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YOUNG PARENTS

SINGAPORE'S NO. 1 PARENTING MAGAZINE NIELSEN MEDIA INDEX 2016



"She can't stop washing her hands!"

Spot the signs of OCD in kids

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march 2017



on the cover

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DOLCE & GABBANA JUNIOR
Headband **MILK & SODA**
Plushie **MARKS & SPENCER**
Crown **LUCA & VIC**
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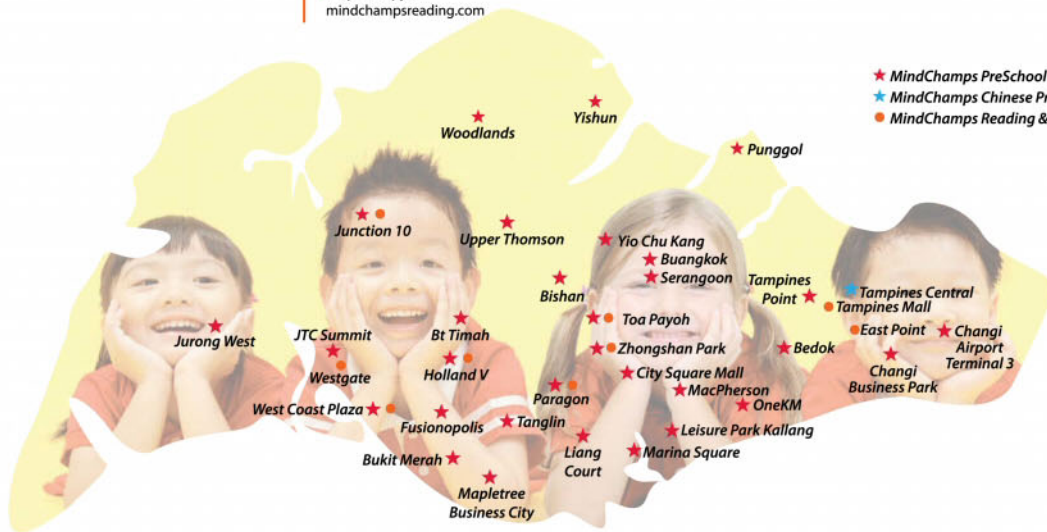
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editor's note



One of the things that surprised me as a new parent was this: babies don't have perfect skin. But aren't they supposed to, you ask? Well, no, say the experts.

It can be upsetting to see your newborn covered with rashes, baby pimples or white bumps, but all these are normal as her skin is still developing.

The trick is knowing when it's a more serious case of allergies – read our story, which is part of our Baby health series this year, on page 30. Our experts also

give you the lowdown on the right skin cleansers to use, and whether you really need to launder with baby detergent.

Talking about skin, one of our must-reads this issue concerns a little girl who couldn't stop washing her hands (page 74).

Thankfully, her mother sought help early and found that she had obsessive compulsive disorder. The condition can easily spiral out of control, so it's important that you spot the warning signs.

In this issue, we also highlight the best spots to bring Baby out to play and eat (page 24). Social-media influencers such as Amber Yong, mum of @leialauren, Hong Qiuting (@bongqiuqiu) and Tjin Lee (@tjinlee) share their favourite places, as well as tips on how to nip public tantrums in the bud.


Check out their suggestions this weekend!





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*Australian Pharmaceutical Index D02A-Emollients & Protectives Market MAT August 2016
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http://www.ncbi.ca/index.php?option=com_content&id=82:the-importance-of-skin-to-skin-contact-&Itemid=17



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we're on instagram!



We spotted these pull toy replicas of old-school playgrounds at Megafash in Suntec City mall.



Little ones can play here while Mummies shop for baby products – the newly opened Bove store has it all thought-out.



We slept with the dinosaurs! This is one of six amazing themed rooms at the Hong Kong Gold Coast Hotel.



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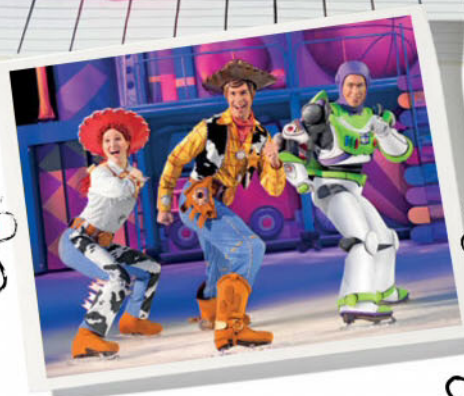


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In this issue

- Video: How to play with the Djeco Bigbom balancing game we featured on page 21.
- More ideas for March school holiday fun.
- 10 things you must know about allergies in children.
- 5 congee and porridge recipes for families.
- 7 ways to solve common problems when going out with Baby.



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THIS MONTH, WE ASK

What are the best ways to keep my kid healthy?

These tips should be on the top of all parents' lists: allow your child to spend at least an hour a day outdoors. Not only will this help protect her against childhood obesity, but it also encourages good eye health.

You should aim to serve at least two portions of fruit and vegetables every day, as well. They're a natural source of vitamins which can aid in boosting immunity and keep her strong.

I always advocate a sensible approach to screen time. See the family media plan at www.healthychildren.org for some great tips.

Dr Natalie Epton, SBCC Baby & Child Clinic

EDUCATION

Brian Caswell is the dean of Research and Program Development at Mindchamps. He has 15 grandchildren.

Helen Marjan is the joint managing director and director of Studies at Lorna Whiston Schools. Her three children are in their teens.

June Rusdon is the chief executive officer of Busy Bees Asia. She has three kids in their 20s.

Leanne Sunarya is the executive director of Etonhouse International Education Group. Her two children are in their 20s.

Fiona Walker is the group managing director of Julia Gabriel Education – Julia Gabriel Centre, Chiltern House Preschool and Chengzhu. Her son is aged 13, and her daughter is 10.

PSYCHIATRY

Dr Cornelia Chee is a psychiatrist and director in the Women's Emotional Health Service at the National University Hospital. Her daughters are aged 12 and 15.

CHILD PSYCHOLOGY

Dr Richard C. Woolfson is a child psychologist based in Britain. He has written 15 books on child and family development, and is *Young Parents'* long-standing Age by Stage columnist. He's also a grandfather of five.

PAEDIATRICS

Dr Chan Poh Chong is the head and senior consultant with the Division of General Ambulatory Paediatrics and Adolescent Medicine at the Khoo Teck Puat-National University Children's Medical Institute, National University Hospital.

Dr Natalie Epton is a specialist paediatrician and neonatologist at SBCC Baby & Child Clinic at Mount Elizabeth Novena Specialist Centre. She has three kids aged four to 11.

GYNAECOLOGY

Dr Goh Shen Li is a consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist in the S L Goh Women's Clinic at Mount Alvernia Medical Centre. She has three children aged two to six.

LACTATION & PARENTCRAFT

Kang Phaik Gaik is a senior nurse manager and parentcraft/lactation consultant at Mount Alvernia Hospital's Parentcraft Centre. Her two children are in their 20s.

NUTRITION

Pauline Xie is a senior dietitian with the Clinical Services Division at the National Healthcare Group Polyclinics. Her three daughters are aged four to 11.

DENTAL

Dr Rashid Tahir is a paediatric dentist at The Kids Dentist. He's also the president of the Pediatric Dentistry Association of Asia and an adjunct associate professor in the Faculty of Dentistry at National University of Singapore. His two daughters are in their teens.

FAMILY

Alfred Tan is the chief executive officer of Singapore Children's Society. His two children are in their 20s.

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Mummy, you said
spots wouldn't
hurt me



**Varicella might seem like a normal part
of growing up, but it doesn't have to be.**

1-2

**It can cause stress, scarring and in extreme
cases even hospitalisation or death.**

1,3-5

**Talk to your doctor today about ways to
protect your children from varicella.**

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For further information, please consult your doctor or pharmacist.
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DIARRHOEA. VOMITING. FEVER. AND A BABY WHO CAN'T TELL YOU WHAT'S WRONG.

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- Severe symptoms such as diarrhoea (up to 20 times/day), vomiting (up to 15 times/day), and fever (39.4°C or higher) may persist up to 7 days.^{2,3,4}
- Infants between 3-24 months are more likely to suffer severe infections.⁵

**Protect your baby as soon as he or she turns
6 weeks old.⁶ Talk to your doctor today.**

A Health Service Message
brought to you by:



Singapore Paediatric
Society

References
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smalltalk

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SAVVY
PARENT

• joy ride

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Jamm Scoot ride-on, \$169, from
www.piccolo-house.com



TEXT STEPHANIE YEO PHOTOGRAPHY ZAPHS ZHANG ART DIRECTION & STYLING EILANE WANG



small talk

make a splash

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- 1 Vaenait floral swimsuit, \$35, from <http://oh-my-darling-joy.myshopify.com> 2 Swan bikini, \$29.95, from www.seedheritage.com
3 Toucan swimsuit, \$59, from www.frolikbeachstyle.com 4 Rash vest, \$22.95, and swimming trunks, \$16.95, from www.cottonon.com/SG
5 One-piece rashie, \$34.95, from www.cottonon.com/SG

TEXT HANNAH MARIE COORDINATION EILANE WANG



6 Flamingo toga swimsuit, \$56.80, from www.gardnerandthegang.com 7 Beluga Kids shark swimsuit, \$69.90, from www.baby-beachbums.com
 8 Horseshoe star swimming trunks, \$49.70, from www.gardnerandthegang.com 9 Palm-tree bathers, \$37.50, from www.kidsagogo.com
 10 Vaenait star swimsuit, \$35, from <http://oh-my-darling-joy.myshopify.com> 11 Pineapple swimming trunks, \$59, from www.frolikbeachstyle.com

KINDERGARTEN 1 ADMISSION IN 2018 FOR CHILDREN BORN IN 2013

Open House: 1 April 2017, 9am – 2pm
Registration Exercise: 1 and 3 April 2017, 9am – 2pm

Bukit Batok

MOE Kindergarten @ Dazhong
Dazhong Primary School
35 Bukit Batok St 31
Singapore 659441

Bukit Panjang

***MOE Kindergarten @ West Spring**
West Spring Primary School
60 Bukit Panjang Ring Road
Singapore 679946

Farrer Park

MOE Kindergarten @ Farrer Park
Farrer Park Primary School
2 Farrer Park Road
Singapore 217567

Punggol

***MOE Kindergarten @ Punggol Green**
Punggol Green Primary School
98 Punggol Walk
Singapore 828772

***MOE Kindergarten @ Punggol View**
Punggol View Primary School
9 Punggol Place
Singapore 828845

Sembawang

***MOE Kindergarten @ Northoaks**
Northoaks Primary School
61 Sembawang Drive
Singapore 757622

Sengkang

***MOE Kindergarten @ Fernvale Link**
Blk 470A Fernvale Link #01-410
Singapore 791470

***MOE Kindergarten @ Sengkang Green**
Sengkang Green Primary School
15 Fernvale Road
Singapore 797636

Tampines

MOE Kindergarten @ Tampines
Blk 489C Tampines St 45 #01-171
Singapore 522489

Yishun

***MOE Kindergarten @ Yishun**
Blk 318A Yishun Avenue 9 #01-126
Singapore 761318

Open House: 8 April 2017, 9am – 2pm
Registration Exercise: 8 and 10 April 2017, 9am – 2pm

Jurong West

***MOE Kindergarten @ Frontier**
Frontier Primary School
20 Jurong West St 61
Singapore 648200

***MOE Kindergarten @ Westwood**
Westwood Primary School
1 Jurong West St 73
Singapore 649188

Sengkang

***MOE Kindergarten @ Springdale**
Springdale Primary School
71 Anchorvale Link
Singapore 544799

Telok Blangah

***MOE Kindergarten @ Blangah Rise**
Blangah Rise Primary School
91 Telok Blangah Heights
Singapore 109100

Woodlands

***MOE Kindergarten @ Riverside**
Riverside Primary School
110 Woodlands Crescent
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- MOE Kindergarten @ Punggol View

Punggol

***MOE Kindergarten @ Oasis**
Oasis Primary School
71 Edgefield Plains
Singapore 828716

***MOE Kindergarten @ Punggol Cove**
Punggol Cove Primary School
52 Sumang Walk
Singapore 828674

***MOE Kindergarten @ Waterway**
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Djeco Bigboun balancing game, \$49.90, from www.thebettertoystore.com



TEXT ELISA CHIA PHOTOGRAPHY ZAPHS ZHANG ART DIRECTION LOY SZE JIN

That's puzzling!

Stimulate your baby's problem-solving skills with these thinking games.



Hape All-Terrain Adventure \$27.94, from www.fb.com/HamleysSingapore and www.og.com.sg



Djeco Mati puzzle \$29.90, from www.thebettertoystore.com



Green Toys 3-D dump truck puzzle \$21.90, from www.motherswork.com.sg



Fisher-Price Silly Sounds puzzle \$29.90, from major department stores

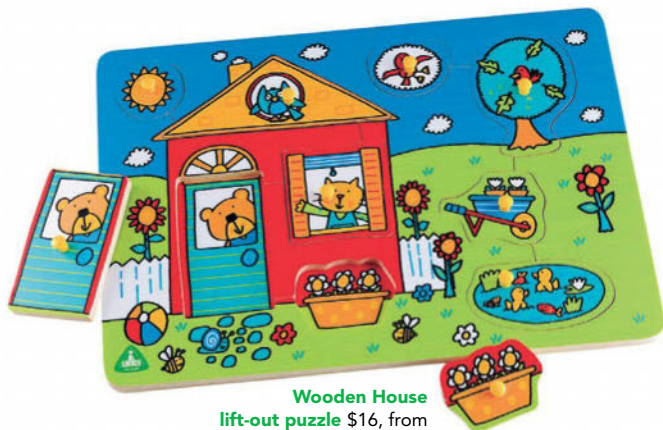




Melissa & Doug Fish Bowl Jumbo Knob wooden puzzle
\$17.90, from
www.motherswork.com.sg



Djeco Pachy & Co 3-D puzzle \$39.90, from
www.thebettertoystore.com



Wooden House lift-out puzzle \$16, from
www.motherscare.com.sg/elc



Petit Collage Ocean Babies beginner puzzle, \$25.90, from
www.tinydipity.com



Fancy meeting you here!

Don't know where to go with Baby? Take inspiration from these influencer mums' favourite haunts and dining places. By **ELISA CHIA**.



@leialauren
Amber Yong, 33, is a marketing manager. Her twins, Leia and Lauren, are one year old.

Our favourite hangouts

The Botanic Gardens, Marina Barrage and Gardens by the Bay. We tend to avoid crowded places as they can get overwhelming for the children.

We like relaxed settings and lots of greenery, where our girls have spacious grounds to toddle around with our dog. Leia and Lauren particularly enjoy kite-watching.

If we're not at these places, we are often spending family time together by the pool at our residence, or at our neighbourhood park's playground.

Another great place is the Marine Cove outdoor playground at East Coast Park, which boasts a range of play equipment suitable for children of varying ages. It is packed with families on the weekends, so it's best to go on weekday evenings when it is not too hot.

Dining places We enjoy taking the kids to DW Workshop, a cafe hidden in a black and white double-storey colonial house at Rochester.



It is spacious and the girls get to roam about in the outdoor patio. It serves delicious food, too, such as savoury chicken, healthy rice bowls, crab salad croissants and cold-pressed juices.

Cafe Melba at Mediapolis is also a nice place for children to hang out while parents have their meal. There is a kid's play area, as well as a huge outdoor deck.

For evening al fresco dining, it would be Starker Bistro at Zhongshan Park, where there are activities such as car rides for the little ones.

In my bag I always have baby essentials such as diapers, wipes, milk, snacks and a spare change of clothing. Not forgetting the camera and toys for distraction!



Our stroller We are currently using the Bugaboo Donkey Weekender twin stroller. We love that it is easy to set up, fits through most doorways and, most importantly, provides a comfortable ride for the girls.

On top of that, it is stylish with its denim fabric, casual grey jersey lining, cognac hand-stitched leather-look handlebar and carry handle, and leather details on the sun canopy!

Go-to kids' fashion brands

There are too many to list here. But to name a few: boutique brands such as Buzz Bear Studio and The Wishing Elephant provide quirky dress-ups for the girls, Itty Bitty Toes for glamorous outfits, L'officiel Enfant for stylish collection and Baby Gap for everyday wear.

Lately, we have also introduced the Leia + Lauren brand, a quirky assemblage of little clothes that is inspired by our girls and our travels. The twins are seen a lot in their own collections, too.

Dealing with public tantrums

For sure, they've had their moments. These tantrums usually come about when they squabble over toys, especially if they are not given one each of everything.

They are also in the phase of toddling and get restless easily when they are in the stroller.

Distraction is key. We've resorted to entertaining them with children's videos on our phones because it is the only way that works, for now.



@tjinlee

Tjin Lee, 42, is an entrepreneur. Her kids, Tyler and Jake, are aged three and one, respectively.

Our favourite hangouts We love to visit the museums, like Singapore Art Museum and National Gallery, where the spaces and architecture are beautiful, and there are so many kid-friendly activities and play areas. It's also sheltered and mainly air-conditioned.

We also like the Zoo and Bird Park; the children love the tram rides there. We go early in the morning, as most Singaporeans don't seem to be early risers. Typically, we arrive by 9.30am and leave at 11am when the crowd is just streaming in.

Dining places Cafe Melba at the Mediapolis is great because it is baby-friendly and can also be very quiet on weekends, being located in a business hub. We look out for spaces with lots of indoor and outdoor areas for toddlers to roam while we dine.

In my bag I always have baby wipes. We love the ones made of bamboo pulp from Cloversoft, an eco-friendly and sustainable brand.



Our strollers Two of our favourites are the Bugaboo Bee and the Mountain Buggy Nano. The Bee is an all-rounder that is super versatile. I just bought a new canopy cover to update it – it now looks good as new!

The Mountain Buggy Nano is light and compact, yet sturdy. Best of all, it folds up into a square-ish size that is easy to pop into trunks or sling on the shoulder. It is also my go-to travel stroller as it is compact enough to fit in a plane's overhead compartment.



For head-turning good looks though, I have my Cybex by Jeremy Scott (pictured left). It is the most stylish of all my prams – with big gold wings and stunning gold wheels – and is a showstopper that I take to events or social occasions.

Go-to kids' fashion brands

There aren't a whole lot of options for boys. That's why we started our online boutique, Baby Style Icon.

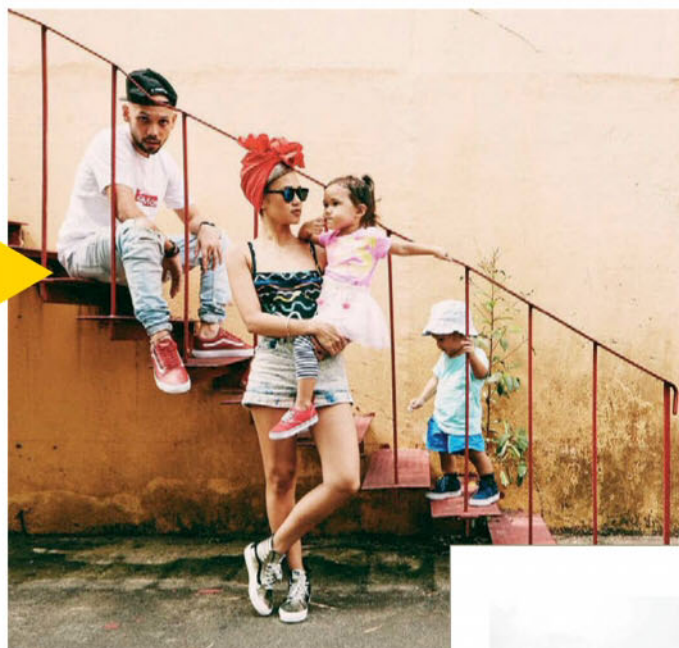
I also love the basics at Mothercare. They are well-priced and excellent value for money.

For special pieces, I like to shop at Alex & Alexa, where you can pick up Kenzo Kids, Stella McCartney Kids, and so on.

Dealing with public tantrums

Like most children, they snatch and fight over things, or get angry when they want something that I can't give them, like my coffee. I am firm with the boys, and consistency is important.

@aarikalee
Aarika Lee, 33, is a singer-songwriter and businesswoman. Her kids, Zola Mae and Ari Jon, are aged three and one, respectively.



Our favourite hangouts There are very few places we go to especially for the kids – maybe the Zoo or the S.E.A. Aquarium.

We enjoy taking them to places that allow outdoor play because both of them love the outdoors – something that I hope will grow into a love of nature as they get older.

The Marine Cove playground at East Coast Park is one of our favourites. It can get a little crowded on weekends but, if we are lucky on weekdays, it's a great stop to make after school, between 11am and 2pm.

We like taking them to gigs (husband Kevin Lester is a rapper) and to museums where they can immerse themselves in music and art – things that my husband and I both love, and that have now become something we can enjoy as a family.

Dining places Our new favourite place is Wheeler's Estate in Seletar. The outdoor area is perfect for children to run around and parents can still enjoy their food and drinks while keeping an eye on the kids.

We've been there on weekends spontaneously and they always seemed like perfect times to drop in. The first time we dropped in it was around 11am, and the second time was around 6pm.

I'm not too particular about what my children eat, so they get to pick anything they want from the menu.

Open Farm Community at Dempsey Hill is also great for little ones. My son loves the warm broccoli salad and my daughter will eat any pasta on that menu. The Caesar salad and open-face lasagna are really good, as well. They also love the playground outside the restaurant.

In my bag I don't leave home without activity books and toys. I have a bunch that I've collected from Usborne Books (available at Motherswork) that the children love, and I always have a stash of toy vehicles in there for Ari, too.

Also, kids' cutlery and food scissors, which are life-savers when we dine out.

Our strollers I use two. One is the Bugaboo Bee with a wheeled board attachment that is perfect for when I'm out with both kids on my own.

The other is the Babyzen Yoyo, which is great for quick outings that might involve public transport. The Yoyo folds up easily and quickly into a compact carry-on that makes it a lot more mobile.

Go-to kids' fashion brands

In Good Company and Sea Apple for special occasions; Le Petit Society and Cotton On for everyday wear. I've also picked up awesome items from Zara and H&M Studio.

Dealing with public tantrums

I always say my kids are unfiltered versions of us. Tantrums mostly happen when they're tired. Just like how adults get a little less patient and cranky when we've had long tough days, I notice that my children only lose their cool when they need to get some rest.



My No. 1 survival tip is to use the distraction tactic. Whenever they look like they're about to throw a fit, I'll find something that will steal their attention.

Be it a toy, or a game or something new to look at, a change in activity has almost always worked for me and then I quickly find a way to finish up what I'm doing, so I can put them down for their nap.

When Zola gets upset, we try to encourage her to tell us what is wrong so we can figure out a way to cheer her up together.

Ari is much younger, but even though he doesn't have the words, he definitely has the ability to tell us what is bothering him, too. The only difference is that the process is a little longer because it usually takes us a few guesses – he'll nod his head to tell us when we've got it right.

BABY'S DAY OUT



@elaine_kim

Elaine Kim, 34, is a doctor and co-founder of social enterprise, Crib Society. She has three sons: Kyan, five, Luke, four, and Nate, three months.



Our favourite hangouts We like Paragon and Vivocity where there's great shopping, as well as kid-friendly restaurants and playgrounds. And because we live at The Club Residences at Capella on Sentosa, we can go to the beach, which is just outside our home, and to Kidzania, which is a three-minute walk away. We go to Universal Studios a lot, where we have annual passes.

Dining places Kyan loves *ebi tempura* and *soba*, and Luke loves *ikura* and *chawanmushi*, so we enjoy going to Japanese restaurants, including the ones at The Japanese Association.

In my bag A change of clothes and wet wipes for the older kids, because they can get messy after meals with ice cream and pasta sauce.

They have their own iPad, which is stocked with educational apps. We limit their screen time, so when we do take it out, it keeps them absolutely engrossed and we can enjoy our meal.

With Baby in tow, there will also be diapers, wipes, diaper cream, a change of clothes, a teething toy and a nursing cover.



Our strollers The Bugaboo Bee Plus with a Maxi-Cosi Pebble car seat. I've used the same stroller for all three boys; it's very versatile.

Last year, I also bought a Joovy Caboose Graphite Ultralight stroller for the older boys as we were travelling, and they loved it.

Go-to kids' fashion brands

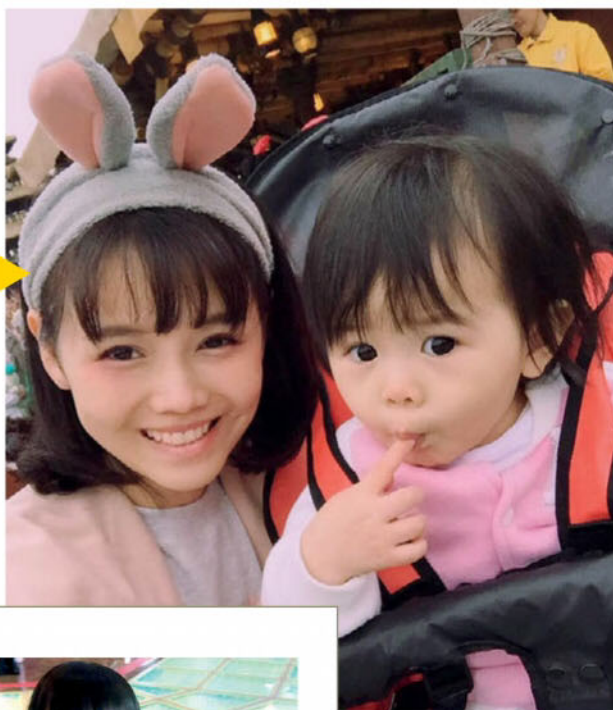
I love the designs from homegrown label Sea Apple. It offers baby and kid sizes, so my three kids can match. Le Petit Society also has beautiful kids' clothes. My children also wear a lot from Kids 21 – we love Paul Smith Junior and Little Marc Jacobs – Armani Junior, Burberry and Carolina Herrera.

Dealing with public tantrums

I haven't had to deal with a full-blown meltdown, thankfully. If I see an impending tantrum, I will get down to their eye level, firmly tell them to behave, do a countdown and then take them away from the public place quickly, if necessary.

They know they will get a time-out if they don't comply by the end of the countdown. Luckily, this method is still effective.

@bongqiuqiu
Hong Qinting, 29, is a full-time blogger and mum to two-year-old Meredith. She is expecting her second daughter in April.



Our favourite hangouts Other than at home in her nursery and at our porch where we have water play and bubble time, we usually spend playtime at indoor playgrounds.

I frequent Cool De Sac because it's very affordable on weekdays, just \$10 for unlimited hours of play for kids under three years old. Inside, there's a cafe where parents can easily watch over their children. Other than toys, playground facilities and ball pits, they also have activities, like face-painting and glass panel painting. There are even TV console games for older children.

I don't always like to go shopping with Meredith – it's boring for kids, unless they're at the toy department. I can spend an hour with her inside Toys "R" Us for free play!

Dining places Astons has lots of child-friendly dishes, from grilled fish that is not too strong-tasting, to mashed potato and pasta. Meredith loves them all, including the mushroom soup and garlic bread.

Before she turned 20 months old, we always packed home-cooked food whenever we went out. But I'm a lot more relaxed now. She can eat "outside food" after she takes her home-cooked food. Variety in moderation is always good, I believe.

In my bag Diapers, diaper cream, her home-cooked food, kid-size cutlery because she likes to feed herself now, food scissors, a water bottle and baby-friendly snacks.



Our stroller I bought a "pariah brand" from Kuala Lumpur for only \$210. I like that it's very light and portable – I can fold it and hang it over my shoulder, like a big sling bag.

Go-to kids' fashion brands Gingersnaps, Cotton On, H&M, Mango and Fox.

Dealing with public tantrums So far, I've only experienced one episode where she insisted on pushing her own stroller. She wanted to play pretend as "Mama Meredith" and we couldn't let her because she was too short to do it.

I have prevented many meltdowns by distracting her. For example, if she



doesn't want to return a toy to the shelf, I'd pretend that someone whom she likes – her teacher, yeye (grandpa) or godmother – is looking for her outside the store. She will put it back and hurry off with me without crying or whining.

Sometimes I even tell her: "I think I saw an elephant walk past! Let's go find it."

I don't know how long more these tricks will work though! ☺

NEW!
BABY
HEALTH
SERIES

7 things you should know about... baby skin

Rashes, bumps, spots and other skin conditions are common, especially during your little one's first year. **EVELINE GAN** finds out what every parent should know about infant skin and how to care for it.



PHOTOS MASTERFILE

1 Don't expect baby-smooth skin.

In reality rashes, bumps, spots and other irritations are common, especially during your little one's first year because his skin is still developing.

The topmost layer (known as the epidermal barrier) doesn't fully mature until he is around one year old, says Dr Lynn Chiam from Children and Adult Skin, Hair and Laser Clinic at Mount Elizabeth Novena Specialist Medical Centre.

Compared to older kids, infant skin is 20 to 30 per cent thinner, shares Dr Ong Ian, a paediatrician at Thomson Paediatric Centre (Katong). This makes it less resilient and more prone to drying out and irritation.

Besides, babies come into contact regularly with milk and food stains, as well as urine and faeces, all of which can cause further irritation to their birthday suit, Dr Chiam points out.

2 Most newborn rashes are harmless, but...

Most skin rashes on your little one are usually not dangerous and clear up on their own, shares Dr Ong. For instance, those pearly white bumps (known as milia) or pimples (baby acne) on his face typically disappear over time.

But this differs for every child. "While some skin issues like baby acne may get better on its own over time, some infants can get more severe forms and may need treatment," says Dr Chiam. "It is important to get the correct diagnosis before deciding whether a rash is mild enough to be left alone."

Sometimes, rashes may also be a warning sign that your baby has some medical issues, such as hand, foot and mouth disease, chickenpox, measles, dengue and brain infection.

Consult a doctor if you notice the following symptoms, Dr Ong advises.

If your baby:

- has fever and pain accompanying the rash, looks generally unwell, and is cranky and irritable.
- has a rash that is widespread, involving large surface areas.
- has a persistent rash that is accompanied by pain, discharge, or feels warm over the affected and surrounding areas.
- has a rash that starts to blister.
- experiences a sudden spread of bruise-like lesions.

3 That rash could be an allergic reaction.

You might have noticed slightly raised red patches, similar to mosquito bites, on your baby's skin. Known as hives, they are often itchy – and scratching them only worsens the problem.

According to Dr Ong, these itchy rashes are usually a sign that your baby has an allergic reaction to certain foods or insect bites, although they may sometimes also occur for no particular reason.

Eczema is another itchy rash that can be triggered by allergies. This condition affects up to one in five kids in Singapore and around the world.

Your baby's skin may feel rough and dry, scaly or flake, Dr Chiam says. In severe cases, the skin may even bleed or become oozy due to non-stop scratching.

It is important to seek professional help for these allergic skin issues. Ask your child's doctor for a skin prick test if you suspect that certain foods or environmental allergens, like pet dander, are triggering the rashes, Dr Chiam adds.

4 Keep Baby's skin clean, but don't overdo it.

Good hygiene is important, but excessive bathing or washing can cause more harm. Dr Chiam advises keeping bathtime short – about 10 minutes or less – and not more than once a day for kids under the age of three.

In the first four weeks, it may be sufficient to bathe newborns two to three times a week, according to Dr Ong.

Avoid using a washcloth during this time; this may speed up water loss from the skin. Instead, you can simply support Baby and allow her to relax in the water, she explains.

After bathing, pat the skin dry gently with a soft towel. Vigorous towelling can irritate delicate skin.

5 Use soap- and fragrance-free cleansers.

Like the frequency of his baths, it is just as important to be mindful of the type of cleansers you use to clean your little one.

"Alkaline soaps are too aggressive on the skin; they dry out your baby's skin, remove oil from the surface and alter the pH of the skin," warns Dr Ong, who adds that maintaining the right pH is important so your baby's skin can develop and mature properly.

Choose products that are soap- and fragrance-free, and do not have added dyes and other chemicals – avoid products that have words like "phthalates" and "parabens" on the ingredient list.

If your baby is prone to eczema, opt for liquid cleansers with added moisturiser, Dr Ong recommends.



**keep him
clean
and dry**



QV BABY GENTLE WASH has a soap-free, pH-balanced formula. Use it daily to cleanse your little one's hair and body. It is suitable for babies with eczema, as well. A 250g bottle retails for \$13.90 at major Guardian, Watsons, Unity, hospital pharmacies, NTUC Fairprice and independent beauty stores. Visit www.egopharm.com.



BIOLANE LIQUID TALC has all the properties of classic talc – in lotion form. Once in contact with skin, the emulsion dries like baby powder and helps absorb any excess dampness – the culprit of most skin irritations. Get a 100ml tube for \$28.90 from selected Watsons and Guardian stores, and www.betime.com.sg.

6 Hold the baby powder.

You may be tempted to keep his bum dry with nice-smelling talcum powder – but don't. When babies inhale tiny powder particles, it may cause lung problems, especially in preemies or those with sensitive airways, Dr Chiam explains.

Instead of using baby powder, change soiled diapers frequently and clean his bottom with water or fragrance- and alcohol-free wipes to avoid diaper rash.

Expose the nappy area to air as often as possible and protect it with barrier creams – try soft white paraffin or zinc oxide creams, Dr Ong reminds.

Don't downplay diaper rash. Dr Chiam says there are many different types of diaper rash and it is best to take your baby to see a doctor to manage it.

7 Baby laundry detergents are not a must.

Mild detergents without added fragrances, dyes, parabens and sodium dodecyl sulphate (a synthetic cleaning agent) are ideal, says Dr Ong.

But using regular detergents in smaller amounts to wash your baby's laundry is fine, too, unless he has extremely sensitive skin, says Dr Chiam.

Still worried? Check for adverse reactions using a simple test: wash one to two pieces of his clothing using regular detergent.

"If your baby's skin appears fine (after wearing the clothing), it is all right to continue. If a rash occurs, try to use a detergent that has minimal amount of fragrances and preservatives," Dr Chiam says. "Alternatively, you can double-rinse the clothes." 🟡



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Ask the doc

Got a question? Our expert is here to help.

When can I introduce my little one to ice cream? Would frozen yogurt be a better choice?

 If your baby has tolerated cow's milk with no adverse reactions – such as vomiting, abdominal pain and skin rashes – then occasional tastes of ice cream after she turns around nine to 10 months old shouldn't be a problem.


But we do usually recommend that babies should not be exposed to foods with any added salt or sugar until after 12 months, so although the occasional taste is okay, you shouldn't give it frequently or in large quantities.

Frozen yogurt also contains added sugar – often more than ice cream – and is unlikely to be significantly more beneficial. It is highly unlikely that the friendly bacteria you are hoping to gain from the yogurt survived the freezing process.

For a healthy, low sugar snack, you are better off giving Baby plain yogurt with some homemade fruit puree, or diced fruit if your child is a bit older.



Should I give my baby a plush toy to sleep with?

 The first concern with plush toys is safety. Never leave a plush toy in a cot or sleeping area where a baby may roll onto it and suffocate.

Also, look at any plush toy as a potential hazard and assess any dangerous features: does it have long legs or arms that could become tangled around Baby's neck; are there any buttons or ribbons that could detach and be a choking hazard?

Plush toys can harbour bacteria and should be washed at least once a week, especially if your baby enjoys sucking it.

If he is very attached to the toy and you are worried about how he will react to having it removed, consider buying two identical toys and rotating them.

Soft toys are also magnets for dust mites and can predispose your little one to nasal allergy symptoms, so they should be kept to a minimum.

I usually recommend only one in the bed of an older child.

ASK THE EXPERT

These questions were answered by Dr Natalie Epton, a specialist paediatrician and neonatologist at SBCC Baby & Child Clinic at Mount Elizabeth Novena Specialist Centre. Got a question? E-mail us at magyoungparents@sph.com.sg.

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Serve all with Love



age by stage 0-1 year

just leave me alone

Whether you're feeling mildly or severely depressed after you become a mum, it's important to recognise the symptoms and seek treatment, reminds **DR RICHARD C. WOOLFSON**.

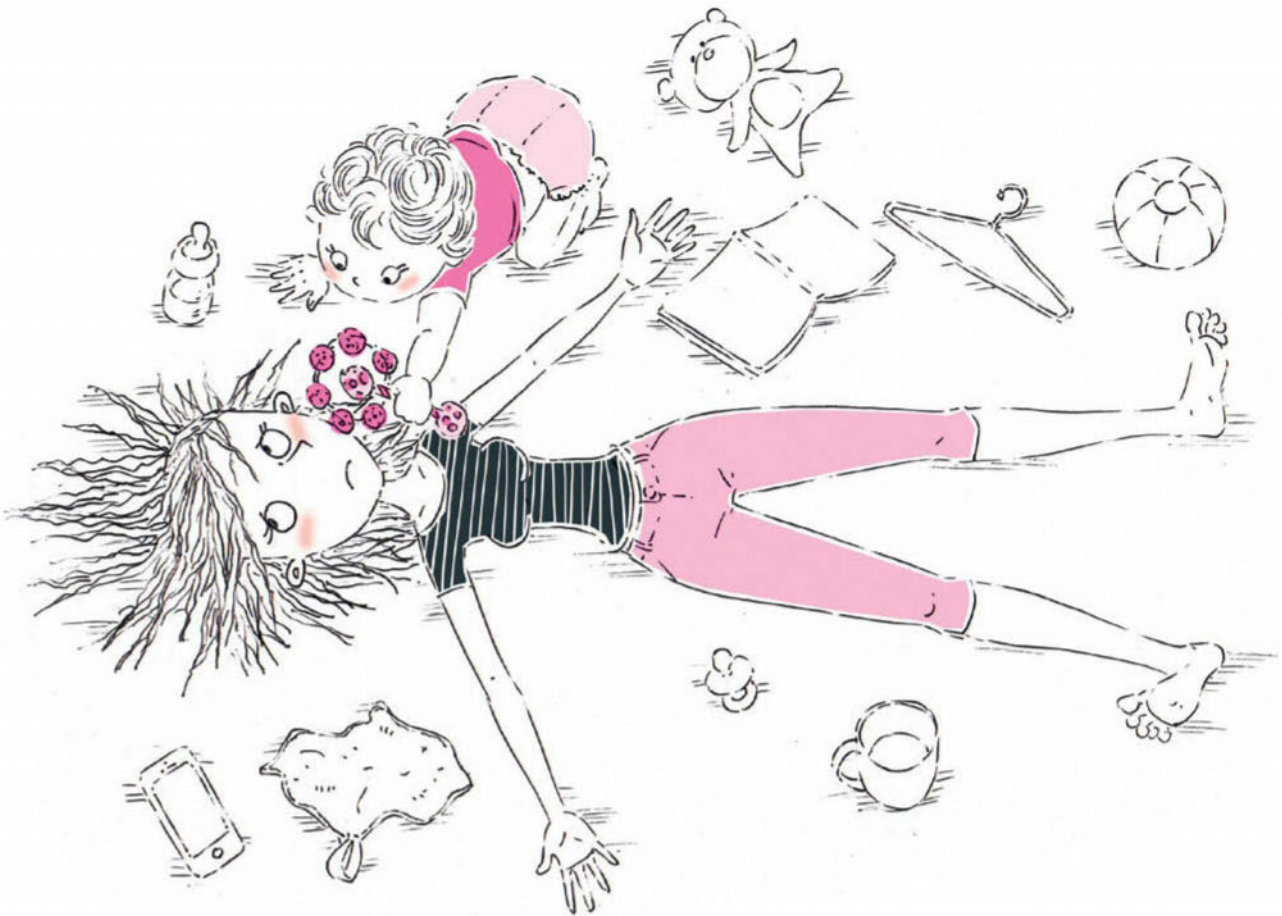


ILLUSTRATION CHENG PUAY KOON

As you've now discovered, childbirth is a stressful experience and coping with your baby in this first year is very demanding, both physically and psychologically.

It's hardly surprising that new mums often feel a whole range of positive and negative feelings immediately, following the birth of their baby.

True, some mothers are very optimistic and upbeat right from the start, but others – perhaps the majority – are more apprehensive, less self-assured and with a lower level of self-confidence.

Bear in mind that childbirth is an enormous strain on your body, the intensity depending on many factors, including your health, the length of the labour and the method of delivery.

Then there is increased tiredness due to your baby's feeding, sleeping and bathing schedule.

There may be other stresses for you, including lack of privacy with your spouse (because you are constantly surrounded by visitors), lack of understanding from other people ("In my day, you just got on with it"), and perhaps unhelpful comments ("I don't know how you manage with your baby screaming all the time").

Not just baby blues

Pressures like these frequently lead to mild feelings of depression and anxiety in the first few days. Known as "the

baby blues", these temporary emotions are so common that most professionals regard them as normal.

They are an almost predictable psychological reaction to the responsibility of caring for a new baby, coupled with the radical change in lifestyle that accompanies motherhood.

Postnatal depression (PND), however, is much more severe and extreme. It lasts throughout the first year rather than just the first few weeks.

Here are some facts about the baby blues and PND:

- Around 80 per cent of new mothers experience the baby blues, usually within five days following delivery. However, this feeling usually passes within a few days without treatment.
- Around 10 per cent of new mothers experience PND. This feeling is so severe and has such a negative effect on their relationship with their baby that professional help is required.
- PND is less frequent in women who have a lively and responsive baby, who are financially secure and who can talk about their concerns.
- PND can cause the new mum to experience loss of self-confidence, poor sleeping patterns, loss of appetite, diminished sex drive, tearfulness, and unpredictable anxiety attacks.
- Many psychologists claim that the baby blues and PND are not separate conditions, but instead are simply different points on the one continuum.

- PND also affects the mother-baby relationship. A baby whose mother has long-term PND is at a much higher risk of having emotional and relationship difficulties.

If you find that you have some of these emotions:

Be honest with yourself

Pretending these feelings do not exist isn't the answer. Denial of your worries won't make them go away. The earlier they are tackled, the better.

Talk to your husband

Tell him how you feel, even if your worries may seem silly. If you don't have a partner, talk to your close friend or to your doctor.

Talk to other new mothers

You'll be reassured to find that your experience is not unique, that others lack confidence, too. Sharing worries with others can be helpful.

Kick guilt into touch It's not your fault that you feel this way. Nor is it your baby's fault. In fact, it's not anybody's fault, it's just one of those things.

Remember that these feelings usually pass in time As with most new tasks, your feelings of anxiety and depression will usually ease as you become more confident.

Get professional help If your anxiety, worries and low mood persist for, say more than eight weeks, speak to your doctor. 🟡



Pretending these feelings do not exist isn't the answer. The earlier they are tackled, the better.

but he has more than enough!

How can you stop your parents from overindulging your toddler? Try to reach a compromise with them, **DR RICHARD C. WOOLFSON** suggests.



Grandma and Grandpa absolutely adore your one-year-old, and you're delighted that he loves them as much as they love him. But you may be worried that they're overindulging him.

It is unlikely that you can ever stop adoring grandparents from spoiling their grandchildren entirely.

However, if you try to reach a compromise – that they can still show their love, but in a way that doesn't break your parental rules – then you'll all be satisfied with the outcome.

Most of all, your little one will benefit from being the centre of attention of two family generations, and the entire family will continue to have a positive relationship.

Here's how you can handle these three common situations tactfully and sensitively.

What happened Your heart sinks when your parents arrive with yet another armful of gifts, and it is not even your toddler's birthday, nor is it Christmas.

You know that your little one already has more toys than he actually plays with, and you worry that he'll simply lose interest if he keeps getting more and more.

How to handle this Before you say anything to Grandma and Grandpa, remember that they shower your tot with toys, books and clothes because they love him and want him to have the best – they're not doing this to annoy you.

Thank them for their presents, and explain that because he still has lots of unopened ones, you'll keep the gifts they just brought, so he doesn't get everything at once.

Tell the grandparents that you'll let them know when his current pile diminishes in size, and ask them not to buy anything more until then.

What happened You've told the grandparents that your tot is not allowed to touch that valuable ornament on the shelf, and yet they let him do what he wants.

When they allow him to do something that you have specifically told them he shouldn't do, they undermine your parental authority.

How to handle this Tell Grandma and Grandpa that you understand they love him and that they don't want to say "no" to him – most grandparents quickly lose the ability to use that word with their grandchildren. But add that you also know they want you to be an effective parent who can provide the best possible upbringing for their grandchild.

Point out that by breaching a limit you have set for your toddler's behaviour, they weaken your authority as his parent.

They won't like to think that they have a bad effect

on your relationship with your child.

What happened Your parents have kindly looked after Junior for a couple of hours, but when you return, his face is smeared with chocolate and his hands are sticky with the residue of sweets.

You have very clear ideas about his diet, and about the foods he shouldn't eat. In particular, you only allow him chocolates and sweets on special occasions.

How to handle this Giving food is a demonstration of love, so the grandparents don't think that giving him lots of sweets is spoiling him. As far as they are concerned, that's just another way of expressing their love for him.



They shower him with toys and clothes because they love him and want him to have the best – they're not doing this to annoy you.

Since sweets and chocolates can be an effective way of settling a restless toddler, the next time they babysit their grandchild, put out a small amount of sweets for him.

Tell them they can give their grandchild these sweets if they want, but they shouldn't give him any more as that would be bad for his teeth. ☀



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here we go again

Your little one seems to destroy everything he touches, from toys to books and furniture. Why is he so destructive?

DR RICHARD C. WOOLFSON has an explanation.



Why can't your toddler be more gentle or play nicely? Within seconds, he turns a perfectly good object into a pile of rubbish, either by tearing, pulling, biting or smashing.

Of course you'll get annoyed when you see the trail of destruction that he leaves behind. But don't confuse his natural curiosity with aggression.

Your tot is a scientist, by nature. He likes to explore the world around him. That's

partly how he learns about himself, about others and about his surroundings.

Through this driving curiosity, he builds up his knowledge of how things work. He can't think of a better way to discover the inner secrets of toys, books and other objects than to take them apart, piece by piece.

It's not that he wants to break them up for the sake of it, or because he has an aggressive personality; he just wants to see inside them, to see how they are put together, to see how they work.

Unfortunately, that usually means the object under scrutiny is damaged beyond repair, but your little one doesn't think that far ahead.

While enthusiasm and inquisitiveness underpin your tot's learning, your challenge is to harness these positive qualities in ways that support his exploration, but at the same time don't cause quite so much collateral damage.

Here are some strategies you can consider:

Provide toys that come apart

Since you know he enjoys disassembling objects, give him a toy that he can put together and take apart, again and again.

For example, age-appropriate bricks, like Lego Duplo and Megablok, allow him to stick them together any way he wants and then to break up his model just as quickly.

Encourage your tot to play with these sorts of toys so he can satisfy his curiosity without creating chaos.

Set clear limits The problem is that he has not yet learnt when it is appropriate to dismantle an object and when it is not. He thinks they are all the same, from that perspective.

Explain clearly to him what he is not allowed to damage,

such as the DVD player, the ornament on the table and his books. Point out that these objects can't be put together again, so he must handle them gently.

Be prepared to say "no"

Once you've explained that he is not allowed to break toys or furniture, but he still proceeds to take them apart, step in and say "no" to him. Don't be afraid to stand your ground, even if he throws a tantrum.

If you give into him, he'll quickly learn that when you say "no", you really mean "no", unless you have a tantrum, in which case I'll say yes."

Distract rather than confront

Better still, don't wait until you have to confront your little one – prevention is always more effective. So if you see him about to tear up a book or break up a toy, distract him with another more appropriate activity.

Offer him a different toy or game, and play along with him so he is totally engaged with it. That way, you can avert the crisis before it actually happens.

Use praise effectively

When Junior does play properly with a toy and leaves it in the same condition that he found it, give him lots of praise. Tell him how pleased



Give him toys that can be taken apart, again and again, so he can satisfy his curiosity without creating chaos.

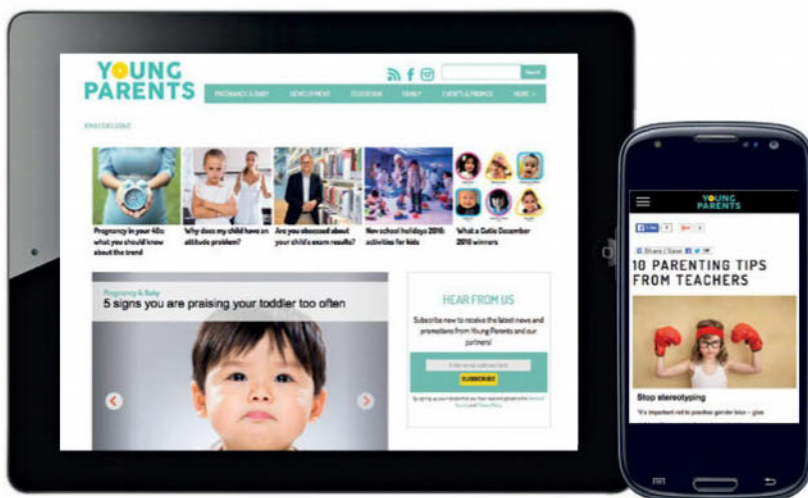
you are that he played so nicely with the item.

He'll glow with pride from your positive comments and he is less likely to be destructive with his toys in the future.

Rewarding for positive behaviour is usually more effective than punishing for negative behaviour. ☺

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age by stage 3-4 years

who are you talking to, sweetie?

Don't be alarmed if your preschooler talks to herself while she plays.
DR RICHARD C. WOOLFSON explains the reasons behind such self-talk.



ILLUSTRATION CHENG PUAY KOON

You may have noticed that your three-year-old talks to herself. That's perfectly normal at this age because her world of play is full of fantasy. Her ability to use her imagination in a variety of innovative ways takes off at a rapid rate during this year.

Watch your child closely while she plays (though make sure she doesn't realise you are looking at her) – chances are you'll discover that she becomes very animated and she starts to talk as though she is in a conversation with someone else – except she's the only one there.

You might even hear her bark out orders, or ask questions, and then stare into space as she waits for a response.

Don't be alarmed by this behaviour. Your preschooler knows that this episode is based on fantasy, and she understands the difference between what goes on inside her head and the real world outside.

If you ask her: "Is there really someone there that you are talking to?", she'll look at you as though you are the one with a problem!

But it's best not to probe like that. After all, she's engaging in a bit of harmless play and your anxious questions might deter her from playing this way again in the future.

My (imaginary) friend

Sometimes, a child uses her fantasy skills to create an imaginary friend, someone (though it could be an animal, not a person) who is so vivid in her mind that she behaves as though the "friend" is actually real.

For instance, she might very politely ask her friend what she wants for a snack. Yet your little one knows her imaginary playmate does not exist, despite this apparent conversation. Perhaps the imaginary friend is best understood as living in that halfway house between reality and fantasy.

Research shows that a boy's invisible pal is usually more competent and talented than the boy himself, whereas a girl's fantasy friend is generally less competent.



Don't panic – she's engaging in a bit of harmless play and your anxious questions might deter her from playing this way again.

When a child does have an imaginary companion, it often appears less than once a day. The imaginary friend disappears as quickly as she arrives, without any pomp or ceremony, typically when a child is around the age of six or seven.

It's a pep talk

Talking to herself at this age occurs for another reason, too. Termed "self-directing speech" by psychologists, a three-year-old can talk to herself in order to give herself instructions.

That's why your child might say: "Put that piece there and this piece here", when playing with a jigsaw. She talks to herself because she is giving

herself directions to complete the challenge in front of her.

Maybe you do this, too, without realising it. For instance, if you are nervous about going to the dentist, as you approach the surgery you might say to yourself: "Don't be silly, act like a grown-up", in order to compose yourself. You and your little one use this method in the exact same way, only she does this more frequently than you.

However, self-talk that is very frequent (several times every day), very intense (the child becomes emotionally charged every time she speaks to herself) and very resistant to outside interference (she refuses to acknowledge you when you speak to her while self-talking), can be a sign of a deeper underlying difficulty.

Most likely this happens because the child is anxious about something, for example, perhaps she is troubled about her relationships with her siblings, and once that concern is resolved her self-talk play returns to its previous normal level.

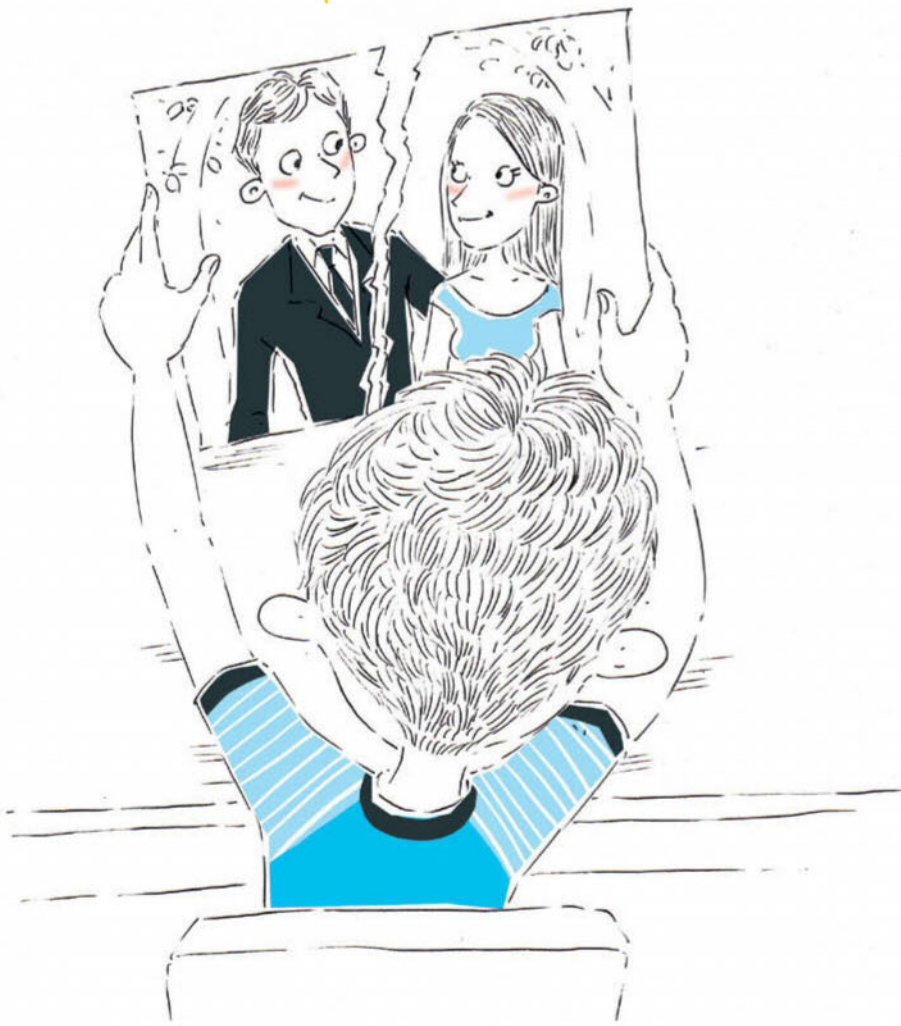
If you are at all bothered by the amount of self-talk in her life – and in virtually all instances, such worry is totally unjustified – have a chat with your family doctor about it. 🟡



age by stage 5-6 years

is it my fault you're divorcing?

If you and your spouse are splitting up, it's important to address your child's tough questions head-on. **DR RICHARD C. WOOLFSON** guides you with suggested answers.



If you and your spouse are heading for divorce, you will have to tell your kid at some point soon. Here are some of the tough questions he might ask, and suggested answers.

Always take his questions seriously, provide reassurance and let him know he can ask you questions about this anytime he wants.

"Why are you and Daddy getting divorced?"

What you could say "Daddy and I are going to live apart because we are not getting on well with each other. But I still care about him and he still cares about me, and we both still love you. It's just one of those things."

What your answer should do Your child is trying to make sense of the disturbing change in his life and he loves both of you. Your reply should tell him in simple terms why you are breaking up, but at the same time emphasising that you both still care for each other and for your child.

He wants to remain loyal to both of you and does not want to have to choose one instead of the other.

ILLUSTRATION CHENG PUAY KOON



"Is it my fault? Have I done something wrong?"

What you could say "No, it has nothing to do with you. You have done absolutely nothing wrong. You are a wonderful child. This is totally about me and Daddy."

What your answer should do Your kid's instinctive reaction is to blame himself for the separation, and he worries it is his fault.

So, it's important to reassure him that you both think he is wonderful and that the parental split has absolutely nothing to do with him. No matter how much he tries to take responsibility, make it clear that he is innocent.

"Will I see Daddy once he moves out?"

What you could say "Of course you will see him. Daddy and I will make sure of that, so you have nothing to worry about. This week, for instance, you are going to meet him on Friday afternoon after school."

What your answer should do Your child loves both of you and he wants you both to remain in his life, even if you don't like each other. Your answer should provide reassurance that, of course, he will continue to see his father.

You should even tell him when and where they will meet. Concrete details help your child trust what you say.

"Will I have to change my school?"

What you could say "No, of course you will go the same school. That's not going to change. We know you have

No matter how much he tries to take responsibility for your split, make it clear that he is innocent.

lots of friends and like your teacher, so you will stay there."

What your answer should do Your young one already thinks ahead and is concerned about the implications the divorce has for him. Emphasise that nothing will change about his schooling routine.

Unless you are certain that you will move house and will move out of the area, you should make it clear that he'll continue to go to the same school.

"Will you and Daddy get back together soon?"

What you could say "Daddy and I are not going to get back together. I am being very honest with you, and I don't want to pretend to you. But we'll soon get used the new arrangement, don't worry."

What your answer should do Your kid wants his mother and father to live together in his house – that's all he's known and he wants it to continue.

Your answer has to be realistic. No matter how tempted you might be at this point, don't give your child false hope. Instead, gently repeat that the separation is permanent and reassure him that you'll all soon get used to the new situation. ☺

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age by stage 7-9 years

best friends forever? maybe, maybe not

Did your child's best friend find another bestie? It's time to teach her to widen her social circle, says **DR RICHARD C. WOOLFSON**.

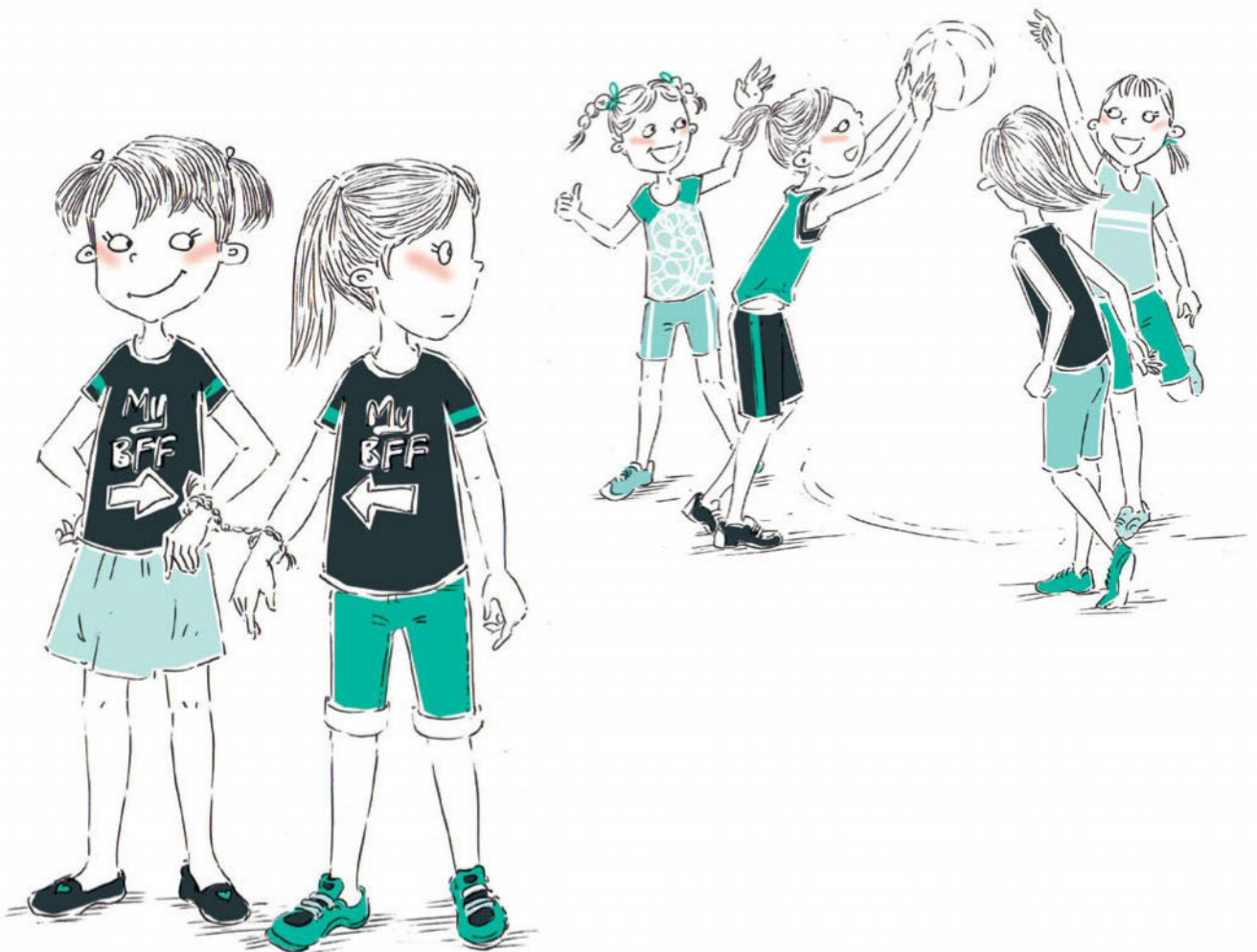


ILLUSTRATION CHENG PUAY KOON

Friendships can be tricky at this age, because most children regard them as precious. That's why your primary schooler is so possessive about her best friend – she becomes immensely jealous when her BFF wants to hang out with other girls.

So, don't be surprised if your child comes home from school one day in tears because her "bestie" has another new BFF – she is afraid of losing her pal altogether and, even if they stay pals, she is upset because they are no longer exclusive.

She needs your help to manage those relationships more effectively.

Friendships bring so many benefits to your tween. For a start, she has someone to play with at school and at weekends, which means she need never feel lonely.

In addition, a solid friendship means she is not socially isolated, and this boosts her self-esteem. Besides, a close friendship during childhood allows each of the children in that relationship to test out their ideas without fear of adult criticism.

All these influences interact to such an extent that the majority of children thoroughly enjoy having a best friend.

Friendships are complex

As an adult, you know that friendships are rarely exclusive. It is perfectly normal for you to have a close friend in one context (say, the workplace) and a totally different close friend in another context (say, among your social group).

It is also common to have two or more close friends in the same context (say, people you met during play dates).

You know that one friendship is not threatened by the other; they don't compete. However, you have learnt that through experience. Confidence in the stability of friendships builds up gradually.

But your child doesn't have that experience, not yet anyway. In the meantime, she might be plagued with jealousy.

The more, the merrier

The best advice you can give your child is that she should try to have more than one best friend.

Of course she may be drawn to a particular kid, because of shared interests, or similar personalities. There is nothing wrong with that. But try to encourage her to mix with other children, too. It's good for her to have a range of friends; some at school, some around the neighbourhood.

Having multiple close friends safeguards her so that she has other children to play with in case one particular relationship break down – and

friendships during childhood are notoriously fragile.

Having more than one close friend also teaches her to feel less possessive about her pals, to accept that friendships can change, and to reduce jealousy.

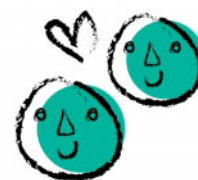
Take a keen interest in her relationships at school; if you find that she mentions the name of only one child all the time, suggest she plays with others in her class, too. Monitor the situation closely.

If the time does arise when your tween reveals she is jealous that her best friend has another BFF as well, comfort her. Point out that she is a wonderful child and that she'll make a new bestie in no time.

Be sympathetic, but don't indulge her self-pity. Explain that her friend's attachment to a new child does not mean there is anything wrong with her personally, just that the girl wants to have more than one pal.

Your child will get over the loss of this exclusive relationship reasonably quickly, much sooner than you expect!

With luck, she'll learn from this social experience that friendships cannot be controlled, and that part of friendship can at times mean letting go when someone is ready to move on. 🟡



Having more than one close friend also teaches her to feel less possessive about her pals, to accept that friendships can change, and to reduce jealousy.

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Masterclasses



2. The Straits Times Parenting Masterclasses

Experts will discuss how news stories are useful resources for imparting character education and English language skill to pupils. Parents will also hear from positive psychology coach and award-winning author, Sha-En Yeo and News-in-Education specialists from The Straits Times Schools Team.

NEW!



3. Colouring & Art Contests

To promote creativity amongst children, we are introducing a colouring contest and an art contest for children from two different age groups. Ignite your child's creativity!



4. Activity Area

An introduction to a list of hands-on activities specially crafted for parents and children on all three days. Take part in many activities such as decorating, baking and even printmaking!

NEW!



5. SmartKids Asia Storyland

Partnering with National Library Board, we are bringing about timeless classics in the form of theatrical plays and storytelling! Immerse in stories such as Goldilocks and the Three Bears, Little Red Riding Hood, Hansel & Gretel and more!



6. Free Trial Classes

Three days of FREE trial classes – a great platform for parents to test-drive the many list of educational and enrichment programmes that is best suited for their child.



7. Stage Activities

A comprehensive set of stage segments from various exhibitors encompassing education, the arts, and more!

NEW!



8. Talent Time

A stage segment comprises of children from all walks of life, displaying various skills and talents for the coveted title of SmartKids Asia Talent Time champion! Registrations will be opened at SmartKids Asia's Facebook page.

MEET & GREET!



9. Meet & Greet

Big names such as Pororo & Friends and My Little Pony will put on a dance number and meet and greet session on stage for children and parents on all three days!



10. Fun Inflatable Rides

To keep children of all ages wildly entertained, a space of more than 200sqm will be dedicated to a set of fun and one-of-its-kind inflatables. Best of all, it's free for all to play!



11. SmartKids Asia Goodie Bags

The early bird catches the worm, as the saying goes. A total of 1,500 goodie bags will be given to the first few per day. How to grab a goodie bag? Stay tuned to our Facebook page or be the first few to queue at the door.



12. Fun Passport

The Fun Passport promises to deliver excitement for all. Complete 10 activities at 10 different pit stops and be entitled to win a prize!



13. Daily Lucky Draws worth up to \$10,000

Happening once daily, the draw comprises of prizes such as cash vouchers, musical instruments, staycations and more! Be sure to stick around till the end of each day.

17-19 March
Singapore Expo Hall 6

10am to 9pm

(Fri & Sat)

10am to 8pm

(Sun)

**FREE
ADMISSION!**

Colouring & Art Contests

STABILO JUNIOR COLOURING CONTEST

FOR 5 - 8 YEARS OLD

**IS YOUR CHILD A COLOUR ENTHUSIAST?
TAKE PART IN SMARTKIDS ASIA'S LATEST
COLOURING CONTEST TODAY!**

At SmartKids Asia, we believe that art and creativity comes in various forms; from the unwarranted doodles on the walls, or the very first stick figure on a sketchpad, we welcome them all. Delving into the realms of creativity and imagination, we are partnering with Stabilo to introduce a Colouring Contest for children ages 5 to 8 years old.

Come discover the world of colours with us at SmartKids Asia. On 17-19 March, we are welcoming children who are experts at grasping a crayon and expressing their love of colours on a sheet of paper. As a token of our gratitude, every child who enters the contest will receive a Stabilo Goodie Bag worth \$15. **Artists with the 10 best artworks will be presented with prizes worth up to \$500 in total and an official certificate**, determining them to be the best conveyors of colours in the competition.



SMARTKIDS ASIA ART CONTEST

FOR 9 - 12 YEARS OLD

**AMP UP YOUR CHILD'S CREATIVITY
AT SMARTKIDS ASIA!**

Registration is now open for SmartKids Asia Art Contest, in collaboration with Dim Sum Place – a cool, new food establishment that'll be opening soon in 2017 by the good folks who started The Ramen Stall.

As a family-friendly (and Halal-certified) joint, Dim Sum Place embodies a bonding space for friends and families of all ages and ethnicities. They believe in the notion that great food has the ability to transcend boundaries, bringing people of all walks of life together, at one table.

SmartKids Asia is challenging young creators and dreamers to translate their ideas into art form. Paint us a story based on your very own idea of "A great makan time". Artists with the 10 best artworks will be presented with prizes worth up to \$500 in total and an official certificate, determining them to be the best imaginers of the contest.



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NLB

National Library Board
Singapore

STORYLAND



**LITTLE RED
RIDING HOOD**



**GOLDILOCKS AND
THE THREE BEARS**



**HANSEL AND
GRETEL**

Be immersed in timeless classics at SmartKids Asia 2017.
Partnering with National Library Board, children will be treated to
theatrical plays and storytelling sessions on all three days.
Admission is free! Register at www.smartkidsasia.com.

THE STRAITS TIMES YOUNG STORYMAKERS CAMP



WHAT WAS LIFE LIKE FOR A WAR REPORTER IN WORLD WAR II?



Sign up for The Straits Times Young Storymakers Camp this March school holidays and find out!

Primary school pupils are invited to go on a learning journey during SmartKids Asia that will cover history, English, photography and more.

To commemorate the 75th anniversary of the fall of Singapore, young explorers will step into the shoes of a war reporter at The Straits Times Young Storymakers Camp, created by the team behind the broadsheet's award-winning weekly magazine, Little Red Dot.

Registration is now open for early birds!
Get your parents to scan the QR code or visit our website at www.smartkidsasia.com.



SCAN & REGISTER!

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS:

- * Gain basic news reporting techniques taught by The Straits Times journalists;
- * Learn what it takes to create engaging photographs;
- * Experience the trauma and perils of war from the Changi War Trail;
- * Understand war and occupation from the thoughtfully-designed galleries, engaging exhibits and personal artefacts at The Changi Prison Museum;
- * Capture unique photos as your child explores the bunkers at The Battlebox
- * Create a unique front page for their own newspaper in The Straits Times Newslab at SmartKids Asia; and
- * Boost confidence and communication skills through hands-on engagement.

Programme Information:

Dates: March 17 and 18
Time: 8am - 6pm
Participants: Primary school levels
Registration fees:
\$200 for two days per child



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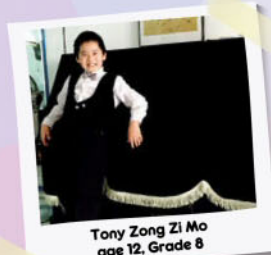
Why We Love CRISTOFORI

"I am very thankful and grateful for the many wonderful opportunities given to me by CRISTOFORI to learn and develop my love for music.

For the past 6 years, my Piano teacher, Ms Lim Wai Fong, has been my pillar of strength and inspiration. She is really the best teacher, ever!



Irwin Chua Yong Da
age 12, Grade 7



Tony Zong Zi Mo
age 12, Grade 8

"I started my memorable Piano journey 3 years ago. I would like to thank my supportive mentor, Ms Agatha, and my family who shaped me into a successful musician today. They corrected my thinking to respect music with the instrument I love and guided me with the right perspectives of music. Her efficient teaching has helped me to reach Piano Grade 8 within a short period.

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- Bass Guitar
- Drum



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- Golden Age Keyboard
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- Monochromatic Madness
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- All Rounded Creative Camp



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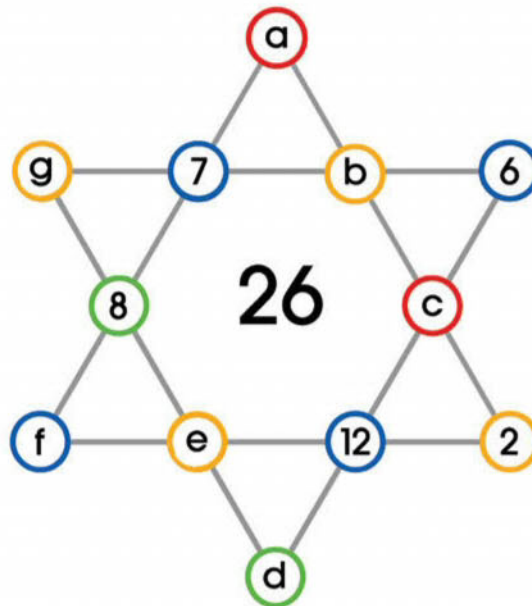
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CRITICAL THINKING CHALLENGE

Several of the circles have letters.
 Replace each letter with a number listed below only once
 so that the sum of the 4 numbers along each segment
 of the star figure equals the number given in the center.

1, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11



Join us at Smartkids Asia 2017
Booth H01, Singapore Expo Hall 6, from 17-19 March 2017!

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Can we afford our child a bit more playtime so that he may well fall down, scrape his knees, but he would **learn the skills** to pick himself up, **grow in character and tenacity and resilience**? All those are what I call tacit learning, and **what makes a complete person.**



- Ng Chee Meng,
Acting Singapore
Education Minister

Thank you to F-17, Coaches, parents & my son's buddies & friends who help to coach & take care of him when we were not there during trainings & competitions. We really appreciate it so much! Raiyan told us that he enjoyed his journey with F-17 so much! The experience, team bonding & winning the Plate Championship are very priceless to him. He would love to join the future tournaments again if time permits him to do so.

Once again thank you everyone!!!

- Mum of Raiyan (age 10)

Thanks to all coaches who took care of the kids and guided them to play good soccer with the right mindset and attitude. We may lose some games but the kids wear the F-17 jersey with pride when entering the pitch. Salutes to Coach Habil and Coach Jahsh. Sam has learned a lot. When I saw the entire group of F-17 players giving full support to the U10s during the Plate Final and how they rushed to the pitch to congratulate the juniors, I realized this is a value of the F-17 Family. Thanks and I wish all the best to coaches, parents and kids! God bless!

- Dad of Samuel Lim (age 12)

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YOUR CHILD'S **S.M.A.R.T** JOURNEY STARTS HERE!

Our world is rapidly changing. In 20 years, 65% of today's jobs will no longer exist in their current form. So how can we best prepare our children for the future?



SEEK Out Strengths

MAP Out Personalised Plan

ACCCESS Classes & Activities

At **Flying Cape**, we believe that maximising learning potential in our children starts with understanding how each child is unique in terms of interests and learning styles.

Our **S.M.A.R.T** framework takes the best of research from renowned academics all over the world and translates these findings into clear and actionable plans you can apply.

REVIEW Progress & Achievements

TURBO CHARGE for Greater Success & Confidence

TOP TIPS FOR A SMARTER & HAPPIER KID



SEEK Out Strengths

- Find out your child's **strengths, interests and learning styles** using diagnostic assessments. Flying Cape's free **Multiple Intelligence** assessment is available at <http://mi.flyingcape.com.sg/>
- Let your child try out a wide range of activities using our **All-You-Can-Learn Class Buffet** and determine fit of school and teaching style. At 5 classes for \$99, what are you waiting for?



MAP Out Personalised Plan

- Use Flying Cape's **CompassMap** to decide what to focus on and to ensure that your child grows up all-rounded.
- **Remember:** Success in academics is not the only way to ensure success in the real world.



ACCESS Classes & Activities

- Search for your desired classes at **www.flyingcape.com.sg**.
- Get your child's active input in deciding on the type of classes. Commitment to learn is always stronger if it is a **joint decision** between parent and child.



REVIEW Progress & Achievements

- Get **regular feedback** from your child's teachers.
- Coming soon: Measure what matters - Flying Cape's **holistic scorecard** helps you track all the activities and classes your child has attended, all in one place.



TURBO CHARGE For Greater Success & Confidence

- **Affirm** your child's progress and jointly determine next steps. Increase the level of difficulty or try out new ways of learning where appropriate.
- Explore **practical applications** of new found skills and knowledge.



It was super convenient because instead of having to scout around for different schools, I could just search on Flying Cape and find all my preferred classes and timings. The staff at Flying Cape was really efficient and helpful too.



Ann Teo, professional working mum

The founders of Flying Cape firmly believe in personal development. Hence on this platform, not only will you find an array of classes to boost your kids' academic prowess, you will also find classes that enhance other areas of your child's life.



Meiling Wong-Chainani, popular parent blogger at Universal Scribbles



A HOLISTIC WAY OF NURTURING YOUR CHILD FROM INSIDE OUT



BOOST YOUR CHILD'S EQ

People Impact's best-selling IQEQ programme enhances self-esteem, and imparts anger management and anxiety coping skills.



BUILD CHARACTER

Hybrid Karate's family-like environment lets your children kick their way to a more disciplined and confident life.



HOW TO MOTIVATE YOUR CHILD?

Acorn Training's REISS motivation diagnostic tells you what makes your child tick and how you can use that to improve his behaviour and school results.



ACE EXAMS

Established tuition centres like **Kent Ridge Education** and **StagMatch** have helped students all around Singapore raise their grades dramatically.



DISCOVER YOUR TALENT

Singapore Dance Theatre's ex-principal dancer Ms Xia Haiying now helms **City Ballet Academy**, producing ballet scholarship holders and graceful weekend learners. If you prefer to draw or paint, check out **Art Flock**.



THE GIFT OF THE GAB

Speech Academy Asia has helped thousands of children speak up and speak better. Go for a class today and see the difference for yourself!



UP YOUR PARENTING GAME

Flying Cape exclusive partner **MegaChamps** does great sold-out FutureSmart workshops. Next up: a session at Facebook in March. Book now to avoid disappointment!



GET A HEADSTART WITH STEM

Coding, robotics and 3D printing are the foundation for great jobs in future. Flying Cape partners **Inspira** and **Learning Journey** show the way with their excellent curriculum.

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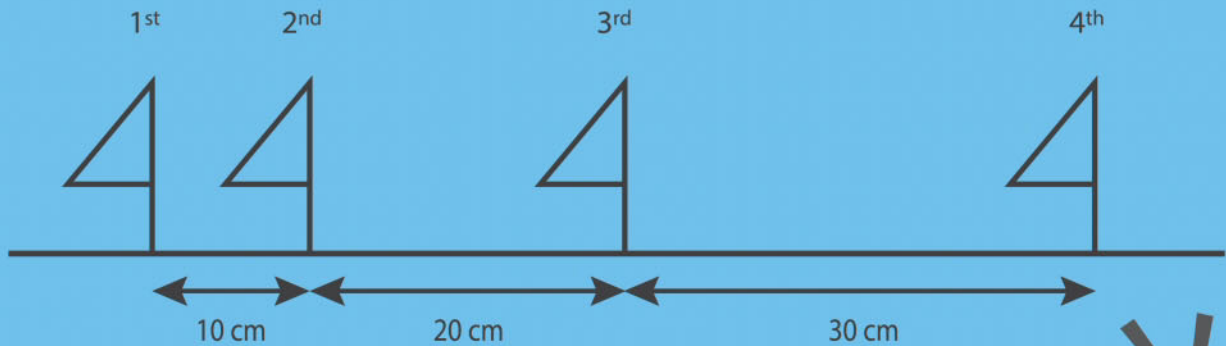
GoGuru

Justin placed some flags in a straight line on the ground as shown below.

Based on the pattern, what was the distance (in metres):

a) between the 4th and the 7th flag?

b) between the 1st and the 80th flag?



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1/2 Size



6 Years
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- Improve Summary Skills



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for families with young children

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To learn and build through play.



Educational apps are making it easy for children to learn and understand – they run on a platform children are familiar and comfortable with. Add fun elements and you're almost guaranteed a child who's eager to learn.

What is Brainy Arkies?

Launched by Marshall Cavendish Education, Brainy Arkies was created as an interactive, easy-to-use and engaging maths resource for primary school children. With over 12,000 questions designed and based on the latest syllabus from the Ministry of Education (MOE), Brainy Arkies is the preferred supplementary resource for parents.

What are the benefits to parents?

- 1 Receive performance reports to chart your child's learning progress on your smart devices.
- 2 Gain insights on your child's strengths and weaknesses in the subject, as well as recommended help that's required.
- 3 Supervisory controls allow for easy monitoring of your child's activities while using the app.



How does this app benefit children?

With the help of little in-app characters called Arkies, they will:

- 1 Learn on their own with the help of step-by-step guided solutions with detailed explanations;
- 2 Learn in a fun way as they complete quizzes on their quest to progress through the game; and
- 3 Receive different learning recommendations, personalised to their individual learning ability.

Parents Workshops

Keen to know more about how you can support in your child's learning? Email us at marketing@mceducation.com to have some of your questions answered by our education experts and enjoy a one-time \$50 off any of the parents workshop booking.

Interactive, meaningful and engaging edutainment is just a click away:

- 1 **Download** the Brainy Arkies app from the App store or Google Play.
- 2 **Enjoy** full access for the first 14 days from your first download.
- 3 **Subscription** costs apply to access multimedia worked solutions, exam format questions, e-learning content and diagnostic reports.

For more information on Brainy Arkies, visit www.brainyarkies.com





MindChamps' Merry March

Bring the entire family out and join us
this merry March with MindChamps!
We have exciting activities for everyone!

MindChamps PreSchool Welcome Day 11 & 18 Mar | 10.30am to 12.30pm For 18 months to 6 years old

Come visit any of our 25 preschool centres islandwide and experience a personalised MindChamps PreSchool tour! Did you know? MindChamps PreSchool has been awarded the **Influential Brands – Top Brand 2016 Winner** in the pre-school education category. This marks the third year that MindChamps PreSchool was accorded this prestigious award, since our first win in 2014! Join us and find out why we are voted the top choice for preschool education!

25 participating centres islandwide!

North Bishan | Serangoon | Woodlands | Yio Chu Kang | Yishun

North-East Buangkok | Punggol Northshore

South Mapletree Business City

East Bedok | Changi Airport (Terminal 3) | Changi Business Park | Leisure Park Kallang **NEW!**

MacPherson | OneKM (East Coast) | Chinese PreSchool @ Tampines Central

West Fusionopolis | Holland V | Junction 10 (Bukit Panjang) | JTC Summit | West Coast Plaza

Central Bukit Timah | Liang Court | Paragon | Tanglin | Zhongshan Park

For details, call **8233 4400** or register at join.mindchampspreschool.org



Holiday workshops for all ages!

Thinking Cap Workshops (P1 - P4)

Let your child benefit from MindChamps' proprietary Thinking Cap programme that meets and goes beyond the requirements in the MOE curriculum. Your child will learn creative problem-solving skills, multi-perspective thinking strategies, goal-setting, time management and effective learning techniques in this workshop.

For P1 & P2: 13 & 14 Mar, 2pm - 5pm, \$68

For P3 & P4: 16 & 17 Mar, 10am - 5pm, \$148



Conquer the Reading Mission (3 - 5 years old)

Mums, Dads and their budding explorers will get to experience Integrated Phonics (through songs, rhymes and poems), and Listening and Reading comprehension through series of fun adventures in the wilderness!

18 Mar, 10am - 12pm or 1pm - 3pm, \$68

Note: One parent is required to attend the workshop.

Master the Writing Quest (K2 - P4)

Join Explorer Love on a mysterious jungle adventure to discover Adjectives, Conjunctions, Verbs and much more. Through this two-day workshop, your child will get to create his/her own masterpiece and learn all about creative writing. Be sure to cheer your child on and see the 'before and after' results of his/her work!

For K2 - P1: 16 & 17 Mar, 10am - 12pm, \$89

For P2 - P4: 16 & 17 Mar, 1pm - 3pm, \$89

For details, call **8332 0020** or register at www.mindchamps.org/holiday-workshops





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MYC is a Proven, Quality Method

Music for Young Children[®] (MYC) has been teaching children from the ages of 2 - 12 the foundation of music education and piano playing, in a group situation, for more than 36 years!

MYC's curriculum was created to build and sustain a wide and firm foundation in music education, appreciation and performance for young children. Our students not only learn how to play the piano and read music, but are also taught the other important elements (i.e. Sight-reading, solfege, composers, composition and ensemble playing) that help create a solid, educated and well-balanced musician.

MYC is the only early-childhood music education method that integrates and utilizes Conservatory repertoire within our own method, working towards each MYC graduate completing their first piano exam and theory exam.

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the girl who couldn't stop washing her hands

What happens when a simple act of handwashing becomes an obsession? One mum tells **EVELINE GAN** how OCD turned her nine-year-old into a nervous wreck.



PHOTOGRAPHY **ZAPHS ZHANG** ART DIRECTION & STYLING **LOY SZE JIN**

While most parents drill handwashing into their kids as part of their personal-hygiene routine, 41-year-old part-time lecturer Joyce Koh (not her real name) did everything she could to break her kid's squeaky clean habits.

"As part of basic hygiene, we taught our daughter to wash her hands before eating from a young age. But towards the end of her Primary 3 school year, we noticed she became utterly obsessed about it," says Joyce.

Later diagnosed with obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), Cheryl was left with dry, cracked skin due to her elaborate handwashing rituals.

"After visiting the toilet, she would wash her hands very thoroughly about four to five times. It got to the point where her skin was so dry it would flake," Joyce recalls.

A type of anxiety disorder marked by obsessive and compulsive thoughts and behaviour, OCD was brought into the spotlight last year after a housewife suffering from the condition was convicted of starving her Filipino domestic helper.

It is one of the top three most common mental health disorders in Singapore, according to a Singapore Mental Health Study conducted by Institute of Mental Health (IMH) in 2010.

Only nine years old when she was diagnosed in 2014, Cheryl was one of the youngest patients undergoing treatment for OCD at IMH at the time. She turns 12 this year.

The IMH Child Guidance Clinic runs an OCD programme for children and teens up to 19 years old with moderate to severe forms of the disorder. Each year, it sees between 100 and 200 kids and teens with the condition.

"It feels right"

When OCD strikes in childhood, the symptoms can distressing for both the child and her parents.

Haanusia Prithivi Raj, senior clinical psychologist at IMH's department of child and adolescent psychiatry, says when children are troubled by OCD, they can experience "very high levels of anxiety and distress".

Their compulsive rituals may also affect their everyday routines as they take up a lot of their time, she adds.

Yet, such kids cannot understand why they are behaving so compulsively.

"In many cases, their explanation (for their behaviour) is that it just 'feels right', which can be frustrating for parents," says Dr Adrian Loh, visiting consultant at

IMH's department of child and adolescent psychiatry.

When told to stop washing her hands, Cheryl's hygiene rituals manifested as other quirks. She would check her belongings over and over again. The thought that she might have overlooked something turned her into a nervous wreck.

"Like the handwashing, the checking and re-checking became a ritual. Once, after a friend's party, she anxiously told me she wasn't sure if she had brought all her things home and kept going through her belongings.

"Within a span of about half an hour, she asked and repeated the same thing eight times!" Joyce says.

Psychology experts still do not know why some kids develop such obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviour.

Haanusia says it could be due to genes, stress or even the child's personality – those with an anxious character run a higher risk of developing anxiety disorders.

Some studies also link OCD to low levels of serotonin, a brain chemical believed to be important in regulating mood, attention and behaviour, she adds.

Fixing the problem, fast

As her only child's anxiety and bizarre behaviour escalated, Joyce knew she had to seek help. A child psychologist confirmed her suspicion that Cheryl had OCD, and the problem had to be tackled promptly before it spiralled out of control.

Studies show the sooner OCD is treated, the better treatment results are likely to be. Haanusia stresses the importance of seeking professional help and following through with treatment.

"While most OCD cases in kids and teens are straightforward, they may sometimes be a harbinger of other mental-health conditions, such as schizophrenia and mood disorders," she explains.

Cheryl underwent cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), which helped her to recognise and change her distressing thoughts and behaviour. OCD patients on the therapy programme are usually deliberately exposed to triggers that normally upset them.

For instance, during Cheryl's therapy sessions, she was asked to do things she normally avoided, such as touching a toilet bowl.



The aim was to gradually reduce her level of anxiety towards triggers over time.

Cheryl struggled with the initial weekly therapy sessions, which spanned around four months.

“She was quite resistant to the therapy at first. It took her so much effort to overcome her own irrational feelings but, over time, she realised that touching the toilet bowl doesn’t actually hurt her,” says Joyce.

There are also drugs available for people suffering from moderate to severe OCD, but Joyce was not keen to medicate Cheryl after learning they might cause side effects which affect attention and focus.

Family support

To help her daughter, Joyce also involved other family members, including her mother-in-law, in the recovery process.

“Being a doting grandma, she would pick up or clean up after her granddaughter whenever she complained that something was dirty. We explained that those were symptoms of OCD, and taught her how to respond to her appropriately,” says Joyce.

With early treatment and support, the elaborate rituals no longer take centre stage in Cheryl’s life.

“She still checks her things at least once but that is reasonable. Recently, we’ve even managed to trash two big garbage bags full of her old belongings. That is a big achievement for her as she also used to hoard everything, from T-shirt tags to clothes and souvenirs,” Joyce says.

Looking back, she thinks the stress Cheryl went through while preparing for her Primary 3 year-end examinations might have triggered the OCD symptoms.

“Now, we try not to cram her revision so intensively. I think spreading out her revision timetable works because she hasn’t suffered any relapses.”

Having gone through this challenging journey with her daughter, Joyce says parents need to be aware that a child with OCD isn’t behaving badly or being disobedient intentionally.

“Children with OCD can’t control their feelings and behaviour. Most importantly, both the parents and child need to communicate openly with each other instead of sweeping the problem aside,” she says. 🟡

OCD red flags

DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE OBSESSIVE THOUGHTS?

- Irrational fears of contamination from dirt or germs
- Fear of hurting someone
- Distressing sexual or religious thoughts
- Desire to hoard or a need for symmetry and exactness

IS YOUR KID BEHAVING COMPULSIVELY?

- Checking
- Cleaning and washing
- Counting
- Hoarding
- Thinking through things for a long period of time

If you suspect that Junior is showing signs of OCD, you may raise your concerns with his school counsellors.

They are connected to Reach (Response, Early Intervention, Assessment in Community Mental Health), IMH’s community mental-health service, which can provide further advice and assistance. Call its Mental Health helpline at 6389-2222.

Source **Institute of Mental Health**



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home alone

When is it safe to leave your child unsupervised at home?
Parents and an expert weigh in on this controversial topic.



TEXT NATALYA MOLOK/WOMENSWEEKLY.COM.SG PHOTO MASTERFILE

Nur Syahamah Syahrom's grandmother had left her house for 15 minutes before tragedy struck last year.

The three-year-old, who was sound asleep when her grandmother exited her HDB flat in Sengkang, had somehow managed to make her way to the balcony ledge, which had no protective window grilles installed, and plummeted four storeys to the bottom of her block.

While the little girl survived her fall, the injuries she sustained left her in a weakened state and she died of pneumonia less than a month later.

To be clear, this was not an isolated incidence. Many similar stories have been relayed to the media over the years, with most involving a kid left at home alone.

It leads us to this question: At what age is it appropriate for children to be left unsupervised?

Each kid is different

Dr Lim Boon Leng, a psychiatrist at Gleneagles Hospital, says: "It is difficult to define a specific age, as children vary in their development and maturity."

While he would not leave any child under the age of 10 alone – ever – he also feels that if the kid is older than 10, it becomes "controversial".

"As each child is different, it will be best for parents to understand their child's temperament, maturity level and his or her propensity towards being impulsive, to determine if their child can be safely left alone at home," he says.

No parent would willingly want to leave their child unsupervised for any length of time but, unfortunately, work and other commitments make this area a tricky one for adults to navigate.

While the act of leaving your child home alone is not a crime, Dr Lim adds that there are some tips parents should keep in mind.

"Firstly, never take safety for granted. Look into features such as locking the window grilles," he emphasises. He adds that parents should also make sure that they are contactable so that the child can reach them immediately if he becomes frightened or has any needs.

"Having a good relationship with your neighbours will be important, as they can sometimes keep a lookout for you, and the child can also approach them should any emergency arise."

Elynn Liew, a mother of two, weighs in on the debate: "I only started to leave both my kids at home by themselves when my eldest son turned 10 years old. My daughter was aged seven-plus then. Prior to that, I left my daughter alone at home once when she was around six."

She stresses that it's important that parents and caregivers do not leave children at home alone while the kids are asleep, and that proper training is given to them so they know how to behave in such situations.

Madam Leong, a mum of two boys aged nine and 12 who declined to give her full name, says her the decision depends on the amount of time she'll be gone.

"For a two-minute trot down the road to the shops, not crossing any roads or getting into a car [so there's relatively little risk of being held up by an accident], I'd do it if mine were five or six years old," she confides. "Basically, it's the age where you can be sure they won't run after you."

She adds that if she were to be gone longer, she would make sure her kids could be trusted not to play with the stove, know how to get out of the house in case of emergencies, and know how to alert the neighbours.

"In my case, with both my children, that has meant when they're around seven or eight years old," she says.

On the other end of the spectrum is Khadijah Mokri, a mum of three boys aged six, four and three. She warns that parents leave their children unattended at their own risk, and says she would find it hard to even exit a room knowing that another adult wasn't present to look after them.

Many parents are similarly anxious when it comes to leaving their children at home alone. They often worry about how their child will cope with the situation. But there are precautions they can take to ease their worries and help protect their kids when they're not around.

Here are some factors to take into consideration if you decide to leave your children unsupervised at home:

Stay in touch Call your kids throughout the day to ask how they are and what they are doing. Ask them to check in before they leave the house and to call again when they return.

Keep kids connected Post important numbers by the telephone, including your work and mobile phone numbers, the doctor's clinic, and a neighbour or nearby relative who can help quickly if they need it. Then get them to practise what to do in an emergency.

Teach them how to dial "999" and when to do it Ask questions like "If someone is trying to get into the house, what should you do?", "If you get hurt, what should you do?" and "If you want to play at a friend's house, what should you do?"

Set firm rules Make it clear what your children are allowed to do and what they aren't. Can they use the Internet when home alone? Can they invite a friend over? Can they invite several friends over?

When handled well, letting your child go solo in the house doesn't have to be a harrowing experience. In fact, some parents say the act of being home alone can teach a child how to be independent, which could position them for success later on in life. 🟡



time out



watch

If your little one is a fan of *Beauty and the Beast*, this musical remake of Disney's classic is a must-watch. Journey with Belle – the spunky Emma Watson (pictured) – as she befriends the castle's enchanted staff to save the Beast and turn him back into a prince again. The movie opens in cinemas on March 17. Visit www.disney.sg.



watch

With over 20 light installations to explore, the fifth edition of i Light Marina Bay will feature works from local as well as international artists. Exhibits, such as the Art Zoo, let little ones explore a colourful playground filled with giant inflatable animals, and there will also be child-friendly workshops. Catch it from March 3 to 26 around the Marina Bay waterfront promenade; admission is free. Visit www.ilightmarinabay.sg.



watch

Teach your kids the importance of family

by taking them to watch The Little Company's latest production, *A Peter Rabbit Tale*. Based on the classic children's book by Beatrix Potter, this coming-of-age tale follows Peter Rabbit as he runs away from home to escape his responsibilities. It runs from Feb 24 to Apr 4, and tickets start from \$25. Visit www.srt.com.sg.



eat

If your family loves grilled meat, Elight Korean BBQ is the perfect place for dinner. From perfectly grilled pork belly and short ribs to colourful *bibimbap*, it will satisfy your cravings for Korean cuisine. The restaurant also serves delicious side dishes, such as seafood pancake and its special steamed egg. Prices range from \$20 for a seafood pancake, to \$45 for 360g of pork belly. Visit www.fb.com/8KoreanBBQ.



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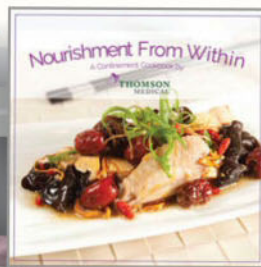
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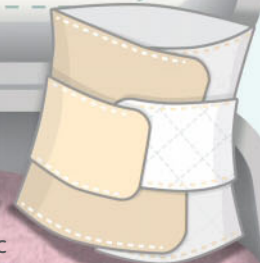
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Introduce Vietnamese street food to your kids

without flying to Ho Chi Minh City. At Saigon Alley in Novena Gardens, you can take your pick from appetisers like pomelo and prawn salad (\$10) and deep-fried crab spring rolls (\$8, pictured), to mains like beef *pho* (\$14). The *banh mi* is not to be missed, as well – the crusty baguette sandwich comes with a selection of fillings such as beef, pork and chicken (from \$7). Visit www.hiddendoorconcepts.com/saigon-alley.



Well-known for its award-winning croissants, Tiong Bahru Bakery has launched a hot food menu at the Raffles City outlet. Don't expect the usual brunch fare – instead of pancakes, it offers a breakfast pancake burger (\$18, pictured above), which features a home-made sausage patty, crispy bacon strips, organic New Zealand egg and matured cheddar stacked between fluffy pancakes.

Another highlight is the *ebiko* crab and prawn toastie (\$19) – grilled sourdough bread served with a generous amount of cheesy crab and prawns, and topped with crunchy *ebiko*. Kids who love seafood will adore this dish! Visit www.tiongbahrubakery.com.



If you are visiting the Singapore Botanic Gardens with your children,

drop by Bee's Knees, conveniently located in the tropical garden. From breakfast staples to pizzas, pastas and sandwiches, there's something for everyone in the family. While soaking in the atmosphere of this new all-day dining garden cafe and bistro, let the kids enjoy the peanut-butter Nutella milkshake (\$8) as you sip on a cafe mocha (\$5) from its extensive coffee list. Try the tiger prawn linguine (\$18), too. Visit www.thegarage.sg.



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for little feet

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Salon-quality beauty treatments that you can do at home don't have to be costly. Korean brand Kocostar, which is new to Sephora here, offers 12 masks for your face, hair, nails and hands, as well as your feet – the Slice Mask Sheets (pictured) look like fruit slices and are particularly fun to use. Prices range from \$6 to \$15. Visit www.sephora.sg.



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moe kindergarten

Look out for its open house and K1 registration exercise in April, which is open to children born in 2013.

MOE Kindergartens' curriculum is designed by the Ministry of Education's curriculum specialists behind the Nurturing Early Learners Framework, which guides the development of kindergarten programmes in Singapore.

Its Hi-Light Programme nurtures children holistically through an integrated approach to learning, and helps them make meaningful connections across six learning areas.

In addition, its Starlight Literacy Programme nurtures early childhood bilingualism and is offered in English and three Mother Tongue languages. Families are involved in their kids' learning through workshops and family-based activities.

The kindergartens offer a four-hour K1 or K2 programme, with an option of a morning or afternoon session. Parents who require full-day services for their children can also opt for Kindergarten Care, a service provided by an MOE-appointed partner service provider. Tel: 6872-2220/ E-mail: contact@moe.gov.sg/ Website: www.moe.gov.sg/moekindergarten

A star learners

Star Learners offers quality and affordable childcare services islandwide, with 22 of its 29 childcare centres coming under the Partner Operator Scheme, which caps fees.

It believes in developing children in an all-rounded manner – to be confident in their abilities, creative and curious about the world, and possessing strength of character to distinguish right from wrong.

Its curriculum includes several distinctive programmes. The Stanley Starfish Character Programme integrates character development into each child's life, while Write a Rainbow gives voice to kids' imagination, hopes and dreams through the writing and publication of their stories.

There's also Ready Steady Go Kids, Australia's largest and most reputable multi-sport and exercise programme for children. The fun, physio-designed sport and fitness activities teach little ones the fundamentals of 10 sports in a social, non-competitive, team-based environment. Tel: 6250-0173, E-mail: info@starlearners.com.sg/ Website: www.starlearners.com.sg/ Facebook: www.facebook.com/StarLearnersChildcare

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How and when do children start developing reading and writing skills, and mathematical concepts? Visit Etonhouse Pre-School at Mountbatten 223 and chat with its team of educators, who will share strategies on how they can best support your kid's learning through play and exploration.

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