

Time spent playing with children is never time wasted - Don Lantero



Little Ducks
Childcare

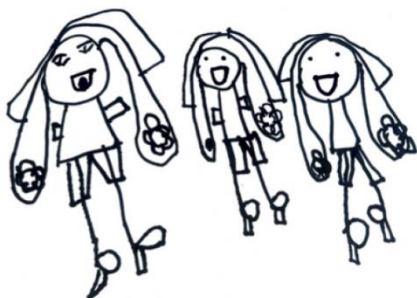


Term Two, 2024

Centre Events

AT LITTLE DUCKS BARDON

National Simultaneous story time ----- 22 May
National Sorry Day ----- 26 May
National Reconciliation Week ----- 27 May-03 June



A Message from your Centre Manager Winter knocks on our door

It's time to get the coats and boots out of the closet, and book your free flu shot!

We have all noticed that winter is coming in strong this year, and through contact with the Health Department we have been informed that many new viruses will be around. So how can we keep the children safe?

Let's combine our efforts and keep everyone healthy by dressing the children up for the weather, not sending them in when unwell, having good hand hygiene, and if possible, having the flu shot. The free flu shot is available at your nearest pharmacy, your pharmacist can be consulted if in doubt.





Mother's Day Afternoon Tea

Thank you to everyone who joined our community in celebrating the special people who play a motherly role in the children's lives. We had a wonderful time welcoming you all into the centre and celebrating with you.

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. The first National Sorry Day was held on 26 May 1998 – one year after the tabling of the report *Bringing them*

Find out more here.



STRAWBERRIES & CREAM SMOOTHIE



PREP 2 min | COOK & SERVE as needed

INGREDIENTS

- 100g yoghurt, such as Greek, natural, soya
- 80g strawberries
- 50ml semi-skimmed milk
- 30g protein powder, vanilla, strawberry or unflavoured
- 30g almond butter
- 20g strawberry jam
- 1 handful of ice

METHOD:

Mega simple; just combine everything in a liquidiser and blend until smooth. Good on the go when kids aren't interested in breakfast.

TIPS: Feel free to use any type of yoghurt or milk you prefer. Adjust the amount of ice to make the smoothie thicker or thinner. Try **Nutra Organics Protein for a family friendly protein.**

Recipe and image by The Body Coach

BEST BLOGS



THE LITTLE ARTISTS ROOM

www.thelittleartistsroom.com

The Little Artists Room is blog full of fantastic art activities for kids. Every child is an artist. Young children are bursting with ideas and as parents and caregivers it is essential for us to empower them to be creative.

The aim in the Little Artists' Room is to help children see the magic in art. All projects are designed to foster imagination, encourage exploration and awaken creativity.

ART BAR BLOG | www.artbarblog.com

What children really need during these formative years is space and time to explore their original ideas. They need to take creative risks daily so that they grow up feeling comfortable with mistakes, finding multiple solutions to a problem, and never losing touch with the creative child inside of them.

On the Art Bar Blog you will find a huge library of creative activities you can do at home. Most activities only require things you already have lying around. Help your child express their creative side, its easy with this blog by your side.

LETTER PILLOW JUMP

If your kiddos need to burn off some energy, this letter activity from *Toddler Approved* will be perfect. Use a stack of paper plates and write one giant letter on each one. Then use packing tape to secure each plate to a pillow and spread them around the room. Have the kids start on one side of the room and try to jump to the other without touching the floor. As they jump to each new pillow, have them say the letter or letter sound. Find more quick early literacy activities here.



HEALTH & SAFETY: Discussing distressing news events with children

From time to time children are exposed to distressing news coverage via the radio, TV, social media and other sources. Coverage of upsetting news such as war, terrorist attacks or natural disasters may leave children feeling confused or frightened.

Even if a child isn't exposed to the news, they could learn about an event by overhearing conversations, talking with peers or online. It is helpful to discuss what they have seen and heard with a parent or caregiver to avoid misunderstandings and provide reassurance.

How distressing news can impact children

Often the distress children feel when they are exposed to news coverage is driven by a fear that these events may happen to them and the people they love. A child's response may vary depending on age, past experiences, temperament, proximity of the event and the coverage they see. It can also be impacted by the response adults and caregivers have, for example if a parent is distressed a child may have the same response.

Signs and symptoms to look for include:

Difficulty soothing and calming down, Trouble sleeping and increased nightmares, Change in appetite, 'clingy' behaviour regression to old behaviours (e.g., bedwetting), withdrawal from social activities, difficulty focusing at school, recurring physical complaints - (e.g., headaches, tummy aches).

How to talk to children about distressing news events

Prepare for the discussion These conversations often happen without warning, but if you have time to prepare, wait until a moment when you feel calm and ready to talk about the topic. It's best to pick a time and place to talk where you will not be interrupted and where your child feels safe and comfortable.

Talking with your child about what they know Open the discussion by asking your child what they know about the news event. This is a good opportunity to correct false information and provide context. Remember to use age-appropriate language. Check your child's understanding throughout the conversation and allow them to ask questions. Often their knowledge is disjointed or incomplete.

Validate their feelings Encourage your child to talk about how the news makes them feel, but don't force them to discuss it if they are not ready. It's important your child knows it's normal to feel upset and talking about feelings can help. It is often useful to discuss your own reactions, to show these feelings are common. Take this opportunity to demonstrate how you use healthy coping strategies to feel better and provide suggestions that might help your child (e.g., playing with friends, taking the dog for a walk or doing something creative).

Reassure your child Ultimately, it's important that you help your child feel safe and loved. For example, you might provide reassurance that these events are rare and that the situation is being handled by experts who can help.

Remind your child about good news stories to shift the balance of negative media coverage and redirect their focus.

Keep the conversation open Let your child know that they can come to you at any time with additional questions or to talk about how they are feeling later.

How to tailor a discussion for different age groups

Pre-school aged children | Pre-school aged children are often more impacted by graphic video footage of traumatic events, even when they don't understand the details of the news story. They often require less detail of the event itself and more general reassurance to feel safe. When discussing your child's feelings, you might find it helpful to talk about where you feel your emotions (e.g., "I feel a heaviness in my chest") to help your child recognise and describe the physical symptoms of stress.

Primary school aged children

Primary school aged children may be particularly concerned that the distressing news event may reoccur or spread, making them or their family unsafe. To help them feel safe you may need to provide more information on the event to help them understand that they are not at risk. If suitable, turn the conversation to ways you might be able to help or take action, for example by donating to disaster relief. You could ask whether the news event has been talked about at school and address any confusion about what other people have said.

Tips for supporting children While it may not be possible or appropriate to shield your child from all media reporting, monitor how much they are watching and try to minimise exposure to avoid your child becoming overwhelmed.

- Where possible, watch coverage of news with your child. This way you can give context to help them understand the event and provide reassurance.
- Try to move on to a new activity that your child enjoys to distract them from dwelling on the bad news story.
- Keep to your family's daily routine, make sure your child continues to eat well, get plenty of sleep and exercise regularly, as children feel more secure in predictable surroundings.
- Some children will feel reassured by the creation of a family safety plan, especially in regions exposed to recurring natural disasters.

Sesame Street has some great resources too, find them [here](#)



Read the article via the QR code.

Source: The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne. (2023, April). **Discussing distressing news events with children**. Retrieved from www.rch.org.au



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 and again).

Melbourne Child Psychology (2019) A golden rule of parenting – Stop thinking everything you do is wrong. Retrieved from <https://www.melbournechildpsychology.com.au/blog/a-golden-rule-of-parenting-stop-thinking-everything-you-do-is-wrong/>



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.



Read the article via the QR code.

Source: Happify. (2021). 4 Mantras for Instant Stress Relief. Retrieved from [happify](https://www.happify.com/).

CREATING A BEE FRIENDLY GARDEN

European honey bees pollinate a third of our food crops, making a huge contribution to our food supply chain, our economy and the broader ecosystem, so the more we can help them do their thing, the better off everyone is. European honey bees will feast on a range of flowering plants, but they do have preferences.

Tips for bee-friendly gardening

- Plant flowering plants in bountiful clumps so bees don't have to search far for forage and can work more efficiently
- Avoid pesticides. Companion planting is the way to go if you want to control pests. Pesticides are one of the reasons bee populations are in decline
- Plant several species to ensure you have forage for every season
- Maintain multiple water sources around your garden
- Spread the word among your neighbours, family and friend



Numeracy

“Being numerate is the capacity, confidence and disposition to use mathematics in daily life. All children bring new mathematical understandings through engaging with problem solving. It is essential that the mathematical ideas with which children interact are relevant and meaningful in the context of their current lives. Educators require a rich mathematical vocabulary to accurately describe and explain children’s mathematical ideas and support numeracy development.”

Belonging, Being and Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, V2.0.

Experiences in early childhood settings build on the range of experiences with language, literacy and numeracy that children have within their families and communities. Encouraging children’s positive attitudes and competencies in literacy and numeracy are essential for children’s successful learning. The foundations for these competencies are built in early childhood.

Numeracy education within an Early Years setting looks like: Conversations with peers and educators, sociodramatic play, dancing, creative arts, water play, gardening, puzzles, building, using technology, playdough and science experiments just to name a few ways your child is developing their numeracy skills.

If you would like more information about how we incorporate numeracy into our program, please speak to your child’s educator or the service’s educational leader.

National Quality Framework | Quality Area 1:
Educational Program and Practice 1.1 The educational program enhances each child’s learning and development.

1.2 Educators facilitate and extend each child’s learning and development.

Australian Government Department of Education (2022). Belonging, Being and Becoming Framework. Retrieved from <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/EYLF-2022-V2.0.pdf>

A Message from your Educational Leader

Assessment and Rating is done, what is next?

Last month we had the pleasure of witnessing everyone’s hard work being noticed, complimented and used as an example during Assessment and Rating. For those unfamiliar with this process, the Department of Education performs A&R every 4 years to observe, analyse and rate the quality of care provided in the service. We are proud to announce that our service met all expectations and got some extra points in areas where our practices went above and beyond.

As we celebrate this together, we also prepare to move on to our next chapter of growth and learning as a team. The A&R process was a great opportunity for us to be informed of areas for improvement, as well as be proud of the hard work we have done so far.

Our biggest goal moving forwards is, alongside keeping all practices up to standard, strengthening our community connection and having a bigger community presence in our service. We would like to welcome everyone to join us on this journey and share your ideas. We have had some lovely parents come in to read books for children, other helping with gardening, but keep in mind that broad community is also welcomed.

It takes a village to raise a child, and we would love to welcome you into our village.



Core Strength: Pass the ball

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

All you need for these activities is a ball or another object.

1) To start you and your child/ren need to find a clear space and get into plank position. A carpeted or grass area would work well to protect forearms. All you need to do is stay in the plank position, lift one arm (while still hovering) and roll the ball to one another without collapsing. See how long you can pass the ball for before falling down. Try again, can you beat your number of passes? Challenge yourselves by making the distance between both of you greater.

2) This time you need to be in a bridge position. (Lying on your back, knees bent, lifting your bottom off the floor). Make sure you are close together. While in this position pass the ball under your bridges to one another and again challenge yourselves, how many times can you pass the ball without collapsing. Make it harder by passing the ball under one bridge, over the other, making a figure 8 with the ball.