

3 Recipes for Summer's

Freshest Feast

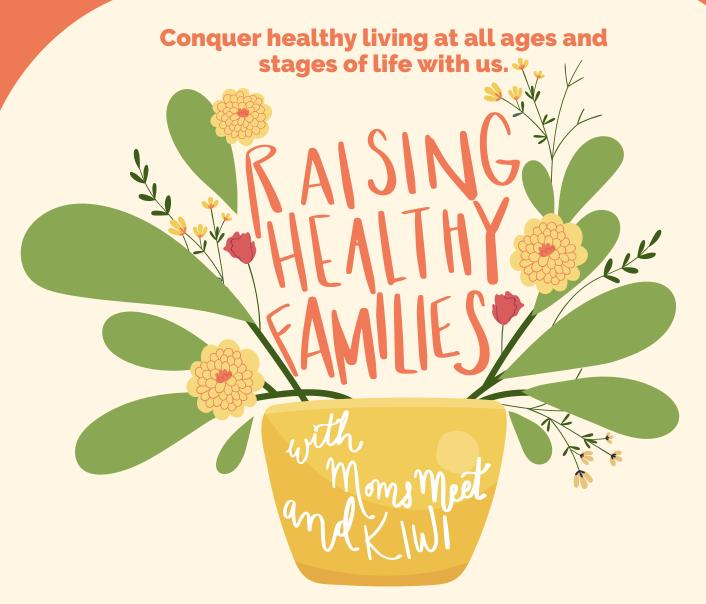
# **Let's Get Dirty!**

the Magic of a Mud Kitchen

Are you up on TICK SAFETY?

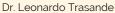
Fast Fashion and the Environment

**How to Shop Smarter for Kids Clothes** 



Tune in to Season 4 on June 1st and hear from our expert guests!







Dr. Vanessa



Sophie Egen

# Or listen to previous seasons now.



Raising Healthy Families is available to listen to on *kiwimagonline.com*, *momsmeet.com*, Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and more.

### What Listeners are Saying

"Excellent information! As an educator, I can apply these lessons to my students, too."

-Elizabeth R.

"I really appreciate this podcast because it makes my family and I feel like we can have an impact! True—we can change the future our kids live under!"

—Robin Y.

-RODITI Y.



### FEATURES -

11 BEYOND CHEAP PRICES: WHAT FAST FASHION DOES TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND HOW TO SHOP SMARTER FOR KIDS **CLOTHES** 

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Simplicity and flavor reign supreme in these three delicious dinners.

BY KAREN KELLY

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### EDITOR'SLETTER

will always be a summer person. I love ditching the layers, spending hours outdoors, and letting the kids roam free sans freezing temperatures. One of the highlights of this time of year has always been the abundance of fresh produce. To celebrate, we've whipped up a spread of in-season dishes for all your celebrations. You can find the recipes in "From the Garden: Summer's Freshest Feast" on page 19.

This summer, it's time to let go and let those littles get a wee bit dirty! The benefits of playing in the dirt are many and the imaginative possibilities are endless. To help get you started, we've got your guide to creating your very own mud kitchen in your backyard (p. 25.) While you're enjoying the outdoors, be sure to brush up on tick safety with our story on page 27.

As you gear up with new summer clothes, be sure to check out our story, "Beyond Cheap Prices: What Fast Fashion Does to the Environment and How to Shop Smarter for Kids' Clothes" (p. 11.) With a change in mindset and movement to slow fashion, you could save your family some money and help the planet at the same time.

From all of us at KIWI, have a safe and joyous summer!

maureen@kiwimagonline.com



# Beyond the Issue

There's so much more to love from KIWI. Explore it all.

## **Hot Pins for** Summer

For the latest crafts, recipes, and parenting advice to fit every season and celebration. be sure to follow KIWI magazine on Pinterest.

Follow KIWI magazine on Pinterest

pinterest.com/kiwimag



### FROM THE WEB

Don't miss our latest stories on kiwimagonline.com.



8 BEST PLACES TO RESELL KIDS ITEMS

Ienna Sims







6 THINGS TO DO TO RAISE RESILIENT KIDS Ienna Sims



WHY VITAMIN D IS SO IMPORTANT Ienna Sims

# **KIWI Craft Central**



Make Your Own Bubbles



Make Your Own Sidewalk Chalk



Make a Milk Carton Birdhouse Feeder





@KIWImagazine

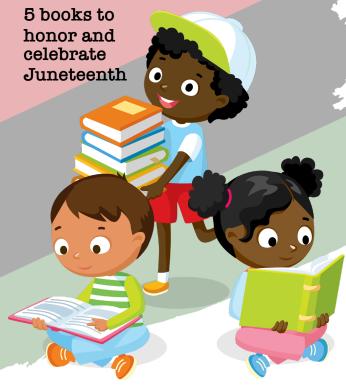


**p** @KIWImag



## READINGCORNER

# FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE



On June 19, 1865, federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas to alert enslaved people they were finally free. This long-overdue declaration was made more than two years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863. Juneteenth is now recognized as a federal holiday commemorating the end of slavery in the United States. These five books celebrate Black history in honor of this historic day.



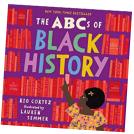
The Juneteenth Story: Celebrating the End of Slavery in the United States by Alliah L. Agostini (Starting *at \$16.99*, Becker & Mayer Kids, Ages 6–9)

This introductory history of Juneteenth for kids details the evolution of the holiday commemorating the date the enslaved people of Texas first learned

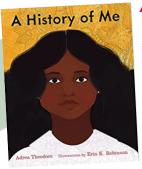
of their freedom. Complete with a timeline of events, this inspiring book highlights why it took so long for the news to get to Texas.

The ABCs of Black History by Rio Cortez (Starting at \$6.53, Workman Publishing Company, Ages 5+)

The poetic ABCs of Black History is a story of big ideas, significant moments, and iconic figures. B is for Beautiful, Brave, Bright, Bold, Brotherhood, and Believing. The lyrical, rhyming text takes



readers on a journey through the alphabet of Black history and culture, and is complemented by bold, beautiful images of hope, love, and perseverance.



**A History of Me** by Adrea Theodore (Starting at \$15.20, Neal Porter Books, Ages 4-8)

Life can be hard for a brown girl in a classroom full of white students, especially when she can feel all eyes on her when the teacher discusses slavery or civil rights. She learns that what matters most is how she sees herself. This beautiful debut picture

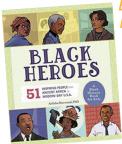
book by Adrea Theodore is inspired by her and her daughter's experiences in school.

Mae Makes a Way: The True Story of Mae Reeves, Hat & History Maker by Olugbemisola Rhuday-Perkovich (Starting at \$ 18.99, Crown Books for Young Readers, Ages 7–10)

This stunning picture book biography details the story of Mae Reeves, a fashion designer and civil rights icon. Mae dreamed of making one-of-a-kind hats but the path for a Black female



fashion designer was unclear, so Mae made a way—and she kept on making a way through every obstacle she faced.



Black Heroes: A Black History Book for Kids by Arlisha Norwood (Starting at \$16.99, Rockbridge Press, Ages 8–12)

Introduce your kids to 51 inspiring Black heroes, from Ancient Egyptian rulers to modern-day scientists, musicians, and civil rights activists. Each biography details the historical figures' lives, how they created lasting change, and more ways to explore

them and their work (through another book, video, or website).



# Bioengineered is the New GMO **Food Labeling**

## What to look for on food packaging

There are a few different ways brands can alert consumers to the inclusion of bioengineered food.

- Packaging can contain "Bioengineered food" or "Contains bioengineered food ingredient"
- USDA symbols for bioengineered food (see above)
- QR code for consumers to scan to learn more information about where the ingredients come from
- Text message disclosure for consumers to reach out to for more information

can have lifelong impacts."

What's New | What's Hot | What's Wow

As of January 1, 2022, the USDA set a new national labeling standard for food that has been genetically modified in a way that isn't possible in nature. According to the USDA, the new rules are meant to keep the public better informed, yet skeptics argue the new system may be confusing to consumers and allow food producers to hide the use of GMO ingredients in their product. While the FDA and National Academy of Sciences state that there is no harm to eating bioengineered ingredients, the new disclosure standards may make it harder for individuals who wish to avoid these ingredients to do so.

"We see not only does [lead exposure] result in decreased

cognitive ability in children, but children who are exposed

to higher levels of lead never meet the same peak cognitive ability as the less-exposed children do. And at the other end of the age spectrum, children who are adults now who have higher blood lead levels or higher bone lead levels—that's where a lot of our lead is stored in our bodies—have accelerated cognitive decline, and would likely meet the threshold for dementia sooner. So these toxic chemicals

- DR. BRUCE LANPHEAR, MOMS MEET WOW SUMMIT '22 VIRTUAL SESSION: "LITTLE THINGS MATTER: THE IMPACT OF TOXIC CHEMICALS ON THE DEVELOPING BRAIN"

------To learn more, follow Little Things Matter on 🄘 📍 💆









# NONPROFIT SPOTLIGHT

# Where Outdoor **Meets Inclusivity**

Founded earlier this year, The Outdoorist Oath is a nonprofit organization whose mission includes a commitment to the planet, inclusion, and adventure. Cofounded by Pattie Gonia, an intersectional environmentalist, drag queen, and advocate for inclusivity in the outdoors, The Outdoorist Oath offers workshops and community so that all can enjoy the outdoors. Learn more.





# A Takeaway From the **Intergovernmental Panel on** Climate Change's (IPCC's) **Sixth Assessment Report**

**6 6** Significant cuts in global greenhouse gas emissions, even getting close to net zero emissions, and even from energy-intensive industries such as iron and steel and plastic, can be achieved by 2050. But it will require a reorientation from the historic focus on incremental improvement, like energy efficiency, to transformational changes in energy and feedstock sourcing.

- Stéphane de la Rue du Can, a researcher from Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (Berkeley Lab) who is a lead author of the industry chapter.

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Connect with other moms either in-person or virtually to try and review free, natural, and organic products.

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# What's hot at momsmeet.com!



# **Our Favorite Moments** from the Ninth Annual WOW Summit

What an amazing time at the ninth annual WOW Summit! This year, from March 29-31, 2022, hundreds of moms tuned into WOW Summit '22 Virtual to hear from inspirational speakers, meet with betterfor-you brands in the Virtual Exhibit Hall, and so much more.

Here are three of the top moments from the event.









### 1. Learning the Danish Way of Parenting

During her session, keynote speaker and best-selling author Iben Sandahl spilled the secret to why Denmark has been ranked the happiest nation in the world for more than 40 years. It's parenting! Using the acronym PARENT, Iben dove deeper into the key areas parents need to focus on to raise confident, happy children. Through play, authenticity, reframing, empathy, and togetherness (hygge), parents can find balance and still teach their children how to enjoy themselves. By focusing on being an empathic and present parent, parents can experience greater joy in life for themselves and their children while reducing stress and worries.

### 2. Nurturing Your Family's Health

The importance of both physical and mental health were stressed during this WOW Summit. The event kicked off with keynote speaker and integrative pediatrician Dr. Elisa Song, who shared fascinating information about how a child's health and wellbeing starts in their gut. Afterwards, clinical psychologist Dr. Ilyse Dobrow DiMarco shared researchsupported strategies to help moms cope with uncertainty, parent more mindfully, and focus on their mental health. On the second day of Summit, Dana Bosselmann, an integrative and functional dietitian, discussed the unique needs of women's health within a forward-thinking model of care rooted in functional nutrition.

### 3. Finding Connection Through Motherhood

One of the greatest parts of any WOW Summit is being able to connect with other moms and share experiences. While attendees couldn't share their stories in person this year, the discussion boards, chats, and Virtual Happy Hour offered them a way to celebrate motherhood. From sharing stories about becoming a mom to discussing money saving hacks, everyone opened their hearts to each other. A fun "Best Pinterest Fail" competition during happy hour gave a good laugh while reminding moms that sometimes it's the thought that counts.



There's one truth I've learned as a parent to young kids—they always need new clothes. Just when you think you've assembled a good collection, the seasons change and their little bodies outgrow their current size at a rate that makes your head spin. Kids are hard on clothes, too—the falls, the spills, and the spit up—it's likely they go through multiple outfits a day.

For all these reasons and more (hello, affordable prices), many parents (including me) have turned to fast fashion labels to clothe our little ones. Yet if you give the fast fashion industry a closer look, you'll see that it's a big contributor to climate change, microplastic pollution, and unethical labor practices. Thankfully, there are more sustainable ways to outfit our families and better brands to choose. Together with a shift in mindset to slow fashion, we can bestow a healthier planet to our children.

# What is Fast Fashion?

While fast fashion began to make its way into the ethos decades before due to manufacturing improvements, *The New York Times* was the first to coin the term in the 1990s. They used it to describe Zara's business model of affordable prices and lighting fast production cycles.

In general, fast fashion describes brands that value quantity over quality, mass producing clothes cheaply, often at the sacrifice of worker's rights, livable wages, waste, and environmental and health concerns. These companies consistently churn out new styles, setting trends at a rapid pace. For example, while there used to be two seasons in fashion (Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter), it has now evolved into 52 microseasons, with new styles hitting store shelves every few days.

Consumers are programmed to attempt to keep pace, and with affordable prices, buying habits have shifted to buying more and often. More recently, "Hauls" have taken over social media in which influencers document the large quantities of purchases they've made of fast fashion brands like SHEIN and H&M. There's even a #babyhaul hashtag filled with stuffed nursery closets and more clothes than one child could ever wear. With fast fashion, it's easy to feel your closet of clothes is outdated and even easier to update it with many items priced under \$20.



# How Does it Harm the **Environment?**

This cultural shift to overconsumption has proved very detrimental to the environment in many ways.

# **BREAKING DOWN THE CLOTHING AND TEXTILE INDUSTRY'S IMPACT**



Responsible for \$2.4 trillion in global manufacturing



Employs 300 million people across the globe (including many women)



Contributes 2-8% of global greenhouse gas emissions



Uses roughly 215 trillion liters of water per year



Annual material loss of \$100 billion from underutilisation



Accounts for roughly 9% of annual microplastic ocean pollution

Adapted from the UN Alliance of Sustainable Fashion

# Unsustainable Carbon **Footprint**

According to the **UN Alliance for Sustainable** Fashion, the clothing and textile industry is responsible for 2-8% of global greenhouse gas emissions. A 2020 McKinsey report <u>"Fashion</u> on Climate: How the Fashion Industry Can Urgently Act to Reduce Its Greenhouse Gas Emissions" likens the contribution from 2018 alone, in which it estimated a 4% contribution, to the yearly emissions of France, Germany, and the United Kingdom combined. It warns that without

"Under its current trajectory, the fashion industry will miss the 1.5-degree pathway by 50%."

– "FASHION ON CLIMATE: HOW THE FASHION INDUSTRY CAN URGENTLY ACT TO REDUCE ITS **GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS"** 

an accelerated abatement of emissions even with current decarbonisation initiatives, the output would be double the limit needed to remain on the best-case scenario 1.5-degree pathway. The recommendations call for a 60% reduction in emissions and emphasize a switch to renewable



# SUSTAINABILITY **REQUIRES A SWITCH TO CIRCULAR FASHION**

The main principle of circularity is to consider the product's end of life from inception to avoid waste and emphasize recyclability and biodegradability.

These principles are built into the circular fashion production process so that materials can stay in rotation for as long as they provide value before they are then returned to the earth. In this model, fabrics can be recycled and reused to create new items and then biodegraded.

energy. They also call upon consumers to alter their consumption habits and embrace fashion circularity.

it says. Instead of valuing our wardrobes, societal expectations have been set to always want more. Cheap prices make it possible.

# **Excessive Clothing Waste**

The waste issue is two-fold and includes clothes that have never been purchased and clothes that are no longer wanted on an individual level. Where does it all go? Well, according to data from the EPA, 85% of textiles discarded in the United States in 2018 from both consumers and the fashion industry are incinerated or landfilled.

The fashion industry routinely overproduces by about 30-40% each season, according to Forbes. A 2018 report from ShareCloth on apparel overproduction estimates that 150 billion garments are produced each year equalling roughly 20 garments per person. Inherit in this issue is that the production volume is not actually based on need and dramatic surplus is discarded without an industry-wide restructuring of the production process. The report also highlights how consumers buy more when the prices are lower. "The average American buys 70 apparel items per year. That is a new piece of clothing every four or five days,"

# Microplastic Ocean **Pollution**

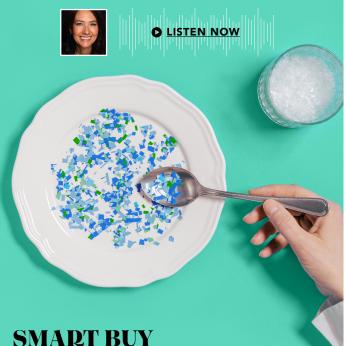
Synthetic fabrics like polyester, acrylic, nylon, and spandex are plastic-based and derived from petroleum sources. According to Ocean Clean Wash, 60% of clothes today are made with synthetic fibers because of their durability and affordability, amongst other reasons. When clothing made with synthetic materials are worn and washed, they shed tiny fibers too small to be filtered by conventional washing machines and end up in our waterways.

Microplastic pollution not only harms the environment but has pervaded the marine ecosystem and subsequent food chain so much so that it has been found in human bodies. More research is needed on the effects of microplastics in the body but a recent review in the Journal of Hazardous Materials found that it can damage cells in a multitude of ways.

# LISTEN AND LEARN

Want to learn more about microplastic pollution in our oceans? Listen to our podcast interview with Julie Andersen, CEO of Plastic Oceans International on Raising Healthy Families with Moms Meet and KIWI.

"Diving Deeper into the Plastic Pollution Crisis with Expert and Plastic Oceans CEO, Julie Andersen"



Roughly 9 million microfibres make their way into wastewater treatment facilities from just one load of wash, according to Ocean Clean Wash. There's a few simple consumer solutions to cut down on your microfibre contributions that can be used in or with your washing machine.

# Harmful Chemicals in **Textile Manufacturing**

Over 8,000 different chemicals and 10,000 different dyes are utilized in the making of textiles according to Green America. Some of the worst offenders are hormone disruptors like polyfluorinated chemicals (also known as persistent or forever chemicals) and flame retardants. Others like azo dyes, heavy metals, and formaldehyde are known carcinogens whose exposure can elicit a multitude of health concerns.

Garment workers who come into contact with these and other chemicals in the textile production process are at most risk. Likewise, much of these chemicals run off into the local water system, polluting rivers and affecting the local population around the factories.

Chemical contamination also constitutes much of the water pollution created by the textile industry.

According to Green America, "The impacts of chemicals banned in the final product but allowed in the manufacturing process, like dyes, polyfluorinated chemicals, and flame retardants, are striking. In China, 70 percent of the rivers and lakes are polluted, and in Bangladesh, the Buriganga River is so polluted with toxic



Using the filtering principles of real ocean coral, the Cora Ball is able to catch roughly a third of microplastic fibers in your laundry. STARTING AT \$38.99, **CORABALL.COM** 



Or you can toss your synthetic clothing in the Guppyfriend Washing Bag which prevents 86% of synthetic fibers from breaking when washed in the bag. **STARTING AT** \$34.95, GUPPYFRIEND.US



chemicals and heavy metals prevalent in the leather tanning industry that it can no longer sustain aquatic life."

# Unethical Labor Practices

Inequity and unethical labor practices are rampant in the fashion industry. Many of the poorest people around the globe are making the clothes we buy for unlivable wages under abysmal working conditions. According to the Clean Clothes Campaign, garment workers in South Asia are paid 2–5 times lower than what they need to live in dignity. While minimum wages may exist, they are not always reflective of living wages, forcing workers to endure unsafe conditions and unbearably long working hours.

Some of the safety issues they experience are working in factories with structural dangers. This was on horrific display during the tragic 2013 **Rana Plaza factory collapse** in Bangladesh that killed 1,100+ people and left another 2,500 injured.

Additionally, garment workers are exposed to synthetic chemicals and dyes on a daily occurrence in often poorly ventilated factories with improper protection and a lack of

transparency on the risks exposures have on them. Polyester is a good example of the issue.

According to Green America, "Polyester textiles, used in 55 percent of all clothing production, rely on the use of heavy metals, like antimony, a possible carcinogen, as well as known carcinogens, like cadmium and lead. Research from the National Institutes of Health shows that occupational exposure to antimony can cause respiratory, skin, and gastrointestinal symptoms, and may even cause cancer. Too often, factory workers who may encounter such toxic materials are not notified about safety procedures or given proper equipment to reduce exposure."

# Greenwashing

As in all industries, consumers need to be aware of greenwashing from brands who highlight one ethical attribute of their organization while continuing to employ harmful environmental or human rights practices. A brand may also market themselves as eco-conscious but on further inspection, they don't hold any Fairtrade or organic certifications.

Green America's "Scorecard of Environmental & Social Practices of Major US Apparel Companies" from its

2019 report on toxic textiles

is a great resource for digging into your favorite brands' practices. Target and The North Face top the list for their transparency and practices while J. Crew, Carter's, and Forever 21 bottom out the list. To learn more about whether your favorite brands' green claims are true or hyped, check out **Green America's** investigation.



# What Parents Can Do to **Shop Smarter**

As consumers, we have the power to move the dial towards a more ethical and sustainable fashion industry with our purchases.

### Do Your Brand Homework

Dig in a little deeper to the business and production practices of the brands you buy. Look for concrete sustainability goals on their website, transparency in the supply chain, and certifications that prove their commitment to the environment and human rights.

### Certifications that Matter

What to look for in a sustainable brand:



Fair Trade Certified is the certification from Fair Trade USA® quaranteeing that a brand provides "safe working conditions, environmental protections, sustainable livelihoods, and community development funds." Learn more.



Fairtrade International, operating out of Bonn, Germany focuses on traceability and has distinct labels for Fairtrade Cotton and Fairtrade Textile Production amongst others. Learn more.



**B** Corp certification focuses on an equitable, inclusive, and regenerative economy. Learn more.



GOTS Certified, which stands for the Global Organic Textile Standard, looks at the entire textile supply chain and has set criteria for not just certifying organic cotton but also chemical use and ethical worker treatment. Learn more.



**OEKO-TEX®** offers an umbrella of certifying labels that consider harmful substances and environmental and social practices in the leather and textile industries. Learn more.

### Switch to a Slow Fashion Mindset

The fast fashion industry lulls us into thinking we must constantly buy to keep up with the trends. Slow fashion values sustainability in the supply chain, ethical workplaces and labor rights, and clothing quality that endures beyond one season and one sibling.

#### SHOP SECONDHAND

This is an affordable and practical way to practice sustainability. Check out our list of the 8 Best Places to Resell Kids Items. Check your local area for the best resale options around you. Here's my favorite: @fievelandlouise. They sell in the shop and on Instagram and even ship to you if you aren't local.

#### MEND YOUR FAMILY'S CLOTHES

Stitching at the seam is simple enough, but if your kids' clothes have holes in t=hem, you can patch them up with boats or bikes or anything else your child likes.

#### WASH WITH CARE

How you wash your clothes matters. To extend wear, wash less, wash full loads, use cold water, and hang dry when possible.

### **BORROW AND LEND**

Sharing is caring, especially when it comes to clothing amongst families and friends with similar-aged kids. Some of my favorite pieces of kids' clothing have been passed around between my circle of friends and returned or passed on depending on who's kid is next in the size lineup.

## WANT TO CALCULATE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT?

You can calculate your impact with a simple 12 question quiz from **Ethical Clothing**.



FROM THE GARDEN SUMMER'S

ELESTEST FEAST



# *Ingredients*

- 1 pint grape tomatoes, cut in half
- 2 heirloom tomatoes, sliced
- 8 ounces cherry sized mozzarella balls, cut in half

1 avocado, diced

Handful of basil, chopped

2 Tablespoons olive oil

1 lemon, juiced

Salt and pepper

# Tomato. Mozzarella, and Avocado Salad

Creamy and rich, yet light and nutritious, this salad will be in solid rotation at your dinner table all season long.

# **Directions**

- 1. Add tomatoes, mozzarella, avocado, and basil to a medium sized bowl.
- 2. In a small bowl whisk olive oil, lemon, salt and pepper.
- 3. Drizzle over the salad, toss gently and serve immediately.







## BY KAREN KELLY

Savor the simplicity and flavor of fresh summertime produce with these three delicious dishes that you can whip up easily after a day spent enjoying the outdoors.





# **Ingredients**

4 pieces of cod 8 corn tortillas Shredded cabbage Avocado slices

#### **SEASONING**

1 teaspoon paprika 1 teaspoon garlic powder 1 teaspoon onion powder 1⁄4 teaspoon black pepper 1⁄4 teaspoon salt

### MANGO SALSA

1 mango, diced 1/4 cup red onion, diced 1/2 red pepper, diced 1 jalapeno, seeded and diced 1/2 lime, juiced 1/4 teaspoon salt

# Fish Tacos with Mango Salsa

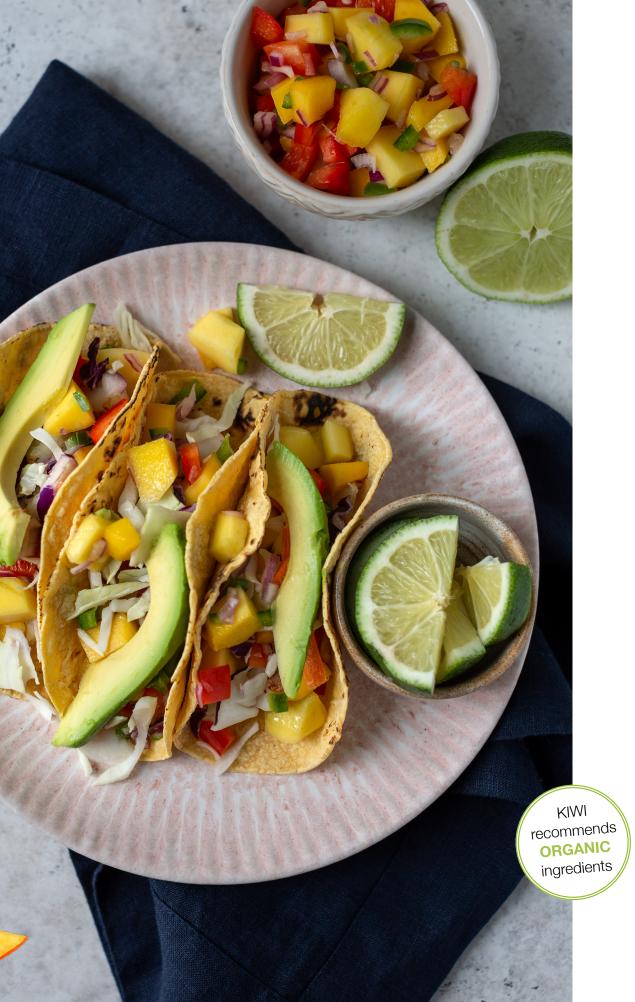
Transport your taste buds to the tropics with this yummy pairing of fresh fish and sweet and savory salsa.

# **Directions**

- 1. Combine seasoning ingredients.
- 2. Pat the fish dry and sprinkle with the seasoning.
- 3. Place in air fryer at 350°F for 10–15 minutes depending on the thickness of the cod.
- 4. While the fish cooks, make the mango salsa by combining all ingredients in a small bowl. Toss gently and set aside.
- 5. Warm the corn tortillas by wrapping in a damp paper towel and heating in the microwave for 20 seconds.
- Using two corn tortillas per taco, assemble the tacos by adding fish, salsa, shredded cabbage, avocado, and more lime juice if desired.

MAKES 4 SERVINGS

369 calories, 13 g fat, 26 g protein, 10 g fiber, 10 g sugar







# **Ingredients**

1 watermelon1 cup strawberry nonfat yogurt

½ cup strawberries, cut in half ½ cup blueberries ½ cup blackberries ½ cup raspberries Kumquats (optional) Honey for drizzling

# **Directions**

 Use a sharp knife to cut the watermelon down the middle, making one piece about 2 inches thick. Slice into 8 pieces like a pizza.

perfectly in little hands.

- 2. Scoop a spoonful of yogurt at the end of each of the pieces.
- 3. Pile on the fruit and drizzle with honey.
- 4. Serve immediately.



# The Magic of a Backyard Mud Kitchen

BY STACY KEANE

Maria Montessori believed that children needed to spend time in the natural world, "to understand and appreciate the order, harmony, and beauty in nature." A child-size outdoor kitchen can invite exactly that, as your child is compelled to roll up their sleeves and dig into sensory play.

When they play outdoors, children can experience embodied learning and use their senses to feel, smell, and listen to a different set of inputs than what they experience in their own playroom.

When you think about it,
Montessori-aligned families
work to curate their little one's
indoor play space, which often
includes an area where their
child has access to a limited
supply of toys and materials
that are geared to their current
stage of development, so it
makes sense to consider an
outdoor space as well.

# Benefits of a Mud Kitchen

Creating a mud kitchen provides a space for open-ended and pretend play as a child learns and grows. This type of play allows for exploration and problem solving to happen independently and organically.

There can be a natural tendency to want to step in and help our little ones as they are working through concepts, but that is often the time when we need to step back and let our children figure it out for themselves. For example, if your toddler fills a bucket full of sand or water they will learn they have to use their maximum effort to pick it up, or figure

out how to pour some out to make it lighter. Your child is developing a growth mindset as they work through these challenges on their own.

### How to Set Up Your Mud Kitchen

If you choose to set up an outdoor mud kitchen for your child, the possibilities are endless. Oftentimes families find an easy and affordable mud kitchen setup is to repurpose old wooden pallets and cinder blocks (always supervising your little one). One of mom or dad's old, oversized shirts can be a great smock to hang on a hook nearby. Be sure to trim the bottom, so they don't









trip over it. This allows your little one to independently get ready as they literally dig into their play!

Once your mud kitchen is in place, simply add tools to invite play. This can be as simple as old muffin and loaf plans, wooden spoons, pots and pans, and other kitchen gadgets you're willing to part with (at least for the time being). All of that measuring and packing of mud is great exposure to STEM concepts. Your child will also be testing hypotheses as they add different amounts of water to soil for the perfect mud consistency.

We recommend including a watering can and water source nearby, so your child can take the initiative to create more mud as they play. Toddlers love to exert maximum effort, so filling a bucket with water, mud or rocks and carrying it around the yard can be great fun for a little one—and help get the wiggles out as they burn that extra energy.



**About the Author** Stacy Keane is an AMI Montessori certified teacher, M.Ed. and head of learning for Monti Kids. She contributes extensively to the Monti Kids curriculum and makes sure she stays relevant by working with new and expecting parents. "As an educator, I was surprised by the amount of support I needed as a parent, and it is my goal that every Monti Kids family receives this support from the very beginning-we're

in this together!"

# The Essentials for Setup

Gathered from around the house, fill your mud kitchen with the tools to inspire open and endless play. Use this list as inspiration but work with what you already have at home!

Colander Baking tins Spoons and spatulas Watering cans and small pitchers

Metal bowls and buckets Pots, and pans

Kid-friendly garden tools

Garden soil (if you don't have easy or safe access to dirt in your backyard)

# HOW TO PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM SUMMER TICKS

By Jenna Sims

Summertime welcomes the opportunities for sun-filled days, warmer temperatures, and countless outdoor adventures. Along with the warmer weather, however, comes the risk of tick bites and potential tickborne diseases. Tick exposure can occur year-round, especially if you live in wooded, grassy, or brush areas, but ticks are more active from April to September when temperatures rise across the country.

In fact, studies over the past few years show that climate change has contributed to the expanded range of locations in which ticks can survive. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, "Because tick activity depends on temperatures being above a certain minimum, shorter winters could also extend the period when ticks are active each year, increasing the time that humans could be exposed to Lyme disease."

In recent years, the number of reported tickborne diseases in the United States ranged from about 50,000 to 60,000 per year. The most common tickborne illness is Lyme disease, a potentially serious bacterial infection that affects

both people and animals. Lyme disease can cause fever, fatigue, joint pain, and rash, in addition to more serious joint and nervous system issues. While Lyme disease cases have been reported in almost all states, the most common US regions are the Northeast, upper Midwest, and northwestern states.



LITTLE TICK

# PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY FROM TICKS

The best line of defense is to prevent tick bites as much as possible. Enjoy the outdoors with your family but avoid grassy or brush areas when possible. If you're going on a hike, for example, try to remember to walk in the center of trails (note: ticks cannot jump or fly so they must come into direct contact with you to bite). While prevention is key, following these seven additional tips can give your family added protection and peace of mind.

# WEAR PROTECTIVE CLOTHING IN WOODED AREAS.

Before heading into the woods, put on pants, longsleeved shirts, and high boots. Since ticks are often darker in color (red, brown, etc.), wearing lighter clothing may help you spot them more easily. One trick by avid hikers is to wrap duct tape around your pant legs with the sticky side out to try to catch ticks before crawling up your legs.

### TREAT CLOTHING OR PURCHASE SPECIALLY DESIGNED APPAREL.

Products containing 0.5% permethrin should be used to treat clothing, shoes, and gear to protect against ticks. Permethrin resembles naturally occurring chemicals found in chrysanthemums that have insecticidal properties. Many clothing brands also sell insect-prevention clothing like pants and tops, such as this Kids' Insect-Shield Hoodie from L.L. Bean.

### USE AN EPA-REGISTERED REPELLANT.

The Environmental Protection Agency has an extensive list of EPA-registered repellents for ticks and/or mosquitos. Many insect repellent products contain the active ingredient DEET, which has been clinically tested and deemed safe for children over 2 months. Environmental Working Group (EWG) recommends looking for insect repellents that contain no more than 30% DEET for the general population. Consider this chart from Health Canada for DEET recommendations for children:



| AGE                | RECOMMENDATIONS   |
|--------------------|---|
| 0 to 6 months      | No DEET   |
| 6 to 24 months     | 5-10% DEET. Use only when bug risks are high Limit to one application per day |
| 2 to 12 years      | <b>5-10% DEET</b> Limit to three applications per day. Avoid prolonged use    |
| General population | No more than 30% DEET allowed in products                                     |

Also keep in mind that most products containing DEET should only be applied to children once per day (i.e., don't use a product containing both

### Concerned about DEET?

The EWG acknowledges that while the safety of DEET has been called into question over the years, studies have found that it is unlikely to be a cause of neurotoxicity. They explain, "DEET isn't a perfect choice, nor the only choice. But weighed against the consequences of a life-changing disease, such as West Nile virus, we believe it is a reasonable choice." (Read more in their guide.)



DEET and sunscreen since sunscreen should often be applied more often in a day).

### DEET ALTERNATIVES

EWG recommends some alternatives to products containing DEET, including Picardin, IR3535, and lemon eucalyptus oil. Note that lemon eucalyptus oil is not recommended for children under the age of three. Learn more from the EWG's guide to bug repellents.

### DO A SEARCH FOR TICK NUMBERS IN YOUR ARFA.

According to the CDC, only a few different tick species bite and transmit diseases to humans. These maps show the general distribution of different human-biting ticks in the United States, according to species.

### PERFORM A "TICK CHECK" SOON AFTER OUTDOOR EXPOSURE.

Upon returning from hikes or potential tickinfested areas, check each family member's full body. The CDC recommends paying special attention to these areas: underarms, in and around the ears, inside belly button, back of the knees, in and around hair, between legs, and around the waist. Showering within a couple hours of outdoor exposure has been shown to reduce the risk of getting Lyme disease and other tickborne diseases. Be sure to also check your pets for ticks.

If you suspect you've been bitten by a tick, be aware of the common signs and symptoms that may occur, including fever and chills, aches and pains, and rashes—and contact your doctor if any symptoms occur.

### IMMEDIATELY DRY WORN CLOTHES ON HIGH HEAT.

In addition to performing body checks, make sure to remove any ticks from clothing and gear. Your worn clothing should be placed in the dryer on high heat for at least 10 minutes to kill ticks that may have attached to your clothing. (If washing clothing first, it's recommended to use hot water.)

### UPDATE YOUR LANDSCAPING WITH "TICK-FREE" ZONES.

Your garden and grassy areas in your backyard can be breeding grounds for ticks. A 3-foot-wide barrier of wood chips or gravel between your lawn and wooded areas can help restrict ticks from migrating into your space. If possible, play structures should be kept in sunny areas and away from yard edges or trees.



## **HOW TO REMOVE A TICK**

If you find a tick attached to your or your child's skin, it's important to remove the tick as soon as possible. Below are instructions from the CDC on how to remove a tick with a set of finetipped tweezers:

- 1. Use clean, fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.
- 2. Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don't twist or jerk the tick; this can cause the mouth parts to break off and remain in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth parts with tweezers. If you cannot remove the mouth easily with tweezers, leave it alone and let the skin heal.

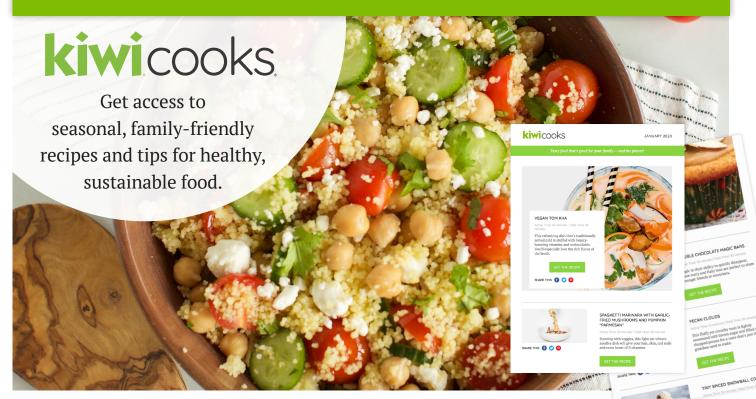
3. After removing the tick, thoroughly clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol or soap and water.

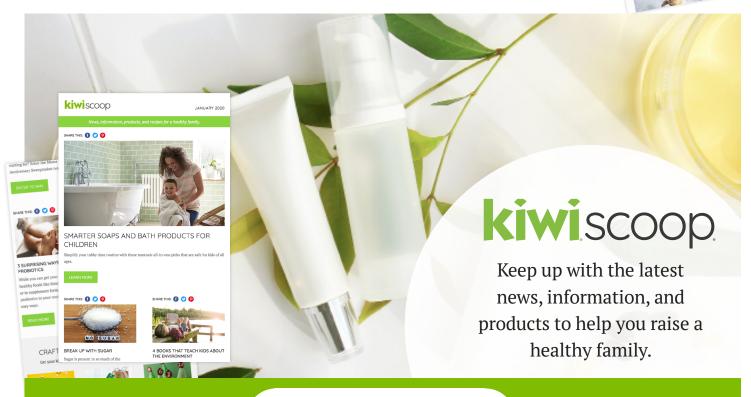
- 4. Never crush a tick with your fingers. Dispose of a live tick by:
  - Putting it in alcohol
  - Placing it in a sealed bag/container
  - Wrapping it tightly in tape
  - Flushing it down the toilet

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



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# **STRAWBERRIES**

WHY WE LOVE THEM: Strawberries are bright, juicy, sweet, and full of powerful antioxidants to support heart health, lower blood sugar levels, and help prevent cancer. Strawberries are good sources of vitamin C, manganese, folate, potassium, and fiber. They mainly consist of water (91%), making them a low-calorie food.

HOW TO CHOOSE THEM: Look for strawberries with a bright red color and fresh green caps (and without signs of spoilage). Smaller berries will have more flavor because they contain less water than bigger ones. Keep in mind that strawberries get darker after picking them, but not sweeter. To check for ripeness, smell them! If their fragrance is strong and sweet, they're ready to consume.

HOW TO STORE THEM: Strawberries can be stored in the refrigerator for 3-7 days. To extend their shelf life, discard any spoiled or bruised fruit and place in a glass jar in the coldest part of your fridge. To freeze, rinse fresh strawberries under running water, then place them on a parchment-lined sheet and place in the freezer for at least two hours or until they are frozen solid. Then, you can place them in a freezer-safe bag (with air squeezed out) for up to 8-12 months.

DELICIOUS WAYS TO USE THEM: When ready to consume, rinse fresh strawberries under cool water and gently pat dry. Remove the green caps by either twisting or cutting off with a knife. Fresh strawberries are delicious on summer salads, in yogurt parfaits, or plain. Overripe strawberries make a great addition to pies and other baked goods, jams and jellies, ice pops, compotes and dressings, smoothies, and cocktails.

### TRY THESE KIWI RECIPES



Arugula and Berry Salad



Pinky Pie Punch



Strawberries and Cream Sandwich

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