

DAD knows  
PAINTED TOES!

# THE MOM & CAREGIVER™

JUNE 2020  
VOLUME 22 ISSUE 6

[www.themomandcaregiver.com](http://www.themomandcaregiver.com)



## THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT MEATBALLS FOR DAD

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## ON THE COVER

It was a day at the spa for **Mia** and **Charlee!** Mia is a new big sister who just sat back and enjoyed her pedicure. Charlee was anxious for her turn, crying until her toes were painted, and then laughing because it tickled. Huge thanks go out to James, our professional pedicurist for the day, who was so kind and funny.

Photographer  
Photostylists

One-12 Photography  
Sabina Manji  
Melissa Warkentin

Publisher/Chief Editor **Sabina Manji**  
Assistant & Copy Editor **Melissa Warkentin**  
Designer **Vlado Bali**  
Sales **Sandy Rusland**  
sales@themomandcaregiver.com

If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact us at 519.495.7316 or at editor@themomandcaregiver.com.

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## WE'LL BE BETTER THAN BEFORE

It's every parent's fear. Are my kids going to be alright? Will they grow up to be healthy, kind and loved? Will they achieve big things, will they follow their dreams? And then BOOM - a pandemic hits which turns their lives upside down. Our family dynamics have changed, schedules have changed, learning has changed.

Well guess what? We hear from the professionals this month who tell us the kids ARE going to be alright. Special education teacher, Frank Emanuele, reminds "Let us not underestimate the natural resilience in most children." on page 12. And RN, Heather Bywaters, of the London Middlesex Health Unit, talks about our families' new-found "resilience and ability to adapt in a difficult, constantly changing environment." We've learned some pretty amazing things about ourselves during these trying times! (page 7)

Here at The Mom & Caregiver, we have been honoured to partner with local restaurants for our Home Not Hungry initiative, feeding families who need help putting dinner on the table during this pandemic. We have fed over 1,500 hot and healthy meals to children and adults across London, and have learned what an amazing, supportive community we are!

I find I'm looking for every reason to celebrate these days, and helping our community has surely been a huge one. But we have even more coming this month. June boasts the first day of summer, and there's hope that a tiny bit of normalcy will be returning for our warmest, brightest season. At the very least, the kids can be running through the yard sprinkler, chalking on the sidewalk and searching for clovers in the grass. We are also pumped to honour dear old dad this month with Father's Day on June 21<sup>ST</sup>. Dads - you've become even more of a hero these past few months as you show us that fathers can be a thousand different things from meal-makers to home-schoolers to essential-workers to hug-givers. I miss my father dearly, and if you're like me, be sure to read Janet's "DDC" article on page 10.

Why not show your heart to the special man in your life with a recipe from one of our newest writers, Chef Devan Rajkumar. Yummy meatballs in a cast-iron skillet (p. 15) might just have Pop's name written all over them! We also welcome new author, Debbie Braun, who will be giving us real (estate) advice on buying, selling and moving with a family on p. 23.

Stay safe and stay healthy this summer, with lots of love from The Mom & Caregiver family! 🌿



“ *The man who plants trees, knowing that he will never sit in their shade, has at least started to understand the meaning of life.* ”  
- Rabindranath Tagore

# JUNE 2020 EVENTS

**1<sup>ST</sup>** Enjoy a Cirque du Soleil show from the comfort of home.  
[www.cirquedusoleil.com/cirqueconnect](http://www.cirquedusoleil.com/cirqueconnect)

**2<sup>ND</sup>** It's the last month of school – finish strong!  
[www.classroommagazines.scholastic.com/support/learnathome.html](http://www.classroommagazines.scholastic.com/support/learnathome.html)

**5<sup>TH</sup>** A fun snack for your little adventurer!  
[www.themomandcaregiver.com/buggy-nacho-dip/](http://www.themomandcaregiver.com/buggy-nacho-dip/)

**8<sup>TH</sup>** Worried about the kids' teeth?  
[www.themomandcaregiver.com/the-next-stage-caring-for-your-toddlers-teeth/](http://www.themomandcaregiver.com/the-next-stage-caring-for-your-toddlers-teeth/)

**10<sup>TH</sup>** Watch free Netflix documentaries for the whole family  
[www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLvahqWMqN4M0GRkZY8WkLZM-b6Z-W7qbLA](http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLvahqWMqN4M0GRkZY8WkLZM-b6Z-W7qbLA)

**12<sup>TH</sup>** Vegetarians and meat-eaters unite – everyone loves this soup!  
[www.themomandcaregiver.com/vegetarian-taco-soup/](http://www.themomandcaregiver.com/vegetarian-taco-soup/)

**15<sup>TH</sup>** Hop on the treadmill and escape to world-renowned hikes  
[www.travelandleisure.com/trip-ideas/nature-travel/virtual-walking-trails-around-the-world](http://www.travelandleisure.com/trip-ideas/nature-travel/virtual-walking-trails-around-the-world)

**18<sup>TH</sup>** Make it from scratch as a gift for Dad  
[www.themomandcaregiver.com/tomato-ketchup/](http://www.themomandcaregiver.com/tomato-ketchup/)

**20<sup>TH</sup>** It's the 1<sup>ST</sup> day of Summer

**21<sup>ST</sup>** HAPPY Father's Day

**25<sup>TH</sup>** Celebrate summer with craft-time!  
[www.themomandcaregiver.com/beach-games-activities-and-crafts-that-dont-cost-a-cent/](http://www.themomandcaregiver.com/beach-games-activities-and-crafts-that-dont-cost-a-cent/)

**27<sup>TH</sup>** Social Distan-SING Along with Choir!Choir!Choir!  
[www.facebook.com/choirx3/](http://www.facebook.com/choirx3/)

**30<sup>TH</sup>** Watch #LIVE footage of animal cuties from the Toronto Zoo  
[www.facebook.com/pg/TheTorontoZoo/videos/](http://www.facebook.com/pg/TheTorontoZoo/videos/)



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Thanks to all who have donated time, food and efforts in London and surrounding area



For More Details and Events

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# HAND, FOOT *and* MOUTH DISEASE

We have been so inundated with information about the novel coronavirus in the past several months. This attention, while warranted, can make us forget the other “viruses among us.” Our current social distancing has likely led to a decline in these common childhood diseases. As we begin to open up society in the coming months, these common childhood illnesses will likely return.

One of the most common of these is hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD). This viral illness is often spread in day care centres. It is caused by the coxsackievirus. Children will have blistering lesions around and in the mouth, on the hands and on the feet. There may be a fever at the start of the illness. Some children will have spots in one or two of the areas and not all three. There may also be some irritability and achiness that comes with the onset of HFMD. There may also be a red spotty rash over the thighs and buttocks. HFMD always resolves on its own but the biggest challenge is the fact that the oral lesions cause pain for children while eating and drinking fluids. This may lead to a reluctance to eat or drink by your child.

The most important thing to do with HFMD is to keep your child comfortable. The use of Tylenol or Advil may help with fever and achiness at the start of the illness. These medications may also help with the pain of the oral lesions. Making sure that your

child is taking in fluids to prevent dehydration is also important. Popsicles or ice chips may soothe the lesions as well as provide hydration. Some oral rehydration fluids such as Pedialyte come in popsicle form or can be frozen.

Ultimately, once the episode is over it can be marked off as “done” on the checklist of common childhood illnesses to get immunity to! 🌐



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

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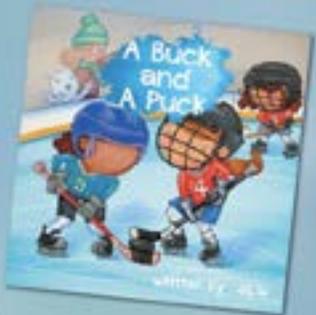
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The Wonder Years – Preschool - School Age

# FAMILY LIFE *after* COVID-19

The experience of the COVID-19 pandemic has affected everyone. We don't know what the future will be like, except that some things will be different. Circumstances surrounding COVID-19 taught us about our resilience and ability to adapt in a difficult, constantly changing environment.

## HERE IS SOME OF WHAT WE LEARNED:

### OUR COMMUNITY IS AMAZING!!!

Agencies in Middlesex-London stepped up to change the way they provide services. Stay tuned to see what this looks like in the future.

- When the weather is stormy, check out the activities available at [www.londonpubliclibrary.ca](http://www.londonpubliclibrary.ca)
- When you have to cancel your play date, see what's going on at [www.londonchildrensmuseum.ca](http://www.londonchildrensmuseum.ca)
- When your car breaks down and you miss playgroup, follow your Family Centre on Facebook for suggested activities and virtual events. Sign up for their e-blasts. For more information: [www.familyinfo.ca/familyCentres.asp](http://www.familyinfo.ca/familyCentres.asp)
- The county has wonderful offerings too! [www.library.middlesex.ca/middlesex-earlyon](http://www.library.middlesex.ca/middlesex-earlyon)

### HANDWASHING WILL NEVER GO OUT OF STYLE!

Ensure this habit continues to be engrained in your family's routines.

[www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/handwashing](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/handwashing)

### SELF-CARE IS VERY IMPORTANT!

If we invest in the wellbeing of ourselves as parents and caregivers, we will be better prepared to cope with challenges.

- Your emotional well-being is important. Try journaling or a mindfulness activity. [www.zerotothree.org/resources/2268-mindfulness-for-parents](http://www.zerotothree.org/resources/2268-mindfulness-for-parents)

- Limit exposure to media. Although it is helpful to maintain a sense of connection, it may also cause anxiety.
- Set aside daily time for yourself. Relax or do something you enjoy for at least 30 minutes.
- Get outside everyday.
- Take regular breaks. Include a healthy snack and some physical activity. Drink your water!
- Establish a flexible routine for your day. Predictability in uncertain times is calming.
- Reach out for help when needed. [www.cmhamiddlesex.ca/](http://www.cmhamiddlesex.ca/)<sup>i</sup>

### SCREEN-TIME IS A USEFUL TOOL!

Online resources allowed us to work from home, learn from home and provided much needed entertainment. Being mindful about screen-time misuse and overuse is still important:

- Role-model healthy screen use. (Just try your best!)
- Distinguish between screen-time for work/school versus entertainment. Choose active play, outdoor adventures, reading, art, music or dancing more often.
- Turn off screens (phones too!) during family times, especially mealtimes.
- Protect sleep for everyone! Stop screen-time an hour before bed.
- Try a Family Media Plan. [www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx)
- Choose media suitable for your family. [www.mediasmarts.ca/](http://www.mediasmarts.ca/)<sup>ii</sup>

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

*www.developingchild.harvard.edu/guide/a-guide-to-covid-19-and-early-childhood-development/*  
*www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/healthy-parenting*  
*i Zero to three. (2020). Young children at home during the COVID-19 outbreak. The importance of self-care. Retrieved from www.zerotothree.org/resources/3262-young-children-at-home-during-the-covid-19-outbreak-the-importance-of-self-care*

*ii Canadian Pediatric Society. (2020). Screen-time and young children.*

*Retrieved from www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/screen-time-and-young-children* 



Heather Bywaters RN PHN,  
Middlesex-London Health Unit for  
the Middlesex-London Community  
Early Years Partnership

# SKIN CARE DIY PART 2

**Here are two more pure skin care DIY recipes to help maintain healthy skin.**

**SOOTHING & SOFTENING HONEY MASK** (All Skin Types)

This mask can increase circulation, remove impurities/toxins, tone and tighten, act as an exfoliant, calm inflammation, and soften skin.

Honey acts as a humectant that will draw moisture from the air to the skin to make the mask deeply soothing and hydrating to dry, sensitive and environment-damaged skin.

**This mask only needs the simple ingredients below:**

- 1 tablespoon raw honey
- 1 teaspoon finely ground sunflower seed meal
- 1 teaspoon raw wheat germ

Use a small whisk or spoon to combine all the ingredients in a small bowl. Let the mixture set for a couple of minutes to thicken before applying to the skin. One-time use - do not store.

**HOW TO USE**

Use fingers to spread the mixture onto face and neck. Make sure to tie hair into ponytail and use a hairband to avoid stickiness to hairline. Then lie down with towel roll under neck. Relax for 30 minutes, then rinse off mask with warm, damp cloth. Follow with toner and moisturizer. Recommend use is once per week.

**LIGHT AND LIVELY MOISTURIZER** (All Skin Types)

In skin care, moisturizer plays an important part. When applying moisturizer, you are putting a barrier between skin and all age-accelerating environmental factors. Plus, moisturizer can keep your serum from drying out your skin.

This moisturizer is light and hydrating. It can be used anytime your skin needs to be refreshed or is feeling dry and tight.

- ½ cup distilled or purified water
- 1 teaspoon vegetable glycerin
- 5 drops frankincense, grapefruit, lavender, or lemon essential oils

Combine all the ingredients in a small storage bottle and shake vigorously to blend. Label and date. No refrigeration is required but for maximum freshness, make sure to use within six months. Store in a dark, cool cabinet.

**HOW TO USE:**

Shake well before use. Apply with a cotton ball on cleaned and toned face and neck area. Allow to dry. You can spray this over makeup as well to add freshness. Use daily.

Remember...Relax, Regenerate, Revitalize 

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# UNDERSTANDING BABY'S CRIES

**B**abies cry or fuss to communicate their needs, feelings and preferences. Reasons could be hunger, discomfort like a dirty diaper, being too hot or cold, pain from diaper rash or other ailments, or food sensitivities. Sleepy babies might cry and fuss until they are held in a position soothing and comfortable to them. Spitting up or reflux is often attributed to crying but often, it is unrelated. Heartburn medicines do not help with crying. If your baby is acting abnormally, having a fever, vomiting, not feeding or gaining weight well, discuss this with your child's doctor.

During early months of life, some babies may be growing well, be happy between periods of crying and have no illness, but they cry more than three hours per day and are hard to settle.

This type of crying is colic. The exact cause of colic is still unknown but is suspected to be related to an immature nervous system and a child's ability to self-console. Colic is temporary and tends to be outgrown with maturity and time, with resolution around four to six months in the majority of infants.

If your baby has colic, what can you do? Some strategies include removing milk from your diet if you are nursing, as some babies could have cow's milk protein sensitivity. If your baby is formula-fed, you can speak to your doctor about trying a broken-down formula. Avoid overfeeding your baby because this can cause your baby to be uncomfortable. Rocking your baby can create a steady, calming motion. Swaddling can sooth your baby too. Using a pacifier or walking your baby can also help. If you are thinking of trying probiotics or herbal remedies, remember to talk to your doctor before starting. As a parent, it is important to look after yourself. You need to get help with child-minding and take a break if your baby cries too much. This can prevent you from feeling overwhelmed and potentially harming your child. Keeping your baby safe is vital. 🧡



*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.*

# A **MEMBER** of the **DDC**

When I was 23 years old, I was welcomed into a secret club, which I had no idea existed. This club didn't discriminate between age, sex, race, religion, sexual orientation or status. The DDC only met once a year, in June. While most people around the world were celebrating, the DDC drowned our sorrows with copious amounts of alcohol, sharing tears and memories of the most significant men in our lives...our fathers.

Father's Day was a day the DDC dreaded. The absence of our fathers was reinforced with each card aisle we passed, each sign in the mall and every other commercial on the television and radio. The week leading up to it often left me queasy and bewildered.

Since then the sting has lessened, and I've learned to honour my father in healthier ways. There isn't a day that goes

by, when my father doesn't send me a message. I keep his memory alive by sharing stories and laughing over shenanigans. Father's Day for me is now every time I see a ray of sunlight stream through the clouds to the ground. I remember my father's optimistic voice in my ear, telling me, "this too shall pass."

Or when I'm struggling with something, and discover a golf ball in a random location, I remember the lessons he taught, and the path of least resistance suddenly appears.

And when I'm late, and speeding to my destination, my father reminds me to slow down, look at the big picture and what really matters, as the railroad crossing drops.

The most profound lesson I've learned since being a DDC member is that I didn't know what true happiness was until it was gone. So now, I try to 'stop and smell the roses,' and express my happiness whenever I can. This is also why I laugh just a little too loud, and I hug you a bit longer, and why I say I love you every chance I get. I'm looking for the happiness. Which is the best lesson I learned from being a member of the Dead Daddies Club. 🌿

*Janet Smith is a proud single-mom of one daughter and a marketing professional who is grateful for her rural roots in the London area. She is a big believer in connecting with people through laughter and honesty.*

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Life as a Child Sees It

# COPING KIDS

**How have you and your family been coping during the Covid-19 pandemic?**

**Mikael:** We have been coping well but we are starting to get bored.

**Ella:** We've been doing pretty good and are making sure to keep in touch with family and friends to make sure they're fine too.

**What have been your personal favourite activities to keep you occupied during quarantine?**

**Mikael:** I have enjoyed playing guitar, reading, cooking, and watching Seinfeld.

**Ella:** I like to paint, read, go on walks and have movie nights with my sister.

**What has been the best and worst part of schooling from home? Have you had any big challenges?**

**Mikael:** The best part of schooling from home is that if I get up early I'm done all my work by noon and I have the rest of my day to do whatever I want. The only challenge would maybe be asking questions - it sometimes takes a while for responses.

**Ella:** I like that I get to work at my own pace and can work at any time of the day, but it gets a little tricky sometimes because we can't really do projects we would normally do in groups. If I have a question, I have to email my teacher instead of just asking in real time.

**Unfortunately, your grade 8 graduations have been cancelled/postponed. How does this make you feel? Have you planned any ways to celebrate at home?**

**Mikael:** It is kind of frustrating but I expected it to get cancelled due to the teacher strike. I don't have any plans for home.

**Ella:** I'm a little disappointed that I won't get a typical graduation, but I think it's worse for high school students and college graduates. We don't have anything specific planned yet, but we're definitely going to find some way to celebrate!

**What do you think the government or the general public could be doing better to fight Covid-19? What could we do differently next time a pandemic hits?**

**Mikael:** I think we have to be more proactive, and I think if we did everything we did a couple of weeks earlier we could have been better off.

**Ella:** I think our government did do a pretty good job by shutting things down and setting guidelines, but if it's going to work we all need to follow them. I also think they need to be careful about how quickly they open things up again. 🤝

Join 14-year olds **Mikael** and **Ella** every month as they share perspectives on life as a child sees it.



Grand Avenue Children's Centre is a full-day, licensed, non-profit child care centre, located in London's Old South. An established centre, we have been providing quality programs for Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers for over 30 years!

*"Sometimes the smallest things take up the most room in your heart."*



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11

# ARE THE KIDS GOING TO BE...

As the summer months approach, many of us are hopeful that the physical distancing restrictions will soon lighten up. We look forward to some form of social reintegration and that we get to spend time close to our loved ones. But for many of us parents who have been in lockdown with our kids since mid-March, our thoughts wander into worry.

This unnatural form of isolation resulted in many of us easing up on the routines at home. Our kids are getting more screen time than usual, we have become their teachers, their playmates, and in some cases, the only other person around. We talk a lot about safety around others, viruses in the air, and the hyper-importance of handwashing. Many of our kids haven't left the confines of their home in months, they haven't seen their friends or family

members, they haven't gone to the park, or accompanied you to the grocery store.

As a result, it's only natural that we are concerned about how they will fare through these times. Many of us are probably worried about screen withdrawal, separation anxiety from us, an unnatural fear of touching others, a constant panic of getting sick, or a dread of public places. We worry about withdrawal from loved ones, lagging social skills, decreased self-confidence, and whether the friends they missed so dearly will welcome them back into their social circles. Or maybe our concerns are completely opposite – that our kids, who have been so socially deprived, will hug everyone in sight and be part of the next wave of the virus spread. Then we worry about their schooling! Will they be behind in the fall? Am I responsible for their lagging academic





# ALRIGHT?

skills? Now that they've been used to learning one to one with me, will they be able to go back to learning in a room with 25 other kids? And finally, will our kids fear that the world out there is no longer a safe place for them?

In my experience as a teacher, I've seen kids go through horrible life situations: a complicated parent separation, a victim in a car accident, victims of abuse, the loss of a parent, and the death of a younger sibling. Many times, it seemed these kids would never recover from such tragedy, but every time, every child did. With caring adults around them, each child was able to overcome their trials – and most became stronger than ever. Let us not underestimate the natural resilience in most children.

Fellow parents, it's okay that we worry. It's what we do. But we need to take a pause

and acknowledge that these are OUR fears, not necessarily theirs. Perhaps they're worried less or about different things than we are. It's important that we talk about our fears, but let's keep these chats between adults and be mindful about little ears near us. Our job is to stay positive, to point out the good in each situation, to celebrate their achievements, and to instill a sense of optimism and security. Yes, keep these worries present and plan for the transition but also let your child take the lead and respond to them as needed. Let's shift our energy from worry and despair, to comfort and hopefulness.

Because in the end, the kids ARE going to be alright. 🌍

---

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

*A special thanks to One-12 Photography for the use of this image.*

# NATURAL DIAMOND OR LABORATORY GROWN

*What are your thoughts on laboratory-created diamonds?*

I personally don't mind the idea, as long as people understand them and know the true facts. A billion plus year old diamond is a sign of love, commitment and sincerity. You can't replace that with diamonds created in a reactor. To me there are two reasons people believe they should choose a lab-created diamond over a natural. One is environmental, the other is cost. Both I will discuss below.



*People want to purchase laboratory-created diamonds because they say they're more environmentally friendly. Is this true?*

This is not true. The estimated greenhouse gas emissions of the mining of a natural diamond are three times less than that of a laboratory-created diamond. In fact, De Beers is currently working to have all their mines become carbon neutral within the next five to eight years. Diamonds are formed in kimberlite, a rare volcanic rock, which has the capability to capture carbon dioxide and store it. I would need a few more pages of writing to discuss the social, economic, wildlife, conservation, community and overall global benefits of natural mining.

*So, it must be because laboratory-created diamonds are cheaper then?*

The short answer is 'yes'. Over the past few years, pricing has

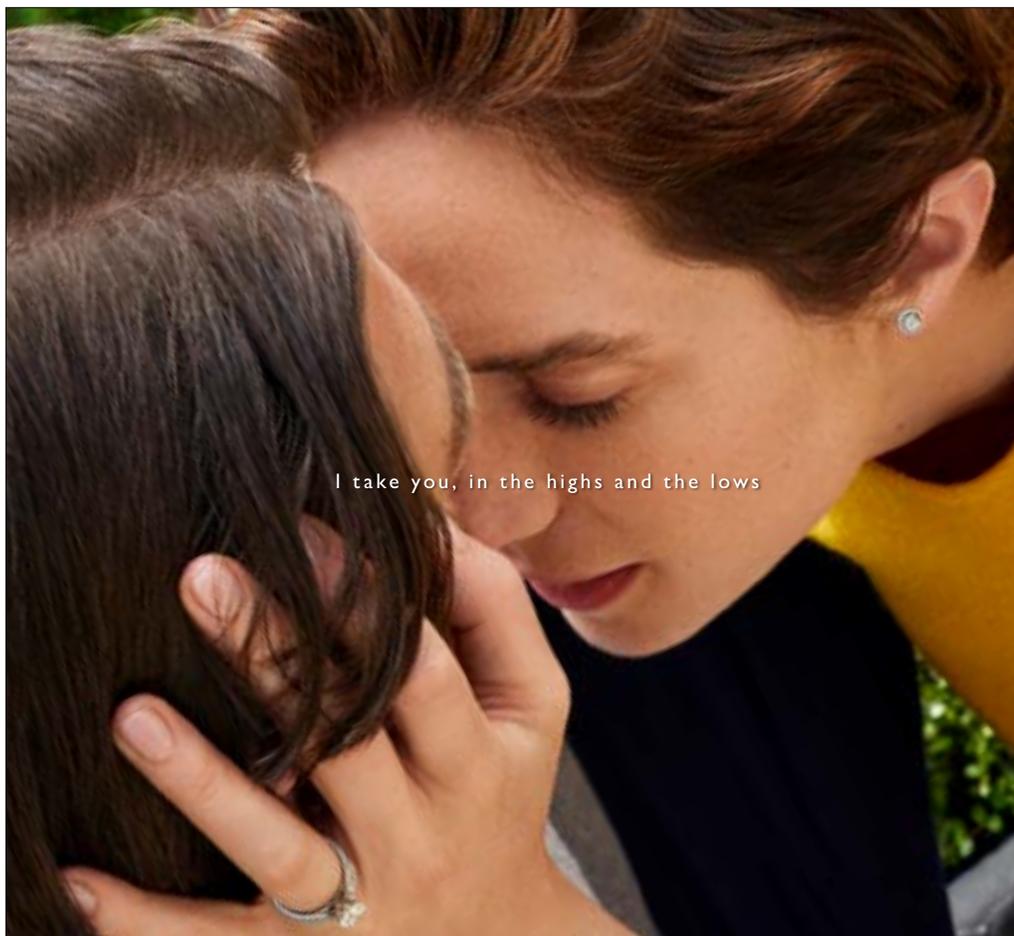
dropped significantly. But there is still not enough of a price difference between the natural and lab-created to justify value. The pricing doesn't really make sense as they can create a diamond in any quality they want, and an infinite number of them, whereas natural diamonds are finite. It takes a two billion dollar investment to begin the operation of a mine. Most mines are located in extremely remote and inaccessible regions.

DeBeers has created a company called Lightbox which will feature laboratory-created diamonds in jewellery, and will drive the price down to about \$800 per carat. As of right now the prices are quite a bit higher than that.

*Do you stock laboratory-grown diamonds?*

We carry a few sizes in stock, just to show people and discuss the arguments for and against a laboratory-created diamond. A couple other things I should mention is that we offer up to full value on diamond trade-ins that were bought at Nash's for a lifetime. We will not do this with laboratory-created diamonds. I can't guarantee that the value will be there tomorrow, whereas with natural diamonds I can.

*Colin Nash Certified Gemologist Appraiser, Nash Jewellers*



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# THE ONLY MEATBALL RECIPE YOU WILL EVER NEED

*We think this could be called "The only meatball recipe Dad will ever need" as well!  
How about cooking up a batch for Pops this Father's Day?*

## INGREDIENTS:

- 1 lb ground beef
- 1 egg, beaten
- ½ white onion, finely diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- ¾ cup Parmesan, finely grated, reserve some for garnish
- ¼ cup parsley, reserve some for garnish
- ¾ tsp chili flakes
- ½ cup panko, or other breadcrumb
- ¾ teaspoon oregano
- salt & pepper to taste
- 2-3 tablespoons cooking oil
- 2 cups tomato or pasta sauce
- cast iron pan (optional)

## PANADE:

- 1 slice white bread, crust removed and torn or cut into 1" pieces
- 2-3 tbsp milk

## METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 375F. In a medium sized pan on medium heat add 1 tbsp cooking oil and add onions. Season with salt and pepper and cook until golden brown, then add garlic and cook until it begins to take on colour. Remove from pan and cool down.

In a large mixing bowl combine all ingredients including panade and onion mixture. Sear off a small piece and

adjust seasoning if necessary. Roll meatballs using clean hands into balls 2-3" in diameter. In a large oven-friendly pan add cooking oil and sear meatballs until golden brown. Deglaze with tomato sauce and place pan in the oven for 15-20 min until meatballs are fully cooked through and have a chance to braise for a little while. Remove from oven and spoon sauce over meatballs. Garnish the dish as you wish and serve. 🍴



*Chef Devan Rajkumar's relentless passion and ambition to become one of the best in the food service industry are rooted in his time spent as a young boy in a tiny apartment with his Guyanese grandmother. Her dedication and enthusiasm were instilled in Chef Devan and began his quest for life changing food profiles.*

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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. 🌱

Stephanie Brown was poor when her kids were young but they did not know it because she made all their food from scratch. A Mennonite woman befriended her and gave her a passion for cooking. She found herself spending hours every day in the kitchen serving her children food made with her own two hands. Stephanie sourced her ingredients from farmers in her community.

This mindset still drives the existence of Living Alive Granola. No preservatives, no refined sugar, gluten-free and made with local products like Clovermead Honey, Palmer's Maple Syrup, and Hilray Oats. "It is a good feeling for us as a company and as a family to know that Ontario farmers and producers are all helping support each other. This allows us all to offer the highest quality of food that is not only delicious, but also nutritious." says Stephanie.

One morning in 2009, Stephanie served her children granola. They loved it so much that she decided to sell it at the St. Thomas, ON market. She sold 80 bags in four hours that first day, so she knew she had something special.

Unfortunately, Stephanie has a mood disorder called Bipolar Depression. She became sick after one year and was then hospitalized. She had to sell her business. Suddenly she found herself with no job, and a single mother of three small children.

In 2016, while working on her wellness and trying to find a career that would work with her Bipolar illness, she met Joe Preston (a well know politician and very successful business man), who wanted to invest in her company. "Selling my granola was and still is for me the answer to having a career.

I use my business now as a platform to educate people about mental illness. We donate 10 cents to local mental health projects from every large bag sold. Grocers all across Southwestern Ontario have been instrumental in helping us help people that suffer with mental illnesses by selling Living Alive Granola on their shelves."



Bracing You for Life

# JUNE is INTERNATIONAL SCOLIOSIS AWARENESS MONTH!

Scoliosis is a common spinal deformity that is routinely diagnosed in childhood and teen years. You may begin to see signs of a curving spine at any age but the condition commonly presents during puberty when the child goes through a growth spurt. Scoliosis is not linked to poor posture or heavy book bags! If you begin to notice signs of a curving spine, talk to your family physician as this is a progressive condition that can change rapidly as your child grows. Early diagnosis and early management is key to treatment success.

The predominant sign of scoliosis is an S or C shaped spine. Depending on the progression of the condition, your child's spine may also begin to twist (like a corkscrew) making the ribs (which are attached to the spine) appear uneven.

#### Other signs to watch for include;

- A shoulder or hip that appears higher than the other
- One shoulder blade that sticks out more than the other
- Back pain
- Difficulty breathing

To make a definitive diagnosis a physician will request an x-ray, computed tomography scan, or magnetic resonance imaging of the spine. They will measure the curve of the spine and express

the severity in terms of "degrees of side to side curvature". This measure helps determine the treatment plan as management depends on curve severity, the child's age and how much growth is left. Severe scoliosis curves or curves detected after growing has ceased may be surgically corrected. This is very invasive and used as a last resort. The majority of cases can be conservatively managed using a thoracolumbar spinal orthosis (TLSO)

A custom made TLSO is a standard non-invasive treatment for scoliosis that should be worn until the child stops growing. Your doctor or orthotist will be able to indicate the daily usage. The wear schedule can be up to 24 hours a day depending on the severity of the spinal deformity. The brace acts as a holding device that keeps a curve from getting worse and if worn properly and for the prescribed time, the curve should not get bigger.

There's no quick fix for scoliosis. Wearing a brace or recovering from surgery takes time. However, when treatment is over, people with scoliosis are able to live a full and active life. If you have any questions or concerns about scoliosis or if your child is affected, please do not hesitate to reach out to our office. We would be happy to answer any questions you or your family may have! 🌐

*The Team at Custom Orthotics of London*



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# A WOMAN'S WORK: COVID EDITION



Recently, I put a request out on my personal Facebook page for insights as to what people wanted me to write about for my column this month. Truthfully, I had no idea. As we fully submerge into the second to third month of isolation, I am feeling the burnout and overwhelm. I am not on the frontlines in terms of engaging in person-to-person work (my private practice has moved entirely online), but I am busy trying to help my clients navigate working from home, parenting and trying to salvage bits and pieces of their mental health - while trying to do the same for myself.

The comments I received were heartbreaking. I heard from mothers who sounded like they were absolutely drowning. My friends vulnerably shared their anxieties about trying to raise children while working, guilt around using screens, coping with profound feelings of isolation and crippling worry about the future, their children and their own mental health. I heard from single people who felt cut off, forgotten about and scared. I heard from single mothers who had no help and I heard from women in relationships who didn't either.

As a recent single mother myself, trying to homeschool and take care of an ill parent while running a private practice has been, at times, panic-inducing. I heard from my friends on my Facebook post asking (begging) me what to do. In full transparency, I don't have all of the answers myself. This pandemic highlights the desperate need we have for our systems and structures to stay in place, because when they break, we have absolutely nothing to catch us. What I heard was that the normal "Do yoga! Write a gratitude list!" suggestions were failing women.

In addition, the propulsion to everything online meant for more opportunities to compare to other women who seemed to be sailing through this pandemic with their home-cooked apple pies and finger-painted furniture with kids. So this begs the question: what do we do when nothing is working? How can we manage what is a mental health crisis in the making? How does

a woman work, often alone and with the weight of what feels like a million roles on their shoulders?

My short answer is that we don't. Because we can't.

In my own therapy sessions, I have sat there gasping for air to a therapist who is likely just as isolated and flattened as I am. I am candid and vulnerable and she helps me to lessen the expectations on myself, to forgive myself for the screen time my daughter is now getting and the homework assignments I can't seem to keep up with. She reminds me that I can't be a machine and that I need to express myself creatively by painting and making art for myself and myself alone. She reminds me to take my medications as prescribed, to go for walks six feet apart with my friends when I can. She says I need to get outside as much as I can, get to nature, go out to the country. She says I need belly-laughs (and these come from my socially distanced walks). I know that I need therapy, more often. I need so much support, now more than ever. I can't do any of this alone.

I am clearly not a doctor, but I am a therapist and a mother and a woman, so these identities might qualify me for sharing my experience. I can't tell you if a walk outside is the right choice for you. I can tell you it's been the right choice for me. Therapy has been the right choice for me. Permission to be grossly imperfect has been the right choice for me. Crying, writing in my journal, learning a new craft (adult paint by number on Amazon is where it's at, folks), meditation and medication are where it's at for me. These strategies have been useful to my clients as well.

In these unprecedented times, we need to re-examine woman's work and smash it to bits. Looking for ways to care for your spirit and soul are key to surviving this mess. The same impossible standards that are placed on us "out there" cannot survive in lockdown.

Breathe. We will get through this. May you be happy. 🌿

*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.*

# HOW *a* PANDEMIC *primes* PETS *for* SEPARATION ANXIETY

Social distancing has changed my perspective on the life of a dog. As a homebody, I thought I would thrive in isolation: fewer social commitments, more home cooked meals, and not a pair of jeans in sight. Needless to say, the novelty is long gone and I now anxiously await my husband's return from work so I can finally interact with another human... and maybe even go for a walk!

When life returns to "normal" (whatever that may be), our dogs are going to experience similar feelings of social withdrawal. Currently, they are enjoying the extra time and attention from their beloved humans, but these conditions are perfect for creating separation anxiety.

### WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF SEPARATION ANXIETY?

Overly attached dogs might follow you around or crave physical affection. When left alone, they may manifest their anxiety as vocalization, destruction, or house soiling. Upon sensing an impending departure, they may shake, shiver, salivate, refuse to eat, or become restless or quiet and withdrawn.

### WHAT CAN I DO TO PREVENT SEPARATION ANXIETY?

Focus on routine and rewards. A consistent routine will include time for enrichment (food toys, new experiences, learning new

tricks), regular exercise, and scheduled time alone to help your dog learn self-sufficiency. If you have adopted a puppy during this pandemic, you will need to work extra hard to ensure these habits are established now. Before rewarding your dog with attention or a treat, ask yourself: "What behavior does my dog need to learn? What behavior should I never reinforce?" and only reward them when they are calm.

### WHAT IF MY DOG ALREADY HAS SEPARATION ANXIETY?

Continue to enforce routine and rewards, while altering any habits that may be contributing to your dog's anxiety, such as rewarding them with attention upon returning home or punishing them for making messes. It can be difficult to break these tendencies on your own, so use all your resources and do not hesitate to also contact your veterinarian and a professional dog trainer for advice early on.

Our furry family members have certainly helped us cope through this pandemic. Let's ensure that we do the same for them when it's over. After all, no matter what species we are, we're all in this together! 🐾



*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](mailto:danielle@NeighbourhoodPetClinic.com). Our team at Neighbourhood Pet Clinic will tap into their collective experience to answer your various questions.*



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# SIMPLE HACKS to CURB your CRAVINGS

Cravings - this is a topic that has come up in discussion with most of my clients since mid-March...and understandably so! Find yourself rifling through the kitchen lately, looking for something sweet or salty to nibble on while you watch the news (or when binging on Netflix)? Indulging in a glass (or bottle) of wine every night?

It's likely emotional eating. Our brains are wired to crave certain foods when feeling bored, sad, or anxious. We seek foods that are highly palatable (like ice cream or chips) over healthier foods (like veggies and fruits). These foods activate the reward centres in our brain, making us feel good.

In self-isolation, we're spending more time at home, and adjusting to this new "normal" filled with daily pandemic news alerts, worrying about family, finances and the future. It comes as no surprise that many of us are turning to food for distraction. Can you relate? I know I can.

Turning to food can easily become a coping mechanism. However, this can lead to unhealthy behaviours, putting us at risk of developing obesity and other chronic diseases. Over the years I've discovered my own tips, tricks and tools that I keep in my emotional eating toolbox and I can't wait to share those with you.

**1 PRACTICE MINDFUL EATING** When we're more mindful about the what, why, when, where and how of our eating habits, we're more likely to make healthier choices more often. This can help you reconnect to your experience with food by bringing awareness to your feelings, thoughts, emotions, and behaviours. There are many simple ways to get started, like eliminating all distractions, turning off the TV and putting down your phone, eating slowly, chewing your food thoroughly and focusing on how the food makes you feel, and stopping when you are full.

**2 KEEP A FOOD AND FEELINGS JOURNAL** Sometimes it helps to take a step back and think about why you're craving something sweet. Is it hunger, boredom, stress? Keep a food and feelings journal to help you track patterns in your food choices and cravings. Maybe stress is the reason. Find other ways to cope with stress and practice self-care, like talking to a friend, taking a bath, making some tea, doing yoga, exercising, etc.

Follow me on Instagram @sparknutritionandhealth and on Facebook @mysparkdietitian for more healthy eating tips and some of my favorite recipes. And **stay tuned for part two** next month for six more crave-curbing hacks! 🍷



*Jenn Giurgevich is the founder of Spark Nutrition & Health, a virtual nutrition consulting business. Visit [www.sparknutritionandhealth.ca](http://www.sparknutritionandhealth.ca) for more info on how she can help you build a positive relationship with food and exercise... and ignite your best self!*

# TELETHERAPY: The NEXT BEST THING

These days, parents are not only parenting, but also educating their children as they navigate the world of online learning. For parents of children with speech and language disorders, keeping up with their child's therapy is one more thing added to an already full plate! We know that children need regular practice to reach and maintain their speech and language goals. Did you know that the College of Audiologists and Speech Language Pathologists of Ontario considers teletherapy to be the next best thing to in person therapy?



throughout the session. There are also lots of fun toys and games that your child can participate in virtually. Typically, children are well engaged throughout the sessions, and have lots of fun interacting with their therapist.

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THERAPY?

In order to make significant gains in speech and language goals, children require ongoing practice. With the sudden closure of many services, therapy has been interrupted and progress towards goals may regress. During teletherapy sessions, parents are asked to participate in the session and support their child. This not only helps with technological hiccups, but also gives the parent a front-row seat to the techniques and activities utilized by the speech-language pathologist. This parent-coaching model allows for carry-over of goals as the parent can continue targeting the child's goals during daily activities and routines.

During this time of social and physical distancing, it is important to stay connected. Fern Speech and Language Services has continued to provide consultation, assessment, and treatment via teletherapy and would be happy to connect with you. 📞

*Elizabeth Skirving, M.S., M.Ed., Reg. CASLPO*

*Andrea Jennings, M.Cl.Sc., Reg. CASLPO*

*Speech-Language Pathologists Fern Speech and Language Services*

### WHAT IS THERAPY?

Teletherapy sessions allow a speech-language pathologist to provide speech and language consultations, assessments and intervention and parent coaching virtually via video conferencing! Research indicates that this is an effective way of providing speech and language therapy.

### WHAT DOES THERAPY LOOK LIKE?

In order to participate in teletherapy, all you need is a device with a camera, like a smartphone, tablet or computer that can access the Internet. Prior to the session, your speech-language pathologist will send materials such as crafts and worksheets that can be used

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# PUT YOUR BEST FACE FORWARD



Take your daily skincare routine to the next level by incorporating some of these top tips from the pros!

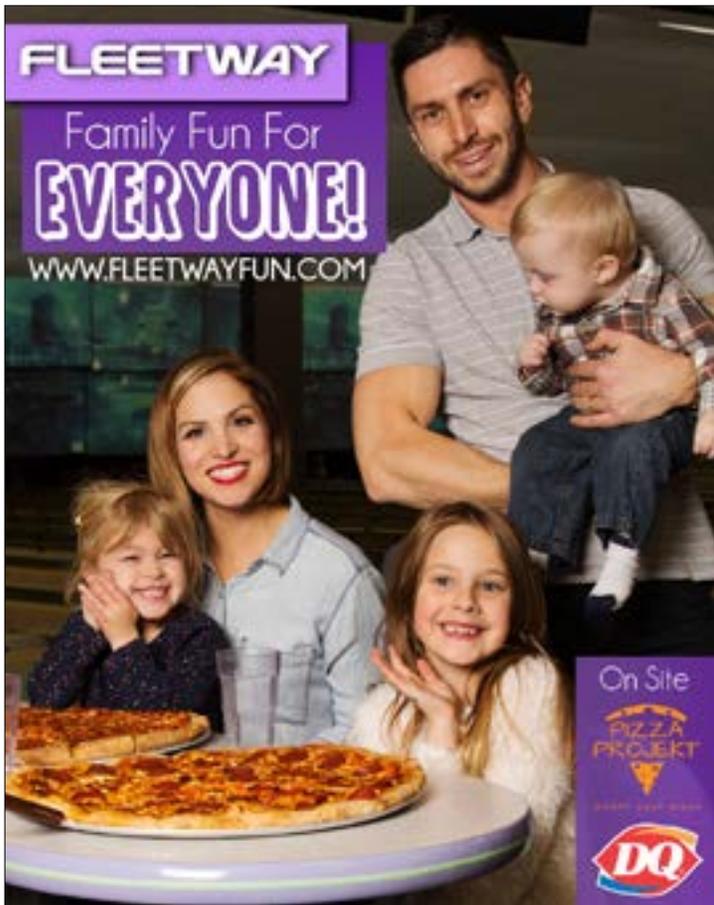
**DOUBLE CLEANSE** - Take it *allll* off with a double-cleansing technique. This is especially ideal when cleansing away a full-glam look. By washing your face twice in row, you're breaking through all the build up from products and cosmetics and ensuring that all residue - including cleanser suds - are completely removed from the skin

**REMOVE & REPLENISH** - Another pro tip to maximize the benefits of any face mask is to exfoliate your skin before applying your treatment. Exfoliating removes what your daily cleanser can't as they're designed to get in deeper, buffing away the layers of dead skin cells and build up which creates a barrier on the skin, preventing treatments and masks from thoroughly penetrating the skin and working their magic.

**FEED & FORTIFY** - Once your skin is completely clean and treated, it's important to deeply feed, strengthen, and nourish your skin with an appropriate serum and moisturizer for your skin type. These formulas are designed to keep skin hydrated while targeting specific concerns such as aging, sun-damage, acne or sensitivity. Layering your products helps to lock-in the beauty benefits.

**CONCEAL & PROTECT** - Don't just cover up to conceal, cover up to protect! SPF is essential for beautiful, healthy, youthful-looking skin and fortunately, many cosmetic companies include sun protection in their products giving you the best of both worlds. Whether you prefer liquid, cream or powder formulas, always ensure that in addition to applying foundation to your face, you include your neck, ears and chest to properly blend in colour, as well as for sun protection where you're most exposed. Stay beYOUtiful! 🌸

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

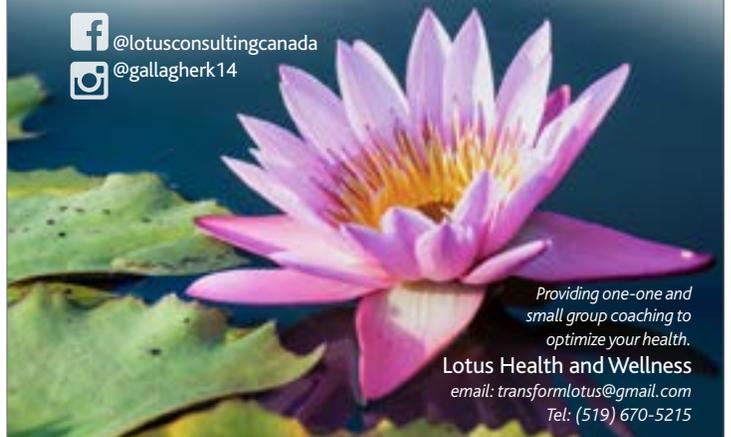


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# MEET **DEBBIE BRAUN,** REALTOR AT KELLER WILLIAMS

**T**hirty years ago would you have imagined how your life is now? Mine certainly didn't go as planned but I am grateful for that. The only predictable outcome has been the wonderful men my boys have become and what a proud mama I am!

Flash back 24 years to a difficult divorce from my boys' dad. We had no family nearby so I worked to build friendships that have since lasted a lifetime. At times I strained to see the light at the end of the tunnel and it was only with support (often in the form of girlfriends with wine) that we eventually made it through to our new normal. When a legal assistant position became available in the family law department where I worked, it felt right to pay forward that support. For decades I did just that and I cherish the bonds I made with people then.

Six years ago, I married Craig, the love of my life. We live in Westmount where we entertain neighbours, friends, family and clients. We host international students to embrace a world beyond our own and to share what good we've found in ours. In our down time, we enjoy travelling, cooking, cycling, music and movies.

There came a point where I wanted to do something different. I became a realtor and joined Keller Williams whose core values mirror my own. My business focuses on helping families experiencing separation and divorce. Now more than ever, I work to help people through the most stressful time in their lives. My new network is not unlike girlfriends with wine, only it's made up of lawyers, counsellors, mortgage agents, and financial experts. I've worked to foster this network to spare my clients the stress of searching for reliable help. I am grateful for the challenges of my past because they've led me to a career where I know I make a difference.

If you find yourself lost in the dark, I'll help you move on, with all the compassion, experience, (and humour) I can muster. Stick with me...I know the way out. 🌟



*Debbie Braun,  
Realtor at Keller Williams*

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