

THE MOM & CAREGIVER™

SEPTEMBER 2019
VOLUME 21 ISSUE 9

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Cool Nights,
Warm Hearts

YOUR KID'S FIRST DAY? ASK AN EXPERT

The TEACHER PARENT PARTNERSHIP

The ART of
BEING
CURIOS
WITH OUR
KIDS

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ON THE COVER

You may think they're sisters with that beautiful blond hair, but they're not! **Charlotte** and **Isla** cuddled up in a warm blanket on the hottest day of the year, and they had a blast doing it. Isla had a huge grin when we joked that it was winter weather. Charlotte is a big sister who knew just how to help with our younger model. Way to go ladies!

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MOM & CAREGIVER

BACK TO SCHOOL, BACK TO ROUTINE!

rou-tine

/rootēn/

Noun: a sequence of actions regularly followed; a fixed program.

"I settled down into a routine of work and sleep."

synonyms: *procedure, practice, pattern, drill, regime, regimen, groove*

Whatever the definition, this is what I'm craving. ROUTINE! I think you hear me, fellow moms and dads. The summer is wonderful and all – it's full of exciting times where you stay up late, sleep in, eat treats, and enjoy last-minute plans. But two months of that has been enough for me, and definitely enough for the kids in our lives. It is time to plan ahead, follow a schedule, and get some normalcy back in our lives. It is glorious September!

I've always felt like September is actually the new year for me. I like to get back on track with family schedules, healthy eating and planned days where I know Mikaeel is busy at school, and I can be productive at work. And it looks like our wonderful writers agree.

Dana Libby of Vanier Children's Services encourages us to get curious with our kids. Curious to find out how? Read her article on page 7. Teacher and parent Frank Emanuele explains the very important Teacher-Parent Partnership (did you know your child will spend over 16 000 hours with teachers in their elementary and high school careers?) on page 12. Plus, we get advice from young experts on page 11's Kid Zone – make your child's first day (and year) of school the best it can be.

Now, we're not all work and no play around here. You and the kids can "get your STEAM on" in Cambridge with information from our travel guru, Sherri Telenko (see page 14). And you'll find great ideas for family fun in London and area in our Events listing (page 5 and online at www.themomandcaregiver.com/events) – movie nights in the park, air show or pow wow, anyone?

My hope for you this month is that you enjoy getting back into the groove of September. Whether you have a child back to school or not, make this your time to enjoy the blessed routine of life! ☺

*"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I may remember.
Involve me and I learn."*

-Benjamin Franklin

SEPT 9/2019 EVENTS

6TH

Movie Nights in the Park:
Captain Marvel, Victoria Park,
www.facebook.com/mninthepark

9TH

Stretch and Grow with
your Infant Family
Centre Westmount,
www.lcc.on.ca/family-support-programs/westmount-family-centre

14TH

Great Canadian Shoreline
Cleanup, Pinery Provincial Park,
www.ontarioparks.com/park/pinery/events

15TH

Beer and Macrame Workshop,
Anderson Craft Ales,
www.andersoncraftales.ca

20TH

London Multiple Births
Association Sale, Hellenic
Community Centre
www.facebook.com/events/850544258647272/

22ND

A Day for the Dogs,
Fanshawe Pioneer Village,
www.fanshawepioneerillage.ca

30TH

Canadian Cancer Society
Longest Day of Golf,
various courses in London and area,
for information contact
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7TH

Western Fair,
Western Fair District,
www.westernfairdistrict.com/western-fair

13TH

Airshow London, near
London International Airport
www.airshowlondon.com

15TH

Harvest Festival and
Pow Wow, The Museum
of Ontario Archaeology
www.archaeologymuseum.ca/beer-bbq-show

19TH

Carly Rae Jepsen,
London Music Hall,
www.londonmusichall.com

21ST

Naturally Vegan
Market Workshop,
Covent Garden Market
www.coventmarket.com

27TH

London Knights vs. Erie Otters,
Budweiser Gardens,
www.budweisergardens.com



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NUTRITION DURING PREGNANCY EATING for TWO?

Nutrition is a cornerstone for maintaining good health throughout life. It is particularly important to ensure that nutrition is appropriate in pregnancy, both for the growth and development of the fetus and also for the maintenance of mom's health.

The new Canada Food Guide that came out in January 2019 is less prescriptive than its predecessor. There are no recommended serving sizes. The emphasis is on getting a variety of foods that are whole and less processed. Three food groups are emphasized - fruits and vegetables, whole grains and proteins. There is an emphasis on using more plant based proteins such as legumes and tofu.

There is a need for increased calorie intake in pregnancy. In the first third of pregnancy, no additional calories are needed and the focus is on getting a variety of nutrient dense foods. In the second third, an additional 340 calories is required and in the third trimester an additional 450 calories is required.

There are some nutrients that are of particular importance in pregnancy. The SOGC (Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada) recommends that we pay attention to iron, folate, choline, iodine and omega-3 fatty acids.

Low iron causes moms to feel unwell, but also leads to low birth weight and has impact on baby's development. A non iron deficient mom needs 27 mcg of iron in a day during pregnancy. Most prenatal vitamins have close to this amount of iron.

Folic acid/folate is found in green leafy vegetables and is important for the prevention of neural tube defects and other birth defects. It should be started at least six weeks before pregnancy. The amount required by women not otherwise at risk for having a baby with these defects is 0.4 mg and this is again found in prenatal vitamins.

Choline is found in whole grains and in eggs, milk and dairy. It helps to prevent neural tube defects in baby. Iodine is needed for the production of thyroid hormone. Our table salt is iodized so a deficiency of iodine is unusual, though the reduction of salt in our diets may result in low iodine consumption.

Omega-3 fatty acids are important for baby's vision and neurologic development. The more important type of omega-3 is called DHA and is found in salmon, rainbow trout and mackerel. Any consumed fish should be labelled with Health Canada's seal of approval to ensure low levels of mercury. Other omega-3 fatty acids are found in nuts and seeds such as walnuts and flax seeds. ☺

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!



THE ART OF BEING CURIOS with our KIDS



Dana Libby MSW, RSW
Vanier Children's Services for
Middlesex-London Community Early Years Partnership

I was speaking with a mom of a five-week-old baby and I asked her how things were going. She replied, "We are getting to know each other." This left me thinking, what a wonderful way to come into the profound relationship between parent and child. It starts in infancy as we watch, wondering what their noises, cries, gazes and smiles might mean. This is a time of discovery, an intimate personal journey a parent takes to answer the question "Who is this little person?"

However, infants grow into toddlers with minds of their own. They can choose between things and have preferences. They can answer questions, tell stories, discover and create whole new worlds in the bathtub, the garden, in a cardboard box. It is essential for parents to guide their children, to teach them right from wrong and to take charge when necessary. For toddlers, that must seem like so much of the time. So in between, be curious. We can support our kids in this stage (and as they grow) by being curious. Curiosity is a strong desire to know and learn. When we listen to our children's ideas, ask open-ended questions and praise creativity, we not only let them know that we are interested in learning and knowing more about what they are thinking, but more importantly, about who they are. Let go of teachable moments and replace these with

connection and curiosity. Toddlers' minds are open and ready to explore all possibilities of their world. Drilling colours, numbers and labels for things can create anxiety. However, when we follow our child's lead, we may discover great things about them. A dog could be a giraffe with a shorter neck, bananas could be blue on another planet, songs are better with made up words and sounds. When we understand that toddlers' primary intention is to learn, even when they exhibit the most challenging behaviour, we are better able to react with interest and empathy when things go wrong. My three-year-old niece wrote on her parents' new couch with markers. When they asked her why, she answered "How would I know if markers worked on couches?" Ah... an experiment, misguided as it may be. Instead of responding with anger, frustration and punishment, we could respond with curiosity. How can we fix this together? What other things can we colour on (tin foil, napkins, paper plates, stones, etc.)? These reactions help our children feel like they matter while helping them understand that no problem is too great to solve. Showing curiosity paired with connection will help our kids understand that they are valued for their thoughts and ideas, are unique individuals, one of a kind, with gifts to offer and for this, they are loved. ☺

LOTS of TUMMY ACHES?

Does your child often complain of tummy aches? Your child is not alone. 10-15% of children will complain of recurrent abdominal pain (aka "tummy aches"). Most healthy children who have tummy aches for more than two months are likely to have functional abdominal pain (FAP). Functional means no blockage, infection or inflammation to explain the pain. The pain comes from increased sensitivity of the nerves connecting our digestive organs (such as our gut) to our brain. Even if nothing is wrong, the nerves may send signals during normal intestinal functions. This extra sensitivity could be triggered by a variety of things such as previous infections or stress. The pain experienced is very real, causing your child to stop usual activities like going to school.

How is FAP diagnosed? Your doctor will take a detailed history about the pain and its course. In children with FAP, growth and physical examinations are normal. Tests like blood-work, urine or stool studies may be needed to screen for other causes of recurrent abdominal pain. Extensive lab testing or endoscopy are usually

unnecessary, unless another condition is suggested by certain features in the patient history, physical examination or laboratory results.

Fortunately, FAP can be managed. The goal of treatment is to help your child get back to doing usual activities.



If school absence is an issue, then developing a plan for returning to school is vital to getting better.

Learning strategies to cope with the pain is important like breathing exercises or avoiding certain pain triggers. Your child will benefit from your help to avoid focusing on the pain.

Staying optimistic and positive about getting better will help. Your doctor may be able to suggest other therapies to help your child. ☺

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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YOUR KID'S FIRST DAY? ASK AN EXPERT!

Join 13-year-olds **Mikaeel** and **Ella** every month as they share perspectives on life as a child sees it.

Many little ones are starting their first day of school this month. Would you consider yourself an expert on this topic and why?

Ella: Of course I would! I think I'm an expert because I have been present on the youngest kids' very first day of school nine times (including my own very first day of school). I watch them get called up to the front of the gym and then file out and into the classroom where they begin to learn the basics of school. Year after year, excited and nervous, they take their place at the front of the gym.

Mikaeel: I would maybe consider myself an expert on first days of school because this year will be my eleventh first day of school.

What are your memories from your first day of school?

Ella: Hmm. I don't remember much from my first day of school. I do remember how proud I was of my backpack though! It was brown with rainbows on it and I thought that I was so cool when I wore it.

Mikaeel: I remember meeting my teacher and meeting my friends and being excited about naptime and no homework.

What should parents be doing to get their child ready for the first day of kindergarten?

Ella: Practice raising your hand and only talking when you are told to. I'm in grade eight and I still get in trouble for talking out. Also kindergarten is the time for mistakes! If you mess up, it's okay, just learn from it.

Mikaeel: Parents should make sure their child(ren) are up to date with all their vaccinations. That way they don't catch/spread illnesses. And make sure they tell them what to expect on the first day of school.

You're in grade eight. Will you be assisting the kindergarten children in any way this year?

Ella: My school is small so I will probably be interacting with the kindergartens in one way or another. I could be the kindergarten lunch helper, or be a buddy on a skating trip. I could be their reading helper, or assist with a craft or two.

Mikaeel: This year I will be assisting the kindergarten students during some activities and during some lunch hours.

What's your best tip to give a four year old about making friends at school?

Ella: Honestly, just say hello. Once you do that, you start to play with those kids and then you become better and better friends. I am still friends with the same kids that were in my kindergarten class.

Mikaeel: Don't be afraid to meet new people! ☺

THE TEACHER PAR

As both a parent and a teacher, I sometimes struggle with what hat to wear when it comes to my kids' education. This fall, both my boys will be in school (Grade 1 and JK) and as I continue to appreciate and navigate the parent role, I am reminded of the importance of the parent-teacher relationship.

Teachers spend a lot of time with our kids and are important adults in their lives. In a very short amount of time, they will get to know your child while assessing and evaluating their ability

to meet curriculum expectations. This journey through grade school may come easy for some but many of our children will struggle - whether academically, socially, or emotionally. In my experience, the best outcomes for kids happen when teachers and parents work together in a harmonious partnership. I have seen struggling students overcome their challenges and thrive because of amazing alliances between teachers and parents. Here are some tips that will help you kick-start and foster that positive relationship.



ENT PARTNERSHIP

KEEP COMMUNICATION OPEN: If your child is having difficulties with their homework, peers, or just not wanting to go to school, share this with the teacher. In turn, expect that teachers will also talk about your child's difficulties with you. It's never easy to hear bad news from a teacher, but keep in mind that the goal is not to belittle your child or your parenting abilities, but to look for a solution to the problem together.

FOCUS ON FACTS, NOT FEELINGS: It's challenging not to get caught up in emotions when dealing with issues involving your child. When they hurt, you hurt ten times more, and teachers understand that. When discussing a challenge, try to focus on the facts to help guide the discussion. Keep a journal or a record of your observations (how long homework takes, how many days a week they don't want to go to school, etc.).

KEEP AN OPEN MIND: Even new and inexperienced teachers develop quite the tool kit of strategies and ideas very quickly. They have access to experienced colleagues, resources, and work with students with similar issues. Listen to what they have to say and give their strategies a chance. If you don't get the desired results, just say so and go back to the drawing board together. It may take several tries before finding something that works.

BE SPECIFIC: Saying you want your child to do better in math is very broad. If math is a struggle, then try to pinpoint what exactly the issue is. Work together to identify the problem, outline it specifically, select one or two goals to work on, then put together a plan. Involve your child and discuss the goal together – they may have some ideas on how to get there too!

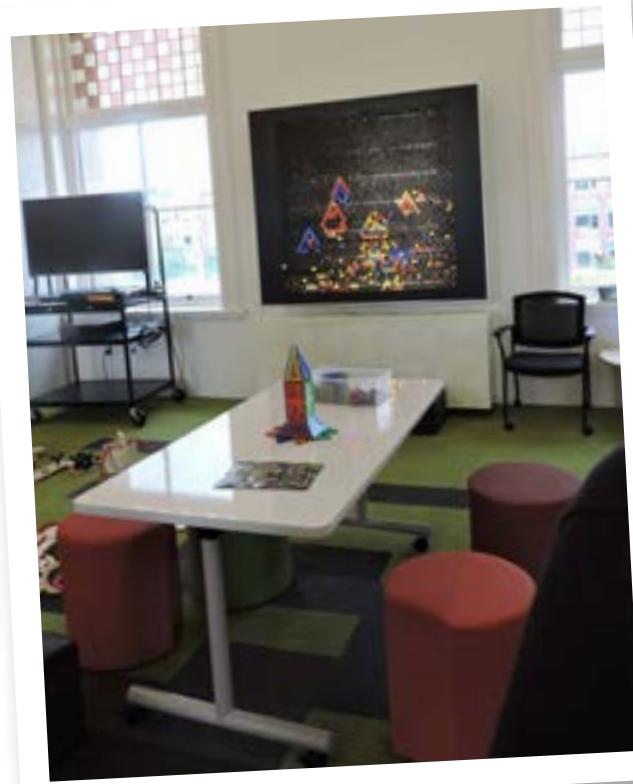
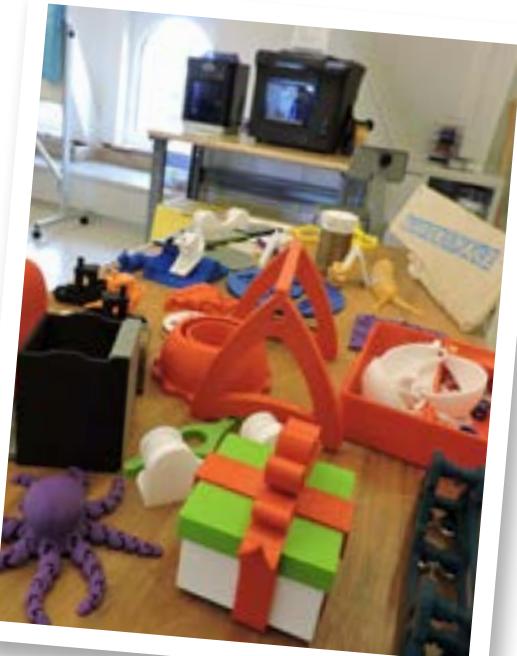
What we parents need to remember is that we are on the same team as teachers. We both want our kids to be happy and successful. A partnership approach will ensure consistency between home and school; it will show our kids that teachers and parents care and want to work together to make it better. And what a great way to model to our kids how adults collaborate and resolve issues in a positive way!

Here's to a great start to your school year! &

Frank Emanuele is a proud father of two sons, a special education teacher, and a director of Dad Club London.



STEAM *on* *in* CAMBRIDGE, ONTARIO



Sherri Telenko is a freelance travel writer living in Southern Ontario. Please follow her adventures at www.dogtrotting.net

If you think libraries are filled with books, think again. Or visit the Old Post Office 'library' in Cambridge, Ontario, now called the Idea Exchange.

First, the Grand River adjacent Old Post Office was refurbished, restoring the building's historic character. A modern glass extension was added and wrapped around the rock façade, adding space and an accessible entrance. In July 2018, the facility opened, but not until it was filled with the latest STEAM – science, technology, engineering, arts and math – equipment to inspire young minds to write code or build video games.

Different floors cater to different ages and interests: on level two, toddler-level tables allow kids to play with tech toys or press palm-sized blocks into the wall-sized Light Bright. Drop by and use what's there or sign up for a Mini-Makers (ages 2 to 12) class such as candy science, recycle art or music makers.

"Visitors are welcome to all our spaces and can attend scheduled classes at the Old Post Office," according to manager Laura Knudsen. "No library card is required to use the musical instruments, play on the Light Bright or LEGO walls, or build a pre-cut puzzle in the maker-space."

The third floor houses the popular 3D printer and die cut machine available to Cambridge residents.

According to Knudsen, memberships are needed to use this equipment, reserve an AV room, use the VR and gaming equipment, or checkout STEAM boxes.

Innovation extends outside too. Starting September 5, the autumn lightshow projects on the building's facade Thursday to Sunday evening at 9 pm. ☀

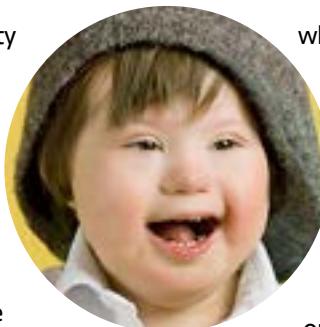


SPECIAL INDEED!

One area that we have developed in our specialty practice in orthodontics over the last 15 years has been the treatment of children with special needs. This includes kids with autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy and other types of developmental disorders. While being technically and logically challenging from a treatment standpoint, these children have provided some of the most rewarding and fulfilling work we have ever rendered.

What makes these children so "special"? It is the unfiltered and pure essence these kids possess and exude. In our culture, direct connection without layers of pretense and masking to sift through first, is extremely rare. Not so with this population of children. It is a true privilege to encounter another soul so directly, openly.

All of which brings me to a conversation I had with a colleague years ago. I was speaking at a meeting about the need for more orthodontists to enter into special needs treatment and was asked the question, "Why bother? They don't know the difference anyway." I was truly taken aback. After my initial shock, my response was (and is when asked similar questions to this day –



which sadly, still happens) that we don't actually "know" what another knows at any given time. Improved function should belong to all patients (and parents who decide for their children) and the desire for improved esthetics can be an important part of self-esteem just as much for special needs children as the non-special needs population.

If it is possible to enhance breathing, chewing and oral hygiene, which reduces oral and systemic disease, ought we not to do it? Special needs kids have many times the number and severity of malocclusions than other kids. Less dexterity, complex homecare issues and other underlying health conditions are common. If we freely and unthinkingly offer these treatments to non-special needs children, then logic would dictate that it is even more important for the special needs child to receive this care. Why not help one who is dealing with a health deficit already in other ways?

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Each month we introduce you to a business that offers families in London and the surrounding area, services or products you won't want to miss. 

HUGO & Co. is an interior design + downsizing and move management company that specializes in working with seniors and people with dementia as they transition homes, ensuring that their new space looks and feels like home.

The idea to blend her background in design with downsizing and transitioning seniors came to HUGO & Co. founder Monica de Wit as she helped move, clear out and prepare her elderly relatives' house for sale. "There was really no one servicing seniors in this way - being the one stop shop - someone to pack and move them, organize, set up and decorate their new home, and then disperse of the contents, prepare and stage their old house for sale." And from that HUGO & Co. was born - a company committed to overseeing every detail of the transition from start to finish - with a designer's eye. "Sometimes we are buying all new furniture for clients, and sometimes we are selecting from their existing pieces what will work in their new space. We do a lot of space planning and floor plans for our downsizing clients so that when our moving team comes, they know exactly what to take and where it's going - it saves a lot of time and angst on moving day."

HUGO & Co. also specializes in design for dementia and Alzheimer's care. This is when room duplication and design psychology become very important and essential to making the transition into a care facility a smooth one. "We work with the powers of attorney or the children of the elderly person and create a transition plan which often involves us packing up and moving mom or dad and duplicating their room in their new home within a few hours - complete with pictures and familiar objects where they should be." HUGO & Co. also works on designing interior spaces for dementia care residences and is currently working on the third dementia care build for Highview Residences opening in Kitchener in October 2019.

For more information:

www.hugoandcompany.com,

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or call **844-511-4846**.



PARENTING *beyond* DEATH

CONFRONTING THE NIGHTMARE

No one wants to think of dying and leaving minor children behind. Life and history bring tragedies and often they are difficult to contemplate. But they can be confronted. By including a custodial appointment in your Will, you can gain peace of mind knowing that your children will be cared for by someone in whom you have faith in the event of your untimely death.



WHAT IS CUSTODY?

Custody is the right and responsibility to make all of the most important parenting decisions you likely lose sleep over. From choices about education and extra-curricular activities, to religion and health care, custody entails all of the major decisions that define parenthood and caregiving today.

HOW IT WORKS

In Ontario, you can use your Will to select who will have custody of your children if you die and no one else—like a surviving and capable parent—is entitled to it by law. Because the ‘best interests of the child’ is the overriding concern in family and children’s

law, the court reviews all custodial appointments made by Will after 90 days. Case law shows us that the strongest evidence the court will consider before making the appointment permanent are the wishes expressed in a Will and what’s been happening for the first 90 days after death. This is why you want to be sure that your wishes are captured in a properly drafted Will.

THERE'S MORE

Your Will includes other parenting decisions you can maintain control over too. At what age should your children be able to claim their share in your Estate? Eighteen may be the age of majority, but is it the age of financial maturity? Who should be entrusted with safeguarding your children’s entitlements until then? That’s for you to decide. Make these parenting decisions while you can: have your Will drafted today, and rest in the knowledge that death won’t be a limit to parenthood. &

www.jimdeanlaw.com

Jamie Froats is an associate lawyer with Jim Dean Law who specializes in the firm's Wills and Estate business.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A WILL & POA

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BEGINNINGS, END REPEAT



INGS,

My baby is starting school this year. Is yours? Maybe you have a child entering a different school or grade. I can't quite believe it. Just four short years ago I was in the bowels of post-partum depression with a three month old, crying and wishing my days away. I can vividly remember sitting at the kitchen table, pumping breast milk with tears streaming down my face as my daughter lay there, studying this half-naked, weeping woman while she lay on her tummy time mat. The house seemed hollow and felt like a prison cell. I looked at this tiny human, so beautiful and perfect in every way, and I wondered what would ever become of us as we began to traverse this often surreal journey of life together.

That first year with her was like a continual shedding of layers of myself; a constant stream of deaths and rebirths of who I was and who I was becoming. I lost my freedom and I gained the respect of time. My party days were packed away, but my love of early mornings, (alone) were born. I lost my mind, but learned how to ask for help. Beginnings, endings, repeat again. This is what motherhood is.

Now, I am packing her lunch in an overpriced bento box. She's picked out her backpack. She's going off into this world which, at times, is going to break her heart. Parents - how does it happen? We go from loving our squishy babies with their gummy smiles and slobbery kisses to loving actual individuals with teeth and opinions.

The beginning of school reminds me of something I read once on a meme, and that I will now attempt to paraphrase:

There will be a last time. A last time to kiss that gummy mouth. A last time to nurse a baby, or sing him a lullaby. There will be a last time to notice the soft spot on her head, or to change a diaper. There will be a last time to make sure he doesn't fall down the stairs, a last time to cut her food. There will be a last time to kiss a boo-boo, a last time she crawls into bed. A last stuffed animal, a last time he sits on your lap. We won't know when. We can't know when that last time will be and it makes me terrified and comforted all at the same time.

I am looking at my daughter as she sleeps - do you do this too? If I stare close enough, I can still see traces of her baby face and I am transported back to those first months of self-doubt and joy and anguish. I realize that the words my family doctor offered to me in those early visits were true, "the days are long, but the years are short".

Death and rebirth - this is motherhood. With each ending comes a new beginning, and here we are standing together, at the dawn of a new school year. The ending of long, hot summer days and porch drinks, the beginning of routines and newness and growth. My wish for your family this year is that your skins are shed gracefully and your rebirths are full of promise and peace. September: ready or not, here we come. ☺

May you be happy, Jordan

Jordan Thomas is a registered social worker and the owner of Nourish Counselling Services. Jordan works with women on improving their mental health and self-compassion. Follow along on [IG @nourishcounselling](#).

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UNDERCOVER EMERGENCIES

One of the most common questions a veterinary clinic receives is, "Should I bring him in?" Our furry family members can't tell us what hurts or how they feel, so it can be difficult for a concerned pet parent to know the answer to that question. Here are some common situations in which our pets may appear fine, but seeking treatment should not be delayed.

GASTRO-INTESTINAL ISSUES

Just like in children, vomiting and diarrhea aren't uncommon. However, they can also be a sign of serious illness and can quickly lead to dehydration, so should not go untreated. Seek veterinary attention as soon as possible if the pet is vomiting/defecating blood, straining, not eating or drinking, seems to be in pain, is lethargic, restless, has another medical condition, or any combination of these symptoms.

TRAUMA

When a pet has a fall, gets attacked, goes missing, or is involved in a traffic accident (either inside or outside the car), they may appear fine externally despite sustaining internal injuries. Don't delay in calling your vet for a thorough exam to assess any damage hidden beneath the surface.

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

URINARY ISSUES

If your pet is straining to urinate or is urinating inappropriately, they may act normally otherwise, but it could be a sign of a life-threatening blockage (more common in males than females).

POISON OR FOREIGN BODIES

Some common dangerous items include household pain relief medications, poisonous flowers, rat poison, chocolate, macadamia nuts, corn cobs, carpet, bones, socks, and feminine hygiene products. Always call your vet as soon as your pet ingests any item it shouldn't.

EYE PROBLEMS

While not typically life-threatening, when left untreated, eye problems or injuries can quickly increase in severity and can result in loss of the eye or blindness.

As with most ailments, early diagnosis is key to receiving the most effective treatment. Keep in mind that most pets will hide signs of discomfort for as long as possible, so do not wait for them to cry out or limp before seeking help. There are many other situations that may warrant immediate veterinary attention, but if you're ever unsure or have questions about your pet's health, your vet is always the best source of information. ☺

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CELEBRATE CULTURE & FOOD TRADITIONS



In July, the Canada's food guide update featured a celebration of cultural diversity with the release of the food guide Snapshot in 26 additional languages. Exciting! Last month, the food guide featured how culture and food traditions are an important part of healthy eating. Given this, I thought it would be perfectly fitting to share with you my most recent experience living like a local in Morocco! This summer, I had plenty of opportunities to learn about different foods, food traditions and build my awareness of the cultural beauty of North Africa on my journey through Morocco. One of the highlights for me was....drum-roll please...THE FOOD! Are you surprised? I didn't think so.

The customs and rituals surrounding food are just as important as the cuisine in Morocco. My personal favorite is their sharing of food and eating together. In the Moroccan culture, many people believe in "Al Baraka," which refers to a type of spiritual energy that occurs when families eat together. I could relate to this as eating meals together as a family was an important part of growing up for me, and something I will pass on to my family in the years to come. Why is it important? Enjoying healthy foods with others is a great way to connect and add enjoyment to your life. It can also provide many benefits and contribute to a healthy lifestyle. It's about spending quality time together without the screens and distractions. It's the perfect time to slow down, reflect and share with family, friends, neighbours or co-workers.

Now back to the food. I have never tasted food more delicious than when I was in Morocco. Seriously! One of the most commonly eaten foods in Morocco is couscous. My first experience eating couscous was when we first arrived.

Everyone sat around the table and we all ate from the same plate full of delicious couscous with roasted vegetables and chicken – some ate with a fork, and others with their hands. No meal was without bread, which is a staple in Morocco. Needless to say, I ate a lot of it while I was there! A Moroccan kitchen staple is the tagine - a cone-shaped cooking vessel traditionally made of either ceramic or unglazed clay. Pretty much everything I ate from a tagine was a party for my taste buds. I made sure to bring one home with me to create my own Moroccan dishes! Nuts, olives, onions, garlic, potatoes, tomatoes, peppers, squash and fruit are also important components of Moroccan cuisine...and mint tea! Lots and lots of delicious mint tea.

One thing that this trip has done for me is inspire me to travel, see, and experience all this world has to offer, including all the different cultures and food traditions. Unable to get away? Bring them home to you! Research different cultures and food traditions and try out a different recipe each month. Round up the family and encourage them to get involved in the experience! Canada's food guide has some great recipes that you could try, like mujadarrah, eggplant lentil curry, moose stew, and harira. Find more recipes here: Canada.ca/FoodGuide.

Enjoy! &

Jenn Giurgevich is a Registered Dietitian and former 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.



BACK to **FALL BASICS**



The Autumn season has definitely left its mark on the runway, shedding the bright colours of the summer, and fully embracing the warm and wonderful of fall. We are going back-to-basics with timeless trends that are feminine, sexy and oh-so gorgeous!

MATTE RED LIPS

Bright, bold and beautiful! Red lips are one of the hottest trends this season and a great way to take your look from coffee to cocktails. For a perfect pout, line lips first before applying your favourite shade of rouge in a matte finish.

CLEAN AND CLASSIC

The timeless wing is back and more gorgeous than ever! To create the perfect line, opt for a fine tip liner in a rich black for more precision and control. A classic wing can be worn very subtle or extended for a more dramatic look. Don't be afraid to play with both!

A FLUSH OF BLUSH

Give your skin a pinch of colour with sheer, soft hues of pink. Neutral tones in cream or powder formulas provide a natural finish and are easier to blend. For an all-over fresh-faced look, add a similar shade to lips for a monochromatic finish.

SMOKY NEUTRALS

Inspired by natures finest, sultry, smoky eyes in shades of neutral browns is definitely a fall favourite! Beautiful blends of cocoa, taupe, sienna, and champagne surrounding the entire eye area can be worn day or night.

PEARLS AND PINS

Delicate, feminine accents of pearls, silver and gold can be clipped and pinned to create the prettiest of hair styles. Paired with some of the most classic makeup looks this season, these chic and timeless accessories can be worn effortlessly and are great to dress up any outfit.

Stay beYOUtiful! &

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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