

CHILDREN HAVE NEVER BEEN VERY GOOD AT LISTENING TO THEIR ELDERS,  
BUT THEY HAVE NEVER FAILED TO IMITATE THEM. – James Baldwin



**JANUARY  
2024**

# THE NETWORK COMMUNITY HUB

## AROUND THE COUNTRY

<b>New Year's Day</b>	<b>01 JAN</b>
<b>World Braille Day</b>	<b>04 JAN</b>
<b>Kid Inventors Day</b>	<b>17 JAN</b>
<b>Australia Day</b>	<b>26 JAN</b>
<b>International LEGO Day</b>	<b>28 JAN</b>
<b>Aboriginal Cultural Showcase</b>	<b>24-26 JAN</b>





### WORLD BRAILLE DAY – 4 JANUARY

World Braille Day is celebrated on 4 January each year, in commemoration of the birth of Louis Braille in 1809. The United Nations has affirmed World Braille Day, asking its members to celebrate World Braille Day by promoting

the use of braille as an important means of communication. When you first look at something written in braille, all you see (or feel) is a jumble of dots! However, like any other code, braille is based on a logical system. [Learn more and play some fun games here.](#)

### ABORIGINAL CULTURAL SHOWCASE – 24-26 JANUARY

Australia's the largest gathering of Indigenous country musicians are gearing up to take Tamworth by storm at the seventh Annual Cultural Showcase. Held as part of the iconic Tamworth Country Music Festival, the Annual Cultural Showcase brings together some of the best and brightest Indigenous musicians this side of the Black Stump. [Find out more here.](#)



## THE BEST SUPER SOFT GINGERBREAD PLAYDOUGH

PREP 5 mins | COOK 5 mins | PLAY

### INGREDIENTS

- |                |                         |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| 1 cup of flour | 1 tbs cream of tartar   |
| ½ cup of salt  | 1 tbs vegetable oil     |
| 1 cup of water | 3 tbs pumpkin pie spice |

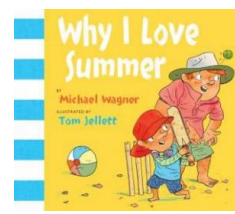
### METHOD

1. Measure out all ingredients together with your child.
2. Dump all the dry ingredients into a saucepan first and stir together. Add wet ingredients and mix together.
3. Stir continuously over medium heat until it forms a ball.
4. Take it off the heat and dump it onto parchment paper or wax paper, once it's cool to touch knead it and help make the dough smooth.
5. Use cookies cutters, buttons, wooden trinkets and create make believe gingerbread man or anything you like.
6. Keep fresh in an airtight container.

*Have fun!*

## Book reviews

How fun are holidays!  
Enjoy these fun reads in  
the sun.



### BLUEY: CAMPING

*Bluey the award-winning preschool show about Bluey, a blue heeler pup, and her family. When Bluey is on a family camping trip, she meets a new friend, Jean Luc. Join them as they plant a tree, hunt a 'wild pig' and learn about the magic of friendship. A gorgeous hardback book for kids of all ages.*

### HOLIDAY SORTED! JIMMY REES & BRIONY STEWART

*Who said family holidays were hard? Dad has got this holiday sorted! Lenny and the twins go to the toilet before the long drive, choose a favourite toy for the journey, and even help Dad pack the car. Perfect! They can finally hit the road. But then I'm starving! Mack needs to go to the toilet again! I forgot to feed my pet rock! Can we say goodbye to the neighbours? From one of Australia's best-loved comedians and children's entertainers Jimmy Rees and illustrator Briony Stewart comes a story about the not-so-relaxing part of a holiday that families everywhere will know all too well.*

### WHY I LOVE SUMMER | MICHAEL WAGNER

*There are four seasons in a year, and they're all awesome, but only one of them gets to be summer! An ode to a uniquely Australian experience and the joy of family and friends. Sunny days, weekends at the pool, games in the backyard, daylight until late and long, lovely holidays . . . that's summer, the best season ever.*



**Enjoy The Rest Of Your School  
Holidays With VillageOSHC!**  
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# FOCUS: What to do during school holidays at home: 25 Amazing ideas

If you're looking for what to do during school holidays at home, check out these 25 amazing activity ideas and fun holiday activities for kids at home to beat school holiday boredom and make the most of their holidays!

**Some of the best kids holiday activities at home include:**

- Movie marathon
- Reading marathon
- Seasonal crafts and DIY
- Fashion show
- Learning touch typing
- Learning a new language
- Fun activities for kids online
- Playing board games or guessing games
- Making your own homemade indoor games
- Fun balloon games to play at home
- Fun ball games to play at home
- Play indoor bowling
- Completing a puzzle
- Solving fun educational puzzles
- Writing your own story
- Making a dollhouse or mini animal house
- Collage ideas
- Exploring sensory art
- Drawing your fantasy
- Trying origami
- Cooking competition
- Making a movie
- Indoor treasure or scavenger hunt
- Giving the kids bedrooms a makeover
- Planning for your next school holidays

## Run a reading marathon

Running a reading marathon - a Readathon is one of the best rainy day activities for kids at home and any family that wants to get into reading. Children benefit from reading because it helps them in many ways, including: learn vocabulary and grammar; understand the world around them; build independence and become more academically successful in the future. In addition, kids become more creative and imaginative. You can create a competition for the whole family to participate. The first person who reads the most within a certain time limit wins a prize.

If you're not in the mood for competition, read a good book together with the family and have a book club discussion about the characters or any interesting themes from the book.

## Host a fashion show

Go through all the clothing that you and your kids have come up with a few outfits and model them in the hall or living room! Sort through clothes to see which ones fit and which ones don't, and discover some pieces that you can wear more often.

Hosting a fashion show for your kids is not only fun but also great exercise! The best part about it? They pretend to be celebrities, strike funny poses and strut on stage. You can even grab your camera and run a photo shoot after the show.

It's a perfect indoor activity if you want them to keep busy and out of trouble. This is also a great way to keep everyone active and entertained while giving the whole family plenty more bonding opportunities too!

## Learn touch typing

Touch typing is a useful skill to have nowadays. With technology playing such an essential role in our lives, it's great to teach your kids to become tech pros from a young age. Start with these two free websites:

**Jungle Junior** is a fun, interactive touch typing game for kids. Check out videos and practice typing different letters. Kids can learn and practice their typing skills while learning the alphabet, so this resource is perfect for younger kids who are learning to read and write.

**Dance Mat Typing** is another superb resource for kids to try. Better for older kids who are well and truly familiar with the alphabet, this indoor activity from BBC combines animals with funny voices and accents (and lots of puns!) as well as fun typing activities.

## Let kids come up with collage ideas

There are so many kids creative activities at home to keep your kids busy, and this is one way you can do it. Let them use old magazines and flyers when creating their amazing collages. This will become one of their favourite school holiday craft ideas!



Need more ideas check out the full list via the QR code.

Source: Osipova, Daria. (2023, November 9). **What to do during school holidays at home: 25 Amazing ideas**. Retrieved from [schoolholidays.com.au/blog/20-fun-indoor-activities-for-kids](https://schoolholidays.com.au/blog/20-fun-indoor-activities-for-kids)

## WELCOME TO THE LAND OF SLOW

Before we overbook the next months before Easter, stop! Hopefully you and your family have enjoyed a week or so of slow and have maybe relaxed into it a little. Do it, it's good for you. As the weeks start to ramp up really consider how you fill your days. Keep a few afternoons free for family and to give space for self-initiated play. Ask children to reflect on last year and choose a sport or extra-curricular activity they love and book that in. Choose margin, slow your pace and be attentive to the things that matter most. Here's to the year of less busy!



## HEALTH & SAFETY: 5 Ways to Practice Gratitude with Your Kids

This time of year, we're frequently reminded to give thanks for the good things in our lives. But when decorations come down and school starts back up, the prompts to practice gratitude fade away. So, how can we rewire our brains to recognize goodness year-round? To find out, we collected tips from gratitude guru and fellow parent Maryam Abdullah.

### 1. Discover what gratitude means for your family.

Gratitude can be a difficult concept for adults to grasp — let alone little ones. Maryam says **gratitude is really about recognizing goodness outside of ourselves**. Goodness can be big things, like happiness, love, family, and health. It can also be small things, like hugs, green lights, and ice cream. It's up to you to decide the goodness you want to recognize. Once you understand how gratitude aligns with your own values, you can start talking about it with your kids.

**2. Share how goodness makes you feel.** Practicing gratitude doesn't always have to be a formal act of recognition. It can be as simple or easy as thanking your child for a hug or kiss. Maryam says since children aren't necessarily able to verbalize things, parents should show their kids how to practice gratitude by doing it themselves.

*"Parents can start demonstrating gratitude with babies before they speak their first word. And then once they become verbal, I think it's important to practice saying thanks to one another as a family. And not just saying thanks but actually describing how you feel."*

Talking about how goodness makes us feel can help us better understand and manage our emotions. Maryam shared a simple example of how parents can show gratitude after a moment of goodness.

**Goodness:** Your neighbour came by and dropped off some tomatoes.

**Recognition:** I feel so thankful that she's our neighbour and that she's someone who shares with us. I feel so happy to be able to receive these gifts from her.

**3. Ask your kids about their gratitude.** Kids aren't always great at describing their feelings, so Maryam recommends sparking conversations based on four parts that make up the gratitude experience:

What we **NOTICE** in our lives for which we can be grateful  
How we **THINK** about why we have been given those things

How we **FEEL** about the things we have been given  
What we **DO** to express appreciation in turn

Maryam says asking Notice-Think-Feel-Do questions is a simple way to scaffold your child's understanding or perception of something that's good in their life.

**NOTICE:** I noticed that grandma brought you this new book.

**THINK:** What do you think about that?

**FEEL:** How does that make you feel?

**DO:** Is there something you want to do, to show them how you feel about receiving this new book?

**4. Encourage your kids to document their gratitude.** Along with prompting conversations, Maryam tells us parents can encourage their children to practice gratitude on their own through activities or rituals. Here are some easy ideas:

**Gratitude Journal** "Recognizing goodness in writing can be a ritual in the morning when they wake up or in the evening as a reflection about how the day went." **Photo Essay** "If writing isn't the right activity for your child, they could take pictures of things that they're grateful for and build up a library of photos of the good things and gifts in their lives."

**5. Practice turning gratitude into a habit.** Each time you demonstrate and talk about gratitude with your kids, you're helping them build valuable skills for their emotional toolbox. Maryam suggests trying to work gratitude into your family's daily rituals with activities.

*"At the dinner table, have each family member talk about three good things they experienced that day. This can spark conversation between parents and children in ways that may be just really sweet and tender. It also could be a way for parents to get a glimpse of what's meaningful to their child."*

**Creating good habits is easier said than done. So be kind to yourself through the process!**

*"Sometimes, as parents we may feel like our kids haven't figured out all of those steps and that's okay. I think that's something we as parents need help, remembering too. This is something that they're still learning, and the more they practice that that skill will get stronger."*



Read the article via the QR code.

Source: Bradley, Cailyn. (2021, October 27).  
**5 Ways to Practice Gratitude with Your Kids.**  
Retrieved from <https://www.kiwico.com/blog/parent-tips/5-ways-to-practice-gratitude-with-your-kids>

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