

THE LAZY PARENT

PARENTING – SIMPLIFIED

APRIL 2023 EDITION | NO. 5

THE
Lazy



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WELCOME I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE

How exciting another month of sharing. I am so beyond grateful that you are here with us and am ridiculously excited to share what we have in store for you.

This month we have some amazing articles, I'm talking delicious recipes and of course sensory play! Not only that we have some cheats and tips to help navigate the school holidays and some easter art. Our incredible contributors are also throwing you a whole bunch of discount codes to get you through and my advice is get on this quickly!!

As always this would not be possible without these amazing people who go above and beyond each month so as always, my heartfelt thanks and to you as well, for turning up each month and taking on board what we are sharing. At the lazy parent we are well aware of not everyone having a village, so we aim to provide that lifeboat. We also love to hear from you, if you have some tips or tricks, a recipe or way to play we want to hear it - please get in touch today

Each month our amazing contributors put together different resources to help make your experience of raising a child that little bit easier, we encourage you to head to their socials to follow for more amazing tips, and if there's anything you love about us please tell your friends, family and social circles!

Lastly, drink more water, we both know you haven't been drinking anywhere near enough. I love you, see you next month.

MONTHLY AFFIRMATION

Affirmations are a great way to focus on our subconscious language and a powerful way to reframe our thoughts. This is an important habit to set for both ourselves and our children. Each month we will share a new thought for you and your little ones to focus on.

It helps to pick a certain time of day to practice, either repeating to yourself, with your child or even talking to your reflection.



This month's affirmation is perfect on its own or you can add on - I am worthy of - love, opportunity, safety, whatever you feel you need.

The important thing to remember is you are deserving of what you are saying!

DIY SENSORY BAGS

INSTRUCTIONS



For infants
(aged 3-12+ months)



PACKS AND PARTIES

SENSORY BAGS

Sensory play is vital in developing a number of skills, including fine motor skills and language skills, even in babies as young as 3-12+ months. Sensory play builds neural connections in the brain and develops their hand-eye coordination.

Have you tried making your baby a DIY sensory bag? Making your own sensory bags is an easy, fun and portable activity which all infants love to explore.

SENSORY PLAY

A sensory bag is a great way to promote critical tummy time and encourage infants (and even toddlers) to investigate and learn about the world around them. They can observe objects, colours, sounds and textures, stimulating their 5 senses, in a safe and inviting way.

Always supervise baby play with sensory bags. At first, your baby may just react to the touch, temperature or stimulation, but as your baby grows he/she will get more interactive with the experience. A baby's curiosity will keep them engaged with sensory play.

Ingredients:

Hair gel (or water)

Anything you've got!

Wrappers, pom poms, glitter, buttons, fabric off cuts, mini bells, seeds, shaving cream, marbles, water beads, feathers, cotton balls, sprinkles, sequins, beads, googly eyes, foam shapes, paint, gels, oil, natural objects like leaves, flowers and grass, anything in your craft box or pantry!

Food colouring (optional)

Method:

1. Seal 3.5 edges of a laminating pouch with a hair straightener (or iron if you don't have one).
2. Spoon in as little or as much hair gel (or water) as you like.
3. Add in any objects you wish and wipe away any gel that may be on the remaining area to be sealed.
4. Flatten out the pouch/bag to get as much air out as possible, without letting any gel or objects inside get too close to the opening.
5. Seal the last of the laminating pouch to close in all the sensory bag's objects.

Note:

If you're worried the pouch hasn't fully sealed properly around the edges, reinforce with some washi, duct or gorilla tape.

Make as many different sensory bags as you want in one go.

Don't use any sharp objects in the sensory bags that may poke a hole in the pouch.

We would love to hear how you go making some – please share or tag us in your play.

Follow us on Instagram and Facebook @sensoryplaypacksandparties or head to our website for more information on sensory play:
www.sensoryplaypacksandparties.com.au

WWW.SENSORYPLAYPACKSANDPARTIES.COM.AU



Easter

These are ready for purchase but are limited so get in quick.
Order your Large Easter Sensory Play Packs now via our website.
The sensory play pack materials conveniently come in a stackable container with a lid for you to easily store away in between each use.
These make a great gift for your children, friends or family members as an alternative to chocolate. A gift that is actually beneficial for their development - what a win!

Follow us on Instagram and Facebook @sensoryplaypacksandparties or head to our website for more information on sensory play:
www.sensoryplaypacksandparties.com.au

<https://sensoryplaypacksandparties.myshopify.com/discount/LAZYPARENT10>
- exclusive discount code (\$10 off)

<https://www.sensoryplaypacksandparties.com.au/#easterpack> - website link to pack

ON THE OLIVE BRANCH

On September 24, 2021, I gave birth to my beautiful baby girl Olive weighing just 3.5 kg and at 51 cm long, this little girl changed my life in ways I could never imagine. Being a first-time mum is hard and I'm not just talking about the all nighters, the exhaustion, the complete upside down and around around our lives take but I'm also talking about the pressures that we place on ourselves. The "don't do this" "don't do that". The wormhole that society takes us nowadays into having us second guess if an item is safe, am I buying the right thing..It's endless.

When Olive was turning four months old, I was approaching the solids journey, and of course doing what many of us first time mums do - we Google- researching the benefits of led weaning, the benefits of purée, how to prep your fruit, and of course the many many choices when it comes to tableware for your child. The importance of BPA free, the chemicals that can leech into foods, so many advertising holes I fell into.. I spent money on bowls and plates that didn't suction like they promised, plastics that promised to be BPA free but you always second guess it because... well you know it's plastic.. bamboo with a coating flaked into the food one time and "dishwasher safe" items that had absolutely no business being in the dishwasher.

One day, I actually remember the day really clearly my brother Alistair - aka uncle Ali - came over with a loaf of banana bread from my favourite bakery and I was venting to him about how hard it was to find quality nowadays. Then he turned around to me and said "why don't you do it yourself..." and from there the ideas came flowing and with my brother beside me we teamed up to create what would become our business. My daughter Olive may have been born September 2021 but On The Olive Branch was born that day in my kitchen - while Olive tried sweet potato for the first time.

Once we outlined the ideas we had it was time for the grunt work. To approach manufacturers, to design and create.





I must say the bonus about reading so much into the “do’s” and “don’ts” is that I knew exactly what I didn’t want in our products. I wanted to be sure we created a product that was made with food grade silicone, that was non-toxic. BPA free, PVC free, Phthalates Free, Lead Free, Cadmium Free, Heavy Metals Free – just zero nasties – and that you could put in the microwave and dishwasher time after time and it not warp or need to be replaced. Just for once a product that does what it says, that you know you’ll be using in the years to come. After a few months of creation – and almost a year ago – we launched our website and our products onto Amazon Australia.

Today, I have an office set up in my guest bedroom, my brother is the best business partner I could ask for. Our feeding sets are going really well with fantastic reviews. We are just about to launch a 4 in 1 developmental puzzle / teether – that also grows with your child – and dummy holders that are all made with our signature silicone.

We are a small family owned business with big plans.

With our first birthday approaching, we would love to offer a discount code on all our products to the beautiful readers of The Lazy Parent, please use “lazyparent15” at checkout for 15% off and free shipping.

Thank you for reading our story and I hope we have the pleasure of meeting some of you through our socials.

Instagram: [ontheolivebranchco](https://www.instagram.com/ontheolivebranchco)

Website: www.ontheolivebranch.com





Let there be Joy!!!

Carla Davis

REnYOU Counselling & Wellbeing

Can you believe it's April already!?

The first school holidays of the school year, this can be a very tricky space.

If we are 'externally working parents', we have the juggle of care arrangements to organise well before the holidays begin, 'working-from-home parents'...well, this might look very similar.

If we are 'stay-at-home parents', we are surrounded by our little people wanting snacks, needing to be entertained, having playdates or sleepovers.

Whatever combination your situation presents you, it can be a lot!

We can often feel overwhelmed or at a loss, wanting to make the best of the time we have with our little people, and not so little people, wanting to create opportunities for quality time this time and not have it spiral away and over before we know it.

Activities across the school holidays can be costly, but there are simple and cost effective ways of having fun, connecting with your little people and enjoying a stress free time while you do it.

Let's discuss some ideas and ways that you might be able to connect with your little people that won't break the bank or your sanity!



Whether you have all day, week nights or weekends to spend with your little people, you can use that time to create everlasting memories.

During the school holidays especially, the trick is to remember to keep breathing, relax, be flexible and allow the fun to flow by staying present.



It's ok, there is no need to worry about

the fort/cubby being built in the hallway, or the train track that runs from the loungeroom to the bedroom. These are signs of constructive play that will be played with and built upon across a few days if allowed to stay in place. It is important not only for little people to use their imaginations and creativity, but its good for us as parents and carers to allow ourselves the space to remember the joyful times of childhood and maybe be brave enough to join in!!!

It is very beneficial for our health and wellbeing if we can kick off our shoes, get on the floor, get our hands in the dirt and get involved, and, our little people love it.

So get those shoes off, roll up your sleeves and get ready to be transformed into another world, where the adulting stressors fade into the background for a while, giving our brains and systems a much deserved break.

Just in case it's been a while, here are some memory-joggers...



Forts and cubbies – indoors these can be created out of bed sheets, small and large cushions, chairs that create an area for the sheet to be placed over, you might need pegs to keep the sheet or blanket in place, maybe a broom to prop the sheet/blanket up, big cardboard boxes can also be used.

Craft activities – 'finger-knitting', create holiday themed (eg. 'Easter' or 'Autumn Equinox')

games/chocolates/decorations, make flower chains/crowns, pressed flowers that can be used in artwork.



Art – paint rocks (with faces or make them into animals), drawing/colouring in together, string painting (place string in paint then place the painty string on paper and slowly drag it down the page), bubble art (mix food colouring/water/dishwashing liquid to form bubbles in a tray, place paper on top, lift).

Outside – construct a fort/cubby, make mud pies, plant flower or vege seeds, roll down a grassy hill, make a garbage bag kite and fly it.

Camping/Sleepovers – either in a tent in the backyard or in the loungeroom (mattress on the floor or in the fort/cubby) cook some veg/hotdogs, damper in the oven or create a 'bits-a' dinner. This can be combined with a movie night (see below) or picnic.

Movie night – this can involve a lot of blankets/duonass/sleeping bags, cushions, mattress, popcorn/snacks (see cooking below), low/no lights on, sound turned up and a favourite movie or two.

Picnic breakfast, lunch or dinner at the park/beach/forest/backyard or in the loungeroom cubby.

Cooking – popcorn, (made with popping corn in a saucepan on the stove, cover with icing sugar/popcorn salt) corn fritters, honey joys, chocolate crackles, jelly, cupcakes (make heaps and place in a container in the freezer), pancakes (great cold, use when 'camping', picnics or bits-a dinner), lemonade scones, scone base pizzas.



Easy meals – 'bits-a' dinners are made up of a collection of food items you happen to have and are all placed separately on a plate, like a mini picnic on a plate. Eg, 2 small triangles of a sandwich, half an orange cut in sections, a cheese stick /pieces of cheese, some grapes, 2 rolled up slices of ham/chicken meat etc etc. These can be used for lunch or dinner and are guaranteed to please, especially if you create them together!



One last suggestion to consider, the little ring blow up pool, add bubble bath to the water, bath time fun!!!!!!

I am sure there are many many many creative things you did as a child that filled you with joy, made you giggle and transported you to that place where time seemed to magically disappear. Tap into that. Do more of that. You will feel more alive, fulfilled and more importantly, connected to Self and with your little people.

So off you go, enjoy making a bits-a meal, eat it in the blanket cubby while you watch a favourite movie together with your sparkly-eyed little one, I'm sure you will all sleep well after sharing exciting adventures together.



Carla :)

REnYOU Counselling & Wellbeing

W: renyoucounselling.com.au

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REnYOU also offers a discount to lazy parent readers.

Simply quote this article title when booking

Support available in person and online/phone



Kim Sheppard
HEALTH & WELLNESS

A Holistic Approach To Secondary Infertility
By Kim Sheppard BHSc (Nat) J.P. (C.dec)

Secondary infertility is the inability to conceive or carry a baby to term after previously giving birth. This can be an emotionally challenging time and often Mum is already stressed and overwhelmed raising their little one.

The female reproductive cycle is very complex and even a small change from what is considered normal can prevent ovulation.

There are 4 events in reproduction:

1. Ovulation: The release of a healthy ovum (egg)
2. Tubal transport: The fallopian tubes need to be healthy and have a normal anatomic relationship with the ovary to allow capture of an ovum from a rupture ovarian follicle.
3. Fertilisation: An adequate number of healthy sperm must be deposited at the cervix around ovulation and the functional cervical mucous must thin to allow easier access for sperm to the upper genital tract.
4. Implantation: Occurs when there is a receptive uterus environment for adhesion and implantation of an embryo and subsequent foetus.

Infertility or delayed conception may occur due to the following:

1. Ageing
2. Cigarette smoking
3. Diminished ovarian reserve
4. Endocrine disorders
5. Endometriosis
6. Heavy metal toxicity and environmental toxin exposure
7. Infection
8. Obesity
9. Polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS)
10. Premature ovarian failure
11. Stress
12. Tubal factors

Herbal Medicine Treatment Goals:

1. Improve fertility potential and individual fertility factors
2. Improve oocyte health and receptivity to sperm
3. Modulate and support hormone production and utilisation (including gastrointestinal and liver health)
4. Prevent miscarriage and address relevant factors if there is a history of miscarriage
5. Support the communication between the endocrine organs
6. Reduce oxidative stress and enhance endogenous antioxidant systems
7. Manage and address aetiological factors including stress, infection, toxicity, metabolic syndrome, and inflammation
8. Support channels of elimination: liver, kidney, lymph, gastrointestinal and skin

Clinically most fertility clients I see are chronically stressed. They are often working full time, planning a wedding, renovating a house, exhausted looking after the family, not sleeping or eating well and are stressed because they haven't conceived as fast as they had hoped.

Reducing stress is usually part of a holistic naturopathic fertility plan.

Here a few tips you can start implementing today to reduce stress:

1. Yoga & Meditation: Great for reducing physical, mental and emotional stress Kim teaches a variety of yoga, meditation and breathwork classes at Embrace Life North Lakes.
2. Insight Timer app: A free app with over 170,000 free meditations (Relaxing music, natures, sounds, guided meditation and more! Search Kim Sheppard Health & Wellness on the app for free guided meditations to reduce stress and the Mind, Body, Spirit Podcast with Kim Sheppard for a unique podcast that combines science and intuition to support your mind, body, spirit wellness journey.
3. Quality time: Re-learn how to switch off every day. Take 5 deep breaths, enjoy a cup of tea outside (without your phone), feel the sun on your skin and the grass beneath your feet, get a hobby (that is not associated to your job).
4. Get outside: Enjoy nature, go for a walk, go to the park, have lunch at the beach or a rainforest walk.
5. Have fun: laughing reduces stress, watch a comedy, catch up with good quality friends (not the ones that drag you down), be playful with your partner, remember that feeling as a child where fun was a priority and you didn't have to think about any of the adult responsibilities.

If you would like support with balancing hormones, conceiving or reducing anxiety book a Naturopathic appointment with Kim and discover how relaxing and fun Kim's yoga classes are too!



Creamy bacon pasta

Ingredients

1 packet of pasta
4 rashers bacon
1 1/2 cups thickened cream
1 cup peas
1 cup corn
Parsley
Parmesan cheese

Method

Boil pasta of your choice and put aside the pasta water

Add oil to a frying pan and cook bacon for 4-5 minutes on medium heat.

Once the bacon is crispy remove from pan.

Add garlic and onion to the bacon grease pan and cook for around 3 minutes until soft.
Add any veggies you wish. I used corn and peas. Cook until soft.

Add cream and bring to simmer. Cook for another 2 minutes.

Add cooked pasta and bacon and stir through.

Add any seasoning if it needs.

If the sauce is too thick you can also add some pasta water to stretch it.

Garnish with Parmesan cheese and parsley.



For more recipes and inspiration make sure you are following

@hanging.with.the.henrys



School holidays reminders

The Lazy Parent

End of term is here. We usually have two camps of adults in this space, the ones counting down with endless activities planned, or those who would dance with the devil to have an extra week to themselves, sometimes we even encounter a strange hybrid of the two, either way there are some unavoidable things to be aware of moving in to the holidays.

EMPTY THOSE SCHOOL BAGS, DRINK BOTTLES AND LUNCH BOXES NOW MY FRIENDS, if there is ever anything you take from me, this is it, the last thing we need is to find out the source of that strange smell that we chalked up to too many guests over easter is really that banana that went missing in week 4. Empty it all now and give it a clean out, it will make for a much easier transition next term.

Pick a spot – I'm all for working smarter and not harder, kids always have a lot of stuff and some of its unavoidable as hard as we try, that's why I find designated spots life savers. My kids love drink bottles so ours will live in the fridge, lunch box will live next to the microwave and clothes (when washed) hung in the cupboard ready to go for next term. Finding or making spots is one of those tasks that you start now to save time later?

Wash now – I'm talking all of it, uniforms, hates, jumpers, socks, everything, do one load at the start of the holidays so you can be done with it and enjoy your few weeks off!

Check in around homework/assessments/tasks – you'll find each school and year is different, checking in now avoids those last minute "I need socks, glue and \$15 by tomorrow".

That little bit of effort now will ensure future you is thanking you on that first day back



The Power of Play

The Lazy Parent

Play can be a wonderful for many reasons, as a therapy, a learning tool, a distraction and simply a way to connect. That said play doesn't come easily to us all and is even not always enjoyable. So how do we find a balance?

First, figure out what play means to you. Play can be anything, once you adjust your mindset you can look at how you play differently. Could it be a walk together, reading a book, art and craft, if you don't enjoy an activity then don't let that be your play. Our children aren't dumb they can tell when we are genuinely enjoying our time with them and when we've checked out and are counting down til they get bored and wander off.

The easiest way to engage in play with your child is to find something you both enjoy. Because when you do your going to genuinely want to be there and your child will pick up on that

Some quick tips and tricks for play

Make it a distraction free space – phone off, no checking emails, or talking to your neighbour, often our kids don't know how to ask for our attention but they know how to get it, so in our kids eyes they don't differentiate between bad and good attention, your focus is their goal, so if your growling them they're getting your attention, the best way to eliminate this is through play, give them your undivided attention and over time, once they know it's consistent you'll notice those other bigger behaviours lessening

Now if play is hard

Set a timer for play – make it realistic what can you be mentally there for 5 – 10 minutes? Knowing you can always increase your time together, just don't decrease from it during the timer.

And now here is a really beautiful trick – let your child pick what to play, sit down and say ok buddy what do you want to play, you don't have to guide or control play, our kids are amazing game creators, simply let them.

Or if you like play guide with what you enjoy – this will make it a more meaningful and enjoyable experience for you both, give your child 2 or 3 options you'd be happy to do and know they like also.

My other tip is bluey – watch bluey – they normalise play, kids love it, adults love it, you both will pick up so many games and ways to connect from it

Acknowledging that play can feel weird. It can be weird to let go of our insecurities. It can be weird to reconnect with childhood innocence and the freedom that comes with it and if you struggle with it, that's ok, it's important to start small and build and grow with your child

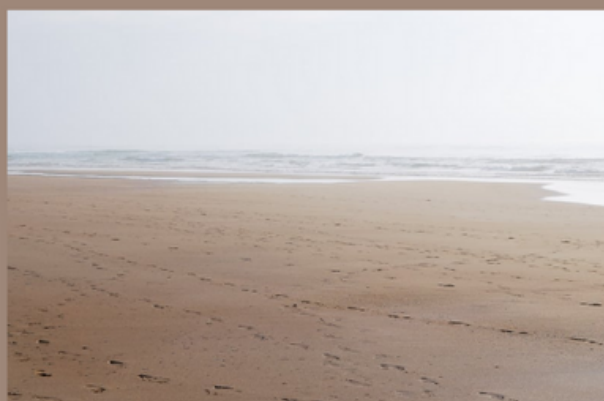
The really beautiful thing is play doesn't have to be complicated or expensive. Simply being present and spending time together is what matters most.

What are your favourite ways to play?

Let us know at thelazyparent@outlook.com

LIBRARIES

CHECK OUT YOUR
LOCAL LIBRARY FOR
SCHOOL HOLIDAY
ACTIVITIES



SHOPPING CENTRES

SEE IF YOUR LOCAL
CENTRE HAS FREE
ACTIVITIES PLANNED

COUNCIL

OFTEN LOCAL
COUNCILS WILL HAVE
FREE SCHOOL HOLIDAY
ACTIVITIES



Birthday/Christmas/Special occasion saving tips

Friends, I am by no means a financial expert, although we have previously had them on board (see December 2022, edition) That said I have been raising children for a very long time and know how to make a budget stretch, especially when you need to plan for those pesky but regular costly events, you know the ones, I'm talking, easter, Christmas, birthdays and holidays.

Here is my guide for what has worked, please obviously note that what works for one person won't always work for another, and I also really implore you, especially in the cluster ... of our current times to please link in with local supports and resources if you need. There is absolutely no shame in getting support which is available for us all. Some places may be local neighbourhood and community centres, financial counsellors/ing, food aid and other support services.

This list could be added to but to get us started -

Plan ahead - I know, I know, you can keep the side eyes to yourself, but honestly planning is the one saving grace for all of this. In our January 2023 edition we have a super handy budgeting template. There are a couple of handy ways you can plan

1) Plan what's coming - birthdays, holidays, once you know what's coming its easier to prepare for

2) Priortise - what can you skip, what can you alternate, what is a must

Be strategic - Buy for the year ahead in sales, after an event Christmas, easter, Halloween specific items are drastically reduced. Use these specials to your advantage (Just keep track of what you've got)

Start slowly buying or budgeting. There's two options here, you can roughly estimate how much you'll spend and put that aside each week, or what I prefer to do is start buying in advance. Especially shopping sales or certain items, I get one a week or fortnight and stash away, that way when the birthday is here its less to stress about, all you need to do is make time to wrap.

Keep an eye out for sales/specials - End of financial year sales, and black Friday are both gathering traction. Another thing to do is price match, some places will match, some will match and also add a discount. It takes a bit of extra time but honestly it makes things so much easier.

Capitalsie on fly bys/rewards cards. Once you've compared prices it helps to be strategic where you spend. If prices are similar be strategic, shop where you have a rewards card and utilise those discounts. Sometimes you can access free shipping at a certain amount so aim for that.

Like I said what works will vary for everyone and these are some ideas. You may find a variation of these will work or simply non at all. The one thing I encourage is find what works for you, its ok to keep searching to you find the right fit for you!

Iva is a proud Aboriginal,
South Sea and Fijian artist.
Iva has discovered her
passion and is only 11
years old, and enjoys
posters, and fictional
characters





IT'S NOT GOODBYE, IT'S SEE YOU SOON

Thank you all for being here and our amazing contributors for sharing their expertise and knowledge, this would not be possible without you all

Our goal at the lazy parent is to decrease isolation and increase ways and feelings of connection. Providing you a free and accessible resource at your fingertips monthly covering the things that matter

This space is largely compiled by parents for parents, if you have a topic you would like to see covered or alternatively would like to contribute please email thelazyparent@outlook.com

Our Contributors

Everyone you have read here has provided this knowledge for no other reason than to ensure you are supported and have access to resources, feel free to follow them to stay up to date and informed

Are you on our mailing list yet?

Make sure you have signed up to our mailing list at thelazyparent.com.au to make sure you dont miss a thing

The Lazy Parent

Did you know we provide one on one support, group work and service consultancy and support. For more information please visit us at our socials IG @_thelazyparent FB @thelazyparent or our website thelazyparent.com.au