

FEBRUARY  
2021



# ON *this* MONTH

## Bug-A-Lugs

Prep Free Day -----	10
Prep Free Day -----	17
Prep Free Day -----	24

## AROUND THE COUNTRY

Sustainable Living Festival -----	1-28
World Wetlands Day -----	2
Safer Internet Day -----	9
Chinese New Year -----	12
National Apology Anniversary -----	13
World Day of Social Justice -----	20

## School Holiday Fun!

Who can believe the school holidays has already come and gone?! What a fun December/January holidays we had! Whilst 2020 was a challenging year, it was so wonderful to see so many of our families back to join in on the school holiday fun.

There were many highlights throughout the school holiday program. We started our January program with a New Year party, with the children really enjoying the disco and cupcake making! We got silly and had some hilarious water challenges on Water Fun Day. The children were really engaged with our STEAM day, taking part in various science experiments and participating in engineering challenges. Wacky Wednesday saw some seriously out there hairdos and crafts being created! Gold Rush day was a hit, with the children particularly enjoying the scavenger hunts and gold panning. Animal extravaganza was fantastic and as an added bonus we had a visitor from Minibeast and Insects.

It was a busy and rewarding holidays! We are already looking forward to the next and fingers crossed we might have a few excursions. 😊

## Kyneton

During our first week back at out of school hours care at Kyneton, we have been focussing on learning more about ourselves and connecting with the other children. We have started to include positive affirmations into our discussions in the afternoon, along with our Acknowledgment of Country. We call these affirmations our “warrior mindset” and they help us to build a strong sense of self esteem and boost our confidence.

For those who wanted to, we have decorated a piece of bunting each and it is now displayed on the wall at Bug-A-Lugs, so you will have to look out for it next time you come in, and we have created posters to tell our friends all about ourselves.

We wrote down some of the goals that we are aiming to achieve this year. One of Mikaela’s goals is to do a proper cartwheel, and already some of the children have been helping her with this goal, although she still needs a lot of help!

We have also written letters to our future selves, full of memories and aspirations that we are looking forward to opening at the end of the year so that we can reflect on our achievements.

We have played several games, including “A Night at the Museum”, ‘Giants Treasure” and “Poison Ball” and had a lot of fun on the playground!

We have been taking care of our mental health, with some mindful colouring and meditation most mornings and we have left for school ready to learn! We are looking forward to a fantastic week next week with our “teamwork” theme and the children have already contributed some great ideas for our activities next week including a scavenger hunt, various group games and some collaborative colouring! We look forward to seeing you all next week!

## Woodend

Welcome back to the 2021 school year. This month children are focusing on their 2021 goals and ambitions for both OHSC and school as well as home. Some activities include Dear future self-letters, all about me worksheets and so much more including arts and crafts.

Children are learning about all the BIG THINGS in Australia as we are creating a new display board. Outdoor and oval play have continued to be a hit, we look forward to another fun filled year with our children and families.

## BeYou

The Bug-A-Lugs team has been working with BeYou to teach children the importance of Mental Health and Wellbeing, as well as further educate staff members on these topics. Through webinars, case studies, articles and online modules, our team is growing and learning. In our newsletter, each month we will be incorporating a section on what exactly we have been researching and hearing about through our BeYou consultation. A particular section on the BeYou website that stood out was about “Learning Resilience”, and the importance of optimism and a positive mindset.

“Social and emotional learning (SEL) is about developing the ability to care for others, make responsible decisions, establish positive relationships, and handle challenging situations” ([Learning Resilience - Be You](#))

A part of Social and Emotional learning is resilience, and the way towards maturing in this aspect is inside our everyday interactions. It is pivotal to focus on building the resilience in children and creating strategies they can use to deal with stressful situations. One way of helping a child build their social and emotional learning is being encouraging and reassuring. The outlook of others on a situation a child is in greatly influences their reaction. Turning a negative into a positive is one way of doing this. For example, through Covid-19, due to the restrictions there were no excursions. To a child, you could say “We can’t go on excursions right now, but it won’t be like this forever”. Focusing on the words we say/use/hear, not taking the attention away from the child or invalidating their feelings are key factors to ensure they feel supported and safe to talk in their environment.

Another strategy that will be helpful in social and emotional learning is reminding children when they have overcome challenges and promoting effort and self-belief. Saying “Remember when you did this? If you could do that, I am sure you can do this too” will help them see that it is important to try, and not give up before they have even begun a certain activity.

Bug-A-Lugs will keep connecting with BeYou online and these strategies shall be implemented by the staff members. We hope that children can affirm, embed, and be empowered through social and emotional learning, and we can support them in their mental health and wellbeing journey.

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### EGG HEADS

**Gardening is a great way to keep children busy, whether you have a large garden, a small patio or even an apartment without a balcony, you can always find a way to do some planting and bring a bit of nature into your children's lives.**

All you need is some empty egg cartons (even egg shells), a bit of soil, some seeds... You don't need much to have a good time! Simply fill the cartons with a little soil, add your seeds and water.

Choose fast-growing seeds. Radishes, fava beans, dried beans, lentils and chickpeas, etc. are all ideal for planting with children, because their journey from seed to shoot to plant is fast and they require little care - just a little water and you'll be seeing progress every day. Some flowers, such as nasturtiums and marigolds, grow quickly and can be used to decorate salads or desserts.

Image & Activity Source: [klorane.com/au-en/content/tips-eco-friendly-school-holiday-activities](http://klorane.com/au-en/content/tips-eco-friendly-school-holiday-activities)





## SUSTAINABLE LIVING FESTIVAL (NSLF) 1 - 28

In this age of environmental, social and economic disruptions it is vital that we don't lose sight of the bigger picture and keep our eye firmly focused on the mission to sustain our planet. In the wake of Australia experiencing unprecedented climate events,

the Festival will urge a groundswell of climate awareness and support for the urgent action we need. *In 2021, NSLF events will focus on these themes: 'Culture of Care', 'Emergency Lessons', 'Local Matters' and 'Reboot and Respond'.* Find out what events are happening around you [here](#)

## NATIONAL APOLOGY ANNIVERSARY – 13

February 13 marks the Anniversary of the National Apology to Australia's First Peoples – a sacred moment in our nation's history that must never be forgotten. There are 10 things you should know about the National Apology [read here](#)

## CRISPY CAJUN CHICKEN TACOS



PREP 10 min | COOK 10 min | MAKES 6

### INGREDIENTS

#### Crispy Air Fried Cajun Chicken:

500 grams **chicken breast**, cut into bite-sized pieces  
 1/2 cup (125 ml) **buttermilk**  
 2 1/2 cups (300 grams) **corn flake style breadcrumbs**  
 2 tablespoons **flour**  
 2 1/2 tablespoons **store-bought Cajun seasoning**  
 2/3 cup (90 grams) **parmesan cheese**, grated  
**sea salt and pepper**, to season

#### Zesty Lime Sauce:

1 cup (250 grams) **Greek style yoghurt**  
 juice and zest of 1 **lime**  
 1 clove **garlic**, minced  
 1 handful **coriander leaves**  
 1 tablespoon **olive oil**  
**sea salt**, to season

#### Tacos:

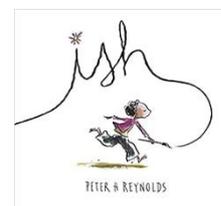
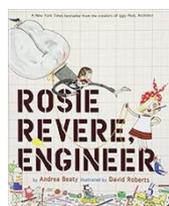
6 **tortillas**, warmed according to packet instructions  
 1 **avocado**, mashed with the juice of 1 **lime**  
 2 cups **iceberg lettuce**, finely shredded

**METHOD:** **Place** the chicken and buttermilk into a bowl and stir to combine. Into a separate bowl, **place** the cornflake crumbs, flour, Cajun seasoning, parmesan, salt, pepper and stir to combine. **Dredge** each piece of chicken in the breadcrumbs and **place** the crumbed chicken onto a tray lined with baking paper, drizzle with a little olive oil and **bake** in a preheated oven (200 C) for 10 minutes or until chicken is golden and cooked through. **To make the Zesty Lime Sauce:** **Place** the yoghurt, lime zest and juice, garlic, coriander, olive oil and salt into the jug of a food processor and blitz for 1-2 minutes or until lusciously combined. **To assemble the tacos:** **Top** warmed tortillas with lime avocado, shredded iceberg lettuce, crispy Cajun chicken bites and drizzle with zesty lime yoghurt sauce. Enjoy x

Recipe and Image from *My Lovely Little Lunch Box*  
[mylovelylittlelunchbox.com/2020/04/20/crispy-cajun-chicken-tacos/](https://mylovelylittlelunchbox.com/2020/04/20/crispy-cajun-chicken-tacos/)

## Book reviews

*Resilience can be learned like any other skill. It takes practice and patience. Check out this collection of books that teach resilience.*



## ROSIE THE ENGINEER

Andrea Beaty | 4 - 8

*The beloved New York Times bestselling picture book about pursuing one's passion with persistence and learning to celebrate each failure on the road to achieving one's dreams. Rosie Revere dreamed of becoming a great engineer. Where some people see rubbish, Rosie sees inspiration. Alone in her room at night, shy Rosie constructs great inventions from odds and ends. Hot dog dispensers, helium pants, python-repelling cheese hats: Rosie's gizmos would astound—if she ever let anyone see them.*

## SAD THE DOG

Sandy Fussell | AGE 4 - 8

*An ode to finding the one who brings out the best in you—and makes you feel as special as you are. A clever little dog christens himself "Sad" when his humans fail to give him a name. Although they feed him and wash him, they don't appreciate his many gifts, like his love of singing ("stop that yapping!"). Although Sad is initially frightened, it soon becomes clear that the boy is just the right person to make a dog's life complete with playtime, treats, and a brand-new name: Lucky.*

## ISH

Peter H. Reynolds | AGE 4 - 8

*A creative spirit learns that thinking "ish-ly" is far more wonderful than "getting it right" in this gentle fable from the creator of the award-winning picture book *The Dot*. Ramon loved to draw. Anytime. Anything. Anywhere. Drawing is what Ramon does. Its what makes him happy. But in one split second, all that changes.*

## FOCUS: Kids Who Spend More Time in Nature Become Happier Adults, Study Confirms



**You don't really need a study to tell you this, but it's worth noting the science behind our intuitive guess that kids who spend more time in nature become happier adults.**

A new study out of Denmark found that living near and spending time in nature is measurably better for your mental health, both short and long term. The study followed more than 900,000 Danish people from 1985 to 2013 – taking into consideration their education, income, family history of mental illness, and how much green space surrounded them growing up. You can find the full study on the PNAS website.

So, after studying *nearly one million people across three decades*, they found that “children who grew up with the lowest levels of green space had up to 55% higher risk of developing a psychiatric disorder independent from effects of other known risk factors.” Nature has a calming and normalizing effect on humans. Spending just a few nights outdoors can reset your sleep cycle. But modern living often separates us from nature and our body's natural cycles, and many of us are living proof of how the body and mind can suffer.

This effect is backed up by brain studies. When we spend time in nature – a stroll through a park or sitting near a body of water – frontal lobe activity decreases and our brain's alpha waves (associated with a calm, but alert state) increase. David Strayer, a cognitive psychologist at the University of Utah, found that just three days of nature immersion is enough to “clean the mental windshield.” It has the ability to reboot an overstimulated brain to help us reclaim our cognitive abilities and emotional equilibrium.

The number of “forest schools” — which have long been a tradition in Scandinavia and where much of the learning takes place in natural settings in the outdoors — has grown by 500

percent since 2012, according to Richard Louv, author of *The Nature Principle: Reconnecting with Life in a Virtual Age*.

Oregon (USA) recently passed a ballot measure to raise money for outdoor schools and the state of Washington just became the first state to license outdoor preschools, where much of the play and learning occurs outside.

### URBAN GREEN SPACES COUNT AS NATURE

The findings indicated that the “higher pace of life and social stress in the most urbanized areas could create a stronger need for restorative environments such as urban green space.” But don't sell your condo and move your child to the country just yet. The study found the participants didn't necessarily have to live in a forest to enjoy the mental health benefits. Those who lived within a reasonable distance from public parks, urban green spaces, or wilderness areas – and who use them often – can reap the same health benefits.

The study also found, “Stronger association of cumulative green space presence during childhood compared with single-year green space presence suggests that presence *throughout* childhood is important.” As often as you can, provide the means and encourage your child to spend more time in nature. Free play is ideal. This is when your child is using his imagination and will stay engaged much longer than when he's waiting for a parent to direct him.

### HOW TO ENCOURAGE FREE PLAY IN NATURE

Kids are naturals when it comes to free play, but it's always helpful to have a few ideas up your sleeve to combat the inevitable whine, “I'm bored!” The key is to allow your child to use his imagination or direct his own forms of play while you make sure he's safe. If you have a nature-shy child, you might have to start off encouraging her with some ideas for playing outdoors. Think back to how you used to spend time outside. You'll come up with plenty of ways to get them off the screens and out enjoying nature. You can learn more about encouraging children in nature [here](#).

Hook-Sopko, Amity. (2020). *Kids Who Spend More Time in Nature Become Happier Adults, Study Confirms*. Retrieved from <https://www.greenchildmagazine.com/kids-who-spend-more-time-in-nature-become-happier-adults/?fbclid=IwAR0JstSFh3X5ydiZWxg85tfSu>



## MINDFUL EATING

Eating is often done fast. So fast in fact that your body doesn't have a chance. To recognise that you have put food in your mouth. Try this activity as a family:

(Fun foods to play the game with include celery, bread, grapes and avocado.) Pick up a bit of food and look at it. Don't put it in your mouth just yet. **What does it feel like in your hand? What does it smell like? Is it hot? Or cold? Now put it in your mouth. Is it crunchy? Or smooth? Does it slurp? Does it crunch? Is it salty? Sweet? Spicy? Congratulations! You just fully appreciated that piece of food.** Try with some other kinds of foods. Eating is much more interesting when we pay attention to it.

Activity and image [healthy-kids.com.au/](https://www.healthy-kids.com.au/)



## HEALTH & SAFETY: Creating Rules

*Family rules help create structure. A family rule is a specific, clear statement about behaviours you expect from your child. Rules work best when there is consistency, predictability, and follow-through.*

**Why are family rules important?** Family rules help children understand what behaviours are okay and not okay. As children grow, they will be in places where they have to follow rules. Following rules at home can help children learn to follow rules in other places. It is normal for children to break rules and test limits. Consistent follow through with consequences when rules are broken help your child have a clear understanding about the importance of rules. Remember, young kids sometimes break rules because they simply forget. Not all broken rules occur because kids are testing the limits. But our responses should be the same no matter what the reason for breaking the rule.

### **Why should all family members know and follow the rules?**

For family rules to work well, everyone needs to know, understand, and follow the rules. By doing this, children don't get mixed messages about what is okay or not okay. For example, you know screen time should be limited for young children and you want dinner time to be family time so you set a family rule that no screens are allowed during dinner time. If another caregiver checks their phone during dinner, your child may be confused. Your child's behaviour will be better if all caregivers support the rules in the same way. This is true for parents, grandparents, or any other caregivers in your child's life.

### **How can all family members get on the same page about rules?**

There are several steps that can help all family members be consistent. Parents or caregivers can:

- talk about what rules would help their family and agree which ones to set
- post the rules in the house so everyone can know them
- talk with other adults who care for their children about the rules to make sure everyone knows what is allowed and not allowed
- ask all caregivers to be consistent in monitoring and enforcing the rules
- remind children about the rules by repeating and posting them in the home



**What is a good number of family rules for toddlers and pre-schoolers?** The number of rules you set depends on your child's ability to understand and remember. It is also hard for parents to consistently enforce lots of new rules. For young children, focus on only two or three of the most important rules at any one time. As your child learns a rule and is following it consistently, you can add new rules.

### **Steps for Creating Family Rules**

Family rules help create structure because children know what behaviours are okay and which ones are not okay. The steps for creating family rules are below.

1. **Identify the family rules**
2. **Explain the rules**
3. **Follow the rules**
4. **Use consequences for not following the rules**

You can find step by step explanations of each step of creating family rules [here](#).

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). *Creating Rules*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/parents/essentials/structure/rules.html>

## CRAWL CHASE



When was the last time you got on your hands and knees and crawled like a baby? Give it a go, it is quite tiring and is a great brain workout too.

This activity is simple and requires no equipment just a little space. It is tag on all fours. Take turns being 'in'. Everyone gets into crawling position and crawls away trying to avoid being tipped! *Have fun.*

**Feedback**   
is always welcome

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