

A FREE  
MAGAZINE

# THE MOM & CAREGIVER™

JUNE 2024  
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OF THE  
*Tiger*

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PREGNANCY - BABY - TODDLER



PRESCHOOL - SCHOOL AGE - FAMILY

# Easing into Summer

## TRANSITION TIPS FOR PARENTS

As June unfolds, the shift from structured school days to the freewheeling rhythm of summer begins. This transition can be both exciting and overwhelming for children. Here are a few tips to help parents make this change smoother and more enjoyable for their kids.

**1. Maintain a Routine:** While summer offers more flexibility, keeping a basic structure—like regular meal times and a bedtime routine—helps children feel secure and manage their expectations.

**2. Gradual Changes:** Instead of an abrupt shift, gradually relax the daily schedule. This could mean pushing bedtime later or allowing more unstructured playtime in the week leading up to summer break.

**3. Involve Kids in Planning:** Empower your children by involving them in the planning of summer activities. Whether it's choosing books to read or picking a new outdoor game to try, making decisions together will excite and engage them.

**4. Set Clear Expectations:** Discuss how the daily routine might change, including when they'll have free time and any chores or responsibilities. Clear expectations prevent misunderstandings and last-minute scrambles.

**5. Incorporate Learning Opportunities:** To bridge the gap between academic years, incorporate informal learning opportunities into everyday activities. Trips to the museum, nature walks, or even cooking together can be both educational and fun.

**6. Stay Active:** Encourage physical activity to expend energy and reduce stress. Whether it's a family bike ride or dance parties around your house, staying active is crucial for physical and mental health.

With these tips, transitioning into summer can be a delightful experience, fostering a season full of growth, discovery, and quality family time.

REGISTER NOW AT DANCE EXTREME

*Let's Dance!*



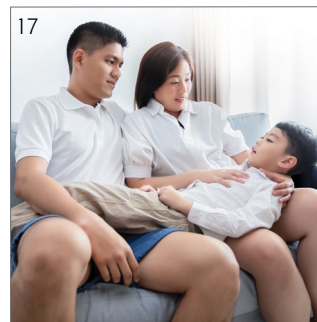
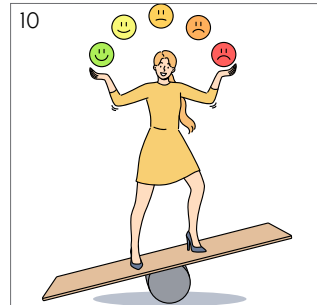
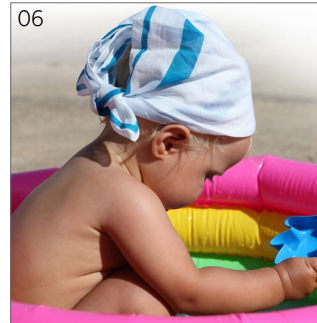
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## ON THE COVER

Alexis is now a Children's Hero Ambassador with the Children's Health Foundation as she was born weighing only one pound! She loves dogs and hockey; we love her volunteer spirit, stunning eyes, and willingness to do multiple wardrobe changes on shoot day.

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# FUN DAD, WISE DAD, KIND DAD, STRONG DAD

*"A dad is someone who wants to catch you before you fall but instead picks you up, brushes you off, and lets you try again.*

*A dad is someone who wants to keep you from making mistakes but instead lets you find your own way, even though his heart breaks in silence when you get hurt.*

*A dad is someone who holds you when you cry, scolds you when you break the rules, shines with pride when you succeed, and has faith in you even when you fail."*

*-unknown*

Dads, Grandpas, Stepdads and Father Figures come in all shapes and sizes. Fun dad, wise dad, kind dad, strong dad, fair dad, sweet dad, learning dad or trying-hard dad. We're always thrilled to celebrate the special men in our lives here at The Mom & Caregiver.

In this month's issue, we hear from Miz Marce who describes fatherhood as a journey. Her bond with her father has deepened as he moved from a more traditional father figure to a nurturing caregiver and trusted confidant. Read more on page 12..

We also celebrate the last day of school this month. School-agers will run out the doors of schools across our country, cheering and screaming, only to be bored about a day and a half later! But don't fear - Nurse Practitioner, Becky, encourages us to "Say Yes to Boredom!" on page 20. Did you know it boosts problem solving skills and self-esteem?

Also, Dance Extreme eases into summer with transition tips for parents on page 2. Planning, routine and gradual changes leave room for fun times to be had!

Lastly, we get artsy with youngsters, Adi and Lander. These creative cats give you summer art ideas, like sea glass sculptures and colourful monster paintings on page 11.

So whether you're honouring dads or grads this month, you'll find all you need in our June issue. Pour a brewsky or a slushie, sit back with your favourite guy or kid, and soak up all the sunshine and good times that June has to offer!

*With gratitude,*

*Sabrina*

PUBLISHER/CHIEF EDITOR



For More Details and Events Visit

THE MOM & CAREGIVER .COM  
Your Online Parenting Resource

# EVENTS

J U N E 2 0 2 4

Professional Bull Riders,  
Budweiser Gardens, **01<sup>ST</sup>**  
[www.budweisergardens.com](http://www.budweisergardens.com)

**02<sup>ND</sup>** The Art of Banksy,  
140 Dundas Street,  
[www.theartofbanksy.com/london](http://www.theartofbanksy.com/london)

Blippi: The Wonderful World Tour!  
Budweiser Gardens, **07<sup>TH</sup>**  
[www.budweisergardens.com](http://www.budweisergardens.com)

**08<sup>TH</sup>** Monster Madness,  
Budweiser Gardens,  
[www.budweisergardens.com](http://www.budweisergardens.com)

London's First Ever Bonsai Show,  
Covent Garden Market, **09<sup>TH</sup>**  
[www.coventmarket.com](http://www.coventmarket.com)

**14<sup>TH</sup>** London Majors vs. Toronto,  
Labatt Park,  
[www.londonmajors.com](http://www.londonmajors.com)

Na-Ma-Res Traditional Pow Wow,  
Fort York, Toronto, **15<sup>TH</sup>**  
[www.nameres.org/pow-wow](http://www.nameres.org/pow-wow)

**16<sup>TH</sup>** Happy  
Father's Day!

Dash 4 Dad: For Prostate Cancer Research  
& Treatment, Springbank Gardens, **16<sup>TH</sup>**  
[www.dash4dad.ca](http://www.dash4dad.ca)

**20<sup>TH</sup>** It's the *first day*  
of summer!

National Indigenous  
Peoples Day **21<sup>ST</sup>**

**22<sup>ND</sup>** London International Food Festival,  
Victoria Park,  
[www.canadasbiggestparty.com](http://www.canadasbiggestparty.com)

Gluten Free Fest,  
Centennial Hall, **23<sup>RD</sup>**  
[www.glutenfreefest.ca](http://www.glutenfreefest.ca)



*Once the last day of school arrives, school-agers are quick to shout "I'm bored!" Here are 10 great outdoor activities that will entertain kids for hours:*

- 1. Ride your bike or scooter.**
- 2. Go bird spotting at a local park.**
- 3. Make your own outdoor Tic Tac Toe.**
- 4. Play catch or soccer with a beach ball.**
- 5. Make mud pies.**
- 6. Paint the sidewalk with water.**
- 7. Make homemade bird feeders.**
- 8. Have a nature tea party.**
- 9. Blow giant bubbles.**
- 10. Paint with a fly swatter.**



“ *It's risky. It's terrifying to jump.  
That's the point. Be brave. Do it anyway* ”

- Evan Sanders

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MOM & CAREGIVER

# SUN SAFETY

As the warmer weather arrives, it is a good time for a reminder about protecting your children (and yourself) from the sun's rays. Children's eyes and skin are extra sensitive. Exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun can lead to skin damage, dehydration, heat stroke, and increase the risk of skin cancer, eye cancer, and lip cancer, as well as damage to your vision and cataracts later in life.

## TIPS ON HOW TO STAY SUN-SAFE:

- Seek shade or bring your own (i.e. an umbrella)
- Limit time in the sun when the UV index is 3 or higher, usually between 11am-3pm.
- Teach children the 'Shadow Rule'. If their shadow is shorter than they are, sun rays are very strong and sun protection is especially important!
- Babies less than 12 months old should be kept out of direct sunlight. Keep babies in the shade, under a tree or umbrella, or use a stroller with a sunshade.

## SUN PROTECTION

- Use 'broad spectrum' and 'water resistant' sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher. Apply generously to all exposed skin, avoiding the mouth and eyes.
- Don't forget commonly missed spots like the top of feet, back of the neck, ears and back of the hands.
- Reapply sunscreen every two hours, or more frequently if swimming or sweating.
- Lips need protection too! Use a lip balm with SPF 30 or higher.
- Sunscreen is not recommended for babies under six months of age, so keep them covered and in the shade.

## SUN CLOTHING/ACCESSORIES

- Ensure children wear close fitting sun glasses with the labels UV 400 or 100% UV protection when outdoors.

- Wear a wide-brimmed cap that shades the head, face, ears and back of the neck.
- Look for special UPF (Ultraviolet Protective Factor) clothing or tightly woven fabric for added protection.

As we all age, it is important to regularly inspect skin for any unusual moles, freckles, or changes in existing spots. Discuss any concerns with your healthcare provider. Early detection is the key to success if any treatment is needed.

By following these simple sun safety tips, we can help to keep our children from being harmed by the sun's UV rays. Teaching children about sun safety when they are young will encourage healthy habits that will benefit them for a lifetime.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

[www.healthunit.com/sun-safety](http://www.healthunit.com/sun-safety)

[www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/weather-health/uv-index-sun-safety.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/weather-health/uv-index-sun-safety.html)

[www.cancer.ca/en/cancer-information/reduce-your-risk/be-sun-safe/spotlight-on-sun-safety](http://www.cancer.ca/en/cancer-information/reduce-your-risk/be-sun-safe/spotlight-on-sun-safety)

Submitted by Daniel Neamtu WFN - 4 for the Middlesex-London Health Unit





# NOT SO YUMMY GUMMIES

In Canada, the legalization of marijuana has opened new avenues for consumption, including the popularization of edibles and cannabis-infused candies. While this shift has brought benefits for adults, it has also sparked concerns about unintended access by children. Recent reports indicate a troubling trend: children inadvertently consuming marijuana-infused products, often belonging to their parents.

The allure of colorful packaging and sweet flavors can make these products appealing to young children, who may mistake them for regular candies or snacks. Accidental ingestion of cannabis edibles can lead to a range of adverse effects in children, including dizziness, nausea, lethargy, and in severe cases, even respiratory depression or psychosis. Such incidents not only pose immediate health risks but also raise questions about responsible cannabis use within households.

To address this pressing concern, proactive measures are essential. Education stands as a cornerstone in preventing accidental consumption. Parents must be well-informed about the potential dangers of cannabis edibles and the importance of storing them securely, out of reach of children. Moreover, fostering open communication with children about the risks associated with marijuana use, tailored to their age and understanding, can empower them to make informed choices and avoid accidental ingestion.



Child-resistant packaging regulations for cannabis products can serve as another line of defense. Stricter guidelines mandating opaque, resealable, and child-resistant packaging for all cannabis edibles and candies can mitigate the risk of accidental exposure. Additionally, clear labeling indicating the presence of cannabis and

appropriate warnings can help adults differentiate between regular and infused products, reducing the likelihood of confusion.

Community-wide initiatives, including public awareness campaigns and educational programs in schools, can further reinforce these preventive measures. By fostering a culture of responsible cannabis use and promoting safe storage practices, communities can work collaboratively to safeguard children from unintended exposure to marijuana-infused products.

In navigating the landscape of legalized cannabis, it is imperative to prioritize the safety and well-being of children. Through concerted efforts at the individual, regulatory, and community levels, we can mitigate the risks associated with accidental ingestion of cannabis edibles and ensure a safer environment for all.

*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!*

L

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# P IS FOR PSYCHOLOGY: PART 2

*Hello readers: This is a continuation from our April issue.*

But I stuck to it. The day of, I arrived 45 minutes early, parked down the street, sat in my Jeep and went over all the responses to the questions I anticipated she might say... building up for failure. I got up to the door. *My palms are sweaty. Knees weak, arms are heavy. There's vomit on my sweater already from mom's spaghetti.* I approach the front counter. The receptionist says, "Oh I'm sorry. We had to reschedule and I forgot to send you the message." And like that children's book by Mercer Mayer, I **WAS SO MAD**. I stormed out of the office and called my wife, my lawyer and my mother to vent. I complained about the system and why I didn't want to do this... really just trying to make excuses not to give it another go. But, after a few days, I calmed down and rescheduled. I went through the same anxious feelings that I had the first time like a baby learning to walk... second time's a charm!

I sat down and we did our introductions. Then she proceeds to ask me, out of the blue, if I have a British relative.

I say, "Yes, my grandmother is British."

She says, "Well, she called the office the other day."

Gran (insert British accent here): "Oh hello there. My grandson was in a wicked and most dreadful car accident and his daughter was injured catastrophically. He built up all his might and decided to get some much needed help and this awful psychologist stood him up. Through my research, I found that you are the best in the city. (Again if she reads this article.) Would you have any openings?"

I had absolutely no idea she had done this. My mother must have told her the story and how upset I was. She took it upon herself to



help her grandson. Good looking out, Gran. This is how my first experience went. But I will be honest with you, that was the ice breaker I needed. The doctor's response was exactly like mine and it made us both laugh out loud.

That was four years ago and we still see each other regularly. I can't tell you why or how it helps, but it does. The grief and loss that I have will never go away, but the good days in between seem to last longer.

*Daniel Burdis is a father of two and husband of one, who always strives to put family first. He will share tales of adventures throughout his life, but his main goal is to be the relatable father who makes questionable decisions!*



## REGISTER YOUR CHILD

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# PROTECTING YOUR BIG DAY!

Congratulations – you (or your partner) said yes! Now comes the excitement of planning your special day. With all the time, effort and money that goes into planning a wedding, you will want to consider how important it is to protect that investment. While you never hope to use it – event insurance will provide you with the peace of mind of protection, in the event something happens.

Quite often now, venues are requesting that anyone renting their space have a Special Event Liability Policy in place. This will not only protect the venue, but you and your spouse. While reviewing liability policies, there is coverage for many different scenarios, including but not limited to:

- Cancellation expenses
- Honeymoon cancellation
- Loss of deposit
- Wedding photographs and video
- Loss or damage to bridal attire
- Wedding presents
- Rings

- Cake and flowers
- Wedding stationary
- Rented property

There are a few insurance companies in the market that offer this type of policy for you. Your KIB broker will review the various options for you to compare and help you select the best plan for you. In addition to the items outlined above, the policy would cover you for:

- Liability (i.e. a guest slips, falls and hurts themselves)
- Property damage (i.e. the sparklers on the bridal cake set the venue on fire)
- Liquor liability – Unfortunately it still occurs that people drive after drinking. Should something happen, as the host of the wedding or event, you could be held liable. This coverage will help to protect you in the case of a lawsuit.

As a broker, we encourage anyone who is hosting any type of event (i.e. graduation party, prom, family BBQ/corn roast, wedding reception, birthday party, etc.), to inquire

about special event liability insurance. It is a simple thing at minimal cost that can provide that extra layer of protection to your special day and event in case something happens. As mentioned, if renting a venue for your event, often you will be required to have insurance for the event. That is where we can come in! We work with many different companies that offer different packages and offerings that we can tailor to you and your event. Contact us today to talk about your next event and help it be one to remember!



Scott Sleightholm, CAIB, R.I.B.(Ont.), Vice President, Kenny Insurance Brokers

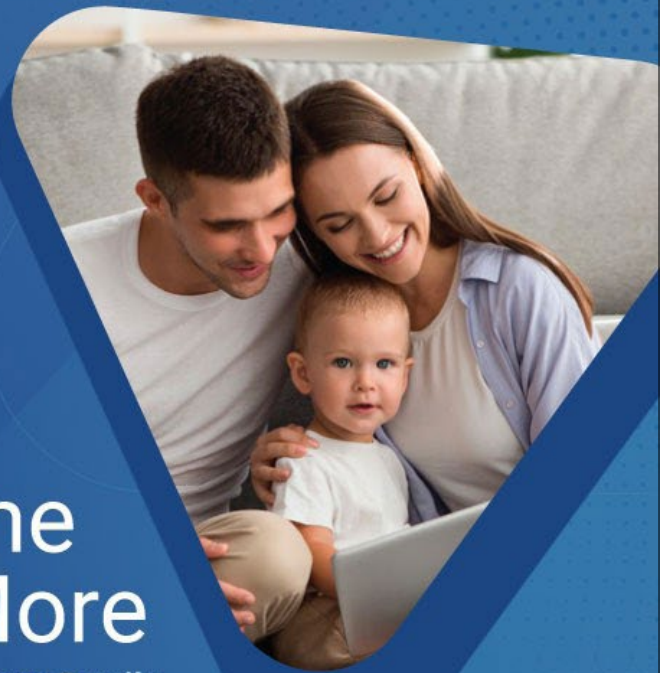


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# ENTRY #5: ACCEPT WHERE YOU'RE AT. YOU CAN BUILD FROM HERE!

I shared last month the power of printing off a mood chart (free from Google) just by filling it out for 30 days. It's like counting calories, but I always say, "You don't know what you don't know." If you're anything like me, doctors' appointments (prior to being sick of being sick) went like this:

**ME:** Look good so you can hide how desperate you feel for something to stop the constant mood swings. How embarrassing if you were hospitalized again?

**PSYCHIATRIST:** "So how are you?"

**ME:** "Fine. I don't sleep well. I'm not sure why."

**PSYCHIATRIST:** "Ok. Based on your answers, we can increase the anxiety medication. Other than that, I can see you on June 15<sup>TH</sup>, but I want you to fill out a mood chart for next time."

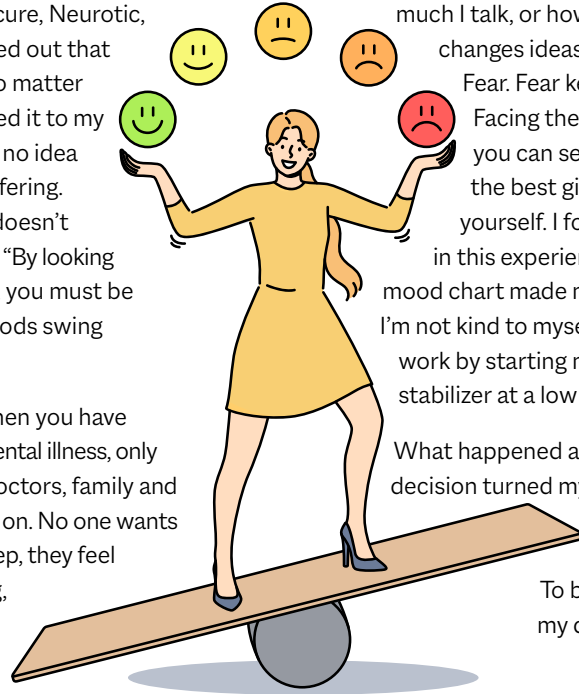
**ME:** "OK."

I walked out looking fine, but FINE stands for Frustrated, Insecure, Neurotic, and Exhausted. I filled out that chart for 30 days no matter what. When I showed it to my psychiatrist, he had no idea how much I was suffering. How could he? He doesn't live with me. He said, "By looking at your mood chart, you must be exhausted. Your moods swing almost hourly!"

Understand that when you have symptoms due to mental illness, only YOU can tell your doctors, family and friends what's going on. No one wants to say they can't sleep, they feel life isn't worth living, and it's hard to go out in public. I accept that I

can't control my behaviours, impulses, how much I talk, or how fast my brain changes ideas. It's Truth vs. Fear. Fear keeps us stuck. Facing the truth (so that you can self-advocate) is the best gift you can give yourself. I found my voice in this experience. Seeing my mood chart made me realize that I'm not kind to myself. We got to work by starting me on a mood stabilizer at a low dose.

What happened after this decision turned my life around 100%. How? To be continued, my darlings!



Stephanie Preston creates videos on managing bipolar disorder. She is a Social Service Worker, Health Care Aide and suffers from severe bipolar depression herself. She loves being a grandma and is Crossfit obsessed. Follow her at [www.tiktok.com/@bipolaronthebrain](https://www.tiktok.com/@bipolaronthebrain) and [www.facebook.com/bipolaronthebrain](https://www.facebook.com/bipolaronthebrain).

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# CREATIVE CATS

**What is the best art project or picture you've ever made?**

**Adi:** A colour monster!  
**Lander:** A recreation of a city.

**Have you ever had a strange dream? Tell us about it!**

**Adi:** No.  
**Lander:** Yes, but I don't wanna talk about it.

**When you visit your cottage, do you like to do any arts and crafts there? If so, what kind?**

**Adi:** Yes, I like painting.  
**Lander:** I collect sea glass and I am making a sculpture.

**Do you have a favourite subject at school that lets you use your creative brain?**

**Adi:** Yes, math.  
**Lander:** I love all of the subjects!

Meet our Kid Zone writers, 11 and 7 year old siblings, **Lander and Adi!** Each month, they'll be sharing perspectives on life as a child sees it.



**THE MOM & CAREGIVER.**

**NEW TO PARENTING? JOIN THE CONVERSATION**

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# FATHERHOOD IS A JOURNEY

Being a father holds a unique place exclusively for dads. As a single mother, I've often heard fellow single moms say, "I have to be both mom and dad", emphasizing the absence of a partner in sharing the joys and responsibilities of parenting. However, I soon realized that while I could take on many roles for my children, I couldn't replace their father. I could offer them physical, emotional and spiritual care, but a dad's role is truly irreplaceable.

Single parents can raise strong, independent children who lead fulfilling lives. Yet, I believe that my children's fathers provide a unique kind of love, support, security and guidance that hold immense value.

In my own journey, my bond with my father has deepened over the past three decades. A successful entrepreneur and a traditional father figure, he has gracefully transitioned into a nurturing caregiver, a trusted confidant, and has shown his love in unexpected ways he refrained from during my upbringing.

Building a relationship takes effort from both sides, although I always encourage parents to take the lead in addressing our gaps. Witnessing my connection evolve and strengthen given my dad's desire to develop his role has been an immense blessing.

My father is a modest man who avoids the spotlight, but I trust he will receive this message as intended: a heartfelt expression of my deep love, admiration and appreciation for his growth, setting an example for other fathers on their journey.

*Fathers encourage and comfort their children - Thessalonians 2:11-12*



Marcy Demelo is an Entrepreneur, Career Coach and Educator, teaching you how to reinvent yourself to live out your passion. Find her on Instagram at [waymaker\\_inc](#) and at [www.waymakerinc.ca](http://www.waymakerinc.ca).

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# ENERGIZE WITH CAUTION!

How do you energize for your day or kick that afternoon slump? Do you rely on caffeinated energy drinks, coffee or chocolate? These foods all contain caffeine, which you may want to limit. Health Canada recommends a daily intake of no more than 400 mg of caffeine for adults over 18. For reference, energy drinks can contain up to 180 mg of caffeine per can.

Supplemented foods, such as caffeinated energy drinks, are regulated by Health Canada. They require new labels to help you know what ingredients like caffeine or taurine have been added to them.

Other examples of supplemented foods

include snack bars and fruit drinks, which could be supplemented with:

- minerals such as calcium
- vitamins such as vitamin C
- amino acids such as L-leucine

As of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026, all supplemented foods will be required to have new labels, but some are already starting to appear on the market, so here's what you can expect to see:

All supplemented foods will show a supplemented food facts table instead of a nutrition facts table. There will be a "Supplemented with" section listing the type and amount of each supplemental ingredient, like caffeine.

Some of these foods will also carry a caution identifier, which includes an exclamation mark and the words "Supplemented" and "Health Canada" on the front, alerting you to read cautions written on the back or side of the product. An example of a caution is: "Do not drink more than 1 serving per day."

Stay energized and hydrated this summer, but be smart about your supplemented drinks and foods intake. Whether for yourself or other family members, find more information at [canada.ca/supplemented-foods](https://canada.ca/supplemented-foods).

*Jenn Giurgevich is the founder of Spark Nutrition & Health, a virtual nutrition consulting business.*

# A DOULA'S **ROLE** IN PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

**F**irst things first. What is a Doula? Traditionally speaking a Doula is someone who offers support to a pregnant person before, during and after birth. However, a Doula's expertise can span a wide spectrum of care depending on their training.

Supporting families is not a one size fits all gig! Families come in all shapes and sizes, with diverse ways of caring for each other. Doulas offer an empathic and trauma-informed perspective with a focus on informed consent and self-advocacy in care.

At our office, Jennifer is our Doula. Jennifer's training is focused heavily on the postpartum period, and infant feeding. She works alongside Dr. Ari, supporting our tiniest patients and their families through the assessment and treatment of lip and tongue ties.

When a family arrives with their baby, emotions are high. Parents are often sleep

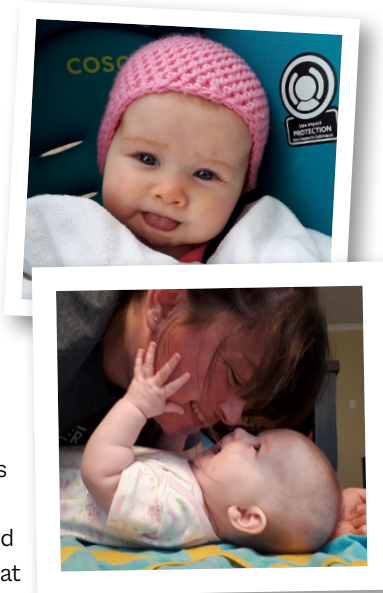
deprived, anxious and unsure of what is about to happen. This is where support begins. Our experienced team will welcome your family and all your feelings into our space. Families are given an opportunity to ask questions and share their experiences. We allow space for those feelings and experiences to be acknowledged and validated. Our goal in this initial meeting is to let families know they will be fully supported through the entire process, to ensure parents feel safe with us. It is our privilege to be trusted with your child's care, and we hold that in high regard.

As a Doula, with a focus on infant feeding, Jennifer may offer support with latching post procedures, assist with positioning, discuss bottle feeding and demonstrate comfort techniques to help soothe an uncomfortable baby. We will go through the post procedure expectations together, ensuring everyone is prepared.

Families are encouraged to reach out to Jennifer at any time after the procedure is completed with any questions or concerns. Parents are given Jennifer's contact information and her promise that no question will be ignored. It is our office's goal that parents see our Office and Team as a safe space.

As a Doula, Jennifer's role is to listen, note these differences and take the time to ensure that each family's care is tailored to their specific needs.

*Dr. Timucin Ari DDS, Ph.D, FRCD(C), Ari Pediatric Dentistry and Orthodontics*



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# GRILLED WHISKEY SALMON FOR DAD



*Happy Father's Day! These salmon fillets are marinated in a sweet whiskey sauce, resulting in a delicious flavour and crispy glaze when done on the grill.*

**INGREDIENTS:**

- 4 (8-ounce) salmon fillets
- 1/2 cup whiskey (any whiskey works - I like to use a maple whiskey!)
- 1/4 cup soy sauce (use a light version for less sodium)
- 1/3 cup orange juice
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 tsp chili paste
- 2 cloves garlic (minced)
- Preheat grill for medium-high heat.
- Once heated, oil grill grates to create a non-stick surface. Another option is to place a piece of tin foil on the grill.
- Place salmon on hot grill and cook for 5 minutes on each side. I like to use two spatulas to flip to prevent the salmon from falling apart.

**DIRECTIONS:**

- Mix whiskey, soy sauce, orange juice, oil, chili paste and garlic in a bowl.
- Place salmon in a shallow dish and pour mixture over top. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for an hour or until ready to grill.
- You'll know it's done when it flakes easily, has faded in color, and reaches an internal temperature of at least 145 F.

*Recipe by Jenn Giurgevich*



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Since its establishment in 1997, Dance Extreme has been more than just a dance studio; it's a place where children and families unite to evolve as dancers and confident individuals. Situated in the heart of our community, Dance Extreme started with a modest setup of just two dance rooms. Today, it has blossomed into a lively center with six dance rooms, a kitchen, a study area, a birthday party room and cozy waiting areas for families, all meticulously designed to foster a nurturing environment and a strong sense of community.

Our studio's guiding principle, 'Awaken the Greatness in Your Child,' encapsulates the core of what we strive to achieve every day. The comprehensive range of our classes ensures that there's something for every age and skill level, making dance accessible to all. Over 10,000 students have graced our halls, each departing with dance skills, invaluable life lessons, and a sense of personal growth.

What sets Dance Extreme apart is our unique approach to teaching dance. We integrate mindfulness and life skills into our curriculum, helping students develop awareness and empathy alongside their dance techniques. This holistic approach ensures that our dancers excel on stage and in all aspects of their lives.

Our facilities reflect our commitment to family and community. The glass windows in every studio and live feeds to TVs in our lobby allow parents and caregivers to be part of their children's progress without interrupting their classes. This transparency is a cornerstone of the trust we have built with our families over the years.

Each year, our dancers showcase their talents at the prestigious Grand Theatre, a professional venue that elevates every dancer's performance. These showcases are not just about demonstrating skills but also about celebrating the journey of growth and self-discovery that each student embarks on, offering a glimpse into the exciting professional opportunities that await them.

We invite you and your dancer to join us on this extraordinary journey of dance and personal growth, where every step taken on the dance floor is a step toward unlocking greatness.



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# UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD'S WAY OF LISTENING

**D**o you find yourself wanting to give feedback in the sports or activities your child is engaged in?

Our son plays hockey. My husband and I found that giving immediate feedback on his performance as soon as he steps off the ice or during the car ride home wasn't landing well. As parents we thought we were being helpful and supportive. Instead, it only caused frustration and irritation. Not only were we off in our timing, we also realized we weren't speaking to his way of listening.

Fortunately, we recognized this and called a family meeting where we asked him, 'What do you need from us?' and 'How will you hear us best?' He shared that he didn't want to talk right after because he needed time to decompress from the competitive adrenaline racing through his body - makes sense. He said, 'When I'm ready, I want to hear two things I did really well and two things I can improve on.'

This allowed his voice to be heard and created connection. It also gave us valuable insight into how and when he hears information best. By empowering our son to voice his needs, we're helping him

self-advocate and also giving him a sense of independence. This not only benefits him in hockey, but also in all aspects of his life, especially relationships.

Just as teamwork is crucial in his hockey, it's also essential within the family unit. By working together and understanding each other's perspectives, we are able to better support our son in his athletic pursuits and personal growth.

This is what I know: It's important to recognize that what works for you may not necessarily work for your child. By being open to adjusting your approach, you learn to speak to your child's listening, which is essential for fostering a healthy parent-child relationship.

*Sara Westbrook is a professional speaker and creator of UPower Inc, offering keynotes, presentations and workshops on 'Emotions Change Choices' to audiences ages 4 -100. She can be found at [sarawestbrook.com](http://sarawestbrook.com) or on Instagram @iamsarawestbrook*





# WHAT WOMEN WANT

In honour of Father's Day, here is a comprehensive list for single Dads out there on the path to love. The road map will be unique for you, however these insights should translate to most.

**FIRST, listen.** When women begin to share how they're feeling, about their day, or general chatter, they're moving their energy in their body. They require nothing other than you to be present and hold the space to hear them. You may find the more you stay silent, the more expansive their vocabulary, facial expressions and emotionality will range. This is normal. This is not something that needs fixing. This is the beauty of the feminine fluidity. When they are complete (you will see their big exhale), give them a hug and witness them soften into your arms.

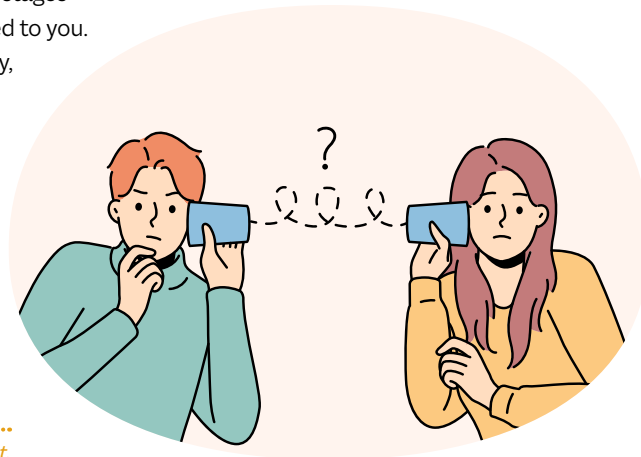
**SECOND, ask what she needs.** Yes, she can do all the things herself, as I imagine you'll be looking for that interdependent

mama, however she doesn't always want to. In moments when you don't know how to help or what to say, ask what she needs and you will find she will always have an answer. The caveat? Don't ask her what she needs if you don't intend to support her and follow-through. Period.

**THIRD, cultivate connection.** This will look different to every woman, so it's important to identify in the early stages of dating how she feels connected to you. Intimacy is expressed emotionally, physically, intellectually and spiritually. So the more time you get to understand what makes her feel most connected, the better your chances of feeling her heart open, body relax, and smile beam.

Just remember, you're going to fuck up. And so will we.

The overarching opportunity here to do things "different this time", is to do things different this time. Allow yourself to be seen in your vulnerabilities (we love seeing your own range of emotions) and share your thoughts, tell her you like her and ask her for the next date. When a woman feels desired, connected and appreciated, she will not only become your partner, she will become that happily ever after.



*Lyndsay Campbell is a co-parenting Mom of two boys, Branch Manager by day, and Reiki Master by night.*

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# LEARNING TO FLY

Parenting a tween today feels like a flashback to the '90s, complete with flannel shirts, Doc Martens, and a penchant for questionable decisions. But shielding our kids from our mistakes robs them of life's valuable lessons and epic stories.

It's like walking a tightrope blindfolded, balancing protection with letting them spread their wings. As someone who's taken the scenic route through life, I know parental guidance is essential, but so is letting them fall flat on their faces sometimes. After all, the best adventures start with a leap of faith, don't they?

Take for instance the time a "friend" attempted a rooftop-to-pool jump, fully convinced they were auditioning for the next "Jacka\$\$" movie. It ended with broken bones and a bruised ego, but it also offered a valuable lesson on the importance of risk assessment and learning from others' mistakes.

Or the genius idea of sneaking out for a high school party, resulting in a police ride home and a lecture on the dangers of underage drinking... candy is dandy, but liquor is quicker. But I also learned about my personal safety, rules, trust, and hangovers.

And every teenager should have a hooky-gone-wrong experience to realize that freedom comes with consequences. Sure, mine ended with the full school bus driving by as I got a speeding ticket. Still, it also taught me the importance of accountability, reputation, and insurance rebates.

Here's the thing: life is messy, unpredictable, and downright chaotic at times. But it's also



beautiful, exhilarating, and full of endless possibilities. And if we never let our kids make mistakes, take risks, and embrace the thrill of the unknown, they'll miss out on some of the most epic adventures life has to offer.

So let your kids fly, even if it means watching from the sidelines with our hearts in our throats and our fingers crossed behind our backs. Because in the end, it's not about avoiding mistakes—it's about embracing them, learning from them, and making memories. It's in those moments of near misses and narrow escapes that they learn what it truly means to be alive, and grow into resilient individuals.

*Janet Smith is a proud mom of one daughter and a marketing professional who is grateful for her rural roots in the London area. Follow Janet's funny and honest journey at IG & TT | @re.marketable.janet or FB | @janetsiddallsmith*

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# SAY YES TO BOREDOM!

Imagine, it's early Sunday morning and you're just about to sit down and enjoy a coffee when you hear "mom, dad... I'm bored". Our instinct can be to offer the kids things to do or schedule activities throughout each day,

but that can hinder needed life skill development such as problem solving, organizational skills and boosting their self-esteem.

## PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

Boredom helps children develop planning strategies, problem-solving skills and organizational skills.

If they encounter a problem when they are planning and doing activities on their own, without the steps being mapped out for them by us, they must figure out how to fix the problem. When a child learns how to problem solve on their own, it boosts their self-esteem.

## SELF-ESTEEM BOOSTER

Building, creating or planning something on their own is a fantastic way to boost a child's confidence. Once a child can accomplish a task on their own, it not only reinforces there is no limit to their capabilities, it then boosts their self-esteem.

## IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED...

It is very rare for a child to try something new and succeed the first time. Since this is a theme that will be a part of their lifelong learning, shielding our child from failure means they won't feel capable of trying to succeed on their own. If something they decide to do while they are bored doesn't happen the way they wanted, they can learn from that experience and do things differently the next time. Kids are resilient and can overcome failure, and boredom can give them that opportunity.

## DISCOVERING NEW INTERESTS

When children are bored, they are more ready to try something new like planting, making cookies or learning how to paint. When you give a child down time, you give them an opportunity to be creative and curious about what they like and don't like.

## DANGERS OF NO DOWNTIME

When children are over-scheduled, they don't have time to be kids. They tend not to eat well, sleep well, or connect with kids properly. This can lead to adulthood depression and anxiety and inability to make good decisions.

At the end of the day, let kids have time to explore who they are and what they like about this world.

---

*Becky Morrison is a Nurse Practitioner based out of Calgary who has specialized in mental health for over a decade. She is finally, after years of infertility, a mother of two busy little boys, and doting fur mom of her gentle giant, Stella. She is, and always will be, a strong advocate for mental wellness at all ages.*



# IS IT TIME FOR NEW HIKING SHOES?

June is finally here! The dreary winter blues are behind us and it is finally time to get those hiking boots out and move our bodies! There is no better way to do that than hiking and exploring nature!

But before you hit the trail, check out those old tattered hiking boots and see if they need to be replaced. No hiking boots? That's alright, you can also follow these guidelines when assessing running shoes.

**1** Inspect the overall appearance. Are there any cracks, rips or tears in the exterior material? Is the shoe's stitching intact? Faulty stitching or damaged materials can impair the integrity of the boot, affect the structural stability and affect the waterproofing ability.

**2** Assess the method of fastening. Are the laces frayed and worn out? Are all the eyelets intact? Do the Velcro straps still hold?

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**3** Set the shoe on the table and assess the overall shape and alignment.

Does the shoe appear deformed, flatter or lopsided?

**4** How does the foot bed look? Do you use the factory liner or have custom foot orthotics? Are there signs of excessive wear? Does it still provide support and cushioning?

**5** The most important: How does the tread look? Are there any signs of excessive and uneven wear patterns? Take the time to inspect the entire bottom of the shoe closely. The tread provides traction and stability. If the tread on the

bottom of your shoe is smooth in some places or isn't as defined as it used to be, this is a sure sign that it's time to buy a new pair of shoes.

**6** Just like everything else in life, shoes have a lifespan. Most manufacturers recommend replacing your shoes every 500-800 km walked in.

**7** Another big factor to consider when it comes to boot longevity is the type of terrain you are using them on. Trail walking is a lot more forgiving than pavement, so keep that in mind.

**8** How do you care for your boots? Are your boots constantly getting wet or exposed to adverse weather conditions? This can dramatically impact the lifespan of the boot.

Still can't figure out if you should replace your hiking boots/running shoes this summer? Go to your local store with your old shoes and try on a pair similar so you can compare how the new versus old feel and fit.



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# A WHOLE-FAMILY APPROACH TO FELINE DIABETES

Like many busy families, Whiskers' humans work together to prioritize his care while balancing work, school and chores. Even the kids pitch in by making sure Whiskers' bowls are always full!

But over the years, Whiskers' unlimited access to food has added up. Sure, he's carrying a couple extra pounds these days, but he still looks quite handsome. His mom even wondered if he'd even lost a bit of weight lately, but it was hard to tell. She chalked it up to a happy accident.

Lately, the kids have been needing to replenish his water more frequently too. This is because, unbeknownst to the family, Whiskers has slowly been growing thirstier. He's also been visiting the litter box more often, but who would ever notice a stealthy cat like Whiskers coming and going?

For this reason, many cats like Whiskers only get diagnosed with diabetes when it reaches a critical stage called diabetic ketoacidosis (DKA). DKA is a life-threatening condition requiring urgent medical intervention. Symptoms of DKA include vomiting, lethargy and weakness. Because

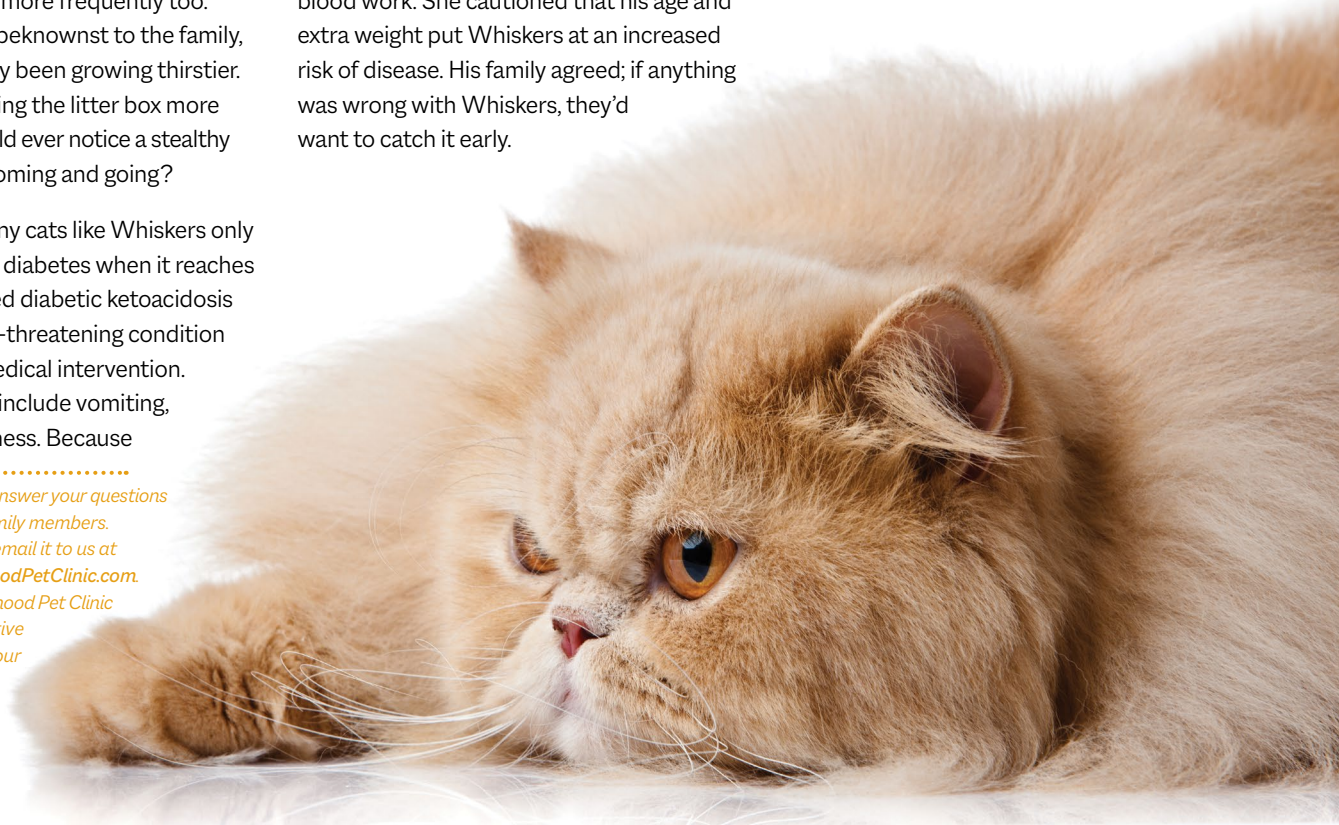
these are more noticeable symptoms, this is often the first time most families detect that something is even wrong with their cat. At this point, hospitalization is required in order to have a chance at recovery.

Fortunately, Whiskers' family always brings him to the veterinarian for his annual check-up, even when he appears healthy. Whiskers isn't typically a big fan of going to the vet, but that's nothing that an anti-anxiety pill and yummy treats can't fix!

At his exam, Whiskers happily enjoyed some catnip as the doctor advised doing annual blood work. She cautioned that his age and extra weight put Whiskers at an increased risk of disease. His family agreed; if anything was wrong with Whiskers, they'd want to catch it early.

Because of his family's diligence, to their surprise, Whiskers was eventually diagnosed with diabetes. The doctor explained that his pancreas was failing to properly regulate his blood sugar. However, because of its early detection, they had more treatment options available to them.

The family left with the proper medications, a therapeutic diet, and a plan in place to track Whiskers' blood sugar. A few months later, he was in diabetic remission! No, it wasn't a miracle; it was the result of early intervention and working together as a family to support Whiskers... just like they always have.



*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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