

"YOU'RE BRAVER THAN YOU BELIEVE, AND STRONGER THAN YOU SEEM, AND SMARTER THAN YOU THINK." — A.A. MINE



FEBRUARY
2023

THE LINK COMMUNITY HUB

AROUND THE COUNTRY

WORLD READ ALOUD DAY

1

WORLD WETLANDS DAY

2

SAFER INTERNET DAY

7

SUMMER'S DAY

28





WORLD READ ALOUD DAY – FEBRUARY 1

Literacy is not a gift given just to some lucky ones, it is a foundational human right that brings joy, economic independence, gender equity and a pathway out of poverty. World Read Aloud Day has evolved into a global movement of millions of readers, writers, and listeners

coming together to honour **the joy and power of reading and sharing stories**, and continue expanding the definition and scope of global literacy. [Find out more here](#)

SAFER INTERNET DAY – FEBRUARY 7

Safer Internet Day is a worldwide event that raises awareness about online safety and encourages everyone to help create a better internet. Celebrated in 170 countries, Safer Internet Day is designed to bring the world together to make the internet a safer, more positive place. Find out how you can better support your family online by following the link below.

[Webinar and more eSAFETY information](#)

CHICKEN MEATBALLS WITH PESTO



PREP 20 min | COOK 10 min | SERVES 8

INGREDIENTS

Chicken Meatballs:

1 kg chicken mince
1 cup fresh breadcrumbs,
soaked in a 1/4 cup milk
2 eggs
1 cup parmesan cheese, *grated*
1 tbs garlic, *minced*
sea salt & pepper, *to season*

Basil Pistachio Pesto:

2 cups fresh basil leaves
1 cup baby spinach leaves
2 garlic cloves
1/2 cup pistachios
1/2 cup parmesan, *grated*
zest and juice of 1 lemon
3/4 cup olive oil

500 grams **spaghetti**, cooked according to packet instructions reserving 1 cup of cooking water

METHOD:

Place the mince, breadcrumbs, eggs, parmesan, garlic, salt and pepper into a large bowl and mix thoroughly to combine. **Take** 2 heaped tablespoons of mince and roll into rounds. **Heat** a little olive oil in a fry pan over medium-high heat. **Add** meatballs and cook 6-8 minutes, stirring occasionally or until the meatballs are golden and cooked through. Set aside.

To make the Basil Pistachio Pesto: **Place** the basil, baby spinach, garlic, pistachios, parmesan, lemon juice and zest into the bowl of a food processor. Blitz for 1-2 minutes or until finely chopped. **With** the motor running, slowly add the olive oil and continue blitzing until thoroughly combined (scraping down the sides of the bowl as necessary).

Pour the pesto over the cooked spaghetti with a splash of the reserved pasta water and toss to combine. **Top** spaghetti with cooked meatballs, fresh basil leaves and a grating of parmesan cheese. Enjoy x

Recipe and image from mylovelylittlelunchbox.com

Book reviews

Have you read these? Fun books to light up your day!



THE ONE AND ONLY SPARKELLA | CHANNING TATUM

Ella is excited for her first day at a new school. Glimmering pencil case? Check! Shimmering backpack? Check! Glittery ribbons in her hair? Check! She can't wait to meet the other kids and share her sparkly personality. But her first day doesn't go quite as planned. Her new classmates don't like her sparkly ways. Ella decides to try and be a little less sparkly the next day. But with a little help from her dad, she soon learns the importance of just being herself!

VERY GOOD HATS | EMMA STRAUB

The first picture book by bestselling novelist Emma Straub, author of This Time Tomorrow. This is a joyous, inventive, adorably illustrated read-aloud that will inspire kids to see ordinary objects in a whole new way. Some people think hats are fancy things you can buy at a dressy store, but that's just the tip of the iceberg. In this book, acorns and raspberries are snug hats for your fingers, and an empty pudding cup is a good hat for a stuffed bear. Pyjama pants make dangly hats, books can be dramatic hats, and bubbles make very fine hats as well (if temporary). Readers will be delighted to discover that *anything* can be a hat if you believe it is. Hats are everywhere you look!

TAP! TAP! TAP!: DANCE! DANCE! | HERVE TULLET

Read, play, and DANCE on the pages of this interactive and definitely out-of-the box picture book from the creator of Press Here! Starting with a gentle glide, growing in complexity and animation, finally building to a crescendo of colour, action, and movement--here's a book perfect for kids bursting with energy. A celebration not only of releasing emotion but also of carefully controlling motion and dexterity.



FOCUS: Household chores for children

Children can learn a lot from doing household chores. Doing chores helps children learn about what they need to do to care for themselves, a home and a family. They learn skills they can use in their adult lives, like preparing meals, cleaning, organising and keeping a garden. Being involved in chores also gives children experience of relationship skills like communicating clearly, negotiating, cooperating and working as a team.

Household chores: good for children, good for your family

When children contribute to family life, it helps them feel competent and responsible. Even if they don't enjoy the chore, when they keep going they get the feeling of satisfaction that comes with finishing a task. And sharing housework can also help families work better and reduce family stress. When children help out, chores get done sooner, and parents have less to do. This frees up time for the family to do fun things together.

How to get children involved in chores

It's best to start by choosing chores that work for children's ages and abilities. Chores that are too hard can be frustrating – or even dangerous – and chores that are too easy might be boring. Even young children can help with chores if you choose activities that are right for their age. You can start with simple jobs like packing up toys. Chores like this send the message that your child's contribution is important.

It's also important to think about **chores or tasks that get your child involved in caring for the family** as a whole. A simple one is getting your child to help with setting or clearing the table. Jobs like these are likely to give your child a sense of responsibility and participation. If your child is old enough, you can **have a family discussion about chores**. This can reinforce the idea that the whole family contributes to how the household runs. Children over six years old can help decide which chores they'd prefer.

You can **motivate your child to get involved in chores** by:

- doing the chore together until your child can do it on their own
- being clear about each person's chores for the day or week – write them down so they're easy to remember
- talking about why it's great that a particular job has been done
- showing an interest in how your child has done the job
- praising positive behaviour
- using a reward chart to track completed chores and give small rewards like choosing a TV program or family meal.



Pocket money for children's chores

Some children are motivated to do chores for pocket money. But some families believe all family members have a responsibility to help and don't give out pocket money for chores. If you decide to pay pocket money for chores, **explain chores clearly** so there's no confusion or bargaining about what needs to be done and when. Some families don't link chores to pocket money but might pay extra pocket money for extra chores.

Chores for children of different ages

Here are some ideas for chores for children of different ages.

School-age children (6-11 years)

- Water the garden and indoor plants.
- Feed pets.
- Help with hanging out clothes and folding washing.
- Take out rubbish.
- Help with choosing meals and shopping.
- Help with meal preparation and serving, under supervision.
- Vacuum or sweep floors.
- Clean the bathroom sink, wipe down kitchen benches, or mop floors.
- Put away crockery and cutlery.

Source: raisingchildren.net.au (2020). Household chores for children. Retrieved from <https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/family-life/routines-rituals/chores-for-children>

BACK TO SCHOOL ANXIETY

Going back to school is exciting for some kids, but others have trouble with anxiety heading into the new school year. This is especially true of kids who are starting at a new school or are already anxious about being away from parents. This anxiety fades for most kids as the school year goes on, but parents can help them get off to a good start.

First, check in with yourself. Kids can tell if you're nervous, so managing your own stress is a good way to help them feel calm too. Then, be sure to really listen to kids' worries. Often, kids just need a little validation ("I know how hard it is to get to know a new teacher") to feel better. You can also help them make

plans for handling anything specific they're worried about.

If your child's anxiety doesn't go away and interferes with school, it may be time to get support from a mental health professional. Some kids develop anxious headaches or stomach-aches about school or even refuse to go altogether. A mental health professional can help you figure out why your child is struggling and provide the support they need. You can read the full article **here**.

HEALTHY
KIDS



HEALTH & SAFETY: Home safety hazards

Being aware of hazards within your home is the first step to preventing them. Some of the most common hazards at home include fire, poisoning and allergies. There may also be risks posed by your home's contents, such as falls, choking, cuts and burns. This is not an exhaustive list, so you may find it useful to do your own research and conduct a risk assessment of your home.

Fire - Fires at home can be highly dangerous, not only to your property but also to you and the people you live with. Be sure to have working smoke alarms in the house tested regularly, and a fire plan with safety protocols in place. To reduce the risk of home fire, it's important to:

- reduce flammable clutter, such as old boxes or paper
- never leave cooking unattended
- maintain any fireplaces and chimneys, with regular inspections from a professional, and
- assess electrical systems, and seek the assistance of an electrician if you notice frayed or loose wires.

Poisoning - Several household items present poisoning risks, such as cleaning and maintenance supplies, medications and petrol. Keeping these things locked away and out of reach of children can reduce the chance of them being accidentally ingested. And when storing these items, try not to keep chemicals or petrol in bottles that could be mistaken for something that's drinkable, like a soft drink bottle. Another hazard to be aware of is carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide poisoning can occur in homes with appliances that use fossil fuels, like gas. It's very difficult to detect carbon monoxide, but you can reduce your risk of exposure by installing a carbon monoxide detector. Regular maintenance of appliances that might cause a leak, such as heaters and ovens, is also important.

Allergies - Mould grows when water condenses onto surfaces, like walls and window frames, and is directly related to humidity within your home. If you have an allergy to mould, symptoms can include sneezing, itchy eyes and headaches. To keep mould at bay, remove condensation from surfaces in your home, especially in damp areas like your bathroom and kitchen, and keep air vents clear. You may also benefit from using an air purifier.

Water - Water safety depends on 100% active adult supervision whenever your child is around water. This includes around baths, pools, ponds, dams, rivers, creeks, baths and buckets with water. If you have a pool, by law you must have a pool fence and self-locking gate that meets Australian Standard AS:1926. Regularly check and maintain

the pool fence and gate to make sure it's in proper working order. Never leave the gate propped open.

For bath safety, always supervise and give your full attention to babies and children under five years in the bath. Never leave children alone in the bath or bathroom. Never leave older children or siblings to supervise.

Falls - are the most common cause of injuries and visits to hospital in every age group. You can help to keep your child safe by watching the new skills they're learning, and the new places they can reach – and then adjusting your home. For example: When your child starts climbing, lock windows – particularly upper-storey windows – restrict window openings, or shield them with firmly attached window guards. This will stop your child climbing out and falling. Leave a hall light on at night, or use sensor lights to make it easier for older children to get to the toilet without tripping

Choking - Choking and strangulation risks are a common hazard at home. Food that isn't prepared well may present a risk. Consider your child's age when presenting them with food. In addition to food, there are objects in your home, such as cords and small toys, that could be dangerous. Consider doing a sweep around your home where children might be present, to ensure choking and strangulation hazards are out of the way. For more information about choking read the **information linked here**.

Burns and scalds prevention - To prevent burns, keep your child away from fire and hot surfaces. Keep a close eye on your child whenever they're near things that can burn – especially around stoves, ovens, microwaves, heaters and other appliances. Hot food and drinks and too-hot baths are a major cause of scalds for babies and children. Here are some simple safety precautions to avoid these risks: Keep hot food and drinks away from and out of reach of children, avoid holding your child if you're having hot food and drinks. Always test bath water temperature before bathing children – the safest bath temperature is 37-38°C.

Cuts - Knowing about items that present a potential risk of cuts and scrapes can help you avoid them. From a tin lid in an open recycling bin to sharp outdoor tools, it's useful to be aware of the risk so you can mitigate it. This might mean: ensuring bins have a lid, keeping kitchen tools, like sharp knives, stored safely, pointing sharp items such as forks and knives down if you use a dishwasher, installing a lock on your bathroom cupboard so items like razors can't be accessed easily, and putting tools away.

Source: [raisingchildren.net.au](https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/safety/home-pets/home-safety) (2021). Child Safety at Home Retrieved from <https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/safety/home-pets/home-safety>

GIO (2021). What are the most common home safety hazards? Retrieved from <https://www.gio.com.au/know-more/improving-your-home/most-common-home-safety-hazards.html>



MAKE YOUR OWN CLEANING PRODUCTS

Turn cleaning day into a science experiment and mix up some non-toxic sprays and solutions to use around the house with your child. Combine baking soda with warm water to create a deodorizer or simple kitchen cleaner, and use it to wipe down the inside of your microwave or refrigerator. Or, mix dish soap with warm water to clean the countertops. When you make your own cleaners you save money, reduce your toxic load and reuse bottles you would have usually thrown out! You can find a large range of recipes **here**





UNLOCK YOUR CHILD'S FULL READING POTENTIAL

We are delighted to have partnered with The Reading Switch, an online program that supports and enhances reading abilities and confidence in primary school age children. The program is beneficial for children with and without a diagnosed reading difficulty.

To find out more information about the program, please visit extend.com.au/the-reading-switch/

Our partnership with The Reading Switch offers families two benefits:



1. Free 30 day trial of the program
2. Discounted subscription to the program ongoing.

If the program helps to build your child's confidence, then we are thrilled to offer you a discount code **EXTEND10** which gives 10% off the monthly subscription fee.

VISIT [EXTEND.COM.AU/THE-READING-SWITCH/](https://extend.com.au/the-reading-switch/) TO REGISTER!