COMMUNITY HUB

AROUND THE COUNTRY

NAIDOC Week -----	4 - 11
World Population Day-----	11
Eid al-Adha -----	19 - 23
National Pyjama Day -----	23
Asalha Puja Day -----	24
International Day of Friendship -----	30
Schools Tree Day -----	30 – Aug 1



NAIDOC WEEK – JULY 4-11

NAIDOC Week celebrations are traditionally held across Australia each July to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. 'Heal country' is the theme for NAIDOC Week 2021.

Heal country! – calls for stronger measures to recognise, protect, and maintain all aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage. Find out more about [NAIDOC WEEK here](#).

NATIONAL PYJAMA DAY – JULY 23

Support Little People with BIG Dreams! National Pyjama Day is all about wearing your favourite pair of PJ's to school to help The Pyjama Foundation raise funds for children in foster care. Funds help to run a program called *The Love of Learning Program* where volunteers called Pyjama Angels are matched with a child in care and spend an hour a week focusing on learning-based activities. Find out more [HERE](#)

PROTEIN PANCAKES



PREP 10 min | COOK & SERVE as needed

INGREDIENTS

2 cups milk (or use coconut or almond milk)
 2 cups flour (either do 2 cups spelt or 1 cup tapioca and 1 cup oat flour, but you could play around with different options)
 4 tsp baking powder
 4 eggs
 6 tbsp protein powder*
 2 tbsp hemp or chia seeds
 *optional- use Nutra organics vanilla

METHOD:

Simply blend all of the ingredients together and store in a jar! I cook ours in butter in a cast iron pan and they never stick. Serve with berries, banana, Greek or coconut yoghurt, pure maple syrup or raw honey, cinnamon etc! Or as one of my kids loves - peanut butter!

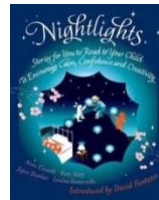
SO, WHAT ARE THEY GETTING?

Good fats, fibre, protein, omega 3's, calcium, iron and fresh fruit, all before they leave the house for the day!

*Love this recipe and want more? Go to [Jo Kate Nutrition](#) Jo's course *The Nourished Family* provides you with a realistic approach to nutrition, health and cooking and will teach you foundational principles to use for the rest of your life. Find out more [here](#).*

Book reviews

Big feelings, major meltdowns, trouble sleeping, sound familiar?



NIGHTLIGHTS

ANNE CHIVARDI, JOYCE DUNBAR, KATE PETTY, LOUISA SOMERVILLE | 4-8 year olds

Nightlights is a book of stories to read to children, but stories with a difference. It's a collection of twenty interactive meditation stories that have been specially written to calm and relax your child at bedtime, while at the same time engaging and stimulating his or her imagination.

HAPPY

NICOLA EDWARDS | AUS

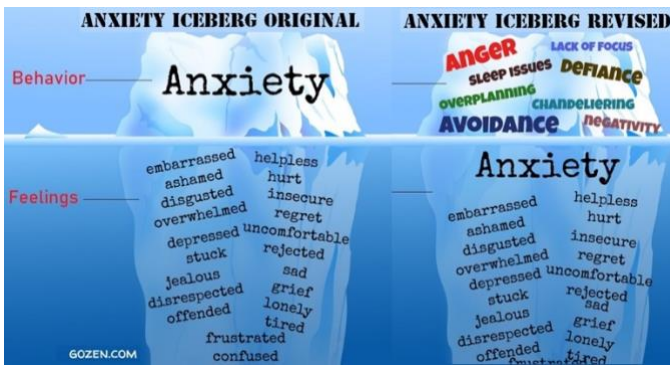
We breathe deep and expand like the galaxy. We breathe out many thousands of stars, and if ever we start to feel panicky, this reminds us of just who we are. The perfect soothing read for quiet time. Happy gently encourages young readers to explore their emotions and the beautiful world around them, with stunning illustrations and thought-provoking rhymes on every page.

THE BOY WITH BIG, BIG FEELINGS

BRITNEY WINN LEE AND JACOB SOUVA

Meet a boy with feelings so big that they glow from his cheeks, spill out of his eyes, and jump up and down on his chest. *The Boy with Big, Big Feelings* is relatable for any child, but especially for children experiencing anxiety and extreme emotions, or who have been diagnosed with autism or as a Highly Sensitive Person.

FOCUS: 8 surprising ways a child's anxiety shows up as something else



Icebergs are deceiving because what you see on the surface is usually only a small fraction of what lies below. Observing the behaviour of an anxious child is sometimes like looking at the tip of an iceberg: underlying the anxious behaviour are layers of emotions and experiences. Therapists often illustrate this idea with an image of an iceberg. While the image above can be eye-opening, there's a huge assumption that parents can actually recognize that tip of the iceberg or look at a child's behaviour and say, "Yup, that's anxiety." Here's the reality: anxious behaviour in children is not uniform. Your child might ask repetitive questions for reassurance and no matter how many times you answer, the question repeats. You might have the perfect child at school that comes home and constantly picks fights with you or siblings. You may have a child that can't focus, motivate, or even loses sleep at night. Or maybe your child is downright angry. Anxiety, in fact, can manifest in a multitude of forms. In our work at GoZen!, we see anxiety showing up eight different ways. This makes the iceberg look more like the image on the above left.

Let's try to understand why anxiety manifests in these ways by taking a deeper dive into each:

- 1. Difficulty Sleeping:** Anxiety and sleep problems have a chicken and egg connection. Research has shown that anxiety can lead to sleep disorders and chronic sleep disruption can lead to anxiety.
- 2. Anger:** The link between anger and anxiety is an under-researched area, but in our work, the manifestation of anger in anxious children is clear. Here are some hypotheses as to why there is a link. Anxiety occurs when there is an overestimation of a perceived threat (e.g., a test or a party) and an underestimation of coping skills (e.g., "I can't handle this."). When our kids are chronically and excessively worried and don't feel like they have the skills to manage the anxiety, they feel helpless. Helplessness leads to frustration, which can show up as anger.

3. Defiance: There is nothing more frustrating to a child with anxiety than feeling like their life is out of control. As a way of feeling secure and comforted, they seek to take back control, often in unexpected and peculiar ways.

4. Chandeliering: To borrow a term from renowned social scientist, Brené Brown, chandeliering is when a seemingly calm person suddenly flies off the handle for no reason. In reality, they have pushed hurt and anxiety so deep for so long that a seemingly innocent comment or event suddenly sends them straight through the chandelier.

4. Lack of Focus In the past research has suggested that ADHD and anxiety often go hand in hand. But studies have shown that children with anxiety don't necessarily have ADHD more often. Instead, these two conditions have symptoms that overlap—a lack of focus and inattention being two of them. Children with anxiety are often so caught up in their own thoughts that they do not pay attention to what is going on around them. This is especially troublesome at school where they are expected to pay attention to a teacher for hours at a time.

5. Avoidance: As humans, we have a tendency to avoid things that are stressful or uncomfortable. These avoidance behaviours happen in two forms—doing and not doing. The only problem with avoidance is that it often snowballs. Children who are trying to avoid a particular person, place or task often end up experiencing more of whatever it is they are avoiding.

6. Negativity: From a neurological standpoint, people with anxiety tend to experience negative thoughts at a much greater intensity than they do positive ones. As a result, negative thoughts tend to take hold faster and easier than positive ones, making someone with anxiety seem like a downer all of the time.

6. Over planning: Over-planning and defiance go hand in hand in their root cause. Where anxiety can cause some children to try to take back control through defiant behaviour, it can cause others to over-plan for situations where planning is minimal or unnecessary.

HEALTHY AFTERNOON TEA

With homework, activities, lessons, and sports, school-age kids are busier, and probably more independent, than ever. Unless you have an especially early dinner time, most kids still need an after-school snack to help them stay focused on homework and other after-school commitments. Snacks can keep younger children from getting so hungry that they become cranky, and they can keep older kids from overeating at larger meals. And for picky eaters of all ages, snacks can be added insurance that they're getting the necessary nutrients.

The afternoon snack can sometimes be the trickiest to keep healthy. Generally, we are all tired so quick and easy work best! Fruit with a handful of nuts, yoghurt, or wholegrain crackers topped with cheese are all easy afternoon snacks.

If you have time, try working with your kids to make a couple of pre-prepared afternoon teas on the weekend [Best Recipes](#) has a great list for inspiration!

HEALTHY
KIDS

HEALTH & SAFETY: The Mental Health Benefits of Exercise



How do you feel after a workout? Even when you're purple faced and desperate for a lie-down, you feel pretty pleased with yourself for giving it a go, right? Once the initial breathlessness subsides after a workout, it's common to feel like you have more energy and those troublesome problems might not seem quite so big as before. While they might seem intangible these benefits are as real as – and arguably more important than – the results you see around your waistline. "A prescription of exercise can help you have a healthy mind," says GP Dr Paul Stillman, from Media Medics. "Exercise stimulates positive endorphins, clears your head and lifts your mood. I think we'll see more and more people prescribed exercise as a mood-booster."

Healthy body = healthy mind

We're starting to realise just how vital exercise is for our wellbeing, both mental and physical. New research from the Department of Health published in October 2017, reported 12 per cent of cases of depression could be prevented with an hour of exercise each week. Up your workouts to three a week and you could reduce your risk of depression by 30 per cent.

Can exercise help you handle stress?

Sure thing. A team of neurologists at Stanford Medical School, U.S., studied brain scans and found regular exercisers have more grey matter in the prefrontal cortex, which governs stress-management. But when we feel down, everything can feel overwhelming. Time to crawl into a hole? In fact, the more stressed out you feel, the more you need to look after yourself – and a workout can be the happiest medicine. Research has shown that exercise is clinically proven to stimulate serotonin, your natural feel-good neurotransmitter.

Does exercise help anxiety?

"Running gives me the headspace to focus on what I'm feeling when my anxiety gets really bad," says Cardiff student Seren Pritchard-Bland, 21, who ran the London Marathon for the mental health charity Heads Together. "I get panic attacks when I'm stressed out, but I find simply getting out of the house with my trainers on makes me feel like I've achieved something positive. Running is therapeutic – it's so much healthier than being alone at home with thoughts spinning around my head."

Why is exercise such a mood-booster?

"Exercise is fantastic for releasing tension, reducing stress and giving joy," says Hayley Jarvis, programme manager for sport at the mental health charity Mind. "Being active is one of the best things you can do to help yourself bounce back in times of adversity. Getting out of your head and into your body can actually improve your ability to think clearly and break up your racing thoughts."

Find your mood-boosting workout

If the thought of hauling yourself out of bed to jump around feels as impossible as climbing Everest, start slow. You can always stop if you're not feeling it, but all it takes is a few minutes of low-intensity exercise – even just walking – to trigger the release of pain-relieving endorphins. Every stretch releases tension and every movement makes oxygen flow a little faster. Look out for your tipping point, because the more aware you are of the moment your mood warms up, the better it feels.

Which workout will make you happy?

To build friendships... try team sports like football and netball. "Social connectivity is incredibly important," says Hayley. "When we're struggling, we tend to isolate ourselves, but being with other people can motivate you to get out there. Playing team sports is great if you feel lonely."

To calm your mind... try yoga, Pilates and tai chi. Hayley explains: "Exercise that works with your breath is particularly good for improving mindfulness, which can also calm a spinning head and improve your mood."

Source: thebodycoach.com

ENERGY EFFICIENCY AT HOME DURING WINTER

Now that you know the average Australian home uses about 40% of their energy on heating and cooling, you can put a plan in place to save this winter. Even small changes to the way you heat your home can lead to some helpful savings, so here are five handy tips:

There are a few different ways to conserve energy when temperatures become colder:

- **Keep curtains open during the day** for rays of sunlight to warm the room and close them at night to keep out chilly drafts.
- **Only heat the rooms you use most** – reduce the area you heat by closing doors to rooms you're not using, so you'll use less energy to heat the rest of the house.
- **Keep your thermostat between 18°C and 20°C** – every degree you reduce heat can save up to 10% on your energy use.
- **Use a draft stopper** – if cold air is getting in, warm air is getting out. Invest in door seals, draft-proofing strips and door snakes to stop heat escaping and reduce your heating costs by up to 25%.
- **Consider the old-fashioned way of bundling up** with an extra layer of clothing while at home before turning the heater up an extra degree.

There are people who always seem happy. Why is that? Is happiness something that comes naturally to some and not others? If you accept the nature versus nurture concept, with nature in greater control, you're handing over the charge of your happiness to your ancestors. If nurture is your belief, then you're completely at the mercy of your environment. But is it ever really one or the other?

In terms of genetics, it's believed we're born with a set capacity for happiness. So all we can do is strive to live at the top of our set range of happiness.

However, neuroscience now shows that it's possible to increase our set range of happiness by training our brain to produce new neural connections for happiness. How?

It's believed that if we want to increase our set range of happiness, we need to *expect* to be happier and *make more opportunities* to be happy. That's right. Turns out we can build our brains for extra happiness!

Here are three ways we can take control of our opportunities for happiness.

1. Plan for proud moments

It's not just kids who thrive on recognition. Look for your proud moments every day. It could be something you achieved, gave to another, or paid forward as a good deed. Look for opportunities to make yourself proud and recognise those moments. Recognition from others is great but never wait for it in order to feel good about your contribution. You decide if you achieved something today. What can you be proud of today?

2. Invest in positive relationships

Surrounding ourselves with positive, helpful people who make us feel good will contribute to our positive well-being. In return we feel positive about ourselves when we contribute to good relationships in a positive way. The balance of give and take in any relationship won't always be perfect, but you should always feel like you're giving *and* receiving in every relationship.

Identify those who invest in you in a balanced way.

What could you do today to nurture those reciprocal relationships?

3. Invest in You

In order to perform at our peak, we need to ensure we are mentally and physically ready for the opportunities each day presents:

- **Embrace the simple pleasures.** Make time for a little pleasure every day. Whether it's meditation, reading, your favourite coffee or a friendly chat, every day must have some pleasurable occurrences.
- **Stay healthy.** Make your health a priority. Eat well, exercise and take care of general health needs. When we feel good about our physical condition, we feel good about ourselves.
- **Stimulate your mind.** Enhancing happiness involves nourishing your mind. Learn something new, take on a new challenge, or embrace a stimulating conversation.

The Dalai Lama said "Happiness is not something ready made. It comes from your own actions." If we want to be truly happy at work, and in life, we need to look for every opportunity to create our own happiness, every day.