

THE Mom & CAREGIVER™

FEBRUARY 2017
VOLUME 19 ISSUE 2

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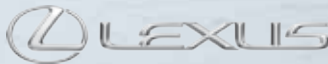


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On The Cover



Peekaboo! It was fun turning the tables on our photographer! Teyo took Cynthia's picture for a change! Teyo loves Mickey Mouse Clubhouse, Bubble Guppies, basketball and power tools. A huge thanks to Little Labels Boutique for our cover kid's adorable outfit.

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Photostylist
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Sabina Manji
Melissa Warkentin

If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact us at 519.652.9226 or at editor@themomandcaregiver.com.

THE MOM & CAREGIVER is published by Anibas Productions Limited, Publications Mail, Agreement Number 40834037 PO Box 29118, London, ON N6K 4L9 - www.themomandcaregiver.com

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Sabina Manji - Chief Editor

It's Time to Exhale



"The best and most beautiful things in this world cannot be seen or even heard, but must be felt with the heart."
Helen Keller

Hello everyone! Here we are with our first full-colour February edition of *The Mom & Caregiver*. Now that our new baby is already a month old, I'm thrilled to report that, with the exception of a few hiccups (as all new babies are bound to get), things are moving along really well. We haven't lost even one night's sleep nurturing our all-new magazine. The nine months we spent on this labour of love have really paid off. You, dear readers, were a big part of that process. I look forward to sharing all that happens as we grow into a magazine we'll always be proud of.

As you know, February is the month of love. And, we're always looking to share

the love with you. With this in mind, we're introducing a new column this month called Frankly Fatherhood. This column will express the love and concern in being a parent and caregiver from a man's point of view (page 12).

It's also important to love ourselves this month and our psychotherapist, Emily, shows us how to be happy when we're single on page 16.

One of the best ways to share love with our children is by spending quality time together. I have such fond memories of cuddling up on the couch with little Mikael to read a storybook. I still remember his favourite back then was *Love You*

Forever by Robert Munsch (truth be told, maybe it was MY favourite). Our As They Grow column reminds us that building a love of literacy begins at the baby and toddler stage. I couldn't agree more. I truly feel that by starting Mikael early, he's developed into an avid reader today.

Finally, we hope the experience of sharing the new magazine is one that is reminiscent in some ways to being introduced to a newborn family member. It truly has been a labour of love (now exhale!).

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FEBRUARY EVENTS

02/2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Bealart Talks John Labatt Visual Arts Centre Western University	2 Feb. 1-4 Silent Film Series Grand Theatre	3 Brassroots Aeolian Hall	4 Feb. 3-5 The Magic Flute Talbot College
5 Billy Culp Aeolian Hall	6 Books for Babies LPL, Central	7 Nature in the City LPL, Central	8 Feb. 7-11 Vigilante Grand Theatre	9 Culture Club 55+ Museum London	10 Harry Manx Aeolian Hall	11 Saturday Morning Walk Springbank Park (tvta.ca)
12 Feb. 11-12 Monster Jam Budweiser Gardens	13 Storytime LPL, Central	14 Blue Rodeo Budweiser Gardens	15 Poetry Reading LPL, Landon	16 Ladysmith Black Mambazo London Music Hall	17 Playgroup LPL, Cherryhill	18 The Firehall Reunion London Music Hall
19 Feb. 18-19 London Golf Show & Sale Western Fair	20 Board Game Event Centennial Hall	21 Nature in the City: Magical Meadowlily LPL, Central	22 Feb. 21-March 11 Art Grand Theatre	23 Storytime LPL, Byron	24 Feb. 24-26 London Boat, Fishing and Outdoor Show Western Fair	25 Feb. 24-25 Forest City Beer Festival Presents: Winter Pop Up Bar! Hassan Law Community Gallery
26 Billy Talent Budweiser Gardens	27 Books for Babies LPL, Central	28 Eric Church Budweiser Gardens	For More Details and Events Visit  Your Online Parenting Resource			

Feb. 11-12
Monster Jam
Budweiser Gardens

February 14
Blue Rodeo
Budweiser Gardens

Feb. 18-19
London Golf Show & Sale
Western Fair

February 20
Board Game Event
Centennial Hall

Feb. 24-25
Forest City Beer Fest Presents: Winter Pop Up Bar!
Hassan Law Community Gallery

February 28
Eric Church
Budweiser Gardens

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PRECONCEPTION CARE

(the perfect time to put the horse before the cart!)



When we think of starting or growing a family, we often think of our finances, getting on the wait list for that coveted day care with the four-year wait or our career trajectory. But, what about optimizing health before pregnancy?

A large proportion of pregnancies are unplanned and women often arrive to care later in pregnancy. The ideal time to pay

attention to your health is long before you plan to get pregnant. Regular prenatal care reduces many poor pregnancy outcomes such as preterm birth and low birth weight as well as maternal and infant mortality. A woman's health before pregnancy has a profound impact on its outcome. Pay attention to some key areas when planning a preconception care visit.

1. Infections: Treating women who are HIV positive around delivery can reduce the risk of babies being infected. German measles (rubella) and chicken pox exposure in pregnancy can have dire consequences to baby so knowing if you're immune and getting immunized can help prevent these consequences.

2. Nutrition: Using folic acid at least six weeks before conception can reduce the

risk of spinal tube defects. Iron deficiency in moms can impact babies' growth. Supplementing with omega-3 fatty acids can help with brain development.

3. Exposures: Think as if you're pregnant once you start planning a pregnancy. Talk to your doctor about smoking, alcohol and recreational drug use.

4. Chronic illness: Women with diabetes,

high blood pressure, seizure disorders, depression or any chronic illness need to plan how to best keep themselves and their babies healthy by examining the effects of the illness and their medications before a pregnancy

The Middlesex-London Health Unit website (thehealthunit.com) has information on preconception care. Visit to your health care provider and take inventory of these key areas ... and put the horse before the cart!

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Newborn - Baby - Toddler

BUILDING A LOVE OF LITERACY

MLHU Early Years Partnership

Your baby can hear sounds as early as 20 weeks gestation and can recognize your voice and words by 30 weeks, so why not share the love of literacy from the very start?

Make reading and rhyming routine

Talking, singing, reading and playing are all ways to foster love and attachment with your child and have the added benefit of developing the foundations for learning. When that sweet little baby is born, start a routine and add reading and rhyme to everyday activities. Repeating the same rhyme with each diaper change or pulling out a board book while waiting at one of many doctors' visits are simple ways to weave literacy into things you're already doing. As your baby grows with each new milestone, you'll be growing that love of literacy simultaneously. Use that same board book when waiting in line at the grocery store and talk about the different shapes and sizes of clothing as you wash and fold your laundry. Turn your everyday routines and chores into rich learning opportunities.

Quality words count

Research has proven that your child needs to hear many quality words before the age of three to be successful in school. But, what is that number and what does that mean? Two thousand quality words an hour is the answer. Words should be thoughtful and positive, offering a wide range of vocabulary. We also know that your child's brain is more receptive to the power of these words when they come from a family member or caregiver while making eye contact. The relationship and connections behind the words shared with baby naturally build a love of literacy.

Start today

The most important thing to remember is that it is never too late to start. Giving your child your full attention, love and positive words will give them the opportunity to be the very best that they can be. For more literacy tips for parents, professionals and children of all ages, visit our website, thisisliteracy.ca.

By Jamie Fenton
Family Literacy Coordinator, Child & Youth Network

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IS YOUR CHILD LACTOSE INTOLERANT?

After consuming dairy, does your child get stomachaches? Lactose intolerance, occurs when lactose, a sugar in milk and dairy products, cannot be digested. Our bodies need the digestive enzyme lactase to digest lactose. Those with lactose intolerance don't produce enough lactase. When lactose isn't digested in the intestinal tract, gas, stomach cramps, diarrhea and bloating can occur.



Lactose intolerance is a digestive problem not a milk allergy involving the immune system. It may be genetic and is more prevalent among Asians, African Americans and Hispanics. It can develop in children between three and six years old, when bodies are making less lactase. After diarrhea, intestinal damage can cause a temporary shortage of lactase and intolerance to dairy for one to two weeks.

Dodge dairy
Try eliminating dairy from your child's diet for two weeks. If symptoms improve

without dairy but worsen with re-introduction, your child may be lactose intolerant. If you're concerned about your child, speak to your child's doctor.

How is it treated?
Treatment is individualized as tolerance varies. Some can eat yogurt and aged cheeses because the lactose in these products is broken down when they're made. Over-the-counter lactase pills can aid in digesting dairy products but consult your child's doctor first. For children on lactose-restricted diets, include suf-

ficient foods rich in calcium, vitamin D and riboflavin.

Lactose intolerance is easily manageable. Speak to your child's doctor for more information.

Becky Biqi Chen was a resident in general pediatrics for three years at the Children's Hospital at London Health Sciences Centre. She is currently specializing in pediatric gastroenterology during her fellowship at the British Columbia Children's Hospital.



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Family Love

I am truly humbled to be writing my first column for *The Mom & Caregiver* magazine. I hope to give you, the reader, an honest voice of one dad's journey through fatherhood – the toughest and most rewarding experience in a man's life.

It's New Year's Eve. I finally get to sink into a comfy chair and savour my already warm beer as I watch my kids playing with their cousins. My large and loud extended family members are wrapped up in running around with Luca (our three-year-old) and playing peek-a-boo with Nico (our one-year-old). They're singing, hugging, eating and laughing out loud together as though they've been in each other's lives for years. In fact, my family just met our kids two days ago, after our 14-hour flight to visit them here in Uruguay. With over 9,000 km between us normally, I can't help but be amazed at how easily love comes between them all.

I have wonderful childhood memories of my own family trips and of my extended family here. We've made a point of visiting every two to three years and this was the first visit with both kids. A small part of me wasn't sure how that would pan out since there are no other kids in this group and Luca's second and third cousins are over 20 years older than him. My fears subsided almost immediately when we arrived



and Luca was received with a new soccer ball at the airport. Within minutes, grown-ups were kicking the ball around the terminal and Luca was chasing after them, all smiles.

The rest of the holiday was wonderful. I was elated to see how easily my extended family embraced, took care of, and loved my kids and how my kids opened their own little hearts to allow a whole bunch of new faces in. Maybe it's a cultural thing and there's the expectation that we are to treat all family a certain way. Maybe my kids sense that they are safe and it's ok to mimic the love I show for my family. Maybe the affection my family has for me is automatically transferred to my progeny. Or maybe I'm overthinking this and it's much simpler.

Who you might identify as part of your family will vary but the one common, undeniable thread is love. Love is founded, nourished and blossoms when it's surrounded by a loving family. And it's our top job as parents to love our kids and encircle them with others to share that love.

Frank Emanuele is a proud father of two sons and special education teacher for the local public school board. When not parenting or educating, Frank enjoys cooking, photography, movies and video games.



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Brushing Up

Tips for your Pearly Whites

Many of us made resolutions in January, often around getting healthier. But, rarely do we think about the important role a healthy mouth plays. This year, make a decision to put your healthiest mouth forward by following these tips.

Make a date with your dentist
Regular dental checkups are absolutely essential in keeping your mouth healthy. Schedule regular cleanings and make them a priority in your schedule. When you're at your appointment, book your next one so it doesn't slip your mind.

Make friends with floss
It's not enough to just brush your teeth twice daily. Flossing helps to remove bits of food from between the teeth that brushing can't reach.

Reduce your sugar intake
It's no secret that sugar isn't good for your teeth. If you have a sweet tooth, the New Year is a good time to resolve to cut down. The simplest way to avoid snacking on sugary treats is to simply not buy them.

Butt out for good!
If you're a smoker, you may have already resolved to kick the habit in the

New Year. That's great! Your oral health will be dramatically improved by quitting smoking.

Eat more healthy foods
Add more healthy foods into your diet. Increase your calcium (which will bolster your teeth) and eat more fibrous foods that need to be chewed well.

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WE DO THE POO, SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO!

Three years ago, my husband and I had no idea of the adventures that were to come. We were about to attempt to conquer the world of parenthood. Our first big discussion was about how we were going to deal with the poop!?

Growing up working on farms and babysitting, poop was never a fear for me! However, Andrew blissfully thought the diapered babies on TV commercials changed themselves.

As new parents, we oohed and aahed over all the things we'd need for our beautiful newborn, but we were struggling with the question: disposable or cloth diapers? We liked the convenience of disposables, but loved the benefits to our child, the environment and our pockets that cloth diapers provided.

We chose cloth diapers because we loved the health benefits we were able to give our daughter, Addison, and because we didn't have to worry about how many diapers we were using.

Then I heard about cloth diaper laundering services, where they wash the cloth diapers for you and deliver clean diapers to your door every week! Wow! But, of course, there wasn't one nearby.

We moved back to London and happily discovered that we were pregnant again and that Cheerful Cheeks Cloth Diaper Service was available to purchase!

We were going to need more diapers. I was excited about educating others about the positive impact of cloth diapers, and eager to share the cloth diaper service with fellow parents and caregivers.

As we walk alongside new and growing families, we enthusiastically expand Cheerful Cheeks into London's surrounding communities to help make them a better place for our children and future generations.

Andrew and I help kids and families through our "Strive for Five" referrals opportunity where families can diaper their kids for free. We volunteer to make meals at The Ronald McDonald House in London. And, we have big plans for the future!

We do the poo, so you don't have to!

Kate & Andrew Marak
Cheerful Cheeks Cloth Diaper Service



CHEERFUL CHEEKS

Literature, stout and romance

Are We There Yet

Must-See Travel Destinations

Dublin, Ireland, is the most romantic city I've visited. Ok, it's not Paris. But, if I were planning a Valentine's Day getaway without kids, I'd pick Dublin for two reasons: Trinity College and the city's infamous pubs.

The very green and sculpted Trinity College campus is an oasis of serenity in this busy tourist city. Its main draw is the Book of Kells museum housing a ninth-century manuscript depicting four books of the New Testament.

Viewing this exhibition is a remarkably moving experience, particularly because the tour exits into the college's magnum opus, the Library

Room, with floor to ceiling wooden shelves of 200,000 antique books punctuated by busts of famous writers. It's a visual ode to all things literary and poetic.

But, not all of Dublin is intellectually heavy.

Outside Trinity College on Grafton Street, a voluptuous Molly Malone stands in statue form selling cockles and mussels and attracting a steady stream of photos. Across the street, McNeills Pub spoons out bowls of hearty Irish stew, while pulling a pint or two.

Speaking of pints, the Guinness Storehouse is the most popular destination in the country and the best way to get there – or to any Dublin stop – is on the 'hop on and off' green double decker bus tour. Plan to spend half a day at the Guinness emporium because there's always a line up and the tour ends at the fourth-floor Gravity Bar for tastings and lessons in the perfect pour. No surprise, the Gravity Bar also hosts a weekend St. Patrick's Festival Feb. 16 to 18, 2017, complete with local musicians.

Sherri Telenko is a freelance writer and blogger living in Southern Ontario. Sign up for travel and trail riding ideas at www.horsetrotting.net or follow her on twitter @SherriTelenko.



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Scooching along the floor, Leah quickly moves to her Mom, pulls herself to a shaky stand and is quickly pulled up to Jenn's lap where she sighs and relaxes into a soft puddle. Jenn strokes Leah's "it's been a long, busy day" pig-tails and adjusts the little girl's rather stiff legs over her own while discussing the benefits of Botox on hamstrings.

Leah spent the first few months of her life fighting for a chance to prove to the world just how brave she is. Her foster parents became strong allies and, with their love and skilled care, she began to thrive. Full of confidence and expectation of only good things in life, Leah navigates her world in her zippy fuchsia wheelchair and turns to her new Mom when her physical needs become just too much for a five-year-old girl.

Jenn was filled with conviction that her skills, connections and knowledge, born through necessity while raising her son through the caring systems for Cerebral Palsy, Epilepsy, and delays had a further purpose. While attending the Adoption Resource Exchange in Toronto, she was instantly taken by Leah's profile. Here was a little girl for whom workers had been looking for a permanent home for over four years. Jenn certainly understood that, on paper, Leah's challenges could seem daunting to those not familiar with the "other" side. The other side, for Jenn, is the child with

dreams and hopes, the child who needed an adult who could see beyond the leg braces and shunts. Leah needed a parent who could confidently plow a path for her and cheerfully welcome a swarm of medical helpers – their new family.

Learning more about Leah's culture became a focus for Jenn. With Leah's dual links to Oneida and Walpole Bands, it was important to Jenn that they attend cultural opportunities together. Project Hugs became a meeting point to reconnect with siblings, grandparents, and aunts and uncles.

Jenn feels blessed that she and her sons have grown their family circle to include Leah. She looks at her daughter and sees the many, many aspects of this little girl's world. Culture, relationships, health battles and academic challenges but, tonight, all that matters is that her favourite story – *Kiss, Kiss, Goodnight!* – is read before bed.

Amy Robinson works in Child Welfare and has been blessed by adoption with her youngest two daughters. They love to hear that, of all of her six children, they're the only two that didn't ruin her figure!

You can be happy ... and single!

Life Balance

Happiness and Fulfillment

Our world is focused on couples and being single can make you feel left out. Although most of us find ourselves alone throughout our lives, society makes us believe that happiness can only be found in a partnership. However, we're also told we must be happy alone before we can be happy in a relationship! And the emotional excitement of finding a connection drives us to find love at any cost! These mixed messages are certainly confusing!

Since we're programmed to seek out companionship, the art of being happy alone is tricky. When people seek counselling to find happiness, we often explore life balance. Life's demands often suffocate our inner happiness. Discovering who you are as a person separate from your career and internal desire for love is a place to start.

Think about your sleep patterns, eating habits, exercise regimen and social time. Do they give you the freedom to be happy? You don't need to overhaul your life completely, however, small mini steps like eating fruits and vegetables, taking a warm bath before bed, or walking during your lunch can improve your life balance. Take care of yourself like you would take care of someone you love.

February is the month of love but, instead of focusing on finding the date of your dreams, ask yourself what inspires and motivates you. Buy yourself a card, then write a message that makes you feel loved, desired and wanted. Keep it to remind yourself that, whether you have a partner or not, you deserve to enjoy life to the fullest!

"Take care of yourself like you would take care of someone you love."

Emily Beeckmans is educated as a social worker and is a trauma specialist. As a private practitioner, she strives to educate clients and the public about the importance of emotional health and well-being. Emily offers you a safe place to dig into your thoughts, feelings and life choices.

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Pet Friendly

Making Your House A Home

Why do cats BLANK?



Gene Rayburn once hosted a show called "Match Game" in which he'd ask a panel of contestants to complete a question. The point of the show was to match the words used to fill in the missing word in the question. Let's get started.

Why do cats _____? (Eat grass) When cats eat grass they frequently vomit. Some think this is an evolutionary adaptation to purge themselves of parasites. Others believe it might be a response to low level inflammatory bowel disease.

Why do cats _____? (Hide in boxes) Cats once survived by hunting, but they also needed to avoid being hunted. Boxes and other camouflage offer your feline friend a source of (apparent) protection from the dangers of the world while concealing their location from any prey they choose to stalk.

Why do cats _____? (Knead) As a kitten nursing their lactating mom, your cat would stimulate more milk release by rhythmically extending and contracting their toes against a swollen mammary gland. Those cats that knead a blanket or your arm as adults are simply reliving that blissful time of their lives they associate with drinking warm milk and the comradery of kin.

Why do cats _____? (Hate water) While most cats shy away from water and don't like getting rained on or getting their paws wet, others truly enjoy it. Some dip their foot in water and lick the moisture off their paws. It's rare to see cats swimming. Maybe it's because they aren't good at shaking the way dogs do to get rid of the water.

Why do cats _____? (Purr) We really have no idea why cats purr. We know it originates from the vocal cords and seems to vibrate through the sinus cavities of their head. We also know it's associated with something pleasurable like the touch of one's hand or the pleasure of one's company. We don't know if it serves some other lofty purpose. Many of us have asked our cats why they purr but the answer we get back is always the same - MEOW! (which means "feed me" in catspeak).

Dr. I. Wonder is here to answer your questions regarding your furry family members. If you have a question, email it to us at brent@NeighbourhoodPetClinic.com. Our team at Neighbourhood Pet Clinic will tap into their collective experience to answer your questions.



The great soda debate

We all live under the same sky, but we don't all have the same horizon.

*Konrad Adenauer, 1876-1967,
Former Chancellor of Germany*

Soda, diet or not, has no nutritional value. Now, you may be wondering, is it healthier to drink regular or diet soda? Well, the answer is not as clear-cut as you might hope.

Regular soda

Regular soda contains lots of sugar or high fructose corn syrup, which are high in calories. Fructose is far more dangerous than other sugars because it's metabolized by your liver. Much of the

fructose you eat is stored as fat and creates a vicious cycle of overeating, weight gain and, ultimately, obesity.

Diet soda

While diet soda has few calories that does not mean it won't lead to weight gain. Some research suggests artificial sugar substitutes can make you hungrier, causing you to eat more and thus promoting weight gain.

Another issue is the safety of artificial sugar substitutes. While they've been approved for human consumption, they may increase the risk of or cause joint inflammation, neurological problems,

cancer and metabolic problems.

Artificial sweeteners are not the answer
Many have fallen for industry claims suggesting that no- or low-calorie "diet" foods will help you lose weight and allow diabetics to indulge in the sweeter side of life without harmful effects, but studies have repeatedly blown massive holes in these claims. Artificial sweeteners actually stimulate appetite and increase cravings for carbs.

Rene Beaulieu is a Certified Health Coach and business professional who is passionate about working with people to improve their health, family and work life. Learn more at healthseekersinc.com.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Take the guesswork out of feeding your baby

Feeding your baby may seem like a mystery but here are some guidelines you can follow:

- Exclusively breastfeed for up to six months and sustain it for up to two years and longer. Add a daily vitamin D supplement for breastfed infants.
- Introduce iron-rich foods such as meat, meat alternatives and iron-fortified cereal as your baby's first complementary foods around six months of age.
- Introduce foods commonly associated allergies (peanut, fish, wheat, milk products, soy, whole eggs) at about six months and, once introduced, offer them regularly. Check with your family doctor if there's a family history of allergies.
- Look to your infant's cues. Allow your baby to self-feed and use an open cup.
- Prepare family meals for everyone, even baby. Offer a variety of textures appropriate for your baby's eating skill level.
- Schedule regular meals and snacks, starting at one year old, with a variety of foods to ensure a good supply of nutrients for proper development.

For more information, contact your local health unit or visit dietitians.ca.

Heather Thomas, PhD is a Registered Dietitian from London who strives to find balance in her professional and family life while enjoying the occasional chocolate chip cookie along the way!



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WHOLE HEALTH

Are you HIP? Superfoods and ancient grains for heart health!

Health-inspired person or “HIP” is the latest trend word for 2017, where clean, mindful-eating is a new approach to health. Nutraceuticals, or foods with medicinal benefits, continue to rise in popularity, including ancient grains such as sorghum. A gluten-free, complex carbohydrate and antioxidant-rich seed, this flour is often overlooked at bulk stores. High in fibre, protein, omegas and B-complex vitamins, it aids digestion, helps skin conditions, prevents diabetes and cancerous tumours, and promotes low cholesterol and cardiovascular health.

Sorghum Pancakes (makes 12)

2 tsp ground chia seeds
3 Tbsp boiling water
½ cup oat flour (ground rolled oats)
½ cup sorghum flour
¼ tsp baking powder
¾ tsp baking soda
¼ tsp salt
1 large egg, beaten
1 cup buttermilk
1 tsp vanilla extract

Combine chia and water in a small bowl. Stir and set aside. In a medium bowl, combine flours, baking powder, baking soda, salt; mix well. Set aside. In another small bowl, whisk egg, buttermilk, chia mixture and vanilla. Add buttermilk mixture to flour mixture and stir until combined. Preheat skillet on medium heat. Brush with butter or oil. Scoop ¼ cup batter onto skillet. Flip when pancake begins to bubble, approximately 3 minutes per side. Sides should be golden.

Carolyn Hemming (and co-author, Patricia Green) are the authors of seven bestselling cookbooks in three languages with easy recipes and accessible ingredients. Carolyn is an active mother and businesswoman who lives with her family in London.

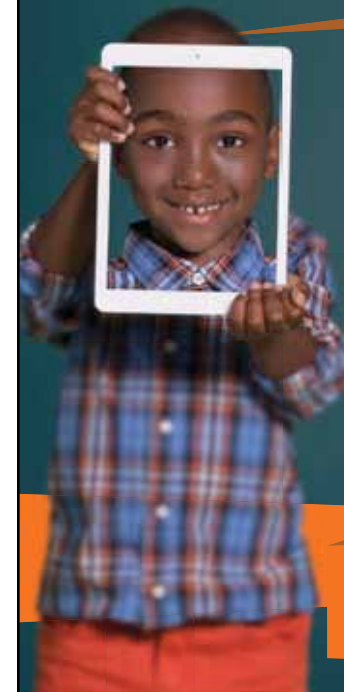




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