

THE MOM & CAREGIVER™

MARCH 2018
VOLUME 20 ISSUE 3

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Allergy Alert

How to Introduce
New Foods

PMS

Promoting Men's
Survival

It's March Break

Get Cooking with the Kids

Celebrate International Women's Day

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On The Cover



Noah is ready for a tropical vacation! He was such a patient boy and loved snuggling in his Mom's arms during the shoot. And, we absolutely love that hair! A huge thanks to Little Labels Boutique for our cover kid's funky goggles.

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

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FINDING COMMON GROUND

"No winter lasts forever,
no spring skips its turn."
- Hal Borland

It's so important to find a way to connect with your kids, especially as they get older. Finding something you have in common allows you to spend time together, and have conversations about your shared passion. But, as you can imagine, finding a connection with an almost twelve-year-old son can prove challenging. Truthfully, that's not so with my Mikaeel. Our shared passion is cooking and baking. I give him creative freedom in the kitchen that he doesn't experience elsewhere. ("Dad doesn't let me make this kind of mess!") He would love to have a cook-off where he gives us a list of odd ingredients to create something edible.

Looking for ways to connect with your child this March Break? Our dietitian, Jenn Giurgevich, has you covered with family cooking ideas on page 20. Not looking to cook at home? Our Kid Zone kids talk eating out this month by offering their opinions on TVs in restaurants. March Break seems like a great time to treat the family to a night out, but we challenge you to use that time to talk, chat, tell jokes, be silly, catch up on each other's day, play a game or ask ques-

tions. Turn off the tech and avoid the TVs - take tips from our wise youth on page 15.

We've been hearing from so many of you over our social media. "How do I get my child on one of your covers?" and "When does your annual photo contest begin?" Well, it's here, so start snapping! We'll be receiving entries to our 14th annual Captured Moments photo contest from March 10 - April 10. Check out our ad on page 19, and get complete details at themomandcaregiver.com. We can't wait to see your little ones' smiling faces!

We continue to feel the love from our community during our 20th anniversary year, and we want to spread the love right back to you. Visit our Facebook and Instagram pages for great 20th anniversary giveaways. We look forward to seeing you there. And to all the special women of the world who make such a difference every day, happy International Women's Day on March 8th! 🌸



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MARCH EVENTS

03/2018

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

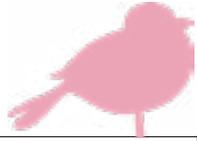
Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

For More Details and Events Visit



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				1 The Sheepdogs London Music Hall	2 March 1-4 Stratford Garden Festival	3 March 1-4 Disney On Ice Budweiser Gardens
4 Imagination Station Museum London	5 Storytime LPL, Central	6 Early Years Play Dates London Children's Museum	7 March 7-9 London Farm Show Western Fair	8 Playgroup LPL, Beacock	9 March 3-25 Kinsmen Fanshawe Sugar Bush Maple Festival	10 Maple Harvest Festival Museum of Ontario Archaeology
11 WWE Live! World to Wrestlemania Budweiser Gardens	12 March 12-17 Beethoven Lives Upstairs Grand Theatre	13 A Thousand Splendid Suns Grand Theatre	14 March 14-18 Lionel Bart's OLIVER! Palace Theatre	15 Forest City Film Festival Winning Films of 2017 Wolf Performance Hall	16 March 15-18 USports Women's Hockey Championships Thompson Arena	17 Great Canadian Fiddle Show Aeolian Hall
18 Free Guided Tour Museum London	19 March 19-21 Banff Mountain Film Festival Wolf Performance Hall	20 Early Years Play Dates London Children's Museum	21 Storytime LPL, Carson	22 Jazz Ensemble Paul Davenport Theatre	23 Poetry in Voice Competition Westminster Sec- ondary School	24 Broadway in London Wizard of Oz Budweiser Gardens
25 Speed & Custom Car Show Western Fair	26 Storytime LPL, Central	27 The Preschool at Crouch LPL, Crouch	28 London Lightning Budweiser Gar- dens	29 March 29-30 Spring Arts & Craft Show Western Fair	30 London Collectibles Expo Centennial Hall	31 Egg-cellent Easter Craft! LPL, Jalna

March 1-4

Stratford Garden Festival
Disney On Ice at Budweiser Gardens

March 14-18

Lionel Bart's OLIVER!
Palace Theatre

March 3-25

Kinsmen Fanshawe Sugar Bush Maple
Festival



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PMS:

Promoting Men's Survival (and Support)

PMS has become the focus of many pop culture jokes. T-shirts claim that PMS is "Putting up with Men's Silliness." (I am paraphrasing for the S word.) Sitcoms have men blaming all behavioural infractions by their partners on "that time of the month."

PMS or premenstrual syndrome is a very real condition. Hormonal changes in the seven to 10 days prior to the period can lead to many symptoms. These may include temperature dysregulation, cramping, fatigue and bloating. There may also be mood changes such as depression, emotional changeability and irritability. In some women the mood changes may be severe enough to be diagnosed as a cyclic depression. This severe mood change is called premenstrual dysphoric disorder or PMDD.

The role of a partner in dealing with any condition is two-fold. The first is to provide support. The second is to act as a mirror

and recognize when more attention is required. The role of a partner is not to hide out in one's chosen man cave as the sitcoms might suggest.

Providing support may depend on the symptoms. It is helpful to show flexibility in adjusting the household thermostat when your partner feels excessively cold or hot. Providing a hot water bottle for cramping or taking over the kitchen when fatigue is an issue are stellar supports. Asking what you can do to help may be revolutionary.

Providing a mirror and recognizing when mood changes are severe is another role for a partner. There is a theory that PMDD is really just a manifestation of underlying depression that manifests during a vulnerable time of the month. Reflecting this to your partner and helping her get professional help are the keys in getting better.

It's easy to be a partner when the going is good. Being a great partner in PMS and health is a challenge but might lead to a deeper and more fulfilling relationship. 🌱

Dr. Bhooma Bhayana is a family physician in London and the mother of two young men and grandmother of one lovely princess! She continues to find wonder and enjoyment in family practice despite more than 30 years on the job!



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INFANTS & ALLERGIES

About seven per cent of babies and young children have food allergies. Food allergies occur when the immune system mistakes a specific protein (an allergen) in a food as harmful, so the body reacts to it. Once a person has a food allergy, they get an allergic reaction every time they eat that food.

Foods that most commonly cause allergies are called common food allergens. The nine most common food allergens are:

- Egg
- Milk (and milk products)
- Mustard
- Peanut
- Soy
- Seafood (fish, shellfish)
- Sesame
- Tree nuts (e.g., almonds, cashews, walnuts)
- Wheat

Signs of an allergic reaction are a rash, vomiting, diarrhea, or breathing problems. If you think a food causes your baby any of these symptoms, stop offering that food and speak to your healthcare provider. Call 911 if your baby is having trouble breathing.

Introducing common food allergens

Recently, there has been a lot of discussion and confusion about the best time to introduce common food allergens to babies, in particular peanuts. For most babies (those not at risk for food allergies), Canadian guidelines suggest the following about preventing allergies and offering allergenic foods:

- Breastfeed exclusively for the first six months of life.
- Introduce food allergens to baby at about six months.
- Introduce only one food allergen from the list above per day and wait two days before offering another common food allergen.

- If baby has an allergic reaction, it will likely happen within 48 hours.
- Food allergens can be found in a variety of foods, so be sure to read the ingredient list on food labels.
- Food allergens should continue to be offered to infants regularly after they are introduced to maintain tolerance.

To introduce peanut protein to babies:

- Add peanut butter to foods like infant cereal, pasta, applesauce or yogurt, and mix well.
- Spread it thinly on toast or crackers for the older baby.

Allergy risk

A baby is at increased risk of developing a food allergy if:

- A parent, sister or brother has been diagnosed with an allergic condition like food allergy, eczema, asthma or hay fever.
- A baby has severe eczema.
- Baby has allergies to other foods such as egg.

Talk to your baby's health care provider to find out if your baby is at increased risk of developing a food allergy. Families concerned about food allergy prevention for at-risk infants should consult their physician.

Very valuable research about introducing food allergens earlier than six months and US recommendations from January 2017 are all influencing practice and advice from healthcare providers in Canada. However, it's not yet known what the ideal time is to introduce peanut protein for all infants, depending on their risk for food allergies. It is known that most infants can safely receive peanut butter at home at about six months. 🌱

Ginette Blake, BAsc RD

Public Health Dietitian

Middlesex-London Health Unit

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GET READY FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



(NC) March 8th is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender equality. Here are a few ways you can recognize and celebrate International Women's Day this year:

"One is not born a woman, one becomes one."

- Simone De Beauvoir

1. **Learn about feminist heroes.** Learn the history of this special date and the movement towards gender parity. Read up on women throughout the world and throughout history who have made a difference. Have a movie night with your friends and watch films about women, especially women from other countries or cultures.

2. **Get involved.** There are many ways you can get involved in your community. Join a board of a charity or organization, or volunteer and actively participate in the work that they do. See if there is a local walk or marathon in your area. Marching, running or walking with other women can help raise awareness for the struggles of women around the world.

3. **Donate to a charity.** Consider donating to one of the many organizations such as Amnesty International that work on women's issues, locally and internationally. Donating to organizations working on women's rights can help in the fight against gender-based discrimination, ensure women can access sexual and reproductive health services, and make sure that women who are human rights defenders can safely and freely carry out their work.

4. **Celebrate courageous women in your life.** Take a moment to think of the significance of the women in your life and be sure to celebrate, appreciate and thank them. 🌸

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CELEBRATING FAILURE

At work the other day, I was pulled into a conversation with a discouraged and defeated colleague who was feeling like a failure at the whole parenting gig. Her tired eyes looked up at me as she sipped her much-needed coffee and she said, “Frank, how do you do this so well? You seem to have it all together and in control... and you even have time to write a monthly fatherhood column!”

Little did she know the inner turmoil I was feeling that moment, so I sat down next to her and we talked.

Earlier that week, I got a note from my four-year-old’s teacher about how aggressive my son is being on the yard and that he punched one of his friends in the stomach. A day later, I found myself signing two incident reports at daycare because my two-year-old decided that biting was a normal part of toddler problem solving. My mind flashed through scenes at home where they fight over the same toy (that wasn’t touched in months!), I’m policing time-outs, and agonizing over the dinners they don’t eat, and how quickly I lose my patience over the endless whining, crying, and occasional screeching. Where did I go wrong?

We’ve all been there. We know the feeling all too well – those days where we feel we are failing at parenting.

In the isolating world of social media, there is unspoken pressure to always show your best accomplishments, your most proud successes, and the happiest photos of your kids. We fall into the rabbit hole of portraying this ideal view of ourselves online and unconsciously comparing ourselves to other “award-winning” parents. Let’s take a step back and keep in mind that it often takes about 64 attempts to get that just-right pic and I can’t help but wonder why some parents feel the need to post these perfectly staged statuses so frequently. I also believe that many of us have endured our fair share of parenting fails so we feel the need to celebrate those little successes when they happen. We’ve all done it, we’re all guilty, and it’s OK.

So this month I want to celebrate the failures – the parenting failures – the times where we feel too tired to do the right thing, the times when we’re riding out the tantrum storm in the grocery store, the times that we’ve lost our cool and yelled at our kids, the times that we’ve turned on a screen just

to get 30 minutes of peace and quiet.

Parenting is supposed to be hard work and I take comfort in knowing that my efforts will pay off in the end... they’d better! 🙌

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 gaming.



Is Coffee Bad for Your Teeth?

Brushing Up

Tips for your Pearly Whites

Many people simply can't start their day without a cup (or three!) of coffee. But, have you ever stopped to think what that morning cup of joe is doing to your teeth? The truth is, that morning coffee fix may be doing more damage to your teeth than you realize.

Coffee contains tannins, a type of polyphenol that causes the colouring in things like coffee, tea and red wine to more effectively stick to your teeth, leaving behind an unsightly yellow hue. You may think that only heavy coffee drinkers are at risk of that tell-tale yellowing of

their teeth, but even those with a one-cup-per-day habit are at risk. So, how can you still enjoy your coffee without staining your teeth?

First, although it may seem counterintuitive, drink your coffee black if you can. Cream and sugar accelerate the growth of the bacteria that cause the discoloration. Second, don't sip your coffee all day! The more exposure your teeth have to the tannins, the more discoloration will occur. Drink that coffee in one sitting, and be sure to brush your

teeth soon after to minimize the staining effect.

If you're a coffee lover, you may have noticed that your teeth aren't as white as they could be. You don't have to give up your coffee habit for the sake of your teeth. With a few precautions and some diligent dental hygiene, you can have that beautiful smile and healthy teeth, and still enjoy your coffee fix. ☺

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In 1986, Butch Rummel began his career in the granite, marble and natural stone industry by working with civic memorials, monuments and sculptures. His work was so superb that his reputation grew locally and internationally. Butch has earned multiple awards, certificates and degrees ranging from sculpting to tooling to technology. Over time, Butch's experience working with natural stone grew in all aspects of the industry.

In 1999, Gordon Parmenter started working with residential and commercial renovations and has since gained substantial knowledge in the completion of various construction projects. Gordon holds several degrees and certifications in business and information technology.

In 2005, the dream of ownership, for both Butch and Gordon, became a reality when they opened a granite, marble and natural stone facility. Butch Rummel and Gordon Parmenter united with partners Joseph Knott and Joseph Rodriguez to establish Bedrock Kitchen and Bath, LLC, now one of the largest granite and marble fabrication companies in both Michigan and Ontario. Bedrock Kitchen and Bath, LLC has over 65 years combined experience in the natural stone field.

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Join 11-year-olds Mikaeel and Ella every month as they share perspectives on life as a child sees it.

What is your opinion on this topic?

Mikaeel: I think that there should be no TVs in restaurants because when you go out to a restaurant with friends and family you don't go there to watch TV. You go there to spend time with friends and family.

Ella: I don't much like the TVs because I think that they are pretty distracting. I like to talk to the people I'm there with instead of watching TV.

Is your parents' opinion the same on this topic?

Mikaeel: My parents don't like TVs in restaurants because I always get distracted watching TV in a restaurant when my parents are trying to have a conversation with me.

Ella: My parents also think that the TVs are sometimes distracting to people.

Why does this matter to kids and families in London and around the world?

Mikaeel: It matters because people don't communicate face-to-face anymore when they go out. They just watch TV or go on their phones. I think restaurants should turn off TVs so people can talk and then there won't be as many distractions.

Ella: I think this matters to kids and families in London because sometimes they don't spend a lot of time together. They go out to a restaurant but don't even talk because they are busy staring at the TVs.

What do you think restaurants could do to make this better for everyone?

Mikaeel: I think restaurants could have one night every week called family night where restaurants turn off all the TVs so families and friends can talk and hang out instead of watching TV. Hey restaurants, Kids Zone challenges you to turn off the

TVs!

Ella: I think that restaurants could make it better for everyone by having certain booths for people that like the TVs and certain booths for those who don't.

Anything else you'd like to add?

Mikaeel: It depends on the restaurant. If it is a family restaurant, I don't think is good but, if it is in a bar or grill, it isn't as bad.

Ella: I would like to add that if TVs were taken away at restaurants I would still want the music because if you were there with someone you didn't know that well then it wouldn't be so awkward. 🎧

Mikaeel is the son of our editor, Sabina, and Ella is the daughter of our assistant editor, Melissa. Each has over 11 years of life experience. These grade sixes are world authorities on many, many subjects. Mikaeel and Ella will be sharing their ideas and opinions monthly.

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What Truly Matters

I have always wanted to be a mother. I have dreamt about it for years. When infertility threatened my dream, my partner and I decided to pursue adoption through the Children's Aid Society of London and Middlesex. We knew there were children in our community who needed us and, as an indigenous woman, I felt this could be a way for me to help my cultural community.

I can truly say it has been the best and worst experiences we have ever had. Throughout the training I understood that the child who came to us may not stay permanently. I knew that relatives of the child could come forward and the child may go to them. I thought I was prepared for that possibility.

It was only a few weeks after we became approved to foster/adopt that we "got the call." There was a baby boy, only 12 hours old, who needed a home. Again, we were reminded that anything could happen. This could be temporary or permanent placement. We were also told the baby had an older sister who was two years old and living temporarily in a foster home.

About one week after being home with the baby, an aunt came forward. We were heartbroken, but decided we would do whatever we could to help make the transition the best for the baby. For the next three months we loved and cared for the baby. We supported visits with his aunt and built a great relationship with her. When the court date came, we prepared the baby's things and included the life book we had created as a keepsake. Nothing could prepare us for loving a child and having to say goodbye. We feel fortunate that, because of the wonderful relationship we had developed with his family, they send us pictures and updates. He is loved and

cared for and that is what truly matters.

Through this experience remained our knowledge of his sister. We already loved her even though we did not know her and wanted to continue with our plan to adopt her. Before moving ahead, it was important that we allowed ourselves time to grieve the loss of the baby. It was hard. I cried a lot. I put all the baby things into the baby room and closed the door. It was several weeks before I could clean the room. Then, I put away all the baby things and repainted. For me, it was a way to let go and have a fresh start.

"Nothing could prepare us for loving a child and having to say goodbye."

A couple of months later we met our little girl. The transition to living with us moved quickly and the bond that grew is amazing. It feels like we knew we were meant for each other. We now have our happily ever after. 🧡

Jamie Palmer is awaiting the finalization of the adoption to her little girl. From her experience she leaves us with this: "The journey to adoption is challenging. There will be hard times. Your heart will break. But in the end, the journey leads you to something beautiful."

Foster and adoptive families are everyday people willing to open their homes and hearts to help children and young people in need. Be a part of our team. Contact us today at 519-455-9000 x2777, caslondon.on.ca, or find us on Facebook.



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LONDON & MIDDLESEX

One in five Canadians experiences loneliness and social isolation, which has a significant impact on their mental health. Many factors contribute to the problem, so being open to personal and community solutions is very important.

Decisions about how we choose to live can create loneliness and isolation. The unintended consequences of technology are moving services online, which eliminates human interactions. People are in the same room on their electronics and not connecting.

The problem is complex, but deserves attention. Reconnecting people with their community can improve health and well-being. Many of my clients, young and old, feel lonely despite having lots of people in their lives. They feel disconnected, with no one who understands them or no support to manage life's challenges.

Other countries are making loneliness and isolation a national crisis. Many new programs are emerging, which include post-secondary students living with seniors in their home or old age facilities, and day cares being run in retirement homes. However, we're still exploring ways working families can remain connected to their emotional world at a chaotic life stage.

Remember, you're not alone and many people feel the same way! Here are some ways you can reconnect your soul to other humans.

- Turn off your electronics for a night and play board games or do crafts with your family and friends.

- Make dinner or clean up with your family or friends. Do a community kitchen with your friends every month to prep meals for the week. You get adult time and the kids have play time.

- Go to a community centre and participate in workshops, sports, crafts or social events. Seniors centres have tons of fun things to do that are adapted to your mobility needs.

- Participate in interactive forums online where you talk about common issues and struggles so you can get human feedback even though you are online.

- Pick up the phone instead of texting to hear a voice and check in with friends and family.

- Go out shopping or to the library to be around people.

- Go talk to co-workers instead of emailing or texting.

- Ask a co-worker to go for walks on your lunch hour.

My challenge to you this month is to find one new way to stay in touch with friends and family. How can you enjoy the company of other humans? 🌱

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

Help Your Cat "Live the High Life"

Like alphabet magnets, cats seem to be attracted to the fridge. For them, the refrigerator is the penthouse suite. It's often the highest point in the house and kitties love a room with a view.

From their cool cat condo, they can see everything that happens in the kitchen. Not only is it often a private spot where they can be out of reach from young children or dogs who might chase them, they also receive the mental stimulation of watching their world from above.

This instinct is how their ancestors stayed safe from predators and hunted for food without being detected. The refrigerator is a relatively low-risk zone, but this love for heights can get cats into quite a bit of trouble.

For example, a cat may love to lounge by a second- or third-storey window. However, if the window is open to let in a breeze or the screen is loose, it only takes a moment of distraction for a typically balanced kitty to focus too hard on prey or fall asleep and take a tumble.

Cats are very good at hiding pain. Even if a cat lands right-side-up or falls from a height of only a few feet, he or she can still sustain injuries like damaged tendons, limbs, ribs, jaws and teeth from hitting the ground. This is especially a

risk for cats who enjoy access to apartment balconies.

Additionally, outdoor cats can easily get stuck in trees. It may seem like they simply refuse to come down, but the curvature of cats' claws makes it simple to climb up but very difficult to go back the other way.

It is very enriching for a cat to enjoy heights, but pet parents have to help by providing secured areas to scale, like shelves, bookcases and cat trees. If these items require claws to climb, don't forget to include an easy way for the cat to get down!

By challenging your cat both physically and mentally, these perches can be a great way to spend quality time together. Your cat can enjoy his or her entertainment, whether he or she prefers to watch Bird TV by the window or the cooking channel from the "top floor" of the refrigerator! 🐾



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@Neighbourhood-PetClinic.com. Our team at Neighbourhood Pet Clinic will tap into their collective experience to answer your questions.

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Lean and green.

Vegetables are not only an essential part of a healthy diet, but these delicious greens are packed with wrinkle-fighting antioxidants, vitamins, and collagen-boosting benefits. Two of my absolute daily must-haves are spinach and kale. These leafy beauty boosters contain vitamins A, C, E, K – a powerful anti-aging combo that helps to minimize wrinkles, diminish dark circles, and tighten skin for a much more youthful appearance.

Go nuts!

Almonds and walnuts not only make for a healthy snack, they are also amazing hair

enhancers. Packed with vitamin E and omegas, these yummy nuts helps to keep hair strong and shiny, protecting tresses from environmental and sun damage. They're also a great source of protein and fibre, which help to keep our bodies fuelled and lean.

Berry beautiful.

Oh, how these delicious little fruits can make such a big impact on our skin and hair. Berries are packed with vitamin C: a strong antioxidant that protects skin from free radicals, hydrates from the inside-out, and increases collagen levels. By making these anti-inflammatory fruits a staple in our everyday meals, we are not only feeding our hair, skin, and nails with beautifying benefits, we are nourishing our bodies, reducing stress and improving digestive function.

Top it off.

A simple way to help treat many skin conditions, revitalize skin and promote healthy hair growth is by topping off your favourite meals with skin-saving seeds. Flax, chia, sesame, pumpkin, and sunflower seeds, just to name a few, all contain essential nutrients to strengthen hair, clear skin, and minimize fine lines. Due to their anti-bacterial and anti-inflammatory properties, these little seeds help to create big beautifying results!

Bon appetit! 🍴

Lisa Aquilina is a beauty and wellness professional who strives to help women take care of themselves and support their well-being.



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20

YEARS!

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



To help celebrate our 20th anniversary, we're featuring a past cover kid in each issue this year.

Meet Landon and Clark. They're five years old and were on the cover when they were two.

A word from their mom, Susan:

What are your current interests?

The boys enjoy hockey and soccer. They love going to the movies and playing with their little sister (Teagan who is two years old).

How do you feel when you look back at your cover?

When I look at their cover I remember how much fun they had that day! Watching them try to carry the big suitcases and running back and forth to hug the photographer while she was trying to get a shot were just the cutest. It's a wonderful memory that I enjoy reminiscing with them.

What does it mean that we've asked you to come back now?

We are all so excited that you have asked them back! I'm proud that they have made such a positive impression and look forward to gaining another memorable experience.

What has your experience with Sabina and *The Mom & Caregiver* magazine been like?

Our experience with Sabina and *The Mom & Caregiver* has been great! I could really feel the dedication. It's obvious this magazine is something everyone involved feels passionate about.

What have you enjoyed about *The Mom & Caregiver* magazine, besides your child being on the cover?

I enjoy seeing the fun ideas for things to do with my family; crafts and events. I also like your inspirational quotes (on your Facebook page).

Anything else you'd like to add as we celebrate our 20th?

Congratulations on 20 years! Your commitment to the children and families of our community is amazing! 🍷

TESTIMONIAL

"I've had excellent experience working with Sabina. She is loving and caring, a true professional and will make you feel like you've become a part of her family. I would highly recommend her and her magazine for your advertising."

- Monika, Luxe Medical Laser Treatment Centre

Photo: One12 Photography

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MOM & CAREGIVER 21

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Cook With Your Kids This March Break!

Looking for ways to keep your kids entertained over March Break? I've got you covered with a great way to connect with your kids and spend quality time as a family – get cooking! Cooking is an important life skill that doesn't always come naturally. Practice makes perfect so why not start them young in the kitchen! For example, reading recipes can help your little chef's reading skills, while measuring ingredients can help improve math skills. Not only that, picky eaters are more likely to try food they help make. Parent win! Most importantly, cooking is a great way to instill healthy habits that will last a lifetime. Start simple! Your little chefs can start by learning basic cooking skills and build their way to chef status in no time. With your help and guidance, children at all ages can play an important role in the kitchen. Don't forget to go over safety rules, explain what they can and cannot touch, and show them how to safely use kitchen tools.

Children aged 2-3 years can:

wash fruit and vegetables, count ingredients and add ingredients to a bowl

Children aged 3-4 years can:

help gather ingredients, pour from measuring cups and mix ingredients in a bowl

Children aged 4-6 years can:

stir ingredients together, crack and beat an egg, set the table

Children aged 6-8 years can:

use basic kitchen equipment (such as a blender or can opener)

Children aged 8-11 years can:

use a knife to chop easy-to-grip foods and use the microwave and stove (with your help)

Here's an idea – have a cooking party for your kids over March Break! Let them plan the menu, write the grocery list, shop for food and cook the meal. You can be their assistant/sous chef!



Another idea would be to visit your neighbourhood library and borrow kid-friendly cookbooks or search online for recipes your little chef would like to try.

Happy cooking and enjoy your time as a family this month! 🍷

Jenn Giurgevich is a Registered Dietitian and contract Professor at Brescia University College with a wealth of nutrition knowledge. Over the last 10 years, Jenn has paired her love for nutrition and health with her undeniable love for fitness, working as both a personal trainer and a fitness instructor.

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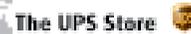
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