



December 2009 : Issue #1

Cheeky MONKEY

PRACTICAL PARENTING SUPPORT

WELCOME TO OUR FIRST CHEEKY MONKEY NEWSLETTER!

CHECK OUT THE FORUM DURING THE MONTH OF DECEMBER TO TAKE PART IN OUR 'ADVENT CALENDER' AND CHRISTMAS COMPETITION!

A bit about our Advent Calendar by Bridget

I am soooo loving having a little one around this Christmas season. It's really exciting knowing that she's finally old enough to enjoy the build-up, decorations, pressies and all. So, of course, I could not pass up the opportunity of buying Jayden a cute "My Little Pony" advent calendar while we were out shopping the other day. I cannot wait to give it to her simply because I know how excited she will be waiting for the next little surprise each morning. I remember doing just that as a child, and the anticipation was all part of the fun of the season. And that got me thinking, us mums need an advent calendar of our own. So, as of December 1st, we would love it if you popped on over to the forum to check out our very own Christmas Countdown Advent Calendar thread. Every day, from December 1 till December 25, we will have something special and *Christmassy* just for you.

And, because we're all mums (or mums-to-be), we know how very exciting this time of the year is for our kiddlets. So, we have a Christmas Countdown thread for them too. We hope that they enjoy the ideas and links that we have found just for them. So keep an eye on the thread each day....we don't want your little one to miss out on any of the excitement! And if your cheeky monkey is a tad too little to enjoy our countdown this year, you might want to store some of the ideas in your memory bank for next year!

We will also be running a special Christmas competition this month, so be sure to pop over to the forum and check it out!

CHEEKY MONKEY BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

We'd like to welcome our first Cheeky Monkey Arrival! Big congratulations to Sharlene and family on the safe arrival of their baby boy! Lukas Anthony Wilson was born on the 26th of November, weighing 8lb 3oz and 54cm long.

Cheeky Monkey for Practical Parenting Support is proud to welcome you as a member to our new site.

As this is the first of our monthly newsletters, I thought that I would take this opportunity to explain to you who is behind Cheeky Monkey, why we were started and how this wonderful adventure was started!!

Cheeky Monkey was created out of a need for New Zealand parents, to have somewhere safe, reliable and positive, to go to learn about all things baby, child and family, not from a textbook you cannot ask questions of, or an employee pre-programmed with textbook dialogue, but of mothers from all walks of life and age ranges, who share a common goal : bringing up our children to be happy, secure, well rounded, strong individuals.

Our site has been created by a group of mothers, who have felt as all mums do - that sometimes, we just need some help and support from others who have been through it, or are going through it along with us!

A lot of us know each other through the forums, some of us have even managed to meet face-to-face, but we all share those times where with sleeping or busy children, we just can't get out of the house, so we want a support network that is reachable from home!

We actively promote getting mums out of the house, and involved in Playgroups, Coffee Groups and Support Groups, but we know that's not always possible, so the forums are here for all those other times!

Our Mission is to make sure that all Kiwi parents have a support network so that when we need help, it's there for us!

We will try to make sure our articles are informative, relevant and readable for mums.

We will try to make sure that our information is correct for mums. But please remember, that all content here is submitted by you, our valuable members, without whom there would be no community. So if you come across something that isn't quite right, please let us know how we can make it accurate!

We pride ourselves on having a busy and motivated community of families who love meeting new people and helping out where we can, so joining our group is easy! All you have to do is post your Introduction so that we can meet you and you will find lots of us will jump to welcome you! Once we know a little about you, it will be easy for us to chat! We have a great Team here who will answer any of your questions - don't forget that we have live chat also if that helps you find your way around the forums faster!

We are also very proud of our members for their lack of judgment no matter what your parenting methods are. We are very open minded and we understand that different parents find different things work for them - we love to hear about it, so tell us how things work in your family!

We are here for parents, no matter who you are or where in New Zealand you are, so pull up a chair, pop into our forums and introduce yourself - meet us and let's have some fun!

REGULAR FEATURES

A few of our regular features that you'll find in the forum are:

- Question of the day
- Website of the day
- The Daily Brainteaser
- Gizza Peek @ (weekly themed photo thread)

NEW IN DECEMBER

- Starting on Wednesday the 2nd of December from 8:30pm onwards, we will be running a weekly Chat night in the forum. This will be a good opportunity for members to chat and get to know each other better.
- There will also be a fortnightly game of 'What am I?' held in the Gaming Table section of the forum, every second Sunday (starting on the 6th of December) from 8pm onwards, so pop on in and have some fun!

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Cheeky MONKEY

PRACTICAL PARENTING SUPPORT

MEET THE TEAM AT CHEEKY MONKEY

A POEM TO MR CHEEKY MONKEY

Written by one of our lovely members,
J'n'E

My nights have been lonely
My thoughts empty too
Without you in my life
I didn't know what to do

Between Facebook and Trade Me
There was an empty gap
Without my trusty forum
All I could really do was nap

But now you are back
and you are now here to stay
my nights are no longer lonely
And you will keep my boredom at bay!!!!

YAY CHEEKY MONKEY!!!!

SALT DOUGH DECORATIONS

- 2 cups of salt cutters. Use the end of a
- 2 cups of flour straw to make a hole for
- 1 cup of water hanging.

Stir all the ingredients together. When it becomes too firm to stir knead with your hands. The dough should feel moist and smooth but not stick to your hands. If it is sticking, knead in a bit more flour.

If you want you can separate the dough into smaller parts and add different food colourings.

Roll the dough out to 1/4 inch thick, cut out shapes with cookie

Bake at 70°C for half an hour, then turn up to 100°C and bake for a further hour or until ornaments are completely hard and dry. Turn over periodically.

Decorate and coat with 2 coats of acrylic varnish. Thread with ribbon for hanging.



Whoopsiebaby aka Sharyn
SAHMummy to a 12 year old DD and 15 month old DS - from Wellington

I'm a full time Mummy who also works from home doing Web Design and Photography. I am the resident pixel-pixie and try and keep the site running, looking pretty and doing cool stuff!!!

I enjoy being at home with my gorgeous boy and we try to organise and get out to coffee groups and playgroups to help keep him stimulated!

My organiser side attracted me to Cheeky Monkey, as did the other amazing ladies here!

ClothMumma aka Kristy
SAHMummy to a 2 year old DS and 8 month old DD - from Timaru

I am also a SAHM, I love being home with the kids and seeing them grow and change. I am a cloth napping,

breastfeeding mama! I am always happy to offer help/suggestions on either! In my spare time I like to relax in the bath with a good chic-lit book.

I am also proud to be part of Cheeky Monkey, love seeing how our community of members is growing.

mum2riley aka Fay
SAHMummy to a 2 year old DS - from Christchurch

I love being a SAHM and being able to spend so much quality time with my gorgeous boy. He's a little chatterbox and always keeps me on my toes. We go to music and movement once a week and he goes swimming with his dad at the weekend. Its hard work keeping him stimulated but well worth it watching

him learn and grow. In my spare time I like to do digital scrapbooking as well as traditional paper scrapbooking. If I have time I also like to bake, read and play playstation!

I feel very privileged to be a part of Cheeky Monkey and I love meeting new people and making some great friends!

Kitkat aka Bridget
SAHMummy to a 2 year old DD and TTC #2 - from Auckland

I'm a WAHM, I'm doing In-Home

Childcare at the moment, which is super because I get to stay home with my little monkey. I look after another toddler five days a week, and a baby two days a week. I love scrapbooking, reading and spending time with my awesome hubby and our daughter. Oh, and I LOVE Cheeky Monkey.....it's a wonderful place to meet new friends, vent, share....and I can do it all from my comfy couch while the kids are asleep! LOL

Sara aka Sara
SAHMummy to a 2 year old DS and Due May 2010 with baby #2 - from Wellington

I'm a full time mummy to my wee man and looking forward to our new arrival mid may 2010. My days are filled with play groups, swimming and toddler gym! I love the beach and am very lucky to have a water baby who is happy to spend hours down at the beach. I love being a SAHM and wouldn't change it for the world! In my spare time I enjoy going to the movies, going out for dinner and a boogie with my DP or just staying at home watching girlie movies, eating and drinking cheap wine and

spending far too much time on Cheeky Monkey!

WellyMel aka Melissa
SAHMummy to a 2 year old DD and TTC #2 - from Wellington

Well, where do I start? I'm currently a SAHMummy, but I also work for Barnardos, manage a property management company and work part time at night as well. I enjoy looking after my two Barnardos boys, and love taking them all out to coffee group. My days are very full on, but I wouldn't change a thing. I love being a mummy and feel privileged to be able to spend my day watching my child grow. In my spare time I spend a lot of time on my favourite forum Cheeky Monkey. I also like holding BBQs, gardening, reading and drinking nice wine.

Bronwyn aka Bronwyn
SAHMummy to a 13 month old DS - from Wellington

I'm a SAHM, formerly a high school Maths teacher, so have a bit of a geeky side to me!

I try and get Michael involved in a lot of activities - we're currently involved with Playcentre, Mainly Music, Salvation Army Playgroup, and three coffee groups! We also go swimming fairly regularly, and manage to have a quiet day at home each week! In my non-Mummying time, I love doing logic puzzles and reading a good novel. I'm also a beginner digital scrapbooker, working pretty much exclusively with pictures of my son! I also spend far too much time on Cheeky Monkey!

BE SUNSMART THIS SUMMER

Summer is finally here and we all know how important it is to protect our babes from the sun, so whether you're at the beach, the pool or just hanging around in the back yard, don't forget to Slip, Slop, Slap and Wrap!

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PRACTICAL PARENTING SUPPORT

FORUM TIP - PRIVATE MESSAGING

RECIPE - GINGERBREAD BISCUITS

- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 250g butter
- 1 egg
- 2tsp cinnamon
- 1tsp ground ginger
- 1tsp ground cloves
- 1Tbsp grated orange rind
- 2Tbsp golden syrup
- 3 cups flour
- 2tsp baking soda
- 1/2tsp salt
- Christmas cookie cutters (optional)

In a large bowl, cream together the butter and sugar then add egg and beat.

Add orange rind and golden syrup, mix well.

Sift in all the dry ingredients and mix into a firm dough. Chill thoroughly.

On a lightly floured board, roll the dough out 1/4 inch thick. Cut out shapes and repeat the process until all the dough has been used.

Bake the biscuits for 10-12 minutes at 190°C.

Decorate as desired.
Makes Heaps!



At Cheeky Monkey we decided that there are some things, best shared in private and we respect our users enough to believe that this won't be abused.

However since many of you have come from forums where it isn't allowed, we thought we would walk you through the basics of how they work and how to send one!!

Private Messages are a bit like email, but within the site!

At the top of every page, you will see a link **User Control Panel**

If you click on the **User Control Panel** link, there is a tab for **Private Messages** and this is where you want to go next.

Private Message Tab

When you click on the Private Message Tab, you are taken straight into

Compose Message

It's just like posting, except you choose who you want to send the message to before you type the message and press submit!

Inbox

Is where, just like in your email, you can see messages that have been sent to you!

Outbox

Is where messages you have sent, but have not yet been read are found.

Sent Messages

Are where all messages go once they have been sent, and read by the recipient.

If you want to get tricky with your PM's then have a look inside the last category; **Rules, Folders & Settings** as this section will allow you to

make up a few folders to help you sort

your messages - and even help you sort the PM's into them!

Another thing I will mention, is that when you are browsing the forum, if there is a specific person you wish to send a **Private Message** to, then you can do this easily from the forums by clicking on their name, then on their profile in the Contact section, you will see **click to send a Private**

Message and if you click this, it will shortcut you to a PM with that persons name already selected!!

Please remember, that our site is one of support, therefore people abusing the PM function will not be tolerated. Please use this with respect.

People mis-using this feature, will have it removed.

Happy messaging!!

A MOTHERS HIGHLIGHTS - THE FIRST YEAR

by Bronwyn

Well, with my baby having recently turned one, I reflected on the year that's passed, and just a few of his "firsts".

The first time I met him, he seemed like such a wee angel, and I was sure someone was going to ask for him back. It didn't seem real that he was mine, and I could keep him forever!

The first time he smiled — what a heart melting moment. And as the smiles became more discriminate, my heart melted a whole lot more.

The first time he rolled over, he looked so surprised, but then did it again. If only a baby that size could have looked proud, he would have been beaming all over.

When he was older, and rolled in the other direction, he was definitely proud of himself — he woke me up at 2am to show me he could roll! Fortunately, he

went back to sleep for 5 hours after that! The first time he held his own rattle, and discovered he could make a noise with it, those little giggles that emanated from such a small boy were just beautiful. We have lots of videos of rattling!

The first time he tasted food — what a fun time! Intrigued, yet quite disgusted. He was certainly beginning to show his own opinions by now.

The first time he crawled, there was much delight from a small boy — after weeks of rocking back and forth, and frustration at wanting to crawl but not quite being able to, he was so pleased to be able to get to the toys he wanted.

The first word he said was "Mum" — I was so proud! I just need to coach him to say "I Love Mum" now!

The first time he stood — what a new view of the world he gained! Suddenly a

whole new level of baby-proofing needed to be put into action. The stepping around furniture followed very quickly.

The first time he took unaided steps were mostly by mistake, but he learnt quickly that steps will result in great happiness from Mum and lots of cuddles. It's worth stepping into a cuddle!

The first taste of cake — aah, every child should be allowed a smash cake at their first birthday! I've never seen him in quite so much ecstasy at having a whole cake to himself!

And the next year will provide so many more firsts — each and every one of which I will have a little heart melting moment, and he will feel so proud of himself.

What firsts do you remember most fondly?

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TIPS FOR TRAVELLING WITH KIDS

by Mel

CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS

All Ages

Books
Togs/goggles/etc
Beach towel
Special xmas day outfit
Special Decorations

Under 1's (Boys/Girls)

Rattles
Teething necklace
Touchie feelie toys
Baby swing seat
Exersaucer
Bouncer/Rocker
Cot bedding
Jolly Jumper
Pram/Carseat Toys
Wooden blocks/Mega Blocks
shape sorters
Activity table

Boys 1-3

Cars
Trucks
Sand pit
Sand pit toys
Paddling pool
Togs/goggles/etc
Books
Colouring in books/pens/crayons etc
Ride-ons
Duvet cover set
Puzzles
Playdoh
Seat/Chair/Beanbag
Water/Sand table
Musical Instruments

Girls 1-3

Sand pit
Sand pit toys
Paddling pool
Togs/goggles/etc
Books
Colouring in books/pens/crayons etc
Ride-ons
Duvet cover set
Dolls pram
Doll
Doll accessories
Puzzles
Playdoh
Water/Sand table
Musical Instruments

Boys 4-6

Bike
Helmet
Books
Board games
Balls
Sports Equipment - Cricket Sets,
Paddle Tennis Sets, Toy Golf Sets
Art Supplies

Girls 4-6

Hair accessories
Bike
Helmet
Books
Board games
My little pony
Art supplies
Barbies
Littlest Pet Shop

Christmas is coming and for many this will mean various trips to see family all over the place.

The last two years our little family spent Christmas in New Plymouth. Its a long trip by car with a little one, but the flight back is great!

When travelling with children you need to be realistic. Gone are the days when you could travel five hours only having to make one stop! We try and make sure when travelling with Lara to stop at least every two hours and let her have a really good run around (unless we are travelling at night). This means what used to be a five hour trip can now be a 6 hour trip. One of us always sits in the back with her if she is awake. Keeping her entertained and happy while being restrained in the car is hard, for both her and us.

A few things that have worked for us are:

- books
- bubbles (yep I blew bubbles for Lara from Patea to Wanganni, it worked really well)
- music (We have an old NOW CD with lots of old up beat sing at the top of your voice music)
- toys hanging from everywhere
- mirror

A few other things that could entertain:

- any object that's bright and new!
- rattles of all sorts
- music-makers
- a few pieces of mega-blocks
- magnetic stick-together blocks
- toys of interesting shapes
- pop-up toys
- balls (for rest areas during car trips)
- nested containers

- sets of things to put into containers
- Busy Boxes with levers, bells, moving parts
- board books
- simple speaking toys: baby pushes button, toy speaks (not too loud!)
- small wind-up toys
- blanket, stuffed animal

Things to pack when travelling (both car and plane):

- new toys/treats for the journey
- make sure you have more than enough nappies for the expected changes and loads of wipes
- wet cloths
- spare clothing (for you and the children!)
- food, water
- plastic bags for wet/dirty stuff

When travelling it is a good idea to dress children in layers that are easy to add to/remove as you don't know how warm or cool it will be, and it will make life easier when you aren't sure what the temperature will be at your destination. If you are flying, be aware of the rules and regulations regarding sizes of items you are able to bring on board, usually airlines are fine with anything that is required for baby/child, but be aware that you may have to throw things out. A wrap/sling/baby carrier is a fantastic idea for flying and in airports, (Kristy recently traveled with her 22month old and 6month old. Her and her hubby shared the carrying of the children, DS 22mths was worn in a mei tai carrier on her DH's back and DD 6mths was worn in a moby wrap carrier on Kristy's front). They are also handy when you get where you are going, so that you can go walking without the need for buggies/strollers.

Loving a child doesn't mean giving in to all his whims; to love him is to bring out the best in him, to teach him to love what is difficult.
- Nadia Boulanger

Amnesia: The condition that enables a woman who has gone through labor to have sex again.
- Joyce Armor

Those who say they "Sleep like a baby" haven't got one.
- A new mother

A baby will make love stronger, days shorter, nights longer, bankroll smaller, home happier, clothes shabbier, the past forgotten, and the future worth living for.
- Author Unknown

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