

mini CHILD

THE REAL GUIDE FOR PARENTS

Back to School



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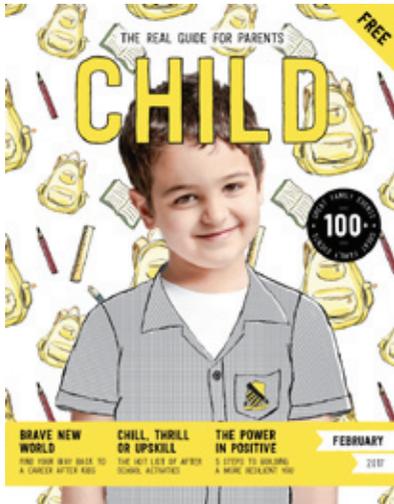
WHAT'S INSIDE:

- MY CHILDHOOD CAREERS
- KIDS LUNCHBOX RECIPES
- DIY FUNNY FACE FRUIT
- + MUCH MORE!

FREE

FEBRUARY 2017





REMEMBER
TO PICK UP
YOUR CHILD!



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+
MOTHERHOOD

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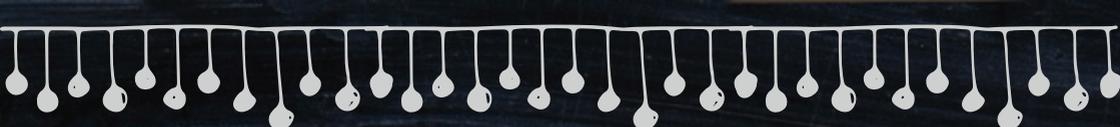
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Ed's Letter



We are kicking off the New Year with our CHILD Back To School Mini Mag! Getting ready for the new school year always feels like a welcomed fresh start. Your child may be anticipating their very first day at school (get the camera ready!) or they are excited about starting a new grade (with the big kids).



It's one of the times of the year that I always enjoyed the most – when my parents would take me to buy and pick out new stationery, backpack, lunchbox and text books. The week before school began would be spent putting my name on EVERYTHING followed by packing my bag, pencil case and decorating the title pages in my exercise books.

While we can all get caught-up in the 'back-to-school' shopping to-do list it can be the time that parents are beginning to dread putting packing lunchboxes back into their morning routine! So to ease the load, we have packed this issue with LOTS of easy and quick lunchbox ideas and have even let the kids tell us what they really want for lunch. Win-Win!

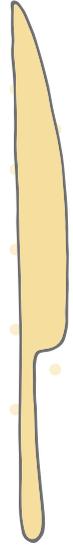
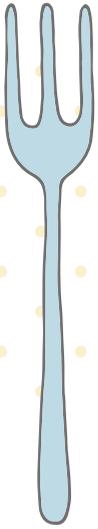


All the best for the year ahead,



Jenna xo





DO YOU HAVE LUNCHBOX FATIGUE? DREADING THAT LATE NIGHT OR EARLY MORNING LUNCH PACKING?

Here's a little insight into what 21 of our reader's kids want to see more of in their lunch boxes. Some are actually pretty surprising.

It can be hard to extract information out of some primary kids, but the one thing they all seem to have in common is the ability to request specific lunches.





SO WHAT DO THEY WANT?

“Jokes! My son asks for a joke in his lunchbox now. I left him a knock-knock joke in his lunchbox one day and now it’s turned into a bit of a tradition. “Knock-knock. Who’s there? Orange. Orange who? Orange you glad it’s lunch time?” He loves it!”

– **Jacqui**



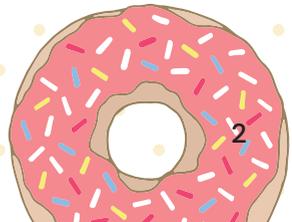
“Apples cut into fours (halves are a no go for him), strawberries because Spiderman eats them, cheese and crisps (his muscles grow because of them) and 1 sandwich square... simply because his tummy told him.” – **Kylie**

“‘Only pasta’, that’s penne pasta with no sauce, Bolognese or otherwise. If it was up to her, she’d eat only pasta for brekkie, lunch and dinner.” – **Yomarie**

“Homemade sausages rolls, choc bliss balls, and a good old vegemite sandwich cut into triangles, NOT squares... or else there’s trouble!” – **Melissa**

“Banana-Grams! I scratch a message onto the skin of a banana using a toothpick. At first the message can’t be read, but by lunchtime it darkens enough for it to be visible, which gets my child excited about lunch and reading.” – **Kath**

“My sons love popcorn necklaces that they can wear and snack as they go over lunch. So cute! I thread them onto floss as a double win so they can clean their teeth afterwards.” – **Sara**



“Only a ham and lettuce sandwich cut into shapes, because she wants to eat the bare minimum so she gets maximum play time.”

– Lisa

“Homemade sushi or rice balls, hard boiled eggs that have been shaped in an egg mould, the chicken one is a favourite.”

– Colleen

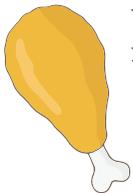
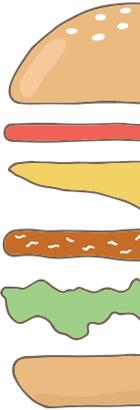
“Fruit kebabs, Greek yoghurt, baby cucumbers, carrot dippers, homemade hummus, and rice crackers. My daughters not a big sandwich fan so we dabble with lots of different ideas like lettuce wraps.” – Helen

“Chicken Nuggets. My son asks for them for every dinner and occasionally breakfast! We once went on a 12 day cruise and he ate nuggets EVERY night!” – Paul

“Homemade banana and choc chip muffins. Although my son doesn’t know it’s got banana in it. We keep that bit quiet! He’s also been into cheese and veggie muffins too as he thinks it takes too long to eat a sandwich and doesn’t get enough play time.” – Jason

“Cheese and olive jaffles. My daughter likes toasted sangas better than bread sandwiches because the fillings stay in and don’t fall out as she’s running around the playground.” – Judith

“Dinner left-overs. My boys love taking their thermos to keep their food warm. They love pin wheels, potato pie, lasagne and fried rice.” – Rebecca





“Cheese and vegemite roll or cheese and bacon rolls are my son’s favourite and a nice change from sandwiches every now and then.” – **Julia**

“My boy asks for yummy drummies from the school canteen every lunch order chance he gets... otherwise sausages.” – **Sevi**

“Popping Candy, chocolate and Whiz Fizz; I counter with suggesting a trip to the dentist and we compromise with a cheese and salad sandwich.” – **Joanna**

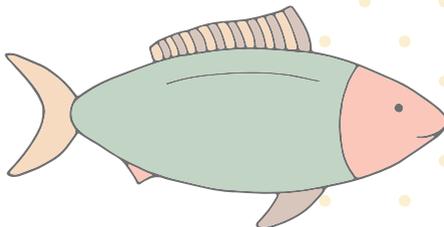
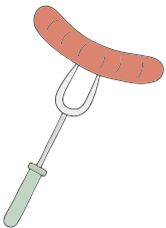
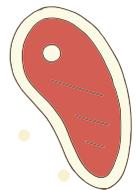
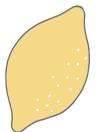
“Fairy bread. They can’t get enough of it...and neither can I. We all love it.” – **Karina**

“Kindergarten daughter loves her Mayo and Cheese sandwiches cut into dinosaur shapes.” – **Hayley**

“Tiny Teddies with the 100’s and 1000’s on them.” – **Charisse**

“A Vegemite Sandwich EVERY SINGLE DAY...” – **Rebecca**

“Whatever their friend had the day before!” – **Kerrie**





**SCHOOL CANTEEN
MEMORIES**
& Aussie Meat Pie Recipe

WORDS **JANE LAWSON**



HOW TO COOK UP A NATIONAL TREASURE – AN AUSSIE MEAT PIE RECIPE WORTHY OF A SCHOOL CANTEEN.

Friday was pie day at my primary school – delivered hot in wooden crates by the local pie man wearing a little white cap. After four days of devon and tomato sauce sandwiches, his pies were a gastronomic delight. We'd excitedly run up to the canteen ladies with 20 cents in our hands, mine was kept in a zipped pocket in my school uniform and I'd check it all day to make sure it

hadn't fallen out. I can still remember the intoxicating wafts of the pastry as we walked away, warm pie and sauce cupped with both hands.



This extract and recipe feature is from *Milkbar Memories* by Jane Lawson, published by Murdoch Books, \$39.99, available now in all good bookstores and online.

AUSSIE BEEF PIES

This is the quintessential Australian beef pie, flavoured with beer and Vegemite. You'll notice I've given two options for the meat filling. If you like your pies a little chunky and more rustic, use chuck steak; if you prefer them more like the ones you get at the footy, use minced beef. **Makes 6 individual pies.**

Ingredients

2 tablespoons olive oil
1½ tablespoons butter
1 brown onion, finely chopped
2 tablespoons plain (all-purpose) flour, plus extra for dusting
600g chuck steak, cut into 2cm dice — or 650g minced (ground) beef
250ml (1 cup) beer
375ml (1½ cups) beef stock
1 small carrot, finely diced
1 celery stalk, finely diced
2 garlic cloves, crushed
½ teaspoon finely chopped fresh thyme
1 tablespoon tomato paste (concentrated purée)

1½ tablespoons worcestershire sauce
1½ teaspoons Vegemite (or Promite or Marmite if unavailable)
1 fresh bay leaf
1 quantity of Savoury shortcrust pastry (See below recipe),
or 3 sheets ready-rolled frozen pastry, thawed
½ quantity of Puff pastry or 3 sheets ready-rolled frozen
pastry, thawed
1 egg, lightly beaten
Tomato sauce, to serve

Method

1. To make the filling, put half the olive oil and half the butter in a saucepan over medium-high heat and sauté the onion for 10 minutes, or until lightly golden. Remove from the pan and set aside.
2. If using chuck steak, season the flour well with sea salt and freshly cracked black pepper, then toss together with the beef cubes until they are lightly coated. Add the remaining oil and butter to the pan, then sauté the beef over high heat in several batches until lightly golden, adding a little more oil if needed. Set aside with the onion.
3. If using minced beef, brown it in batches in the remaining oil, but reserve the remaining butter. Add the butter to the pan once the mince has been browned and removed, then stir in the flour and cook for a minute or so.
4. Add the beer and stock to the pan, scraping up any cooked-on bits. Return the beef and onion to the pan, along with the carrot, celery, garlic, thyme, tomato paste, worcestershire sauce,

5. Vegemite and bay leaf. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 1¼ hours, or until the beef is very tender and the sauce is thick and rich. Discard the bay leaf, then season to taste.

6. Cool the mixture slightly, then cover and refrigerate for 4 hours, or until completely cold; if you can leave it overnight, the flavours will develop even more.

To assemble and bake the pies

7. Remove the shortcrust pastry from the fridge 15 minutes (a little less or more on a hot or cold day) to soften slightly before you roll it out; it should still be cold.

8. Using a fine sieve, very lightly flour your work surface and a rolling pin. Starting at the middle of the shortcrust pastry disc, gently roll the pastry away from you, then turn it 45 degrees and roll away from you again. Repeat this process until the pastry is a uniform 2mm thickness. Use a 15cm round pastry cutter to cut six shortcrust pastry discs for the pie bases.

9. Lightly grease six individual, non-stick pie tins, measuring about 12cm across the top, 8cm across the base and 3.5cm deep.

10. Line each pie tin with a shortcrust pastry round, gently pressing the dough into the tins, starting in the centre and working out towards the top rim of the tins; stop when the pastry is about 1cm above the line of the tin.

11. Gently fold this bit of pastry down over to line the pie tin rims — this is where the pie pastry lids will adhere. Place the pie tins on a baking tray, lightly cover with a sheet of plastic wrap and refrigerate for 2 hours.

12. About 15 minutes before you're ready to resume making the pies, take the puff pastry out of the fridge to soften slightly, making sure it is still cold.

13. Divide the cold filling among the pie bases. Roll the puff pastry out to a 5mm thickness and cut out six 12.5cm rounds. Lightly brush the rims of the shortcrust pastry with the beaten egg. Top each pie with a puff pastry round, pressing down around the edges to help the two different pastries adhere to each other; you can pinch the edges together if you really want to be sure, or use the back of a fork to seal around the edge. Pierce the top of each pie with a small sharp knife or skewer to form an air vent, then brush the top of the pies with more beaten egg, avoiding the vent.

14. Place the pies back in the fridge for 30 minutes before baking – this will give the lids of the pies more puff and crispness.

15. Put two baking trays in the oven and preheat the oven to 200°C.

16. Place the pie tins directly onto the hot baking trays and bake for 10 minutes, or until the pastry is puffed and lightly golden. Turn the oven temperature down to 180°C and bake the pies for a further 10-15 minutes to ensure the filling is hot – your pastry should have a pretty good tan by now!

17. Remove the pies from the oven and the tins. Serve hot, with tomato sauce.

SAVOURY SHORTCRUST PASTRY

Makes enough for 6 individual pies

Ingredients

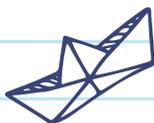
300g (2 cups) plain (all-purpose) flour, sifted
½ teaspoon fine sea salt
150g unsalted butter, cut into 1cm dice and chilled
1½ teaspoons strained fresh lemon juice
60-80ml (¼–½ cup) iced water

Method

1. This pastry is easy to work with, and the recipe can easily be doubled. Put the flour and salt in a food processor. Add the butter, then leave to sit for a few minutes to soften the butter slightly — but it should still be cold. Pulse in short bursts until the mixture just forms roughish crumbs.
2. Combine the lemon juice and 60ml (¼ cup) of the iced water, then drizzle half the liquid over the crumbs. Pulse until the mixture just starts to clump. Drizzle with the remaining water and lemon juice mixture and pulse again until the dough just starts to cling together, adding the remaining water if needed.
3. Gather the dough up quickly and pat into a disc about 15cm wide and 2 cm thick. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for a few hours, or overnight. Use as instructed in individual recipes.



5 REASONS
WHY WE LOVE
LITTLE LUNCH



WORDS BRON BATES





ABC

IT'S IMPORTANT FOR AUSTRALIAN KIDS TO SEE THEMSELVES REPRESENTED IN MAINSTREAM MEDIA. BRON BATES THINKS THERE'S ONE SHOW THAT'S DOING IT RIGHT.

a
b
c

"Mum, is *Charlie & Lola* British? And what about *Peppa Pig*?" Max asked me. Sadly of course the answer was 'yes'.

As children, the TV shows we watch influence how we think about ourselves. For instance, I was ruined by watching *Sesame Street*. To this day I feel like a New Yorker born in the wrong city. I don't really want my kids to feel like that.





I think there's one show that's nailing it for Australian kids right now and that's *Little Lunch* based on the books by Danny Katz and illustrated by Vane Mitch. Both Max and Rose love it and I love it for them. Here's why:



1. IT SHOWS AUSTRALIAN KIDS IN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS

We've seen loads of great shows from overseas featuring children at school but there are particular idiosyncrasies about Aussie school days that they can't represent. *Little Lunch* is set in a real Australian school, most of the kids have Australian accents, use Aussie turns of phrase and wear familiar school uniforms and hats (all Aussie kids know the 'no hat, no play' refrain). Happily, in *Little Lunch*, there's not a yellow school bus to be seen.

2. IT DEALS WITH ISSUES SPECIFIC TO AUSTRALIAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS



Dealing with your packed lunch (or lack thereof) is a very Aussie part of the school day. *Little Lunch* episodes are most often set in the playground at recess or lunch time. Other typical situations that are hilariously covered: what happens when your teacher falls asleep in class, the beep test for fitness, stage fright, being 'germblocked' and who owns the monkey bars.

3. IT'S SMART AND FUNNY



Little Lunch doesn't talk down to its audience and it brings the children (and adults) along for the humorous triumphs and blunders that the characters face. As it's funded by children's television bodies, it's monitored for age-appropriateness and the like. As Robyn Butler from *Gristmill*, the producers of



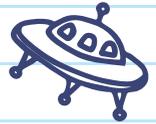
Little Lunch, explained, “We steer away from anything that would have a negative impact on children, such as violence, danger or bullying. It means we write a really joyful, happy and optimistic show.”

4. EACH EPISODE CAN BE WATCHED AS A STAND ALONE

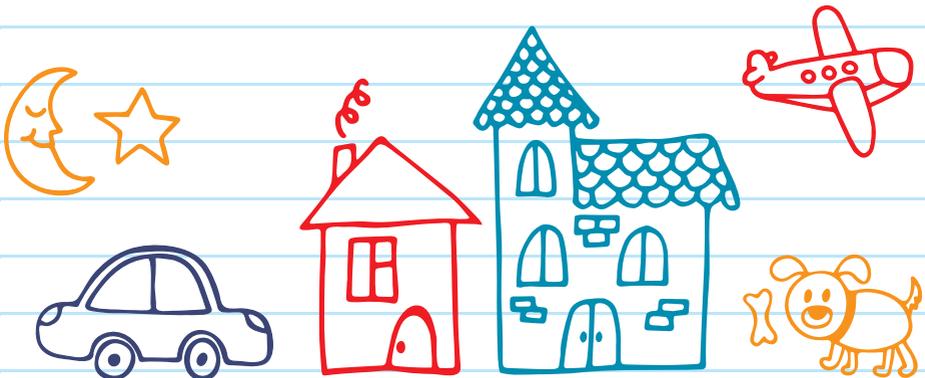
At under 15 minutes long, each episode covers one issue succinctly, such as, is it acceptable to dress up as a character you invented yourself for book week? Perfect for watching over arvo tea after school.

5. IT'S EMPOWERING FOR KIDS

The six main characters in *Little Lunch* all have distinct, believable personalities and backgrounds. It's helpful for children to see smart and funny characters that they can relate to, attending a school that looks like theirs, dressing like them and speaking like them. It's also validating for kids to see their real life experiences reflected in the adventures of the characters.



In years to come I hope my kids look back and remember their school experience as positive and important, full of humorous ‘Little Lunch’ moments.





my CHILDHOOD CAREERS

WORDS JENNA TEMPLETON

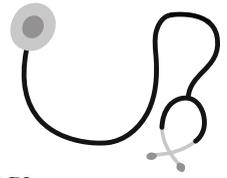
JENNA TEMPLETON GETS ALL NOSTALGIC ABOUT HER CHILDHOOD OCCUPATIONS THAT EVENTUALLY LED HER TO A CAREER IN MAGAZINES.

“Where’s dad going?” I’d ask Mum every weekday morning when I was a tot, any time I heard his car keys jangle.

“He’s going to work”, she’d reply.

My head would admittedly go down with a frown (other days I was always his shadow). Why would he choose to go to this ‘work’ place instead of staying home all day to play? My mum quickly let me know that adults couldn’t always be in charge of everything and that Dad needed to go to work so we could ‘buy nice things’ and ‘put food on the table’.

By primary school, my mum had headed back to work and would travel one and a half hours just to get in to the city for her job. From a young age, I figured if adults had to spend all their days at work, I better choose an occupation I loved. This was the beginning of playtime becoming test trials of jobs...here are a few of my childhood careers circa the ’80s and ’90s.



HAIRDRESSER

I'm sure every child wanted to be a hairdresser at one stage. Once I discovered how to use scissors, I couldn't help but experiment with different cuts and hairstyles on poor *Barbie*. I went that extra step further...most of the cartoon characters from the '80s and '90s such as Dorothy Gale from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* cartoon series always had a permanent part in their fringes. I couldn't get my fringe to stay the same way (also we were out of glitter hairspray) so one day at kindergarten during craft time, I convinced one of my friends to cut a triangle shape right in the middle of my fringe. Unfortunately, my kindergarten teacher didn't quite appreciate my creativity and I got in trouble and burst into tears (she was worried my mum would be mad). That was pretty much the end of that career.



BUS DRIVER

My mum didn't drive, so on days when Dad wasn't home, Mum would take me out to town and anywhere else we needed to go by bus. I always enjoyed making all the little stops and seeing what interesting characters would get on, and try to guess which stop they would get out at. For a week, my backyard became a bus route, where I'd imagine driving around on a make-believe bus, picking up make-believe people. Turns out I preferred this more as a casual role, because it got a bit repetitive after a while. On to the next career.



RADIO PRESENTER



I'll never forget the time in primary school when my sister and I won a tape recorder – a real flashy one for its time too. It was grey and had neon pink and green coloured zig zags splashed all over it. So rad! The best bit of this masterful piece of technology was that it could be used to record and came with a microphone. Clearly I was handed with an opportunity of a lifetime. The last couple of years were dedicated to perfecting a radio show. My sister and I took turns DJing. All of our family friends and the kids in our class were invited over to be interviewed and introduce songs on our show. Without even realising it, we were scheduling playlists of our favourite hits: *I Should Be So Lucky* (Kylie Minogue), *Eternal Flame* (The Bangles), *Please Mr Postman* (Teen Queens) and *You're The Voice* (John Farnham). We were also ad-libbing and writing talk-back content. Highlights of the stint included a full rendition of the *Lip Smacker* ad jingle (going ape

over grape) and getting one of my after school care friends to declare his love for someone in our class. Gripping stuff, I know. I don't know why I gave up this career (perhaps I ran out of cassette tapes). It's something I'd love to revisit now – in the form of a podcast perhaps?



TEACHER

Some of my favourite books were activity-based ones. The ones filled with puzzles, mazes, find its, interesting facts and problems you had to solve. Visits to my local op shop and 'teacher's textbook shops' helped me accumulate quite a





good collection of educational reads. I spent lots of my childhood playing with my neighbour who was like a brother to me. Some days he'd come over and we'd set up a little classroom at our house. He was a year younger, so I'd teach him all the things I learnt in school ahead of his class. I'd make up maths tests, read out loud from books, and dedicate time to doing cover pages, crafting book jackets and even marking the work. Some days it would be 'excursion day', so we'd go on nature walks around the yard. So much fun. At least for me it was!



GRAPHIC DESIGNER

When a new school year began, I always looked forward to drawing and decorating my text books and its cover page. Art and craft was always a favourite subject of mine and still is today, so I asked dad about jobs that combined the two – books and design. I love books, so I was super excited to find out that someone's job was to spend their days designing book covers – a graphic designer. By this stage, I was almost heading into high school, so it was a career I held on to for a long time.



WRITER

Given my love for books, art, editorial planning and design, it's no wonder that my final career had my name written all over it. Writing and specifically working in magazines just felt like home. It combined all my likes and loves. Even though at the start I wasn't very good at spelling and grammar, I didn't let this stop me from achieving the career I wanted the most – writing.



My parents encouraged my love for the subject by getting me computer programs that I could write and record my stories in. I loved the '90s computer program *Creative Writer + Fine Artist*. It allowed you to write and design your own books and newspapers. I remember compiling lots of newsletters, printing them off and filing them in a folder. All through high school, I'd pore over the latest teen mags, *Dolly*, *Big Hit*, *Bliss*, *TV Hits*, *Girlfriend*, *Smash Hits* and study each of the sections. My favourite issues were the specials they did on the magazine teams that had a bio of each person, what an average day was like for them, and info about their role and how they got their job. These were the pages that I would blu-tack over my bedroom walls.

And I guess you can say the rest is history...





6 ECO-FRIENDLY



lunch ideas



WORDS **GABRIELLE CHARITON**

EASY SCHOOL LUNCH PACKAGING IDEAS THAT DON'T COST THE EARTH.

For time-poor, harried parents who have 20-gazillion jobs that need to be done before the mad dash to school, 'earth-friendly' lunch options are pretty much off the radar. The convenience of packed muesli bars, cheese sticks, small bags of biscuits, popcorn or chips, and a quick vegemite sanga wrapped in cling film is hard to beat. But earth-friendly doesn't have to mean 'difficult' or 'time consuming', it just means making a couple of slight changes to your weekly shop.

By not sending plastics and excess packaging to school with your child every day, you'll be helping to cut back on landfill. When it comes to the environment, every little contribution really does help.



HERE ARE A FEW PRACTICAL IDEAS:

1. Change your wrap: swap cling film or snap-lock bags for waxed (or greaseproof) paper.

This is the easiest change you can make towards an earth-friendly lunchbox. Wax paper is really cheap, easy to use (even before the first coffee of the day) and can be recycled. Use it to wrap sandwiches, biscuits and fruit.

2. Make it reusable.

A slightly more hardcore option is the reusable sandwich bag. The idea is that the bag comes home each day, is washed and re-used again the next. This eliminates waste completely, but you do have the added hassle of having to wash and dry the bag.

3. DIY snack packs.

Buy some small plastic containers and fill them each day with snacks: crackers, cheese, grapes, sultanas, strawberries, homemade popcorn, carrot and celery sticks, or yoghurt. If you find mornings a real struggle, you can pack your snack boxes for the week ahead and keep them in the fridge.

4. Cook-in wrapper.

If your kids aren't so big on sandwiches, cook savoury muffins or mini-frittatas in paper muffin cases. Drop one into the lunchbox, no further wrapping required.





5. Bento box.

Some mums swear by bento-style lunchboxes, with little compartments for everything. These will save you from packing small containers, but won't give you the flexibility to prepare snacks ahead of time. You will also be restricted to a certain size for sandwiches.

6. **Don't forget the water.** Forget packaged drinks and send the kids to school with a BPA-free plastic or stainless-steel drink bottle.

Once you're in the habit of packing lunch items yourself rather than reaching for the muesli bars and bags of chips, you'll never go back. As well as reducing waste, earth-friendly lunches are much cheaper than buying pre-packaged foods. It's win-win: you'll have a tidier school, a healthier child, a wealthier wallet and a happier planet.





BACKPACKS ARE NOT JUST FOR KIDS! HERE IS OUR ROUNDUP OF SUPER STYLISH NAPPY BAG ALTERNATIVES PARENTS WILL BE HAPPY TO ROCK! BACKPACKS ARE THE NEW BLACK...

Gah, the heavy nappy bag, you guys know what I'm talking about, right?

On occasion, wouldn't you prefer to carry your world on your back instead of your shoulders? Especially as the kids get older and faster! But we don't all have a plethora of backpacks in the house, unless you count tiny ones covered in colourful children's TV characters.

We have your solution – we've wrapped up the hottest adult backpacks around!



HERE ARE SOME REALLY RAD AND STYLISH BACKPACKS THAT MIGHT MAKE YOU HAPPY TO HEAD OUT WITH CHILD IN TOW:

Click on the **brands** and **products** for more info:

Tiba + Marl Mini Floral Elwood Farfetch / **Metro Boheme** / **Herschel Supply Co. Jasper Rushfaster** / **Babymel Harlow** The Baby Closet / **Hastings Navy Stripe** PacaPod / **Herschel Little America** The Iconic / **Urban Originals** Hard To Find / **Kånken** Glue Store

6 BOOKS FOR THE *mini feminist*

WORDS **BRON BATES**

BRON BATES HOPES TO RAISE KIDS WHO ARE FAIR-MINDED AND COMPASSIONATE.

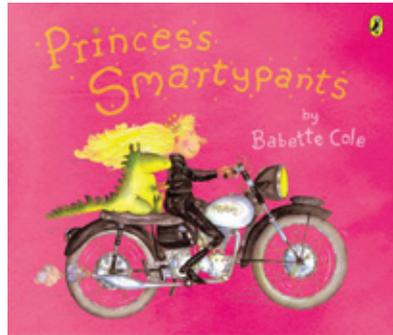
I think that reading picture books that challenge gender stereotypes and sexism with fun stories and colourful pictures is an entertaining way to start. Here are seven books I love to read with my kids. Some of them are about questioning traditional ideas about how girls and boys 'should' behave, some of them simply feature a confident girl as the main character.



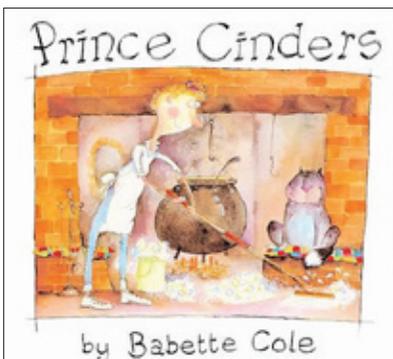
These books aren't just for girls. With one good book, boys as well as girls can understand that all kids, regardless of gender, need to be the lead characters in their own lives.

1. *Princess Smartypants* written and illustrated by Babette Cole

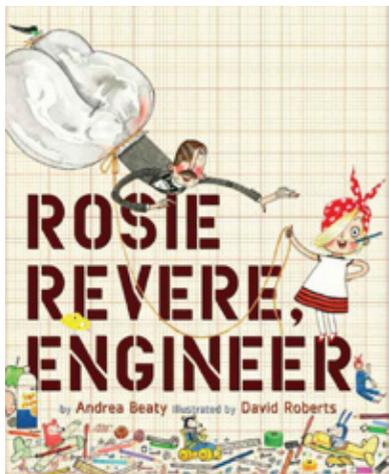
“Princess Smartypants did not want to get married. She enjoyed being a Ms.” If (like me) stereotypical princess stories about beautiful, helpless girls being saved by brave boys leave you cold and cranky, *Princess Smartypants* will brighten your day. Forced by her parents to pick a prince to wed, Smartypants systematically goes about putting off all her suitors with some help from her large collection of fantastical pets.



2. *Prince Cinders* written and illustrated by Babette Cole



What if a prince is not big and handsome but small and scrawny? *Prince Cinders* is mocked and belittled by his tough, hairy brothers who leave him at home to clean up after them while they go out to the Royal disco. One evening, a bumbling fairy falls into his life and he discovers that being ultra-masculine isn't all it's cracked up to be.



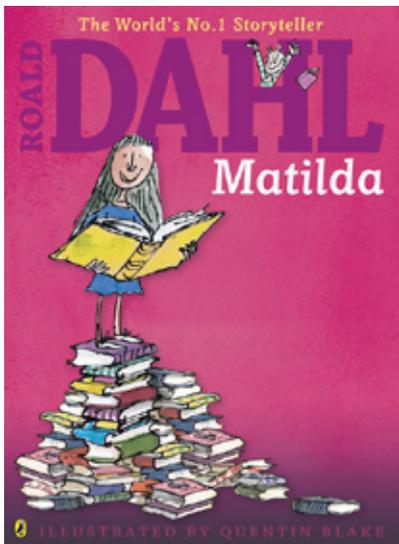
3. *Rosie Revere Engineer* by Andrea Beaty and illustrated by David Roberts

Rosie is a little person with big ideas. When she creates a stupendous invention and her beloved uncle laughs at her, she wants to pack it all in. Her kindly great aunt has other ideas and Rosie learns that, 'The only true failure can come if you quit.'

4. *Olivia* written and illustrated by Ian Falconer

Olivia is a renaissance piglet who likes to be prepared. *Olivia* follows a day in the life of this spirited girl – from her morning routine (moves the cat, brushes her ears) through to her outfit selection (must try everything on), beach prep (must wear everything), setting boundaries with her baby brother, an inspired painting session (on the wall at home), until night when she wearily falls into bed and dreams of being an Opera singer. Naturally.





5. *Matilda* by Roald Dahl and illustrated by Quentin Blake

Matilda is a jewel in a family of thorns, a reader in a family of TV watchers, a girl in a family that favours boys. She's precocious to the point of possessing super powers, and with these, and the help of her sympathetic kindergarten teacher, Miss Honey, she takes her revenge on those that have wronged her.

6. *Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale* written and illustrated by Mo Willems

Speaking up is hard to do when you can't yet talk, but baby Trixie tries her darndest in *Knuffle Bunny*, the first in a series of three books about Trixie. The stories are delightfully illustrated and the plots follow typical mishaps that befall children. What makes this a great feminist picture book? Trixie stands up for herself and her most defining attributes aren't particularly feminine or masculine, they're just those of a confident child.





KAREN MILES JUST SIGNED UP TO BE CLASS MUM... WHAT HAS SHE DONE?

I never thought I'd do this. I don't know what's come over me. I replied 'yes' to an invitation to fill the role of 3F Class Mum 2016.

I find school life completely overwhelming as a parent. There are too many calls made upon parents to volunteer, attend school events – the majority of which are during working hours when I'M AT WORK supporting my family – and breezily stay on top of an overload of school newsletters, daily notes and permission slips.

My husband Stu looked more than concerned when he supportively quizzed, "Are you sure you want to do this?" Even the lovely Ms F of 3F politely questioned my announcement at drop off this morning.





You see, I've never been a class mum. How could I be a super organised/perfect/cupcake-baking type if I wince at the sight of another note requiring 'pack a pasta school lunch for Italian Day'? I love spaghetti, I've been to Italy, but celebrating a country by designing an outfit in the colours of their national flag to wear to school? It's too much.

The notion of a class mother also troubles me. Shouldn't it be class 'parent', not 'mum'? Does anyone have the time to fill this role? Why in our modern age of parenting (steps up on soapbox) do schools even ask folks to do it at all?



When the invitation came to me, my immediate and honest response was fear. Fear of letting people down, fear I'd just blown any sense of time management for 2016 and fear of not meeting the Supermum stereotype I'd clearly built up in my mind of what a class mum needs to be. There she was, back again, in all her super capey glory.



Here's the three key reasons why I said yes, and one caveat: I'm publishing my rationale below so we can reflect back in a school term's time on how I'm fairing and share a collective chuckle. Let's face it, it could only be a matter of weeks before you'll find me rocking in a corner mumbling incoherently.

Ok, here's why I said yes:

1. My daughter Scarlett's having trouble making friends at school, still. At home she's confident, funny and loud, but at school she's anxious, lonely and upset. This breaks my heart. I can still feel the sting of sometimes being left out and friendless, whether it was Year 3, Year 12 or around the water cooler last





week. Do we ever really recover from that? The plan, therefore, is to actively create opportunities for her and her classmates to build friendships. I'm starting with a Valentine's Day afternoon tea party at our home (on a weekend) for the 3F parents and their girls. We'll have a super simple craft activity all about making friends, and I'll bake cupcakes! (I actually make a pretty mean buttercream.)

2. I'd like to build a greater sense of connection with my daughter's school. When I'm at her school, I don't feel like I belong. I don't know many of the other parents and I can see they're forming friendship circles that extend beyond car line and I'd really like to join the fun. The parallel between reason one and reason two is not lost on me.



3. Rounding things out, I'd like to understand how her school works and possibly even contribute to it. To be the voice of the working mum if that would help, and put my permission note fatigue where my mouth is. Time to walk the talk.



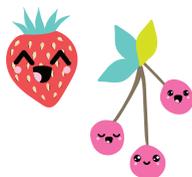
4. OK, I know I said there were three reasons, but there's a secret number four and five. I hope this Class Mum role will provide me with some new and interesting ways to spend time with my daughter – I can't keep watching My Little Pony reruns with her and remain awake. I want to spend more quality time with my kids doing activities we both enjoy, so maybe this could help.



5. I secretly wonder whether being class mum is a path to a greater sense of community and being part of something that helps other parents and their girls feel that too. I guess we'll see?



DO IT YOURSELF FUNNY FACE FRUIT



WORDS + IMAGES **JENNA TEMPLETON**

GO BANANAS DRAWING FUNNY FACES ON FRUIT!

Finding squashed fruit at the bottom of the school bag can be a regular afternoon occurrence for parents, so why not add a bit of fun and creativity to the mix with these funny face fruit characters.

Get the kids together and draw funny faces on the outer-peel of bananas and mangos using markers. Add fun accessories like bow ties, glasses, freckles, hair and rosy cheeks.

TIP: Stickers can also be a great alternative to using markers!





BETTY &
BRUCE
BANANA



MICKEY
MANGO

ONIGIRI

RICE BALLS

WORDS + IMAGES **JENNA TEMPLETON**





RICE BALLS MAKE GREAT COMPACT AND HEALTHY LUNCHES FOR KIDS.

Onigiri rice balls can be made the day before and refrigerated, which is a win for time-poor parents who can't always make school lunch in the mornings.

If packing for a lunchbox, cover the rice balls with cling wrap, then get the kids to create funny faces on each using a marker and stickers.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 CUP OF PRE-COOKED AND COOLED JASMINE RICE
- 1 SMALL TIN TUNA IN SPRING WATER, DRAINED
- 1 TSP MAYONNAISE
- ONIGIRI RICE MOULD (I USED A TRIANGLE, BUT YOU CAN USE A VARIETY OF SHAPES)

MAKES 3 RICE BALLS



METHOD



1. In a small bowl, stir mayonnaise in with tuna until combined.
2. Fill the bottom half of onigiri rice mould with rice.
3. Place tuna-mayo mixture on top of rice in the centre.
4. Fill the rest of the mould with rice.
5. Press and hold down the mould lid, squeezing ingredients together.
6. Take the onigiri out of the mould carefully onto a plate – it should be in the shape of your mould.
7. Repeat steps with remaining mixture to make another two onigiri rice balls.

TIP: If you don't have a rice mould, scoop a good amount of rice into the palm of your hand, followed by a teaspoon of tuna-mayo, and another generous scoop of rice on top. Start rolling into a ball, then mould into a triangle, being sure to keep the tuna in the middle of the rice ball. Keep hands wet with water to stop rice from sticking to your hands.





KIDS LUNCHBOX RECIPES

WORDS + IMAGES **TRACY RUTHERFORD**

NOT SURE WHAT TO PACK FOR YOUR KIDS' LUNCHES TOMORROW? WHY NOT BE INSPIRED BY A THEME? HERE ARE FOUR IDEAS TO GET YOU STARTED.







Fill a lunchbox with your child's picnic favourites!

Chicken Sandwich Shapes

Use cookie cutters to make petite sandwiches in the shapes of hearts. Serves 2.

Ingredients

- 1/3 cup cream cheese
- 4 slices wholemeal bread
- 50g shaved chicken
- 1 small carrot, grated
- 1/4 cup alfalfa sprouts



Method

Spread cream cheese on one side of bread. Arrange chicken, carrot and alfalfa sprouts on two of the slices. Top with remaining bread. Use cookie cutters to cut sandwiches into shapes.

Little Raspberry Muffins

A great bite-sized treat to eat on the go. Makes 12.

Ingredients

- 100g smooth ricotta (from a tub)
- 50g butter, melted and cooled
- 1 egg
- ¼ cup caster sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- ½ cup wholemeal self-raising flour
- ¼ cup self-raising flour
- ½ cup raspberries

Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan forced. Place paper cases into 12 holes of patty-cake tin (50ml capacity).
2. Whisk ricotta, butter, egg, sugar and vanilla until smooth. Fold in flour, then raspberries.
3. Spoon into paper cases and bake for 20 minutes, until lightly golden. They should spring back when touched in the centre. Place on wire rack to cool.

PRE-PREPARE TIP

Cooled muffins can be frozen for up to two weeks. Wrap individually in foil and place in an airtight container or bag.







Let your child tour the world with different cuisines!

NOODLE LETTUCE CUPS

A quick and healthy sandwich alternative. Serves 2.

Ingredients

- 70g rice vermicelli noodles
- 4 slices roast beef, chopped
- 1 small carrot, grated
- 1 small cucumber, halved lengthways and sliced
- 1 tbs sweet chilli sauce
- 1 tbs lime juice
- 4 small iceberg lettuce leaves





Method

1. Place noodles in heatproof bowl and cover with boiling water. Stand for five minutes, then drain. Rinse under cold water and squeeze out excess water. Use kitchen scissors to roughly chop.



PRE-PREPARE TIP

Make the salad the night before and keep refrigerated.



HINT

You could use shaved chicken, thinly sliced tofu or tuna as alternative protein. Add bean sprouts and mint or coriander.

2. Combine noodles, beef, carrot and cucumber. Stir sauce and juice together and add to salad; toss to combine.

3. Divide between lettuce cups and pack in airtight lunchboxes. Keep cool with an ice brick.



TRAIL MIX

A little handful packed with flavour!

Make a nut-free mix using your favourite dried fruits and some crunchy elements. We used goji berries, raisins, dried apricots (cut in half), roasted coconut chips and banana crisps. You could also add cereal pieces. Check labels - some brands of crisp dried fruit (such as the banana) have a lot of added sugar.







Ham & Pasta Salad

A salad to make your kid smile. Serves 2.

Ingredients

- 100g pasta
- ½ cup tasty cheese, grated
- 50g shaved ham, chopped
- 125g corn kernels
- 2 shallots, sliced
- 60g cherry tomatoes, quartered



Method

Cook pasta according to packet instructions, drain into colander and rinse under cold running water (this helps prevent it sticking together). Mix in cheese, ham, corn, shallots and tomatoes. Can be made the night before; keep chilled.

Choc-Orange Energy Balls

A healthy snack kids' will love. Makes 25.

Ingredients

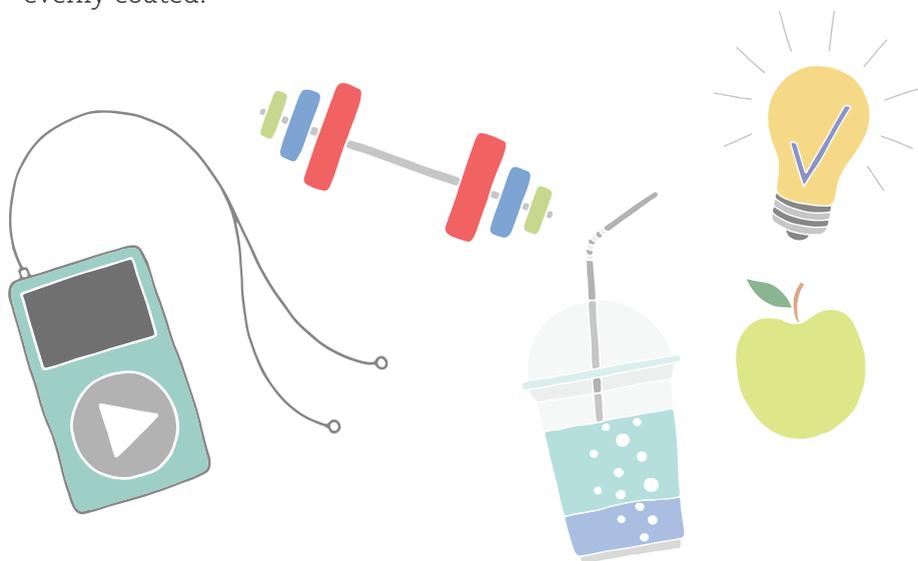
250g medjool dates (from the fruit and veggie section)
1/3 cup desiccated coconut, plus extra for rolling
1 tbs cocoa powder
1 tbs chia seeds (optional)
1 tsp orange rind, finely grated

PRE-PREPARE TIP

Keep the balls in an airtight container in the fridge for up to one week, or freeze for up to one month.

Method

Remove stones from dates and place in food processor with remaining ingredients. Process until smooth. Take heaped teaspoons of mixture and roll into balls. Spread two tablespoons of coconut onto a plate and roll balls in it until evenly coated.





A decorative header featuring various food items and kitchenware. On the left is a green cucumber with a pink end. Next to it is a red apple. In the center, the word "The" is written in a light green, cursive font, followed by a blue fork and a light blue spoon. To the right of the cutlery is a green avocado with a brown pit, a green broccoli floret, and a purple eggplant. The word "Herbivore" is written in a large, light green, cursive font across the middle. Below the title, the text "A lunch that will please the veggie-loving kid in your family." is written in a smaller, brown, sans-serif font.

The Herbivore

A lunch that will please the veggie-loving kid in your family.

A horizontal line of teal circles of varying sizes, some solid and some hollow, spanning the width of the page.

Pita Chips And Vegie Sticks With Hummus

A versatile snack you can mix-up with different dips and crackers. Serves 2.

Ingredients

2 small pita breads

2/3 cup hoummus

Your choice of vegetables, cut into sticks

Method

1. Scoop hoummus into small airtight container or section of the lunchbox. Add vegetable sticks such as cucumber, capsicum, carrot and celery.
2. Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan forced. Cut pita bread into triangles. Arrange on baking tray and cook for five minutes, until crisp. Cool before storing in airtight container.



Apricot Oat Pikelets

Hide all the good things inside a basic pikelet recipe. Serves 20.

Ingredients

½ cup wholemeal self-raising flour
½ cup self-raising flour
½ cup rolled oats
1/3 cup dried apricots, diced
1 tbs caster sugar
1 cup milk
1 egg
1 tsp vanilla essence
butter, to grease

Method

1. Combine flour, oats, apricots and sugar in a large bowl and make a well in the centre. In a separate bowl, lightly beat milk, egg and vanilla together with a fork. Add to dry ingredients and stir gently until combined, but don't overbeat (or you will have tough pikelets).
2. Lightly grease a large non-stick frying pan with butter and heat over medium-low heat. Drop level tablespoons of batter into the pan, leaving room for spreading.
3. Cook for about one minute, until bubbles appear on the surface. Turn over and cook for another minute. Transfer to wire rack to cool, and cook remaining batter. Serve as is, or spread pikelets with a little butter or cream cheese and sandwich together.



HINT

To grease the pan, wrap cold butter in paper towel and wipe over hot pan.



PRE-PREPARE TIP

Freeze pikelets, tightly wrapped in serving portions in an airtight container, for up to one month.

#CHILDMAGREADS

DID YOU KNOW THAT WE ARE ON INSTAGRAM?

We love sharing our favourite books that are on our bookshelf. Click on over to our [@Childmags Instagram](#) to see what we are reading and follow along with our recent picks with our tag [#CHILDmagsreads](#).

