

EASE

WELLNESS JOURNAL



PLAY-BASED LEARNING

Why play is essential
for development

BALANCED NUTRITION

Eating the rainbow
for optimal growth

EMOTIONAL REGULATION

Helping children learn
to regulate emotions

KINESIOLOGY FOR CHILDREN

Benefits and applications of
kinesiology for babies, toddlers,
school children and teens

Welcome to our eighth edition of the Ease Wellness Journal, a resource we hope you have grown to love and depend on throughout 2023 for news, information and advice in relation to your health and wellness journey.

As we prepare to wind down the year to spend joyous time with loved ones, we hope this issue helps you focus some of your holiday time on your children, including plenty of opportunity for free play! As we discuss at length, the value of child-directed free play and the importance of unscheduled time without adult interference can not be underestimated for children.

We also take a close look at emotional regulation and how childhood life experiences matter, as well as touching on the importance of balanced nutrition for kids. To assist, we offer a delicious and nutritious recipe to try and feature a childhood book which will be the ideal gift or stocking-filler this Christmas.

If you love what you read, we invite you to connect with us, book a session or attend one of our events.

Enjoy reading and Merry Christmas!
Yours in health,
Kate and team

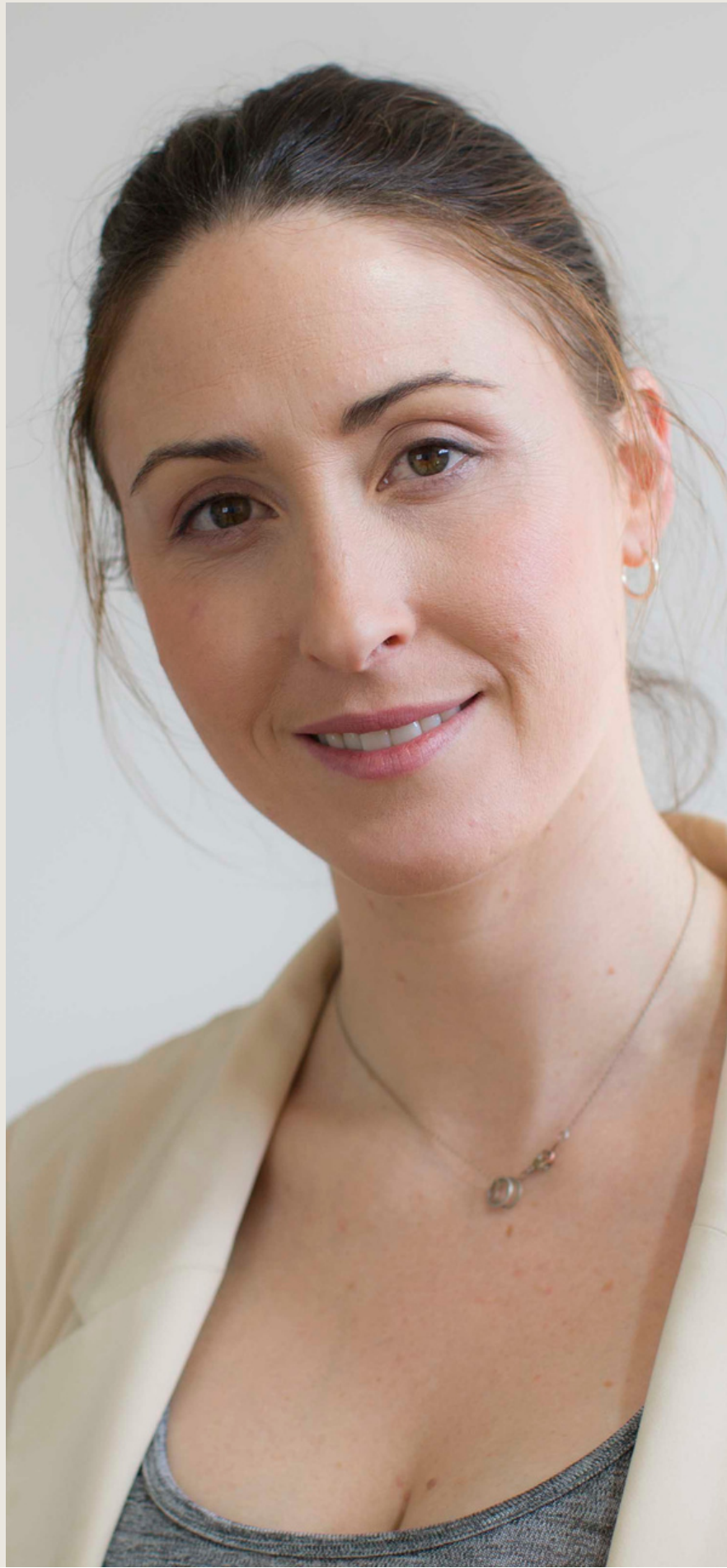




TABLE OF CONTENTS

Kinesiology For Children

04 Understanding how Kinesiology can help each age group

Emotional Regulation

10 Helping kids regulate emotions

Childhood Nutrition

18 Balancing nutrition for kids

Play-Based Learning

22 The importance of play-based learning for child development

Recipe of the Month

29 Crunchy nut and seed bars

The Adventuroos

30 Product of the month



“Children are our most valuable resource.” ~ Herbert Hoover

KINESIOLOGY FOR CHILDREN



Kinesiology can help both children and adults deal with any stress that they are experiencing.

Kinesiology is a safe, interactive, and effective complementary therapy that is particularly suitable for children. This is because Kinesiologists use muscle testing to assess and upgrade the child's response to their unique stresses, internal and external, conscious and subconscious.

As children are often unable to identify the causes of their stress and express themselves as comprehensively as adults, muscle testing is particularly effective at accessing the child's body-wisdom, and help the Kinesiologist to identify the root cause of the stress, whether it be emotional, physical, nutritional or biochemical.

An additional benefit of muscle testing is that children do not have to worry about explaining their issues. Instead, the Kinesiologist can obtain a lot of information through muscle testing alone and can use muscle testing as a tool to advise how to get the child back into balance and an optimal start of wellness.

An additional benefit is that, unlike many adults, children are usually more open to healing and have the ability to shift and change quite easily, which expedites the results of the sessions. Read on for ways that Kinesiology can help children deal with issues, gain health and boost growth.



WHAT CAN KINESIOLOGY HELP CHILDREN WITH?

Because Kinesiology is holistic, it can help to address a variety of symptoms and stressors experienced by your child. Here are the top ten benefits of Kinesiology for kids.

1. Enhance emotional resilience
2. Boost self-esteem and confidence
3. Support strong immune responses
4. Promote social skills and constructive peer interactions
5. Help with relaxation and restful and regenerative sleep
6. Identify food intolerances and provide dietary guidance
7. Address physical aches, skin issues, and recurrent illnesses
8. Enhance focus, concentration and the studying ability of a child in and out of the classroom.
9. Assist and support physical strength, coordination, and development of motor skills
10. Provide an essential tool for parents who want to offer support to their children at home.





“By education I mean an all-round drawing out of the best in the child and man; body, mind and spirit.” ~ Mahatma Gandhi

WORKING WITH KIDS IN A KINESIOLOGY SESSION

Kinesiology can help both children and adults deal with stress they are experiencing in life, be that internally or externally within the environment around them. These stressors vary immensely according to age, but are present from birth through to adulthood and can impact learning, growth, development and relationships at a profound level. Helping children find balance can therefore positively impact all areas of their school, home, sport and social life. Here are common focus areas for Kinesiology and children.



Babies

Babies respond beautifully to the gentle approach of Kinesiology and enjoy being balanced. Muscle testing is performed on the Mother's arm as a surrogate for the baby. This is normally done whilst they are holding the baby, or the baby is lying on them whilst they are on the table. The focus of sessions for babies is often on sleeping, feeding, and food issues.

Through its profound impact on helping babies balance, Kinesiology also has a helpful effect on mothers and the challenges of parenting.



Toddlers

Toddlers are notoriously active and busy, as they should be, so sessions are often more play-based. Prior to a session with the toddler, a call or email exchange with the parent or carer helps to identify the focus of the upcoming session. This allows a safe and trusting relationship to develop between Kinesiologist and child, and facilitates an organic session in the clinic. Like babies, toddlers can also be muscle tested via the parent. The focus for a toddler Kinesiology session is generally emotional regulation, nutrition, sibling relationships, immunity, skin and digestive issues.



School-Aged

Children aged 5 - 12 are generally very happy to come for a treatment session and are open and happy to chat about how they are feeling. Muscle testing makes the sessions fun and interactive, which children enjoy. The initial focus is developing a rapport and creating a safe, comfortable environment for children to share their stresses. In the majority of these sessions, the parent/ carer is present and will help contribute to the session where they see fit. The focus for this age group is most often friendships, focus and concentration, stress management and relief, and nutrition.

Teenagers



When it comes to sessions for older children and teenagers, it is largely up to the individual how they would like the session to run. The majority of clients in this age bracket arrive with their parent or guardian, but subsequently want their session to be private and ask to be alone with the Kinesiologist during the session. Sometimes the parent/guardian will stay for the first part of the session whilst the teen talks through everything going on, and then when it's time to hop on the massage table and test up what is needed for a balance, the adult will exit the room to give their child privacy and space to share one on one. With the teen cohort, Kinesiology sessions tend to focus on social friendship issues, self esteem, study stresses and optimising school performance, as well as general stress management and relief.



“It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge.” ~ Albert Einstein





EMOTIONAL REGULATION

Emotional regulation is not a skill we are born with. Anyone with a toddler or a teen will tell you their child's mood can swing like a pendulum! Helping our kids self-regulate a wide range of emotions is among parents' most important tasks. It is therefore worthwhile and beneficial to understand how emotional self-regulation develops and how we can help children acquire this crucial skill.

Emotional regulation is the ability to monitor and modulate your emotions when you have them, and to manage how you experience and express them. In order to self-regulate emotionally, we need to notice, monitor and recognise different feelings, and adapt them appropriately for each situation. This doesn't always mean decreasing negative feelings and increasing positive ones; merely suppressing negative feelings and forcing ourselves not to express them is not a good regulation process.

Learning to regulate emotions is a key milestone in child development, the foundations of which are laid in the early years of life. A child's capacity to regulate their emotional state and reactions affects a wide range of facets through life, including their family, friends, academic performance, long-term mental health, colleagues and peers, and their general ability to thrive in a harsh and busy world.

EMOTIONAL
REGULATION

EMOTIONAL REGULATION



Relationships

A child with poor emotion regulation skills throws tantrums and strains the parent-child relationship. This can impact siblings and the climate of the whole household, and lead to a negative spiral. Similarly, when it comes to friendships, children who can't control their big feelings tend to have fewer social skills and experience difficulty making or keeping friends.

Typically, an inability to self-regulate big emotions can lead to traits like anger, withdrawal, anxiety or aggressive behaviour. At its worst, research shows these traits lead to an increased risk of dropping out of school, bullying, delinquency, substance abuse and antisocial behaviour problems.

Performance

Effective emotional regulation in children is a strong predictor of academic achievement and success. This is because good emotion management allows students to focus on performing during tests and exams rather than being impaired by anxiety. They also tend to have better attention and problem-solving capabilities and perform better on tasks involving delayed gratification, inhibition and long-term goals. Importantly, this effect carries on throughout life. In fact, research published in the *Journal of Organisational Behaviour* by researchers Cote and Morgan found that an adult who cannot master emotional regulation enjoys less job satisfaction, mental health issues and a general decline in health and wellbeing.

EMOTIONAL REGULATION



Resilience

The world is challenging and the reality is that adverse events will occur during childhood. Those who have learned to regulate their emotions can better handle and bounce back from these events, have a higher frustration tolerance and demonstrate more resilience. Many clinical disorders in children are closely related to emotional dysregulation, putting a child at significant risk of developing anxiety disorders, eating disorders, and clinical depression. Concerningly, research published in the *Journal of Child and Family Studies* found this makes children more susceptible to future psychopathology, leading experts to consider emotion regulation skills essential for development.

The Process

It is definitely easier for some children to learn emotional regulation than others. For some, it comes quite naturally. For others it can be a challenging process. This was explored in depth by Schore in the 2015 book, *Affect Regulation and the Origin of the Self*, where it was found that some babies' temperament is innately more capable of self-regulating than others. Importantly, while genetics matter, a child's environment is the most important factor when learning emotional regulation because the capacity to regulate emotions is not set in stone. In fact, all children can learn to manage their feelings, given an appropriate environment. Read on for reasons why childhood experiences matter, and ways you can help your child begin to regulate their emotions.

Childhood Life Experiences Matter

When babies are born, their brains are not yet well developed. It is almost like building a house; the architectural blueprint may give the house its shape, but the outcome will vary significantly if made of straw, wood, or brick. Similarly, genetics determine the base blueprint for a child's brain development, but their life experiences, like the house's construction materials, can profoundly influence the outcome.

Just as it's easier to impact the house during the building phase than to alter it later, so can human brains acquire some skills better or more easily during specific periods in life. These optimal times are called sensitive periods or critical periods.


After the sensitive period of learning a skill has passed, there is a gradual decline in the ability to become proficient. It is still possible to acquire a new skill, but it will take longer, or the person will be less likely to get good at it. For instance, studies show that the sensitive period to learn a second language and become genuinely bilingual is generally before puberty.



In a Romanian orphanage experiment published in the *National Academy of Science*, orphans who had foster families adopt them before age two developed emotional regulation skills comparable to children who were never institutionalised. Those who remained orphan suffered considerably reduced skills and subsequent mental and emotional issues. Therefore, the sensitive period of emotional regulation is believed to be around the age of two years old.

Science proves the importance of early childhood life experiences. However, this doesn't mean that once kids pass that age, they've missed the opportunity to learn emotional regulation. It only means it will be more challenging and take more time and patience. So it is better to do it right the first time when kids are young, rather than trying to fix it later.

If your child is older, don't despair. It's never too late to start helping children learn to self-regulate. What you need is to start now – the sooner, the better. On the other hand, it also doesn't mean the process of learning to self-regulate is over by age two – far from it. A child's brain doesn't finish developing until the mid-twenties.



“As a mum, I could feed my child’s anxiety, or I could feed their peace. We set the temperature for our kids.” – Beth Moore



HELPING KIDS REGULATE

While many factors, including teachers, schools, neighbourhoods, peers, culture and genetics can influence a child's ability to regulate, parents and family play a central role. Here are four factors that influence children's ability to emotionally regulate.

● Parent Modelling

Modelling has long been recognised as a crucial mechanism through which children learn, and is the number one way to teach children emotional regulation. This is because kids observe their parents' behaviours and reactions, internalising and mimicking these behaviours and learning the "correct" reaction in different situations. To help kids learn effective emotional control, parents can work to adopt better emotional regulation strategies themselves and expose kids to a positive environment full of people with good self-regulation.

● Self Care

For older children, self-care in everyday life is important to strengthen internal resources to regulate emotions.

Activities that enhance self-care include exercise, mindfulness practices (such as meditation and yoga), adequate sleep and good sleep hygiene, and relaxation treatments such as listening to music.

Positive Parenting

Responsive, warm, and accepting parenting practices can help children with a broad range of coping mechanisms as well as social-emotional development and behavioural control.

When parents are responsive, their children associate them with comfort and relief from stress. Those who notice, accept, empathise with, and validate their children's negative feelings tend to affect them positively.

They can teach kids emotional awareness by coaching them to verbalise how they feel and encourage them to problem-solve.

But if parents are dismissive or disapprove of emotional expressions, especially negative ones, children tend to develop destructive emotional regulation methods.

Emotional Climate

Factors that affect emotional climate of a household include the parents' relationship, personalities, the parenting style, parent-child relationships, sibling relationships and the family's general attitudes towards expressing feelings.

Children feel accepted and secure when the emotional climate is positive, responsive, and consistent. When the emotional climate is negative, coercive, or unpredictable, kids tend to be more reactive and insecure.



“If you want to support your child’s emotional health, you need to take care of your own emotions. Your tone, energy, and overall emotional presence serve as your child’s emotional guidepost.”

~ Angela Prues



FOODS



IMPORTANCE OF BALANCED NUTRITION FOR CHILDREN

It's no secret that growing bodies need a lot of fuel, but what many underestimate is the fact that growing minds need fuel, too. The early years of a child's life is an especially important time to be building healthy eating habits to support a child's optimal growth and development. Yet with sweetened drinks and fast food all around us, it can be hard to make healthy foods seem exciting and to achieve balanced and comprehensive nutrition in you child's diet.

We know that specific nutrients play essential roles in children's growth and development. But there is now a growing body of research showing that when a child is lacking in nutrient-rich foods, it negatively impacts brain areas that play important roles in developing positive social and learning behaviours.

By proactively ensuring your family's diet consists of predominantly nutritious food, you can set your children up for a successful future full of possibilities. Read on for the kinds of foods children need, what to avoid, and how to improve household nutrition.



WHAT FOODS DO CHILDREN NEED FOR OPTIMAL DEVELOPMENT?

Each different coloured food or vegetable provides a unique set of nutrients, so when preparing a child's meal try to serve 'the rainbow.' Food diversity plays a major role in proper nutrition and development, so by aiming for different colours on the plate, you are likely to capture the whole range of nutrients. Try getting your children involved in picking a few colourful items to include in their meals or snacks. This will motivate them to eat their fruits and vegetables and help them learn about different produce. Here are some suggested foods to support children's behaviour and assist in achieving greater learning outcomes.

1



NUTS AND SEEDS

These are rich in zinc and very important for mood, the immune system and concentration.

2



MEATS

Iron-rich foods such as red meat play a large role in achieving high concentration levels – they also offer B12 which is crucial to optimal brain development.

3



SALMON

Salmon is rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which are highly anti-inflammatory. Omega-3s, particularly EPA and DHA, are crucial for brain and nervous system development. It also contains protein for growth, as well as Vitamin D for good immune function and autoimmune disease prevention.

4



GREENS

Greens are a great source of magnesium, which plays an important role in growth, development and energy production in children.

5



AVOCADO

Avocados contain nourishing fats that help balance blood sugar levels and support nervous system function. They also have Vitamin B5, also called pantothenic acid, a stress-fighting B vitamin that helps kids manage stress.



IMPROVING HOUSEHOLD NUTRITION AS A FAMILY

Children are more successful at developing healthy habits when they are a part of the whole family's routine.

It's important to be a role model and create an environment that encourages kids to develop lifelong eating habits. But it certainly doesn't have to be a boring task. Instead, there are multiple fun and engaging ways you get the whole family involved. Here are three ideas:

Involve Children in the Cooking

Getting kids involved in preparing meals, trying new foods together and eating regularly as a family contributes to building healthy habits.

Grow a Vegetable Patch

Planting and growing veggies in the backyard is a great way to get the kids excited about eating and gives them the opportunity to learn about different vegetables.

Watch Food Documentaries

Discussion and investigation through food documentaries will often spark curiosity and show kids the process behind how different foods are grown.



“INVESTING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD NUTRITION IS A SUREFIRE STRATEGY. THE RETURNS ARE INCREDIBLY HIGH.”

~ ANNE M. MULCAHY



THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY-BASED LEARNING



Play is essential to a child's development because it contributes to the cognitive, physical, social and emotional well-being of children and youth. An ever-growing body of research highlights the importance of play when learning.

Research by Dr. Karyn Purvis discovered that it takes approximately 400 repetitions to create a new synapse in the brain unless it is done in play, in which case it only takes 10 to 20 repetitions.

Play is essential to a child's development because it contributes to the cognitive, physical, social and emotional well-being of children and youth. An ever-growing body of research highlights the importance of play when learning.

It allows children to create and explore a world they can master, conquering their fears while practicing adult roles, sometimes in conjunction with other children or adults. In the process, play helps children develop new competencies that lead to enhanced confidence and the resiliency they will need to face future challenges. Undirected play allows children to learn how to work in groups, to share, negotiate, resolve conflicts, and learn self-advocacy skills. Play also allows children to be creative while developing their imagination, dexterity, and cognitive strength.

But above all, play is a simple joy that is a cherished part of childhood. As we strive to create the optimal developmental milieu for our children, it is imperative that play be included along with academic and social-enrichment opportunities.

The Covid Effect

The Covid-19 lockdowns around the world caused many to express concerns for children's educational needs and mental wellbeing. Surveys concluded that since lockdown began, almost 8 in 10 children spent more than 3 months at home and parents struggled to keep restless kids engaged with their school work and maintaining a positive outlook.

Indeed, a survey led by experts at the University of Oxford tracked 12,300 children's mental health throughout the Covid-19 crisis. Parents and carers reported that their children displayed increasingly difficult behaviours, including temper tantrums, arguments and not doing what they were being asked to do. They also became more fidgety and restless and had greater difficulty paying attention.



REDUCED CHILD-DRIVEN PLAY

Despite the numerous benefits derived from play, there has been a marked reduction in free play over time. This trend has even affected kindergarten children, who have had free play reduced in their schedules to make room for more academics. A 1989 survey taken by the National Association of School Principals found that 96% of surveyed school systems had at least one recess period. Another survey a decade later found that only 70% of even kindergarten classrooms had a recess period.

There are many reasons and factors contributing to this trend, and conflicting messages about what parents should do to prepare their child for what is perceived to be an increasingly complicated, competitive world. The most important thing to remember as a parent is the fact you have a responsibility to promote all the needs of your child, including physical, emotional and social needs. You should therefore support your child in becoming resilient, learning through play and by reducing excessive stressors in their lives.

A photograph of two young children in a field of tall green grass and yellow wildflowers. In the foreground, a child with bright red hair is looking through a magnifying glass at a flower. In the background, another child with light brown hair is looking on. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day outdoors.

**“THE TROUBLE WITH OVER-
STRUCTURING IS THAT IT
DISCOURAGES EXPLORATION.”**

~ JAY GIEDD, NEUROSCIENTIST



TOP TIPS FOR PLAY-BASED LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Here are top tips from the Ease Wellness team on how you can incorporate and integrate more play-based learning opportunities into your child's day to boost their growth and development, and to help them ultimately reach their full potential in life.

● Adopt a free play policy

Adopt free play as a healthy, essential part of childhood. Provide your child ample, unscheduled, independent, nonscreen time to be creative, to reflect, and to decompress. While you can certainly monitor play for safety, a large proportion of play should be child driven rather than adult directed.

● Encourage active play

Emphasise the advantages of active play and discourage your children from the overuse of passive entertainment (eg, television and computer games).

● Boost activity levels

Remember that active child-centered play is a time-tested way of producing healthy, fit young bodies. Allow time in your child's day for play to help them grow and develop their physical skills.

Toy investment

Emphasise and invest in “true toys” such as blocks and dolls, with which children use their imagination fully, over passive toys that require limited imagination.

Spontaneity

Share unscheduled spontaneous time with your children and play with them to develop a supportive, nurturing and productive relationship with your child.

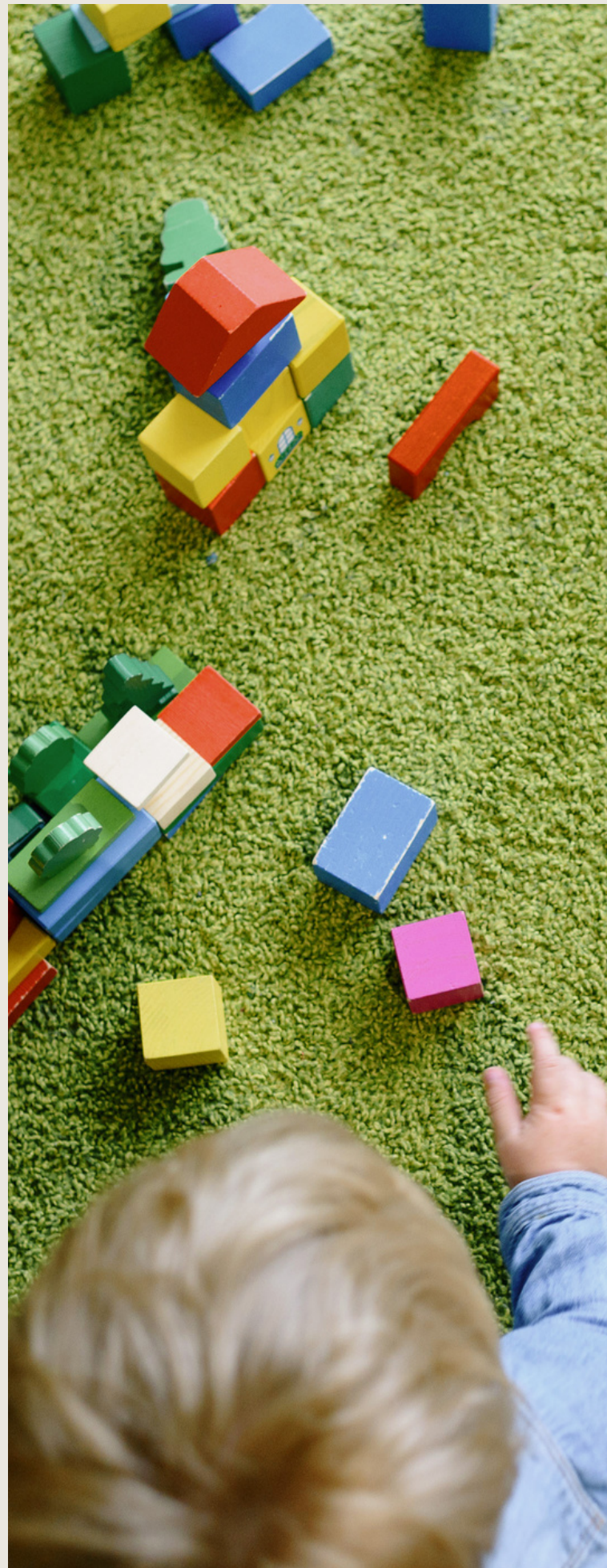
Avoid over-committing

Be aware that arranging the finest opportunities for your children may not be your best opportunity for influence, and shuttling your child between numerous activities may not be the best quality time. Children will be best poised for success by simply having the knowledge that their parents absolutely and unconditionally love them.

Remember that the most valuable and useful character traits that will prepare your children for success arise not from extracurricular or academic commitments, but from a firm grounding in parental love, role modelling, and guidance.

Community play

Organise playgroups beginning at an early preschool age to encourage cooperative play and the process of socialisation. Utilise appropriate resources in your community that foster play.





● Balance sport & academics

Support your child in having an academic schedule that is appropriately challenging and extracurricular exposures that offer appropriate balance. What is appropriate has to be determined individually for your child on the basis of their unique needs, skills, and temperament, not on the basis of what may be overly pressurised or competitive community standards or a perceived need to gain tertiary admissions.

● Pursue variety

Allow your child to explore a variety of interests in a balanced way without feeling pressured to excel in each area. Even if your child displays particular talent in one areas, provide them with the opportunity to explore other areas of interest.

● Childcare choices

When choosing child care and early education programs for your children, choose settings that offer more than “academic preparedness.” Pay attention to whether the settings attend to all needs of your child, including social and emotional developmental needs of your children.

● Professional help

Seek help if your child ever shows signs of excessive stress, anxiety or depression.

“There are no seven wonders of the
world in the eyes of a child.
There are seven million”.

~ Walt Steightiff



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Healthy Banana & GF Oat Waffles

The whole family will love these waffles, which are our favourite Sunday brunch treat topped with a generous dollop of coconut yoghurt and drizzled with manuka honey. The best bit is the fact they are packed with goodness, cater for GF eaters and taste seriously amazing!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup Rolled Gluten Free Oats (100g)
- 1 teaspoon Cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons Baking Powder
- 2 Bananas (approx 220g)
- 2 Eggs
- 1/2 cup Oat Milk or Nut Milk of choice (250 ml)

METHOD

- Throw all ingredients in a food processor until a batter-like consistency.
- Spray the waffle maker with coconut oil and allow to heat up.
- Ladle batter into the waffle iron.
- Remove when golden brown.
- Optional additions: Add coconut yoghurt and berries, honey or maple syrup. Can also add in 1 cup of blueberries or raspberries into the batter if you want an extra little pop of flavour.
- Note: You can also use this recipe to make pancakes or pikelets rather than waffles, if preferred.

Our Tip: Make a bigger batch, divide the segments and freeze them ready to pop them in the toaster for a quick snack, school lunchboxes or breaky on the go!



Healthy & Delicious



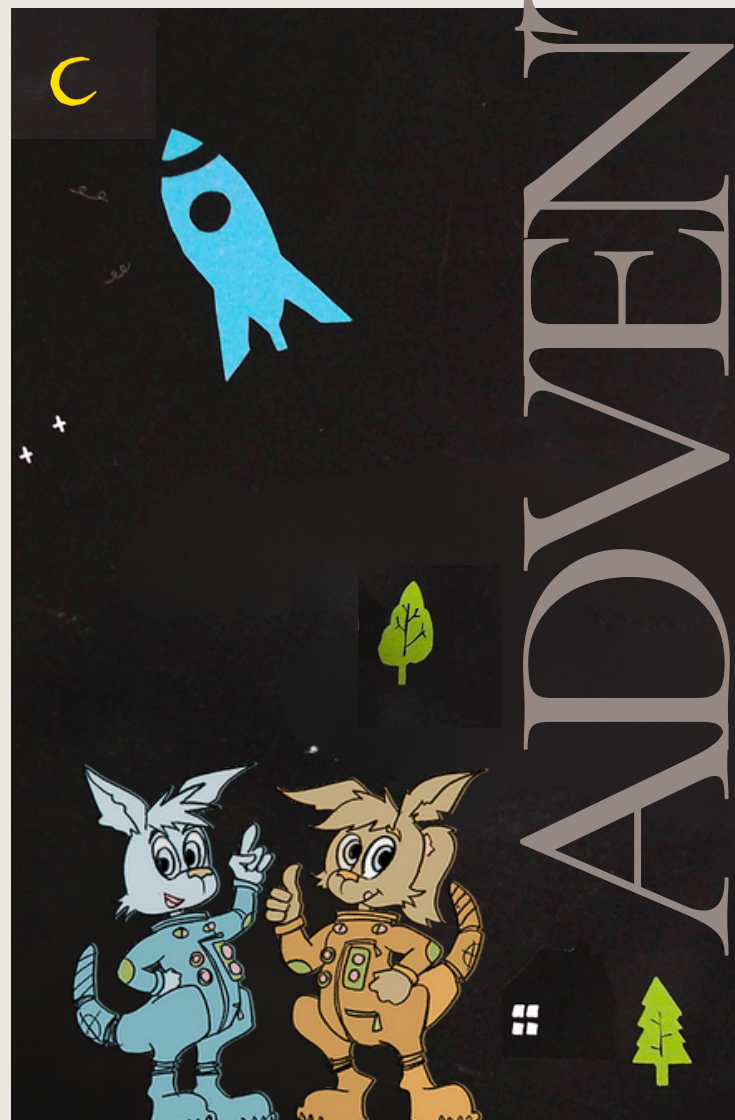
FEATURE PRODUCT: THE ADVENTUROOS BOOK

Adventuroos is a play-along adventure for a healthy body and mind! This book was created to provide simple and effective Kinesiology techniques to children, giving them easy personal development tools for a balanced life.

The techniques in the book have come directly from standard International Kinesiology practice and have been designed to enhance wellbeing by increasing energy, reducing stress, enhancing left/right brain integration and mental alertness. Many delighted parents also find the book helps to improve co-ordination, comprehension and focus.

By having children follow the actions of the Adventuroos, they will be performing the Kinesiology techniques on themselves, the same way a Kinesiologist would take a client through the techniques in a session.

Parents, carers and educators are encouraged to take children on this little adventure every morning for at least 21 days (and beyond), ensuring children perform each technique slowly and deliberately for the best results. Feel free to join in the fun, you may as well benefit from the adventure too!



ADVENTUROOS

Only
\$15
(+ \$5 postage*)

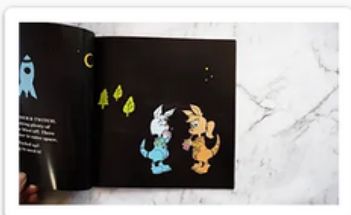
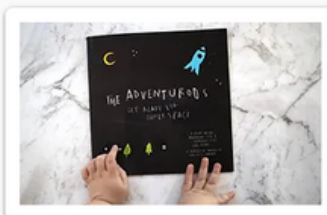
[Click here to buy](#)

THE ADVENTUROOS GET READY FOR OUTER SPACE

In the back of the book
you will find a handy reference that
provides more detail on the techniques
and their benefits to participants.

Feel free to review these
techniques before reading the
story to your children so you
can help them along
the way.

BY KATHERINE ANDERSON
AND TROY GRAHAM



Buy now at: www.katherineanderson.com.au/the-adventuroos

ADVENTUROOS



WELLNESSES

Individual Sessions

In-clinic kinesiology and coaching

Corporate Workshops

Holistic health workshops for workplaces

Workshops for Schools

Addressing the pillars of health in youth

Community Workshops

Helping the community find wellness

Wellness Days & Retreats

Wellness days and special retreats

Women's Programme

Wellness program for busy professionals

Massage

Remedial and multi-sensory massage

Learn More

Visit easewellness.com.au or click [here](#)



EASE

EASE WELLNESS JOURNAL



FIND YOUR EASE & WELLNESS

Copyright Ease Wellness 2023
Find us online at easewellness.com.au