



## ON *this* MONTH

### Aussie Kids Fun & Fitness

#### AROUND THE COUNTRY

Star Wars Day -----	4
Play Outside Day -----	4
International Compost Awareness Week -----	5 - 11
Ramadan -----	5 - 4/6
World Bird Migratory Day -----	11
Mother's Day -----	12
National Families Week -----	15 - 21
National Sorry Day -----	26

## Collaborative Partnership with Families and communities

This Month we will be focusing on  
Quality Area 6: **Collaborative Partnership  
with Families and Communities**

AKFF Service is focusing on supportive, respectful relationships with families by encouraging families to collaborate with the service and encourage active participation in the service decisions and the educational program. A general Satisfaction Survey – for Parents, Carers and Families will be distributed this month to again feedback on Staff Relationships with Children, Programming and the Environment. Please complete the survey and provide feedback on any





### NATIONAL FAMILIES WEEK – MAY 15 - 21

The aim of National Families Week is to celebrate the vital role that families play in Australian society. The enduring theme '*Stronger families, stronger communities*', highlights the important role that families play

as the central building block of our communities and that community wellbeing is enhanced by family wellbeing.

Find out more at [www.nfw.org.au](http://www.nfw.org.au)

### NATIONAL SORRY DAY – MAY 26

National Sorry Day is an Australia-wide observance held on May 26 each year. This day gives people the chance to come together and share the steps towards healing for the Stolen Generations, their families and communities.

[www.reconciliation.org.au/national-sorry-day-an-important-part-of-healing/](http://www.reconciliation.org.au/national-sorry-day-an-important-part-of-healing/)



## Wholemeal Apple Muffins

PREP 15 min | COOK 12-15 min | MAKES 12

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup (250 ml) yoghurt
- 3/4 cup (180 ml) vegetable oil (lightly flavoured olive oil or cold pressed macadamia nut oil are great choices)
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup (125 ml) maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup (125 grams) plain wholemeal flour
- 1 cup (110 grams) almond meal
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon, ground
- 2 medium apples, skin on and diced plus an extra apple, thinly sliced

#### METHOD:

Preheat oven to 180 degrees Celsius (350F). Line a 12-hole muffin tin with muffin papers. Place the yoghurt, oil, eggs, maple syrup and vanilla extract into a large mixing bowl and whisk to combine. Add the flour, almond meal, baking powder and cinnamon and mix until just combined. Do not over mix. Gently fold through the diced apple. Use a 1/4 measuring cup to ladle the batter into the prepared tin and top each muffin with a slice of apple. Bake for 12-15 minutes or until golden and cooked. A skewer inserted should remove cleanly. Allow to cool slightly before removing the muffins from the tin and placing on a wire rack to cool completely. Enjoy x

*Remember to always supervise kids in the kitchen.*



Source: Recipe and images belong to [mylovelylittlelunchbox.com](http://mylovelylittlelunchbox.com)



APPS FOR  
ORGANISATION AND  
YOUR MIND.



### OUR HOME

FAMILY | FREE

*The year is well and truly underway now, everyone is busy and perhaps you have recognised it is time to get everyone on the same page.*

Our Home is a new and simple way to organize your family. Kids will be motivated to do chores and take responsibility while parents can reward them for their effort. There's a shared grocery list and a family calendar to keep everyone coordinated.

### BABY SNAP: DAILY PHOTO STORY

FAMILY | FREE

*Snap a second of your child every day and get a movie of them growing!*



Precious moments of childhood you will never forget. I love comparing photos and seeing how much my kids have changed, but scrolling through 17,000 photos is time consuming. This app makes it so easy and fun! Invite relatives to capture Snaps together. Discuss snaps in a family chat, private and secure.



### STOP, BREATHE & THINK

ADULTS | FREE

*Meditation & mindfulness to help you build the emotional strength and confidence to handle life's ups and downs.*

Stop, Breathe & Think, the app for daily meditation & mindfulness, has a unique approach that allows you to check in with your emotions, and then recommends short, guided meditations, yoga and acupressure videos, tuned to how you feel.





## FOCUS: Empathy and why we need to teach it to our children.



### Why does empathy matter?

Empathy involves the ability to understand someone else's perspective and understand how they feel about it. Empathy is essential in interpersonal relations, has been linked to moral behaviour and in general, humans are kinder when they can understand one another's perspectives and emotions. Positive strengths in this skill have also been linked to emotional intelligence.

In a child, the skill of empathy advances as their cognitive structures develop. Between the ages of two and four years children start to become aware of their own emotions and feelings. Between five and seven years children start developing compassion and reading emotional cues from others. These stages of development are the foundations that help develop empathy in children. For some, the ability to feel empathy comes naturally. *Interestingly, it is not an innate deposition that unfolds equally in all children.*

Fortunately, parents can have a considerable influence to help develop empathy in children. If you encourage empathy, children can become more empathic to others. This is particularly important for children on the spectrum, children who lack 'theory of the mind' and for children who just naturally have a lower empathetic capacity than others.

- **What does empathy look like?** Decety and Cowell (2014) believe the word empathy has become a broad term for three distinct processes;
- **Emotional sharing:** which occurs when people experience unpleasant feelings because they saw or heard distress in another person.
- **Empathic concern:** which is a person's motive or desire to care for others who are vulnerable or experiencing distress.
- **Perspective-taking:** which is the ability to consciously put yourself in another person's situation and imagine what they could be thinking or feeling. All of which can be explored and encouraged through a child's early years.

### 10 Ways to Teach Your Child to Be More Empathetic

1. **Empathise with your child and show empathy towards others.** This is all about role modelling empathy and being mindful of your own responses to your child's emotions. The easiest way to do this is to be reflective of the emotions your child displays and validate how they are feeling.
2. **Teach children to effectively manage their emotions and self-regulate.** Expressing empathy is not always easy for children, particularly if they themselves are experiencing negative emotions or feelings that are overwhelming. One of the initial steps to developing empathy towards others is to be able to manage your own emotions effectively.
3. **Use every day opportunities to address perspective taking.** Use moments from everyday life to encourage caring and compassionate thoughts through 'perspective taking.' Talk openly about how another may feel when you identify situations that elicit an empathetic response in books, movies, at the park or in your home.
4. **Help children discover what they have in common with others.** Encourage inclusion, diversity and warmth by helping your child discover what they share in common with people of all different perspectives.
5. **Encourage kindness, thoughtfulness and compassion for all living creatures.** Prioritise these traits across all situations and to all living things.
6. **Help children develop the ability to read emotional cues.** Empathy requires children to identify how others feel, not only based on their own emotional insight but also on the other person's emotional cues – not every person reacts and feels the same in every situation.
7. **Develop cognitive awareness of empathy using literature.** While you are reading you can engage in empathy building by: discussing the character's feelings and emotions, pointing out the facial expressions or body language of characters, asking your child how they would feel if it were them.
8. **Engage in emotional awareness games and play.**
9. **Encourage younger children to develop empathic concern during imaginary play.** By engaging in play with your child you can role model and encourage empathetic concern.
10. **Encourage and praise emotional sharing.** Your child needs to be reassured that it is okay for them to experience both negative and positive emotions. They should also feel safe to express all emotions to you. You can encourage this by asking your child how they felt when they experienced a situation or event that might have produced a particularly strong empathetic response. When they do exhibit empathy, reinforce the behaviour by praising them for showing compassion. If your child shares an emotion with you, even an unpleasant one, make sure to tell them it is wonderful that they are sharing their emotions, and that it demonstrates how kind and caring they are.

Source: Product Childhood101 (2019, April 16). Develop Empathy Retrieved from <https://childhood101.com/develop-empathy/>

### HEALTHY KIDS

## Turn Off the TV or Computer and Get Active

When kids and teens spend time in front of small screens – whether it's the TV, computer or hand-held games – it takes away from the time they could spend playing sport, games or being active. Australian guidelines recommend that kids and teens spend no more than 2 hours each day on small screen entertainment. Long periods of use should be broken up as often as possible.

While computers and TV can be valuable for education and learning, the health benefits, skills and enjoyment that kids and teens get from being physically active are just as important

### Did you know?

- Children are more likely to snack on foods that are high in sugar, salt or saturated fat when they're watching TV.

READ MORE AT [www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/home/fact-sheets/turn-off-the-tv-or-computer-and-get-active.aspx](http://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/home/fact-sheets/turn-off-the-tv-or-computer-and-get-active.aspx)



## HEALTH & SAFETY: Healthy Habits for Kids to Prevent Cold and Flu

**While it's not possible to shield your kids completely from catching a cold or the flu, especially if they attend day care or school, you can teach them healthy habits to boost their immune systems and decrease their chances of picking up an infection. Teach your children these important healthy habits for kids to prevent colds and flu (and protect others when they are sick):**

### **Get them into the hand washing habit:**

Almost 22 million school days are missed due to the common cold alone, according to the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. Studies have shown that hand washing can reduce absenteeism from infectious illness among school-aged kids. Hand washing is one of the most effective ways of preventing the spread of common school-age child illnesses such as cold, flu, pinkeye, and more. Since children spend so much time together in close quarters during the school year, it's a good idea to make sure hand washing becomes something they do automatically, as a matter of habit. Teach your child to wash his hands often, especially before eating, after blowing his nose, and after using the bathroom.

### **Teach Them How to Wash Their Hands Properly**

Getting your child to go to the sink won't matter if she merely splashes her hands in the water for a second and calls it done. She should wash properly for at least 30 seconds with soap and water. Simple soap will do -- you don't need antibacterial products (in fact, studies have shown that antibacterial soaps are not any more effective at killing germs than regular soap, and health experts have expressed concern that increasing use of antibacterial products may, in fact, be giving rise to antibiotic-resistant bacteria).

### **Show Them How to Cough and Sneeze Properly**

Cold and flu viruses can become airborne on droplets of saliva when someone sneezes or coughs. Teach your child to cover a sneeze or a cough with a tissue or with the inside of her elbow. A recent study showed that most people cover their sneezes, but do so with their hands (a bad habit that can spread the illness to others).

### **Tell Them to Avoid Touching Their Eyes**

If your child touches something that someone with a cold has touched and then touches his eyes or mouth, the cold virus can enter his body through those points. Infections such as conjunctivitis can also be transmitted through touching eyes after touching an object that has been handled by someone with that infection.

### **Encourage Them Not to Share Utensils and Cups With Friends**

Kids naturally love to share (well, sometimes...especially when it's not a favourite toy), but it's not a good idea to share eating utensils with friends, especially during cold and flu season. Viruses and bacteria are easily transmitted through saliva, so this is one type of sharing that you should teach your child to avoid.



In addition to these healthy habits, be sure to give your kids plenty of healthy and nutritious foods, which will help keep his immune system strong and ward off colds and flu. And make sure that he gets plenty of sleep, which is not only important for keeping him healthy but helps school-age kids focus in school and prevents crankiness and moodiness. Getting kids to go to bed can be a particular challenge for school-age kids, but it's important for his health as well as his emotional and cognitive well-being.

Very Well Family (2019, April 16). Healthy Habits for Kids to Prevent Cold and Flu Retrieved from <https://www.verywellfamily.com/good-kids-habits-to-prevent-cold-and-flu-620491>



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## BE A PART OF THE PLASTIC FIGHT

**With an annual production of more than 300 million tons, plastic is one of the most widely used materials in the world.**

What often escapes one's attention is that the plastic is used for its main purpose for only a moment compared with its lifecycle of 20 to 500 years. Lightweight and designed to last, the discarded pieces are easily transported to ecosystems through the forces of nature

causing serious threats to migratory species around the world.

Have you ever found a bird's nest where a part of it was made up of plastic? If you could make one change this month in a move towards more sustainable living we encourage you to stop using single use plastic. If everyone made this one small change the we could protect species for the future. Without change habitats will continue to deteriorate and become inhabitable.

Learn more at [www.worldmigratorybirdday.org](http://www.worldmigratorybirdday.org)





## LAST MONTH WE...



## Hawaiian Day

## Vacation Care

Children engaged in a variety of fun, educational and stimulating activities and experiences during the April Vacation Care Period.

Excursions included:

Tabatinga – Indoor play centre

Ten Pin Bowling

Wildlife Encounters

Hawaiian Party

Let's Have a Ball

Kids Biz – Indoor Play Centre

Local Parks

Movies

Feedback from children and families were very positive with some great ideas from children for our next vacation care excursions.



## Programming Photo Folder:

Just a reminder that our Program Photo Folder is on Display at the Front Sign in desk for families to look at their child/ren engaging in activities during their stay. We would welcome any feedback on the Program both positive and/or negative to help us improve our service and ensure that your child/ren are being provided with the best quality care and education. There is a suggestion box at the front sign in counter if you would like to share your ideas, feedback so this can be incorporated into quality improvement plan. (Quality Area 6)



This Month We Are Focusing on Healthy Lunch Box Ideas – Families will be provided with Ideas, recipes and a guide to healthy eating. Life Skills for kids will also be a part of our Program this month with basic skills to enhance, awareness, decision making, communication, self-help skills, creative, thinking and problem solving



## 5 Minute MOVES HIT THE PLAYGROUND

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

Next time you are at the playground don't just sit back and watch the kids have all the fun! Join in too. Your children will love having you play along and climbing, crawling, hanging and sliding all increase the heart rate.

See how many slides you can all have in a minute? Who can cross the monkey bars? Who can swing the highest?

**Feedback**  
is always welcome

How can we make our newsletter even better?

What information would you like us to include?

Name of your service

Email:

Phone number: