

THE MOM & CAREGIVER™

SEPTEMBER 2022
VOLUME 24 ISSUE 9

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**SO COOL
FOR BACK TO
SCHOOL!**

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Southwestern
Ontario**

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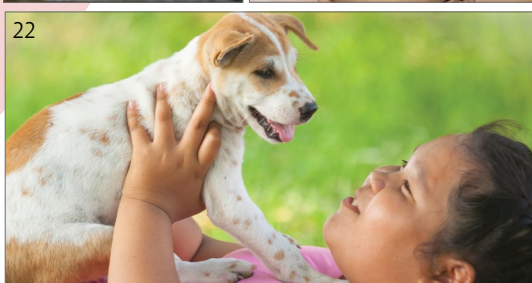
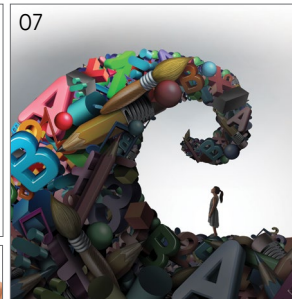
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Robert was nervous arriving as he thought his mom was bringing him for a needle. But he was ecstatic to find out it was his photo shoot instead, and he posed and posed for us. Tu as fait un travail incroyable, Robert!

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

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THE NEW YEAR FOR FAMILIES

I've always considered September the start of the new year for me. It's a fresh start when we drop the exciting chaos of summer and ease back into routines and schedules. I like that. It makes me feel relaxed, organized and in control.

Seeing as this is a fresh start for me, and for so many parents, children and families, I thought I'd put together my September to-do list. (Lists are the other things that make me feel relaxed, organized and in control!)

Sabina's September To-Do List

- Get the kids settled back into school. (Find tips to make this smooth, especially for the newest students, on page 12)
- Make a meal plan. (I've been guilty of eating out on patios and nibbling on snacks. I want to plan my dinners, stick to a grocery list and stock up my freezer. Find out how I'll do it on page 14.)
- Help others. John Holmes says, "There is no better exercise for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up." September is Blood Cancer Awareness Month AND Muscular Dystrophy Awareness Month. Find out how you can help on pages 18 and 21.
- Make mistakes! And let our kids make them too. We're all on this earth to learn, and one of the best ways to do that is through trial and error. So be brave enough to be bad at something new this month, and read Janet Smith's "Mistaeks Happenn" on page 20.
- Consider a new career? Not for me - I'm in love with my baby, The Mom & Caregiver magazine. But if you dream of a meaningful, professional career and want to make a difference in children's lives, find out more on the right hand side of page 5.
- Take time to think, learn and wear an orange shirt on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. This day is meant to recognize the tragic history of loss, and the lasting effects of Canada's residential school system. Every Child Matters!

Here's wishing you a September that checks everything off your list. All the best to the kiddos heading back to school and to the families and teachers who support them!

Sabina



*Educating the mind without
educating the heart is no education at all.*

- Aristotle

*Editorial photography
by Flavia Zaidan
Make-up by Sanah Zebian*



2022 EVENTS

September

Outdoor Movie, Minions:
The Rise of Gru, Mornington
Park, 8:30pm,
www.london.ca/outdoormovie

01ST

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scissor-snips-say-yes-to-
scissor-success/](http://www.themomandcaregiver.com/scissor-snips-say-yes-to-scissor-success/)

02ND

Happy Long Weekend!,
[www.thegirlonbloor.com/
summer-drinks/](http://www.thegirlonbloor.com/summer-drinks/)

05TH

*It's Back to
School Time!*

07TH

Suppertime Just Got Real Busy-
Slow Cooker to the Rescue,
[www.themomandcaregiver.com/
honey-bbq-drumsticks/](http://www.themomandcaregiver.com/honey-bbq-drumsticks/)

08TH

Airshow London Skydrive 2022,
London International Airport,
www.airshowlondon.com/

10TH

Western Fair,
Western Fair District,
www.westernfair.ca/

11TH

Doors Open London,
[www.londonheritage.ca/
doorsopenlondon](http://www.londonheritage.ca/doorsopenlondon)

17TH

Into the Woods, Grand Theatre,
[www.grandtheatre.com/
event/into-the-woods](http://www.grandtheatre.com/event/into-the-woods)

20TH

School Days are Crazy - Here's
Another Slow Cooker Helper,
[www.themomandcaregiver.com/
slow-cooker-chicken-taco-soup/](http://www.themomandcaregiver.com/slow-cooker-chicken-taco-soup/)

23RD

Find Out Why We
Wear Orange Shirts,
[www.canadiangeographic.ca/
articles/survivor-the-story-of-phyllis-
webstad-and-orange-shirt-day/](http://www.canadiangeographic.ca/articles/survivor-the-story-of-phyllis-webstad-and-orange-shirt-day/)

28TH

*National Day
for Truth and
Reconciliation*

30TH

LONDON FRENCH DAY CARE

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- Do you want to identify as a professional?
- Are you looking for a meaningful career?

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- Observe children at play.
- Note your observations.
- Analyze the results.
- Adjust your techniques.
- Repeat the above.
- Learn, learn, learn.
- Love your job.

September is a good month to make a move and rejuvenate.

- Do what you want to do!
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Find out if a rewarding career in home child care is for you.

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E Info@londonfrenchdaycare.ca



For More Details and Events Visit

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ORAL HEALTH

Oral health contributes to overall health and affects one's quality of life. Healthy mouth and teeth allow a child to develop proper eating and speaking patterns and contribute to a child's

psychological well-being. A healthy, pain-free mouth is something every child deserves.

ERUPTION/TEETHING - Some baby teeth may stay in the mouth until the child is 13 years old.

PRIMARY TEETH (Deciduous Teeth, Baby Teeth, Milk Teeth) - Teething is the natural process when baby teeth break through the gums. Your child's first baby tooth will come in around six months of age. Your child should have all 20 of their baby teeth by three years of age. Baby teeth hold the space for the adult (permanent) teeth.

COMMON SIGNS OF TEETHING:

- Drooling
- Fussiness and irritability
- Red cheeks and red swollen gums
- A need to chew on things
- Mild fever

You can assist in relieving teething discomfort by offering a cool teething ring that contains only water or a clean, cooled washcloth for the baby to chew on. Avoid over the counter teething gels and ointments.

TIPS FOR HEALTHY TEETH:

- Avoid putting a baby to bed with a bottle containing milk or juice as this can lead to cavities. If using a bottle at bedtime, fill it only with water. To avoid choking, always supervise your child as they eat and drink.
- A sippy cup could replace a bottle when children are six months or older.
- Soothers can lead to dental issues including narrow arches and tooth crowding when used long-term.
- Offer foods that are healthy, low in sugar and do not stick to teeth. These snacks include cheese, vegetables and fresh fruit. Encourage children to drink only water between meals, preferably fluoridated tap water.

TOOTHBRUSHING AND FLOSSING:

- Even before a baby starts teething, run a clean, damp washcloth over the gums to clear away harmful bacteria after feeding.
- When a baby gets teeth, brush them with an infant toothbrush and water.
- For children three to six years of age, a rice size amount of toothpaste with fluoride should only be used when they can rinse and spit properly.
- Help supervise a child brushing his or her teeth until six to eight years of age (or when the child can clean teeth well without assistance).

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

see www.healthunit.com/dental-health or call your dental office. 

Submitted by: Claudia Barrera-Acosta RDH and Natasha Reed RDH, Middlesex-London Health Unit



FOCUS ON ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER


The start of the school year brings the end of the lazy, hazy days of summer and heralds the time to buckle down and focus. For students with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), achieving that focus is very difficult. We think of ADD as being a diagnosis that largely affects only academic achievement. The truth is that this diagnosis has many more far reaching consequences.

Broadly there are two major categories of ADD. The hyperactive form is more predominant in boys and involves more physical hyperactivity and impulsivity. The inattentive form is more prevalent in girls and this often goes undiagnosed as they are not disruptive and often labelled as “day dreamers”.

ADD impacts not only academic achievement but also the ability to socialize, organize and engage with others. Impulsivity also results in difficulties with addiction and risk-taking behaviour. As children get older, there is a greater association with other mental health illness. 85 percent of adults with ADD have another mental health condition with anxiety being the most predominant.

Adults are increasingly being diagnosed with ADD. They are often diagnosed when their children undergo testing and they see some of the traits within themselves. ADD is often inherited and has a strong genetic component. Although there is significant

improvement with treatment, there has been a lifetime of missed opportunities.

Early diagnosis is the key to preventing these other mental health conditions. If the diagnosis is suggested by your child's treatment, see your health care provider. Due diligence with proper screening is then warranted. Treatment can make a world of difference if the diagnosis is appropriate. Pay attention to your child and help them pay attention. 

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






FITNESS FACILITIES FOR FAMILIES

As we gradually re-emerge from the pandemic, it's important for people of all ages to continue to be active to help counter the more sedentary routine into which many of us were pushed. But we know that being active can be difficult for adults and children alike. Entering a fitness facility can be intimidating whether it's your first time or your return after an extended time away. Or the traditional gym experience may

not be your preferred way of staying active (and is not necessarily designed for kids).

What is important to remember is that going to the gym does not have to mean running on a treadmill or "pumping iron". There are many ways to maintain an active lifestyle while being a part of the fitness community at the YMCA. A wide variety of programs are offered by the 15 Y health and fitness branches across Southwestern Ontario,

focused on providing members with a safe and inclusive environment to meet their fitness goals. Our programming is constantly evolving to meet the needs of our dynamic communities.

Unlike most traditional fitness facilities, the Y welcomes children of all ages. Each day you will find our child members learning the basics of water safety in one of our many pools across the region or learning how to play a new sport in one of our gymnasiums. New children's and family programming is continuously being introduced as we further enhance the family experience within our community. 



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DESIGNING A SPACE FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE

Creating a special space for the young people in your life can seem daunting, but with a little planning, you can have a room that will carry your baby through toddler, school-age and even teenager.

As with most projects, the "rules" are simple and few:

1 KEEP IT SIMPLE. Choose neutral colours - the temptation to use a traditional blue or pink may work for the baby stage of life but you may soon tire of it. There are so many beautiful hues of white from various paint distributors available. My favourites are from Benjamin Moore: Chantilly Lace, Cloud White, Barren Plain, Dove White - all neutrals with a hint of colour to guide you with your accessories. Also keep furniture to a minimum. This provides room for lots of play space which is integral to your child's keeping toys and games in one room of the house.


2 MAKE THE MOST OF THE SPACE.

A dresser can be used as a great change table with some added padding and safety rails. A loft bed with work/play space under it or bunk beds allows more room for play and sleepovers.

3 STORAGE Kids come with lots of stuff: clothing, games, toys, books and more. Wall hooks, under bed storage crates and built in storage in beds can provide handy spots to create habits of putting "stuff" somewhere other than in the middle of the bedroom floor. An under window bench with cubbies can double as a work/play space and storage area with baskets or boxes.

4 ACCESSORIZE WITH COLOUR AND TEXTURE. Pillows, prints, framed photos, a cozy rug and window shades can all add a splash of colour and texture that can be changed and updated at a reasonable cost and

with little disruption as your child matures.

5 CREATE A WORK AREA. If you can find a small extra space, create an area that be used for colouring and creating. This same space can be used later as a homework space. 



Janice Brock,
Owner, Custom Covers and Custom Shades

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READING! (CHAPTER TWO)

Parents are singing, *"It's the most won-der-ful time of the yeeeeeaaar!"*

Yes, indeed it is for many of us with older school-aged kids. But for those with younger children, the first day of JK or SK may feel a bit different. Kind of bittersweet, as we watch them waddle into school trying to stay upright with their oversized backpacks. They were babies just yesterday!

While it's impossible to not worry at all about how our kids will do in school, we can rest assured we've done our best to set them up for success. Last month, I discussed some of the broad, fundamental speech, language and literacy skills we help teach our children from birth.

Hopefully the message was clear that exposure to speech and reading develops "phonological awareness": the ability to perceive the various speech patterns associated with a particular language.



To many, the connection between speech sounds and reading isn't obvious. But to your Friendly Neighborhood Speech Pathologist, it is a fact that children with this skill – and another skill, discussed below – pick up reading faster and easier than those without it. And I'd like to be clear that I am referring to children who can hear clearly.

"Phonological processing" is the other skill that needs to develop. Simply put, it is how we can play with speech sounds. Creating rhyming words, putting sounds together, taking them apart, adding sounds to words, or taking sounds away are all examples of this skill. Although all children will get to practice doing these things in the classroom, building this skill should be part of their exposure to literacy long before they get to JK.

But even if the focus has been the simple joy of snuggling up with dad and a favourite book, that's totally OK! That, in itself, carries a huge benefit: an interest in books and reading. And so long as kids are interested in reading, they are likely to be motivated to quickly pick up the skills they need to read. And if they don't do that as fast as they want to, we're always here to help! 📖

*Mohamed (Mo) Oshalla, MHSc.,
Speech-Language Pathologist & Executive
Director, Ontario Speech & Language Services*



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NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

Last year, the Canadian government passed legislation to make September 30th the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. This day is meant to recognize the tragic history of loss, and the lasting effects of Canada's residential school system.



WHY DO YOU THINK WE WEAR ORANGE SHIRTS ON THIS DAY?

Charlie - We wear orange shirts on September 30th to show our support for First Nations people affected by residential schools. We recognize that Every Child Matters. Many children in residential schools felt like they didn't matter. They were forced to change who they were by people who didn't even know them.

Harrison - We wear orange shirts on this day because of one residential school survivor named Phyllis Webstad. She chose to wear an orange shirt on her first day at a residential school and when she arrived they took it away from her just like they tried to take away her First Nations identity.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO MAKE SURE SOMETHING LIKE THIS DOESN'T HAPPEN AGAIN?

Charlie - Most importantly we should talk about it. It is not a nice part of Canadian history. Many children lost their lives because of the laws back then. People should be allowed to be who they are and proud of who they are no matter where they come from.

Harrison - We should learn about the history of the residential schools in Canada. We can do more to respect and recognize the First Nations' acknowledgement of the land we live on. Our family lives on the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Attiwoonderk (Neutral) and Mississauga Nation.

HOW CAN WE LEARN MORE ABOUT THE INDIGENOUS CULTURES IN CANADA

Charlie - We studied First Nations cultures in grade 5 at school. We have walked on tours with our family at Ska-Nah-Doht in the summertime. We watch movies and shows about Indigenous people in Canada, and we look to support musicians and filmmakers of First Nations People of Canada. That's how they tell their stories.

Harrison - We follow First Nations social media influencers like Notorious Cree, Larissa Crawford, Nanook Gordon and Jayroy Makokis to continue to learn more about Indigenous cultures. 📺

Please join us in wishing a fond farewell to our current Kid Zone writers, Charlie and Harrison. We wish you all the best in the future, and we know you'll do big things in life, gentlemen! Stay tuned next month to meet our newest Kid Zone writers!



As a teacher, one of the most common questions I get asked from friends and family is “What should my kid know before starting kindergarten?” I’ve been through the process myself, taught kindergarten, and have helped many students with this major transition. Here are some of the tips that will help you and your child have a smooth start to the school year.

KIND HERE





EMOTIONS. Talk to your kids about going to school. Reassure them that it's a safe place where they will meet many new friends and have a lot of fun. Talk about the feelings they are having and that it's OK to be a little worried. A visit to the school playground might help ease some of the anxious feelings.

ROUTINES. This one is tough to do over the summer but in the couple of weeks leading up to September, try to follow the school schedule (check out the school website). Practice waking up at a certain time, getting ready, nutrition breaks, outdoor time, etc.

INDEPENDENCE. Not every child will have all these skills mastered but the more you practice at home, the more successful your child will feel. Practice washroom routines, putting on shoes/boots, dressing, eating, opening lunch containers, zippers, and putting on a backpack. Ensure that backpacks, lunch containers and shoes are easy for your child to handle.

SOCIAL SKILLS. Play dates are a great way to practice social skills. Play games that involve turn-taking and waiting. Teach kids how to clean up and share toys (especially with their favourites) and encourage kids to ask questions or ask for help when needed.

ACADEMICS. Kindergarten teachers do not expect 3 or 4 year olds to read or write but practicing these skills is always helpful. Have kids practice holding pencils/crayons, writing some letters and numbers, or writing their first name. Read together (OFTEN!) and help your child to recognize numbers, letters, and even some small words.

KINDNESS. In my opinion, the most essential skill you can teach your child is to be kind! Empathy, helpfulness, friendliness, generosity, respect and being considerate to others are skills that need to be taught and practiced at home AND at school. When kids are kind to one another, the classroom becomes a safe place where students can learn from each other, make mistakes together, feel good about themselves, feel happy and want to go back to school each day.

If your child is struggling in September, connect with your child's teachers. They have a wealth of experience to draw from and can help make the transition to school a successful one. Best of luck to all new kindergarten kids – and their parents! 🍀

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

ERGARTEN, WE COME!

TOP TIPS FOR BACK-TO-SCHOOL

Vacations are over, the days are getting shorter and the back-to-school buzz is in the air! Manage the stress of this transition with my top five tips for back-to-school.

1. PLAN YOUR MEALS AND GROCERY SHOPPING.

I know, I know... broken record here, and this won't be the last time you read those words! But, this is honestly THE BEST habit to set your food environment up for success. Planning in advance helps avoid those 5 pm evenings staring at the fridge wondering what the heck you're going to make for dinner, and the desperate search on UberEats or drive through McD's to grab something quick. It saves time and money when you know what's on the week's menu.

2. COOK IN BATCHES ON THE WEEKENDS.

This tip ties in nicely with tip #1. Part of planning your meals can be batch cooking on the weekends to stock your fridge or freezer for the week. My favorite meals to batch cook are chili, casseroles, stews, curries, soups and tomato sauce for a quick pasta meal.

3. PLAN BALANCED, ON-THE-GO BREAKFASTS.

Planning again? Yes! Plan a breakfast the day before that the fam can eat at home or on the road to school or work. Overnight oats or a fruit and yogurt parfait are easy to make the night before and keep in the fridge. Other quick breakfasts include a banana and peanut butter rolled in a tortilla or a hard-boiled egg with a granola bar and fruit.

4. MAKE SNACKS EASY TO ACCESS.

This one can help facilitate older kids and teens to prepare their lunches too, so well worth the effort to set up! Assign a section of the fridge and pantry for easy-to-grab snacks. Think things like yogurt and cheese, cut up vegetables and fruits with hummus, pre-portioned trail mix, granola bars, crackers, etc.

5. LEARN TO LIVE WITH THE CHAOS.

Didn't get to planning this week? Not sure what to make for dinner tonight? Sometimes, even with the best intentions, we find ourselves at 5 pm with no idea what to make. That's OK! That's life and the best thing to do is embrace those moments and give ourselves grace. A bowl of cereal for dinner once in a while never hurt anybody, so don't stress those times. 🍷



Jenn Giurgevich is the founder of Spark Nutrition & Health, a virtual nutrition consulting business. Visit www.sparknutritionandhealth.ca for more information.

DANCE EXTREME



Dance extreme

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Register Online or In-Person
Sept 7-8 4:30-7:00pm
Sept 12-15 4:30-7:00pm

Classes Begin
Sept 17, 2022



danceextreme.com

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. 📍

Learning the art of dance helps develop many skills beyond just learning dance technique. For young children, dance can improve cognitive and physical development, sensory awareness and social skills, building skills necessary for success later in life.

Dance Extreme Inc offers a wide variety of classes beginning at 1 1/2 years of age. Their goal is to provide your child(ren) with opportunities that provoke interest, engage physical and mental stimulation and spark creativity. Dance classes incorporate elements of skilled dance and choreography instruction, body awareness, music appreciation and creative movement.

When listening to music and moving with the beat, your child(ren) will begin to learn how to coordinate their bodies in harmony with the stimuli around them. Through dance, they will explore what their bodies can do and perform these movements safely. They will build coordination and spatial awareness, all while improving their gross motor skills.

Coordinated movement is essential to proper brain development and language development. Dance allows both sides of the brain (right-sensing/feeling and left-logical/planning) to engage, as children follow steps and directions while creatively interpreting the music. Your child will delight in the social aspects of dance as they learn to understand and embrace their own uniqueness by relating to others and working together. Ultimately, in class they will exercise, learn how to respect others and will develop their self-esteem. Dancing gives young children new skills to learn and master.

Your child(ren)'s program will coincide with their age and grade at school to align with their natural cognitive and physical development. At our **EXPLORE** level, we offer **MOVERS**, a creative movement class for children 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 years. **SHAKERS** is a combination of ballet, jazz and acro for children 4 years old and **GROOVERS** for children 5 years. At Dance Extreme Inc, we welcome your child(ren) into our dance family, giving them a safe space to be who they are and the tools to become their greatest selves all while learning the art of dance. If you wish to know more, please visit our website www.danceextreme.com or contact us at 519-657-DANCE(3262).

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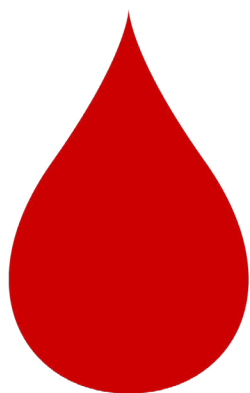
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LEUKEMIA & LYMPHOMA SOCIETY OF CANADA®

QUINN TAYLOR CURTIS' STORY



On January 20, 2019, just before Quinn's second birthday, we heard the words no parent wants to hear. "Your child has cancer."

Quinn had been sick for a while and had a fever that just wouldn't go away. We took her to her doctor one week, a walk-in clinic the following week, and were told it was probably a viral illness. In the third week, she was so tired that she would wake up from her nap and just lay there staring at the wall.

We then decided to take her to emergency and begged the doctor to give us an answer. It was then that they took blood and discovered that her blood counts were extremely low. As we sat in a private room in the emergency department, we were told that Quinn had Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia and would start treatment immediately.

Quinn's journey began with a month long inpatient stay including three surgeries, ICU admission, blood transfusions and her first chemo of many. She spent her birthday in surgery and recovery.

At the age of two, we watched her become the strongest and bravest person we have ever known.

Through numerous admissions, many lumbar punctures, countless blood tests, transfusions, medications and illness, she has done it all with a smile on her face and assurance that it is all okay. On March 29, 2021, Quinn took her final dose of chemo and got to ring the gong.

Being a cancer family is hard and it can feel lonely at times, but one of the biggest things you find in your lowest times is community. You find strength in others who have walked your path, support in organizations that are there to help you back up on your feet, and friends in the nurses and doctors that root for your child as if they were their own.

The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of Canada was one of the first organizations that we found. We chose then to join the

Light the Night Walk because being able to raise money and support for so many others going through what our daughter was meant a lot to us. Having our friends and family join us in raising money and support, as well as be there beside us for the walk, showed us that we are not alone, and even though we couldn't do anything to help Quinn's battle, we could be a part of something bigger.

We believe it is important to fund cancer research, important to have support and access to information for all cancer families. We can't thank the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society enough for all it provides to families like ours. 🌸

*Leukemia & Lymphoma
Society of Canada
www.bloodcancers.ca*



LUNCHBOX CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES



Bake up a batch of this easy childhood favourite and stuff 'em in your child's lunchbox this school year!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup margarine
- 1/4 cup white sugar
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 1/4 cup flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 pkg vanilla instant pudding
- 1 pkg milk chocolate chips

DIRECTIONS:

1. Blend margarine, sugars and dry pudding mix.
2. Add eggs, flour, baking soda and chocolate chips. Mix.
3. Bake at 375 F for 8 minutes.

Recipe by Carrie McMillan



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MISTAEKS HAPPENN!

In our house we operate on the philosophy that mistakes are only mistakes if we make the same mistake twice. We believe that mistakes only go bad when you don't admit to them, apologize for them, or if you repeat them.

Mistakes are a normal part of the learning process at any age, but they are especially important during childhood. Mistakes are the trial-and-error process that children encounter to learn if they should do something again, or how they can improve, all while teaching resilience.

As parents we must be disciplined to allow our kids to make mistakes so they can learn these valuable lessons in preferences, boundaries and accountability. Perhaps this is the most challenging aspect of parenting tweens and teens – letting go.

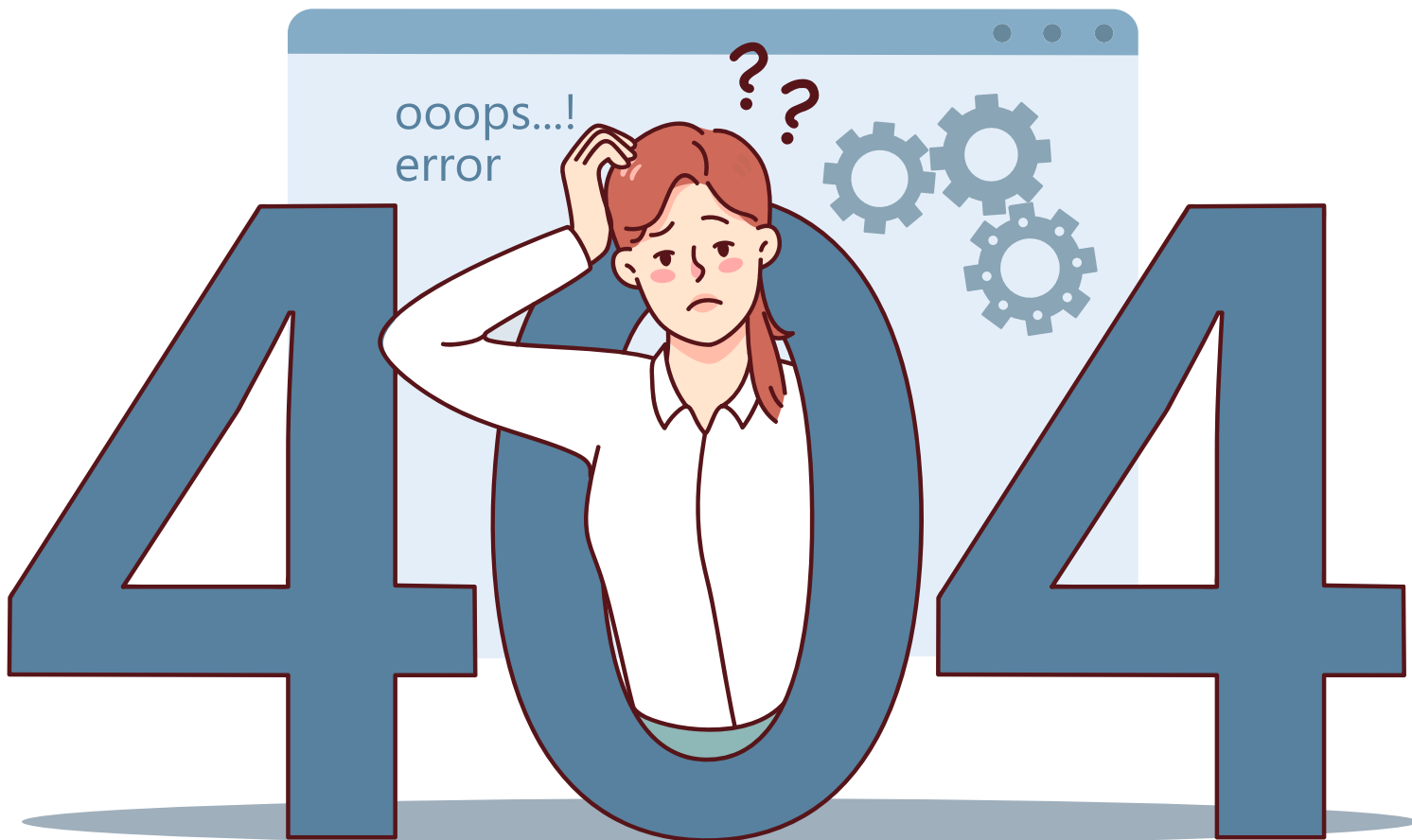
Up until this point of parenting, we have conditioned ourselves and our children to look to us for guidance first, inserting our opinions, so our children won't make mistakes. However, it's necessary to allow our tweens and teens to make mistakes, so they can learn stuff like what characteristics make the best friends or partners. Letting our children crash into these life lessons may be uncomfortable, but I guarantee your child will experience long-term negative effects if you continue to protect your child from mistakes. If you are parenting a tween or teen – butt out – even if you know they are going to get hurt (within reason).

Your role now is to guide them through the lessons that arise from the mistakes, so they are better equipped for life. Parents can help turn these mistakes into a positive experience by showing them mistakes are the building

blocks of reaching our goals. We can teach our kids to break down a problem to get to the root cause. Our parenting role now is to show them how to be accountable for their actions and to provide support as they navigate repercussions. As parents we must provide kids with new tools to cope with anxiety or frustration that may result from mistakes.

Now the question is, how do we deliver all this new information without the rolling eyes and deep sighs. 🙄

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.



IT'S MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY AWARENESS MONTH

Muscular dystrophy is an umbrella term for a group of neuromuscular conditions characterized by muscle weakness. There are several muscular dystrophies (over 30) but the most common one is Duchenne's Muscular Dystrophy (DMD). DMD is characterized by progressive muscle degeneration and weakness due to a genetic mutation in the gene that produces dystrophin protein. Dystrophin is needed to strengthen and protect skeletal and cardiac muscle fibers. DMD is a disease related to the X-chromosome leaving the disease more likely to affect boys than girls. Girls with the gene mutation on one chromosome may present with muscle cramps, weakness and or heart problems.

Individuals who are diagnosed with DMD have various characteristic symptoms:

- Muscle weakness, pain and stiffness
- Frequent falls
- Difficulty rising from a lying/sitting position

- Trouble running or jumping
- Waddling gait
- Walking on toes
- Large calves
- Learning disabilities
- Delayed growth

At this time there is no cure for DMD but there are medications available to slow the progression of the disease. Various therapies, exercises and bracing options are available to help prolong walking, maintain muscle range of motion and strength and improve quality of life. Children with DMD often require a wheelchair by the age of 12 because walking becomes very slow and laborious. Life expectancy is shortened to the late 20s because of the breathing and heart problems that develop in early adulthood.


JESSIE'S JOURNEY

A local inspirational father and son duo created a foundation in 1994 to raise awareness and fundraise for DMD research

Muscular Dystrophy Awareness Month
September



and gene therapy. In 1995, Jessie's father pushed his 15 year old son in his wheelchair from Manitoba to Ottawa (3339 km) and raised \$1.5M. Three years later, the father walked across Canada (8300km) for 286 consecutive days and raised over \$2M! Jessie's Journey has now been rebranded to Defeat Duchenne Canada and continues to fundraise for gene and cell therapy research. The website is an incredible resource with information about DMD. If you would like to donate to this amazing organization please go to: www.defeatduchenne.ca.

If you have any questions regarding DMD, we are more than happy to assist you. 

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NURTURING YOUR CHILD'S LOVE OF ANIMALS

When children learn to love animals, they also learn valuable lessons in empathy, responsibility, bodily autonomy, science and environmental stewardship. While adopting a furry family member can certainly help your child develop their human-animal bond, not every family is ready for a pet. Fortunately, there are many other ways to ignite and strengthen a child's passion.

BABY/TODDLER:

In the early years, it's all about observation and safe, supervised interaction. When enjoying nature with your child, expand their vocabulary by pointing out all the amazing living creatures you see, from snails to birds to bumblebees. Many children also enjoy playing with farm animal toys and learning their sounds.

PRESCHOOLER:

Take it a step further by modeling the traits you hope to nurture: Demonstrate consent

by always asking dogs and their owners for permission before petting them, then show your child how to pet gently and how to know when to stop. Allow your child to experience patience and wonder by building a butterfly garden with them, then revelling in the splendor of your multi-coloured visitors. Develop your child's sense of empathy for wildlife by stopping to pick up litter on your walks.


SCHOOL-AGED: 5-12 YEARS.

School-aged children may enjoy immersive experiences such as hiking, touring a farm or joining a 4-H club. Not only does this help them form an understanding of the world around them, but exposure to nature and life cycles can also help to prepare younger

school-aged children for tough concepts such as birth and death. If your child wishes to help the animals in their community but is too young to volunteer, they can learn philanthropy through organizing a bake sale or birthday party fundraiser.

TEENAGER: 13-18 YEARS.

When your teen is ready to take on more responsibility, they can learn work ethic by pet sitting, dog walking, or volunteering at an animal shelter. Don't forget to ask your local veterinarian if they take co-op students! Many clinics are thrilled to help foster a love for veterinary medicine in the next generation.

As anyone who grew up caring for animals knows, the furry friends of our childhood play a huge role in the people we are today. By nurturing a love for animals in our children, we can help prepare them for adulthood and empower them to make their world a better place. 



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.



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