

WINTER 2020

This FaPMI Winter newsletter comes at a time of great change as we have been living with COVID-19 restrictions to life as we know it. These experiences are unique for each of us. For some it was having children remote learning from home and not participating in usual day to day activities. Most of us have had less contact with the people we care about. Coping with feeling isolated or unsafe or having reduced work and money increased stress and anxiety for many while some families appreciated the down time, being together with children and partners.

In this edition we explore top tips from some families about living through the shut down, we look at how to be less busy post pandemic. There are fun activities for the school holidays, including going to the drive in, making a one pot meal, and the craft activity in this edition is making a world globe.

Check out Michelle Vasiliou's new book, supports for families from FaPMI and the alcohol and other drugs sector, and a great new resource for Dad's. Hope you enjoy the read and embrace new found freedoms. Stay warm and well!



Zoos Victoria/Visit Victoria <https://www.visitvictoria.com/regions/yarra-valley-and-dandenong-ranges/things-to-do/family>

PROGRAMS

The FaPMI program has been unable to run face to face groups in Term 2 and will not be able to do so in Term 3. We are offering online programs instead.

B-4U is an online space for young people 12-18 to connect with others who have a family member with mental health

worries. There will be an online MAT (martial arts as therapy) program and a parents webinar with Parentzone.

If you are or someone you know has ideas for either group or would like to be involved please contact fapmi@easternhealth.org.au or call Bronwyn Sanders on 0408 291 580.

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FAPMI COORDINATOR TEAM

Bronwyn Sanders
(Mon, Tues, Wed)
CHAMPS Referrals -
0408 291 580

Michelle Hegarty
(Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs)

Becca Allchin (Tues or Wed)

Elizabeth Fraser (Mon - Thurs)

4 Bona Street, Ringwood East

Ph: 9871 3988

fapmi@easternhealth.org.au

School holiday activities

Drive-In Immersive Cinema Nights Are Coming to Melbourne

The Drive-In Movie Club is coming to Melbourne from 23rd - 26th July 2020, where you'll be able to enjoy a complete immersive, cinematic experience from the safety of your own vehicle. You don't even have to leave your car as you can order all your sweet treats, snacks and soda directly to you!

The movies on offer are Anchorman, Mean Girls, Back To The Future and cult classic

Dirty Dancing! There is sure to be something for everyone and the movie will be brought to life with incredible real-life activations!

Tickets cost \$35 per car (up to 5 people), and food and beverage add ons (1x drink, 1x popcorn & 1x candy) are also available for just \$20.

www.driveinmovieclub.com/terms



Melbourne ZOO-Live animal cams

Check out the 24/7 live streams of Snow Leopards, Giraffes, Lions, Penguins and Zebras, or watch the limited-time-only appearances from other special guests. If you missed it, you can catch up on what you missed by clicking back on the red line underneath the video.

Can't see the animals on the live cams? That's because our animals live in areas that are much bigger than what a camera can capture.



GET TO KNOW OUR ZEBRAS at Melbourne Zoo

FEEDING TIMES 8.15am, 12pm and 3.45pm daily (please note feeding times are subject to change)

Chozi (male) - 12 years old, look out for his unusual stripe pattern on his legs.

Zuri (male) - 12 years old, Chozi's half brother and generally always with Chozi.

Kwasi (male) - Seven years old and has thick dark stripes and no shadow stripe (thinner grey stripes between black stripes).

Zaire - Four years old and is the smallest and fluffiest.

For more information: www.zoo.org.au/animals-at-home/

La Mama for Kids Online: Super Jenny!



This short series of preschool children's entertainment is engaging, fun and educational. Each episode incorporates fine and gross motor skills, Auslan sign language, shape recognition, singing, dancing and musical terms. Super Jenny encourages creativity, imaginative play and cognitive learning that goes hand in hand to enhance all children's

physical and intellectual development.

Dates and times:
30/06/2020 to 04/07/2020

Location:
Online Event via Zoom

Contact details:
info@lamama.com.au

HOW TO MAKE A PAPER MACHE PLANET EARTH

The world has never been so connected so why not make a paper mache planet earth.

A great way to educate children about continents, the oceans and countries.



How to make a paper mache planet earth:

Things required

A balloon

Equal parts water and flour

Brush to apply

Newspaper strips torn or cut into pieces

Blue & green paint

Directions

1. Blow up your balloon.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together equal parts flour and water to make a paste.

3. Dip the newspaper strips into the flour and water solution. ...

4. Completely cover the entire area of the balloon with strips of coated newspaper...

5. Allow the balloon to dry for 24 hours.

6. Then paint it blue and allow the paint to dry.

7. Paint on continents in green (have a look on line to get the shapes right).

8. Allow to dry and then you can pop the balloon.

9. There you have it your own planet earth!

ITALIAN WONDERPOT

From: <https://www.kidspot.com.au/kitchen/recipes/one-pot-italian-pasta-recipe/1o6d98he>

SERVES 4
PREP 0:10
COOK 0:20

Ingredients

350 g fettuccine (dried)

1 brown onion (medium, sliced)

3 cups baby spinach

1 tin canned diced tomato

1 tbs Italian dried mixed herbs

3 garlic cloves (sliced)

5 cups water & 2 pods Continental vegetable stock concentrate OR 4 cups of stock and one cup of water

100 g feta (crumbled)

Directions

Gather all ingredients together.

Place all ingredients into a pot except for the feta cheese. Cover and bring to the boil. Remove the lid and reduce heat to medium. Continue to

cook for 10 minutes or until the pasta is softened and all of the liquid is reduced to a creamy sauce.

Add crumbled feta to the pan and stir.



Book Review

TOGETHER THINGS

When her father feels sad, a little girl finds ways to keep the bonds of love alive

**WRITTEN BY
MICHELLE VASILIU**

**ILLUSTRATED BY
GWYNNETH JONES**

One in five adults will experience depression in their lifetime. It's an illness that is tough on the families of those affected. Young children especially can be confused and upset when their mother or father suddenly can't play like they used to. Together Things will resonate with the thousands of little people who know what it's like to live with a parent experiencing mental illness, helping them to understand — that it is okay for them to feel mad or sad about their parent's illness. While the person they love is in the haze of mental illness, they may have to do different 'together things' to keep a feeling of closeness. Quieter things like drawing pictures or cuddling up and reading a story together



might be a better way to spend time together, than big, bold intrepid stuff that takes a lot of planning and energy. Through wonderful illustrations and a compelling story, carers and young children can open a conversation about the importance of talking about mental health and build an understanding that sometimes we need to adapt our way of being together to allow time to heal.

Michelle Vasiliu is an award-winning Children's author, educator and a mum. She also lives with mental illness. Many of us, she notes, are still too afraid to tackle the topic of mental illness with our children. Michelle hopes her new book, Together Things, will give people the courage to try.

...SOMETHING TO PONDER

"It is hard to be brave," said Piglet, "when you are only a very small animal."

"It is because you are a very small animal that you will be useful in the adventure before us," said Rabbit.

Piglet was so excited by the idea of being useful that he forgot to be frightened.

A.A Milne



Mental Health and Drug or Alcohol Issues

A NEW FAPMI BROCHURE FOR PEOPLE WITH CHILDREN

All families need a network of support. And at times it can be tricky to find the right supports. A new brochure from FaPMI provides tips for families if mental health and drug and alcohol issues are present.

The brochure outlines ways in which parents can support themselves, their children and the whole family. Here are just

a few of the ideas to consider:

Help children identify their own support people -

It might be a grandparent, family friend, neighbour, teacher or counsellor.

Talk to children about what to do in an emergency -

Have a list of emergency contacts.

Set up a Family Care Plan - which can help minimise worry if parents become unwell or need to go into hospital. It can help to organise care arrangements for children, including usual routines, important contact people, and ways of staying in touch. This also allows parents to focus on recovery.

Talk About It - talking to children about dual diagnosis helps all family members understand what is going on. Books like The Blue Polar Bear or The Flying Dream can be great for the whole family. Help children understand that dual diagnosis is not their fault. Let your kids know you love them even during difficult times.

Resources

Support for Kids

The FaPMI Program has books, information and peer support groups like CHAMPS and Space4Us for children and young people.

Phone
(03) 9871 3988

Website
www.easternhealth.org.au/fapmi.aspx

Turning Point

Eastern Region AOD services intake

Phone
1800 778 278

Website
www.turningpoint.org.au

SHARC

Self Help Addiction Resource Centre Family Drug Helpline

Helpline
1300 660 068

Website
www.sharc.org.au

A message from children and young people:

"It helps to know that there are other kids out there who have a parent with a mental illness. I learned that I am not alone, it's not my fault, and that I can get support if I need it"

"It helps to talk about mental illness and drugs and alcohol in your family so kids know what is going on"



FaPMI Family Voices

WHAT FAMILIES HAD TO SAY ABOUT COPING WITH SOCIAL ISOLATION DURING COVID-19

Over the past month or so we contacted lots of the families on our FaPMI mailing list to see how they were coping with social isolation. We asked them for their “Top Tips For Coping” and also what they were finding challenging. Thanks so much to everyone who contributed because I think we got a great range of ideas.

Here are some of the other tips from parents and families:

You can have a one on one date with your children, with a movie and eat popcorn

Try to end the day positively.

Stop watching the news

Try not to feel you have to do everything

Exercise every day.

Don't spend too much time on Facebook

Just whatever you get done is enough - some days you get a lot, some days you get a little

Don't put pressure on yourself. If we sleep in, we sleep in

Accept that it is there. Follow the rules and make the most of hibernation. Relax, Take a deep breathe, opportunity to pause

With lots of people in the house try and have a private space for each person.

Go out in the fresh air, go for lots of walks

Keep occupied during the day, keep up routines where possible and try and structure the day.

Let go of expectations and be kind to yourself. This is not our fault!



The top three tips:

When we asked families about their challenges the 2 main themes were:

Managing home learning - there is new found respect for teachers! Some families mentioned that they had given up on extended periods of online learning as it was just too stressful

Missing social connections. Even families who were enjoying being at home together were missing contact with their usual social supports

Other things that families said about the challenges of social isolation:

Getting started in the morning has been the greatest challenge,

Differing parenting styles and ways of managing discipline- more obvious now

Lots of issues with discipline and cooperation.

Finances - grocery bill very high with kids at home. Not much to do, kids are bored. Can't go out.

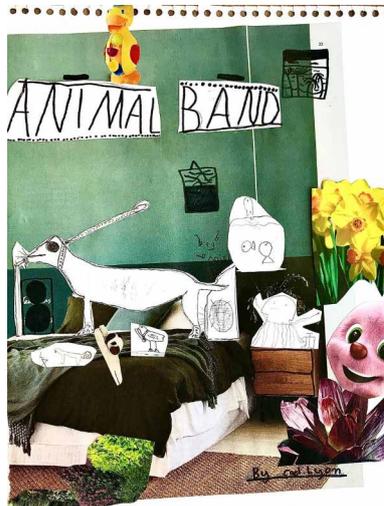
Kids get frustrated with each other sometimes

Haven't got house to myself. Finding it hard to concentrate

Mum is getting tired and not having a break because the kids are home all day.

Schooling at home is pushing all of dad's buttons

Despite all these challenges most families were able to identify their family strengths and many people talked about “just getting through” until school goes back. One family said “We are having a really beautiful time, cooking together, exercising together and chilling out.”



(Art Gallery NSW: Cael, Age 9)

Support in COVID-19

HOW TO BE LESS BUSY POST PANDEMIC

From ABC Life By Kellie Scott May 2020

Professor Strazdins is the director of the Research School of Population Health at the Australian National University. She's spent a lot of time digging into why we're so busy and its impact on our health. She says Australians are very time-pressed. Aussie parents are some of the most time-stressed in the world.

During the pandemic, not being able to socialise, travel or commute for those working from home, has meant some of us are doing a lot less.

"For some people it was a real pause and suddenly that pressure to do more and keep doing more was lifted," says Professor Strazdins.

She says this moment is an opportunity to reconsider how we think about the fast-pace of life.

Tips for mastering the art of doing less

For doing less post-pandemic, Professor Strazdins recommends:

- Asking yourself what you would rather focus your time on? What could you let go of? "Dedicate time to being with other people, but also looking after your health and wellbeing are actually very important."
- Setting better boundaries between work and your personal life — especially while working from home — can also help.



- Not bragging about being busy, so we can help change the value we place on it.

Read more here: www.abc.net.au/life/how-to-be-less-busy-and-enjoy-the-quiet-life/12193336

FAPMI PROVIDES A DIFFERENT KIND OF HOME DELIVERY FOR FAMILIES



During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the FaPMI program recognises that many families experiencing mental illness may be feeling the added impact of isolation at home. The team has developed a series of resources and new strategies to support parent consumers and their families, including baskets of games and sport equipment, pencils and supplies for school, even kids' crafts and home gardening sets.

The team says: "Without the usual supports and community contact, some families are doing it tough. Some parents have lost jobs due to

COVID-19 and are struggling financially. After several weeks, the pressures of managing everyone at home and now supporting children with school work can really increase stress for all family members. The resources have been selected to promote family connection, playfulness, creativity and physical activity – all important strategies for coping during the COVID-19 period."

Baskets of resources for families have been delivered to community-based mental health teams, along with tip sheets for parents for activities for pre-schoolers, primary-aged and teenage children.

Other support

SUPPORT FOR DAD'S

Support for Fathers is providing dads with options and information about fatherhood, the relationship with their partner and connecting with their kids.

They aim to help Dad's to learn more about the importance of their role as dads and partners. Have options based on real dads, evidence and practical strategies. Improve their confidence as dads and partners.

Role-model healthy and respectful relationships within their family and community

Experience support services that are focused on the needs of dads.



Check it out here:
www.supportforfathers.com.au



A NEW COVID-19 STUDY SUPPORT HUB TO SUPPORT THE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF STUDENTS ACROSS AUSTRALIA

ReachOut have fast-tracked the launch of this year's study support resources, with a new COVID-19 study support hub, that is tailored to the specific needs of students right now.

See link below for further information
<https://au.reachout.com/collections/stressed-about-study-during-coronavirus>

SATELLITE CONNECT

Satellite Connect is a primarily online, free program for young people 17–23yrs (approx.) who have a parent/carer with a mental illness.

Through our 6-week program, participants will:

- meet, interact and collaborate with others who may share similar experiences

- learn to empower and support others to collaborate, share and connect with one another
- explore and practice professional and personal development and leadership skills such as confidence building, public speaking, facilitation, mentoring and tools for self-care and self-compassion
- access an extensive range of resources that support the learnings
- discover ongoing opportunities to strengthen skills and connections

Program One Date
Monday 27 July

Program Two Date
Monday 21 September

Time
6.30pm – 8.30pm



For more information: <https://www.satellitefoundation.org.au/programs/satellite-connect/>