

ISSUE 163 | JANUARY 2025 | DHS15

Mother *Baby &* Child

**FIVE TIPS FOR
BETTER ENERGY**

**TACKLING
CHILDHOOD ECZEMA**

**THE BENEFITS OF
FAMILY SEA SWIMS**

**HOW PETS CAN HELP
ANXIOUS KIDS**

**HEALTHY SCHOOL
LUNCHBOX IDEAS**

**IS NOISE
AFFECTING
YOUR
CHILD?**



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EDITOR'S LETTER

Hello Mum!

Happy New Year to you and your family! May it be a lucky, joyful and healthy 2025 for you too. While January often brings the pressures of strict self-improvement routines and healthy habits, this year, I've taken a gentler approach in my own life, one I've shared with you in this issue. Instead of rigid rules and aims, I've included a piece that focuses on five simple things you can do to boost your energy. I find that lots of my best resolutions fall apart across the year because I don't have the energy to keep on top of them - and I'm not alone in that! So, in this article you'll find easy-to-implement ideas that give you the foundation of energy you need to put your best foot forward into the new year, whatever your resolutions may be. Give it a read on page 13 - I hope the pointers help you on your way to success! And if your goals involve tightening up your family's budget and spending, there are some important tips and tricks to take on board on page 28 as you embark on your new habit.

Continuing with the idea of resolutions and wellbeing, on page 14 we discuss the really brilliant effects of taking up sea swimming as a family. Every parent knows the value of carving out time to recharge and reconnect, and a dip in the sea together offers remarkable physical and mental health benefits. Whether you're a busy mum looking for a moment of calm or a family searching for a fun and invigorating activity, exploring the power of the ocean might just be the game-changer you didn't know you needed.

Our cover story this month explores the little-known impact of excessive sound on our children. From busy roads and construction sites to screens and smartphones, clamour and commotion is an inescapable part of living, and kids are constantly exposed to different levels of noise. However, did you know that it can affect their sleep and concentration, as well as their emotional and mental health? The effects can be far-reaching but the good news is that with a few simple tweaks, you can create calmer, healthier environments for your family to flourish in - flip to page 23 to read all about it.

Elsewhere, on page 26, we dive into the best practices for a smooth breastfeeding journey, we explore how having a cat can help children dealing with anxiety over on page 46, and I share my favourite January makeup picks on page 49.

As you know, I like to leave some things for you to discover for yourself in every issue, but this time, I also sincerely wish you discover more of the hope, laughter, strength and prosperity that you and your family deserve in 2025!

Happy New Year!

Editor

Mother, Baby & Child Magazine



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Editor's PICK

SAY HELLO TO THE SUNSET ESPETADA AT NANDO'S

Nando's is lighting up its menu with the introduction of the Sunset Espetada, a vibrant new take on its legendary dish. Combining bold flavors, fresh ingredients and Nando's unmistakable PERi-PERi flair, this new version of the Espetada is sure to satisfy both loyal fans and adventurous food-lovers. Priced at AED 98, including two sides, the Sunset Espetada is available for a limited time until the end of February and is a must-try for foodie families!

The Sunset Espetada takes the classic Espetada to new heights with smoky lemon-marinated chicken thighs, carefully stuffed with halloumi cheese and layered between juicy PERi-orange slices and tender ribbons of baby marrow. The dish is crowned with a luxurious lemon pepper butter sauce, adding a rich and tangy finish that complements every bite. Available at all Nando's UAE locations, the Sunset Espetada is sure to please parents and kids alike!

Reflecting everything you love about Nando's - big flavors, bold ideas and a touch of unexpected creativity - this eagerly awaited dish is served with two of Nando's delicious sides, such as PERi-chips, spicy rice, or garlic bread, offering a family dining experience that's bursting with flavour!

For more information, visit www.nandos.ae.



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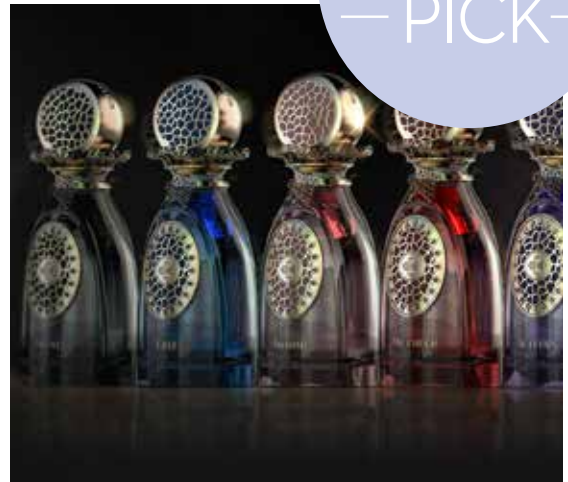
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UNIQUE FRAGRANCES FROM THANA PARFUMS

I'm loving the unisex fragrances from homegrown brand, Thana Parfums. Described as a love letter to the art of perfumery, each enticing scent is inspired by the familiar ouds that fill the souks of Dubai, with a selection of bold fragrances that expertly blend tradition and innovation, focusing on a dedication to artisanal craftsmanship.

An ethos of care

I love that every ingredient is hand-picked and sourced locally from the UAE. Crafted in small batches to ensure the utmost quality, these perfumes are as exclusive as they are sustainable. Thana Parfums embraces a holistic approach to responsible perfumery, focusing on their environmental impact and ethical sourcing. This means that each fragrance not only captivates your senses, but also honours the environment - ideal!

The Magic Elixir Collection

The brand's latest offering, 'The Magic Elixir Collection', showcases a series of scents that envelop you in an air of delicious mystery. Encased in smooth, rounded bottles made of high-quality glass tinted in gorgeous colours, the packaging is also adorned with precious stones.

Ranging from the deeply sensual yet sophisticated rose, orange blossom and cassis notes of 'Shabab', to the floral and spicy scent of 'Mutheer', the new collection invites you to embark on a sensory journey where ancient traditions merge with modern artistry to create fragrances that stand out.

Visit <https://thanaparfums.com> to learn more.

The New Bio-Oil® Skincare Oil (Natural) 100% Natural.



New Bio-Oil® Skincare Oil (Natural) is made entirely from natural ingredients. By harnessing the power of science and nature, Skincare Oil (Natural) matches the efficacy of the original Skincare Oil - the world's leading scar and stretch mark product.



Bio-Oil® Skincare Oil (Natural) is formulated to help improve the appearance of scars, stretch marks and uneven skin tone. For comprehensive product information, please visit bio-oil.com. Bio-Oil® is available at all leading pharmacies in the UAE.

THINGS TO DO



Art and culture events at TODA; a rejuvenating salon treatment; the perfect ‘dino-mania’ dining experience for families and more!



JANUARY DELIGHTS AT THE THEATRE OF DIGITAL ART

New year, new adventures! The Theatre of Digital Art (TODA) invites you and your loved ones to enjoy a month-long celebration of global art, music and wellness this January. From a Jules Verne-inspired digital spectacle to captivating live performances like 'La Dolce Vita' and 'Cuba: Music Journey' as well as beautifully grounding wellness sessions, there's something for everyone. So, why not take your family for a visit to TODA where you'll step into a fully immersive, 360-degree experience. No matter the event, TODA offers a visual spectacle that captivates the senses and is sure to leave your family in awe. Here are two of our favourites!

Meditation and tea

January is a wonderful time of year to take a mindful pause and reflect before you move forward into the new year... and where better to do that than at the Giant Gong Meditation and Tea Ceremony at TODA - an all-senses meditation session that promises to quiet your mind and settle your spirit, featuring the largest gong in the world!

Combining sound baths, breathwork and tasting meditation, this session taps into all of your senses to help you reach the right state of mind for a deep rest. Beat by beat, sip by sip, you and your family can unplug from the fast pace of your daily life and focus solely on the present moment, surrounded by immersive artwork for an enhanced relaxation! Perfect for those who are thirteen years old and older, this 90 minute session will take place on January 30th and is priced at AED 250. So, why not book in with your loved ones to bounce back refreshed and recharged as you let go of 2024's stresses and embrace the year ahead!

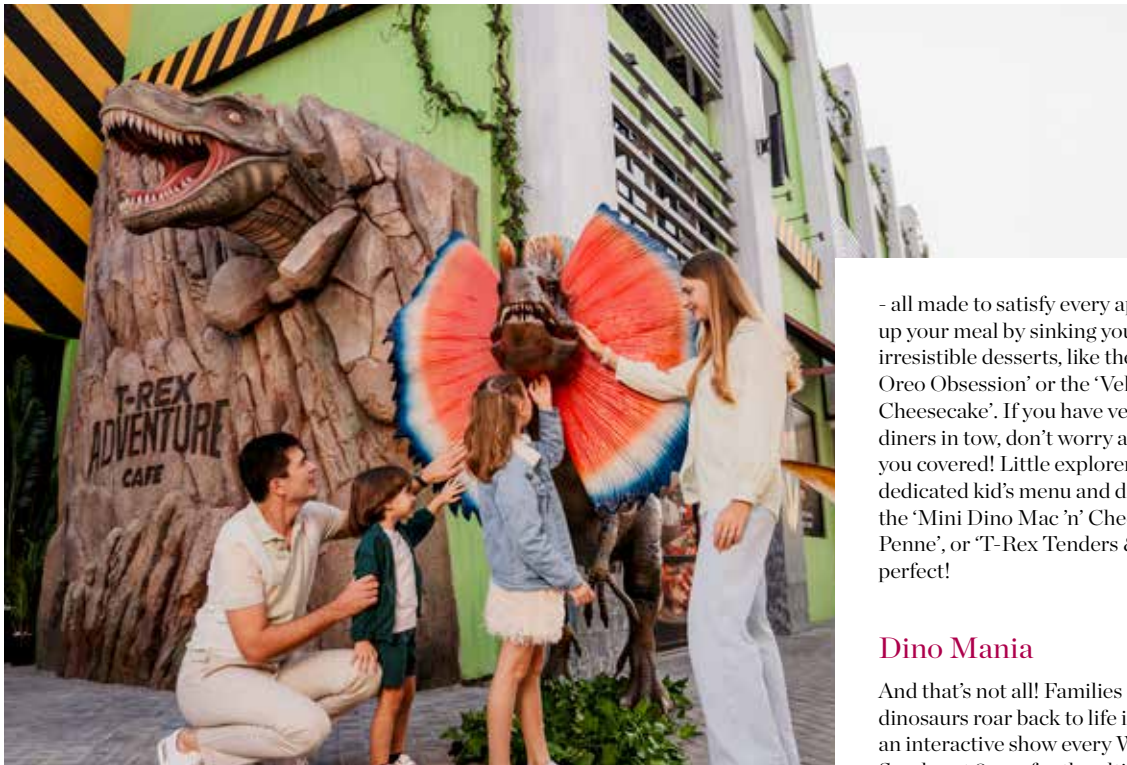
K-POP on strings

For the first time ever in the UAE, your family can experience the ultimate fusion of K-POP's legendary anthems, as Korean world-class cellist Boseong Cho brings the biggest hits of BTS, Stray Kids, EXO, Blackpink, IU and more to life in a way you've never heard before.

Happening on January 25th, this isn't just any concert - it promises to be a moment. Boseong, the winner of numerous prestigious competitions, is back at TODA after his sold-out 'Movie Symphony' performance, but this time he's repping his roots. With his cello at the heart of it all, backed by an amazing band of piano, drums, bass and electric guitar, he's turning your family's favourite K-POP anthems into jaw-dropping instrumental masterpieces.

Again this event is for 13+ and tickets are available from AED 180, up to AED 290, depending on seating. This is the first instrumental K-POP concert in the UAE, and for true fans out there, you won't want to miss the magic of hearing these hits performed live like this. And with TODA's 360° immersive visuals lighting up the stage, you're in for a truly unforgettable experience.

Visit <https://toda.ae> to learn more or book your tickets.



A ROARSOME T-REX CAFÉ EXPERIENCE AT RIVERLAND™ DUBAI!

Get ready to chill with your child's favourite dinosaurs! RIVERLAND™ Dubai, the iconic destination at Dubai Parks™ and Resorts, has opened the T-Rex Adventure Café, Dubai's first dinosaur-themed restaurant. This one-of-a-kind dining destination invites guests of all ages to immerse themselves in a Jurassic-inspired experience that is sure to please your dinosaur-loving little ones!

Dinosaur décor

From towering dinosaurs perched atop the building to lush vines draping its rugged interior, and lifelike raptors lurking amongst the guests, the T-Rex Adventure Café offers a captivating journey into a prehistoric

paradise. Your family can enjoy cosy indoor seating or dine al fresco by the river.

Kids will love getting to meet the restaurant's friendly dino crew, including the mighty Chef Rex, a T-Rex with tiny arms but big culinary dreams who crafts dino-mite dishes for all. Snap selfies, share roars and make unique memories together during this one-of-a-kind dinosaur dining experience!

A Jurassic-themed menu

The café invites your family to step back in time and enjoy a Jurassic-age feast, featuring a variety of mouthwatering dishes such as 'Caesar Saladasaurs', 'Dino-mite Prawns', and the 'Mighty T-Rex Burger'

- all made to satisfy every appetite. Wrap up your meal by sinking your teeth into irresistible desserts, like the 'Prehistoric Oreo Obsession' or the 'Veloci-Velvet Cheesecake'. If you have very young diners in tow, don't worry as the café has you covered! Little explorers can enjoy a dedicated kid's menu and dig into dishes like the 'Mini Dino Mac 'n' Cheese', 'Triceratops Penne', or 'T-Rex Tenders & Fossil Fries' - perfect!

Dino Mania

And that's not all! Families can also watch dinosaurs roar back to life in 'Dino Mania', an interactive show every Wednesday to Sunday at 8 pm, for the ultimate expedition into the past! Don't miss the dino dance-off before the show, where kids can show off their moves alongside some cool prehistoric pals.

The family adventure doesn't stop there - children will love paying a visit to the themed gift shop to take home dino-inspired keepsakes, from plush toys and puzzles, to T-Rex t-shirts. It's the perfect place to find a memento of your Jurassic day out.

Tickets

Entry to RIVERLAND™ Dubai is AED 30 per person (redeemable on food and beverages), or AED 25 per person online (non-redeemable on food and beverages). Annual Pass Holders and those with tickets to any of Dubai Parks™ and Resorts' theme parks - like MOTIONGATE™ Dubai, Real Madrid World, LEGOLAND® Dubai Theme Park and LEGOLAND® Water Park - can enjoy complimentary access to RIVERLAND™ Dubai.

Whether it's a casual family day out or a celebration to remember, the T-Rex Adventure Café promises a roaring good time for everyone!

PILATES AND POSITIVITY AT MATCHA CLUB!



Calling all Pilates lovers - get ready to stretch, strengthen and glow! Matcha Club, one of Dubai's favourite wellness and social hubs, has launched its brand-new Reformer Pilates studio. Whether you're a seasoned pro or a total beginner, this sleek new space promises to take your Pilates practice to the next level.

State-of-the-art

Nestled in the heart of Al Quoz, the studio features seven state-of-the-art reformer machines and an interior that's as calming as it is chic. Think floor-to-ceiling mirrors, large windows that flood the space with natural light and views of gorgeous greenery that'll have you feeling zen before you even start your workout.

Led by some of Dubai's top instructors, the classes are designed to suit everyone - from curious first-timers to dedicated Pilates pros. With expert guidance and a supportive atmosphere, you'll be stretching, toning and getting stronger in no time at all.

Special offer

To celebrate the launch, Matcha Club is offering an exclusive introductory package of three reformer Pilates classes for just AED 250! If you prefer to just drop in, regular classes are priced at AED 140, and with up to eight sessions daily, including a dedicated ladies-only class every day, it's easy to fit into your schedule.

Style and substance

Already loved for its stylish padel courts, versatile movement rooms and beloved French-Japanese brunch spot Nette, the atmosphere at Matcha Club is perfect for a great January headspace.

Head to www.matcha-club.ae to learn more and email info@matcha-club.ae or call 04 548 8364 to book in.

GET YOUR GLOW ON AT SALON 971

For those looking for an unforgettable adventure, Bear Grylls Explorers Camp offers a 24-hour survival course in the rugged mountains of Jebel Jais. In this hugely unique experience, you will learn essential survival skills and experience the ultimate challenge of camping in the wild. In this intense course, you'll learn practical life-saving skills, attitudes such as resourcefulness and calmness under pressure, and push yourself farther than ever before.

As we say goodbye to 2024 and welcome in the new year, it's the perfect time to treat yourself to some self-care and rejuvenation. Here are two must-try beauty treatments from Salon 971 that will leave you feeling refreshed, radiant, and ready to shine.

MATIS Lux Caviar Facial

Indulge in luxury with the MATIS Lux Caviar Facial, a deeply nourishing, opulent treatment that revitalises your skin. Powered by caviar extract, this facial is rich in essential nutrients, boosting your own collagen production, your skin's elasticity and reducing the signs of aging, for a firmer, more radiant complexion. Ideal for those looking to truly elevate their skincare routine, at AED 700, this facial provides a youthful, radiant glow that will have you feeling and looking your best.

The BB Lash Lift

The BB Lash Lift is a revolutionary new treatment designed to transform your natural lashes with a stunning curl and extra volume. This cutting-edge, non-invasive procedure is priced at AED 315, and lifts and enhances your lashes from root to tip, creating a beautifully defined, wide-eyed look that lasts for weeks. Using a specially formulated solution, the BB Lash Lift gives you a long-lasting curl, without the need for extensions or mascara. This is perfect for those looking for a natural yet dramatic beauty boost and a low-maintenance solution for effortlessly gorgeous lashes.

Visit www.salon971.com to learn more.



WELLBEING



Managing your child's eczema; why adult teeth are sometimes delayed; the benefits of family sea swims and more!



FIVE TIPS FOR BETTER ENERGY

The easy-to-implement tricks for beating your post-holiday lethargy!

Festive treats and late nights can leave us feeling sluggish, bloated and under pressure to get back on track when January rolls around. Lethargy makes it harder to kick-start the year with the energy and enthusiasm you deserve, but don't worry! With the right approach, you can shake off any remnants of overindulgence and step into the new year feeling your best.

HYDRATION

First things first, it's time to hydrate! From sugary treats to extra cups of coffee, your body has likely been left parched. Dehydration is a leading cause of fatigue, so drinking plenty of water is a simple yet powerful way to combat low energy. Begin your morning with a big glass of water and keep a bottle within arm's reach throughout the day. If you're feeling adventurous, throw in a slice of lemon or a sprig of mint to add some zing.



binge-watch shows late into the night – instead, try reading a book, meditating or journaling while enjoying a warm cup of herbal tea.

NOURISH YOURSELF

Nourishing your body with the right foods can also work wonders in lifting that post-holiday bloat. After weeks of indulging in rich, heavy meals, it's time to reintroduce nutrient-dense foods that will fuel your body and restore balance. Simply start by incorporating more fruits, vegetables and lean proteins into your meals, giving your body the nutrition it needs to fight fatigue. And while you're at it, be mindful of your caffeine intake - while a cup of coffee might feel like a quick fix, too much caffeine can leave you feeling jittery and more tired in the long run.

GET MOVING

Next up, it's time to give your body the gift of movement. It's easy to fall into the trap of hibernating during the colder months, but staying active is one of the best ways to boost your energy levels. You don't have to run a marathon or hit the gym for hours - a brisk walk, a short yoga session or even dancing around the house to your favorite tunes will get your blood flowing and help clear the mental fog, rewarding you with a boost of feel-good chemicals too!

POSITIVE THOUGHTS

Finally, don't underestimate the power of a positive mindset. Lethargy can often be tied to the emotional fatigue of all the hustle and bustle, so take some time to focus on self-care and set achievable goals for the year ahead. Whether it's through journaling, spending time in nature, or simply giving yourself permission to rest, taking care of your mental and emotional self is just as important as physical recovery.

BEAUTY SLEEP

It might sound counterintuitive, but after the holiday rush, your body may be craving extra sleep. In fact, lack of sleep can exacerbate feelings of fatigue, so listen to your body and give it the reset it deserves. Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep per night and try to establish a calming bedtime routine that helps you unwind. Avoid the temptation to scroll through your phone or



THE BENEFITS OF FAMILY SEA SWIMMING

Spending time in the ocean with your children can bring about so many positive effects. Let's dive in!

Every family knows the value of carving out time to recharge and reconnect, and for many, embracing nature provides the perfect outlet. In recent years, sea swimming has surged in popularity across the world, offering remarkable physical and mental health benefits. Whether you're a busy mum looking for a moment of calm or a family searching for a fun and invigorating activity, exploring the power of the ocean might just be the game-changer you didn't know you needed.

A NATURAL BOOST

Sea swimming has been shown to stimulate the body and mind in ways that few other activities can. When you immerse yourself in water, your body experiences a release of feel-good hormones that create a natural high. For mums juggling endless to-do lists, this burst of positivity can provide a vital boost, helping to reduce stress and improve their overall mood.

In addition, sea swimming is a full-body workout that supports cardiovascular health, tones muscles and improves our flexibility. For mothers, it's an accessible and gentle form of exercise that's low-impact yet highly effective - perfect for staying active without putting strain on your body. Being in the water naturally relieves stress on joints, making it especially beneficial for those recovering from childbirth or easing into postpartum fitness.

For children, sea swimming is a lovely way to explore nature, build confidence in the water and stay active - all while having fun.

Beyond physical benefits, sea swimming is a powerful tool for mental wellness. Immersing in water has been shown to reduce stress, ease anxiety and improve mood by releasing endorphins. In the UAE's warm waters, this effect is enhanced by the sun's vitamin D boost, which is essential for maintaining healthy bones and reducing fatigue. The rhythmic motion of swimming, paired with the calming effect of waves, can be a meditative experience that leaves the whole family feeling refreshed and grounded.

FAMILY TIME

Sea swimming isn't just about health - it's also a brilliant way to bond as a family. For parents, finding activities that appeal to kids and adults alike can be a challenge, but splashing in the waves is a great one for all ages. Children especially love the sense of adventure that comes with wild swimming, while parents will enjoy the chance to unplug and focus entirely on the moment.

The UAE's family-friendly beaches, with their calm, shallow waters, are perfect for introducing little ones to the sea. Building sandcastles, collecting seashells, or simply splashing around - these simple, joyful activities remind families to slow down and appreciate time spent together, away from any screens and distractions.

YEAR-ROUND SWIMMING

While summer swims are often easier to embrace, the benefits actually increase as temperatures drop. Winter swimming, in particular, strengthens the body in a myriad of ways, and this brilliant form of cold exposure is hugely popular in recent times. For mums, it can also be a powerful way to combat seasonal mood swings and winter blues.

When you immerse yourself in cooler water, your body experiences a natural shock that releases adrenaline and beneficial chemicals. In addition, cold water immersion supports the immune system, improves circulation and reduces inflammation. This means it's not just an emotional pick-me-up; it also helps keep your body strong and resilient. Families who regularly engage in cold water activities often report fewer illnesses and greater energy levels, making it a fantastic habit to build together.

Families who commit to swimming year-round often describe it as a bonding ritual that keeps them connected to nature and each other, regardless of the season.

CONFIDENCE AND CARE

For busy mums, establishing a routine can make all the difference when it comes to self-care. Regular dips, even if just for a few minutes, offer a structured way to prioritise wellbeing. They're easy to fit into a morning routine or weekend outing and provide a sense of achievement each time you step out of the water.

Swimming in the sea also teaches resilience and adaptability, especially for children. Unlike a pool, the sea's gentle waves and currents create an environment where swimmers must learn to stay calm, focused and in tune with their surroundings. This sense of accomplishment builds confidence and discipline in swimmers of any age - not just in the water but in other aspects of life as well. Many parents find they feel more focused, motivated and capable of handling stress - a win-win!

A FAMILY HABIT

Incorporating sea swimming into your routine doesn't have to be complicated. Start with regular family outings to the beach, packing essentials like sunscreen, water bottles and snacks to keep everyone comfortable. Choose quieter times, such as early mornings or late afternoons, to avoid crowds and enjoy a more peaceful experience.

SAFETY FIRST

While the UAE's beaches are safe and well-maintained, it's always important to keep safety in mind. Supervise young children closely, making sure they wear flotation devices if needed, and stay within designated swimming areas. Choose safe, shallow areas and avoid swimming alone. Checking weather conditions before heading out and wearing plenty of sunscreen are non-negotiables!

Hydration is also a big part of going to the beach, particularly during the hotter months. Make sure to bring plenty of water to stay refreshed and take breaks in shaded areas to avoid anyone overheating.

A TEAM EFFORT

As with any lifestyle change, it's easier when the whole family gets involved. Turn your swimming adventures into a fun family challenge by setting goals, like reaching a





specific number of swims each month or trying out different beaches and celebrate your achievements together with little treats like homemade hot chocolates or beachside picnics.

For mums looking for more personal time, joining a local sea swimming group can also be a great way to build new friendships. Many groups welcome families too, making it an inclusive activity for all ages.

LONG-TERM BENEFITS

The benefits of sea swimming go beyond the immediate physical and mental boosts. Over time, you'll likely notice improved sleep, increased resilience to stress and a stronger immune system. For families, the shared experience strengthens bonds and builds

routines that encourage everyone to spend more time outdoors.

Dipping into the ocean regularly also teaches patience, courage and mindfulness - qualities that parents often strive to model for their children. Seeing your kids push through the initial shock of the water and emerge smiling is a reminder of how small challenges can lead to big rewards.

A FINAL SPLASH

With access to pristine beaches and warm waters, the UAE is perfectly suited for families looking to incorporate sea swimming into their routines. Whether you're floating in the calm waters of the Arabian Gulf or playing in the waves with your children, the sea offers endless possibilities for joy and connection.

Sea swimming in the UAE isn't just a pastime - it's a lifestyle that combines fitness, relaxation and family fun. For mothers, it's an opportunity to recharge and nurture both their body and mind. For families, it's a way to strengthen their relationships with one another, form healthy physical habits and enjoy the natural beauty of the region.

Whether you're looking to boost your mental clarity, build resilience or simply spend more quality time with your family, sea swimming offers something for everyone. It's an activity that's as invigorating as it is rewarding, helping families stay healthy, connected and grounded in nature.

So grab your swimsuits and towels, and take the plunge - you might just find that the sea becomes your family's favourite way to refresh and recharge together!

TACKLING ECZEMA AND PSORIASIS IN KIDS

We explore practical ways to help you keep your little ones' skin as healthy and happy as possible.



Skin issues like eczema and psoriasis can be challenging for both children and their parents. It's tough to see your child uncomfortable, battling persistent itching, redness and irritation. While these conditions can be frustrating, the good news is that with the right strategies and care, they can be managed effectively.

WHAT ARE THEY?

Before diving into solutions, it's helpful to understand these two conditions. Eczema, also known as atopic dermatitis, is characterised by dry, itchy, and inflamed skin. It often appears in patches on areas like the hands, face, elbows and knees. Psoriasis, on the other hand, is an autoimmune condition that causes thick, scaly patches of skin. While eczema is more common in children, psoriasis can also develop at a young age.

Both conditions are influenced by genetics, environmental triggers and immune system responses. They can be long-term but are manageable with the right approach.

MOISTURISE, MOISTURISE, MOISTURISE!

One of the most effective ways to manage eczema and psoriasis is by keeping your child's skin well-hydrated, so it's best to make moisturising a part of your child's routine. Dry skin can make symptoms worse, so daily moisturising is key. Choose a thick, fragrance-free cream or ointment designed for sensitive skin and apply it immediately after bathing to lock in moisture.

For children with severe dryness, layering moisturisers - starting with a lighter lotion followed by a thicker ointment - can provide extra protection.

BATH TIME TIPS

Bathing plays an important role in managing skin conditions, but it's all about finding the right balance. Long, hot baths can strip the skin of its natural oils, so stick to lukewarm water and keep bath time short - around ten minutes.

Use gentle, fragrance-free cleansers instead of harsh soaps, which can dry out and irritate your child's skin further. Adding a splash of colloidal oatmeal or a specially formulated bath oil can help soothe any itching and inflammation. Once bath time is over, pat your little one's skin dry gently with a soft towel instead of rubbing and follow up immediately with a generous layer of moisturiser.

IDENTIFY TRIGGERS

Many cases of eczema and psoriasis are worsened by triggers, so identifying and avoiding these can make a big difference. Common triggers include:

- Harsh soaps and detergents
- Wool or synthetic fabrics
- Dust mites and pet dander
- Stress or emotional upset
- Weather changes, especially cold and dry air
- Certain foods (for eczema)

It may be helpful to keep a journal to track flare-ups and look for patterns. This can help you pinpoint specific triggers and make adjustments, whether it's switching to hypoallergenic laundry detergents, using a humidifier during winter, or limiting your child's exposure to allergens.

SOOTHE THE ITCH

Itching is one of the most distressing symptoms of eczema and psoriasis, and scratching can make things worse by causing infections or skin damage. Help your child resist the urge to scratch by keeping their nails trimmed short and encouraging them to wear soft, cotton gloves at night if needed.

Topical treatments like anti-itch creams or over-the-counter hydrocortisone can provide temporary relief, but be sure to consult your doctor before using any new products. For persistent itching, your doctor might recommend antihistamines or prescription creams to reduce inflammation and discomfort.



DRESS FOR SUCCESS

Clothing choices can impact your child's skin health more than you might think. Where possible, opt for soft, breathable fabrics like cotton and avoid rough materials like wool or polyester, which can irritate sensitive skin. Dressing your child in layers can also help you adjust their clothing based on temperature, reducing the chances of overheating and sweating, which are two common triggers for eczema and psoriasis flare-ups.

NUTRITION MATTERS

While diet isn't a direct cause of eczema or psoriasis, certain foods can either worsen or improve symptoms. Omega-3 fatty acids,

found in fish like salmon and flaxseeds, have anti-inflammatory properties that may benefit the skin. Probiotics, present in yogurt and fermented foods, can also support gut health, which is linked to immunity and inflammation.

On the flip side, foods like dairy, eggs and gluten can sometimes trigger eczema flare-ups in sensitive children. If you suspect a food intolerance, consult your pediatrician or a dietitian to explore options for testing and dietary changes.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Worrying and upset can be a big trigger for skin conditions, even in kids. Teaching your child stress-relief techniques, like deep breathing,



yoga or simple mindfulness exercises, can make a real difference. Building a calm and structured daily routine might also provide emotional stability and reduce any lingering feelings of anxiety they may be prone to.

Creative outlets, whether it's art, music, or outdoor play, can be useful ways to help your child relax and unwind. When it comes to flare-ups, supporting their emotional wellbeing is just as important as managing their physical symptoms.

WORK WITH YOUR DOCTOR

Finally, don't hesitate to involve your child's doctor or dermatologist. They can provide guidance on treatments such as prescription

creams, red light therapy or advanced medications for severe cases. Regular check-ups also mean that any changes in symptoms are addressed early. It's always good to ask your doctor about developing a personalised skincare plan, and be open to adjusting treatments as your child's needs evolve.

EXTRA TIPS

In addition to lifestyle changes and good skin care practices, there are some natural supplements and herbs that can support your child's skin health and help manage eczema and psoriasis. Of course, always consult your child's doctor before introducing any new supplements or herbs to their routine, but these options have shown promise in supporting skin health and reducing flare-ups.

Fish oil

Fish oil is a well-known supplement rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which have powerful anti-inflammatory properties. Research suggests that omega-3s may help calm the inflammation associated with eczema and psoriasis, potentially reducing redness and irritation. Adding a high-quality fish oil supplement to your child's diet or incorporating omega-3-rich foods like salmon, flaxseeds and walnuts can provide a boost to skin health.

Probiotics

Probiotics are another excellent option for supporting your child's immune system and reducing inflammation. Probiotics can help balance gut bacteria, which in turn may influence immune function and skin health. Yogurt, kefir and fermented foods like sauerkraut and kimchi are natural sources of probiotics, or you can consider giving your son or daughter a probiotic supplement, which has been linked to improved skin conditions.

Evening primrose oil

Evening primrose oil, rich in gamma-linolenic acid (GLA), is often used to soothe irritated skin. It may be especially helpful for children with eczema, as it helps reduce inflammation and can be taken in capsule form or applied topically in diluted oils. Always check with your pediatrician before using it topically.

Turmeric

Turmeric, the golden spice, has anti-inflammatory properties thanks to its active ingredient, curcumin. While it can be challenging to get children to enjoy turmeric in their food, turmeric supplements or incorporating it into smoothies can be an effective way to tap into its skin-healing properties.

Dealing with eczema and psoriasis in kids can feel overwhelming at times, but with the right approach, these conditions can be managed effectively. By removing triggers and focusing on a good lifestyle with appropriate skincare, you can give your child the tools they need to feel comfortable and confident in their skin.

Remember, everybody is different, and finding the right routine may take some trial and error. Be patient, stay consistent and lean on your healthcare provider for support along the way. With your care and attention, your little one's skin health can improve, leaving them free to focus on the fun and adventures of growing up.





DELAYED ADULT TEETH: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Sometimes children's permanent teeth don't come in as expected. Let's explore five of the most likely causes.

Watching your child grow and develop is an exciting journey, filled with milestones big and small. From their first words to their first steps, each moment feels monumental. So, when it comes to their teeth, it's only natural to keep a close eye on progress. But what if your child's permanent teeth seem to be taking longer than expected to appear? Before you start worrying, know that there are several common reasons why children experience delays in the eruption of their permanent teeth.

TIMING VARIATIONS ARE NORMAL

First and foremost, it's important to remember that every child develops at their own pace. While most children start losing their baby teeth around age six, the timeline for permanent teeth coming in can vary widely. Some kids might see their first adult tooth erupt as early as five, while others may not experience this until they're seven or eight. This variation is completely normal and often no cause for concern.

Girls tend to develop slightly earlier than boys, so if your son's teeth are slower to emerge, it might simply be a matter of natural differences in growth rates. Genetics also play a role, so looking at your own dental history or your partner's can give you clues about what to expect. If you or your child's other parent experienced delayed dental development, it's possible your child will follow a similar pattern.

RETAINED BABY TEETH

One common reason for delayed permanent teeth is that the baby teeth are still in place. For adult teeth to emerge, baby teeth must first fall out, clearing the way for new growth. Sometimes, baby teeth are stubborn and don't loosen as expected. This is known as 'retained primary teeth' and is more common than you would think.

In some cases, a baby tooth might be stuck due to its root not dissolving properly. When this happens, it can block the adult tooth from erupting. If you notice a loose baby tooth that just won't come out, or if permanent teeth are attempting to come in behind or beside it, a quick visit to your dentist can help resolve the issue. Dentists can assist with gentle extraction if necessary, allowing permanent teeth to take their rightful place.

SPACE ISSUES

Crowding in the mouth is another reason why permanent teeth may be delayed. If there isn't enough room in your child's jaw for the adult teeth to come in, they might get stuck beneath the gums, a condition called impaction. This is particularly common in cases where baby teeth fell out early due to injury or decay, leaving surrounding teeth to shift and take up more space than intended.

If your dentist suspects crowding, they may recommend orthodontic treatment to create more room for the adult teeth to emerge properly. Early intervention, such as spacers or partial braces, can often prevent bigger issues later on and ensure a healthy, aligned smile as your child grows.

UNDERLYING FACTORS

While most delays in tooth eruption are harmless, there are some medical or developmental conditions that can contribute

to slower dental growth. Conditions like hypothyroidism, nutritional deficiencies or genetic syndromes such as Down syndrome may affect overall growth patterns, including teeth development.

In rarer cases, teeth might be missing altogether due to a condition called hypodontia. This occurs when certain permanent teeth simply fail to develop. If you have concerns about your child's overall growth or notice other signs like delayed speech or motor development, it's worth bringing these up with your pediatrician or dentist for a more in-depth evaluation.

DELAYED ERUPTION

Sometimes, the permanent teeth are present but taking their time to make an appearance. X-rays can often reveal whether the adult teeth are sitting just beneath the surface, waiting for the right moment to erupt. If this is the case, your dentist may recommend regular monitoring to ensure they eventually come through.

In some instances, slight delays in eruption are linked to slow bone growth or differences in root development. These situations often resolve naturally, though your dentist might suggest periodic check-ups to track progress and provide reassurance.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

As a parent, it's natural to want to take action if you feel something isn't progressing as it should. The good news is that most cases of delayed tooth eruption don't require any intervention beyond monitoring. However, there are a few steps you can take to support your child's dental development:

Stick to a schedule

Be sure to schedule regular dental visits for your child. Seeing a dentist every six months allows for early detection of any issues. X-rays can provide insights into what's happening below the gum line.

Good oral hygiene

Healthy gums and teeth are essential for proper development. With this in mind, it's very important to take the time to teach your child how to brush and floss properly to keep their mouth in great shape.



A nourishing diet

Nutrients like calcium, vitamin D, and phosphorus play a crucial role in bone and tooth health for kids. Including plenty of dairy, leafy greens and nuts in your family's diet can support your child's healthy growth.

Guard against tooth loss

Avoid the premature loss of baby teeth where you can. This involves protecting your little one's baby teeth from cavities and injury, as losing them too early can lead to spacing problems for permanent teeth.

Stay patient

Remember, dental development is a gradual process, and differences are part of the norm. Most delays resolve themselves without major treatment.

While it can be concerning to see your child's peers losing baby teeth and gaining adult ones while your son or daughter seems to lag behind, rest assured that delays are often just another variation in the developmental timeline.

If you're ever unsure, don't hesitate to reach out to your child's dentist for peace of mind. With the right support and information, you can confidently guide your child through this stage, ensuring their smile grows as beautifully as the rest of them.

PARENTING



Ways to save money as a family; tips for a smooth breastfeeding journey; helping kids who struggle with bedwetting and more!





HOW NOISE AFFECTS CHILDREN

Modern life is loud - but what is the impact of excessive sound on your child?

In today's fast-paced world, noise has become an unavoidable part of daily life. From busy roads and construction sites to televisions, video games and smartphones, children are constantly exposed to different levels of sound. While some background babble is completely normal, research is beginning to reveal how excessive or consistent sound can impact children's development, health and wellbeing.

As parents, it's important to understand how this affects children and what can be done to create a more balanced and peaceful environment. Let's take a closer look.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Noise is more than just an irritation - it can have measurable effects on physical and mental health, even for children. Studies show that exposure to excessive sound levels can increase stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline in kids, just as it does in adults. Over time, elevated stress hormones may contribute to issues like poor sleep, reduced concentration and anxiety.

Sleep is especially important for children, as it plays a key role in their growth and brain development. The din from traffic, construction or even loud household appliances can disturb sleep cycles, preventing children from getting the rest they need. Poor sleep can lead to fatigue, irritability and difficulty focusing in school, which may ultimately affect academic performance.

In addition to sleep disturbances, high sound levels may contribute to:

- Elevated blood pressure
- Poor digestion
- Increased aggression
- Anxiety and irritability
- Lowered grades

Long-term exposure to loud noise has even been linked to hearing damage, which may go unnoticed until it begins affecting language development and communication. Children who are frequently exposed to high volumes through headphones or music systems may be at higher risk, highlighting the need for volume limits and breaks during listening activities.



LEARNING AND STUDY

One area where noise has a particularly noticeable impact is learning. Children are highly sensitive to auditory distractions, especially in environments like classrooms where concentration is so central to success. Excessive background commotion can make it difficult for children to process information, follow instructions and retain what they've learned, and this is the same for environments where they do their homework.

Studies have shown that younger children who attend schools near busy roads or airports may experience delays in language and reading development due to noise interference. This is because loud or sudden sounds disrupt the brain's ability to focus and filter out unnecessary information, making it harder for kids to absorb new material.

Even at home, auditory clamour can influence learning. Loud music, TV shows and video games may compete with homework time, leaving children feeling

overwhelmed and distracted. Creating quiet, dedicated spaces for study and relaxation can go a long way in supporting children's academic success.

EMOTIONS AND NOISE

The emotional effects of sound on children are equally important to consider. High noise levels can lead to feelings of irritability, frustration and restlessness. Younger children, in particular, may not have the vocabulary to express their discomfort, leading to tantrums or mood swings.

For children with sensory processing difficulties, such as those with autism or ADHD, noise can feel especially overwhelming. Sudden loud sounds might trigger stress or fear responses, making it challenging for these children to feel calm and secure.

On the flip side, excessive quiet can sometimes create its own set of challenges. Children need a mix of activity and calm, and complete silence may leave them feeling isolated. The key lies in finding the right

balance between stimulating sounds and restful quiet.

Prolonged exposure to chaotic environments can also increase feelings of helplessness and overstimulation, which can sometimes look like low motivation to do anything. Over time, if this is a regular experience, it can really affect children's ability to regulate their emotions effectively, impacting their social skills and interactions with others.

Modern life is noisy and overstimulation or a lack of auditory 'rest' is a real thing that can easily go unnoticed. A great approach is to trial some soothing moments throughout the day and see if they have a positive impact on your child's emotional state. This could look like 'reading time' together in the evening, perhaps listening to classical music, or colouring together while listening to nature sounds - whatever works for your family! By providing moments of calm within the day, you'll be giving little ones the tools they need to reset and feel more grounded.

Noise sensitivity may also impact friendships and social experiences and no parent

wants to see their little one struggle socially at school or with friends! Children who feel overwhelmed by loud parties, busy classrooms, or noisy playdates may begin to withdraw socially. Helping them manage this by preparing them for noisy situations or offering breaks when needed can build their confidence and resilience in group settings.

A CALM ENVIRONMENT

So, what can parents do to reduce the impact of auditory disturbances and create a more peaceful environment at home? Here are a few strategies to consider:

Background babble

Turn off TVs and radios when they're not in use, and encourage children to use headphones at a low volume if they're watching videos or playing games.

Quiet zones

Designate certain areas of your home as quiet spaces where children can read, study or relax without distractions. This is an essential escape for overstimulated kids.

Noise reduction

Thick curtains, rugs and wall hangings can help absorb sound and reduce echoes in busy rooms. White noise machines or fans can also provide soothing background sounds that mask disruptive sounds.

Outdoor fun

If you live in a noisy urban area, consider spending time in parks or quieter, green spaces where children can unwind and recharge.

Sound boundaries

Teach children about noise levels and encourage them to be mindful of how loud they speak or play, especially when others are resting or working.

Sleep-friendly spaces

Ensure your child's bedroom is as quiet as possible at night. Blackout curtains, sound machines and avoiding screen time before bed can all help promote better sleep.

THE RIGHT BALANCE

It's important to remember that not all sounds are bad. Music, laughter and play are essential parts of childhood and can help nurture your little one's creativity and sense of connection. What matters most is balance. By being intentional about when and where noise occurs, parents can create spaces that support both activity and calm.

Encouraging children to spend time outdoors will also help. Nature sounds, like birds chirping or waves crashing, have been shown to have a calming effect on both children and adults. Even short walks in the park can help counterbalance the overstimulation of noisy city life.

THE ROLE OF SCHOOLS

While much of the focus is on home environments, schools also play a significant

role in managing auditory levels for children. Teachers and school administrators can help by creating quieter classrooms, using soft furnishings to dampen sound and ensuring playgrounds are designed with noise control in mind.

Parents can advocate for noise-friendly policies in schools where it is appropriate, such as limiting announcements during class time or scheduling noisy maintenance work outside of learning hours.

Clamour and commotion is an inescapable part of modern life, but its impact on children shouldn't be underestimated. From affecting sleep and concentration to influencing emotional health, the effects of sound can be far-reaching. The good news is that with a few simple changes, you can create calmer, healthier environments for your family to flourish in. After all, every child deserves a space where they can feel calm, focused and happy.



BREASTFEEDING 101: A GUIDE FOR NEW MOTHERS

Breastfeeding is a journey that comes with many twists and turns! Here, we discuss getting started and the common issues you may face.

For many new mothers, breastfeeding can feel both exciting and overwhelming. It's often described as one of the most natural things in the world, yet it can also come with questions, uncertainties and challenges. Whether you're preparing to breastfeed for the first time or looking for ways to make it easier, understanding the basics can give you confidence and set you up for success.

WHY BREASTFEEDING MATTERS

Breastfeeding is not only a way to nourish your baby but also a powerful way to bond with them. Breast milk provides the perfect blend of nutrients tailored to support your little one's growth and development. It contains antibodies that help protect them against infections, reduce the risk of allergies and even promote better digestion.

For mothers, breastfeeding offers its own set of benefits. It helps your uterus contract back to its pre-pregnancy size, it burns extra calories and it lowers the risk of certain cancers, such as breast and ovarian cancer. The skin-to-skin contact during breastfeeding also releases oxytocin, the 'love' hormone, a wonderful chemical that helps your sense of bonding and reduces stress.

GETTING STARTED

The first few days after birth are paramount for establishing a breastfeeding supply. It's a challenge as it's totally new to every first-time mother! Many hospitals encourage lots of lovely skin-to-skin contact right after delivery to help trigger your baby's natural instincts to latch onto the breast.

The right position

Comfort is key when breastfeeding, so experiment with different positions until you find what works for you and your baby. The cradle hold, football hold and side-lying position are popular options, but you'll find what works best for you. Don't be afraid to use pillows for support if needed.

A good latch

A proper latch is essential to avoid pain and to be sure your baby is feeding properly. Try to check that your baby's mouth covers both the nipple and part of the areola. If breastfeeding feels painful, gently break the suction with your finger and try again.

Feeding on demand

Newborns typically feed every two or three hours, but every baby is different. Watch for hunger cues, such as rooting, sucking on hands, or smacking lips - these will help you know when to try to feed. It's best to let your bundle of joy nurse until they're full, which may vary from session to session.

OVERCOMING COMMON CHALLENGES

Breastfeeding is no walk in the park and there are lots of pitfalls to work through! Here are the most usual difficulties and ways you can try and tackle them.

Sore nipples

It's normal to experience some tenderness in



the early days, but persistent pain could signal a poor latch. Applying lanolin cream or using hydrogel pads might soothe your soreness, but don't hesitate to ask for help from a lactation consultant if the pain continues.

Low milk supply

Many mothers worry about producing enough milk. The best way to boost your supply is through frequent nursing or pumping. Aim to stay hydrated, eat a balanced diet and consider lactation-boosting foods, such as oats and flaxseed.

Engorgement

Full, swollen breasts can feel uncomfortable, especially during the first few weeks. To relieve engorgement, try warm compresses before



bottle-feeding with expressed milk. This will make the transition far smoother. It's also wise to label and store your milk properly to avoid any confusion, and speak to your employer about setting up a clean, private space for pumping at work.

GROWTH SPURTS AND CLUSTER FEEDING

Babies often go through growth spurts where they feed more frequently for a few days. This increased demand can sometimes make mothers feel like their milk supply isn't enough, but rest assured, your body is designed to adapt.

Cluster feeding, when babies nurse in short, frequent bursts, is also common, especially in the evenings. It's little ones' way of increasing milk production and seeking comfort. During these times, focus on staying hydrated and resting whenever possible.

SUPPORT SYSTEMS MATTER

Breastfeeding is not something you have to tackle alone. Support from your partner, family and friends can make all the difference, as can connecting with lactation consultants, support groups or even online communities with other new mums.

If breastfeeding becomes too stressful or doesn't work out as planned, it's important to remind yourself that feeding your baby - whether through breast, bottle, or both - is what truly matters. The journey looks different for every family and flexibility is key. Caring for a newborn can feel all-consuming, but looking after yourself and giving yourself grace is just as important!

Breastfeeding is a deeply personal experience that comes with its highs and lows. By understanding the basics and preparing for the challenges, you can approach it with more confidence and ease. Remember, there's no one-size-fits-all approach - what matters most is nurturing your baby with love, patience and care. You've got this mama!

feeding and cold compresses afterward. While this might seem too simple, it can actually be very effective! Hand-expressing or pumping a small amount of milk can also help soften the breast and make latching easier.

Blocked ducts and mastitis

Blocked milk ducts can lead to mastitis, a painful breast infection. To prevent this, make sure your baby is emptying the breast during feeds and try massaging any firm areas while nursing. If you develop symptoms like fever or redness, you should contact your healthcare provider immediately.

RETURNING TO WORK

For mothers planning to return to work, continuing to breastfeed is absolutely possible with a little preparation. Good tools are essential! Investing in a high-quality breast pump can make expressing milk easier and more efficient.

For your own peace of mind, practice pumping ahead of time to build a supply in the freezer and get your little one accustomed to



EASY WAYS TO SAVE MONEY FOR FAMILIES

January is a great time for a financial reset, so here are some simple habit changes you can make to save your money for the things that truly matter.

Raising a family is a rewarding journey, but it can also come with its fair share of financial challenges. From grocery bills and school supplies to unexpected expenses, managing household finances often feels like a juggling act, especially in the wake of the indulgent holiday season. The good news? Saving money doesn't have to mean sacrificing fun or quality time with your loved ones. With a few smart strategies and small habit changes, families can build healthier financial habits and enjoy greater peace of mind. Here are some easy and practical ways to save money as a family.

PLAN YOUR MEALS

Food often takes up a significant portion of a family's budget, but a little planning can make a big difference. Simply start by creating a weekly meal plan and writing out a shopping list before heading to the store. Planning meals helps you avoid last-minute takeaway orders and impulse buys, both of which can quickly add up.

Shopping smart also means looking for discounts and using seasonal produce, as well as bulk buying, such as purchasing staples like rice, oatmeal or lentils in larger quantities. Consider shopping around your local stores to find the best value and don't forget to check for coupons or loyalty programs. If you're short on time, grocery delivery services can help streamline shopping and reduce those unplanned purchases.

THINK COMMUNALLY

Kids grow fast - sometimes faster than your budget can keep up! Instead of buying brand-new clothes, toys or baby gear, explore second-hand options from friends, community and family or even returned-but-unopened goods from stores. Many parents sell or donate barely used items, giving you access to high-quality goods at a fraction of the price. Online marketplaces, vintage stores and community swap groups can be goldmines for gently used items.

Clothes and gear shared within the family are another great option. Whether it's outfits from an older sibling or toys passed down from cousins, reusing items can save a surprising amount of money. Plus, it's an environmentally friendly habit that helps reduce waste.

REDUCE YOUR BILLS

Utility bills often go unnoticed until they start climbing and the world is experiencing an overall rise in prices for electricity right now. Simple adjustments can really keep those costs down. Try encouraging your

kids to turn off lights when leaving a room and consider switching to energy-efficient bulbs. Also, unplug devices that aren't in use and invest in smart plugs or timers to save even more.

Water usage is another area where small tweaks make a big impact. Fix leaks promptly, install water-saving shower heads and remind little ones to turn off taps while brushing their teeth. Even little steps, like doing laundry with full loads and air-drying clothes, can lead to noticeable savings over time.

ENTERTAIN WISELY

Family outings and entertainment don't have to break the bank. Look for free or low-cost activities in your area, such as parks, nature trails and community events. Many libraries offer free programs like storytime or craft activities, and museums and zoos often have discounted admission days, so keep an eye on their calendars.

Hosting a movie or game night at home can be just as fun as going out - and it's far cheaper! In fact, at this time of year, many of us are actually in the mood for more low-key fun after all the hustle and bustle of the festive season's socialising. You can even create themed evenings with homemade popcorn and snacks for added excitement and a sense of pomp. The key is to focus on spending time together rather than spending money.

REEVALUATE SUBSCRIPTIONS

In today's digital world, it's easy to accumulate subscriptions - from streaming services and gym memberships to meal kits and magazines. January is the perfect month to take some time to review what you're actually using and cancel any services that aren't adding value.

For subscriptions you want to keep, consider sharing plans with family or friends to split the cost. Many services offer family packages that can save money compared to individual plans.

Not only will culling your subscriptions help you tighten your purse strings, it's also a brilliant way to mentally 'declutter' for a fresh start as we enter 2025!

A DIY ETHOS

DIY projects can be fun, budget-friendly and practical. From homemade birthday decorations to handcrafted gifts, getting creative as a family can save money and create some wholesome memories.





Pinterest and YouTube are full of easy ideas for crafts, home improvement and cooking hacks, and it can be great fun to try some out together!

Cooking at home instead of dining out is also one of the easiest ways to cut costs. We all know this, but the new year is a good time to reaffirm some at-home cooking goals! Batch cooking and freezing meals can save time for mums who have their hands full and prevent the temptation of ordering takeaway on busy days.

TEACH KIDS ABOUT MONEY

Helping your children understand the value of money can lead to their long-term financial success. Try to instill some saving habits by giving them a piggy bank or savings jar. Older kids can open savings accounts and learn about budgeting with their allowance or birthday money.

It's also good to get them involved in grocery shopping or comparing prices online so they see the impact of spending choices. While that can sound boring, turning saving into a game or challenge can make the process fun and rewarding!

TRAVEL SMART

Family trips don't have to drain your savings. Seeing the world can be expensive but also such an amazing thing, so instead of restricting yourself, look for off-peak travel deals and consider staycations where you explore local attractions. Booking accommodation with kitchen facilities might give you the option to save on dining costs, and loyalty points or travel reward programs can further cut expenses.

Road trips can also be budget-friendly, especially if you pack your own snacks and plan free stops along the way, like beaches, parks and hiking trails.

SELL UNUSED ITEMS

Let's face it, most families have closets full of items they no longer use - from clothes and toys to electronics and home décor. Decluttering not only clears out usable space but it can also earn you extra cash. Host a garage sale, list items online or join local selling groups to turn unwanted belongings into money - a win-win!

AN EMERGENCY FUND

Even with the best laid plans, unexpected expenses are inevitable, but having a financial safety net can make them less stressful. Start by setting aside small amounts each month into a dedicated savings account. Even a modest emergency fund can prevent your household from relying on credit cards when surprises arise, whether it's car repairs or a medical bill.

A TEAM EFFORT

Saving money as a family doesn't mean giving up on fun or comfort - it's about finding creative ways to stretch your budget while building better habits. By involving everyone in the process, from meal planning to decluttering, you can turn saving into a shared goal. Small, consistent changes can make a big difference over time, giving you more freedom to focus on what truly matters - making great memories with your loved ones.

So, whether you're looking to pay down debt, build savings, or simply make your money go further this January, these easy tips can help your family get there - one step at a time.

HELPING YOUR CHILD OVERCOME BEDWETTING

Here are some tips and tricks for parents as they navigate this delicate issue with their little one.



Bedwetting - also called nocturnal enuresis - can feel like one of parenting's trickiest puzzles. It's common, often outgrown and completely involuntary. Yet for children, waking up wet can feel embarrassing, and for parents, it can be equally frustrating. The good news is that bedwetting can be managed, and in a way that keeps your child's confidence intact.

WHAT CAUSES BEDWETTING?

Before jumping to solutions, it helps to understand the 'why.' Bedwetting can run in families - if one parent experienced it as a child, there's a higher chance their son or daughter might too. For some kids, their bladder simply hasn't caught up with their growth yet, while others may sleep so deeply that they don't wake up when their bladder signals it's full. Worry, constipation and hormonal imbalances affecting urine production at night can also play a role. The main takeaway is that bedwetting isn't your child's fault - and it's not yours either.

BUILDING CONFIDENCE

The first rule of managing bedwetting is to keep things positive. Remind your child that it's normal, that many kids face the same challenge and that they'll grow out of it. Celebrate dry nights with enthusiasm, but avoid punishing or shaming little ones after accidents - this generally only adds anxiety, which may make the problem worse.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR PARENTS

What should you consider when looking for a solution to your child's issues?

Bedtime routine

A predictable evening routine is a great way to signal to your child's body that it's time to wind down. Include a bathroom trip right before bed and encourage another trip if they wake during the night at any stage.

Manage evening fluids

Offer plenty of water earlier in the day and gently reduce drinks an hour before bedtime. Be careful not to over-restrict fluids though! After all, hydration throughout the day is just as important.

Waterproof covers

It's good to be practical and protect mattresses with waterproof covers. This simplifies clean-ups and is a small tweak that keeps stress levels lower. Having spare sheets on hand also makes middle-of-the-night accidents easier to handle.

Alarms and bathroom breaks

For older kids, bedwetting alarms can be helpful. They detect moisture and sound an alert, helping condition children to wake up and use the toilet. Equally, during the day, remind your child to use the bathroom regularly as waiting until the last minute can overstretch their bladder.

EXTRA SUPPORT

Most children outgrow bedwetting by age seven, but if the problem persists, or suddenly begins after a long dry spell, it might be time to talk to a medical expert. Sometimes underlying issues like urinary tract infections, digestive problems or even stress may need to be addressed. Doctors may recommend treatments like bladder exercises, medication or therapy to help older children who struggle with self-esteem or anxiety related to bedwetting.

While bedwetting can be an upsetting phase for the whole family, have faith that it will resolve. The journey to dry nights is often gradual, but progress will come with time!



EDUCATION



Exploring the Reggio Emilia approach to learning and packing the perfect lunch for your little learner!





A LUNCH BOX FOR LEARNING

For parents, packing a lunch often feels like just another daily chore. But what if that midday meal could do more than just satisfy hunger?

Research shows that the right lunch box can play a huge role in a child's ability to focus, learn and thrive at school. By making thoughtful choices, parents can create a lunch that supports their little one's brain power and energy, setting children up for success in the classroom and beyond.

BRAIN-BOOSTING NUTRITION

Young learners' brains need the right nutrients to stay sharp and engaged during long school days. If this sounds confusing, just start with a source of protein, such as chicken, eggs or hummus, to keep their energy levels steady. Pair it with complex carbohydrates like whole-grain wraps, pasta or brown rice to provide a slow, consistent release of energy.

Healthy fats, found in foods like avocado, nuts and seeds, are essential for brain development and concentration so don't skip them! Including colourful fruits and vegetables also means kids get vitamins, antioxidants and fibre - all of which are vital for your child's cognitive health. A handful of berries, carrot sticks or cucumber slices can make the lunch box visually appealing for little ones - while secretly boosting up their nutrient intake!

SNACKING FOR ENERGY

Snacks are more than fillers - they can keep students' energy levels stable between lessons. Schoolwork is a challenge at the best of times and so it's important to guard your child's ability to concentrate when you're putting together break time bites. Always aim to swap out the usual sugary treats for nutrient-dense options like yoghurt, trail mix or oat bars. These choices deliver lasting energy

without the sugar crashes that can make kids sluggish and unfocused.

HYDRATION MATTERS

It's easy to overlook hydration, but even mild dehydration can impact memory and attention spans. Encourage your child to drink water throughout their school day by adding a reusable water bottle to their bag, and, for variety, try adding slices of lemon, orange or mint to make water more exciting. As a rule, avoid sugary drinks, which will only lead to energy spikes followed by crashes.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

It's a universal truth that children are more likely to eat foods that look fun and inviting - so be prepared! Bento-style lunch boxes with compartments make it easy to include a variety of foods without mixing flavours or textures. Additionally silicone cups or small containers can separate dips and dressings, while cookie cutters can turn sandwiches and fruit into cute shapes that appeal to picky eaters.

ALL HANDS ON DECK

The reality is that kids will prefer their lunch when they help pack it. So, encourage them to choose fruits, vegetables and healthy snacks they enjoy. This not only makes them feel empowered, but makes your life easier too.

A thoughtfully packed lunch box is a genuine tool for learning. By combining nutrition and smart snacks, you can give your children the fuel they need to stay focused, energised and able to learn. After all, healthy minds start with healthy meals.

ODYSSEY NURSERY: EXPLORING THE REGGIO EMILIA APPROACH

We decipher this special approach to learning, where loose parts, sensory stimulation, messy art exploration and role play make up the ethos.



The outdoor play area at the Umm Suqeim branch

In this article, we'll explore the top five elements that distinguish Reggio Emilia learning at Odyssey, including the unique materials they use for art and creation, how nature plays a key role as teacher, the '100 languages' concept, documentation and trilingual learning.

OPEN-ENDED MATERIALS

What are the "open-ended materials" used in the Reggio Emilia approach? Odyssey's 'Atelier' has on display a myriad of materials like blocks, fabric and recyclables, for children to engage in problem-solving and critical thinking. The freedom to

experiment with these materials fosters collaboration and communication among their little learners. In the Reggio Emilia approach, open-ended materials such as loose parts, natural items and art supplies offer numerous benefits for young attendees. These versatile resources encourage creativity and imagination, allowing children to explore and manipulate them in multiple ways.

THE ROLE OF NATURE

What are the benefits of connecting children to nature? Nature is far more than just an 'outdoor space' in this ethos, it's a powerful

teacher in Reggio Emilia learning! This is why there's an ample amount of it at Odyssey, allowing children to explore planting, messy mud play, picnics and animal care at the chicken coop. After all, when children engage with the natural world, they not only gain insights into biology and natural cycles, but they actually learn to take responsibility for their environment.

100 LANGUAGES

The "100 Languages" concept in the Reggio Emilia approach highlights the diverse ways children can express themselves beyond just spoken language. It includes

drawing, music, dance and dramatic play, and ultimately celebrates the multiple ways children make sense of their world. “Art – is not about drawing or painting – it’s about creating!” is a quote that ties together this unique approach. Let’s look at some of the different modes of communication that Odyssey likes to explore:

Art

“For many of us a finished product made of clay or collage materials is called art. But for Reggio Odyssey nursery, art refers to spontaneous, open ended and often messy



explorations with little to no direction from the teacher. We use the word art to describe a lively process of engagement that is reflective, creative and deliberate - one that deepens and extends children’s learning.” Hoda, the Reggio Emilia Director at Odyssey.

Clay modelling

Creativity is nurtured through long-term projects that are based on young learners’ interests, and at Odyssey they use aromatic, cold, messy clay for this! These projects encourage deep thinking, collaboration and exploration.

Exploring light

Children in Odyssey’s Atelier investigate how light behaves, how shadows are formed or how light interacts with different materials. In this way, they learn to make predictions, test ideas and find solutions to challenges, all of which develop their problem solving and reasoning skills.

The ‘language of light’ in Reggio Emilia is a rich, multifaceted concept that connects science, art and communication, allowing children to engage deeply with the world

around them in ways that are both playful and profound. Light is often explored through carefully selected materials like prisms, mirrors, magnifying glasses or colored filters, which invite students to manipulate and experiment with light in diverse ways.

Light can be used to tell stories or convey deeper meanings. For instance, children might create shadow puppets or explore light and dark contrasts in their artistic work to symbolise themes like good and evil, day and night, or the cycles of nature.

DOCUMENTATION

The concept of ‘documentation’ is a large part of this learning approach, but what are its benefits? Throughout Reggio Emilia spaces, children’s learning is displayed through photos, videos and written observations, which is something you don’t see in many other approaches. This aids in reflective practice, guiding educators in assessing and planning based on real-time insights. Families get to celebrate their child’s achievements, making it a collaborative and informed educational journey.

TRILINGUAL LEARNING

Trilingual learning in the Reggio Emilia approach boosts cognitive flexibility,

helping children think adaptively and solve problems more effectively. It also enriches cultural awareness and empathy by exposing them to diverse perspectives. Children are exposed to English, French and Arabic through native speakers from each culture, which aligns with Reggio Emilia’s emphasis on diverse forms of expression and understanding.

BOOK YOUR TOUR!

With the busy end-of-year taking up lots of headspace, many parents put off planning their children’s nursery enrollment until January. But why not get a head start on it now, by reaching out to Odyssey, the UAE’s premier Reggio-inspired nursery, with twelve locations across Dubai and Abu Dhabi?

Their nature inspired philosophy, which originated in Italy by Loris Malaguzzi, views children as “good citizens, with real life practical skills, who can adapt to any job and situation,” which is a vital character trait to have in today’s world. Enrollments are open for term 2, and spaces run out quickly!

Visit <https://www.odysseynursery.com/book-a-tour> to book a tour or call 800-REGGIO for more information.



SCHOOL & FAMILY BREAKS



A high-end city
break to London and
unforgettable family
travel destinations
from around the world.





A LUXURY CITY BREAK AT THE MANDRAKE LONDON

A high-end destination that caters to your every need, the Mandrake, London is an unforgettable place to stay.

There is nothing quite like London during the colder, crisp months, and nowhere quite like staying at The Mandrake. Fitzrovia's finest five-star boutique hotel, it offers 33 luxurious rooms and suites, and an award-winning penthouse. Founded and owned by entrepreneur and art collector Rami Fustok, the centrally located boutique hotel is recognised for its exquisite and striking art, culture and design, based on an 'ever-evolving' concept that hosts all manner of artists, performers, exhibitions and events year-round.

THE PERFECT BASE

With the culture and nightlife of Soho and the West End on your doorstep, and the shopping of Oxford Street only a stone's throw away, The Mandrake is the perfect base to set off and explore all that this famous city has to offer.

JUREMA WINTER GARDEN

The Mandrake has reopened its beloved Jurema Terrace, having transformed it into the Jurema Winter Garden, a breathtaking winter wonderland in the heart of Fitzrovia. Guests are invited to immerse themselves in the beauty of a white dreamscape, where frosted branches, delicate florals and softly lit fairy lights create an intimate, romantic ambience.

Designed as an escape from the bustling city, the Jurema Winter Garden features a one-of-a-kind glass structure that shields guests from the January chill, while offering stunning, uninterrupted views of Jurema's iconic hanging garden.

Faux-fur blankets, candlelit tables and cosy seating add warmth and comfort to this exquisite little retreat, the perfect setting for romantic evenings, family gatherings, or simply just some relaxation.

FOOD AND DRINK

Your family will love indulging in the delicious menu at YOPO. The restaurant serves as a cultural melting pot where traditional South American dishes take centre stage. Chef George Scott-Toft pays homage to the culinary heritage of the region, showcasing time-honoured recipes passed down through families, ensuring that each bite carries the authenticity and nostalgia of South American kitchens. Featuring dishes like 'Smoked Ricotta Ravioli with Pumpkin and Truffle' and 'Grilled Halibut with Butter Beans, Chorizo and Cabbage', or sweet desserts such as 'Tres Leches Cake with White Chocolate and Clementine' and the decadent 'Smoked Dark Chocolate Mousse', your nearest and dearest will not be short of tasty options!

Or for a more casual bite, explore the flavours of the newly opened Taco Bar which boasts an enticing selection of tacos, tostadas and more, capturing the essence and comfort of vibrant South American cuisine.

A multi-award-winning destination, this luxury lifestyle property in the heart of London has been thoughtfully curated and designed to offer you and your family a unique, immersive and truly unforgettable experience - an invitation to a different side of London!

TRANSFORMATIVE TRAVEL EXPERIENCES FOR FAMILIES

Here's a look at some of the most awe-inspiring family travel experiences to add to your wish list for 2025 - places that redefine what it means to truly escape!

In today's fast-paced world, taking time out for unusual or big travel experiences can feel like a real luxury. Imagine swapping screens and schedules for starlit skies, wild landscapes and shared adventures with your family that leave everyone feeling refreshed and inspired. Whether it's gazing at galaxies in the desert or trekking through misty forests to meet mountain gorillas, the new year offers the perfect chance to get planning for a big family adventure in the next twelve months.



SHARJAH: STARGAZING IN THE DESERT

For families who dream of sleeping under the stars, the Chedi Al Bait in Sharjah offers a magical escape into the heart of the Mleiha desert. The adventure begins with expert-led stargazing sessions, where telescopes reveal planets, constellations and even meteor showers lighting up the night sky.

But the magic doesn't stop there. After an evening of cosmic wonder, the adventure continues with an overnight stay in the desert! Retreat with your loved ones into luxurious desert tents, where a gourmet dinner awaits you, and as the sun rises, sip coffee while watching shooting stars fade into the dawn. This serene experience is a lovely combination of comfort and nature, leaving families with unforgettable memories - and maybe even a new appreciation for the universe.

For more information, visit <https://www.ghmhotels.com/en/the-chedi-al-bait-sharjah/>



OMAN: ADVENTURES ON LAND AND SEA

If your family loves the sea, the Chedi Muscat in Oman is the perfect place to set sail - literally. Private charters take you out to spot dolphins, and if you're lucky, even whales. Or perhaps your family prefers to dive below the surface? Then you're in luck as guided snorkelling and diving trips promise to reveal a kaleidoscope of coral reefs and mysterious shipwrecks waiting to be explored.

Back on land, the adventures continue with championship golf courses and dramatic desert landscapes. Whether you're hiking, golfing or simply soaking in the views, this destination strikes the perfect balance between excitement and relaxation - and is a lovely place to connect you with the region's unique allure.

For reservations, go to <https://www.ghmhotels.com/en/muscat/>

MEXICO: A MINDFUL RESET

For families craving calm and connection, One&Only Mandarin in Mexico is a sanctuary of peace. Set in the rainforest, its eco-friendly treehouses and villas provide the ultimate escape for you and your nearest and dearest. Days here are about slowing down - think sunrise yoga, breathwork, sound baths and meditation sessions that leave everyone feeling grounded - all led by expert facilitators.

There's adventure too. Days unfold in the wild heart of Mandarin, where horseback riding leads from polo fields to jungle-to-ocean trails, and whale-watching excursions track migrating humpbacks.



Elsewhere, private diving and fishing unveil a volcanic reef alive with marine life, while hilltop hikes reveal sunrise viewpoints and the revered Abuela Tree. Meals crafted from the organic produce grown on-site tie it all together, ensuring your family is nourished in every sense of the word - how blissful!

If you're ready for a reset, visit <https://www.oneandonlyresorts.com/mandarina>



CAPE TOWN: WELLNESS AND WONDER

Few places blend adventure and tranquillity like Cape Town, and One&Only Cape Town captures it beautifully, offering its guests a fantastic mix of adventure, relaxation and self-discovery. Start your day with a deeply restorative escape to Table Mountain, where you can indulge in a yoga session surrounded by panoramic views and wildflowers! For water enthusiasts, the resort curates unique

aquatic experiences, from stand-up paddleboarding along private canals to whale-watching tours and exhilarating shark cage dives, these activities are sure to get your adrenaline pumping!

Whether practicing asanas above the city or exploring the depths of the ocean, this resort is ideal for families looking to explore and unwind in equal measure.

Visit <https://www.oneandonlyresorts.com/cape-town> for further information.



RWANDA: A JOURNEY INTO THE WILD

For a truly once-in-a-lifetime experience, head to One&Only Gorilla's Nest in Rwanda, where guided treks through lush forests bring families face-to-face with mountain gorillas. Nestled on the edge of Volcanoes National Park, the resort serves as the gateway for you and your loved ones to encounter these majestic animals in their natural habitat. It's a humbling, awe-inspiring encounter that few ever get to experience.

Your evenings will be spent around the bonfire, as you gather to hear inspiring stories with expert guides and naturalists, such as Francois Bigirimana, who've dedicated their lives to studying these incredible creatures. Their passion is infectious, and this life-changing trip is not just about observing wildlife - it's a transformative experience that will leave your family with a renewed appreciation for nature and your place within it.

Go to <https://www.oneandonlyresorts.com/gorillas-nest> to learn more.

Whether it's stargazing in the desert, diving into coral reefs, or trekking through rainforests, these incredible travel experiences remind us of what really matters - spending meaningful time with the people we love. So, as 2025 unfolds, why not step away from the daily grind and into a world of adventure? After all, the best memories are the ones you make together!

HOME & GARDEN



The interior design ideas gathering momentum for 2025 and reasons to dust off your gardening gloves this month!



WHY YOU SHOULD PLANT IN JANUARY

All the benefits this month can offer families with little gardeners!



out too quickly, and it's easier to keep young seedlings hydrated. Plus, gardening during this season allows plants to establish strong roots before the heat of summer sets in.

VEGETABLES TO PLANT NOW

This month is a fantastic time to start a vegetable patch with your family. Fast-growing vegetables like lettuce, spinach and radishes are perfect for impatient little gardeners, as they can be harvested within weeks. Carrots, cucumbers and tomatoes are also great choices, offering a longer growing season and rewarding results.

Planting vegetables together is a wonderful way to teach kids about where food comes from and encourage healthy eating habits. Watching their hard work turn into something edible can be incredibly satisfying!

HERBS FOR EVERY HOME

Herbs are another great option, especially for families with limited outdoor space. Basil, mint, coriander and parsley all thrive in the UAE's winter climate and can be grown in small pots or containers.

Herbs are low-maintenance and provide a quick payoff, making them ideal for beginners. Little ones will love snipping fresh leaves to add to meals, turning gardening into a hands-on culinary adventure.

A SPLASH OF COLOUR

If you're looking to add color to your garden, January is perfect for planting flowers like petunias, marigolds and geraniums. These vibrant blooms not only brighten up your space but also attract pollinators like butterflies and bees, making the garden feel even more alive.

Planting flowers is also a great way to introduce children to the concept of nurturing and patience. They can take responsibility for watering and caring for their plants, learning valuable life skills along the way.

FAMILY TIME

Gardening offers a break from screens and busy schedules, giving families a chance to reconnect with nature and each other. It's a fun, hands-on activity that helps kids develop responsibility, patience and a sense of accomplishment.

Even small tasks like digging, planting seeds or watering can make children feel involved and proud of their contributions - and there are plenty of options to suit every space and skill level. Plus, gardening encourages mindfulness and reduces stress - what's not to love?!

So, grab your gardening gloves and get started. Whether you're planting a balcony herb garden or transforming your backyard into a vegetable haven, January in the UAE is a golden opportunity to start gardening with your family!

January might not be the first month that comes to mind when thinking about planting, but in the UAE, it's actually one of the best times to roll up your sleeves and get gardening! With cooler temperatures and plenty of sunshine, this month offers the perfect balance for families to plant, grow and have some fun over gardening projects. Whether you have a backyard, a balcony, or just a sunny windowsill, here's how you can make the most of January planting.

WHY JANUARY?

The UAE's mild winter is ideal for growing a wide range of plants, from vegetables and herbs to flowers and shrubs. The cooler weather reduces the risk of plants drying



INTERIOR DESIGN IDEAS FOR 2025

What's in store for your living spaces? Let's take a look at the styles, textures, and ideas set to define the year ahead.

As we head into 2025, interior design is taking a bold leap into the future while keeping one foot firmly rooted in the past. From rich colours and sustainable materials to cosy nooks and cutting-edge tech, the trends shaping our homes are all about blending beauty with purpose.

OLD MEETS NEW

A resurgence of vintage aesthetics is on the horizon, with design elements from the 1920s through the 1970s making a notable comeback. Nostalgia is certainly having a moment so expect to see vintage mirrors with gilded edges, bold floral wallpapers, and furniture that feels like it's stepped out of the 70s but still manages to feel fresh. It's all about mixing retro charm with modern sensibilities to create a space that's timeless yet totally on-trend.

NATURE'S PALETTE

Say goodbye to stark whites and greys - 2025 is bringing the outdoors in with a shift towards richer, earthy hues. Picture mossy greens, sunbaked terracotta and warm ochres taking centre stage. When balanced out with neutrals, these grounded hues create a lovely cocoon-like vibe, perfect for making your family spaces feel more cosy, inviting and connected to nature.

TEXTURE, TEXTURE, TEXTURE

Smooth surfaces are taking a backseat as textures steal the spotlight over the next twelve months. From velvet cushions and bouclé armchairs to rough-hewn wood, panelled ceilings and Venetian plastered walls, the focus is on creating spaces you want to touch. Layers of texture add depth and tactile intrigue, transforming rooms into sensory experiences.



AT-HOME WELLNESS

Homes are becoming sanctuaries, designed to help us unwind and recharge. Think spa-inspired bathrooms with rainfall showers, yoga corners bathed in natural light and indoor gardens that bring a touch of green to every corner.

The family home has increasingly become a sanctuary for wellness over the last number of years and this is not set to slow down. Think spa-inspired bathrooms with rainfall showers, yoga corners bathed in natural light, and indoor gardens that bring a touch of green to every corner. Wellness-focused design is all about finding peace and balance within your walls, with an emphasis on helping your family feel their best!



CURVED SILHOUETTES

Furniture with rounded forms is set to soften interiors, as 2025 is all about soft, flowing shapes. Curved sofas, rounded coffee tables and arched doorways create a sense of fluidity and comfort. These organic shapes make spaces more inviting, encouraging relaxation and conversation.

SUSTAINABILITY FIRST

Sustainability isn't just a buzzword anymore, it's a way of life. Designers are prioritising eco-friendly materials, energy-efficient lighting and ethically sourced furnishings as standard considerations. It's all about making choices that look good and do good for the planet and this shift reflects our growing commitment to reducing environmental impact and promoting sustainability at home.



wood, wicker and rattan, and oversized windows to let in light for calm, restorative family spaces. It's a breath of fresh air - quite literally.

ARTISANAL TOUCHES

In a world dominated by mass production, handmade pieces are having a renaissance. Unique ceramics, woven textiles, art or bespoke furniture add a nice warmth and authenticity to your interiors. There's a growing appreciation for craftsmanship, and the time and process behind these one-of-a-kind items, lining up with the general global shift towards more meaningful and sustainable consumption.



SMART HOME INTEGRATION

Technology is seamlessly blending into design, proving that style and functionality can go hand in hand. Smart lighting, temperature control, voice-activated assistants and invisible charging stations make modern living easier - without sacrificing aesthetics.

MULTIFUNCTIONAL SPACES

As living spaces adapt to various needs, rooms that can do it all are becoming common. Dining areas doubling as workspaces, guest rooms with hidden storage, and foldaway furniture make every square metre count. Flexibility is the name of the game and it caters to the dynamic lifestyles of modern families.



A MAXIMALIST MOTTO

Minimalists, look away because this year sees a return to maximalism... where more is more! Bold patterns, vibrant colours and quirky collections are being championed and celebrated. Maximalism is about expressing your family's personality, creating rooms that tell a story and just having some fun with it!

HOME OFFICE CHIC

With remote work here to stay, home offices are getting serious style upgrades. We're talking about built-in desks, statement lighting and ergonomic furniture that looks as good as it feels. No more makeshift setups - your workspace deserves to be as polished as the rest of your home.

BIOPHILIC DESIGN

Nature will likely always inspire interiors, and biophilic design is truly taking root. This includes indoor plants, lots of natural materials like



STATEMENT LIGHTING

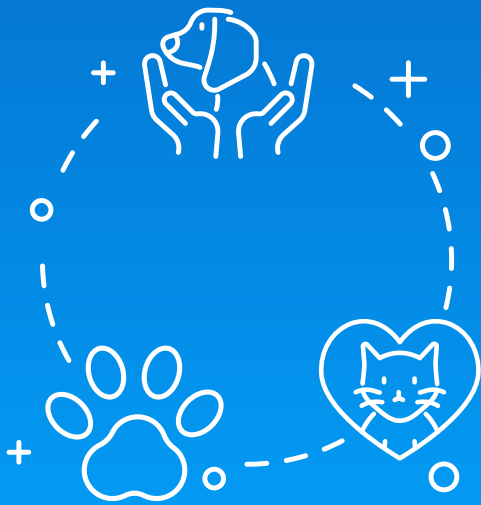
Lighting isn't just practical - it's a statement in interior design. Sculptural pendants, oversized lampshades and glowing orbs serve as focal points, adding drama and personality to your rooms. Using dimmable and layered lighting also enhances the versatility of a space - always handy in a busy family household!

OUTDOOR LIVING

Outdoor spaces are being treated like extensions of the home. Well-designed patios, comfy seating and fire pits are transforming gardens and balconies in the region into stylish retreats for relaxing and entertaining.

Trends tend to come and go but 2025 is bringing us plenty of gorgeous home design themes that look more long-term. Whether you're drawn to plants and sunlight, vintage charm, modern ideas or bold colours, this year's trends offer something for everyone. It's not just about decorating - it's about creating spaces where your family truly feels at home.

PET CORNER



Why feline friends make the perfect pet for anxious children and why an aquarium can help keep kids grounded.



THE LINK BETWEEN PET FISH AND MINDFULNESS

Discover why an aquarium might be the perfect addition to your family.



Pets can have a remarkable impact on children's emotional and mental wellbeing, and while cats and dogs often steal the spotlight, pet fish deserve recognition too! These quiet, colourful creatures might not snuggle or play fetch, but they offer unique benefits, particularly when it comes to bringing out mindfulness and calm in children.

A CALMING PRESENCE

Watching fish glide gracefully through water has a soothing, almost hypnotic effect. The gentle movements, soft tank noises and vibrant colours create a tranquil atmosphere, helping children feel more relaxed and grounded.

Studies have shown that observing fish tanks can lower blood pressure and reduce stress levels in both adults and children. For kids who struggle with restlessness, spending a few minutes watching fish can provide a much-needed moment of calm, helping them reset emotionally.

TEACHING MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is all about focusing on the present moment and aquariums naturally encourage this practice. Whether a child is mesmerised by the swirling patterns of a fish's tail or counting bubbles rising to the surface, they're engaging in mindfulness without even realising it.

Children can also practice mindfulness while feeding the fish or cleaning the tank. These activities require focus, patience, and care, teaching kids to be more present and intentional in their actions - in a low-stress way.

RESPONSIBILITY WITHOUT OVERWHELM

Caring for fish is relatively low-maintenance compared to other pets, making it an excellent first pet for younger children. Feeding fish, testing water levels and cleaning the tank are manageable tasks that teach responsibility without overwhelming kids. These simple routines can help children feel accomplished and build confidence in their abilities with a pet and in general.

STIMULATING CURIOSITY

An aquarium can be a mini science lab in your home! Kids often become fascinated by their fish's behaviors, appearances and habits and this curiosity might just spark a love for biology and marine life.

Parents can encourage learning by helping little ones research different fish species and water ecosystems to consider adding to the aquarium.

SENSORY BENEFITS

For children with sensory processing challenges, an aquarium offers gentle visual and auditory stimulation. The movement of fish and the soft hum of the filter can be calming without overwhelming the senses. Fish tanks are often used in therapy settings to provide a little sensory input in a controlled, peaceful way.

Pet fish may not cuddle or play fetch, but they can offer powerful emotional and developmental benefits for children. From promoting mindfulness and reducing stress to teaching responsibility and sparking curiosity, these little swimmers pack a big punch.

If you're looking for a low-maintenance pet that can help your child feel calm, focused and engaged, an aquarium might be just what your family needs. With their serene air and soothing presence, pet fish can transform any room into a peaceful retreat - and give kids a new appreciation for the wonders of the underwater world.

THE PERFECT PET FOR ANXIOUS KIDS

We explore how having a cat can be a game-changer for children dealing with anxiety.



Pets have a magical way of bringing comfort, companionship and a sense of calm into our lives - and for children who struggle with anxiety, a cat might just be the perfect furry friend. Cats are known for their gentle demeanor and soothing presence, and their dynamic with humans can provide anxious kids with a gentle dose of emotional stability and support.

A CONSTANT COMPANION

Anxiety often comes hand-in-hand with feelings of loneliness or fear, but a cat offers consistent companionship in a low-input way. Unlike people, cats don't judge, make demands or add pressure. They simply

exist, providing quiet support through their presence. For anxious kids, having a cat curl up on their lap or purr beside them can feel incredibly reassuring.

This bond can make children feel understood and accepted, especially when they struggle to express their emotions. Knowing there's always a furry friend nearby can help reduce feelings of isolation and give little ones a sense of security.

PURR THERAPY

Cats are famous for their purring, but did you know this sound does more than signal contentment? Research suggests that a cat's purr

vibrates at a frequency that can promote relaxation, lower stress and even aid in healing. For anxious children, the rhythmic sound of a cat purring can be deeply calming, much like a lullaby.

Studies have shown that interacting with cats can lower cortisol levels (the stress hormone) and increase serotonin and dopamine, which are associated with feelings of happiness and calmness. Simply stroking a cat or listening to its purr can bring worried children immediate comfort during moments of distress.

ROUTINE AND RESPONSIBILITY

Anxiety can sometimes leave kids feeling overwhelmed and out of control. Taking care of a cat introduces healthy routines and a very helpful sense of purpose. Feeding, grooming and playing with a pet helps children establish structure in their day, which can be incredibly grounding.

Cats also teach responsibility in a manageable way. Tasks like refilling a water bowl or cleaning a litter box are simple enough for children to handle but still give them a sense of accomplishment. This can boost their confidence if they struggle with self-esteem and provide positive reinforcement, reminding kids that they are capable and valued.

EMOTIONAL OUTLET

Children with anxiety often have difficulty expressing their feelings, but a cat can provide a safe outlet for those emotions. Talking to a pet may feel easier than talking to another person, and many little ones find comfort in confiding their worries to their furry companion.

Cats are natural listeners - they don't interrupt, criticise or offer unsolicited advice. This nonjudgmental presence can make it more straightforward for children to process their thoughts and feelings, creating a healthy way to release tension and anxiety.

PHYSICAL TOUCH AND CONNECTION

The act of petting a cat can be incredibly therapeutic. Physical touch is proven to reduce anxiety and release oxytocin, the 'love hormone' that helps us bond and feel emotionally well. For anxious kids, cuddling with a cat might feel grounding and soothing, helping them to relax and feel more connected.

Cats are also adept at sensing emotions, and many will instinctively offer comfort by snuggling up or gently resting a paw on their owner. This kind of physical closeness can be especially reassuring for children who are feeling stressed or unsettled.

STAYING IN THE MOMENT

Cats are masters of living in the moment, and spending time with them can encourage kids to do the same. Watching a cat stretch in a sunny spot, chase a toy, or gently knead a blanket can remind anxious children to slow down and focus on the present.

Being fully engaged in an activity or focusing on the current moment are proven strategies for managing anxiety, which is based around chronic future fearfulness. Cats provide endless opportunities for kids



to practice these techniques, whether it's by observing their playful antics or simply stroking their fur and paying attention to its softness.

SOCIAL SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE

Anxiety can make social situations daunting, but having a cat can help children build confidence and improve their social skills. Talking about their pet can act as a great icebreaker, helping little ones connect with their peers who also love animals.

Caring for a cat also helps children practice empathy and understanding, which can translate into better relationships with friends and family members. As they learn to interpret their cat's body language and respond to its needs, children develop emotional intelligence and communication skills that serve them well in other areas of life.

A SENSE OF SAFETY

For anxious children, having a cat at home can create a sense of safety and comfort. Cats often become loyal protectors, sticking close to their owners and offering silent reassurance. Knowing their furry pal is nearby can reduce nighttime fears and make it easier for children to settle down for sleep.

Cats can also serve as emotional anchors during worrying situations, such as moving to a new home, starting a new school or dealing with family changes. Their constant presence provides stability and familiarity, which is especially important for children who feel insecure.

Cats may be small, but their impact on a child's emotional wellbeing can be enormous. If your child struggles with anxiety, introducing a feline friend could be a wonderful way to help them feel more grounded and supported. Of course, it's important to choose the right cat for your family and teach children how to care for their new pet responsibly.

At the end of the day, a cat isn't just a pet - it's a loyal companion, a source of unconditional love and a furry therapist all rolled into one. For anxious kids, this combination can make all the difference, helping them feel calmer, more confident and more able to take on the world.

GOOD LIVING



The Editor's January
makeup must-haves!





Step into the new year with my January picks from Wet n Wild and ILIA Beauty! From richly pigmented lipsticks to lash-lengthening mascaras and radiant skin tints, here are my favourite makeup products at the moment!



BALMY GLOSS TINTED LIP OIL

This is the cult-classic tinted lip oil from clean beauty brand ILIA Beauty, reimagined. A cushiony tinted lip oil with potent levels of moisture-boosting ingredients and sheer, buildable colour - I'm a big fan

of the buttery smooth formula! It quenches dry lips on contact, while adding a gorgeous kiss of pigment that is anything but sticky. Hyaluronic acid, meadowfoam seed oil and salicornia herbacea extract deeply hydrate and nourish your lips, helping your smile look full and glossy. Priced at AED 105, what's not to love?!

or mix, match and layer them to create a customised look. They're available in both natural and luminous finishes so you have lots of options!

SUPER SERUM SKIN TINT

A first-of-its-kind, ILIA Beauty's Super Serum Skin Tint (SPF 30) fuses light coverage, active skincare and mineral SPF into one easy step. Priced at AED 190, the patented non-nano zinc oxide helps boost the formula's effectiveness by 200%, while protecting skin from sun damage - all without an annoying white cast! Plumping hyaluronic acid, hydrating squalane and texture-refining niacinamide help to improve your skin over time and the lightweight, dewy formula blends seamlessly on all skin types - even those ladies who are blemish-prone!

MULTI-STICK MAGIC

ILIA Beauty's daily essentials are designed to instantly revive your look. It all comes back to vibrancy, vivid pops of colour and a fuss-free philosophy with a focus on making your skin look and feel alive. This ethos is



exactly why many of their products are multi-use, for easy application on-the-go, where you can choose to layer it on or keep it natural - and I love that it's always simple.

This is why their Multi-Stick is my latest go-to product! Priced at AED 140, it's a buildable wash

of colour for your cheeks and lips and it now comes in 12 different shades. This creamy, multi-use formula has a twist-up stick for easy application on the go. You don't need any brushes or tools - simply swipe and blend for skin that looks and feels amazing. You can keep it simple with your favorite Multi-Stick shade,

SKIN REWIND COMPLEXION STICK

This is a product that looks like makeup but acts like skincare. On the market for AED 190, this weightless complexion stick melts in and moves with



you, wearing seamlessly for up to twelve hours. Buildable, medium coverage instantly blurs pores, redness and texture issues with

a natural-matte finish. Over time, potent anti-aging ingredients help firm, smooth and soften the appearance of lines and wrinkles - for healthier-looking skin with every swipe.

ILIA Beauty products are available at leading online retailers, such as www.noon.com, www.glambeaute.com, www.namshi.com and more.



HIGH-SHINE LIPS WITH WET N WILD

Experience high-shine perfection at a great price, with the Mega Last High-Shine Lip Color by Wet n Wild. Infused with nourishing ingredients like murumuru butter, mango butter, sunflower and watermelon seed oils, this lipstick provides long-lasting moisture and keeps your lips hydrated throughout the day. The creamy, buildable formula glides on effortlessly, offering you a silky, vibrant colour that won't feather or bleed (my pet peeve!). Available in thirteen cruelty-free, gluten-free and fragrance-free shades for just AED 25.20, it's brilliantly handy for durable wear and soft lips.

MEGA GLO ON THE GO!

For a lip and cheek combo option at a lower price point, I've been loving their Mega Glo Lip And Cheek Color. Priced at just AED 42, it adds a natural flush to both your pout and complexion with a lightweight, airy liquid formula. It can be easily blended with your fingertips, a sponge or a brush, and it has a great, ultra-blendable texture that leaves you with a healthy, radiant finish. Available in three shades, it brings your everyday look to life!

SO DEFINED VOLUMIZING + DEFINING MASCARA

I love that I can achieve both volume and definition with this viral mascara by Wet n Wild, all without those irritating clumps! The durable, tapered plastic bristle brush is designed to catch every one of your lashes and comb out any that have stuck together. Infused with nourishing omega-6-rich castor oil, it conditions and strengthens your lashes while delivering an ultra-black colour that's perfect for a touch of drama. The buildable formula offers volume, length and curl, giving you beautifully defined lashes with clean definition - a great addition to any day-to-night makeup look. At AED 49, it's a steal!

ANGELIC MARSHMALLOW LIP MOUSSE

Layer your lipstick and perfectly complement your eye look with the brand's Cloud Pout Marshmallow Lip Mousse in my preferred shade 'Fluffernutter' - a light, nude brownish hue that adds an angelic touch to your smile. This light-as-a-cloud, soft-matte formula is buildable and blendable, enriched with nourishing argan oil, avocado oil, and vitamin E to keep your lips hydrated and soft. With bouncy marshmallow powder and a sweet marshmallow scent, it's a treat for both your pout and your senses! Available in eight other lovely shades, it won't break the bank, coming in at just AED 35.

A MUST-HAVE BLUSHLIGHTER DUO

The Mega Glo Blushlighter by Wet n Wild combines blush and highlighter in one, instantly sculpting, defining and illuminating your face with just a single sweep. This range's soft shades are priced at AED 38 and feature ultra-reflective, micro-fine pearl pigments that create a radiant, luminous glow, blending seamlessly for a flawless finish. Each duo offers two intensity levels to complement every skin tone. Use them alone, blend them together for contouring, or layer them for a bold, glowing effect.

Wet n Wild products are available online and at leading pharmacies and department stores in the region.

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