



# Wellbeing

September 2019 magazine

Special Edition for

**Kinship Carers Week Victoria**  
**8 to 14 September**



**A week of activities to acknowledge the role kinship carers play in raising many of Victoria's children**



Kinship Carers Victoria  
is supported by the Victorian Government.

# in this issue

In this third issue of the kinship carers' wellbeing magazine we have included more hints and tips to help you focus on your own health and wellbeing. Read the articles carefully; in some of them you might find more than you bargained for!

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# VICTORIA APPRECIATES OUR KINSHIP CARERS

## Stronger carers – stronger children

Dear Kinship Carers,

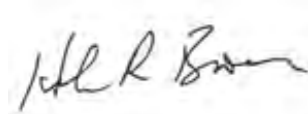
The distribution of this edition of the wellbeing magazine has deliberately been delayed to coincide with Kinship Carers Week 2019. We decided to release it at this time so we could use yet another opportunity to tell kinship carers how much they are appreciated. We know that at times you carers feel unappreciated and that our lives revolve around struggles and sacrifices.

Kinship Carers Week is a token gesture of appreciation in comparison with the contribution you make to the wellbeing of some of our most vulnerable children. Nevertheless, the sentiments of good will towards you are keenly felt by those offering.

The year 2019 is an important landmark in the history of the emergence of kinship care. At last we have an ongoing budget line in the Victorian budget that protects funds specifically to support your work.

We hope you enjoy Kinship Carers Week 2019.

Helen Brown  
OAM



Chairperson  
GPV/KCV

Anne McLeish



Director  
GPV/KCV



Health  
and Human  
Services



# BUILDING STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS

Healthy social relationships are one of the keys to mental, emotional and physical wellbeing

It is a natural human trait to want companionship. The relationships we form with other people are not only key to our mental and emotional wellbeing, but can also affect our physical wellbeing.

There are many different types of relationships – familial, romantic, friendship, casual acquaintance – and within those types there are also different levels of closeness.

Everyone has their own expectations when it comes to relationships and needs to get different things out of relationships. You might be the type of person who enjoys being alone – and there's nothing wrong with that – but studies show that having even one or two close, meaningful relationships can make a positive difference to your mental and physical health.

Recent research suggests that having healthy social relationships makes a bigger impact on avoiding early death than taking blood-pressure medication or being exposed to air pollution. One study even suggests that a lack of social relationships has the same effect on health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

## BENEFITS OF HAVING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

### Less Stress

The social and emotional support provided by close friends and family can be a great buffer against stress.

### Better Healing

A little emotional support can go a long way toward helping a person recover from a procedure or illness.

### Healthier Behaviours

If your friends and loved ones encourage healthy behaviours, such as eating a healthy diet, exercising, not smoking, etc, you're more likely to follow in their footsteps.

### Greater Sense of Purpose

Many people strive to feel like they're doing something good for others, and improving the world in some way – to feel like they're part of something bigger. It's possible that having a sense of purpose can actually add years to your life.

'... studies show that having even one or two close, meaningful relationships can make a positive difference to your mental and physical health.'

## THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS

**Be authentic. Be yourself. Be honest.** Don't deny your beliefs, values and point of view for the sake of fitting in.

**Accept others for who they are.** Keep in mind we all want people in our lives who love us for who we are.

**Seek balance in your friendship.** Entering a relationship with selfish motives and being a person who takes and takes until the well runs dry, is likely to lead to a lonely life. Look for friends who will support you, and support them in return.

**Make time for your friends.** Spend time with your friends. Show them that you want to be around them. Making time for your friends sends the message that they are an important part of your life. If you can't find time to see them in person, try sending them a letter or email, or give them a call.

**Be empathetic.** Trying to understand things from your friend's point of view can help you communicate and understand each other better.

**Celebrate what you have in common.** Most friendships start because people share common ground – a love of books, an insufferable boss, similar life experiences. Plan an activity that allows you to share common interests.

**Be a cheerleader.** Be encouraging. Motivate your friends. A good friend will do the same for you in return!

**Express your gratitude.** Let your friends know that you value your friendship. Tell them. Write them a note.

**Keep your promises.** If you know you can't do something, don't promise that you will. It is better to say 'I don't think I can make it on Saturday night, but let's get lunch next week,' than saying you will show up, and then cancelling at the last minute.

**Keep personal information confidential.** If a friend tells you a secret it is because they trust you and believe that you will keep what they told you in the strictest of confidence. Do not betray your friend by sharing their secret stories with others.

**Respect their choices.** It is okay to disagree. If you've given your advice and your friend sees things differently, step aside. What your friend is doing might be right for their life but not yours. They might be making a mistake, but then again they might not.

**Admit and apologise.** If you do something wrong, admit it. Sometimes when a friend is upset, all they want from you is for you to (genuinely) say 'sorry'.

**Let go.** Did a friend do something that hurt you? Were apologies made? Let go and move on! If you don't, it may taint the relationship going forward. Try your best to make a fresh start.

**Unclench your fist.** Friendships grow and change. Sometimes they end. You can change a lot in a year. Imagine how much you can change in 10 years. The person you were when you met someone is not the person you will always be. If a person is bringing you down, hurting you, or starts to go down a dangerous path, it is completely acceptable to end the relationship. Sometimes, it is healthier to let go.

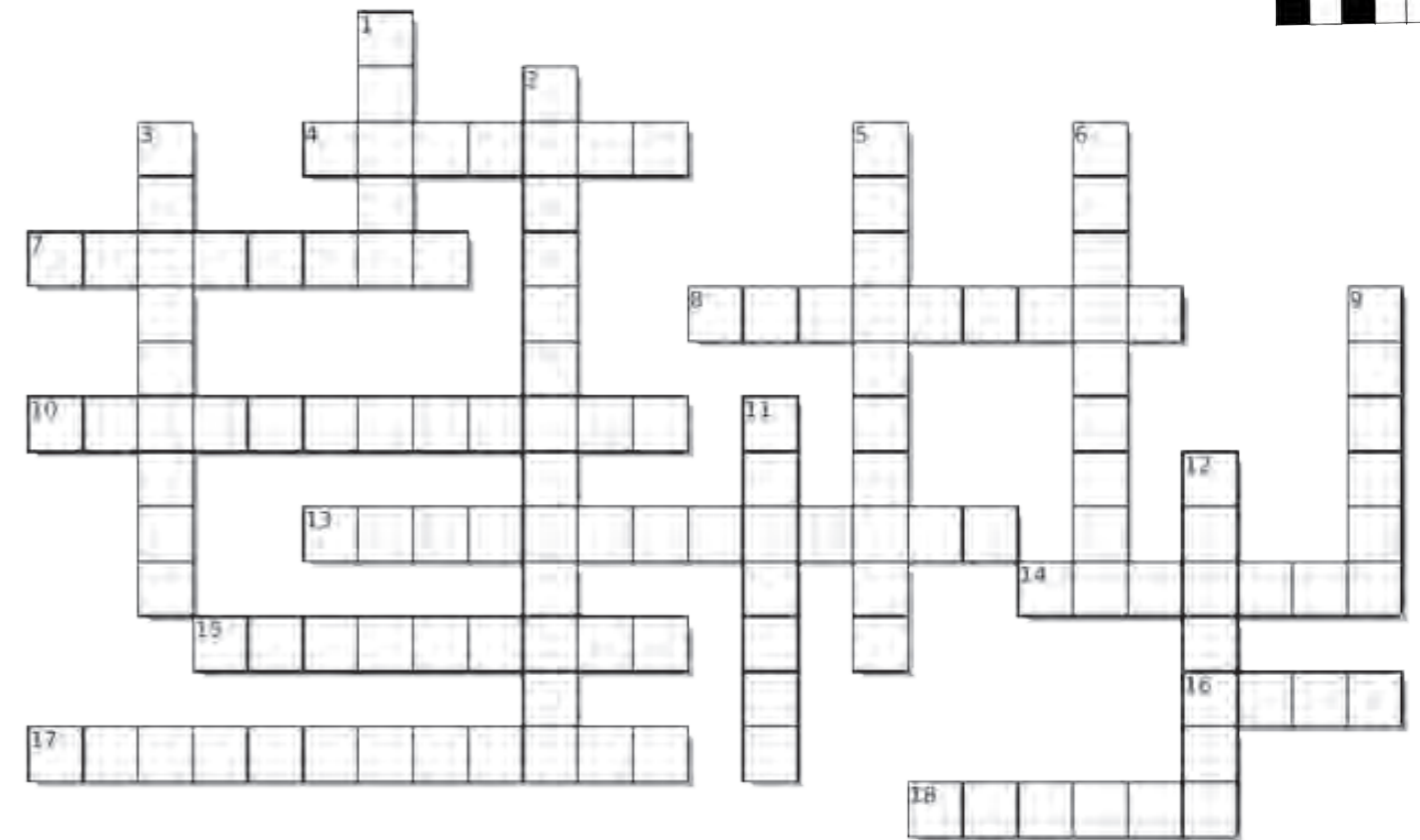
*KCV recently released a discussion paper on loneliness. If you would like a copy of this paper, contact the office on (03) 9372 2422.*

### References

<https://www.nm.org/healthbeat/healthy-tips/5-benefits-of-healthy-relationships>  
<https://www.lifeoptimizer.org/2008/08/29/build-stronger-friendships/>

## STRONG RELATIONSHIPS

All the answers to the clues below can be found in the preceding article on strong relationships.



### ACROSS

- 4 Friends provide this for each other
- 7 Encourage each other
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_ the things you have in common
- 10 Keep private conversations \_\_\_\_\_
- 13 A basic human need
- 14 Relationships must be based on mutual \_\_\_\_\_
- 15 Admit if you are in the wrong and \_\_\_\_\_
- 16 Spend it together
- 17 You don't know this person well
- 18 The people you're related to

### DOWN

- 1 Building this is an important part of relationships
- 2 One of the foundations of good relationships
- 3 To be true to yourself is to be \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Close relationship with people who aren't related
- 6 Express this to show you value your friends
- 9 \_\_\_\_\_ others for who they are
- 11 Being truthful
- 12 Understanding another's point of view

# PODCASTS TO SUPPORT AND INFORM KINSHIP CARERS

In April 2018 Kinship Carers Victoria launched a series of podcasts aimed at supporting kinship carers in the state and informing them about services and support available to them.

Listen to the podcasts here: <http://kinshipcarersvictoria.org/listen-download-podcasts/>

According to Mrs Anne McLeish, Director of Kinship Carers Victoria (KCV):

*'These podcasts are designed to reach all kinship carers at their convenience; that is, in their own homes and at times which suit them. The issues addressed will be of interest to formal and informal kinship carers alike, and will lift their understanding and knowledge about their role and the social, economic and political circumstances that affect them in their role as people who protect our most vulnerable children from further harm.'*

## Podcast #11

This podcast is about the eighth report on KCV's longitudinal study of kinship carer families. Director of KCV Anne McLeish discusses why the study was established, as well as providing an analysis of the latest report findings, which show that, for the most part, kinship care arrangements for the families in the study continue to be stable.

## Podcast #10

In this podcast KCV speaks with Dr Karen McLean, Paediatrician with the Pathway to Good Health Clinic, the Sleep Disorders Clinic, the Royal Children's Hospital, the Murdoch Children's Research Institute and the Department of Paediatrics with the University of Melbourne.

## Podcast #9

This podcast reports on a survey titled 'The Roles That Grandparents Play'. Director of GPV/KCV Anne McLeish speaks about the reason for conducting the survey and about the findings, which highlight the varying roles grandparents play within families and the community.

## Podcast #8

Thirty new kinship care specialists have been employed to support and speak with carers throughout the state. This podcast features snapshots of discussions taken from a recent seminar held to enable carers to meet these kinship care specialists.

## Podcast #7

With the Federal Election inching closer [at the time of broadcast], Director of KCV Anne McLeish speaks about how the organisation works to influence politicians' thinking about kinship care.



## Podcast #6

With elections, both state and federal, approaching [at the time of broadcast], Director of KCV Anne McLeish speaks about KCV's campaign priorities and the organisation's log of claims for governments and standing candidates.

CEO of FamilyCare Shepparton David Tennant also discusses issues relating to families, children and welfare, and where improvements can be made.

## Podcast #5

In this podcast Director of KCV Anne McLeish discusses how education is a key factor in ensuring positive outcomes for children.

Murray Geddes, Principal of the Lookout Centre, South Eastern Victoria Region, also explains the role the centres play and how kinship carers and the children in their care can benefit.

## Podcast #4

This podcast addresses the issue of carer wellbeing. Director of KCV Anne McLeish outlines how KCV works to better protect and promote carer wellbeing and speaks about the various projects KCV has in place to do so.

The podcast also features interviews at one of KCV's artist-in-residence sessions with participants and coordinators, discussing with them the value of the experience.

## Podcast #3

With a view to the state election in November of 2018, Grandparents Victoria/Kinship Carers Victoria released a log of claims against which the organisation would judge the commitment to families of candidates standing in the election. Director of GPV/KCV Anne McLeish speaks about how the log of claims was developed.

This podcast also includes an interview with Barbara Champion, Director of Play Australia, the peak national advocacy organisation for play in this country.

## Podcast #2

This podcast addresses the issue of carer wellbeing. Director of KCV Anne McLeish speaks about why the physical and emotional health of kinship carers and their access to support services is so important and how KCV works to better protect and promote carer wellbeing.

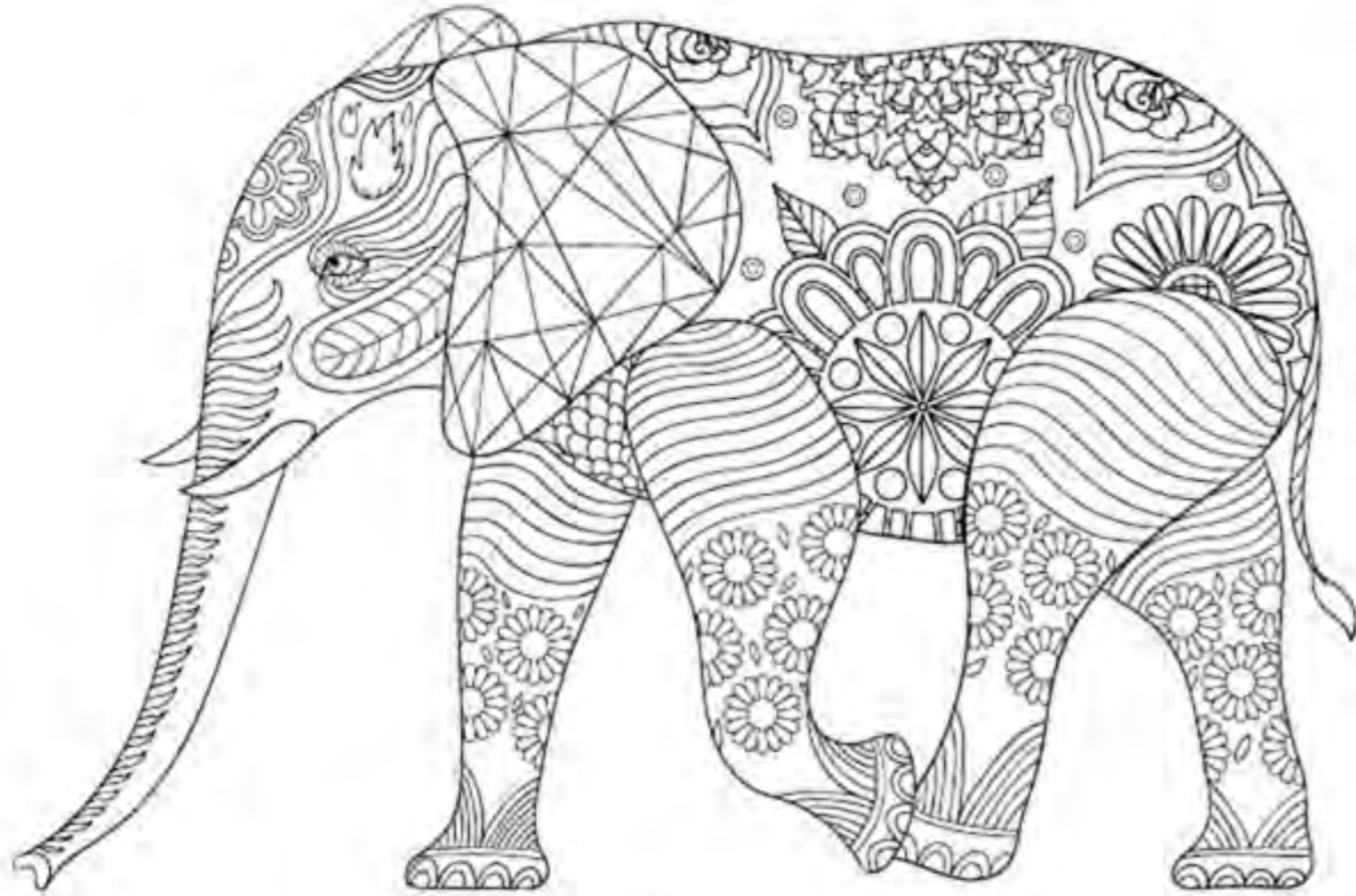
Two kinship carers also speak about their personal and professional perspectives on this key element of kinship care.

## Podcast #1

The first podcast in the series features an interview with Anne McLeish, Director of Kinship Carers Victoria, in which Anne speaks about the aims of this podcast series, plus the mission and scope of activities of KCV.

She also touches briefly on the range of issues facing both carers and the children in their care which will be addressed throughout this series.

# TAKE A COLOURING BREAK



IN ISSUE #2 OF THE WELLBEING MAGAZINE WE DISCUSSED THE BENEFITS OF COLOURING IN FOR ADULTS. TAKE A BREAK AND ADD SOME COLOUR TO THIS ELEPHANT.

# THE AMAZING HEALTH BENEFITS OF LEMONS

The ancient Egyptians used lemons not just for food, but for cosmetics, medicines and cleaning products, and lemons still have a variety of wellbeing uses today

## Personal Care

Strain the juice of one lemon and dilute in 250 ml of warm water. Use this as a rinse to give hair extra shine.

Mix one tablespoon of lemon juice into a glass of warm water to use as a gargle or mouthwash.

Mix together equal parts of lemon juice, olive oil and honey for a soothing hand lotion. Add coconut oil and massage into the scalp to prevent dandruff.

Another natural remedy for dandruff: gather a good handful of leaves from the lemon tree, cover with water and boil the mixture for half an hour. Strain and bottle. When it is cool, rub the liquid into the scalp. Even the most stubborn dandruff will respond to this.

Lemons' antibacterial and antifungal properties make them a natural alternative to treat acne. Simply slice open a lemon and rub it across your face. Or you can add a few drops of honey to a lemon half before applying it directly to the area where you have blackheads. Lemon juice can also help to fade acne scars, even skin tone, and prevent oil build-up on skin.

## Medicinal Use

To soothe a sore throat, mix equal quantities of lemon juice and honey. Sip slowly as required.

Sucking on a lemon can help settle an upset stomach.

Please note: lemon juice should not be left on the body for extended periods of time and may have severe reactions when exposed to the sun.

## Cleaning

Squeeze lemon juice onto a damp cloth and use to wipe surfaces in kitchens and bathrooms. The juice cuts through built up grease and grime. Add some vinegar for extra cleaning power.

Add a splash of lemon juice to the water when washing clothing for a fresh scent.

To rid plastic containers of smells, add a third malt vinegar to two-thirds cold water and a splash of lemon juice. Pour into container, leave for a few hours, then rinse.

Clean and deodorise microwave ovens – place a few slices of lemon into a bowl of water (make sure to use a bowl that is microwave safe!) Place into microwave and heat on high temperature until the water comes to the boil. The steam this creates will loosen any stuck on debris, which can be wiped away with a damp cloth. This method can also help clean a conventional oven – substitute a baking dish for the bowl, and use a whole lemon cut into quarters. You may need to let the water boil a while longer, and use a lot more elbow grease when wiping down surfaces.

## References

Peter Russell Clarke's *The Magic of Lemons*

Mary Murray *My Mother's Times*

<https://www.almanac.com/content/household-uses-lemons#>

[https://www.huffingtonpost.com.au/2013/08/13/lemon-beauty-benefits\\_n\\_3743905.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com.au/2013/08/13/lemon-beauty-benefits_n_3743905.html)

# BUILDING STRONGER BODIES

As we get older, everyday tasks such as climbing stairs, bending over to pick things up, carrying shopping bags or playing with grandchildren become harder. One reason for this may be muscle loss due to a condition that affects all of us called *sarcopenia*.

For each decade we live after the age of 25 to 30, people naturally begin to lose from 3 to 5% of the muscle mass we naturally carry, causing us to lose muscle function.

Muscle strength is not just important for carrying out daily activities, but also assists with bone health and balance, as well as helping to manage blood pressure, blood sugar and blood cholesterol levels. This may in turn help to prevent and control heart disease and type 2 diabetes. In addition, stronger muscles support your joints, which can mean less hip and knee problems down the track.

Another benefit of building up strength in your muscles is that it helps you to maintain your posture and balance, preventing falls as you age, and potentially delaying the need to use a walking frame or cane in later life.

It's never too late to start taking small steps to help you improve your overall fitness, and building up muscles is an important part of that. A 2015 study found that performing strength exercises just twice a week could significantly improve mobility.

Strength training on its own is not going to give you all the health benefits you need. You still need to make the effort to get some regular aerobic exercise, such as walking, swimming or cycling.

In addition to exercising, proper nutrition can also help to repair and develop muscles. Eating a balanced diet that includes protein-rich foods such as lean meats, legumes, fish, eggs and nuts is an important part of sustaining muscle health.

You don't need to have a gym membership or any expensive equipment to exercise your muscles ... on the next page are a few examples of exercises you can do with objects you can find around the house.

Don't forget to check with your doctor if you have any conditions that may affect your ability to exercise safely!

## SQUATS TO CHAIR

Squats strengthen the lower body to help you take stairs, pick things up off the floor and get out of chairs without struggle.

Stand directly in front of a chair with your feet hip-width apart. Push your hips back and bend your knees to lower your body toward the chair. Either touch your bottom to the chair or sit down on it. Keep your torso straight – at the bottom of the squat, your upper body should be leaning forward only slightly. Pause, then push through your feet and squeeze your bottom to return to start.

## WALL PUSH-UPS

Improve upper-body strength, especially in your arms and chest.

Stand a little away from the wall – moving closer to the wall makes the exercise easier, standing farther away makes it harder – and put your hands against it at shoulder height and shoulder-width apart. Keeping your body in a straight line, bend your elbows diagonally to your sides to lower your chest to the wall. Let your heels come off of the floor. Pause, then slowly press through your hands to straighten your elbows and return to start.

## DEADBUGS

They have a funny name, but they'll help you improve your balance and all-over strength.

If you're not confident getting up and down off the floor, this exercise can be done lying on your bed.

Lie flat on your back with your arms and legs up in the air, your knees bent. Maintaining contact between your lower back and the floor, lower one leg until your heel just about touches the floor while also lowering the opposite arm toward the floor above your head. Lift them back up to return to start, and repeat on the opposite side. You can make this exercise harder by keeping your legs straight rather than bent.

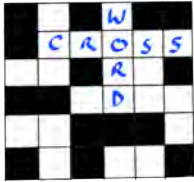
## WALL ANGELS

This simple movement can improve posture and ease back pain.

Stand with your back flat against a wall and your feet about 3 to 6 inches from the wall. With the back of your head touching the wall and your arms straight down by your sides, tuck your chin to your chest. Then turn your palms out and slowly raise your arms, maintaining contact with the wall. Raise your arms as high as you can without your elbows bending or feeling any discomfort. Pause, then lower your arms to return to start.

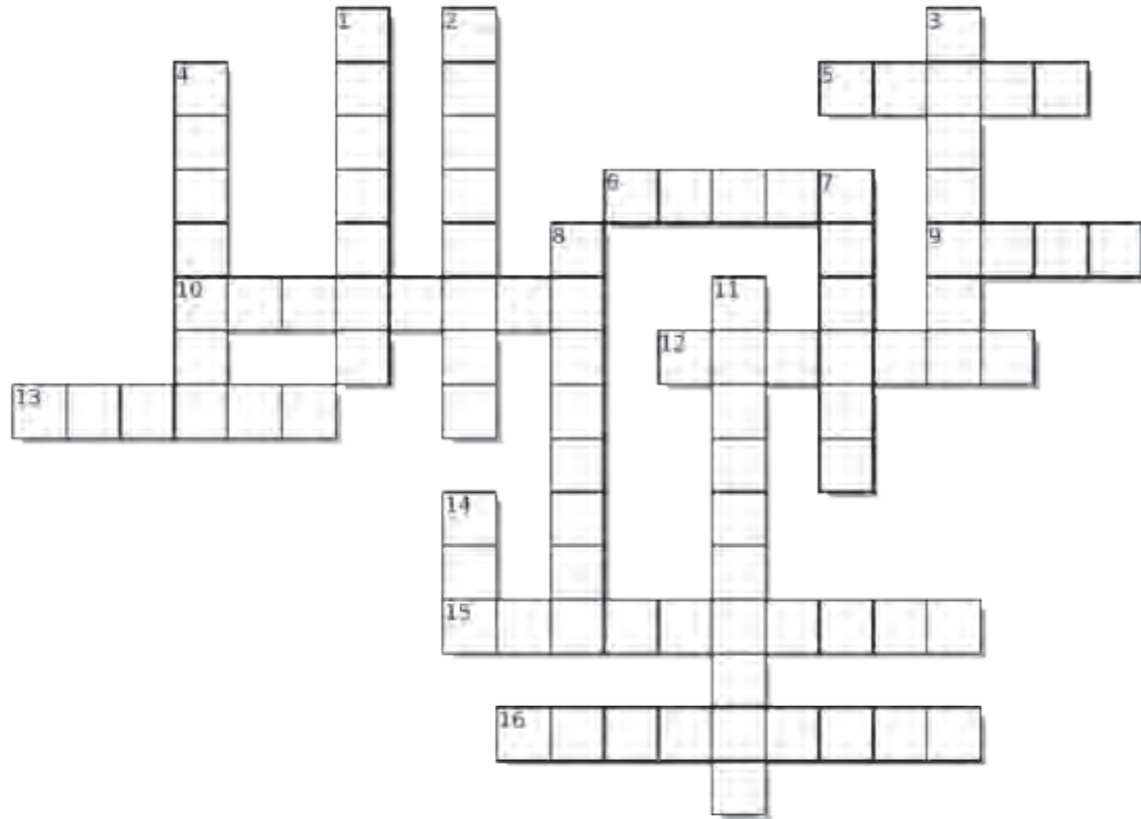
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<https://health.usnews.com/health-news/health-wellness/articles/2016-01-29/8-best-equipment-free-strength-exercises-for-older-adults>  
<https://www.besthealthmag.ca/best-you/fitness/4-ways-to-keep-your-body-strong-as-you-age/>



# STRONG BODIES

All the answers to the clues below can be found in the preceding article on strong bodies.



### ACROSS

- 5 Bend these when doing squats
- 6 Developing better balance can prevent these
- 9 Strong muscles also assist in \_\_\_\_\_ health
- 10 Actions to help keep fit
- 12 Improving this will prevent falls
- 13 Strong muscles can prevent pain in \_\_\_\_\_
- 15 We can lose 3–5% of this every decade \_\_\_\_\_ (6,4)
- 16 Getting adequate \_\_\_\_\_ will help build strength

### DOWN

- 1 Wall angels will help improve this
- 2 Just two sessions of strength exercise a week can improve this
- 3 Don't forget to do this kind of exercise too!
- 4 Eating foods rich in this nutrient will help rebuild muscle
- 7 This exercise builds muscle in the lower body
- 8 Exercise that has a funny name, but is good for balance and strength
- 11 Name of the condition describing muscle loss
- 14 You don't need an expensive \_\_\_\_\_ membership

# WORD SEARCH – ANIMALS



R	E	A	W	V	S	Q	U	I	R	R	E	L	D
P	X	Y	D	O	N	K	E	Y	B	C	R	N	H
E	S	O	O	G	N	O	M	D	P	A	K	L	O
J	L	R	F	R	O	A	G	C	O	M	W	S	R
H	A	E	H	P	O	L	A	R	B	E	A	R	S
E	T	G	P	I	C	A	N	T	E	L	O	P	E
O	E	O	U	H	N	W	A	L	R	U	S	G	L
O	P	A	O	A	A	O	M	O	U	Q	S	I	E
R	C	P	N	C	R	N	C	Z	R	I	O	R	G
A	D	E	A	U	I	O	T	E	G	N	G	A	O
G	A	P	L	B	C	D	G	B	R	T	C	F	A
N	L	T	E	O	M	I	N	R	O	O	N	F	K
A	E	X	Y	B	T	I	V	A	S	O	S	E	N
K	C	O	T	T	E	R	O	U	B	G	A	R	Z

- Alpaca
- Antelope
- Bandicoot
- Camel
- Donkey
- Elephant
- Fox
- Giraffe

- Horse
- Ibex
- Jaguar
- Kangaroo
- Koala
- Lion
- Mongoose
- Ocelot

- Otter
- Polar Bear
- Rhinoceros
- Squirrel
- Tiger
- Vicuna
- Walrus
- Zebra



## COLOURING BREAK TWO



## HINTS FROM YESTERYEAR



If you have an annoying cough which prevents sleep, take a pinch of salt. This never fails.

Attach your latch-key to a length of tape and fasten it to the lining of your handbag with a safety-pin. The key can be found without fumbling and the door unlocked without removing the pin.

Instead of using sticking-plaster on a conspicuous blemish, use the skin inside the shell of a raw egg. It adheres firmly, does not soil, washes off easily and is not nearly so noticeable as plaster. Being transparent, it hardly shows.

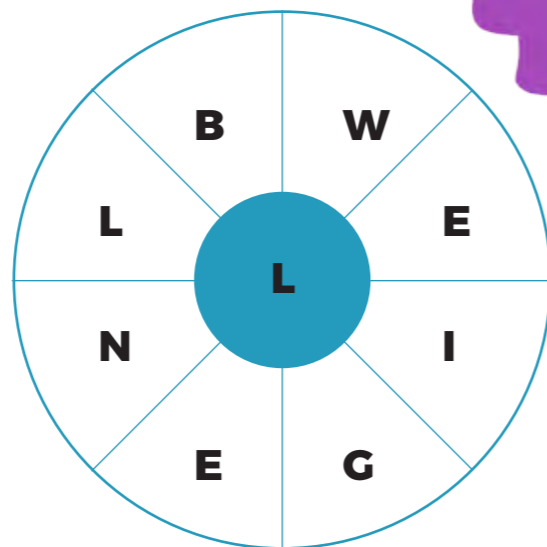
To get rid of the smell of oil paint, place a handful of hay in a pailful of water, and let it stand in the room newly painted.

Damp newspapers torn into small pieces are much more effective for sweeping a carpet than tea leaves.

# BRAINTEASERS



How many words can you find using these letters at right? Words must be at least four letters long, and must use the letter in the blue circle. Each letter can only be used once in a word. There is a nine-letter word... can you spot it?



Double my number, I'm less than a score, half of my number is less than four. Add one to my double when bakers are near, days of the week are still greater, I fear.

Some months have 30 days, some months have 31 days; how many have 28?

Answers: Nine-letter word WELLBEING, six, all of them.

# WHEN IN NEED: CALL A FRIEND

WHO DO I CONTACT ...	
...to find out where the nearest support group operates?	KINSHIP CARERS VICTORIA (03) 9372 2422 <a href="http://www.kinshipcarersvictoria.org">www.kinshipcarersvictoria.org</a>
...for five free parenting counselling sessions on the telephone?	GATEWAY HEALTH 1800 880 660 <a href="http://www.gatewayhealth.org.au">www.gatewayhealth.org.au</a>
...to find out what training is available for kinship carers?	CARER KAFÉ (03) 9416 4292 <a href="http://www.carerkafe.org.au">www.carerkafe.org.au</a>
...to find out what financial and child care assistance is available?	GRANDPARENT ADVISOR CENTRELINK 1800 245 965
...to find out about bereavement assistance?	BEREAVEMENT ASSISTANCE (03) 9564 7778 <a href="http://www.bereavementassistance.org.au">www.bereavementassistance.org.au</a>
...to find out about help for problem gambling?	GAMBLING HELP LINE 1800 858 858 <a href="http://www.gamblinghelpline.org.au">www.gamblinghelpline.org.au</a>
...to find out about family mental health and wellbeing?	DRUMMOND STREET (03) 9663 6733 <a href="http://www.ds.org.au">www.ds.org.au</a>
...to find after hours medical advice?	AFTER HOURS GP HELPLINE 1800 022 222 Nurse on call 1300 606 024



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