

Life is beautiful. It's about giving. It's about family. — Walt Disney



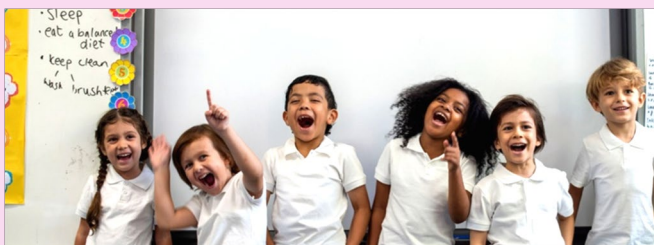
September
2026

The Network Community Hub

AROUND THE COUNTRY

Early Childhood Educators' Day
National Flag Day
Father's Day
National Child Protection Week
International Literacy Day

2
3
6
6 - 12
8



INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY – SEP 8

Literacy is more than learning to read and write. It includes the skills we use to speak, listen, view, understand, create and communicate, helping us make sense of the world and participate confidently in our communities. The 2026 theme, **“Literacy for people, the planet and prosperity,”** highlights the important role literacy plays in creating

opportunities, strengthening communities and supporting a fairer, more sustainable future. **For out more here**

NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION WEEK – SEP 6-12

National Child Protection Week raises awareness of child abuse and neglect and encourages everyone to help create safe, supportive environments where children can grow, learn and thrive. The 2026 theme, **“Every Conversation Matters: Shifting Conversation to Action,”** reminds us that conversations can raise awareness and challenge harmful attitudes, but meaningful change happens when we turn our words into action. Together, we can help create communities in which every child is heard, valued and safe.

NO-BAKE BROWNIES

TOTAL TIME: 1hr 15 min | SERVES 16



NO BAKE BROWNIES

1 cup **rolled traditional oats**
1 cup desiccated **coconut**
1 cup **pecans***
1 cup cacao powder
pinch of **sea salt**
10 **medjool dates**, pit removed
1/4 cup **pure maple syrup**
1 teaspoon **vanilla bean paste** (or extract)

FROSTING

100 g **dark chocolate**
1/4 cup **milk**
1 tbs **coconut oil**
1 tsp **vanilla bean paste** (or extract)
pinch of **sea salt**
to decorate: dried rose petals (optional)

METHOD: Line a 20cm x 20cm square tray with baking paper. **Place** the oats, coconut, pecans, cacao powder and sea salt into the large bowl of a food processor. **Blitz** for 2-3 minutes or until very finely chopped. **Add** the dates, maple syrup and vanilla and blitz again for 2-3 minutes, or until lusciously combined and smooth. **Place** mixture into prepared tray and spread evenly. **Pop** in the fridge for an hour or to ‘set’.

TO MAKE THE FROSTING: **Place** the dark chocolate, milk, coconut oil, vanilla and salt into a small saucepan and place over low heat, whisking continuously until melted. **Pour** the mixture into a bowl and pop into the fridge. Every 5 minutes or so remove the bowl from the fridge and give it a good whisk (this whisking creates a gloriously smooth and luscious frosting). Once **cool**, spread the frosting over the brownies. **Cut** into 12 or 16 bars and serve.

*For a **NUT FREE VERSION:** replace pecans with an extra 1/2 cup oats and 1/2 cup coconut). **Enjoy x**

Find this recipe and more at My Lovely Lunch Box

Podcast Reviews

Parenting is tricky, these listens may just help you along the way!



Emerging Minds Families | Emerging Minds

Each fortnight, Emerging Minds chat with parents, family members and practitioners from all over Australia. They generously share with us their experiences and the knowledge, strength and the skills they've developed while navigating the ups and downs of parenting, raising a family and the tricky things that life can sometimes throw at us. We discuss a range of topics close to families hearts and always with a mind to supporting children's mental health and wellbeing.



Beyond the Bump | Sophie Pearce and Jayde Couldwell

This is a place for real conversations and honest questions, no matter how hard, about the parts of motherhood that often go unspoken. The mental load that changes shape rather than easing. The identity shifts. The stage where life doesn't suddenly feel simpler. Wherever you are in it, the aim is the same: to leave you feeling lighter, more understood and a little less alone after every listen.



Words Grow Minds | Amelia Mulcahy and Kate Ellis

Connection, connection, connection. If there's one thing that parent educator Genevieve Muir wants us to take from her, it's that it all comes back to connecting with our child. With her trademark good humour and keeping it real, Gen talks to Kate and Amelia about surviving and thriving in today's parenting world of information overload. Gen shares practical tips for cutting through the noise, the advice you can ignore, setting loving boundaries... and why watching more cat videos might just help!



HEALTH AND SAFETY: Spring is here! Is it hay fever or asthma?

Spring brings warmer days, more outdoor play and plenty of new growth. But for some children, it can also bring sneezing, coughing, itchy eyes and breathing difficulties. When these symptoms appear, it isn't always easy to tell whether your child is experiencing hay fever, asthma, or perhaps a little of both.

Is it hay fever? Hay fever, also known as allergic rhinitis, is an allergic reaction to triggers such as pollen, grasses, dust mites or animal dander. Common symptoms include a runny or blocked nose, frequent sneezing, itchy or watery eyes, and an itchy nose or throat.

Unlike a cold, hay fever is caused by an allergic reaction rather than an infection. Symptoms may come and go depending on what your child has been exposed to and can become more noticeable during pollen seasons.

Or could it be asthma? Asthma affects the airways in the lungs. Symptoms can include coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath and chest tightness. Night-time coughing or breathing symptoms that interfere with normal activity can also be signs that asthma isn't well controlled.

The tricky part is that hay fever and asthma can occur together. Pollen can trigger the itchy eyes and runny nose associated with hay fever, but it can also trigger asthma symptoms in some people. That's why it is important not to assume that a springtime cough is simply "allergies", particularly if your child is wheezing, having difficulty breathing, waking because of their symptoms or struggling more than usual during active play.

Look for patterns Pay attention to when your child's symptoms appear. Do they become worse after playing outside, around freshly cut grass, during windy weather or at a particular time of year? Keeping track of these patterns can provide helpful information to discuss with your child's doctor. For children with pollen allergies, reducing exposure can also help. Health direct recommends strategies such as avoiding outdoor activities during windy or stormy weather when possible, showering after coming home and avoiding mowing grass. A doctor or pharmacist can advise you about appropriate treatments for your child.



If your child has asthma, make sure their **Asthma Action Plan is current** and that your education and care service has an up-to-date copy. An Asthma Action Plan helps families and educators recognise when asthma is getting worse and provides clear instructions about what action to take.

Don't forget thunderstorm asthma. Spring is also a good time to be aware of **thunderstorm asthma**. Under certain conditions, thunderstorms and high grass-pollen levels can combine to trigger sudden asthma symptoms in susceptible people, including some people who experience hay fever.

Seek medical advice if your child develops recurring coughing, wheezing or breathlessness, or if you are concerned about their symptoms. If your child has **severe difficulty breathing, cannot speak comfortably, becomes rapidly worse or receives little or no relief from their reliever medication, call Triple Zero (000).**

Asthma Week runs from 1–7 September each year, making September a timely reminder to check in on your family's respiratory health. Knowing what to look for and recognising when hay fever and asthma may be connected can help children breathe easier and enjoy everything spring has to offer.



Find more information on this article via the QR code.

Source: <https://asthma.org.au/kids/> (2026).
Attack Asthma. Retrieved from asthma.org.au

GETTING SUN-SMART AGAIN

Spring means warmer afternoons, more outdoor play and longer days but it's also time to get back into good sun-protection habits. One thing children may not realise is that UV levels and temperature aren't the same thing. UV can still be high enough to damage unprotected skin on cool or cloudy days. In Australia, sun protection is recommended whenever the UV Index reaches 3 or above.

Help children get into the habit of checking the UV before heading outside and remembering the five **SunSmart steps**: *Slip on protective clothing, Slop on SPF50 or SPF50+ broad-spectrum sunscreen, Slap on a hat, Seek shade and Slide on sunglasses.* For school-age children, spring is a great time to start building some independence too. Encourage them to remember their own hat, find shady places to play and practise applying sunscreen with supervision. Small habits now can help sun protection become a normal part of getting ready to head outdoors.



FOCUS ARTICLE: Why Children Need Family Rituals



As children grow older, family rituals can become even more important. School, friendships, activities and increasing independence can make family life feel busier, and regular moments of connection can help children feel grounded and supported.

A family ritual is something that happens regularly and has meaning for the people involved. It might be Friday movie night, pancakes on Sunday morning, a walk after dinner, playing a board game together, talking about the best and hardest parts of the day, or having a particular routine before school or bedtime.

For school-age children, these repeated experiences provide a sense of predictability. As their world becomes bigger and more complex, knowing there are familiar parts of family life they can rely on can be reassuring. Rituals can create a sense of stability during busy school weeks, changes in friendships, new activities or other periods of transition.

They also help strengthen a child's sense of belonging and family identity. Shared traditions give children a feeling of being part of something. Over time, simple routines can become important family memories and help shape the stories children tell about growing up: *this is what our family does together*.

Family rituals also create natural opportunities for connection. School-age children may not always sit down and announce that something is worrying them. Conversations often happen more easily while walking the dog, driving to sport, cooking together or sharing a regular meal. These predictable moments give children opportunities to talk when they are ready.

Rituals can be particularly valuable as children become more independent. Spending more time at school, with friends and participating in activities is an important part of growing up, but having regular family touchpoints helps maintain strong relationships alongside that independence. Importantly, rituals don't need to be expensive, complicated or perfectly maintained. Their value comes from **consistency, connection and meaning**. Missing a family dinner or movie night occasionally doesn't matter. It is the pattern over time that counts.

As children grow, invite them to help shape family traditions. They might choose the Friday night meal, suggest a monthly family activity or create a new birthday tradition.

In increasingly busy lives, these small, repeated moments remind school-age children of something important: **you belong here, we enjoy spending time with you, and our family is a place you can come back to.**



Find more information on this topic via the QR code.

Source: Family traditions and rituals: why they're important (2025). Retrieved from raisingchildren.net.au



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