

sa

Homeschooling

ISSUE 7, 2021

LIVING & LEARNING – TOGETHER

+PLUS:

Attitude with gratitude
Homeschooling systems
Final round creative
writing competition
winners

Study
tips for
the New
Year

**THE JOY
OF HOLISTIC
LEARNING**

31

days of
fun family
activities,
adventures
& projects

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Ed's note

As we've gradually – and, hopefully, permanently – moved out of lockdown life, a new way of living has emerged: more parents work from home, more children are homeschooled and our values have shifted from 'we want more' to 'we want better'. And that's what this issue is all about and what we wish for you over the holidays: closer relationships, true sharing and gifts from the heart.

Shelagh
Editor

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As a professor at the Dept of Psychology at the UJ, Jena specialised in developmental psychology, authored several publications and read academic papers worldwide. As co-founder of StudySmart, she emphasises the development of inquisitive minds, a positive outlook and the value of developing unique talents.

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FUNtastic festive food

Who says it's bad to play with your food? These creative delights will keep your children occupied for hours



This method can be applied to just about anything and is a truly fun way of finding out what your child **wants** to know more about.

Provide an inviting space

Create a comfortable environment in which your children can be themselves and comfortably connect with others.

Make it inviting with the use of colour, child-friendly furniture, interest corners and space for creative play.

As you can see, holistic learning isn't an alternative to other forms of education, but rather a mindset of 'wholeness', of the joy of learning. This is something from which we can all benefit.



Staying on top of executive functions

The struggles that come with weak executive functioning skills won't lessen during the holidays. For many, they're worse, writes **Dalena van der Westhuizen** of BrainAbility

1 Establish and maintain an easy-to-follow daily routine

During the holiday period, a consistent daily routine is usually the first thing that goes out the window. However, inconsistent routines are tough for children with executive function struggles. Establish a basic routine that fits in with your specific circumstances and will be easy to stick to (most days).

2 Plan ahead (when you can)

Children with weak executive functioning skills find it difficult to plan and organise. Whether it's visiting family, going to the beach, shopping, etc, warn your child about upcoming activities. A visual planner like a basic calendar works well, or give them a verbal reminder the evening before.

3 Use a checklist

Whether you need to pack for a family visit or an outing, there are things to be done beforehand. Getting a child with weak executive function skills to take part and assume

responsibility for some of these tasks is much easier if you let them use a simple checklist.

4 Limit choices

When kids with executive function challenges are faced with too many choices, they can easily become overwhelmed. To ease the decision-making process, offer only two or three choices when it comes to food, places to visit, what to wear, etc.

5 Break down instructions and tasks into smaller, manageable pieces

Children with weak executive function skills usually struggle with working memory, which enables them to hold all the information for the current task in mind and process it at the same time, in the correct sequence. These children battle to remember, or follow, multi-step instructions and processes. They also struggle with task initiation. Getting started is difficult.

Make life easier for everyone by keeping instructions short and direct and by breaking down bigger tasks into smaller, manageable pieces.

(Don't miss ['Is your child lazy?'](#) in SAH #6 for more on executive functioning skills.)

Enjoy the holidays!