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New mandatory course promotes respect, civility

Parenting a transgender child

An Ottawa family explains their journey

All about summer camp

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- Discover why camp counsellors are so awesome



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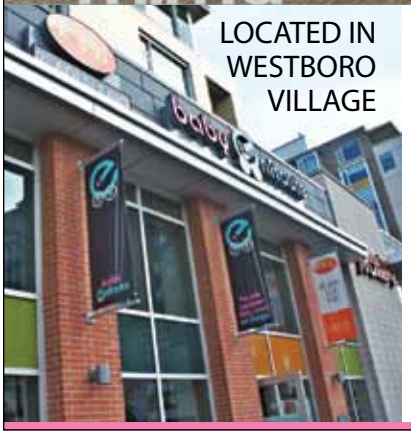



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Spring Co-ed Classes

April 7-June 19
MORNINGS 9:15-12:00
AFTERNOONS 1:00-5:00
SATURDAY 8:30-3:30
SUNDAY 7:45-12:30

July 6-Aug 28
MORNINGS 9:00-12:00

Recreational
AGES 5 and up
Spring Boys and Girls Classes

April 7-June 19
WEEKDAY EVENINGS
SATURDAY ALL DAY

July 6-31, Aug 4-28
July: Monday & Wednesday
August: Tuesday & Thursday

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Kindergym
AGES 3-5
Half day camp

$150.00/week
MORNINGS 9:15-12:00
AFTERNOONS 1:00-3:45

AGES 4-5 (must be 4 by 12/31/2014)
9:00-4:00 Full day camp

$255.00/week
8:30-9:00 DROP OFF
4:00-4:30 PICK UP *INCLUDED*

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9:00-4:00pm
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4:00-5:00pm

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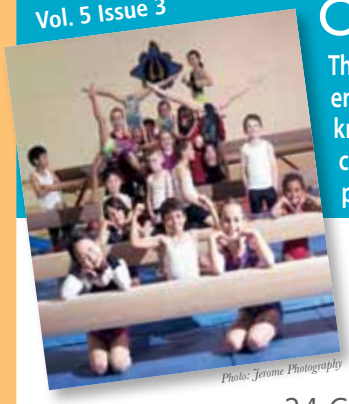
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On Your Cover:

The Nepean Corona School of Gymnastics invites you to try a fun and energizing week of summer camp! In a state of the art facility, with knowledgeable and caring coaches, your child will have a memorable camp experience. Visit us at www.coronagym.ca. For more information please see page 63.

NEPEAN CORONA School of Gymnastics
www.coronagym.ca

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Photos: depositphotos.com

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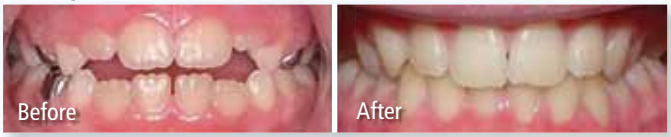
Orthodontic Treatments for Children

Starting Young Can Improve Your Child's Results



Usually by the age of six, an orthodontist is able to see if a child has any underlying orthodontic problems or is likely to develop one. Whether caused by mom or dad's genetic influences or dental anomalies, and when detected at an early age, orthodontic problems can either be corrected or their effect greatly reduced. Here's an outline of some common problems.

1. Open Bite

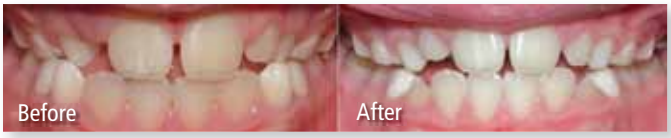


One of the earliest manifestations of a potential problem is an anterior open bite. This can be a result of chronic thumb-sucking or finger-sucking. It can lead to a permanent open bite situation if not corrected early. Open bites can be difficult to eliminate and if they persist into adult dentition, it may require complex multiband orthodontic treatment or even surgery. However, there is a simple solution—taping the thumb to the palm of the hand at night with comforting words of encouragement can often eliminate this habit. The suckling urge is very much ingrained in infants, but if the habit persists after the age of three, a consultation with an orthodontist is recommended.

2. Mouth Breathing and Tongue thrusting

Mouth breathing and tongue thrusting can complicate or even worsen an underlying minor problem. Once the habit is eliminated, dental structures can be expected to rebound to the original genetic situation.

3. Posterior Crossbite



Another problem evident in young children is a posterior crossbite. The upper jaw, or maxilla, may be constricted causing the lower jaw to deflect to one side as it closes. This causes a crossbite. Facial asymmetry may result, but may not be obvious at the age of three. However, if left untreated the facial asymmetry will continue to develop and surgery may be necessary. Early treatment can be simple and very effective. An expansion appliance in the maxilla will often allow the lower jaw to assume a more normal path of closure.

4. Anterior Crossbite



An anterior crossbite is when maxillary anterior teeth erupt behind the lower teeth. This can be a dental interference problem or may be a skeletal problem. If it is dental, the earlier it is treated, the better. If left untreated, the anterior teeth will sustain chipping and damage because of the compromised occlusal function. If it is skeletal, it may require ongoing treatment and possibly surgical correction in the adult years. An orthodontist should be able to differentiate between skeletal or dental and advise early treatment or a combination of early treatment followed by surgery.

5. Extra Teeth

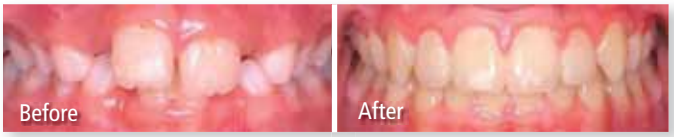


Extra teeth, or supernumeries, require early detection, as extra teeth will interfere with normal eruption of other adult teeth.

6. Tooth Size

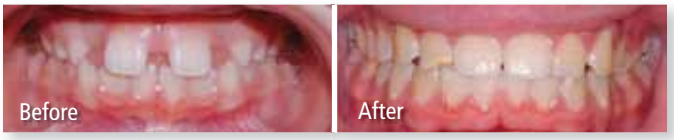
A tooth size problem results in crowding in the mouth. A decision to extract several deciduous teeth to encourage adult anterior teeth to erupt will create better anterior alignment. However, this usually means the crowding problem is transferred posteriorly within the arch and eventually extraction of adult teeth is required.

7. Overclosure



The opposite problem to the anterior open bite is a vertical overclosure. An overbite can be excessive, resulting in the lower arch being constricted and creating significant crowding. This can be treated early with expansion in both arches. This will open the vertical dimension so a normal overbite and overjet can be obtained.

8. Diastemas



A maxillary diastema, or spacing between the teeth, is normal in the early years and usually closes as final eruption of adult teeth occurs. Depending on the size of the diastema and the overbite and overjet situation, early treatment is often advised. This may be followed by a frenectomy—where the ligament between the two centrals is surgically removed. This helps to maintain the space closure.

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Dr. Ian Milne is an active member and a past President of the Canadian Association of Orthodontists and a member of both the American and World Federation of Orthodontists.

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From the Editor



Summer only really begins when our family makes the first of many, many trips to our local beach, about a 10-minute walk from home.

And this took place, to our delight, about two weeks ago, as my daughter hopped on her bike and we made our way down the peaceful bike path, the hot sun beating down on us.

As soon as we caught a glimpse of the lush trees and sparkling water, we knew our long-awaited summer had arrived.

So we spent a luxurious day walking along the beach, sinking our toes in the sand, wading through the (freezing!) water, climbing on the rocks for a better view and simply soaking in the summer beauty of the beach.

Visiting one of Ottawa's many gorgeous beaches is a must-do with the family this summer. It's low-cost, low-fuss and it is really a magical and wondrous way to spend the day. And there's so much more to do than just swim and lie around! For a list of super fun beach activity ideas, see **page 76**.

And to make the most of this fabulous season, writer **Sonia Mendes** offers a roundup of refreshing summer snack ideas (see page 86), as well as outdoor toys to get the kids away from the screen and out enjoying the weather, cooling down as needed (see page 74).

In this issue, we also have a compelling story by **Samantha Ball** about the issues faced by transgender youth and all the supports available in the Ottawa-area to help with transitioning and coming out. She also recounts one Ottawa family's inspirational experience. Don't miss this important read on **page 22.**

There is so much more in this special June-July issue, including our Dad's Corner, a handy list of Ottawa family fun events, and a fascinating Q&A with parenting expert/author Ann Douglas, whose acclaimed book, *Parenting Through the Storm: How to Handle the Highs, Lows and Everything In Between*, is an invaluable guide to parenting children struggling with mental health, neurodevelopmental or behavioural challenges. Read Ann's insightful answers to our questions on **page 96.**

Hope you enjoy this issue and a magnificent summer with your family! Follow us on **Facebook: Ottawa Parenting Times Magazine**, on **Twitter: @ParentingTimes** and check out our freshly revamped website at **ottawaparentingtimes.com**

Kelly Roesler

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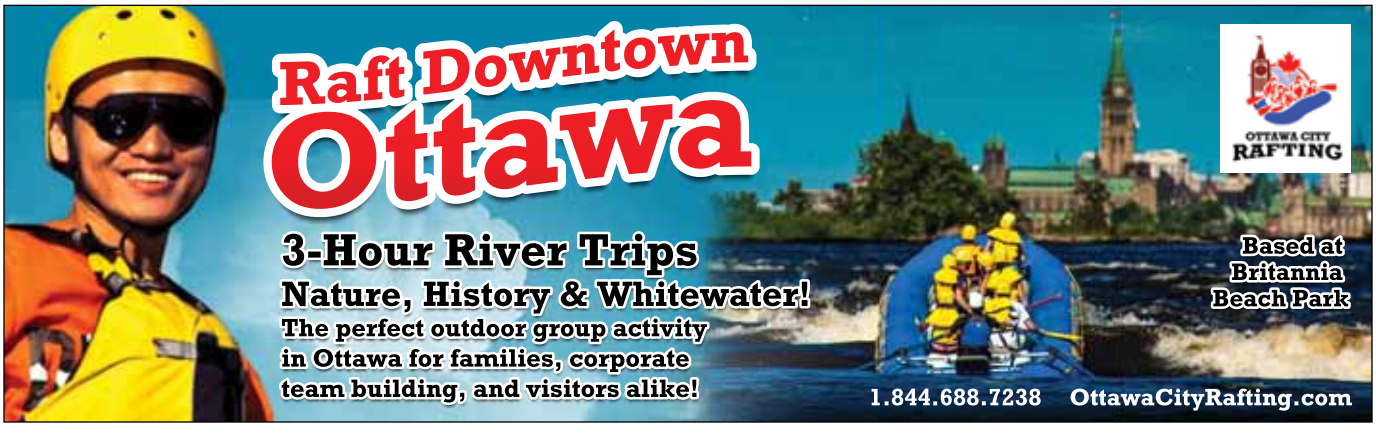

Our Contributors


Kelly Roesler

Kelly Roesler is a writer and print/digital editor, raising her three beautiful children in Ottawa. She studied and taught journalism at Algonquin College, and is passionate about storytelling, current affairs and musical theatre. She also enjoys poetry, punk rock and almost any type of sweets.


Samantha Ball

Samantha Ball has written for *Ottawa Parenting Times Magazine* since 2012. Her family consists of her husband, daughter, and a middle-aged cat, Oreo, who recently had a mid-life crisis and ran away – only to decide life on the streets wasn't for him.


Joe Banks

Joe Banks is the coordinator/professor of the Journalism program at Algonquin College. He is a former rural affairs columnist for the *Ottawa Citizen* and worked as a reporter/photographer, editor and publisher in the Ontario community newspaper industry from 1978 to 2000. Most importantly, he is the father of two adult daughters who absolutely adore him and his wife Diane because they were superbly raised as children. (That last part is entirely true and devoid of bias).


Leslie Foster

Leslie Foster is a marketer, writer, and entrepreneur. She is a family experience enthusiast and enjoys travelling and trying new activities with her husband and son. You can often find them out and about exploring, building weird contraptions, or working on gemstone ice castles in the yard.


Chris Hunt

"The hardest thing about being a parent?" says local journalist and first-time father **Chris Hunt**. "All that time spent being awake ... and sober." An award-winning feature writer, Chris's work has appeared in newspapers and magazines across Canada. Recently, he has developed a sincere intolerance towards floor lamps. And house cleaning. But mostly floor lamps.


Sonia Mendes

When she's not elbow-deep in crafts or reading books with her two daughters, ages seven and 10, **Sonia Mendes** can usually be found working on a feature article. Her writing has appeared in publications such as the *Ottawa Citizen* and *Today's Parent* magazine, and she holds a journalism degree from Carleton University. You can read Sonia's musings about life with two kids – and a sports-obsessed husband – on her blog, www.themotherofadventure.com.


Meghan Wright

Meghan Wright is a Certified Life Coach and Professor of Early Childhood Education. She has worked with children and families for over 15 years in a variety of child care settings. Reach Meghan at www.theprofessormom.com, her blog, www.theprofessormom.blogspot.ca or on Facebook: www.facebook.com/ProfessorMom.

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Ottawa's community museums... Telling our stories, right in our neighbourhoods

Discover new stories this summer when you visit Ottawa's community museums:

- Billings Estate National Historic Site • 2100 Cabot St., Ottawa ON • (613) 247-4830
- Bytown Museum • 1 Canal Lane, Ottawa ON • (613) 234-4570
- Cumberland Heritage Village Museum • 2940 Old Montreal Rd, Cumberland ON • (613) 833-3059
- Diefenbunker: Canada's Cold War Museum • 3929 Carp Rd, Carp ON • (613) 839-0007
- Fairfields Heritage House • 3080 Richmond Rd, Nepean ON • (613) 580-9638
- Goulbourn Museum • 2064 Huntley Rd, Stittsville ON • (613) 831-2393
- Nepean Museum • 16 Rowley Ave, Nepean ON • (613) 580-9638
- Osgoode Township Museum • 7814 Lawrence St, Vernon ON • (613) 821-4062
- Pinhey's Point Historic Site • 270 Pinhey's Point Rd, Dunrobin ON • (613) 832-4347
- Muséopark Vanier Museopark • 300 Av. des Pères Blancs, Ottawa ON • (613)580-2424 x 32001
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Mont Cascades Resort and Waterpark



Ottawa Farmers' Market



Photo: Billie MacDonald

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24 Great Family Fun Events

Ottawa Farmers' Market

When: Sundays, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Wednesdays and Fridays, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Where: Aberdeen Square, Lansdowne Park
What: Take a leisurely family outing to shop and savour premium quality, Ottawa-area fruits, vegetables, meats, flowers and crafts.
Website: www.ottawafarmersmarket.ca

Wilderness Tours, Ottawa City Adventures

When: Opens June 6
Where: Britannia Beach
What: Three hours of an urban rafting family adventure combining fun, excitement and history.
Fees: Start at $49 per person
Website: www.ottawacityadventures.com

Mont Cascades Resort and Waterpark

When: June 5-Aug. 30
Where: 448 Mont Cascades Rd., Cantley, Que.
What: World-class water rides, water play areas and full food and beverage services make Mont Cascades Resort and Waterpark a great place for the family to cool down and have fun this summer.
Website: www.montcascades.ca

Father's Day Antique Car Show

When: June 21, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Where: Billings Estate National Historic Site
What: Bring dad out to see some of the coolest antique cars in town – including a 1959 Cadillac. Take in the awesomeness of automotive history while enjoying live musical entertainment and a mouth-watering barbecue. There will also be a fun scavenger hunt for kids.
Fees: $6/person, $10/pair, $16/family
Website: www.ottawa.ca/museums

Father's Day at the Farm

When: June 21, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Where: Canada Agriculture & Food Museum, 861 Prince of Wales Dr., between the traffic circle and Baseline Road
What: Bring Dad to the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum. Meet the farm dads and learn why these animals are special, not just on Father's Day, but all year round.
Website: www.cafmuseum.techno-science.ca

Italian Week Ottawa

When: June 11-21
Where: Preston Street
What: Italian Week Ottawa, in its 41st year, celebrates the rich diversity of Ottawa's Italian-Canadian community and its food, music, poetry and the vibrant passions of its people.
Bring the family to enjoy all the vibrant Italian culture has to offer: arts, sport, culture and cuisine.
Website: www.italianweekottawa.org











Photo: depositphotos.com © zmaris

Ottawa Ribfest

When: June 17-21, starts at 11 a.m. daily
Where: Sparks Street Mall
What: Bring the family to sample some of the best barbecue chicken and ribs you'll ever taste, while "ribbers" from all over North America vie for top marks. With live entertainment and much more.
Website: www.sparkslive.com

Summer Solstice Aboriginal Arts Festival

When: June 19-21
Where: Vincent Massey Park
What: In honour of National Aboriginal Day, enjoy some of Canada's best Aboriginal talent, featuring music and plenty of family programming, including a Competition Pow Wow, the 2015 Colour Run, a hypnotist, interactive arts and crafts and a fashion show.
Website: www.ottawasummersolstice.ca

Changing the Guard

When: June 28-Aug. 21, daily (weather permitting), 10 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
Where: Parliament Hill
What: A Canadian tradition at its most colourful! The Ceremonial Guard of the Canadian Forces brings this stirring military drill and music to Parliament Hill. Come at 9:45 a.m. to learn more about the ceremony.
Website: www.parl.gc.ca/visitors

RCMP Sunset Ceremonies

When: June 24-28, nightly, 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Kids Zone from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Where: RCMP Musical Ride Centre, 1 Sandridge Rd.
What: A favourite family event featuring the world-famous Musical Ride, Equestrian Abilities Show, Mounted Arms Display, RCMP/Ottawa Police Service Pipes and Drums and Dancers, the Central Band of the Canadian Forces, rescue dogs from the Ottawa Valley Search & Rescue Dog Association, as well as a Kids Zone with the DND kids' obstacle course, petting zoo and more.
Fees: Free
Website: www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/mr-ce/sunset-crepuscule-eng.htm

Children's fun at the Bytown Museum

When: Ongoing
Where: Bytown Museum, 1 Canal Lane, at the Rideau Canal locks between Parliament Hill and the Château Laurier hotel
What: Plenty of interactive activities for young and young-at-heart visitors! While visiting the museum, become a History Explorer with a scavenger hunt through all three floors. Collect postcards about Ottawa's history and end your visit in the children's play space on the third floor.
Website: www.bytownmuseum.com

A Company of Fools: The Comedy of Errors

When: July 2-Aug. 15
Where: Various Ottawa parks
What: When two sets of identical twins separated at birth are brought to the same town by circumstance, mistaken identities abound! Set against the backdrop of Ottawa parks, this touring outdoor performance by professional Shakespeare company A Company of Fools will encourage the audience to partake in a *Where's Waldo*-esque array of colour and hustle bustle, challenging the notion of truly knowing one's friend, spouse, neighbour and self. Full of slapstick, word play, romance and rhyme, this rollicking comical romp is one of Shakespeare's most delightful works – fun for the whole family!
Fees: By donation (pass the hat). Suggested donation $15.
Website: www.fools.ca

– *cont'd on page 14* ▶▶









Photo: depositphotos.com © Yaruta / shmeljov

Monday Night Movies at the Museum

When: Monday nights
Where: Bytown Museum, 1 Canal Lane, at the Rideau Canal locks between Parliament Hill and the Château Laurier hotel
What: Escape the heat, grab some popcorn and explore the First World War and Canada's history through cinema! Visit www.bytownmuseum.com for film selection.
Website: www.bytownmuseum.com

Osgoode Medieval Festival

When: July 11-12
Where: 5673 Osgoode Main St.
What: Enter into the Kingdom of Osgoode to attend this popular annual festival, where the family can enjoy a medieval market, medieval feast, creative arts competition and more! Visit the website for updates on what to expect.
Website: www.osgoodemedievalfestival.com

Ottawa REDBLACKS

When: June to November. Visit www.ottawaredblacks.com for the 2015 schedule.
Where: Lansdowne Park
What: Head out for some exciting Canadian Football League home game action and cheer on Ottawa's young team while taking in all TD Place has to offer.
Website: www.ottawaredblacks.com

Ice Cream Festival

When: July 19, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Where: Canada Agriculture & Food Museum, 861 Prince of Wales Dr., between the traffic circle and Baseline Road.
What: Explore the delicious journey from cow to cone to celebrate National Ice Cream Day (yum!) and get the scoop on ice cream and dairying.
Fees: Included with museum admission.
Website: www.cafmuseum.techno-science.ca

Glengarry Highland Games

When: July 31-Aug. 1
Where: Maxville, Ont., an hour east of Ottawa off Hwy. 417, 30 minutes north of the Canada/U.S. border crossing at Cornwall
What: Bring the family for two jam-packed days of events, activities, sights and sounds. Witness traditional Scottish events with more than 60 pipe bands, 200 Highland dancers, sports, pageantry and tradition. Check online for updated events.
Fees: General admission $20, children under 12 free
Website: www.glengarryhighlandgames.com

Ottawa Busker Festival

When: July 30-Aug. 3
Where: Sparks Street Mall
What: Check out intriguing, unorthodox entertainment by street performers from around the world, including acrobats, contortionists, hula-hoopers, yo-yos, musicians, comedian escape acts, magicians, jugglers and more!
Fees: Free admission; donations appreciated.
Website: www.sparkslive.com

Celebrate Colonel By Day

When: Aug. 3, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Where: At the entrance locks to the Rideau Canal in downtown Ottawa (beside the Bytown Museum, between and below Parliament Hill and the Fairmont Château Laurier).
What: Celebrate the holiday named for Ottawa's founding father with live music, dancing, heritage demonstrators, costumed characters, and face painting for kids. Also on offer: games, crafts, and era-appropriate toys.
Website: www.journeecolonelbyday.ca

Capital Fair

When: Aug. 21-30
Where: Rideau Carleton Raceway
What: The kids will be thrilled to spend the





Capital Fair


Gatineau Hot Air Balloon Festival

day at Ottawa's 10-day fair featuring music, food, midway rides, animals, Monster Truck shows and more.
Website: www.capitalfair.ca

North Lanark Highland Games

When: Aug. 22, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Where: North Lanark Agricultural Society Fairgrounds, Almonte
What: Celebrate Scottish culture and heritage of the Ottawa Valley at the 32nd North Lanark Highland Games, held in historic Almonte at the beautiful grounds of the North Lanark Agricultural Society, with pipe bands, dancers and champion heavyweight athletes, mini games for kids, and plentiful Scottish concessions.
Fees: Adults $17, $14 in advance; children 6-13 $6
Website: www.almontehighlandgames.com

Gatineau Hot Air Balloon Festival

When: Sept. 3-7
Where: Parc de La Baie, Gatineau
What: Canada's largest balloon festival, where gorgeous hot air balloons fill the Gatineau sky, and a wide variety of exciting shows and family activities take place.
Website: www.balloongatineau.com

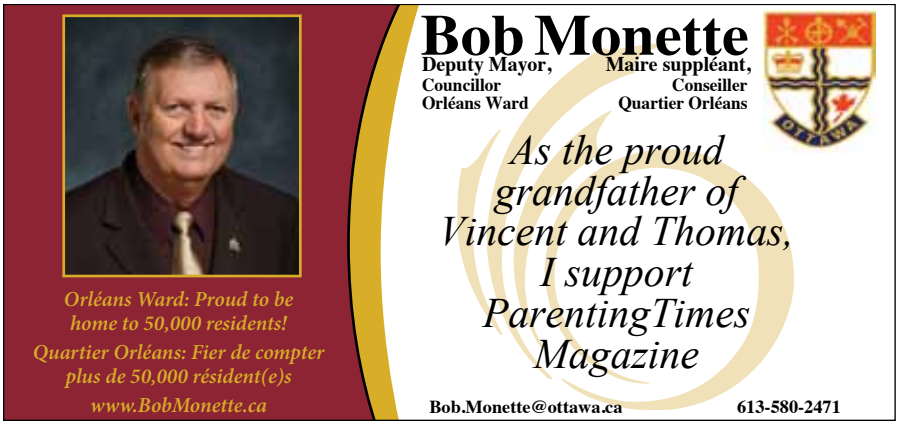
Play ball! Ottawa Champions

When: Until Sept. 7
Where: Ottawa Baseball Stadium, 300 Coventry Rd.
What: Professional baseball returns to Ottawa as the Champions kick off their first season in the Can-Am League.
Website: www.ottawachampions.com

Body Worlds: Animal Inside Out

When: Until Sept. 20
Where: Canadian Museum of Nature, 240 McLeod St.
What: This unforgettable exhibition will lead you on an exploration of what lies beneath the surface of many amazing animals, large and small. The intricate biology of more than 100 specimens—from goats to giraffes, bulls to birds, and octopi to ostriches—is revealed thanks to a process called plastination.
Website: www.nature.ca

Photo: depositphotos.com © ccadano





Parent Education Calendar

Compiled by Susan Burrows, Information Resource Coordinator, Parent Resource Centre

For Parents

Summer Success Camp
A therapeutic day camp geared for children ages 8 to 12 years with ADD/ADHD, learning disabilities and behavioural difficulties. This program runs for two weeks.
Date: Aug. 4-14
Times: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Location: Fisher Park Community Centre, 250 Holland Ave.
Fees: $203
Contact: Jodie Gilvear, 613-580-2424 ext. 29292

Kids in Dundonald Park
Join us for a morning of arts and crafts, sand play and other fun activities. This is a multilingual event: English, French, Somali and Arabic. Weather permitting.
Dates: Mondays, July 6, July 20, Aug. 10, Aug. 24
Times: 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Location: Dundonald Park
Fees: Free
Contact: 613-233-4443 ext. 2108, www.centretownchc.org/en/programs/earlyyears.aspx

Kids in St. Luke's Park
Join us for a morning of arts and crafts, sand play and other fun activities. This is a multilingual event: English, French, Somali and Arabic. Weather permitting.
Dates: Mondays, July 13, 27, Aug. 17
Times: 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Location: St. Luke's Park
Fees: Free
Contact: 613-233-4443 ext. 2108, www.centretownchc.org/en/programs

For Parents/Caregivers (children aged birth to 6)

Building Resilience in Young Children
What does resilience mean? In this second part of the workshop, we will focus on the role parents play in increasing resilience in their child, as well as explore practical tools to help their children develop strategies to be more resilient over time.
Date: Wednesday, June 17-24
Times: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Location: Ontario Early Years Centre — Ottawa South, 2330 Don Reid Dr.
Fees: Free
Contact: 613-737-6369, www.afchildcare.on.ca

Family Yoga
This workshop celebrates the many benefits of yoga and music while encouraging creative play and individual expression between parent and child. Guaranteed to inspire big smiles and healthy bodies! For children ages two to four years.
Date: Monday, June 22
Time: 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.
Location: Mothercraft Ottawa, 475 Evered Ave.
Fees: Free
Contact: Cathy Cadieux, 613-728-1839 ext. 248, www.mothercraft.com

Prenatal and Postnatal

Breastfeeding Workshop for Expectant Parents
Getting ready for your baby? Come learn about infant feeding from an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant. We will share how to get comfortable, how to know if your baby is getting enough to eat, how babies know just what to do and what you can do to help them do it. Partners are welcome and encouraged to attend.
Date: Thursday, June 18
Times: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Location: Mothercraft Ottawa, 475 Evered Ave.
Fees: Free
Contact: Cathy Cadieux, 613-728-1839 ext. 248, www.mothercraft.com

Postnatal Exercise
Join us and learn an effective strength training workout that allows you to bond with your baby. Build strength, tone muscles, regain functional movement, improve your posture and bounce back after childbirth, all while having fun with your baby. Use your baby as resistance and strengthen your back, legs, upper body and core. For mothers and fathers who have infants ages eight weeks to 12 months.
Date: Monday, June 22
Times: 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Location: Mothercraft Ottawa, 475 Evered Ave.
Fees: Free
Contact: Cathy Cadieux, 613-728-1839 ext. 248, www.mothercraft.com

Prenatal Breastfeeding
Given by a lactation consultant, you will learn tips to help start breastfeeding, breastfeeding positions, signs your baby is breastfeeding well, general breast care, expressing milk, storing breast milk, encouragement to get breastfeeding off to a good start, and what to do if you run into problems.
Date: Wednesday, July 8, Aug. 5, Sept. 9, Oct. 7, Nov. 4 and Dec. 6
Times: 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Location: Pinecrest Queensway Community Health Centre, 1365 Richmond Rd.
Fees: Free
Contact: 613-820-4922 ext. 3640, www.pqchc.com

Prenatal Breastfeeding Information
Expectant mothers and partners are invited to join us for this workshop and learn the basics of breastfeeding. Offered by a registered nurse/lactation consultant.
Date: Wednesday, Aug. 12
Times: 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Location: 420 Cooper St.
Fees: Free
Contact: 613-233-4443 ext. 2108, www.centretownchc.org

For Fathers

Power of Dads
In this two-session workshop, the "Power of Dads" will strengthen your parenting skills and give you strategies to help your children meet their full potential. The topics of discussion will include child development, nutrition, sleep and managing difficult child behaviours.
Date: Thursday, June 11 and June 18
Times: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Location: Mothercraft Ottawa, 475 Evered Ave.
Fees: Free
Contact: Cathy Cadieux, 613-728-1839 ext. 248, www.mothercraft.com

Parent/Caregiver Training

Talking/Singing/Reading/Writing/Playing Workshop Series — Workshop #3: Playing
Knowing that the environment is the child's third educator, what is our role in offering a stimulating learning environment for the children in our care? This workshop provides a better understanding of the importance in creating a learning environment that stimulates children's curiosity, encourages exploration and questioning through play, and demonstrates how we are a key component in ensuring this happens.
Date: Wednesday, June 17
Times: 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.
Location: Parent Resource Centre, 300 Goulburn Pt.
Fees: Free
Contact: Sonal, 613-565-2467, www.playworkshopprc.eventbrite.ca

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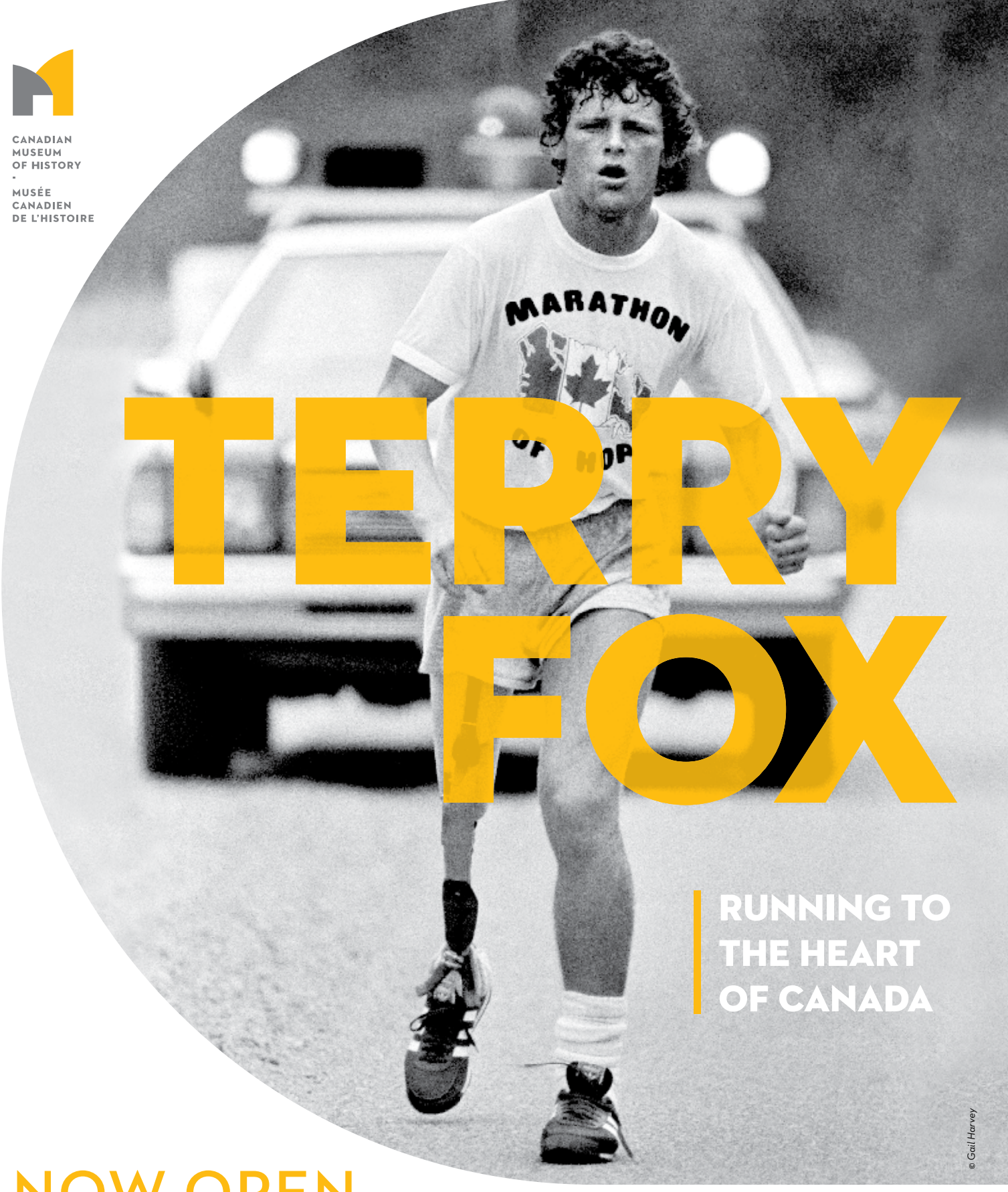

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Thursday, August 13



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WHITEWATER Tractor Pullers Inc.

Truck Pull Show (7pm)

Friday, August 14



Demolition Derby 7pm

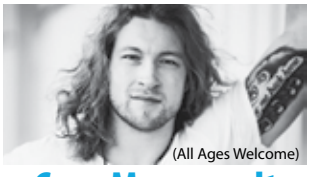


Kerosene Creek 8pm

(Age of Majority)

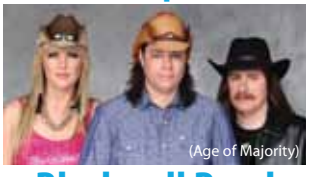
FREE ROUGH CAMPING AVAILABLE

Saturday, August 15



(All Ages Welcome)

Cory Marquardt 7:30pm



(Age of Majority)

Blackwell Band 10:00pm



(All Ages Welcome)

Jordan McIntosh 8:30pm

- Greasy Pig Contest
- Baby Contest / Pet Contest
- Pizza Eating Contest
- Saddle & Harness Show
- Truck Show and Shine
- Vanderlaand's Petting Zoo

Sunday, August 16



(All Ages Welcome)

Teea Goans 2:00pm

- Ecumenical Church Service 9:45am
- Poultry Show
- Heavy Horse Show
- JR Farmers' Olympics
- Vanderlaand's Petting Zoo
- Kids Mountain of Fun Tent
- Antique Tractor Pull
- Miniature Horse Show



Joe Diffie 4:00pm

(All Ages Welcome)

Grand Prize Draw at 3:30 pm

Children's Entertainment Includes:



Wacky Hair Spray
Saturday 11-3pm, Sunday 12-3pm



Luv 2 Groove
Sunday 1pm & 3pm



Dr. Funny Bones
Saturday 11-5pm, Sunday 12-4pm



Lumberjack Show
Saturday & Sunday 11am, 1pm, 3pm

Glass Slippers
(Elsa, Cinderella & Spiderman)
Saturday 11-3pm, Sunday 12-3pm

Corn Maze:
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CHEO asks parents to spread facts, not infection

By Abeer Sami

Lifelong health begins with a healthy start, and one of the most important ways parents can ensure this for their children is by making sure they receive all their vaccinations and receive them at the right time. By choosing to vaccinate, parents are protecting not only their own children, but the lives of all people in their community.

That's why this spring, the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario decided to launch a campaign to "spread facts, not infection." CHEO and its physicians are urging parents and community members to spread the facts about the benefits of vaccination and counter misinformation circulating in the community and on the Internet. Parents can visit www.spreadfacts.ca to read facts about vaccines and sign an online petition.

"We feel that we have an obligation to make sure the facts are out there, and are rising to that responsibility," says Dr. Lindy Samson, CHEO's chief of infectious diseases.

Unfortunately, there has been a resurgence of measles in Canada over the past few months with 193 reported cases since the beginning of the year. To date, there have been children and adults diagnosed with measles in Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba.

Measles can be associated with severe complications and can lead to children needing admission to hospital for problems like pneumonia and encephalitis – inflammation of the brain, which can result in permanent brain damage. Pregnant women who get measles can end up having miscarriages, babies born prematurely, or too small.

"While Ottawa is a community with generally good rates of immunization coverage, recent measles outbreaks in Canada and the U.S. have shown us that diseases that were once eradicated in North America continue to be a real threat," says Dr. Isra Levy, Ottawa's medical officer of health. "Vaccines are the best protection against the spread of these types of infectious diseases in our community."

Vaccinations save lives – up to three million children's lives will be saved this year alone from whooping cough, diphtheria, tetanus and measles vaccines. Diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, pneumococcus, measles, rotavirus and haemophilus are all vaccine-preventable diseases. Together, they still cause up to 30 per cent of deaths of non-immunized children worldwide.

Before routine immunizations, many Canadian children died from preventable diseases such as tetanus, measles and polio. Despite relatively few infections from these diseases today, they are still a real threat.

Vaccines not only protect those who are immunized, but offer protection to those who can't be vaccinated for health reasons, such as those with weakened immune systems. These people rely on herd immunity for protection.

Herd immunity occurs when a large proportion of the population is immune to a particular disease and is able to protect individuals who are not. The greater the percentage of immune people in the population – through vaccination – the less likely it is that a non-immune person will come into contact with an infectious person.

Recently, there has been much speculation about the safety and efficacy of vaccinations. Two of the most touted myths about vaccines are that they cause autism – specifically the MMR vaccine – and that there are harmful chemicals used in their preparation. Neither is true.

Several large studies, as well as multiple evidence-based reviews, have shown there is no causal relationship between the MMR vaccine and the development of autism. This mistaken belief arises due to the fact that the signs of autism appear around the same time that children receive their first MMR vaccine. However, this is simply not true. Studies have shown no difference in autism rates amongst MMR-vaccinated and unvaccinated children.

We know parents want to do what is best for their children. They have the right to accurate, unbiased and up-to-date information, as well as an obligation to use that information when making vaccine-related decisions for their children. Find out how you can spread the facts at spreadfacts.ca and sign the petition at change.org.



Photo: depositphotos.com © Devon

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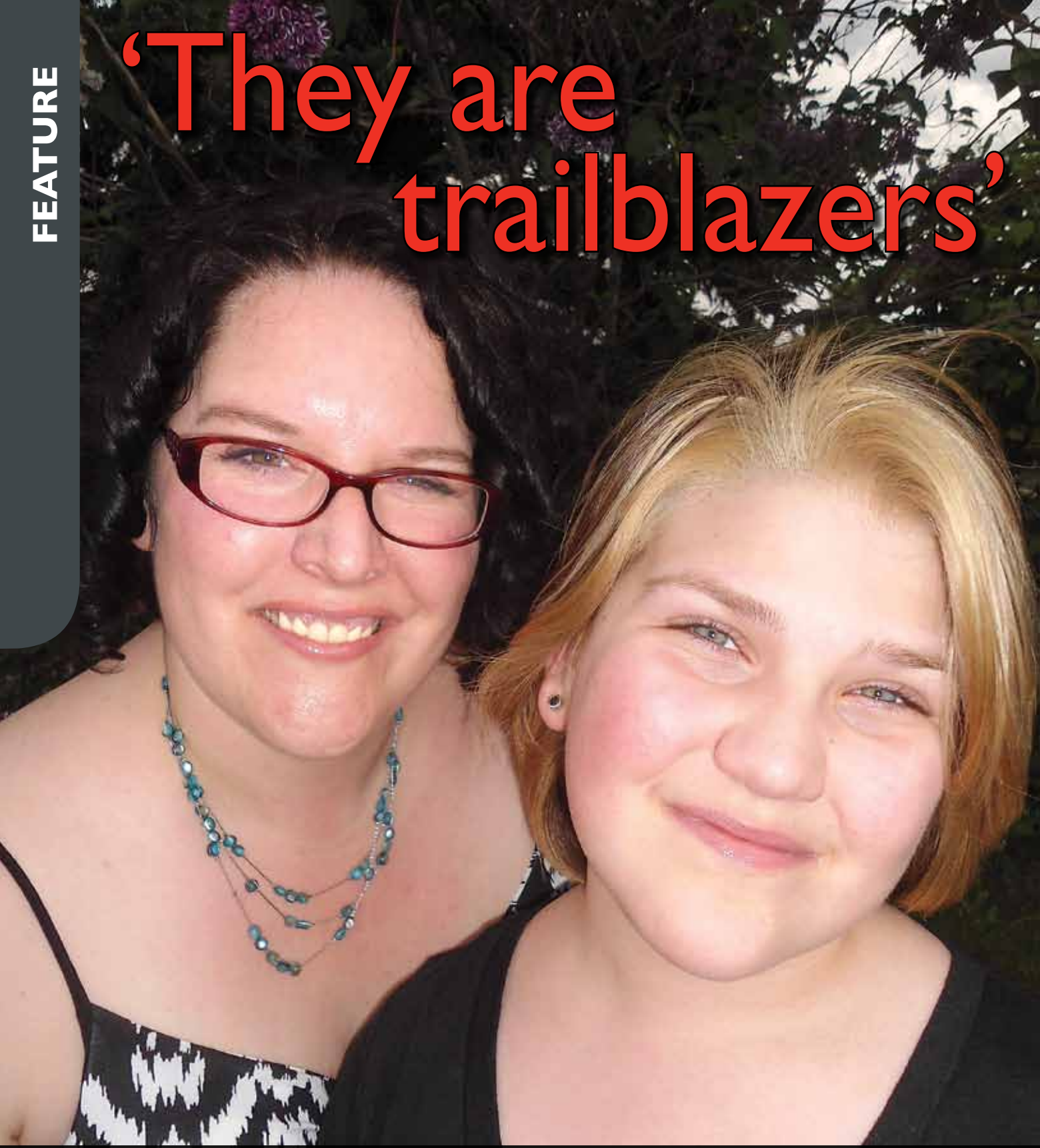

For transgender youth — and their family — the transition and the decision to come out present significant, special challenges. But in the Ottawa area, there are a plethora of resources for support and information. **Samantha Ball** reports.



Left: Alexis, 12, who came out as transgender to her family in February 2014, shown with her mother, Amanda.
Right: Alexis has benefited from the unwavering love and support of her close-knit family – parents Mark and Amanda and brothers Aerik, 18, and Jackson, 8.

Alexis is an articulate and happy 12-year-old Ottawa girl. But she wasn't always this way. For a long time, she suffered from seemingly inexplicable depression and anxiety.

And when she came out as transgender to her family in February 2014, her dad Mark says, "The pieces came together."

Alexis says she was afraid to tell them, "but when I did, they gave me all the support I needed and still do."

"They don't care who I am, they just let me be whoever I want to be."

Alexis has benefited from the unwavering love and support of her close-knit family – parents Mark and Amanda and brothers Aerik, 18, and Jackson, 8.

"Now I just feel like I have a sister … like a lot of people," says Jackson.

And Mark says of his daughter, "she's very much a Daddy's girl … but she always has been."

Amanda has chronicled parts of Alexis' experience on her blog, *The Maven of Mayhem* and when she revealed online that her child was transgender, she told those who couldn't accept Alexis on her terms to "please exit our lives."

Amanda admitted that when Alexis came out, she didn't know much about what being transgender meant.

She has since sought out information, professional advice and support, and has become an advocate in every aspect, speaking out in support of Bill C-279, the transgender rights bill, being passed "swiftly and without amendment."

But the need for support, education and awareness doesn't end within the home of the transgender youth, she says — extended family, friends, schools, and society all have a role to play in ensuring they feel accepted and safe.

Sebastien Pangallo is a social worker at the CHEO Diversity Clinic, where a multidisciplinary team offers information, comprehensive assessment and treatment (which can include hormonal interventions) to children, youth and their families when there are questions regarding gender identity.

– cont'd on page 24 ▶▶



Amanda has chronicled parts of her daughter's experience on her blog, *The Maven of Mayhem.*

Photo: Amanda Jetté Knox

– *cont'd from 23*

At this clinic, Alexis has been receiving a variety of supports – including hormones to stop puberty.

Pangallo says it's vital that children live in an "open, nurturing, caring, supportive, and creative environment" where they can be who they are. He says if home is a safe space, a child or youth will feel comfortable coming out to family or bringing home an LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and/or questioning) friend.

Though Alexis has supportive friends, after coming out, she experienced bullying at school, which led, in part, to her being temporarily homeschooled.

And bullying of any kind doesn't sit well with Lynn Marsh, 44, of Perth. A married mother of two, she says she has always "preached acceptance of everyone."

Having created this baseline of empathy in her children, when she told them that a young member of their family had come out as transgendered, they accepted him, and didn't think twice about it.

March says she found their reaction refreshing, as some older family members struggled with the concept.

Experts say proactively having discussions with your children raises their awareness and provides the opportunity to show them your own acceptance.

Pangallo says when it comes to bullying, "sometimes they just don't understand" the concept of being transgender, and education can help.

Still, he says bullying is unacceptable, and especially given these young people are at high risk for depression, anxiety and suicide.

Laurie Rektor, director of community programs at Family Services Ottawa, says you can show a gender-creative child or transgender youth you care by honouring any name or pronoun change and making sure you "follow their lead" when talking about it, but letting them know you're there for them.

Rektor also highlighted the support FSO provides through their LGBTTQ+ Around the Rainbow community-based program, which provides a full range of education, counselling and support services to support the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, two-spirit, queer and questioning communities and allies.

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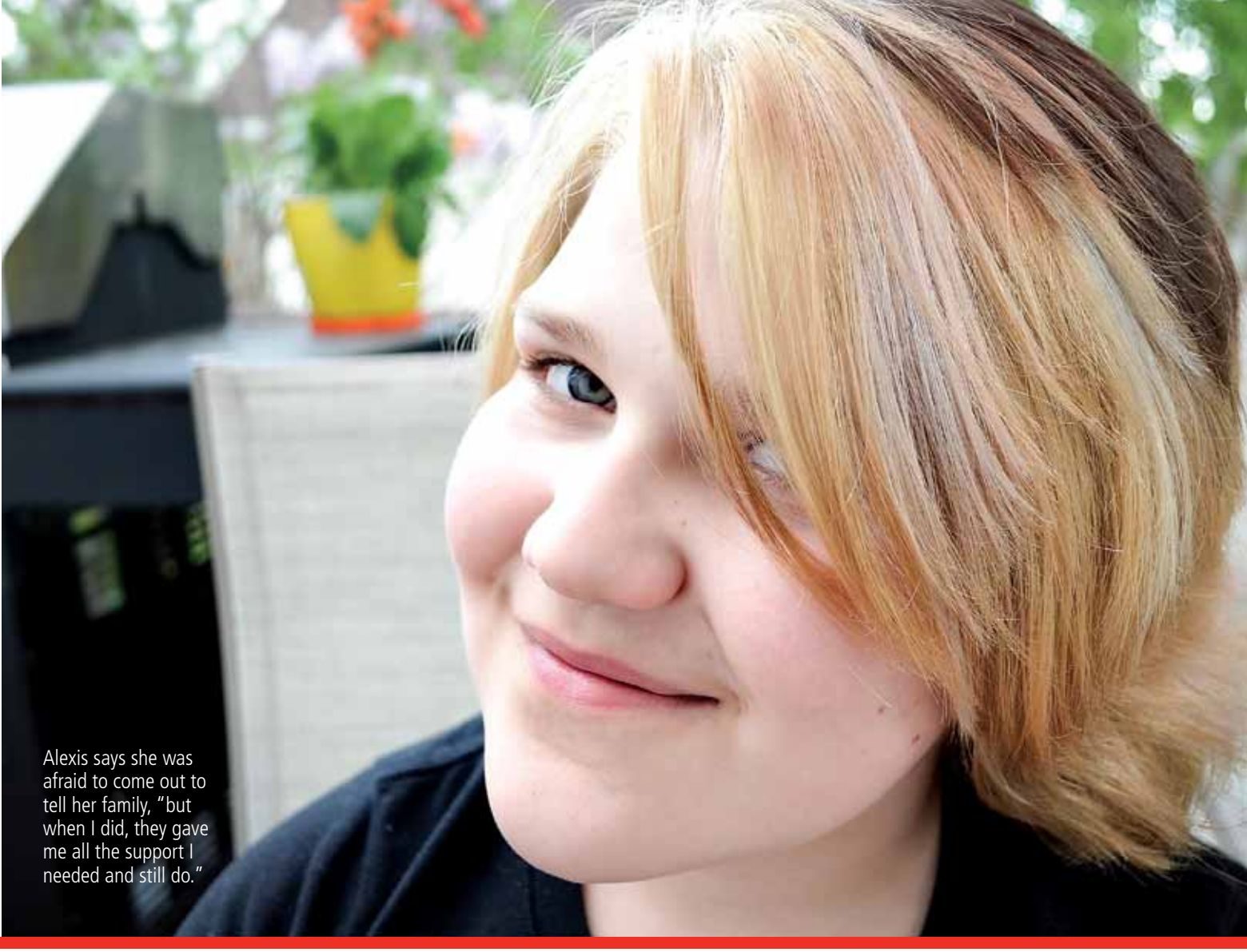

Alexis says she was afraid to come out to tell her family, "but when I did, they gave me all the support I needed and still do."

Photo: Amanda Jette Knox

It was at an Around the Rainbow event that Alexis had the opportunity, not long after coming out, to meet her best friend, a transgender boy who understands what she's going through.

FSO also provides free community development, education and workshops on LGBTTQ+ individuals and families. They adjust the training to fit the needs of the organization, social service agency or school.

Alexis's school situation has recently changed. The principal of their middle school reached out to the family and offered to meet with them. Amanda describes her as "wonderfully educated in trans issues. She's passionate about inclusion and making sure everyone feels safe."

This middle school has LGBTQ "safe space" stickers on the doors, staff use the proper pronouns and transgender terminology, and there are male, female and all-gender washrooms and change rooms available.

And a year has made a big difference in Alexis's life. She jumped at the chance to return to school, despite the fact that her former tormentors are there.

With the support of family, friends, and local resources such as the CHEO Diversity Clinic, FSO, and the #OK2BME drop-in at the Kanata Haven Youth Centre, which she describes as a place where everyone "instantly accepts you" — she's stronger than ever.

And Pangallo says his work is "very rewarding" because of the children and teens he meets. "They can teach us so much about society and about how to be a great person.

"They are trailblazers who are building the foundation for a better future for all the transgender kids to follow them."

Read more about Alexis and her family at www.themavenofmayhem.com

Resources

- www.cheo.on.ca/en/genderidentity
- www.familyservicesottawa.org
- www.ysb.on.ca
- www.ptsottawa.org
- www.ccgsd-ccdgs.org
- www.gendercreativekids.ca
- www.pflagcanada.ca/en/index.html
- www.facebook.com/pages/The-Kanata-Haven-Youth-Centre/152559404762588

Physical activity and **pregnancy**



Photo: depositphotos.com © NataliaD

Regular physical activity during pregnancy is great. It can:

- improve your mood and self-image
- help ensure appropriate weight gain
- help you relax and reduce stress
- promote better sleep
- increase your muscle tone, strength and endurance
- help build your stamina for labour and delivery
- speed up your recovery after labour and delivery
- help increase your energy levels

Start easy and progress gradually

If you've been inactive, start with mild activities like walking and swimming. Even five minutes a day will help. Gradually increase the time you're active to 30 minutes a session. Before starting a new physical activity program, you should talk to your doctor.

Don't overdo it!

You should be able to carry on a normal conversation during physical activities. If you're feeling more tired than normal, take it easy and rest for a day.

Keep cool and hydrated

Drink lots of water before, during and after physical activity to avoid overheating and dehydration. You should also refrain from being active outdoors on overly hot or humid days.

If you're already active, think about how you can modify or replace weight-bearing activities such as running, high-impact aerobics, hiking and tennis with low-impact activities such as walking and swimming as your pregnancy progresses.

Next Steps

Build physical activity into your daily routine. The type of activity you choose is up to you, as long as you feel comfortable doing it and your doctor says it's OK.

Common questions

I've never really been active. Should I start now that I'm pregnant?

Physical activity can make you feel better and be beneficial for you and your developing baby. The decision to be active during pregnancy may be the first step toward a long-lasting healthy way of life for you and your family. Remember to speak with your doctor before you begin and start slowly.

I'm already active, but now I'm pregnant. Can I continue to be active?

If you were active regularly before becoming pregnant, continue your program and make changes as you need to. Talk to your doctor about your current routine to see if and when you may need to make any adjustments. Most importantly, listen to your body as it changes from one month to the next and only do what feels comfortable for you.

Can I lift weights?

Weight training is generally safe as long as the resistance is light to moderate. Using heavier weights could put too much stress on muscles and ligaments. Proper controlled breathing is also very important. After your fourth month of pregnancy, experts suggest modifying exercises that require lying on your back so they are performed on your side, or while you are standing or sitting.

How can I tell if I've overdone it?

If you're really tired and you feel like stopping, then it's time to stop. If you still feel tired, give yourself a break for at least a day. Call your doctor if you have any of the following symptoms:

- persistent contractions
- bleeding from the vagina
- increasing back pain, pubic pain, or pain in the abdomen
- sudden swelling of the ankles, hands or face
- dizziness or shortness of breath
- excessive fatigue
- difficulty walking
- changes in usual fetal movement
- swelling, pain, and redness in the calf of one leg

Source: Health Canada's Healthy Pregnancy Guide, www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-gs/guide/04_pa-ap-eng.php

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The truth about **teething**

How to soothe baby's sore gums

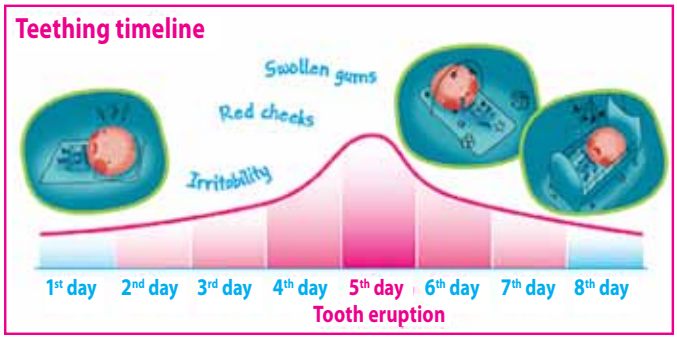


The teething process is not the same for every baby. For one baby, cutting a tooth can happen overnight, without pain or discomfort, while another child might have to endure a long, drawn out and painful experience. Unfortunately, a fussy teething baby leads to sleep deprivation and irritability for baby and parents.

All parents can agree that it can be tough to watch your little one suffer through this painful process, but there are things you can do to help. And a happy baby means happy parents.

The first step is to find out if your baby is really teething or if the discomfort is a sign of another problem. Here are the signs to look for:

- Crankiness/fussiness
- Restlessness/trouble sleeping
- Pulling at the ear/rubbing the face
- Swollen gums
- Biting or chewing on things
- Refusal to feed
- Excessive drool
- Diarrhea (loose stool)



Most babies go through an eight-day teething timeline where symptoms like red cheeks and swollen gums, drooling and trouble sleeping intensify from the first day, right up to the tooth eruption on the fifth day. Once the tooth erupts, the following days see a decrease in intensity of the symptoms until they slowly dissipate altogether … until the next tooth.

Here are some home remedies that can help soothe your baby's sore gums:

- **Use a clean finger, moistened gauze pad or damp washcloth** to massage your baby's gums. The pressure can work to ease the discomfort.
- **Try a rubber liquid-filled teething ring** to relieve baby's need for chewing.
- **Keeping the gums cool with a cold washcloth or chilled teething ring** can be soothing. Also, if your baby's eating solid foods, cold items such as applesauce or yogurt are good choices.
- **Excessive drooling is par for the course** for the teething process; help prevent skin irritation by keeping a clean cloth handy to dry your baby's chin and opt for absorbent sheets for bedtime.

www.newscanada.com



The **dangers** of leaving kids in **hot cars**

Leaving young children unattended inside a vehicle puts them at risk of becoming sick, unconscious or dying, even on what can seem like a relatively mild day. Inside the vehicle, things can heat up very quickly for anyone unable to get out.

Health Canada says outside air temperatures as low as 23 C can climb to more than 50 C inside a vehicle, which is life-threatening for anyone left inside. Imagine how much hotter it can get during extreme heat, where temperatures soar to 30 C to 40 C. High humidity levels can trigger a further increase in body temperature and push the heat-health risks higher.

Did you know?

Extreme heat affects young children faster and more dramatically because of their smaller size. Young children (and older adults) cannot regulate their body temperature as efficiently, which leaves them vulnerable to heat stroke. Heat stroke occurs when our core body temperature reaches 40 C and this can be fatal. In a small, closed environment like a vehicle, our bodies, especially small or frail ones, can go into shock very quickly, causing circulation to vital organs to fail. **In other words, it can only take a few minutes to lose someone in our care.**

Health Canada is reminding parents and caregivers this summer that it is never safe to leave people and pets inside a vehicle, even with the window down. Don't run that quick errand leaving loved ones unattended – the stakes are too high.

As our climate continues to change, Environment Canada expects increased numbers of days in Canada with temperatures above 30 C, increasing the health risks of extreme heat. Remember, heat illnesses and heat stroke can be prevented.

Health Canada has tips for avoiding heat illnesses at www.hc-sc.gc.ca. Just search for extreme heat or call 1-866-225-0709 for free brochures. *www.newscanada.com*

Heat risk: did you know?

Never leave young children inside a parked vehicle or in direct sunlight. When the outside air temperature is 23 C, the temperature inside a vehicle can be dangerously hot, reaching more than 50 C.

Source: Health Canada, www.hc-sc.gc.ca

Photo: depositphotos.com © AGorohov / phakimata

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Swimming safety

Common questions from parents



By Dr. Paul Roumeliotis

Photo: depositphotos.com © iriana88w

Parents often have many questions regarding their infants and children around swimming. Given we are right in the middle of summer, I thought it would be a good time to highlight some of the common questions parents have:

At what age should a child start learning how to swim?

According to the Canadian Paediatric Society, swimming programs for infants and toddlers less than four years of age aren't an effective drowning prevention strategy. It is important to know that children less than four years of age don't have the developmental ability to master water survival skills and swim independently.

At what age can my child swim in a lake or river or other recreational facilities?

Aside from the drowning dangers, water facilities pose additional threats to children related to infections. Illnesses are caused by swallowing, breathing in, or coming in contact with contaminated water from swimming pools, spas, lakes, rivers or oceans. They include a variety of diseases, such as gastrointestinal tract, respiratory tract, neurologic, skin, ear, and eye and wound infections.

Many people don't realize that disease transmission through the use of recreational water can be a serious source of illness. Basically if a facility is tested and deemed safe for swimming, children of any age can enjoy it, provided however, that the following measures be taken:

- **Continual one-on-one-supervision.** Babies and infants should always be in the arms of an adult.
- **Ensure that baby's head is kept out of the water** so that he/she will not swallow recreational water.
- **Do not let your child swim when he/she has diarrhea.**
- **Wash children thoroughly**, especially their bottom, with soap and water before allowing them to enter the water.
- **Wash their hands with soap and water** after each bathroom use.
- **Wash your hands** after each diaper change.
- **Change diapers in a bathroom**, not by the water.
- **Take your child on frequent bathroom breaks** and check diapers often.
- **In all instances, common sense** needs to help decide if the conditions are appropriate for swimming for children.

On a final note, here are some other general water safety precautions:

- Do not think of floatie (inflatable) toys as life jackets. Floaties are not approved life jackets and can give children a false sense of security.
- Children around any body of water should always be closely supervised.
- When buying a life jacket for your child, make sure that it is the right size. The jacket should be snug and not loose, and be worn as per the instructions with all the straps belted properly
- Children should never swim around anchored boats in motor boat lanes or where people are water skiing. Also they should never swim during electrical storms.
- The pool or hot tub should have a four-sided fence with a self-closing and self-latching gate. The fence should be at least four feet high and difficult to climb.

Pediatrician and health communications pioneer **Dr. Paul Roumeliotis** has produced of hundreds of articles, booklets and videos on a variety of child health issues. His highly acclaimed, groundbreaking book for parents focusing on the importance of the first 18 months of life, *Baby Come Home*, was released early in 2015 and is an Amazon bestseller. Visit www.drpaul.com and follow Dr. Paul on Twitter:@thedrpaul

Best of **frenemies**

Mothers, daughters and weight



Photo: depositphotos.com © Goodluz

Barbie gets a bad rap. She's been the prime suspect in crimes against girls' and women's self-esteem, followed closely by fashion designers and Photoshop artists. But is she solely to blame?

It's complicated.

Yes, society's expectations and pop culture play a role, but for many women, our overall malaise with our bodies starts much closer to home. We define and judge who we are by what — primarily — our mothers show and tell us.

Here's how to make sure you're sending the right message to your daughter so that she grows into a strong, resilient woman with healthy self-esteem.

1. There's no better role model for your daughter than you. Are you constantly denigrating your body (or others')? Always talking about dieting or exercise? Do you put appearance on a pedestal to the exclusion of everything else? Yes, we all want to look good but be mindful about the example you set and the lessons she's picking up from all that negative body talk.

Never let her believe that because she's overweight, she's unworthy of your support and none of her other accomplishments matter. She will spend the rest of her life hungering for your approval and trying to compensate for that lack in all the wrong places and in truly unhealthy ways.

She will measure herself against those punishing standards for years to come and wonder why her mother of all people couldn't love and accept her for who she was.

2. Take a positive approach. Spend some quality time going through fashion/celebrity magazines or websites and show your daughter how to identify Photoshopped or otherwise altered images that distort real women's bodies. (Hint: a flawlessly smooth contouring line at the waist, hip or thigh is a dead giveaway that there's been some digital plastic surgery going on.) It will help her become a more discerning and self-confident consumer in the process.

Find ways to encourage her to develop her own sense of style that will bring out her natural beauty and enhance her confidence. Help her find clothes that fit and flatter — whatever her body type and weight. (Hint: buying her something in a size too small is not motivating. It's cruel.) Ask her to join you in a workout or find a physical activity you both enjoy and can do together on a regular basis.

And please, oh please, bite your tongue before you nag, punish or lash out in fat shaming, no matter how frustrated you may get. It never works. Ever. It will colour your relationship long after she grows up and moves out of your house. And it will not have the positive impact you seek. It will only make things worse.

3. Make meals a celebration, not a battle. Family time is precious. Serve everyone the same healthy foods in healthy portion sizes but don't make an issue of who's eating what and how much.

Sure, clean out the pantry and don't bring junk food into the house. (Seriously, there is not willpower enough to resist it.) But more importantly, keep the conversation away from food or weight. Treat the dinner hour as a time for nourishing minds and manners, not serving up more misery.

4. Be the mother you wish you had. Nurture yourself (and your children) with the love and support you may not have received but always wanted. Support your self-worth and

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theirs by learning how to dismiss external judgments and find approval from within. Forgive and let go of the past (you can't change it anyway) and put your energies into what you can influence — the present moment and (maybe) the future.

Take charge of your own transformation. Your daughter will take her cues from you.

5. Create a safe haven. Our culture says, "Be thin." Our commercial interests say, "Eat this. Drink that." There are mean girls and interfering institutions that do more harm than good with public weigh-ins and institutional shaming.

Advocate for your daughter by educating her about what is true and real by giving her the emotional wherewithal to deal with bullies outside the home. And take a stand against well-meaning but wholly ineffective policies that impose one-size-fits-all metrics on young girls and women. Show her that you're her champion and that you will work through this together.

6. Listen for the subtext. When your daughter comes to you and asks, "Am I fat?" don't answer right away. Think about the context. Maybe it's her way to start a conversation about something else that's bothering her about her body or her life, and her weight is an easy conversational hook.

Whatever her motivation, listen and find a way to reassure and prove to her that she can talk to you. About anything. Without judgment. Because one day it may be about something far bigger than the numbers on a scale. You want to build that trust today so she can talk to you throughout her life.

7. Love means always being able to say you're sorry. We always want to do right by our kids and when it comes to weight, we are afraid of saying the wrong thing.

Not talking, ignoring the "elephant in the room" is not the solution. It creates more angst and stigma. Sometimes you will say or do the wrong thing and if you do, don't be afraid to say "I'm sorry." Apologize sincerely and work to find a more loving and helpful way to address the problem (e.g. Health, not weight. Confidence, not calories.)

Don't let the paradox of perfect parenthood be a barrier to being there when your child needs you.

8. Outsource the cure. We all practice selective deafness. And if you and your daughter seem to be stuck in the same unhealthy patterns, don't hesitate to ask for professional help. Sometimes the very same thing you've said over and over again resonates better and is much more palatable when it comes from someone else (i.e. not her mom).

An objective source with the right experience and manner can provide a new perspective and a safe space where you and your daughter can find new, more loving ways to heal the wounds, move forward and perhaps, one day, be the best of friends.

Susan Bodiker *founded One Girl Wellness (onegirlwellness.com) to help girls and women overcome the image disorders that eat away at their self-esteem and keep them from engaging confidently in their world. Her new e-book, Fat Girl: how to let go of your weight and get on with your life, is now on sale. www.susan-bodiker.com*

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Dear Professor Mom,

My three-year-old son has recently developed a strong fear of the dark. He often refuses to go to bed because he is afraid when we turn the lights out. We have tried giving him a night-light in his room, but he still cries and has a hard time settling. What can we do to help him with this fear?

Sincerely, Mom in the Dark



Photo: Julia Unchura. Exclusive Moment Photography

As children get older, they start to develop fears. Children who didn't seem to have a care in the world are now learning what it means to be afraid of something. The more children explore their world, the more they look for answers to explain what they are experiencing.

One of the most common fears in children is the fear of the dark. The dark seems so mysterious and scary when you are young, because everything changes in the dark – or at least it seems to. There are more shadows, and things that look harmless in the light take on new forms (in your child's imagination) in the dark.

The dark is not the only common fear in young children; they can also be afraid of dogs, spiders and many other things. The way that you approach your child's fears will ultimately help in overcoming them. Here are some tips on helping your child face their fears:

Validate their feelings

As parents, we often feel a bit helpless when it comes to dealing with our child's fears. So instead of validating their feelings, we tend to ignore or dismiss them. When our child says, "I am afraid of the dark," or "There is a monster under my bed!" We say things like, "There is nothing to be afraid of," and "There is no such thing as a monster."

We often look for a simple solution for a more complex problem. If your child confides their fears in you, this is a good thing. Allow them room to fully express what they are afraid of before looking for a solution. The more you know about their fears, the better. Tell them you understand why they are afraid and that you will work on a solution together that will help them feel safe.

Share your own fears with them

It is helpful for children to understand that fears are normal and that we all have them. Talk to them about something you are afraid of (age-appropriate). You can also talk to them about fears you had as a child and what helped you face that fear. Perhaps you were afraid of dogs as a child. And you overcame that fear by playing with a friend's puppy and then gradually trusting dogs that you knew.

This will support your child to problem-solve their own situation and help them deal with their fear. It will also help them to see that their fears will seem less scary the more they talk about it, and that it is possible to overcome them.

Do your research

Knowledge is power. The more your children understand about something, the less they will fear it. For example, if your child has a fear of spiders, try looking up information about spiders on the Internet to share with your children. Look at pictures of children holding spiders and share the facts about how harmless (most) spiders are. Talk about what spiders eat and how they can make webs. Your child may even start to think spiders are cool!

Read children's books on the topic of their fears

There are many great children's books that deal with fears. You will be able to find ones that are specific to your child's fears at the library or local book store.

Read these books together with your child. Discuss what the characters did to overcome their fear. Ask open-ended questions: what was their fear? What did they do in order to feel safe? How did they feel once they faced their fear?

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Helping your children understand their fears



Photo: depositphotos.com © Hayzwinmedia

This will reinforce that fears are normal and that we all have them. It will also give them ideas on how to problem-solve these situations for themselves, empowering them to face their fears.

Allow them time to work through their fears

It is tempting to try and solve our children's problems for them. In the long run, it is better for our children to work through these fears in their own time. That doesn't mean they need to do it alone, just that they may need more time to figure these things out.

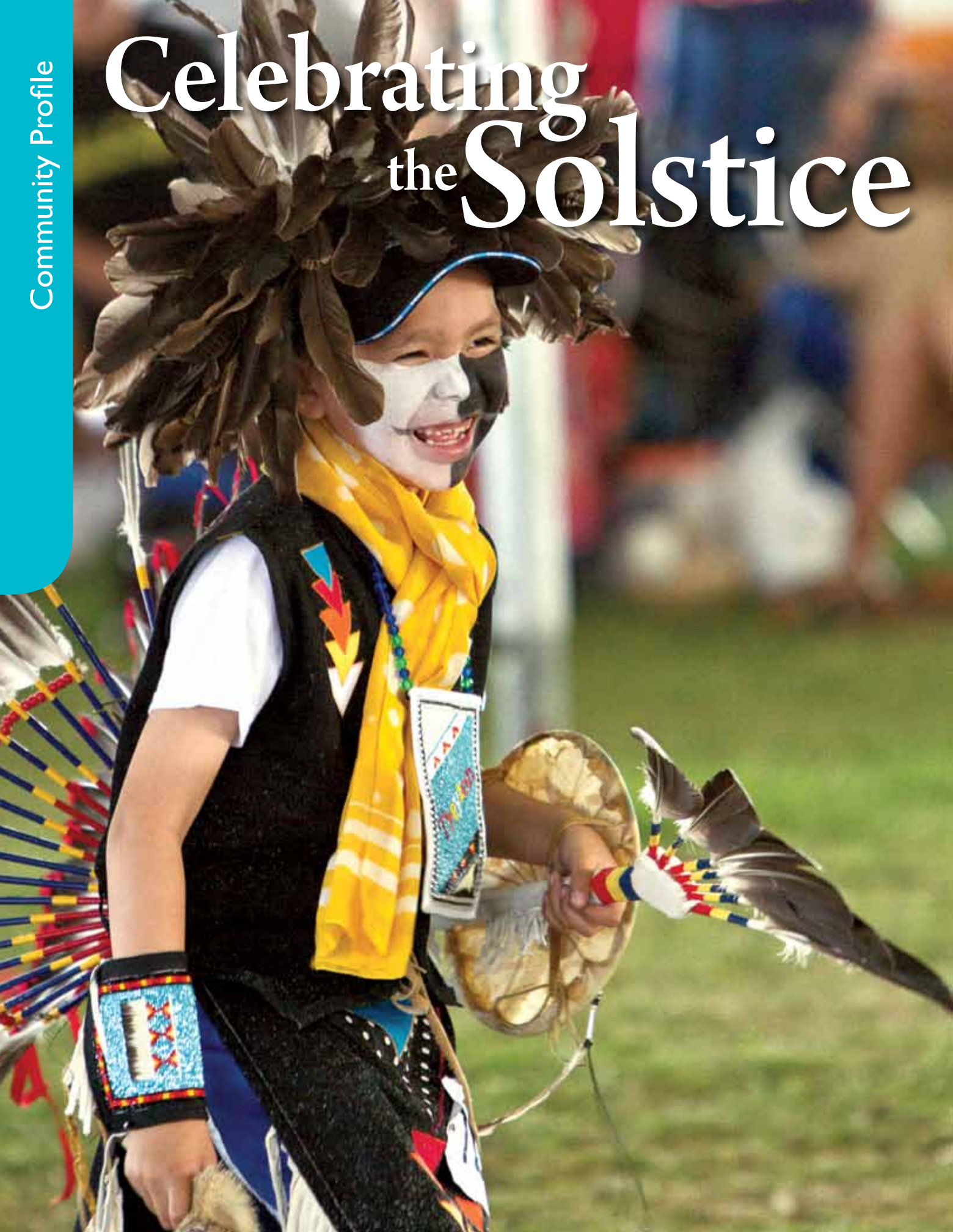
Fears are normal; we all have them. Dogs and spiders can seem very scary to a small child – and the dark can be a bit daunting, even as an adult. Learning to acknowledge these fears and overcome them will help build your child's confidence and problem-solving skills.

If you find your child's fears are debilitating or seem to consume their thoughts, consider speaking to a health care professional.



Community Profile

Celebrating the Solstice



The Ottawa Summer Solstice Aboriginal Festival has blossomed into a bustling three-day multi-arts festival where families can eat, play, dance and learn about Aboriginal culture, writes **Sonia Mendes**.



From competitive pow wow and hoop dancing to bubble soccer and a colour run, the Ottawa Summer Solstice Aboriginal Festival will offer up a jam-packed, three-day schedule from June 19-21.

"We try to do new and unique activities every year and we've certainly added to our offerings this summer," says Trina Mather-Simard, the festival's executive director.

What began 19 years ago as a simple, one-day celebration of National Aboriginal Day (June 21) has blossomed into a three-day multi-arts festival at Vincent Massey Park. Hosted this year by the Assembly of First Nations, the Ottawa Summer Solstice Aboriginal Festival (ottawasummersolstice.ca) welcomes people from every background to join in on the fun.

"It's a great opportunity to connect with artists in the community and learn about Aboriginal culture," says Mather-Simard, adding festivalgoers don't need to have a knowledge of pow wow protocol to attend. "We try to make it a really open and welcoming environment, where everyone feels comfortable.

"It's a balance of traditional activities and urban-contemporary activities – a chance to let the kids and families play together."

Kids and adults can take part in interactive arts and crafts workshops, including demonstrations on how to make corn husk dolls and cradleboards – the traditional, protective baby carriers used by many indigenous cultures.

If crafts aren't up your alley, get busy at the family fun and sports zone, which has expanded to include a wide range of activities. Try your hand at precision hockey, bungee trampoline and bubble soccer, where players take to the field in huge, inflatable bubbles.

This year, a hoop dance competition has been added to the festival roster for the first time. A form of storytelling dance, hoop dancing is generally performed by a solo dancer who incorporates hoops as props.

"It's a very athletic style of dance," explains Mather-Simard. "The dancers use up to 30 hoops at a time, and they create things they see in nature and tell a story through the hoops."

Some of the genre's top talent will be on display at the festival, with world champion hoop dancer Tony Duncan slated to perform.

A talented player of the Apache cane flute, Duncan has toured with acclaimed Native American artists such as R. Carlos Nakai and Joanne Shenandoah, as well as international pop star Nelly Furtado. Duncan, who hails from Arizona, was the featured dancer in Furtado's music video, *Big Hoops*.

Photo: Clear Skies Photography



Other popular Aboriginal performing artists – such as contemporary dance theatre troupe Kaha:Wi, DJ Shub and hypnotist Scott Ward – are also part of the festival's diverse line-up.

While admission to the festival and family programming is free, there is a registration fee for attendees who choose to participate in the Summer Solstice Colour Run on Saturday, June 20 (ottawasolsticecolourrun.com).

In addition to the adult 2.5K and adult 5K runs, a family-friendly 1K run – where runners don white T-shirts and run through "colour bombs" during the course – is themed after the Medicine Wheel.

A system of knowledge practised by most Anishnaabe people, the Medicine Wheel is based on four colours: white, yellow, red and black. Among the oldest teachings, the Medicine Wheel represents the interconnectedness of the physical, mental, spiritual and emotional; when you achieve balance among these, it is believed you will be living the good life, or Mino-Bimadsawin.

Those with a sense of culinary adventure can round out their festival experience by trying a new food. Mather-Simard says Aboriginal food vendors will be offering up buffalo burgers, Indian tacos and grilled pickerel. Be sure to say "meegwetch" for your meal – it's the Algonquin word for "thanks."

Photos: Courtesy of Ottawa Summer Solstice Aboriginal Festival



I've been thinking a lot lately about motherhood and identity, and can't help but wonder if I've been trying too hard to hold on to Kelly, the woman.

By Kelly Roesler

My motherhood, my self

So the other night I was relaxing, watching an old episode of *Sex and the City* with a glass of wine, getting delightfully lost in the ultra-glam fictional world of four beautiful professional women living it up in New York City

In this episode, the main character, Carrie Bradshaw, realized her period was late and pondered the idea of pregnancy and what it would mean for her to become a parent.

I was struck by a particularly funny piece of dialogue from one scene:

Carrie: *"You don't have to lose yourself to have a kid. I know plenty of cool, hip mothers who live in the City and who still have great careers and stuff.*

Samantha and Miranda: *(at the same time) Who?*

Exactly. For ages, women have been fighting to strike a balance between their role as a dutiful, responsible mom and retaining their identity as a person, and their passions, interests, quirks, thoughts, opinions, and beliefs that make them who they are.

We've made many steps forward. Because it's so often vital, the working mom has come to be largely accepted (not always accommodated, and there's still work to be done in many ways) in our society.

But I know at least for me, the ability to hold on to my identity as an interesting, independent woman and to have people see me for who I am, not just a mom of three or a working mom, has weighed on me heavily over the years. It's something I constantly work to cultivate, and sometimes I wonder if I'm trying too hard.

> I spoke to a woman with a master's in finance. All she wanted to talk about was her Diaper Genie.
>
> – Sex and the City, "The Baby Shower"

If you look at my social media accounts, you'll see a wide mix of content. Yes, I post about my kids, yes, I post about topics related to my profession, but there are also many posts about music, fashion and TV that I like. Some of them can come off as though written by a teen 😊 Oh yeah, and I use emoji – a LOT.

I still like to go out with friends for drinks – even sometimes hit the clubs. The other night, acting on impulse, I decided to go out for drinks and dancing, even though I had to work at 6 a.m. the next day. Boy, did I feel my age the next morning.

BUT I also had a great time blowing off steam and for a few hours, felt like a vibrant, free, sexy 35-year-old woman who happens to be a mom (and a hard-working, super-responsible one, 95 per cent of the time. And that is pretty cool. More than cool, it's perfectly fine.

And at the end of that memorable episode, Carrie sits at a park bench, watching children play, a voiceover articulating the worries and questions racing through her head — the same questions I asked myself in that crucial time between suspicion and confirmation of pregnancy:

If I had to, could I do this?
Would I be any good?
Would I somehow manage to stay me?

And the answer to all, I'm happy to say, is "yes."

Photo: depositphotos.com © Syda_Productions

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From August 31 to September 4, elementary schools are open for registration.

To register your child for an OCSB high school, please call the school to make an appointment. High schools are open all summer; the appointments are usually August 31 to September 4.

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Avoiding summer 'brain drain'

How parents can help children minimize learning loss

By Leslie Foster

With school soon letting out, teachers, administrators, and parents will be thinking about summer "brain drain," also known as summer learning loss.



Many studies show that there can be a significant regression in a child's academic skills during the 10-week break from the classroom.

Elaine Tan Comeau, a Canadian mom, former teacher, and founder of Easy Daysies magnetic schedules for kids (www.easydaysies.com), shared her thoughts on how parents can encourage learning all summer long.

Q: What are the most significant consequences of summer brain drain?

A: Studies have shown that children lose one to three months of learning over the summer vacation, two to six months in math skills, and 26 per cent in reading skills. There is also a strong socioeconomic correlation. Mid to higher-income families can enrol their children in programs that model traditional learning concepts. Those children typically don't lose as much in learning skills.

Q: Do you believe that summer brain drain is inevitable? Irreversible?

A: With most skills, there truly is a "use it or lose it" mentality. Brain drain is inevitable if we don't provide opportunities for our children to practise what they learned during the school year. We lose skills when we don't get to practise and reinforce them. Some parents may find this daunting, but it can be fun and easy.

Summer brain drain is not irreversible, but it takes time. When kids head back to school in September, it takes teachers four to six weeks to establish routine, which is necessary to being able to teach new material.

There are other impacts of summer brain drain that are cause for concern. When you take away routine, children

Photo: Courtesy of Elaine Tan Comeau

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experience greater levels of anxiety. That's why we hear, "What are we doing today? What are we doing next?" Time away from school can also impact social skills. Some kids may have access to more screen time and less face-to-face interactions with their peers. Different levels of social skills are affected.

Q: What countermeasures do you propose?

A: I propose three must-dos to avoid the summer brain drain:

1) Have a plan of attack. Do make a plan for each month and a daily routine as a guideline. You'll be so glad you did, and teachers will be grateful in September. Grab a calendar for July and August. First, select a week to enrol your children in an awesome camp. Next, plan something once per week, like a trip to the farmer's market, a visit to local museums, a family hike and a picnic. It gives kids something to look forward to. Then be sure to leave lots of time for unstructured play.

– *cont'd on page 40* ▶▶



Photo: Courtesy of Elaine Tan Comeau

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– cont'd from page 39

You can use a white board, or you can use a product like Easy Daysies, a visual planning resource I created. Children naturally feel anxiety when they don't know what they're doing or when they don't know what's going to happen. Create a visual routine and your child will cooperate more, experience less anxiety, and feel more empowered. Lay out a plan for the day.

The key, however, is to not stress out. It's a visual guide, not a strict schedule. You don't want to indicate that they need to wake up at 7:30, eat at 7:45, and so on.

Invest time to plan out the summer. You'll be glad you did.

2) Have the resources ready. The more readily available you make the materials, the easier it will be to get kids on board. James Kim of Harvard University found that children who have books available will read. Reading four or five books over the summer is enough to prevent the decline in reading skills.

Many libraries offer great reading incentive programs over the summer months. Make the newspaper available to older children, great for Grade 5-6 reading level and higher. Practise reading and comprehension, and discuss world events.

And as an added bonus, the newspaper often features recipes. Cooking is a great activity for reinforcing math and science skills.

Also: make play items such as bicycles, balls, and badminton rackets readily available. Have lots of art supplies on hand, and watch creativity and learning flourish.

3) Have fun playing. Don't underestimate the power of play. Unstructured outdoor play will help children be healthier, improve gross motor skills, develop problem-solving skills, increase self-esteem, teach cooperation, and help instil self-discipline and self-regulation.

Card games and board games tackle many of the same skills development. Teach your children games you loved as a child.

Games will also teach your children to plan ahead, solve problems, follow rules, be good winners/losers, be a team player, improve social skills, learn strategy, improve math and reading, and so much more. Try having a family game night and have fun playing with your children.

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By Leslie Foster



Best backyard science experiments to try this summer

One way to minimize the impact of the summer brain drain is to plan educational activities like science experiments with your kids.

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1) Test inserting the cork in the bottle opening to make sure it fits snugly.
2) Place the ball needle from the bicycle pump next to the cork and use the utility knife to cut off enough cork so that the needle just sticks out of the end of the cork when you push it through.
3) Push the needle through the centre of the cork.
4) Attach the needle to the bicycle pump hose.
5) Put some water in the pop bottle. Start with about one-third full.
6) Securely place the cork into the opening of the bottle.
7) Make a launch pad that allows you to prop the bottle upside down without tipping over. You can use some rocks, a few bricks, a PVC tube. You can add another project in building a custom launch pad (flexes the design, problem solving, and math skills muscles).
8) You will want to do this in an open area, away from vehicles, windows, and unsuspecting passersby. You may be surprised at how high and how far the rocket will go. Also make sure it is pointed directly upward and not toward a person (**adult supervision required**).
9) Have a child start pumping the bicycle pump. The bottle will fill with bubbles and once the pressure builds up, the cork will be forced out of the neck of the bottle and the bottle will be launched skyward.



Photo: depositphotos.com © gabyfotoart

Variations:

Try different sizes of plastic pop bottles with varying amounts of water. Ask the kids to guess what will happen with more or less water, smaller and bigger bottles, and why?

Source: *Handy Dad; 25 Awesome Projects for Dads and Kids* by Todd Davis

– *cont'd on page 44* ▶▶

Photo: depositphotos.com © mdbk1984

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– cont'd from page 43

Egg Walk

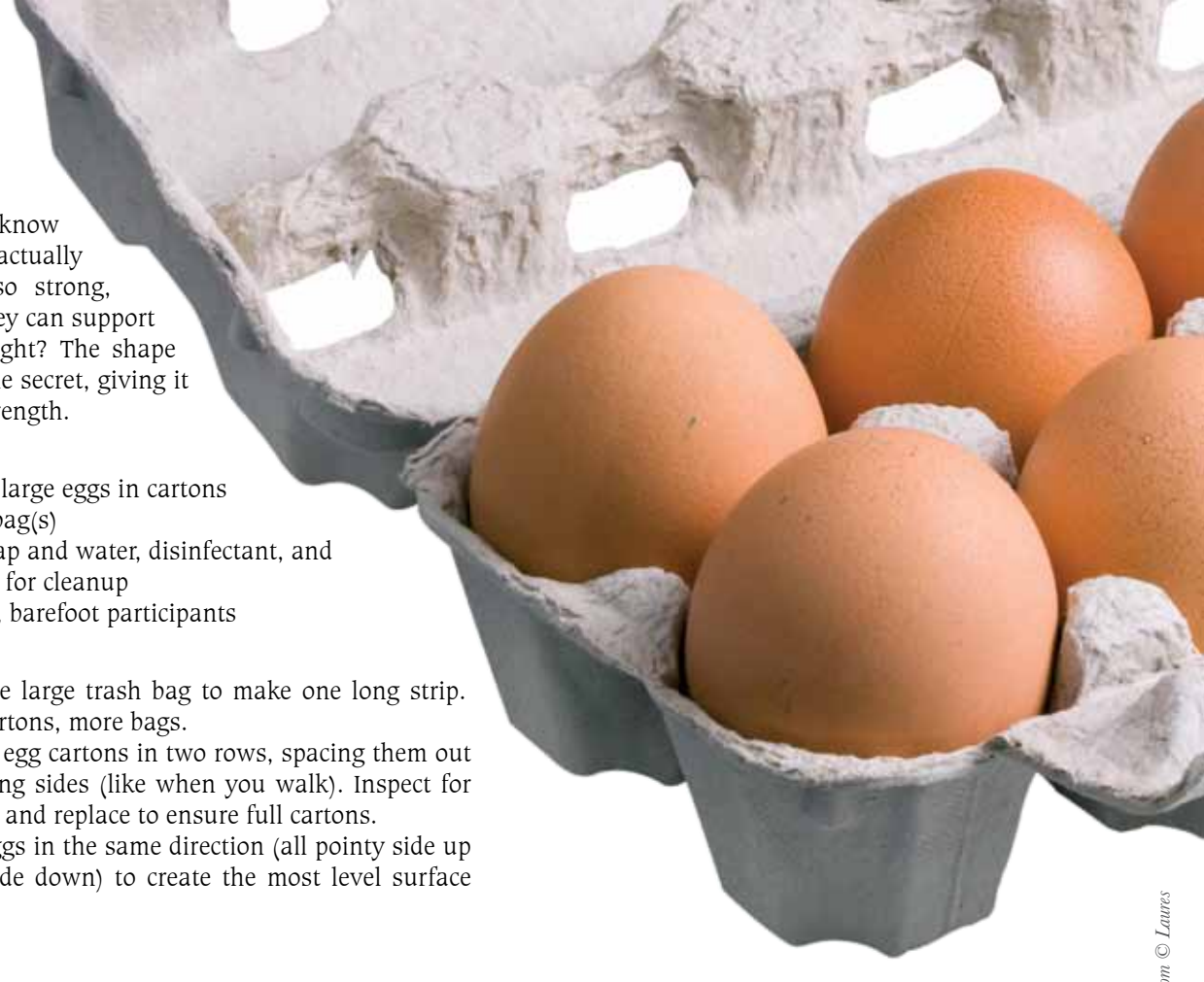
Did you know that eggs are actually very strong, so strong, in fact, that they can support your body weight? The shape of the egg is the secret, giving it tremendous strength.

Materials:

- A few dozen large eggs in cartons
- Large trash bag(s)
- Bucket of soap and water, disinfectant, and paper towels for cleanup
- Enthusiastic, barefoot participants

Instructions:

1) Cut open the large trash bag to make one long strip. More egg cartons, more bags.
2) Arrange the egg cartons in two rows, spacing them out on alternating sides (like when you walk). Inspect for broken eggs and replace to ensure full cartons.
3) Orient all eggs in the same direction (all pointy side up or pointy side down) to create the most level surface possible.



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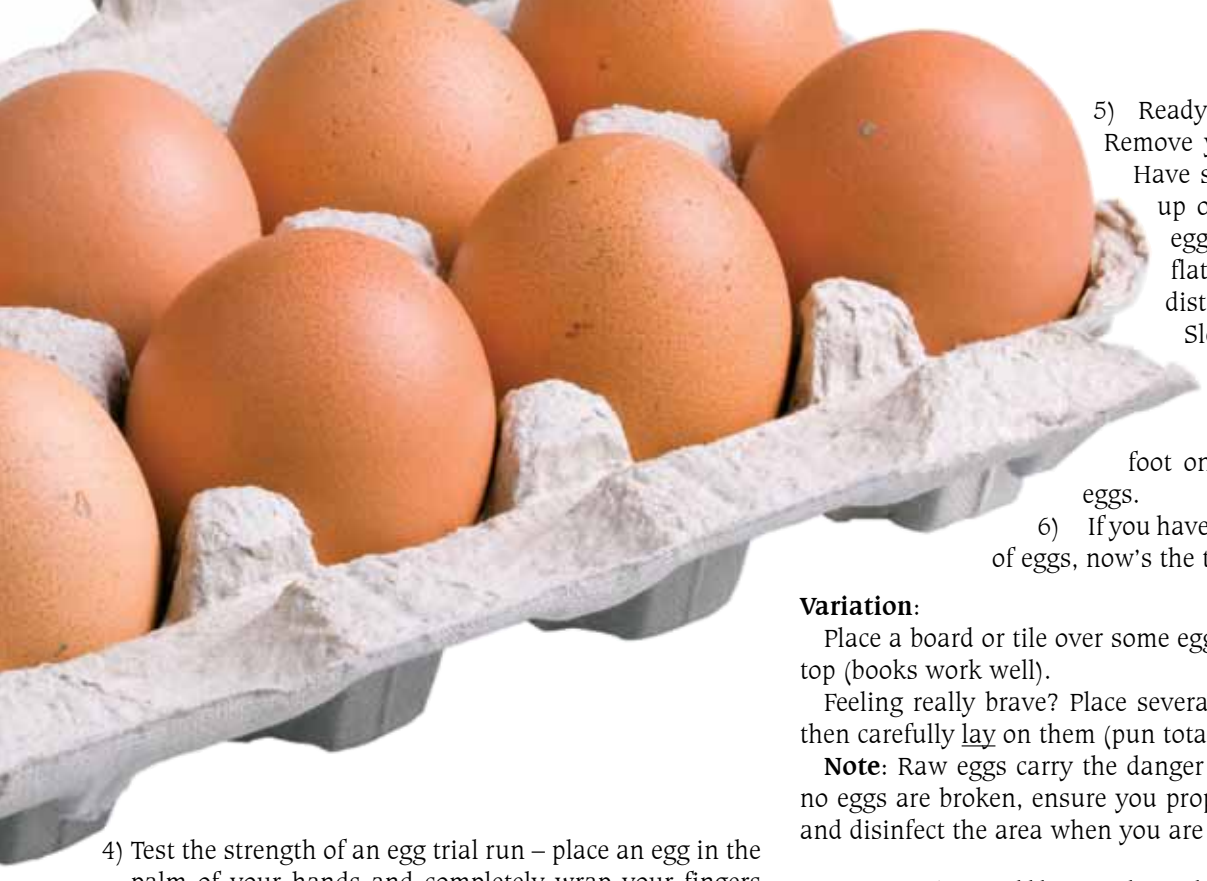

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4) Test the strength of an egg trial run – place an egg in the palm of your hands and completely wrap your fingers around the egg. Make sure you are not wearing any jewelry. Squeeze as hard as you can. What happens?

5) Ready to walk on eggs? Remove your shoes and socks. Have someone help you step up onto the first carton of eggs. Keep your foot as flat as possible to evenly distribute your weight. Slowly apply your body weight to the first carton of eggs, then gently place your other foot on the second carton of eggs.

6) If you have more than two cartons of eggs, now's the time to start walking.

Variation:

Place a board or tile over some eggs and stack weight on top (books work well).

Feeling really brave? Place several egg cartons together, then carefully lay on them (pun totally intended!)

Note: Raw eggs carry the danger of salmonella. Even if no eggs are broken, ensure you properly wash your hands and disinfect the area when you are done.

Source: *Fire, Bubbles, and Exploding Toothpaste; More Unforgettable Experiments That Make Science Fun* by Steve Spangler

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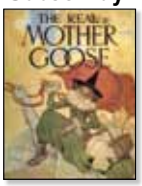
Summer Literacy Calendar – Family Activities

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
					**Mother Goose Day!**  Read a Mother Goose book.	**Make a paper plate goose.** 
Sing your favourite nursery rhymes while in the car or playing at home.	**Bird Day!**  Go for a nature walk, listen and look for birds outside.	**Look at a bird book and talk about the types of birds there are.**	 Make a paper towel tube bird; feathers and googly eyes.	**Talk about what colour birds are, the sounds they make, where they live, what they eat, etc.**	 Make a bird feeder; toilet paper tube rolled in honey, then in bird seed.	 Make a card and mail it out to someone special.
 **Make sunshine pancakes together.**	**Sing 'You Are My Sunshine.'** 	 **Make a handprint sun.**	**Visit the library to get books about spring and the sun.**	**Dance Like a Chicken Day!** 	 **Make a footprint chicken.**	**Talk about the lifecycle of a chicken: what they eat, what they do, etc.**
Go for a nature walk: observe, talk about and draw what you see.	**Draw a flower and label all of its parts.** 	 **Read a book about spring.**	Sing 'I'm Bringing Home My Baby Bumblebee.' 	 Talk about things that start with the letter B.	**Make a bumblebee egg carton craft.** 	**Play 'Simon Says,' doing animal actions.**
Talk about the best thing that happened today.	**Create a family tree!** 	 **Sing the Alphabet Song!**	Make letter shapes with your body by bending and twisting. 	 Swap your favourite book with a friend.	Make bread dough letters out of frozen dough for snack. 	**Create an alphabet book using drawings and magazine clippings.**

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How some parents plan ahead for better sleep



The benefits of a good night's sleep are well known, but the tricks to getting the best amount of sleep are not as obvious, especially for parents. In fact, parents of children under the age of 11 get, on average, six hours and 48 minutes of sleep each night, far less than the recommended eight hours.

Most parents don't have time to think about sleep until their head hits the pillow, but the key to a restful night is preparing in advance. A couple of tricks include:

- **Keep the bedroom at a cooler temperature** – About 18 degrees is recommended for a better rest. Warmer rooms can lead to improper regulation in body temperature that leads to tossing and turning.
- **Create a calming atmosphere** – Try to soothe your senses with specialized products.
- **Unplug** – Turn off your computer, cellphone and tablets at least an hour before bed. The blue light that emits from these items can trick the mind into thinking it is still daytime and could affect the proper sleep cycle.
- **Keep kids in their beds** – This may be a tricky one, but keeping children in their own bed will lead to a better sleep for parents. Try a door gate as well as positive reinforcement when they have slept an entire night in their own bed.

Most of all, keeping the bedroom as a place of sanctuary and relaxation will help with a better night's sleep.

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The perfect coffee for every situation

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Coffee is part of many parents' everyday routine. In fact, according to the Coffee Association of Canada, it is our country's most popular beverage (after tap water) with 65 per cent of Canadians consuming it every day.

Furthermore, there is another reason for drinking coffee: it is one of the most significant sources of antioxidants in the Canadian diet. For many of us, there is nothing like a good cup of coffee to start the day, to complement a family brunch or head out on the road.

Many parents enjoy regular coffee. But coffee routines have evolved considerably and now have so much more to offer.

Over the past few years, the varieties of coffee available have literally exploded. People are personalizing their coffee to suit their taste and indulging in a coffee treat on special occasions.

With all the brands and blends out there, you can't blame coffee drinkers for wanting to add a twist to their regular routine. As many have discovered, specialty coffees can be a great little treat once in a while – a coffee trend report from CAC says 35 per cent of Canadians admit consuming at least one specialty coffee per week.

Now that the warm weather has finally arrived, here are four coffees you can try for indulging yourself during those fun summer moments:

- **Not enough sleep last night?** You had so much fun last night that you forget you were working the next morning? It's time to jump in the car for your morning commute, but just before you do so, swap your regular coffee and make it special. A cappuccino is sure to help you wake up and get you enjoying the day.
- **You impressed your guests with a triumph on the grill. What next?** How about a vanilla latte, a rich coffee with a hint of vanilla that tastes as good as it smells. You'll be sure to impress your guests until the last drop.
- **Who doesn't crave chocolate or a sweet snack from time to time?** Treat yourself with a caramel macchiato instead. A delicious mix of coffee with a buttery caramel taste. What could beat that?
- **Saturday night campfire:** the kids are enjoying hot chocolate and S'mores? Adults can indulge themselves too. Complete your treat with a mochaccino. Coffee and chocolate, mixed together, make for a great beverage to enjoy around the crackling fire.

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By Dr. Stephen Fine

Consider an Ontario camp for your child this summer

Much more than just a fun, safe holiday, camp offers a holistic learning environment that fosters youth development

Why should I send my children to summer camp?

Summer camps in Ontario have been providing quality programs for children and young people for over a century. But the population and cultural diversity of Ontario has grown considerably over the last hundred years.

The truth is that today, many families are no longer familiar with the concept of summer camp or what camp programs have to offer their children. Discerning international parents will find that today's summer camps reflect the cultural diversity of Ontario in the 21st century.

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Camp is more than simply a fun and safe place for a summer holiday. Camp is a holistic learning environment that advances knowledge on personal and social levels, within the beauty and wonder of nature.

Over the years, many international families have sent their children to our horseback riding camp in Ontario. Our campers come from all over Europe, Asia, and Latin America.

Occasionally, I'm asked why parents send their children so far away from home. Often the reason is language immersion for non-English speakers, but there are many other reasons as well.

The reasons are connected to the learning that takes place at camp: learning about self, community and the world around us through actual experience. Camp learning is different from learning at school because activities take place in settings associated to the subject matter.

For example, geology, biology, geography, ecology, astronomy, art and music all become more engaging when delivered in the social and physical settings of camp.

Hands-on, inquiry-based learning

Ontario camps boast magnificent natural settings that are highly valued by people from countries that have suffered loss and/or pollution of their forests, lakes and river systems. Immersion in a natural environment allows children to receive hands-on education that stimulates their natural curiosity.

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Photo: depositphotos.com © mandygodbehear

For example, school science and geography curriculums examine sustainable practices. This area of study can be challenging for children when their experience is limited only to urban environments and planned communities.

Camp settings offer children a connection to the natural world that motivates learning and interest. This is something that cannot be achieved solely in the classroom.

Additionally, many camps provide programs that incorporate math, science and technology, along with traditional outdoor summer camp activities. Back in 2005, the American Institute for Research released the findings of a study on teaching and learning in residential outdoor settings.

Findings indicated that students showed significant gains in self-esteem, relationships with peers, problem solving, and motivation to learn. They also achieved increased academic scores on science studies, which were included in the program.

Positive social development

The development of strong social skills, confidence among peers and independence flourish in the camp setting. Living and working together with your peers, achieving personal goals and sharing responsibilities can transform a shy and cautious child into a positive and self-assured one, often within a very short time.

Residential camps in particular encourage children to interact with one another on a level that cannot be duplicated in a school setting.

– cont'd on page 56

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– cont'd from page 54

Language immersion

It is well known that the best way to learn a language is to live within its native culture. Language is unique not only in its spoken and written aspects, but also in associated body language, hand gestures, and facial expressions. In order to truly learn another language, you must also learn its culture.

School offers language basics such as grammar, spelling, and pronunciation, but the social and cultural aspects of language are best learned through real-life circumstances.

Additionally, brain studies show that children process language understanding more effectively when accompanied by visual stimulation.

For example, Laura is a Canadian English-speaking 13-year-old and Cindy is a Chinese Mandarin-speaking 13-year-old. Laura and Cindy are in a cabin together, where the language associated to the daily routine and activities at camp is reinforced by repetition. Laura and Cindy are "stable buddies."

When it's their turn to feed the horses, the girls walk to the stables together. Laura says to Cindy, "Cindy, will you walk to the stables with me?"

At first Cindy may not understand, but Laura will use body language and hand motions to assist in relaying the message. Done on a frequent basis, Cindy soon comes to understand the words for many of the daily routines of camp life.



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available in Ontario for their children's education. Academic excellence and language immersion are popular reasons for attending Ontario schools.

But the development of socialization skills and strong friendships has proven equally important for successful integration into Canadian university life for any young person.

The first year of enrolment for an international student is always a period of adjustment that can be socially and culturally challenging. A summer camp experience prior to attending a new school in Ontario is an ideal way to become accustomed to the Canadian lifestyle and build a strong friendship base.

Camp is also a great way to end off the school year for those international students already attending a boarding school in Ontario before returning home for their summer vacation.

Opportunity for youth development

Each and every year, families from many different cultures are choosing Ontario as their home. Summer camp represents an element of Canadian youth culture that is wholesome, healthy, fun and educative.

With 300 accredited Ontario Camping Association camps throughout the province, there is a quality camp that will appeal to everyone. Summer camp is something that should be experienced and enjoyed by the sons and daughters of Ontario's multicultural and international communities.

As we often tell prospective parents, our campers come from around the world and around the corner. Consider an Ontario camp for your children this summer.

***Stephen Fine**, Ph.D., is the national research committee chair, Canadian Camping Association, and co-chair, Research Committee International Camping Fellowship.*

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By Catherine Ross

These young leaders are carefully screened, selected and entrusted with impressionable young charges – and they rise to the challenge and set a stellar example, while creating a wonderful camp experience.

Across the country, thousands of eager former campers are counting the days until summer camp begins. Some new campers may be more anxious than excited, as day one draws near.

And once camp begins, the person who will influence the experience of each camper the most is the camp counsellor.

The director is essential, the maintenance staff is useful, the nurse is important (should you need her) and nobody would stick around for long without the cook. But the camp counsellor is the one with the closest, most consistent contact with the campers.

As one renowned camp director, Elizabeth Raymer, described it, "This group of leaders determines the success or failure of the entire enterprise … The most beautiful site with elegant buildings and a superabundance of up-to-date equipment is useless in the hands of an inept staff."

– *cont'd on page 60* ▶▶





– cont'd from page 59

Her expectations were clear: if you aspire to be a camp counsellor, you have to be good. Your campers deserve your very best.

Camp directors diligently read resumes, identify candidates worthy of an interview, then check references. With care and thoroughness, they select a group of young people whom they believe to be worthy of emulation by impressionable young campers.

Once on site, they continue to train, supervise and evaluate. One Camp Wenonah staff alumna who assisted the director with interviewing prospective camp counsellors for the 2015 season marvelled at the qualifications, personalities, experiences and volunteer service of the candidates.

My experience concurs with her conclusions – young people who choose to be camp counsellors are anything but average.

The summer my 18-year-old son, David, joined our staff as a canoe trip leader, I had a rude awakening. For years, without a second thought, I had sent *other* people's young adults into the wilderness to care for our campers. Sending my own son forced me to think more carefully about the huge burden I was placing on these young leaders' shoulders.

I expected them to travel for days on the assigned route, feed, shelter and care for a group of campers relying on the bare necessities, as well as their experience, judgment and skills. They accepted the challenge without hesitation. And they never disappointed me!

– cont'd on page 62

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– cont'd from page 60

Despite the rattlesnake sunning on the portage path, a group of drunken fishermen wanting to share their site or a young camper with abdominal pain who required evacuation in the night, they always made the right decision and brought everyone home safe and sound. With one exception, they always arrived on time.

Once when the lake was too rough to cross, they patiently remained on shore until the wind died down, thus forcing them to arrive home late, but with good reason. Again, they made the right decision.

That summer I started a new tradition. At the end of the season, I wrote to my camp staff parents to share with them my renewed admiration of their offspring, based on their achievements.

– cont'd on page 64

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– cont'd from page 62

But the campers get the last word. As a board member for the Kids in Camp Charity, I recently received a summary of comments from the campers the charity had financially assisted in 2014. Their remarks confirmed that counsellors continue to do an awesome job.

Payton tells us, "I learned how to do tricks on a wake board … my counsellors were amazing and so chill." Veronica, a special needs camper, reports, "If something is too hard or too much, I can tell my counsellors and it doesn't mean I'm lazy."

Emily confirms, "My counsellors were really nice, sweet and kind and very funny." Tal loved his counsellors: "Cameron and Shimon are very cool and they helped us with problems if we got into fights. I am so lucky I came to this camp."

Parents, ask your camp director about their staff of special young people, who will influence your children in positive ways and hopefully help them grow up to be just like their counsellor!

Catherine Ross *is former director, Camp Mi-A-Kon-Da, Canadian Camping Association communications officer, and author of Our Kids E-Book, Preparing for Camp.*

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Camp Nominingue celebrates 91 years this summer






Camp Nominingue was founded in 1925 by F.M. Van Wagner and Hay Finlay, two physical education professors at McGill University. In that first summer, the camp opened with 10 campers and five staff.

After a considerable search, the present site on Petit Lac Nominingue was chosen because of its many desirable features, especially the excellent canoe trip possibilities in the surrounding lakes and rivers. The choice has turned out even better than expected.

For 90 years, Camp Nominingue has thrived as one of Canada's premier residential summer camps for boys. Peter Van Wagner, F.M.'s son, took over as owner and director in the mid-1960s and has been in charge ever since.

In the beginning, the majority of campers came to Nominingue from Montreal. Today, 60% of the campers come from across Quebec, with another 20% from Ontario, mainly from the Ottawa area, and another 20% from outside the country.

The original area of the camp was about 40 acres. Now the camp and tree farm make up over 350 acres. Over 120,000 trees were planted in the actual tree farm, but hundreds more have been planted throughout the camp since the early years.

Three years ago, the Van Wagner family made a difficult decision – with no member of the family in a position to own and operate Camp Nominingue, new investment was required to ensure that the Camp would maintain its standard of excellence. And so began the search for a new owner who shared the Van Wagners' vision for a summer camp.

The goal was clear from the start – to ensure that Nominingue continue to provide young people and families with the special experience and the unique values and traditions upon which the camp was built.

Camp Nominingue is delighted to report that they have found just the right investors: Erik Blachford and his wife Maryam. Erik and his brother were campers and counsellors in the 1970s and 1980s, following a tradition established by their father and uncle in the 1940s and 1950s. Today, Erik's sons are campers and the whole family attends our family camp each August.

The operation of the camp will continue with very little noticeable change. Grant McKenna, director, and Elisa Van Wagner, business manager, will remain in charge of the camp's operation, with Grant becoming a part owner of the camp. Peter Van Wagner will continue as Camp Nominingue's Big Chief.

Plans for the coming summer, our 91st, are well underway with enrolments arriving daily and with the staff already in place, planning the innovative and exciting outdoor programming for which Nominingue is famous.



The 'avoidance' tactic

Chris Hunt suspects his partner, Angela, is dropping some not-so-subtle hints about desiring a second baby.

Before my son Riley turned two, he took part in a study designed to measure his communication and comprehension abilities. Turns out he's a pretty smart kid.

His test scores were equivalent to those of a seven-year-old. Heck, he even had a couple of answers in the 10-year-old range.

I wasn't surprised. He's an expert at understanding what's going on in the world around him. And he typically uses that understanding to get out of doing what someone else wants him to do. It's called avoidance, and he will either use his wit or his innate cuteness to get out of doing what someone wants.

A couple of weeks ago, his daycare got a new board game and the children gathered around a small table, eager to watch two of their lucky pint-sized brethren try it out. Sounds cute, but in reality it was more like something from a zombie apocalypse movie.

A horde of scrunchy, vacant faces peering in unison in eerie silence while those at the back fight to press forward, causing those at the front to wordlessly bump into each other.

The teachers quickly decided to disperse the crowd.

"Okay! Everyone not sitting in a chair at the table, go do something else until it's your turn to play!"

And slowly they all began to amble away. Except my kid. He got a chair and pulled it to the table with a sort of "Hey guys! Whose turn is it? Also, you should move it along because I'm pretty sure a teacher is going to ask one of you to leave soon" smirk. I'm not that clever. I have a hard time understanding what people are trying to tell me on a daily basis. Especially my son's mother. I can't even hold a conversation with her of late.

It began last month, when we were sitting on our couch while Riley napped. Outside there was a young woman with a young baby who was crying.

Angela sighed quietly, looked at me deeply as if trying to measure her words for proper impact and said, "I can't even remember what it's like to have a crying baby around the house."

To which I responded: "Me neither. Isn't it great?"

She looked upset, but for the life of me I couldn't understand why.

A few days later found us watching a particularly sad medical drama on television. Again, she turns and gives me that penetrating look.

"I've been wondering, what if something happens to us? What happens to Riley? He'll be all alone. Wouldn't it be great if he had somebody to grow up with? You know … just in case?"



Photo: Chris Hunt

To which I responded: "I have been thinking about that actually. Thank goodness my brother is going to have a baby soon."

I could tell by her frown she wasn't happy.

It got worse two days ago. It was late and I found myself drifting in and out of sleep on the couch when Angela suddenly appeared in front of me, wearing a revealing night gown.

"You need to come to bed. Now."

Apparently I had been snoring. She didn't say it, but it's a thing I frequently do and I guess I had been doing it so loud she couldn't even take the time to get properly dressed before telling me to shut up. It was cold too, with a chilly breeze wafting through the bedroom window. So I crawl into bed with her. And promptly fall asleep.

She wakes me up. "I can't sleep," she says. I tell her that might be because she's essentially naked and it's cold outside.

She tells me I should warm her up. So I do what any good man would do. I close the window, toss a sweater at her and go back to sleep.

She doesn't talk to me much over the next day, so I know I've done something wrong. It's almost like everything she's been saying has a different meaning and I keep missing it. So I resolved to not say anything until she told me exactly what was on her mind.

So the other day, she sat me down while giving me that penetrating look and said, "I want to have another baby."

This time I knew better. I didn't say anything. After a few seconds, she shook her head and said "Now I know where Riley gets it," and walked away.

I have no idea what she meant by that.

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The recipe for a lasting marriage? Honesty, laughter and embracing flaws



Joe Banks reflects on more than three decades of wedded bliss

I'm writing this on the day of our 32nd wedding anniversary. It's not a particularly special year, except it occurred to me this morning, as I kissed my bride, that fewer and fewer of our contemporaries, friends and acquaintances are doing the same. (Marking anniversaries I mean, not kissing).

There's a simple answer for that: fewer of them are still married to the one they originally hitched up with in the first place, mostly through separation or divorce. Statistics bear that out.

Society used to say that was a shame; that why wouldn't people love the one they're with, and fix what's broken rather than tossing it away like trash?

Neil Sadaka said breaking up is hard to do. But from what we've noticed here in the future, divorce needn't always be the default — if simple honesty had trumped an unrealistic and unattainable sentimentality in the first place.

That, and lots of laughter; there can never be enough of it. As far as I know, no one has died from too much of it.

Combine both, and there is a recipe for a lingering marriage.

One of the most honest – and funny – wedding vows I'd ever heard was exchanged at a ceremony last May, which took place in Algonquin College's pub, The Observatory. This couple had been cohabitating for quite a while, as many couples do (we did).

While not a typical venue one would equate with solemnity, it was entirely fun in the very best sense of the word. It was, after all, a place so many students had made vows of their own, though perhaps not so soberly.

There she was, resplendent in white, facing her tux-covered, ponytailed groom, looking at him with a moist eye; so much in love, the two of them. The skylight above was casting a movie-like ambience over the proceedings, as if a higher power were itself blessing the union.

Or so Hollywood may write it.

And then, at the moment of vows, she spoke those magical words.

"I vow not to belittle your collection of Star Wars action figures."

Bam! The place went up like a raucous comedy club crowd, and any ceremonial tension disappeared like dust in the wind.

His retort was along similar lines: I promise not to criticize your shoe collection, or go on about the mascara brush sitting on the bathroom counter every morning, or any one of a number of other petty miseries endured by any number of couples every day.

The vows were so granular, real, and funny, that they actually made a serious statement about how the little things that jam our keys get in the way of the big ones that are at the heart of a marriage; let's not sweat the small stuff because we're in it for better reasons.

Of course, that's a very mature and adult way to look at marriage, and I'm the first to agree that such wisdom doesn't easily fit inside the pre-castings of what wedding planners, Frankenbrides and moms have in mind. They want perfection, and the ordinary flaws of everyday life don't mesh well with them.

Not long after we attended that wedding, my wife and I were reflecting on what has made us most happy as empty nesters. A romantic soul would guess it's the joy of each other's company, long conversations and rediscovering our youthful selves.

But that would be wrong. Or at least dishonest.

It actually has a lot more to do with the ability to pee with the bathroom door open, sashaying around the house in the ole birthday suit, and almost never having to make a decision on what's for supper.

That's the simple truth, for better or for worse. And for us, it worked for 32 years.



Photo: depositphotos.com © Jim_Film

‘To me, this is the ultimate life’

Ottawa entrepreneur and proud father **Preston Martelly** thrives on navigating a demanding career while making plenty of time for his family.



Photo: Alea Cardarelli

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By Samantha Ball

Preston Martelly can't remember a time when he didn't have an entrepreneurial spirit. The married father of four children aged seven and under thrives on the ability to forge his own career path.

Martelly, 35, is the owner of Ottawa Mobile Apps (www.ottawamobileapps.com). He recently launched the Kanata North app, designed to help the community stay in touch.

For example, if there is an emergency in the area, the councillor can send an urgent message that will reach all users.

Martelly says restaurants, churches, communities, nonprofits, schools, and daycares are just a few organizations that could benefit from creating their own mobile app.

"People are realizing that mobile apps are not as cost-prohibitive as they once were," he says.

He also says he enjoys working closely with clients to simplify complex ideas and ensure they receive the right solution for their needs.

Though becoming an entrepreneur may not be for everyone, "to me, this is the ultimate life," says Martelly.

The main appeal of working for himself is the flexibility and freedom it offers.

Not only can he plan his work hours around the schedule of his children and their activities, which this devoted dad doesn't want to miss, but he can also take his work anywhere – to favourite coffee shops, or even a park if the weather is nice.

But it takes strong support at home to make it all work.

"A supportive partner that has faith in you and sees your vision is critical," he says.

And as much as he loves the work he does, Martelly's family remains his top priority. He goes "off duty" for at least a few hours between the end of school and bedtime to ensure he spends quality time with his wife and kids.

He says disconnecting is vital to maintain a work-life balance, emphasizing that business owners who work 24/7 are at risk of personal and professional burnout.

"If someone close to you is asking you to disconnect – you should."

He says self-care is necessary to recharge for maximum productivity. Entrepreneurs should ensure they are getting enough rest, exercise and downtime to pursue other activities or creative interests. For Martelly, that means playing in a band.

And Martelly advises other dads interested in taking the entrepreneurial road to sit down and write out a detailed plan that takes into consideration the various needs of the family, their personalities, and what it would look like to reach their end goal.

Photo: depositphotos.com © Rangizzz

Teaching respect in sport to parents

Organizers hope a new mandatory course for Ottawa minor hockey parents will lead to better relations and prevent unwanted incidents, writes **Derek Abma**.

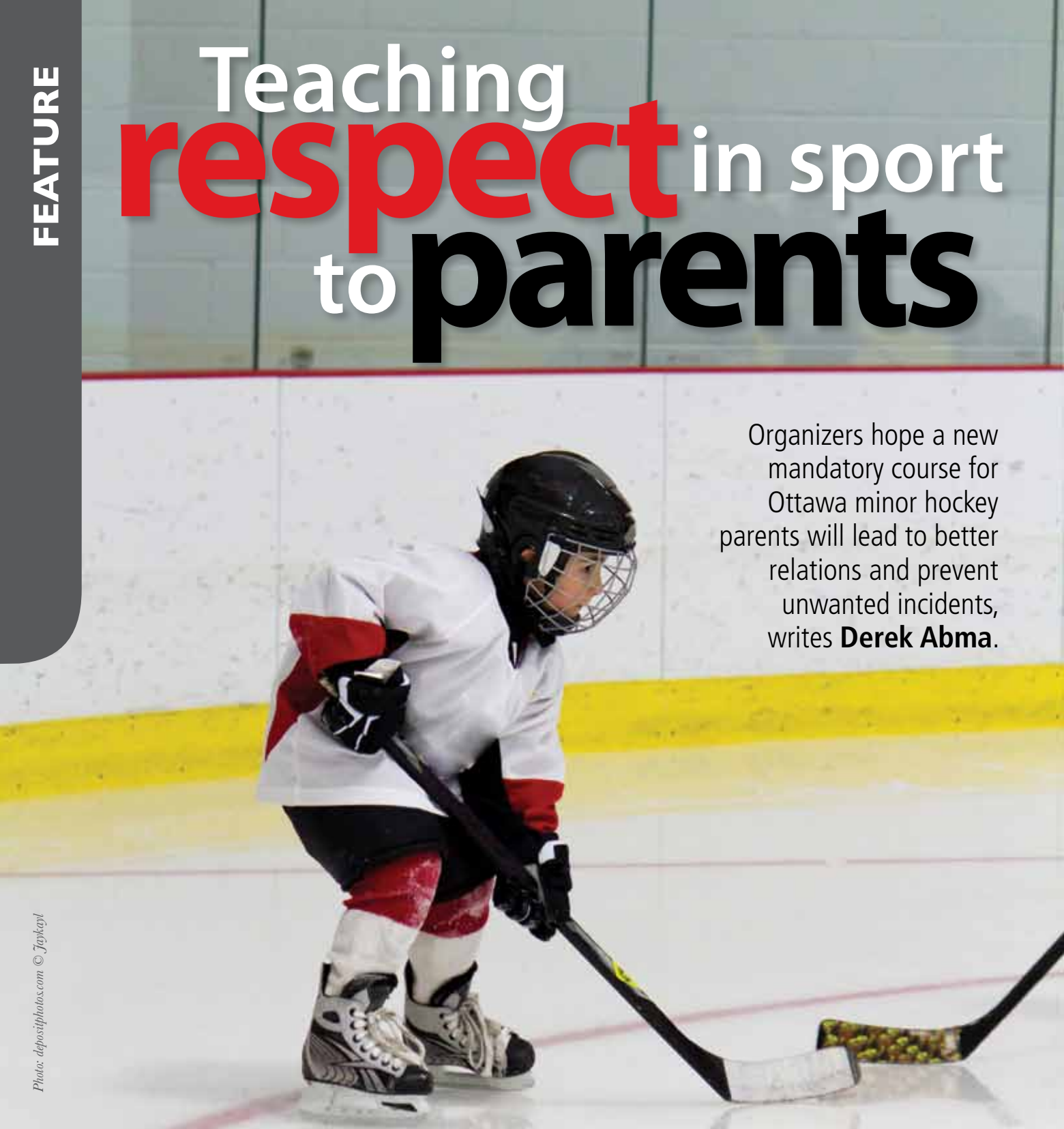

Photo: depositphotos.com © Jaykayl

This coming season, minor hockey is becoming $12 more expensive and taking up an extra hour of time for many parents in the Ottawa area. It's because of an online course for parents that organizers hope leads to friendlier interactions between parents, coaches, officials, players and everyone else involved in the game.

Many of us have seen the newscasts and videos from other parts of Canada showing parents fighting in the stands, threatening each other and being just all-around belligerent.

Hockey Eastern Ontario executive director Debbie Rambeau says there have been no problems of such magnitude in this region, but adds that organizers are trying to prevent such things before they happen.

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"We just want to be proactive in giving families the tools in case something arises," she says. "We've been really lucky in this branch in that we haven't really had any issues, but there are other branches across Canada that you might have seen affected."

For example, on Vancouver Island earlier this year, the situation of parents yelling at on-ice officials, other parents and opposing players escalated to the point where some parents were being banned from games. The Vancouver Island Amateur Hockey Association happens to be implementing this same online course for parents for the coming season.

"We're hoping that if an issue arises, this tool will help combat some of those issues," Rambeau says.

It's called the Respect in Sport for Parents program, and at least one parent or guardian of initiation (ages five and six) and novice (ages seven and eight) players in an association falling under the jurisdiction of HEO will have to take it before the next season starts, as well as parents of all new players up until midget (up to age 17). Girls' hockey leagues are not subject to this, as they are not governed by HEO.

The course deals with several topics, such as the appropriate level of pressure to put on child athletes, as well as interacting with referees, coaches and other parents. It has already been implemented in several other jurisdictions throughout the country.

HEO officials say there are indications that in Alberta, where it is part of hockey programs throughout the province, there has been a decline in unwanted incidents involving parents.

A memo sent from HEO to hockey associations throughout the region says the course is intended to be "a positive program to make good parents better," and that it is "not a reaction to media reports or a tool for discipline."

Rambeau says the course can teach parents how to cope with situations even when someone else — perhaps a coach or another parent — is the problem.

"A parent may be yelling at their child," she says. "Maybe you can go and just say something politely to that parent like, 'Really, it's a game. Let's just have fun.'"

Nepean's Grant Bifolchi has experienced minor hockey as parent of two sons and as a coach of various age groups at both the competitive and house league levels. He says he's seen several examples of inappropriate conduct among parents.

"I have had parents that are belligerent to their child on and off the ice, nagging and pushing hard in an effort to motivate or embarrass," he says.

As a coach, Bifolchi had to field late-night phone calls from parents complaining about their children's ice time. One year when he was not coaching, a teammate of his son had a father who was often inebriated at games, and he once took this parent to the in-rink restaurant "with the promise of buying him a beer so everyone else could watch the game in peace."

Bifolchi says a program like Respect in Sport can be helpful in dealing with parents who cause problems. However, he doesn't agree with it being applied as broadly as planned. He would prefer to see a course like this in place just for parents who cross the line.

"I can see this being a valuable tool as a corrective measure," he says. "The coach should be able to hold a parent accountable if, and only if, there is cause and it is ongoing. Perhaps let's institute a policy where if a parent has some control issues, the league would approach them and ask them to take the course so their child may continue in the program."

Bifolchi points out that hockey is already a sport parents have to invest a lot of time and money in.

"Hockey is already so expensive and intensive for parents and kids," he says. "We need to make it less so, not more so."

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Photo: depositphotos.com © ClickImages

Sex Toys



By Kelly Roesler

News flash: moms actually do enjoy sex. And why shouldn't we? It relieves tension and stress, is great for our overall health, can help with better sleep, provides a youthful glow, helps with menstrual symptoms, and the list goes on and on.

And many of us have been using sex toys for years. But others have never used a sex toy and maybe figured they never would. But there are many reasons why, if you've never explored using toys, you might want to give it a try.

"I am thankful we live in the technological age," says Sue McGarvie of The Ottawa Sex Therapy and Libido Clinic, a sex and relationship therapist, columnist and talk show host. "Sex toys just speed up the process. And we all know that busy moms are looking for time-saving measures."

She says many don't realize that only 30-per-cent of women reach orgasm from intercourse. The rest need direct clitoral stimulation.

"Toys help us reach orgasm, feel sexually satisfied, and we are more likely to engage in future sex if we have a great sexual experience."

McGarvie says the Ottawa-based and developed We-Vibe offers products that help couples achieve orgasm together during intercourse. Or the We-Vibe touch can offer effective, gentle clitoral stimulation.

"An inexpensive toy like the bullet is discreet (in case your mother-in-law goes through your sock drawer)."

The benefits of regular orgasm are tremendous, says McGarvie.

"Bodies want to orgasm. It relieves tension in our hips, puts us in a better mood and makes partners feel like they are pleasing us.

"A quick, necessary orgasm (either alone or with someone else) can help us find our equilibrium. It also tightens up vaginal muscles after childbirth and encourages fertility."

And no, she says, using a sex toy will not make us less sensitive.

"I do believe in the adage of 'use it or lose it.' Sexual needs are a real drive. And listening to our bodies when we want to grab our favourite vibrator and climax ensures that we are the sexual beings we are meant to be."

And Shelley Taylor, sex educator and owner of Venus Envy (venusenvy.ca), an Ottawa educational sex shop and book store, offers tips for moms who are thinking about toys.

Photo: depositphotos.com © AndreyPopov

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for sexy mamas

Motherhood doesn't have to be all work and no play. Whether you're looking to spice up things with your partner, or parenting solo, all moms deserve to tap into — and reconnect with — their sexual side.

"First off, I would say get something quiet! Some toys can be really noisy, and even if the kids can't actually hear the toy running, if you're really aware of the noise it's making, it's going to be harder to relax.

"After that, there's a huge variety of toys that a person can choose from, and that goes the same for moms. There are toys that are built for various sensitive bits all over the body, and some that can be used only externally (think clits, thighs, penis), and others that can be used in the vagina, anus, and often externally as well."

Taylor says toys are a fantastic way to play alone or with a partner, and a vibrator can make orgasm so much easier and sometimes bigger, too.

"So if you're short on time, or just need to get off and go to sleep, a little bit of lube and a vibe could help get you to that goal quickly and with a smile on your face."

And for busy, overworked parents, using a toy can increase pleasure, as well as intimacy and make the little time you have together just that much more fun.



Photo: depositphotos.com © Semenchenko

"Good sex thrives on feeling wanted and that can be a difficult feeling to share when one or both of you are tired and stressed," she says.

"Adding a lubricant, a toy, and/or some dirty books or movies can help you remember how much fun you two can have together, even for a few minutes here and there."

Taylor offered some quick tips about sex toys:

Vibrators: great for stimulating any sensitive spots, choose something with multiple speeds since everyone likes different things in a vibrator. There's a huge variety available; some of the best would be made of medical grade silicone (easy to clean!) and are rechargeable like a cell phone, so they're ready to go at a moment's notice. Reliable brands include Fun Factory, Lelo, We-vibe and Jimmy Jane. Vibrators come in a million shapes; decide if you want something compact for external-only use, or something longer that can be used inside and out. Also, some of those internal toys are curved for g-spot play too, as a bonus!

Dildos: These toys are made for vaginal and/or anal penetration and come in lots of different shapes and materials. At Venus Envy, we mostly sell dildos made out of medical grade silicone for ease of cleaning. Someone might choose a dildo if they find vibration annoying, but they aren't used as often as vibrators, partly because what a lot of women are missing is clit stimulation and a dildo can't give you that. Also, if you have a vibrator, you always have the option to use it in "off" mode.

Butt toys: The anal opening and canal can be a pleasurable place to play with for some women, but not so much for others. Like all things sexual, everyone is different and enjoys different things. If you're interested in anal play, a small butt plug or anal beads and lots of lubricant, as well as taking things slow and everything feeling really comfy are the keys to safe and fun anal play! Remember that the rectum is an "open" system, unlike the vagina and anything that goes into your bum has to be either attached to a human, or have a base or flange on it.

Don't forget lubricant! These are our very favourite sex toys! And especially for someone who might be feeling tender after giving birth, or who is lubricating less because of breastfeeding or other hormonal changes. Some things to keep in mind: avoid lubes that have sugar or glycerin in them if you're prone to yeast over growth (and women who have recently given birth are more prone to having an imbalance in the vagina's ph levels). Lately, lots of people have been avoiding parabens in their lube too; some good brands to check out would be Blossom Organics, Hathor, Yes, and Sliquid Organics.

FUN in the SUN

By Sonia Mendes

With the hot weather upon us (finally!) and summer vacation just around the corner, it's high time to get the kids outside and active. But how do you lure them away from gaming in air-conditioned comfort? With the season's coolest outdoor toys, of course!

These gadgets are sure to get your brood off the couch and out of the house – flipping, bouncing and diving their way through the hottest of summer days.



Photo: Don Holtz, Photographer

Flipping out

It's a skateboard … without wheels! Kids eager to try skateboarding, snowboarding and surfboarding can safely learn techniques in their own homes, yards or at the beach this summer –using the **Kick Flipper** on carpet, grass or sand. A brand-new product from Canadian toy company PlaSmart, the Kick Flipper teaches boys and girls (ages five and up) balance, footwork and coordination in an uber-cool way! Available at amazon.ca in red or blue; $14.99.



Photo: OgoSport.com

Bounce, bounce … splash!

Kids ages four and up can develop their gross motor skills while having a blast with **OgoDisks**. While these "hand trampolines" were designed to use with Ogosoft balls, they're also perfect for bouncing water balloons on a hot day! Made by PlaSmart and available at Mastermind, Indigo, Mrs. Tiggy Winkles and Tag-along Toys; OgoDisk Mezo (includes two 15"/38 cm disks and an OgoSoft ball) $43.99; and OgoDisk Mini (includes two 12"/30 cm disks and an Ogosoft ball) $29.99.



Photo: ©Tucker International, LLC

Grand slam power

Knock it out of the park with the **Crush-It! Bat** from Tucker Toys. Kids ages five and up will love this lightweight, easy-to-swing bat, which features high-tension strings and a spring-action barrel. An adjustable power knob on the bat allows for adjustable string tension, for playing in a large field or a small backyard. Includes a foam ball that's dense enough to hit out of the park, but soft enough to catch without a glove! Makes a "whoosh" sound when swung. Available online or in-store at Mastermind Toys (mastermindtoys.com); Crush-It! Bat $19.99; two-pack of Crush-It! Balls $4.99.

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Photo: ©Tucker International, LLC

All-terrain ball

Get the kids catching, throwing and kicking the **E-Z Grip Ball** from Tucker Toys on virtually any surface! Soft but tough, this waterproof ball offers high-bounce performance and a webbed grip for active play on grass, sand and water, making it perfect for the pool or beach. Available in-store or online at Mastermind Toys (mastermindtoys.com), and online at Toys R Us (toysrus.ca); $12.99.



Photo: ©2015 Swimways Corp. All rights reserved

May the Force be with you…in the pool!

Have some little *Star Wars* lovers at home? You'll win the 'Most Popular Parent' award when you bring home these **Star Wars LightSaber Dive Sticks** from SwimWays! Each pack has two six-inch dive sticks – green for Yoda and blue for Luke Skywalker. Featuring water activated, light-up action and detailed character-specific hilts, these dive sticks are recommended for kids ages five and up. Available at Mastermind Toys and Walmart; $17.99.



Sizzling summer FUN at the beach

By Kelly Roesler



Looking for a sensational summer getaway without leaving city limits? Take the day – and pack a picnic – to savour the season at one of Ottawa's gorgeous beaches. Here are some of the best ways to enjoy the beach with your family this summer.

Photo: depositphotos.com © vitpetrogb

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What I love most about the west Ottawa neighbourhood in which I live is its proximity to the beach – about a 10-minute walk. Every summer, all summer long, my four-year-old daughter and I can be found enjoying this picturesque beach.

Surrounded by lush green trees and grass, plenty of hot sand and lovely views of the river, as well as a children's playground, rocks for climbing, and a beachside café, we are happiest when we're out enjoying this serene, endlessly delightful oasis just minutes from home.

Going to the beach is a fun outing, no matter what you do. It's an ideal local escape, where you can get away from your home, soak up the sun and cool off in the water.

But a day at the beach is more than swimming and sunning. There are TONS of great family activities and things to do at the beach. Here are some ideas:

Frisbee: A classic, simple beach game and your family can even play with the dogs (if you're at a beach that's pet-friendly)

Imaginative play: Join your kids in cooking, baking, and creating with sand.

Build your child's vocabulary: Beach trips are a prime opportunity to teach toddlers new words. Identify sailboats, waves, fish, parasails, airplanes, seagulls and seaweed, and more.

Embark on an active adventure: Take a walk; climb on the rocks, and splash in the waves. Get some exercise! Toss your kids in the air. Dance. Do water aerobics with your youngsters.

– *cont'd on page 78* ▶▶

Photo: depositphotos.com © Vojagerix



Sizzling summer FUN at the beach



– cont'd from page 77

Create a scavenger hunt and have the kids collect rocks, shells, seaweed and sand.

Make sand angels.

Play *Ring Around the Rosie* in the water: The huge splash at the end when you "all fall down" is sure to delight the kids.

Fly a kite: Buy one from the dollar store or make your own.

Bury someone's body or feet in the sand.

Play tag or chase.

Read a beach-themed book.

Look for rocks to paint.

Pick up trash: Talk about how litter can hurt animals and the ocean. You can even turn it into a game.

Engage in child-led play: Simply follow your child's lead, and go with the flow.

Have a 'crab walk' race.

Take a hike: Many beaches offer nearby trails to hike to or from the water. This is an excellent way to get in a workout and the water is awesome for cooling down afterward. Your family can take in lovely views while immersed in nature.

– cont'd on page 80

Photo: depositphotos.com © shalamov



The Kingdom of Osgoode Medieval Festival

July 11–12
9:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Next to Osgoode Market Square
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Education Day, Friday, July 10

for children only, ages 4-14.
Learn about Medieval chivalry, armour, music and more.
Must register in advance online.

Main Contact: 613-443-9090 or info@osgoodemedievalfestival.com

To Volunteer: Thora 613-443-9090 volunteers@osgoodemedievalfestival.com

Vendors: Ingrid 613-443-9090 vendors@osgoodemedievalfestival.com

Pub Contact: Catherine 613-443-9090 feast@osgoodemedievalfestival.com

Education Day Contact: Jenny Wheatly 613-443-9090 educationday@osgoodemedievalfestival.com

The King's Fiest & Medieval Murder

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Catered by Red Dot Cafe

Saturday Night July 11

Details available online

www.osgoodemedievalfestival.com

Ottawa
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Osgoode

– cont'd from page 78

Enjoy a delicious picnic: There are usually food vendors near popular beaches, but it's less expensive, healthier and more fun to pack your family a picnic lunch or dinner filled with fresh fruits, vegetables and other nutritious snacks. And the kids will love to help with preparing and packing!

Make a friend: You'll often find and meet people from different countries and cultures all around you at the beach. Kids don't need to speak the same language to enjoy play, fun, and laughter.

Take lots of photos: The beach is ideal for taking many breathtaking photos, perfect for sharing on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Wander along the beach with your camera and discover interesting angles, colours and scenes to capture.

Write messages in the sand: Write them big or small, say whatever you want and snap a pic to remember your trip. Try taking a family footprint picture.

– cont'd on page 82



Photo: depositphotos.com © Volin / alenkasm

2015 Navan Fair August 6th - 9th!
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Saturday Aug. 8, 2015: 8am - midnight
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Birds Of Prey: Friday, Saturday & Sunday, 11am, 1pm & 3pm
Canadian Raptor Conservancy
(www.canadianraptorconservancy.com)
The Lumberjack Company: Saturday – 2pm, 4pm & 6 pm
(www.thelumberjackcompany.com)



Full schedule can be found at www.Navanfair.com

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Sizzling summer FUN at the beach



– cont'd from page 80

Watch the sunset: This is a favourite beach activity because it offers such a breathtaking sight. It never gets tiresome, and the kids will love it, too.

Celebrate a holiday or special occasion: People often go to the beach to watch fireworks or to celebrate a summer birthday or some other occasion. There's nothing like the sound of crashing waves and feeling of sand between your toes to mark a special day.

Relax: Take a break from the fun and just stop where you are and don't do anything at all. You can just sit, relax and take it all in. Focus on breathing or meditating. Unwind and enjoy your surroundings.

Build a sandcastle: Another classic beach activity for kids and adults. Sandcastles are an engaging, creative and fun way to pass time at the beach. Run a Google search for inspiration!

– cont'd on page 84

Photo: depositphotos.com © yanlev





Sunday
dimanche
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de 10 h à 15 h

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Sizzling summer FUN at the beach

– cont'd from page 82

***DON'T FORGET:** Bring plenty of water to drink, slather on tons of high-SPF sunscreen (and be sure to reapply after swimming and throughout the day), wear a hat, and talk about sun safety with your kids.

Photo: depositphotos.com © yanlev

OTTAWA BEACHES

Beach	Description	Amenities
Britannia Beach 2805 Carling Ave. 613-820-1211	WEST Located on the Ottawa River at Britannia Bay, the beach is great for swimming, picnics or just watching the sailboats go by on a beautiful summer day.	• Washrooms • Free parking • Canteen and outdoor showers • Picnic tables and barbecue pits • Play structures and fields
Mooney's Bay Beach 2926 Riverside Dr. 613-248-0863	SOUTH A popular summer destination for swimmers, rowers, and volleyball players, the beach is located on the east shore of the Rideau River, just south of Carleton University.	• Washrooms and change rooms • Paid parking (7 a.m. to 6 p.m.) • Seasonal parking passes available at the Terry Fox Field House – 2960 Riverside Dr. • Canteen • Picnic tables and barbecue pits • Tennis courts and play structures
Petrie Island Beach 727 Trim Rd. 613-824-5704	EAST Ottawa's newest beach offers a wonderful sandy beach and spectacular views across the Ottawa River.	• Washrooms • Paid parking (7 a.m. to 6 p.m.) • Seasonal parking passes available at the Orleans Client Service Centre • Interpretation cottage • 12 picnic tables and canteen
Westboro Beach 745 Sir John A. Macdonald Pkwy. 613-792-3875	CENTRAL A somewhat smaller beach and park located on NCC property at Kitchissippi Lookout, on the Ottawa River.	• Washrooms • Free parking • Canteen and patio with tables

Source: ottawa.ca

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Grilling is a journey.

Basic Pork Ribs

Yield: Serves 6 **Preparation Time:** 10 minutes **Cooking Time:** 1 1/2 hours

Ingredients

3 lb (1.5 kg) Ontario pork back ribs
1 tbsp (15 mL) freshly ground pepper
1 tsp (5 mL) red pepper flakes
2 tsp (10 mL) dried thyme leaves
1 to 2 cups (250 mL to 500 mL) your favourite BBQ sauce

Cooking Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 325ºF (160ºC). Remove tough membrane on non-meaty side of the ribs by easing away a corner with a small knife, then tear the membrane away from the ribs.
2. In a small bowl, mix together black pepper, red pepper flakes and thyme. Sprinkle over ribs and place on a baking sheet; meaty side up. Add hot water to baking sheets to give about 1/4-inch depth. Cover baking sheet with foil and place in oven for around 1 to 1 1/2 hours. Remove ribs from oven and discard liquid from tray.
3. **Grill:** put grill on high for 10 minutes then turn down to medium. Place ribs on a medium-low heat and grill for 15 minutes, brushing with BBQ sauce, turning occasionally.

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Simply sweet summer

I've always loved the simplicity of summer. For a few blissful months, we get to trade our thick sweaters and bulky boots for streamlined tank tops and slip-on sandals. Our days get a little more relaxed and a lot more sunny.

My philosophy is that kids' summer snack foods should reflect the season, too. Let's boycott the hot oven and complicated recipes!

In the spirit of keeping things easy breezy, here are a few taste-tested, kid-pleasing snack ideas. Each one requires minimal ingredients and supplies, and doesn't require a degree in fine arts to prepare.

Frozen chocolate banana pops

It's like having your own frozen banana stand! (*Arrested Development* fans, are you with me??)

Ingredients & supplies:

- Bananas
- Chocolate chips
- Topping(s) such as: shredded coconut, sprinkles, crushed peanuts or PC's new Sugar Cone Topping (a blend of peanut pieces, chocolate chips, caramel candy pieces and sugar cone bits!)
- Popsicle sticks
- Wax paper

Method:

1. Line a baking sheet with wax paper. Slice bananas in half, then peel each half and place on the wax paper.
   Insert a popsicle stick into the flat end of each banana half. Put the baking sheet in the freezer for about two hours.
2. Remove baking sheet from the freezer. Pour toppings into small bowls and set aside.
3. Put chocolate chips in a microwave-safe bowl and microwave them at 20-second intervals. Briskly stir chocolate chips after each interval, until completely melted and smooth. Use a spatula to transfer melted chocolate to a small, deep bowl.
4. Working quickly, dip and rotate each banana half in the melted chocolate. You may need to use a spoon to cover all areas.
5. Immediately dip chocolate-covered banana half into your desired topping. Use a spoon to scoop and sprinkle toppings on uncovered sections, aiming to make the topping as uniform as possible.
6. Place banana pops back on the wax paper, and return to freezer. Chill for 20 minutes and serve!







Fruit fiesta!

Kids love just about any fruit when it's dipped in chocolate, but if your little one isn't a fan of bananas, try putting toothpicks in grapes, strawberries, blueberries or orange segments – then freeze them and start dipping.

Photos: Sonia Mendes

snacks

By Sonia Mendes

Juicy bug bites

Give the term "bug bites" a positive spin with these tasty fruit critters! Prepare them ahead of time, or let the kids use their imaginations to help create their own creepy crawlies.

Ingredients & supplies:

- Assorted fruit (I used watermelon, green grapes and strawberries)
- Regular and/or miniature chocolate chips (for eyes and spots!)
- Wooden skewers

Method:

1. To make the body of a caterpillar or butterfly, simply thread grapes on a wooden skewer (alternate with strawberries or another fruit if desired).
2. To turn your caterpillar into a butterfly, just add slices of watermelon on either side.
3. Make an easy ladybug by cutting an oval shape out of a slice of watermelon. Add eyes and spots with chocolate chips. Grape stems make great antennae – just be sure to remind little ones that they're not edible!



Photo: depositphotos.com © brookefuller

Bugging out

It's easy and fun to get creative with vegetables, too! Try making a butterfly body with grape tomatoes – complimented with cucumber wings. Or slice a plum tomato in half to make the body of a ladybug, then use black olives to make the bug's head and spots.

Photo: depositphotos.com © brookefuller

Fro-yo pops

It doesn't get much easier than this, folks! Seriously, who needs Menchie's?! (OK, scrap that … I do!)

Ingredients & supplies:

- Small, individual yogurt cups (I used Minigo)
- Popsicle sticks

Method:

1. Using a sharp knife, make a tiny slit in the centre of the yogurt top. Insert a popsicle stick. Freeze for at least two hours, or overnight.
2. Remove yogurt containers from the freezer and carefully peel off the seals, leaving sticks intact. Run hot tap water over each cup for about 10 seconds, being careful not to let water into the yogurt.
3. Gently pull the frozen yogurt pop out of its container and enjoy!



Photos: Sonia Mendes

Photo: depositphotos.com © Photocreo

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* Note: Dora & Diego is not a musical performance.

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Vacationing with the family in the Adirondacks of Northern New York is an adventure just waiting to be had. Get off the beaten path and explore rugged coastlines, historic sites that make history come alive, and, of course, the incredible summer recreation opportunities.

New in the Adirondacks this summer

On July 4, The Wild Center in Tupper Lake will open the Wild Walk, an elevated boardwalk trail that puts visitors in the treetops to experience the Adirondacks from a bird's perspective. This made-for-kids attraction features swinging bridges, a spider's web with room to hang out and a massive, bald eagle's nest that welcomes visitors to climb a bit higher.

In the Lake George Area, Posh Primitive just opened, offering "glamping" amid the lush Adirondack summer landscape. Guests stay in custom-made, log-embellished



The Wild Center

Photo: Courtesy of the Wild Center

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By Rebecca Steffan



Photo: depositphotos.com © fashionstock

canvas wall tents, each equipped with sumptuous furnishings and a distinctly safari-chic atmosphere.

Off-property day trips include whitewater rafting on the Hudson River, paddling and fishing, guided hiking trips, ziplining, and mountain and road biking. The staff cooks farm-to-table meals and dogs are welcome. – *cont'd on page 92*

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Photo: Courtesy of the Adirondack Coast/goadirondack.com

– cont'd from page 91

Set sail this summer in the Adirondacks

Boating in the Adirondacks is an essential part of summer for visitors and residents alike, and the region's vast supply of navigable waterways have created a vibrant community of paddlers, boaters, sailors and swimmers. Set sail on one of the many picturesque lakes of the Adirondacks, including:

Lake Champlain – The USA's 13th largest lake offers consistent winds for wind surfing and sailing, as well as multiple boat launches. Rent a boat from one of several marinas, and join in the fun during the 37th annual **Mayor's Cup Festival and Regatta**. Slated for July 9-12 in Plattsburgh, the regatta is the largest and the most highly regarded sailing regatta on Lake Champlain. The Mayor's Cup features a full weekend of family events, including the Parade of Lights, live music on the waterfront and a 5k fun run for all ages.

Long Lake – Located in the central Adirondacks, this popular summer destination offers over 22 kilometres of waterways, with lean-tos and campsites located along its shores. Go for a seaplane ride with Helms Aero Service after a day on the water.

Durant Days & Boat Parade Weekend, scheduled for Aug. 1 in Raquette Lake and Long Lake, offers a weekend of festivities celebrating William West Durant, the man credited with creating the Great Camp style of architecture.

Boat tours of Raquette Lake will be offered on the W.W. Durant Cruise Ship, as well as tours of area Great Camps, live musical entertainment and the annual Raquette Lake Boat Parade, followed by fireworks.

For those interested in the history of boating and water transport in the Adirondacks, the Adirondack Museum's *Boats & Boating in the Adirondacks* exhibit features classic boats from the early days of travel, including Gold Cup-winning vessels, circa 1905.

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Also on display is the *El Lagarto*, aka the "Leaping Lizard of Lake George," which won the 1933, 1934 and 1935 Gold Cup races – the last of which was in Lake George.

Lake George – As the warm weather winds down, Lake George will host the **Lake George Gold Cup Festival**, a re-creation of the 1935 race that saw George Reis win his third Gold Cup with *El Lagarto*. Slated for Sept. 17 – 20 in Bolton Landing, the festival will feature vintage boat and replica races, island tours, picnics and plenty of family fun from this bygone era of racing.

Family mountain biking: hit the trails or watch exciting races

The Adirondack Region is a growing mecca for mountain bikers in the northeast, offering well-maintained trails and a community of riders who welcome visitors to explore and enjoy their favourite trails.

Integral to maintaining Adirondack mountain bike trails are the volunteer organizations that do everything from securing funding for signage to raking leaves and pine needles off the trails.



Photo: depositphotos.com © bloodua

Barkeater Trails Alliance, a project of the Adirondack Ski Touring Council, is leading the charge around Lake Placid, Wilmington and Saranac Lake, adding on to existing networks so that all levels of riders have plenty of options.

In Wilmington, one of BETA's ongoing projects is the **Flume Trail Network**, located on the West Branch of the Ausable River, offering smooth single tracks, and technical climbs.

A half an hour drive from Wilmington, the **Ausable Chasm Mountain Bike Center** offers up mountain bike trails, including beginner cruising and intermediate loops with double-track and single track trail.

The advanced loop features steeper hills and narrow paths through kilometres of unspoiled forest. For more expert riding, the Wickham Marsh State Trails are connected to Ausable' s trails, leading riders through the marsh, downhill to Lake Champlain.

– *cont'd on page 95* ▶▶







Family Fun Guide

Lake George Region

Gateway to the Adirondacks

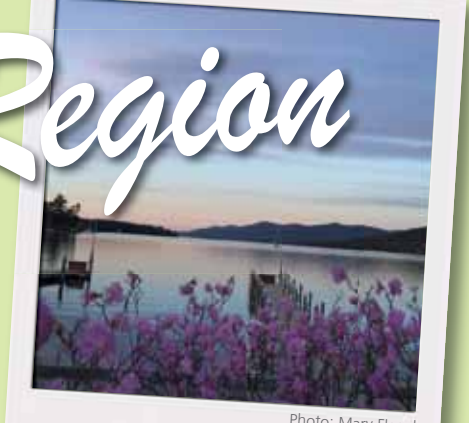

Photo: Mary Flagel

Relax overlooking the lake!



Photo: Brian Koonz

Ride in a horse drawn carriage!

The Village of Lake George offers the largest mix of attractions, restaurants, shops, nightlife.

You can walk within a two-block radius and go fishing or rent a boat, watch a war re-enactment, relax on the beach, take a cruise, play miniature golf, parasail, hit the arcades, ride in a horse drawn carriage, have a cocktail overlooking the lake, enjoy a micro-brew or wine tasting, or just relax on a bench and watch the world go by.

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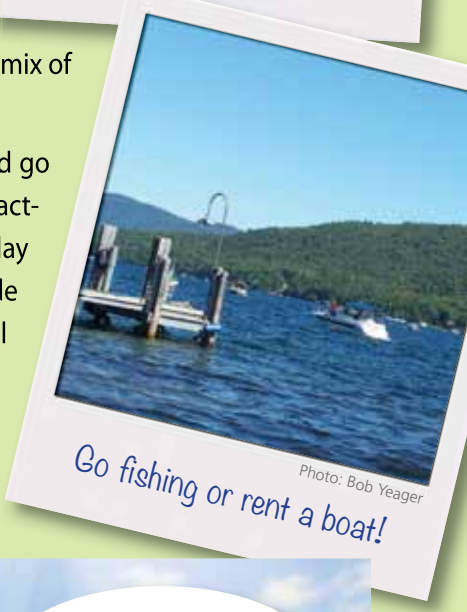

Photo: Bob Yeager

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JUNE

Americade – June 2-6
Shake the Lake for Vets Sake – June 12-14
Adirondack Wine & Food Festival – June 27-28

JULY

King George Fishing Derby – July 10-12
Lake George Festival of Arts & Crafts – July 18-19
Queens's Great Craft Show – July 25-26

AUGUST

Lake George Blues & Roots Festival – August 1-2
British Music Invasion (tribute bands) – August 15-16
Lake George Music Festival – August 18-20 & 21-25

SEPTEMBER

Lake George.com Brew fest – September 5-6
Adirondacks National Car Show – September 10-13
Adirondack Hot Air Balloon Festival – September 18-20
260th Anniversary Battle of Lake George – September 26-27

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Photo: Gore Biking – Courtesy of Gore Mountain

– cont'd from page 93

In the western Adirondacks, **Highflats State Forest / Seven Springs Trails** is one of four areas in the Adirondack Seaway Region maintained by the **St. Lawrence County Mountain Bike Association**. Located in Colton, the trails provide kilometres of great terrain for all abilities.

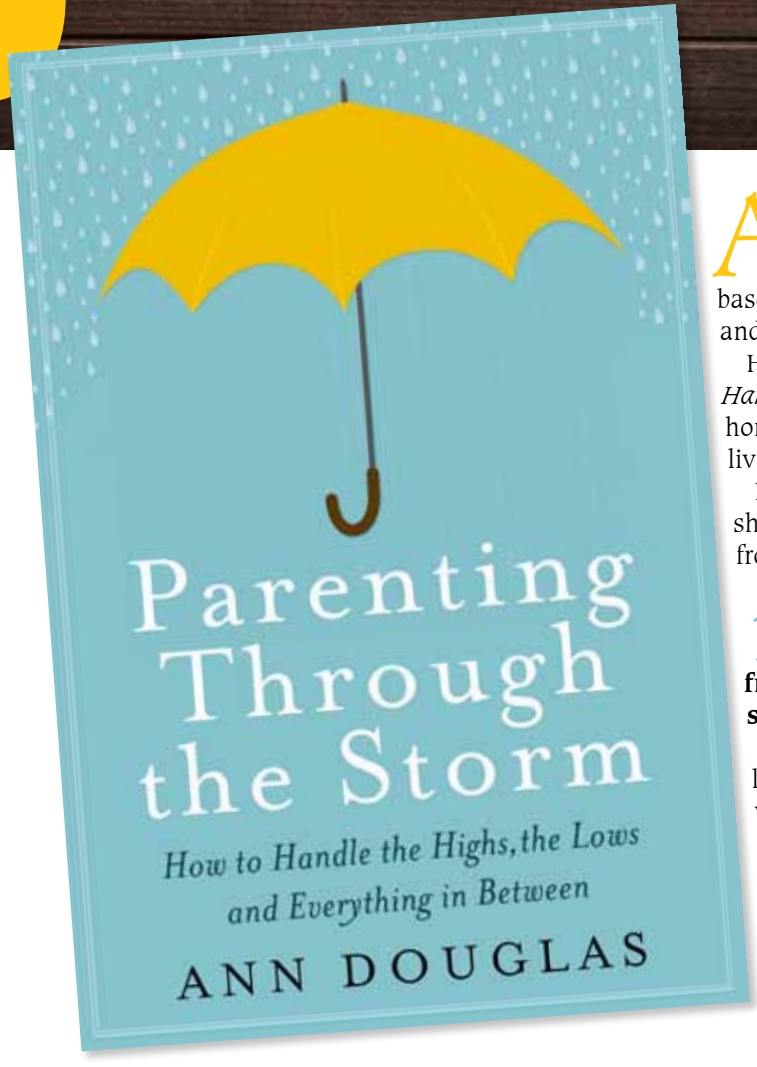
The Adirondacks also host several mountain biking festivals and races throughout the summer, including:

- **20th annual Black Fly Challenge** on June 13 is a 64-kilometre bike race through the Moose River Plains Recreation Area, starting in Indian Lake and ending in Inlet. Riders and guests will enjoy an after-party at Fern Park featuring food, beer and live music. The race attracts about 1,000 riders and is open to beginner, sport and expert competitive cyclists.
- **Mountain Bike Rodeo & Races**, the final event of the Black Fly Challenge, is scheduled for June 14 at Fern Park. The event features a series of competitions for all ages, including a Slow Race, Barrell Race, Log Pull, Balance Race and the Longest Wheelie.
- **The Churney Gurney Mountain Bike Race & Kids Race** slated for Aug. 2 at Gurney Lane Recreation Area in Queensbury will feature three course options covering 16, 24 and 40 kilometres for beginner, sport and expert riders. Cash prizes will be awarded for winners in each category. The kids' race is for riders ages 12 and under. The Queensbury Recreation Department plans to expand the town's Gurney Lake Park by about three kilometres this year.

Discover the Adirondacks on visitadirondacks.com, or connect with their social channels on Facebook.com/VisitAdirondacks, Instagram.com/VisitAdirondacks and Twitter @visitadks.

Q&A

'It's about hope and healing and resilience'



Ann Douglas is the author of the bestselling *Mother of All* parenting books and has written for top parenting publications in Canada and the U.S. The Peterborough-based Douglas leads parenting workshops and advises parents and educators across Canada.

Her latest book, *Parenting Through the Storm: How to Handle the Highs, the Lows, and Everything in Between*, is an honest and indispensable compendium of advice for parents living with children who have mental illnesses.

In this Q&A with *Parenting Times*, Douglas explains why she wrote the book and what she hopes parents take away from it.

1 Your book is titled *Parenting Through the Storm*. It's an intriguing title that suggests this is far from a typical parenting book. What exactly is "the storm"?

I used the storm as a metaphor to describe the challenging times we went through as a family when my kids were struggling. I also wanted to leave the door open to the possibility of hope: storms can pass through.

I used two storm-related quotes in the book's epigraph because I wanted to acknowledge the importance of family resilience in the wake of the storm. Right now, I'm even wearing a storm-related T-shirt. The quote on my T-shirt reads, "Storms make trees take deeper roots."

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2 For readers who may not be familiar, can you provide an overview of your family's experience, and explain what inspired you to write this book?

Sure. Back in around 2003 (the starting point for this book), all four of my children were struggling. My oldest (14) was struggling with depression and an eating disorder. The two middle boys (12 and 11) were struggling with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. And the youngest (who was six at the time) was having a terrible time at school. He was suspended six times in Grade 1.

It would be four more years before we finally obtained a diagnosis that explained his behaviour: Asperger's syndrome (an autism spectrum disorder). When things were at their worst, I felt scared and alone and overwhelmed and sad that life was so difficult for my kids.



Photo: depositphotos.com © garloon

If we fast-forward to the present (as I do at the end of the book), I can tell you that, despite their earlier challenges, all four of my kids are thriving today as young adults. (They range in age from 17 to 27.) They are doing much better than I would have thought possible a decade ago.

I wrote this book in order to offer a mixture of hope (that things can get better) and practical advice (strategies for making life better, starting right now) to parents who are facing the same types of struggles my family faced. I wanted to write a book that would let other parents know that things can get a lot better for your child and your family.

I wanted to write the book that would have been helpful to me when things were most difficult and my kids were really struggling. This is easily the most personal book I have ever written. I talk about my children's struggles, my family's struggles, and my own struggles.

But this book is about so much more than that. It is about hope and healing and resilience — and about practical things you can do, starting right now, to start making life better for your child and your family, even while you are waiting for your child's name to move to the top of the waiting list for diagnosis and treatment.

The book is for any parent who has a child who is struggling — especially if they don't quite understand why that child is struggling and they want to learn more. They might have a preschooler who is extremely anxious or they might have a teenager who is angry or depressed. The book covers a range of ages and addresses a number of different types of challenges — everything from mental health challenges to neurodevelopmental conditions to behavioural difficulties.

3 In the book, you write that you hope you can help parents avoid spiralling downward to the same extent that you did. Can you explain what you went though, what was your lowest point and how you found the strength to recover and keep going?

I experienced a really devastating three-year-long clinical depression. I gained a lot of weight which I have subsequently had to work very hard to lose. (I've lost 135 lbs.) Things were pretty grim.

In terms of finding the strength to recover and keep going, a combination of medication and stress management allowed me to experience a dramatic improvement in my mental health. At the same time, my kids were starting to do a lot better, which brought down my stress levels tremendously.

Once I started feeling better and they started doing better, I was able to start focusing on my physical health: making sleep a priority, exercising daily, portion control re: eating (I keep a daily food diary), and making a conscious effort to have more fun. (More about this below.)

Photo: Jessica Melnik Photography

4 Do you feel there are misconceptions about children, mental health and parenting that need to be clarified, and that you try to clarify in your book? If so, can you explain?

1. It is possible to be a loving and committed parent and still have a child who struggles. Having a child who is struggling doesn't make you a bad parent, just as being a child who is struggling doesn't make your child a bad kid. Parents are often unfairly blamed for the difficulties their children are experiencing — something that only serves to make a painful situation even worse.

2. A diagnosis doesn't define your child. It simply provides you with information that can be helpful to you as you try to make life better for your child. A diagnosis can provide you with access to support at school and in the community and it can allow you to zero in on parenting strategies that are most likely to bring out your child's strengths.

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5 In the book, you also write that you're a "passionate convert" when it comes to the importance of self-care, something most if not all parents tend to neglect. Can you elaborate on that?

It is so easy to put your own health and happiness on the back burner when your child is struggling.

If I had to do it all again, I would do a better job of taking care of myself. I hadn't realized, until the past two years, when I started to become physically active on a daily basis, just how key regular exercise is to helping me when it comes to managing anxiety and boosting my mood.

When I think back to the years when the kids were really struggling, I remember how often I felt paralyzed with anxiety and exhausted at the same time.

Part of the problem was that I was so busy trying to get them the help that they needed to thrive that I forgot to take good care of myself. I wasn't getting enough sleep. I was using food as a tool to cope with my emotions. And I was almost completely sedentary. It is hardly surprising that I eventually hit the wall, experiencing physical and emotional burnout. I've had to work really hard to come back from that.

Now I understand how crucial exercise is to maintaining my emotional equilibrium. I walk every day. Sometimes I walk two or three times in the same day. Walking helps to calm me. A situation that seems overwhelming when I set out on my walk feels much more manageable by the time I arrive back home.

I have also learned to make sleep a priority. I no longer treat it like an unnecessary frill. I understand that the sleep I clock tonight is an investment in how I'm going to feel (and how I'm going to cope) tomorrow.

Healthy nutrition is key, too. Going too long between meals or overindulging in simple carbohydrates can lead to dips in blood sugar, something that makes mood swings, irritability, and fatigue worse. I've learned how to team up protein, complex carbohydrates, and healthy fats in ways that are energy boosting rather than energy zapping. I've severely cut back on my consumption of caffeine. And I've pretty much stopped drinking alcohol.

I make fun a priority. Fun falls off our to-do lists pretty quickly when our kids are struggling, and yet it is incredibly soul-nourishing. It's important to reach out to other people who will help you to remember to have fun, even when your child is struggling, as opposed to waiting for some unknown date in the future to give yourself permission to start having fun.

6 Generally speaking, what are the most important messages you hope readers/parents take away from your book?

1. You and your child are not alone.

2. Having a child who is struggling doesn't make you a bad parent — just as being a child who is struggling doesn't make your child a bad kid.

3. It is important to reach out for help as soon as you begin to suspect that there could be a problem. Waiting lists are long. You want to get your child's name on the waiting list for diagnosis and treatment sooner rather than later.

4. You don't have to wait until your child has a definitive diagnosis before you start trying to make things better for your child and your family.

5. You don't have to be afraid of obtaining a diagnosis for you child. Understand that a diagnosis simply provides you with a snapshot of information about your child. It doesn't define or limit your child.

6. It is important to give yourself permission to experience joy in your life — even when your child is going through a hard time. You can't put your life and your happiness on hold until some magical future time when your child will no longer be struggling. You have to do the hard work of finding happiness in your life right now, even while your child is going through a really tough time. A child who is struggling needs the strongest, happiest, healthiest parent possible. Self-care isn't an indulgence. It's a necessity.

> It is possible to be a loving and committed parent and still have a child who struggles. Having a child who is struggling doesn't make you a bad parent.

7 You have made it through the storm, and as you write, so have your children, who have grown into healthy, happy adults. As you look back on your experiences from the other side, what have you learned?

I have learned that families are incredibly resilient and that weathering a storm like what my family experienced can leave us even stronger and more connected than what we were before.

8 And what words of advice and/or comfort would you offer to other parents who are struggling?

It is so important to reach out for help and support from other parents who have walked this walk. They can help you to make sense of the mental health and educational systems so that you can find the support your child and your family need to thrive. And they can encourage you to treat yourself with self-compassion — to keep telling yourself that you're doing the best that you can in a difficult situation; and that it's not fair or reasonable to demand perfection of yourself.

Two organizations that are doing really great work in providing support to families are The Institute of Families for Child and Youth Mental Health (www.familysmart.ca) and Parents for Children's Mental Health (www.pcmh.ca).

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