

THE Mom & CAREGIVER™

A FREE
MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 2025
VOLUME 27 ISSUE 10

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A Harvest of
Blessings

FALLING IN LOVE
WITH DANCE.....02

HELPING KIDS
GROW ONE BITE
AT A TIME.....06

KIDS SHARE FALL
TRADITIONS.....11

PREGNANCY - BABY - TODDLER



PRESCHOOL - SCHOOL AGE - FAMILY

Gratitude in Motion

FALL-ING IN LOVE WITH DANCE



October is here! Pumpkin spice, cozy sweaters, and Thanksgiving is around the corner. It's the season for slowing down, soaking up family time, and remembering what we're grateful for.

One of the best ways to connect? Move together! Dance is an instant mood booster, no matter your age (or skill level). Clear the living room, crank up your favourite tunes, and let the kids show you their best moves. No choreography needed, just lots of laughter.

Dancing together isn't just fun. It builds confidence, sparks creativity, and creates memories your kids will remember long after the turkey

leftovers are gone. Plus, it's a sneaky way to keep everyone active when cooler weather sets in.

Gratitude isn't only about saying "thanks." It's about enjoying the little things—like twirling in the kitchen, giggling until your cheeks hurt, and spending time with the people who matter most.

So, this Thanksgiving, after the dishes are done and the pie is gone, turn up the music. Whether you dance for five minutes or fifty, you'll be making the kind of moments that remind you exactly why you're thankful.

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Let's Dance!



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CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

Teaching Our Kids to be Grateful

04

EVENTS CALENDAR

October

05

AS THEY GROW

Helping Kids Grow One Bite at a Time

06

FAMILY HEALTH

RSV

07

SPECIAL FEATURE

A Mother's Caregiving Voice

08

MODERN MEDICINE

Plump, Radiant Skin: A Thanksgiving Glow

09

BIPOLAR ON THE BRAIN

Journal Entry #21

10

KID ZONE

Turkey Talk: Kids Share Fall Traditions

11

OUR MENTAL HEALTH

Drugs: The Good, The Bad and The Ugly (Pt. 4)

12

BIZ SHOWCASE

Culinary Catering

14

MORTGAGE WHISPERER

Parents Turning Houses into Opportunities

16

DAD-ITUDE

The Elder Millennial Dad Experience

18

TMI

Girls Gone Mild

20

ONE STEP AT A TIME

National Orthotic and Prosthetic Day

21

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The Perfect Month to Focus on You!

22

ON THE COVER

Sophie was only two weeks old at her photoshoot, and dear photographer, Cynthia, went to her home to capture this special moment. Cynthia has photographed this beautiful family's engagement, wedding, the birth of big brother, Theo, and now sweet Sophie!

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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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TEACHING OUR KIDS TO BE GRATEFUL

The Oxford Dictionary defines gratitude as “the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.” Psychology research shows that gratitude is associated with greater well-being by helping you build strong relationships, feel more positive emotions, deal with adversity and relish good experiences.

So how can we be grateful this Thanksgiving month, and every month that follows? Here are some ideas for you and the kids in your life!

SAY THANK YOU. Say thanks to others for their friendship, their help, and the things they do that make you happy (making dinner, helping with homework). Say thank you to yourself for carrying on even when you are tired, for trying your best when times get hard.

BREATHE. Take a deep breath and be thankful for the air you breathe and the nature around you.


WRITE A THANK YOU NOTE. Send a text, email or thank you card to someone who has made a positive impact on your life. Reach out to let them know instead of just thinking about it.

LIST YOUR VIPS. Make a list of the very important people in your life. You may have one or you may have many. Be thankful they are in your life.

GRATITUDE JAR. Ask family or friends to write down one thing or person they are grateful for – add everyone’s gratitude to a jar. Once filled, take out one piece of paper at a time and share.

Inside our gratitude jar this month, we are grateful for pumpkin activities from Montessori Academy of London (page 5), family meal ideas from Middlesex London Health Unit (page 6), post-Thanksgiving dinner dance tips from Dance Extreme (page 2) and a Special Feature showing love to caregivers from Juli Henderson (page 8).

Lastly - a reminder to enter your child’s photo in our 20th annual Captured Moments photo contest. They could appear on one of our upcoming covers! If you haven’t entered yet, you have until October 15th!

Wishing you an October full of thanksgiving. 

With gratitude,


PUBLISHER/CHIEF EDITOR



For More Details and Events Visit

THE MOM & CAREGIVER .COM
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EVENTS

OCTOBER 2025

Rick Mercer's Stand-Up for
Canada Comedy Tour, Centennial Hall,
www.centennialhall.london.ca

01ST

Big Bandemic,
Aeolian Hall,
www.aeolianhall.ca

05TH

PA Day: Fall Fun,
Sherwood Library,
www.lpl.ca

10TH

Thanksgiving Day,
Fanshawe Pioneer Village,
www.coventmarket.com

13TH

The Lord of the Rings &
The Hobbit in Concert, Centennial Hall,
www.centennialhall.london.ca

16TH

Hope and Action Festival,
Fanshawe Conservation Area,
www.thamesriver.on.ca

25TH

Happy
HALLOWEEN!
31ST

G'MAR TOV
this YOM KIPPUR!

02ND

Pumpkins After Dark: Discount
Thursday, Storybook Gardens, ,
www.london.pumpkinsafterdark.com

09TH

Happy
THANKSGIVING!

13TH

The Play That Goes Wrong,
Grand Theatre,
www.grandtheatre.com

14TH

WISHING *you* A
prosperous DIWALI!

20TH

Halloween Town Market,
Covent Garden Market,
www.coventmarket.com

25TH

Hey, Pumpkin! Let's have gourd fun!

There is a little bit of a fall in the air, and pumpkins and squash are everywhere! Here are two fun seasonal activities to try with your little ones.

Pumpkin Face Painting

What you will need:

- a small pumpkin, washable markers, a toothbrush, a little bar of soap, a small bowl of water, a sponge

Invite your child to draw a face or decorate their pumpkin in any way they like.

Once they are finished, or if they make a mistake, show them how to dip the toothbrush in the water and brush it onto the little bar of soap.

They can then gently scrub the area they want to clean. Once finished, they can wet the sponge and wipe off the soap. (...They may love this process even *more than the creative part!*)



With a clean pumpkin, they're now ready to create all over again.

Pumpkin Hammering

This works well with a squash, gourd or pumpkin.

What you'll need: a pumpkin, a child-sized hammer, and some golf tees.

Allow your child the freedom to place the tees where they like and discover by trial and error what works best for hammering the tees in.

This is a great hand-eye activity and will help further develop their fine motor skills, coordination and concentration.

“Children must never work for our love; they must rest in it.”

Dr. Gordon Neufeld

FAMILY-STYLE MEALS: HELPING KIDS GROW ONE BITE AT A TIME



Sitting down to eat together as a family is about more than just food. Eating together is a chance to connect, learn and grow. Serving meals family-style, where everyone helps themselves to food from shared dishes, is a simple and powerful way to support your child's development.

Eating together helps children build a healthy relationship with food. When kids serve themselves, they learn to listen to their hunger and fullness cues, develop independence and practice important social and motor skills. Plus, when they see others enjoying a variety of foods, they're more likely to try new foods and tastes.

WHY IT WORKS

Children are natural learners, and mealtimes are full of opportunities to model and practice positive habits. When you serve yourself the same food as your child, you show them that trying new things can be fun and rewarding. Sitting together also gives you a chance to model table manners and enjoy meaningful conversations.

Submitted by Claire Bilik, RD from the Middlesex-London Health Unit

KEEP IT SIMPLE

If family-style meals are new to your household, start small. Let your child serve themselves one or two items per meal starting with something easy to scoop or pick up with tongs. You can serve the rest. Over time, they'll gain confidence and can take on more. Let your child decide what and how much to eat from the food offered. This helps them learn to trust their own appetite and make choices that feel right for their body.

MAKE IT EASY FOR LITTLE HANDS

The right tools can make a big difference.

Try using:

- Small pitchers and bowls that are easier to lift and pass
- Wide-rimmed serving dishes to help reduce spills
- Short-handled spoons, scoops or tongs for easier serving
- Squeeze bottles for condiments like ketchup or salad dressing

Plastic dishes are often lighter and cooler to the touch than glass or metal, making them safer and more comfortable for young children. Using smaller serving dishes helps reduce food

waste. If something gets spilled or contaminated, there's less to throw away. Encourage your child to start with one or two scoops so there's enough for everyone, and let them know they can always go back for seconds.

A LIFELONG SKILL

Serving meals family-style isn't just about what's on the plate; it is about building confidence, connection and lifelong healthy habits. With a little patience and the right tools, mealtimes can become one of the most rewarding and fun parts of your day. For more tips on eating together as a family, visit HealthLink BC.

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RSV

I am refraining from fearing winter and calling it the “cozy season” in keeping with the Danish aesthetic of “Hygge” or creating a cozy warmth through the winter months. Nonetheless, we cannot avoid the fact that colder temperatures come with more illness. Contrary to the wives tale that cold exposure leads to viral illness, most often these illnesses occur because we are cooped up together with little opportunity for fresh air circulation.

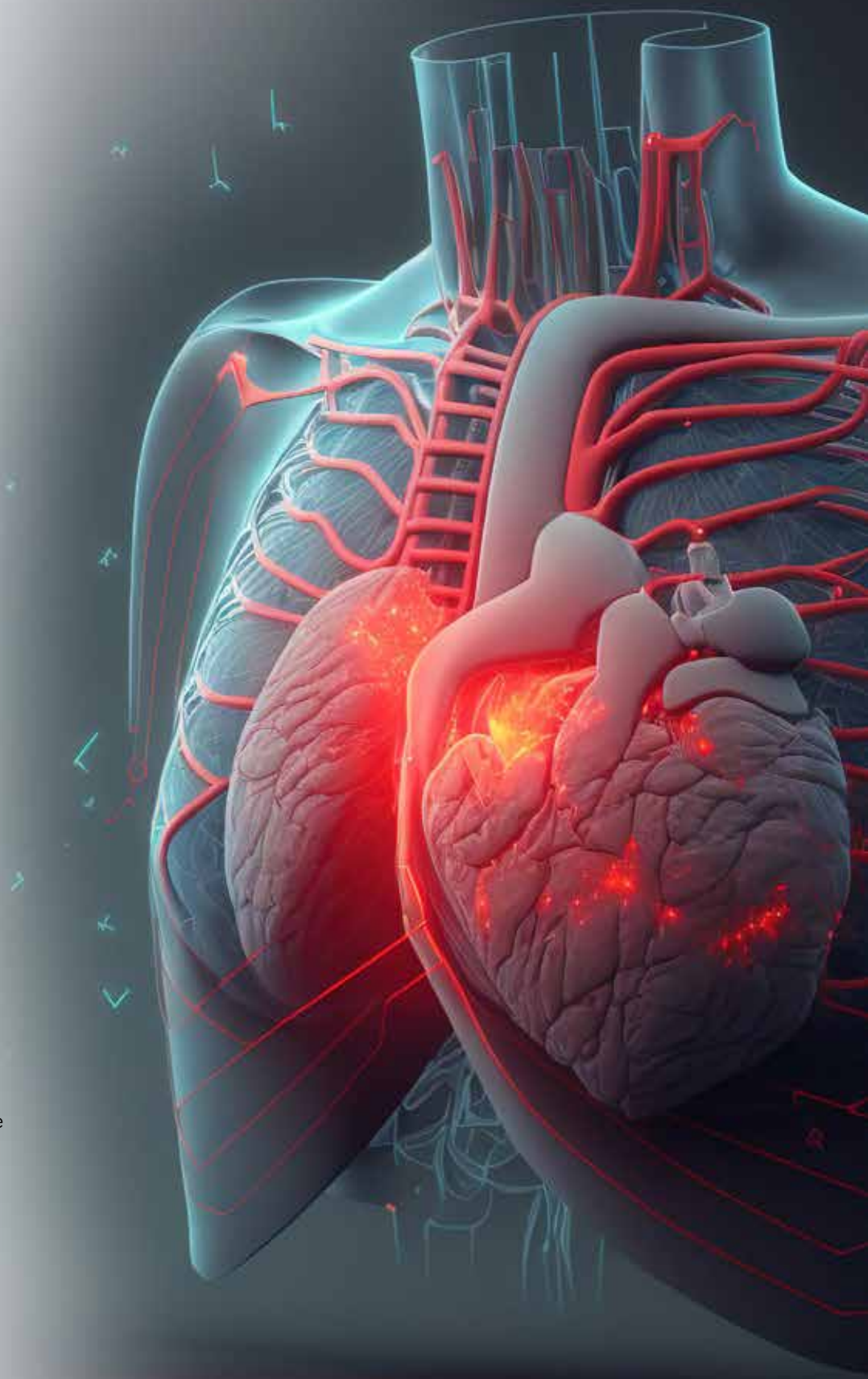
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) is a common respiratory virus that causes mild cold like symptoms in most people. The very young and the elderly are more susceptible to a more severe complicated course when they develop RSV.

We have always had a program for preterm infants to be vaccinated for RSV. In infants and young children under 2, RSV is a leading cause of bronchiolitis and pneumonia and is also a major cause of hospitalizations for young children. In Ontario, newborns are offered the RSV vaccine in the newborn nursery shortly after delivery. There is also a “catch up” program for children under two to receive this through their primary care provider. This vaccine is called Beyfortus. It will be offered as a publicly funded vaccine again this fall to young children.

In older adults, RSV can lead to severe respiratory illness, hospitalization and even death. The RSV vaccine for older adults is called Arexvy. It is recommended for adults over 60 years of age. Since it was launched in 2023, it required a prescription and was not publicly funded. In the 2025 season, it will be funded for those over 75 and for those who might be immunocompromised due to a chronic health condition. This vaccine will be available through your health care provider but presently not authorized to be given at your pharmacy.

So snuggle up, draw the shawl closely around your shoulders and assess your RSV risk to stay safe this winter!

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!





WHAT REMAINS: A MOTHER'S CAREGIVING VOICE

You didn't choose this caregiving journey. Caregiving chose you.

I had no idea what it meant to be a caregiver until I became one — not in theory, but in the sacred, daily rhythm of parenting my son, Robert, who lived with a rare disease and profound medical complexities. His life taught me that caregiving isn't a role you step into. It's a calling built around love.

Through 18 years of caregiving, I learned lessons that continue to shape how I live, love, and lead. I offer these thoughts to moms walking this path:

You Are More Than One Title. You're not just a mom; you're a nurse, protector, and comforter. Some days, you wear an invisible superhero cape. Other days, you feel invisible yourself. Your love is the glue holding everything together.

This Work Is Sacred, Even When Unseen. Sleepless nights, hospital stays, advocacy trials — it's easy to feel overlooked. But the sacrificial

work you do is love in motion. It deserves to be honoured.

Cherish Your Identity. Caregiving can consume you, but it doesn't have to erase you. I continued teaching voice and public speaking through most of my caregiving years because it brought joy and balance. That space was my self-care.

Grief and Love Can Coexist. You may grieve the life you imagined while fiercely loving the one you embrace. When Robert passed away, my caregiving didn't end. It became part of my DNA. I've learned to turn pain into purpose — helping others find their voice while mine carries Robert's echo.

You Are Not Alone. That's why I founded *InOurArms.blog*, an advocacy initiative born from Robert's legacy. It uplifts and connects caregiver families and reminds them:

- Your love matters.
- Your work is sacred.
- You are not alone.



Let Your Voice Be Heard. Whether whispered in a support group or shouted from a stage, your story has power. Caregiving gives you a voice shaped by tenderness and tenacity. Use it. Share it. Celebrate it.

To every caregiving mom: I see and honour you. What remains is not just memory — but the strength of who you've become through your pain.

.....
Juli Henderson, www.inourarms.blog

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PLUMP, RADIANT SKIN: A THANKSGIVING GLOW

October is a season of gratitude and abundance. Around the table, we celebrate with golden turkeys, rich sides and pies that remind us of comfort and care. And while “plump and plentiful” is what we want on our plates, it’s also what many of us long for in our skin.

Collagen is the protein that keeps skin firm, smooth and resilient. As the years pass, our natural supply slows down, leaving skin less full and less radiant. The good news is that modern treatments can help restore that youthful bounce.

INJECTABLES WITH MARIAM, RN

Mariam provides a thoughtful, artistic approach with injectables:

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RESURFACING LASERS WITH JESSIKA, RN

Jessika offers advanced resurfacing laser treatments that refresh the skin, stimulate collagen and smooth texture. It’s like polishing your complexion before the holiday season, leaving you glowing and confident.

Together, these treatments create subtle, natural results that enhance rather than change your appearance. At London Plastic Surgery & Advanced Aesthetics, every treatment includes medical-grade skincare support:

- With Sculptra®, we provide a dermal roller to maximize collagen stimulation.
- With dermal fillers, we include Alastin® INhance Serum to support healing and extend results.
- With laser resurfacing, we guide you with pre- and post-treatment products to optimize recovery and reveal a smoother, more radiant complexion.



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Now that the kids are back in school, are you a Registered Nurse or regulated health professional looking to advance your career? If aesthetic medicine is something you’re interested in, visit our website to learn more about our upcoming Principles of Injecting Neuromodulators and HA Dermal Fillers Course.

A SEASON OF GRATITUDE—FOR YOURSELF

This Thanksgiving, while you care for everyone else, remember to give yourself a little care too. Investing in your skin or furthering your education is about more than appearance. It’s about confidence, self-respect, and feeling as vibrant as the season itself. We are here to support you every step of the way.

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IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU





ENTRY #21:

IT'S **NOT** ABOUT YOU!

Being bipolar, my brain soaks in ALL the information around me. When I want to improve in an area of myself, I study it. I am watching YouTubes, reading books, meditating and seeking out how I can love my enemies. It's easy to love people who love you back, but what if you could just hold your head high living life in peace regardless of what others think, say or do?

Disclaimer! If someone is abusive, please seek out help. I am talking about people like the movie Mean Girls. No matter what you do, they don't like you. You don't understand why people are unkind. I am sorry to break it to you, but not everyone is going to like you. Do you like everyone? No! Before you read on, I bet all of you are mad at someone. Who is it and why? Are you easily offended? I encourage you to take a moment right now to write out your answers. Some of you are going to get a new freedom if you DO the work. You can get all the therapy in the

world, but YOU are the one who needs to do the work. Now that you are done, let's read on why choosing peace at all cost 24/7 will change your life immediately.

As a farm kid, back home we have a saying that when someone mistreats you or talks badly about you, "Just let it roll off your shoulders like water off a duck's back." Don't let anyone steal your peace. It is just not worth it. We can get so concerned about our hair, outfits of the day, what social media says, and our worth and value in what we do. Don't focus on the storm around you. We all have seen hurricanes on TV and the devastating aftermath they leave behind, but did you know that the middle (known as the eye) is calm with clear skies and very little rain? You can be the outside of the storm, or the peaceful middle, but you can't be both. What do you choose today?



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 and www.facebook.com/bipolaronthebrain.

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TURKEY TALK: KIDS SHARE FALL TRADITIONS

What's your favourite thing about fall, and how do you like to spend autumn days?

Playing in the leaves and going to Spirit Halloween to get cool Halloween costumes.

Do you have a special family tradition for Thanksgiving or a favourite food you look forward to?

Yes! We have a couple of big family dinners and my dad makes the best turkey dinners!

What are you planning to be for Halloween this year, and how did you choose your costume?

I'm going to be a piece of sushi at school and a pickle for the trick or treating night!.

If fall had a "perfect day," what would it look like for you?

The perfect fall day would be no school, Spirit Halloween all day, and scaring people at the Pioneer Village haunted house.

Meet our Kid Zone
writers, 12 and 8 year
old siblings, Lander and Adi!
Each month, they'll be sharing
perspectives on life as
a child sees it.



CRYSTAL METH (A FOUR PART SERIES FOR PARENTS WITH TEENS)

Methamphetamine, crystal meth, is a synthetic stimulant. It is typically sold as a shiny white rock/crystal. The short-term effects of crystal meth include:

- Euphoria
- Increased energy and alertness
- Paranoia
- Anxiety
- Rapid heart rate
- Stroke
- Death

Short term use can impair memory, insomnia and lead to stimulant use disorder (SUD).

Long term effects of crystal meth are very concerning and on the rise. Several of them are permanent. They include:

- Psychosis (seeing or hearing things that are not there)
- Delusions (deeply believing in false stories)
- Increased risk of various infections such as HIV
- Heart failure
- Stroke
- Tooth decay and tooth loss
- Decrease in sexual function
- Slower cognition (difficulty learning, slower reaction times)

It is very difficult to treat an overdose of crystal meth as there is no reversal agent for stimulant overdose.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Having a conversation with your teen about the reality and dangers of “trying Meth” is key.

Educate teens that most illicit drugs are laced with fentanyl/carfentanyl which increases their chances of death after just one “hit”. Educate your teens on how to use a naloxone kit and make it available for them for their safety and that of their friends. Having a naloxone kit does not increase their risk of trying illicit substances and it cannot reverse an overdose of crystal meth, but it will save a life, as again most drugs are laced with fentanyl.

These are very difficult conversations to have with our teens, but absolutely necessary in our current landscape of illicit substances in Canada. Take care.



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.

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"What truly differentiates Culinary Catering is our people. We are committed to creating a work environment that our staff members feel pride and comfort in. We feel that when our team loves what they do, they are just as excited about events as our clients are. From customizing your perfect menu to ensuring that every detail is accounted for, our team works hard and has fun creating each unforgettable event." With Culinary Catering, you are not just hosting an event, you are creating an experience that you and your guests will cherish long after the food is cleared.

Culinary Catering is proud to offer full event collaboration with all of their clients to ensure that every detail is perfect. For your wedding, corporate event, charitable gathering, family party, or whatever it is that you are hosting, their team is committed to ensuring that you can relax and be a guest at your own event.

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PARENTS TURNING HOUSES INTO OPPORTUNITIES

Every parent knows that raising a family comes with big dreams and bigger expenses. From helping kids with school, to creating a cozy home, to keeping everyone safe on the road, it can feel like the list never ends. What many don't realize is that one of the best financial tools to support those goals is sitting right under their roof: home equity.

WHAT IS HOME EQUITY?

Equity is the portion of your home you truly own. As you pay down your mortgage, and property values rise, your investment increases. For example, if your home is worth \$700 000 and your mortgage is \$400 000, you've built \$300 000 in equity. Many lenders allow families to borrow against it through a Home Equity Mortgage or Line of Credit (HELOC).

Rhonda Stark, Mortgage Agent, Level 2, Mortgage Intelligence, (519) 868-6794, www.rhondastark.ca, www.facebook.com/YourMortgageResourceConnection/

HOW PARENTS PUT EQUITY TO WORK FUNDING EDUCATION

For parents dreaming of helping kids with tuition, home equity can cover costs like classes, books or living expenses, helping children step into adulthood with fewer financial worries.

UPGRADING THE FAMILY HOME

The house that worked for toddlers may not suit growing teens. Renovations like a finished basement, updated kitchen or backyard retreat can make life easier now while adding value for the future.

PURCHASING A FAMILY VEHICLE

Between carpools, sports equipment and pets, reliable transportation is a must. Using equity often means lower rates than a car loan, making it easier to buy a safe, spacious vehicle for the whole family.

WHY FAMILIES CHOOSE EQUITY?

- Lower interest rates than most loans or credit cards



- Clear repayment plans that fit family budgets
- A way to fund important goals without derailing long-term plans

A home isn't just where life happens, it's part of the family's story. By using equity wisely, parents can turn that value into opportunities, comfort and memories for their loved ones.

QUICK TIPS:

Three Smart Uses for Home Equity

- 1** Start Small: Even modest upgrades, like a bathroom refresh, add comfort and value.
- 2** Think Ahead: Invest now for long-term goals like education or retirement savings in the future.
- 3** Borrow Wisely: Stick to a budget-friendly plan that supports your cash flow.

Your Home Holds More Than Memories

Turn your equity into opportunity:

lower rates, family-friendly repayment plans, and a smart way to fund goals like education, renovations, or even a new vehicle — without derailing your future.

Smart Tips:

- 1** Start small
— even a refresh adds value
- 2** Think ahead
— plan for tuition or retirement
- 3** Borrow wisely
— keep cashflow comfortable

More than bricks and mortar, **your home is part of your family's story.** Make it work for your future.



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MOM & CAREGIVER.

CAUGHT BETWEEN ERAS: THE ELDER MILLENNIAL DAD EXPERIENCE



I'm an Elder Millennial. I grew up in the Napster, ICQ and Myspace era. We spent long days outside, drank from the hose and knew smoking was bad—but we also knew the internet had dangers, like strangers you should never give your address to. And of course, nothing ruined your chat room vibe faster than your sister picking up the phone mid dial-up.

We're not quite the "participation trophy" generation people tease our kids about, but we're also not from the "what happened to little Johnny? He never made it back from 'Nam'" era of our grandparents. We sit somewhere in between—raised in flux.

We understand the internet, yet can hold a face-to-face conversation. We text nearly

as fast as our kids, but we also remember jingles from TV commercials. We recall when Tom Green was a rapper, and when Drake was in a wheelchair on Canadian after-school TV. This middle ground has its challenges. Some of us caught the last wave of affordable home ownership; others stumbled through "buy now, pay later" traps while learning financial independence. We lived through the infancy of the influencer era with Paris Hilton while still being able to afford groceries and gas without a side hustle.

We all arrived here differently. And as parents, we carry expectations that don't always match reality. If you don't own a four-bedroom home with two cars in the garage, that's okay. If you can't coach every

hockey practice and pay for three Instagram-worthy vacations a year, that's okay too. You haven't failed.

What matters most is showing up. Your kids won't remember the car you drove or the square footage of your house. They'll remember that you cared enough to be there. They'll remember you working overtime to cover braces, even if you watched the ball game later on a shaky iPhone video. They'll remember the affordable family trip where you laughed and made memories, without worrying about the balance on the AmEx after.

As Jessie J reminded us back in 2011: "It's not about the price tag." It's about presence, love and striving to be the best version of yourself.

Jeremy McCall is a married father of 3, a social service case manager, and known as "The Dadfather", being the founder and Past President of Dad Club London.



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GIRLS GONE MILD

I watched my daughter march into high school this fall like she owned the place. As she wades into the wild kingdom of lockers, cliques and gym class trauma, I stood there blinking back nostalgia, thinking about my girls — the ones who held my hair, hyped my antics and still have photographic evidence of my “questionable” life choices.

You know the ones. Your first calls or last nerves. Your crisis hotline and comic relief in one. If you’re lucky, high school gives you more than just awkward kisses and emotional scars; it gives you sisters — not by blood, but by braces, bad decisions and the shared trauma of passing out in a cornfield while underage drinking.

If you’re lucky, you still have them. And if you’re really lucky... you get a fall weekend with them once a year to remind you that you’re still funny, still fierce and still up for shenanigans — as long as they end by 9 p.m.

In this so-called “sweet” spot of motherhood — you know, where we’re driving kids to tournaments, juggling jobs and surviving perimenopause — those same girls are still my ride-or-dies. We don’t talk every day. We don’t need to. But when fall rolls around, we fall right back into our groove like it’s 1994 and we’re skipping class with Slurpees and a plan to do absolutely nothing productive. Pumpkin spice, stretchy pants, too much booze, too much food and side-splitting laughter as we relive our youth.

It’s not just a weekend. It’s therapy. It’s a deep exhale. It’s the reminder that even though our kids think we’re lame and our knees crack like glow sticks, we are still fabulous (just with more supplements). Life changes, but your high school girls don’t. They remember who you were before you were someone’s mom, someone’s boss or someone who Googles “is this perimenopause or just rage?”

So, while my daughter is out there building her own squad — the ones who will one day carry her secrets and hold her hair — I’ll be here, packing ibuprofen and Costco-sized snacks, heading off to laugh so hard I pee a little. (Okay, a lot. It’s fine.)

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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NATIONAL ORTHOTIC AND PROSTHETIC DAY

Many people have heard about the great Terry Fox and his story, but how many people can list off someone who uses an orthotic device? September 19th was National Orthotic and Prosthetic Day, so here are some answers to commonly asked questions!

WHAT IS O&P (ORTHOTICS AND PROSTHETICS)?

Within the field of orthotics and prosthetics, practitioners work to improve their patient's quality of life by providing various assistive devices that aid in mobility and promote independence. A prosthetic is a device that is fabricated to replace another limb. An orthosis is a device that is designed to support a limb that is either weak or has high tone. By combining creativity and technology, professionals in this field can design devices that cater to each individual they see.

WHO NEEDS AN ORTHOTIC DEVICE?

Lots of people! Some patients we encounter on a daily basis are those who have suffered a stroke, present with drop foot, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, club foot, toe walking, polio, diabetes or even little infants who have a flat spot on their head.

As for who would see a prosthetist, the patient population is much smaller and is limited to those who have lost a limb from diabetes, cardiovascular disease, congenital deformities or trauma. The number one cause for amputation is diabetic complications. For more information regarding the dangers of diabetes and how to manage it, please visit Canada's website, diabetes.ca.

WHO MAKES THESE DEVICES?

There are two main professionals in this field, a clinician and a technician. A clinician is the health care provider who

would assess the patient and determine the treatment plan. These individuals take into account the patient's history, current presentation and what their goals are. From this information, they design an assistive device that will enhance and improve the patient's quality of life. A technician is critical to the intricate fabrication of these devices. They are the ones who are in the workshop physically making the device for the patient. A technician has the knowledge of various types of materials, such as plastic and metal, and the hand skills to create these devices. Each device is unique to the patient's needs and often is made to their specific measurements.

The field of orthotics and prosthetics is very small but very important. Without the help of these individuals, some children and adults would not be able to walk or perform activities of daily living safely. If you have any questions about orthotics or prosthetics, do not hesitate to reach out to our office.

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WHY OCTOBER IS THE PERFECT MONTH TO FOCUS ON YOU!

October often feels like a turning point. I call it “the real new year”. The back-to-school rush has settled, routines are falling into place, and the crisp air reminds us that a new season is here. For many women in their 40s and 50s, October can also be the perfect time to pause, reflect and reset... especially if you’re navigating perimenopause or menopause.

This stage of life comes with big changes. Shifts in hormones can leave you feeling more tired, noticing changes in weight or body composition, or struggling with mood swings and sleep. It can feel overwhelming, but here’s the truth: midlife can also be an opportunity to realign with what your body truly needs.

Just like we change over our closets for fall, it’s worth changing over our routines too. Simple nutrition and lifestyle habits can make a world of difference in how you feel:



- **PRIORITIZE PROTEIN.** Lean proteins like eggs, chicken, beans, cottage cheese and Greek yogurt help support muscle maintenance and growth, and keep you feeling fuller longer, which can help minimize cravings.
- **BALANCE YOUR PLATE.** Half your plate filled with colourful vegetables and seasonal fruits (think apples, squash and pumpkin)

provides fibre and antioxidants that support digestion, heart health and energy.

- **LIFT WEIGHTS.** Resistance training is especially important for protecting muscle and bone health in perimenopause and beyond.
- **GUARD YOUR SLEEP.** Cooler evenings are a cue to set earlier bedtimes and create restful rituals that support hormone balance and mood.

October is often seen as a month of gratitude, with Thanksgiving at its heart. What better time to start being thankful for your body, and giving it the nourishment and care it deserves? Instead of seeing perimenopause or menopause as a loss, view it as a reset. It’s your chance to shift focus toward yourself, your health and your future.

So this fall, let’s embrace the idea of change not as something to fear, but as something to celebrate. October – you’re the fresh start we’ve been waiting for!

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

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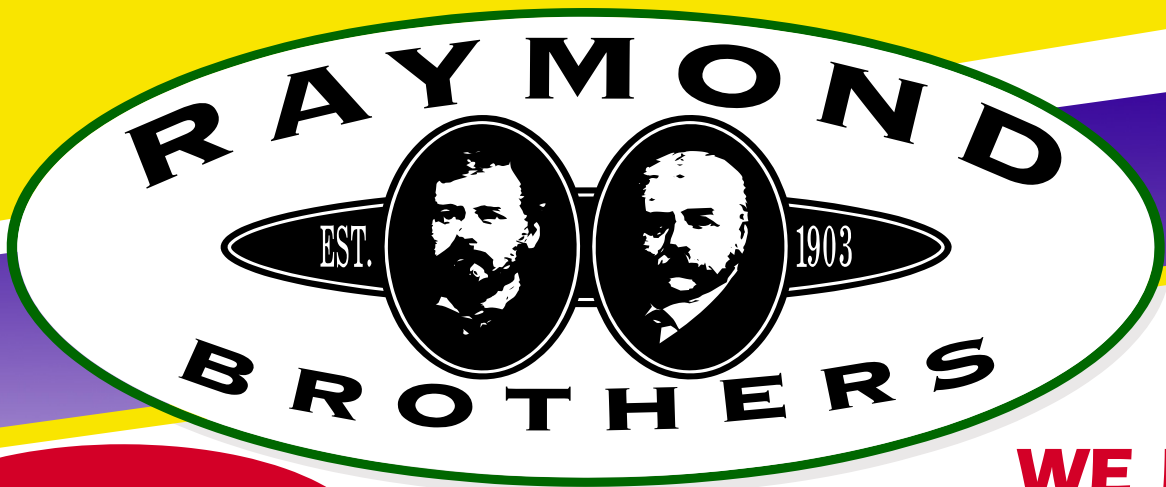
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