

A FREE MAGAZINE

THE MOM & CAREGIVER™

MAY 2026
VOLUME 28 ISSUE 05

www.themomandcaregiver.com

FOLLOW US



*Up, Up
AND AWAY!*

CELEBRATE MOM WITH STRAWBERRY SLUSHIES!	5
HOW BREASTMILK EVOLVES	6
WELLNESS FOR WOMEN WHO DO IT ALL	19

PREGNANCY - BABY - TODDLER



PRESCHOOL - SCHOOL AGE - FAMILY

Why Summer Camps Are More Than Just Fun



As the school year winds down, many families begin thinking about how to fill the long summer days. While summer is meant for rest and freedom, children still benefit from a balance of structure and play. That's where summer camps, especially dance camps, offer something truly special.

Summer dance camps provide a unique environment where kids can stay active, creative, and connected without the pressures of the school year. The structure is still there, but it feels lighter. There are no tests, homework, or expectations beyond showing up, trying new things, and having fun.

One of the biggest benefits of dance camp is confidence. With more time to explore movement and creativity, children feel more comfortable stepping outside their comfort zone. They try new styles, make new friends, and experience small successes each day. Those moments help build lasting self-esteem.

Dance camps also support social development. Kids spend their days working together, playing games, and sharing experiences. Without the usual school pressures, friendships form quickly, creating a space where children feel a sense of belonging.

Physically, dance camps keep kids moving in a way that feels like play. They build strength, coordination, and endurance while dancing, creating, and participating in themed activities, helping them stay active all summer.

Perhaps most importantly, camps give children a chance to simply be kids. They laugh more, move more, and enjoy the freedom of summer while still having a place to go and something to look forward to each day.

Summer dance camps are more than just a way to pass the time. They create memories, build confidence, and give children a joyful space to grow.

REGISTER NOW AT DANCE EXTREME

Let's Dance!



Dance extreme

725 Notre Dame Dr #1, London, ON
519.657.3262





CONTENTS

ON THE COVER

Celeste was so excited about the kite mom made when she arrived at the shoot, but wanted nothing to do with it once the cameras were rolling! Mom and Dad worked hard to coax some smiles out of her, and of course, Bluey chipped in too via Dad's phone!



EDITORIAL The Real MVPs Are Moms!	04	BIZ SHOWCASE <i>Al Canto B&B</i>	14
EVENTS CALENDAR May 2026	05	WHOLE-PERSON CARE The Benefits of Sound Therapy	15
AS THEY GROW How Breastmilk Evolves to Meet Your Baby's Needs	06	MORTGAGE WHISPERER Turning Life Milestones into Your First Home	16
FAMILY HEALTH Know Your Numbers	08	DAD-ITUDE Letting Your Kids Be Bad at Things	18
COMFORT CARE Steel-Toe Boots & Lip Gloss: Women in Trades Rock	09	MODERN MEDICINE Wellness for Women Who Do It All	19
BIPOLAR ON THE BRAIN Journal Entry #28	10	TMI You Are the Company You Keep	20
KID ZONE April Showers Bring MAY Flowers	11	ONE STEP AT A TIME Tummy Time Troubles	21
OUR MENTAL HEALTH Books About Mental Health	12	FOOD FOR THOUGHT Why Does My Body Feel Different in Perimenopause?	22

Publisher/Chief Editor **Sabina Manji**
 Assistant & Copy Editor **Melissa Warkentin**
 Graphic Designer **Vlado Bali**
 Photographer **One-12 Photography**
 Photostylists **Sabina Manji**
Melissa Warkentin

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

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

THE MOM & CAREGIVER is distributed FREE of charge. Anibas Productions Limited welcomes unsolicited contributions. Such material, if published, may be edited. Although Anibas Productions Limited cannot pay contributors, recognition will be given to the contributor. Anibas Productions Limited reserves the right to refuse any contributions or ads. Anibas Productions Limited cannot accept responsibility, in any way, for dissatisfaction or damages incurred by advertisers or their clients. Advertising rates and circulation information is available on request.

All rights reserved. Copyright 2026 ©

THE REAL MVPs ARE MOMS!

April showers have brought May flowers (for moms)! We're stepping into this month with garden blooms, longer days, and a well-deserved spotlight on the real MVPs: moms.

This issue is all about celebrating you—whether you're running on coffee, crumbs or sheer determination. Motherhood is equal parts magic and mayhem, and we wouldn't have it any other way (most days). It's the bedtime stories, the last-minute school projects, the hugs that fix everything—and the moments where you wonder how you're still standing at the end of it all.

That means it's time to show mom you love her berry much! Make her our "Strawberry Slushies for Mom" recipe on page 5. Here's a tip, mamas: leave this recipe laying around as a hint to your spouse or kids! Or make it for yourself (self-love rules!) - it's bright, refreshing and blissfully simple. Bonus: it pairs perfectly with five quiet minutes alone (we support hiding in the pantry if necessary).

We're also diving into something truly amazing: how breastmilk evolves to meet your baby's needs (page 6). It's one of those topics that makes you pause and think, "Wow, the human body is incredible!"

So whether you're a pregnant mama, new mom, seasoned mom, grandmother, caregiver or someone who has stepped into a nurturing role in your own unique way, we see you—the early mornings, the endless to-do lists, the invisible emotional labor and the fierce, unwavering love that carries your families forward. This month, we hope you embrace the chaos, laugh at the mess, and maybe even lower the bar just a little. Not every moment has to be picture-perfect to be meaningful.

Here's to the moms doing it all—and then doing just a little bit more, even on the days when "more" feels impossible.

Happy Mother's Day!

PUBLISHER/CHIEF EDITOR

Sabrina



25+
YEARS



EVENTS

MAY 2026

Spring Market,
London Ukrainian Centre,
[www.facebook.com/
events/1180187744322471](http://www.facebook.com/events/1180187744322471)

02ND

Discovering Stem
with Raider Robotics,
London Children's Museum,
www.londonchildrensmuseum.ca

09TH

Mother's Day Botanical
Market, Eldon House,
www.eldonhouse.ca

10TH

Maker's Club: Cricut Tote Bags
(ages 10+), Lambeth Library,
www.lpl.ca

16TH

London Poutine Feast,
Victoria Park,
www.poutinefeast.com

21ST

Special Olympics Ontario
School Championships,
Western University,
www.schoolchamps.ca

26TH

Monster Madness,
Canada Life Place,
www.canadalifeplace.com

30TH

Stars on Ice,
Canada Life Place,
www.canadalifeplace.com

03RD

Happy
MOTHER'S DAY!

10TH

Storytime (ages 1+),
East London Library,
www.lpl.ca

14TH

Happy
VICTORIA DAY!

18TH

Clue: Live on Stage,
Canada Life Place,
www.canadalifeplace.com

22ND

Mamma Mia!,
Palace Theatre,
www.palacetheatre.ca

28TH



CELEBRATE MOM WITH STRAWBERRY SLUSHIES!

INGREDIENTS:

- ¼ cup of lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons of sugar, honey or maple syrup
- 2 cups of frozen, seedless watermelon, cut into cubes
- 2 cups of strawberries, cut in half
- 1 cup of ice cubes

DIRECTIONS:

- 1 The day before you plan to make the slushies, cut the watermelon into cubes and place in large freezable bag and place in freezer.
- 2 When ready to prepare, put first 4 ingredients into blender, cover and blend until smooth.
- 3 Add ice, cover and blend until slushy

ENJOY!

Recipe by Jenn Giurgevich

“ *Motherhood is messy and beautiful and exhausting and magical – all before 9 a.m.* ”

Unknown

FOLLOW US



HOW BREASTMILK EVOLVES TO MEET YOUR BABY'S NEEDS

If you're breastfeeding, you've probably learned that it's a delicate balance of art and science. It's something you learn by feel - something that grows, shifts, and becomes beautifully unique to you and your baby. Breastfeeding not only nourishes your baby, but it also strengthens the special connection you share. And just like your baby, your breastmilk changes and adapts over time.

Did you know your breastmilk changes as your baby grows?

Breastmilk is made up of more than 200 components, including macronutrients, micronutrients, immune factors, prebiotics and more. The balance shifts as your baby grows and develops, providing proper nourishment at each stage. When you or your baby is unwell, breastmilk adapts by producing antibodies that help protect your baby by supporting their immune system.

Breastmilk remains your baby's main nutrition source until age one.

For the first six months of life, breastmilk provides all the nutrition that your baby needs. Even after foods like grains and

vegetables are added, breastmilk continues to be the main source of nutrition. By 12 months of age, the balance of calories shifts to be primarily from solid foods; however, breastmilk still plays an important role. Not only can breastmilk continue to provide many valuable nutrients, it also becomes more concentrated with immune factors, offering enhanced protection and ongoing immune support for your baby.

Returning to work?

Breastfeeding can continue.

The return to work can leave some parents feeling unsure about how to continue with breastfeeding. The good news is that with a bit of planning, it is possible. The approach might look a little different depending on the age of your baby and how frequently they are feeding. Your milk supply relies on continued breast stimulation, so if your baby cannot nurse at their usual times, consider hand expressing or pumping your breasts instead. It is important to know that the Ontario

Human Rights Commission protects your right to continue breastfeeding once you return to work.

Breastmilk adapts. Your baby thrives.

Watching your baby grow and change is one of the most exciting parts of parenting. You can feel confident that your breastmilk is changing alongside the needs of your growing baby - providing exactly what they need at every stage. Even during big life shifts like returning to work, your milk remains perfectly designed for your baby with very little adjustment needed on your part.

For support at any time during your breastfeeding journey visit our website www.healthunit.com, or call 519-663-5317, extension 5.

SOURCES

Froń, A., & Orczyk-Pawilowicz, M. (2024). Breastfeeding Beyond Six Months: Evidence of Child Health Benefits. *Nutrients*, 16(22), 3891. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu16223891>

Yeong Kim, S., & Yong Yi, Dae. (2020). Components of human breast milk: from macronutrient to microbiome and microRNA. *Clin Exp Pediatr*. 2020;63(8):301-309.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3345/cep.2020.00059>

Ontario Human Rights Commission. (no date). 6. Duty to accommodate. Retrieved from <https://www.3ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-preventing-discrimination-because-pregnan->

Submitted by Heidi Reynolds BScN, RN, IBCLC for the Middlesex-London Health Unit





StrathCraft Awards
ESTABLISHED 1918

BUY DIRECT FROM OUR LONDON LOCATION

Serving Canada Nationwide

Specializing in bespoke products
all made on-site

Do you have a logo you want
on a pin or a medallion?
on a Yeti or Stanley?
on the front of an acrylic or glass award?



Canadian made with
competitive and fair pricing

519-686-1891

Ask for Dave or Mike.
Reference the Mom and Caregiver
for a discount on your first order

✉ info@strathcraft.com

📷 @strathcraftawards

KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

There are some numbers that we should all know about ourselves to help us manage our health. Keeping an eye on some of these parameters can help us to understand our health and also prevent chronic medical conditions.

The first of these numbers is blood pressure. Blood pressure is the force with which your heart pumps blood against the resistance of your arteries. It consists of two numbers. The systolic (upper number) is the pressure when your heart beats. The diastolic (lower number) is the pressure when your heart rests in between beats.

High blood pressure (hypertension) is often called the silent disease because you may not feel any symptoms when your blood pressure is high. High blood pressure is associated with a greater risk of heart disease, stroke and kidney disease. Normal blood pressure is below 130/80. The lower your blood pressure, the lower your risk of having negative outcomes.

Things that you can do to reduce blood pressure are as follows:

1 Reduce your salt intake to less than 2 grams a day. There is an excellent guide to reading labels on food and lowering salt (sodium) intake on the Hypertension Canada website.

Avoiding processed foods and not adding salt at the table are a good place to begin.

2 Exercise regularly. It is recommended to exercise 150 minutes a week. Even a brisk walk daily can reduce blood pressure.

3 Avoid stress. Easier said than done! Although we cannot always control external stressors, we can control our reaction to stress.

4 Eat more fruits and vegetables.

5 Avoid smoking.

Knowing your blood pressure is of vital importance to better health. There are many self-monitoring devices that are now available and may help you to prevent negative outcomes from untreated and unrecognized blood pressure.

Stay tuned next month for our next installment of Know Your Numbers!



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!

STEEL-TOE BOOTS & LIP GLOSS: WOMEN IN TRADES ROCK

Picture this: a technician shows up at your door... and it's a woman. Cue double take. Cue surprise. And then... job nailed.

Women in trades aren't a trend—they're problem-solvers, communicators and multitasking masters. They fix your furnace, wire your panel or unclog your pipes, and

explain it without making you feel dumb.

They bring skill, empathy and attention to detail that keeps customers calm and homes running smoothly. And yes, they can rock steel-toe boots and coffee in hand.

The trades need more women—not as a gimmick, but because the industry is smarter,

safer and stronger with them. Representation isn't a moment—it's a movement.

Next time a woman shows up to fix your AC, don't be surprised. Just be glad she's the best technician you've ever had.

.....
*Jayden's Mechanical, (519) 273-HEAT (4328),
www.jaydensmechanical.com, @jaydensmechanical*



Jayden's COMFORT CARE® MAINTENANCE & PROTECTION PLAN

(519) 237-HEAT (4328)

WWW.JAYDENSMECHANICAL.COM

**PROTECT WHAT
KEEPS YOUR FAMILY
COMFORTABLE**





JOURNAL ENTRY #28

ARE YOU RUSHING THROUGH LIFE?

Feeling overwhelmed with taking the kids to swimming lessons, finishing deadlines at work, or trying to get to your baseball game just in time? Do you have to tell your kids that you can't make it to their birthday party because you work shift work? Are you so busy that you've broken the promise to yourself that you would eat healthier this year, but you keep ordering from Skip?

Have no fear, my friend. I have some suggestions to help you take your lifestyle from crazy town to mindfully peaceful. You know that you're always going to get tough love from me. YOU make your schedule so YOU can change it. Read that again.

I encourage you to write down everything that you are doing. Next, read the list and cross off the ones you don't even like doing anymore. Why not sit down as a family to listen to how everyone feels? What do you have to prove? You haven't failed if you stop doing actions that no longer give you joy. This will also save you money as well as your sanity.

Our granddaughter was in music and dance. At four years old she told Mommy, "I don't like to go to music anymore." Ask your kids what they don't want to do. Let people be who they are. Not the fantasy version that you have in your head. If they stop

piano lessons, you will have more time with them. They will feel heard and it might even bring you closer together because you have just honoured the person they want to be.

Once you have crossed off what activities the whole family doesn't want to do as a unit, now you can look at how much more time you have. I recommend not filling your calendar where you have freed up time for a month or two. As a family or couple, discuss how much you're enjoying gaps of space where you're just resting and relaxing, or if you are ready to try something new. Remember that if you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always gotten!

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.





APRIL SHOWERS BRING MAY FLOWERS



If you were making a Mother's Day bouquet for Mom, what flowers would you include?

Adi - I would include pink roses.

Lander - Definitely roses!

Have you ever planted anything? Did it grow?

Adi and Lander - Yes, we grew plants for mom, and yes, she still has them!

Do you prefer to get your hands dirty in the garden OR stay clean with a good book on the back porch? Why?

Adi - I pick a good book - I love reading!

Lander - I'd get my hands dirty - being dirty is fun!

Do you believe that summer "officially" begins with the May 24th weekend?

What does your family do on that long weekend?

Adi and Lander No, summer starts when school ends. On the May long weekend, we hang with friends and watch fireworks in Port Stanley.

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.

BOOKS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH



I received a request from a reader for a list of good books regarding mental health and children. I love to hear so many parents are invested in helping their little ones foster mental wellbeing! When a child has mental wellness, there is a positive ripple effect within their family, community and ideally our society. One of my go-to authors is Daniel Siegel, a neuropsychiatrist that specializes in interpersonal neurobiology and the executive director of Mindsight Institute and founding co-director of the Mindful Awareness Research Centre at UCLA. I love his book *The Whole-Brain Child* as it allows parents to understand how to integrate the child's emotional brain with the logical brain in order to promote age-appropriate emotional regulation. One of the key strategies he teaches is empathy before correction, naming emotions to tame them, and fostering resilience with his 4 Ss (safe, seen, soothed and secure).

A couple of my favorite books come from a family of authors. Adele Faber wrote *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen so Kids will Talk* which is a great book on fostering healthy communication with your children. The book discusses:

- How to cope with a child's

negative feelings (anger, frustration, disappointment)

- Expressing big feelings without being hurtful
- Engaging your child's willingness to cooperate
- Setting firm boundaries
- Alternatives to punishment that foster self-discipline
- Resolving family conflicts peacefully

Adele's daughter, Joanne Faber, continued in her mother's footsteps by writing *How to Talk So Little Kids Will Listen* and *How To Talk When Kids Won't Listen*. The focus of these two books is aimed at teaching powerful communication skills for parents of children ages 2-7. The books empower parents to foster more rewarding relationships with their young children during the most stressful parts of parenting, like tantrums, meltdowns and outright defiance.

These books are great for understanding the foundation of what our child can process at different stages of their lives, how they feel, why they act the way they do and how to help them, and in turn, strengthen the family bond.

.....
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.



One-12 Photography
www.one12photo.ca
 519-777-1699



WE SEE THE HOPE & POTENTIAL in EVERY YOUNG PERSON

YFC LONDON

↓ Give today to help us reach London's youth!

yfc london.com

FOREST CITY COMMUNITY CHURCH

A Special Place...



For people looking to **discover** or **rediscover** faith in their lives.



For people seeking a growing experience of **community, purpose, and hope.**



For families wanting to give their kids a **faith foundation.**

SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES:

Central Campus | 3725 Bostwick Rd. | 9+11 am
East Campus | 716 Classic Dr. | 9:30+11 am



Dedicated to healthy smiles for all ages



974 Dearness Drive | 519-681-1905
bookings@dearnessfamilydentistry.com
www.dearnessfamilydentistry.com

JOIN US THIS SUMMER FOR

Dance Camp



725 Notre Dame Dr #1, London, ON
519.657.3262



FOLLOW US



AL CANTO B&B



AL CANTO B&B

A Hidden Gem in Florence




www.alcanto.it

For more information or to book your stay, contact Nicholas at info@alcanto.it

5 STAR RATING



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. 

A Hidden Gem in Florence

If you've always been dreaming of visiting Florence, consider this your sign. The property dates from the 13th century and was recently fully renovated by Architect Franco Madella, who scrupulously kept all of the antique features this old property held. It is now run by Canadian Art Historian Linda O'Brien and her two sons, Nicholas and Ryan, who all speak fluent English, French and Spanish.

Al Canto offers a stay that feels less like a rental and more like being welcomed into a beautiful Italian home. The name itself carries meaning, inspired by the idea that the renowned poet Dante Alighieri once passed through this area—adding a quiet sense of history and storytelling to your stay. From the moment the large doors open, you're greeted by a stunning interior that immediately feels warm, inviting and full of character. One of its most unique features is a car displayed inside the home, the classic FIAT 500, an unexpected detail that makes Al Canto truly memorable.

With five thoughtfully designed rooms, comfort is clearly a priority. The beds and pillows are incredibly comfortable, making it easy to rest and recharge after a full day of exploring Florence and beyond. Guests are welcomed every morning with a nourishing breakfast that features locally sourced products, a simple yet meaningful touch that adds to the feeling of being cared for. It's the perfect way to start a day of wandering cobblestone streets or simply slowing down. Step outside your room and you'll find a beautiful garden—ideal for reading, relaxing or enjoying your favorite glass of wine in a peaceful setting. It's a space that invites you to pause and truly take in the moment.

The property is located just 4-5 km from the city center which is easy to reach via public transport. Also, the neighbourhood features many options for lunch and dinner, allowing guests to rest in the neighbourhood after a long day of visiting.

Be prepared to receive many tips on how to make your visit become a true local experience, leaving a long-lasting impression on its guests. Al Canto isn't just a place to stay—it's a place to feel.





THE BENEFITS OF SOUND THERAPY

Sound therapy is an increasingly popular practice that invites us to slow down, tune in and reconnect with ourselves through the power of vibration and sound. Rooted in ancient traditions yet supported by modern research, sound therapy uses instruments such as singing bowls, gongs, chimes and voice to create immersive soundscapes that gently guide the body and mind into a state of deep relaxation.

One of the most immediate and noticeable benefits of sound therapy is its ability

to calm anxiety. As soothing tones wash over the body, the brain begins to shift from a heightened, alert state into slower brainwave patterns associated with rest and restoration. This shift can help quiet racing thoughts, reduce feelings of overwhelm and create a sense of inner stillness that many people find difficult to access in their daily lives.

Beyond calming the mind, sound therapy has a profound effect on the nervous system. The vibrations produced by sound

instruments can help regulate the body's stress response, encouraging a move from "fight or flight" into "rest and digest." This gentle recalibration supports improved sleep, reduced tension and an overall sense of balance. Many participants report feeling lighter, more grounded and deeply nourished after a session.

Sound therapy also opens the door to creativity. When the mind is quiet and the body is relaxed, space is created for new ideas, insights and inspiration to emerge. In this receptive state, individuals often experience a deeper connection to their inner voice, making it easier to access creativity, intuition and emotional expression.

At the Eir Centre, we are excited to offer individual and group sessions, as well as Listening Within: A Sound & Story Workshop Series—a gentle, supportive experience designed to help you slow down, reconnect and listen inward. This unique series blends sound meditation with reflective writing, creating a nurturing space where participants can explore their inner landscape with curiosity and compassion. Whether you are seeking calm, clarity or creative renewal, we invite you to pause, listen and rediscover the wisdom within.

Dr. Kylea Potvin, Medical Oncologist and Founder, Eir Centre, 226-289-6644, Info@eirhealing.ca



Care. Compassion. Healing.

At Eir Centre our vision is to transform the conventional model of care by embracing a holistic approach that nurtures the mind, body, and spirit. We aim to empower every individual facing health challenges with the knowledge, skills, support, and courage to discover their strength and live fully.



What We offer:

- ✓ Individual Psychotherapy
- ✓ Psychedelic Assisted Therapy
- ✓ Oncology & Survivorship
- ✓ Nutrition Counselling
- ✓ Sound Therapy
- ✓ Breathwork
- ✓ Yoga Therapy



 www.eirhealing.ca



 226-289-6644



 info@eirhealing.ca



TURNING LIFE MILESTONES INTO YOUR FIRST HOME

Spring brings more than warmer weather, it marks graduation and wedding season, a time when fresh starts are top of mind. For many young couples, recent graduates and growing families, this is when the idea of buying a first home can feel both exciting and urgent. Moving from renting to owning can seem like a big leap, especially when balancing student debt, daycare costs and everyday expenses, but it's definitely achievable with the right plan.

For first-time buyers, preparation is everything. Understanding how to balance current financial responsibilities with long-term goals is key. Many assume that student loans or childcare expenses automatically put homeownership out of reach. However, lenders consider a broader financial picture, and there are flexible options available that can support buyers at different life stages, whether you're

managing student debt, raising a family, or both.

Taking the first step doesn't require perfection. It requires a clear strategy and a willingness to plan ahead. Small adjustments and informed decisions make a meaningful difference over time.

SMART STEPS FOR FIRST-TIME BUYERS MANAGING REAL-LIFE EXPENSES:

- Understand your numbers early: Review income, debts (including student loans) and monthly expenses such as rent, daycare and daily living costs to determine a comfortable home price range.
- Build a realistic savings plan: Consistent, manageable contributions toward a down payment can grow faster than expected. Automating savings can help keep things on track.
- Explore first-time buyer programs: Incentives, grants and rebates may be available to reduce upfront costs and improve affordability.

- Strengthen your credit profile: Paying bills on time and reducing high-interest debt opens the door to better mortgage options.
- Get pre-approved: Knowing what you can afford helps narrow your search and shows sellers you're ready when the time comes.
- Plan for all homeownership costs: Budget for property taxes, utilities, insurance and maintenance alongside your mortgage.
- Seek expert guidance: Working with experienced professionals can help identify options that fit your unique financial situation.

Graduations and weddings symbolize new beginnings—and for many, buying a first home is a natural next step. With thoughtful planning and the right support, even those balancing student debt, childcare and everyday expenses can move confidently toward homeownership.

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

New Beginnings Start at Home

Graduating, getting married, growing your family—
life is full of milestones.



Buying your first home might feel like a big step, but with the right plan, it's closer than you think.

From managing student loans to balancing everyday expenses, there are more options available than ever before.

RHONDA STARK
MORTGAGE AGENT
BROKERAGE #10428
LEVEL 2



CALL TODAY

Start with a strategy, get expert guidance, and **take the first step toward a place to call your own.**

519.868.6794 | RHONDASTARK.CA

Missed the open house?

Book a personalized visit!



OUR FRENCH CATHOLIC SCHOOLS:

Frère-André

400 Base Line West
London
519-471-6680

Sainte-Jeanne-d'Arc

35 Fallons Lane
London
519-457-3141

Saint-Jean-de-Brébeuf

270 Chelton
London
519-963-1219

Sainte-Marguerite-Bourgeoys

700 Bristol
Woodstock
519-539-2911

Never too early,
never too late
to discover your
child's future school!



MyFrenchSchool.ca

CULINARY CATERING



BUEHLER
CUSTOM WOODWORKING

553 Southdale Rd. E. Unit 103
London, ON N6E 1A2
519-630-7222
buehler@rogers.com
www.buehlerwoodworking.ca



culinarycatering.ca 519-641-4725 info@culinarycatering.ca

FOLLOW US





LETTING YOUR KIDS BE BAD AT THINGS (SO THEY CAN EVENTUALLY EXCEL)

You know how they say opposites attract? I am a giant, my wife is dainty. I am clumsy, she is graceful. I love sports, and she dusts me at tennis, pickleball and badminton before heading back to crafting and crocheting. She is very clean... and I became very clean.

But the one area where we are exactly the same? We are both recovering helicopter parents.

Between the two of us, we've seen what can happen when kids don't have enough guidance. So naturally, we over-corrected. *We hovered. We intervened. We "helped."* A lot. And while it came from a good place, we eventually realized something: in trying to protect our kids from struggle, we were also holding them back from growth.

I hate not being good at things. It's why I no longer play my wife in racquet sports and still can't skate at 42. And no parent wants to see their child struggle. But the older our kids got, the more we saw how uncomfortable they were with failure. A missed shot could bring tears. A lost sweater could spark a meltdown. *That's when it clicked. The goal isn't to remove struggle. It's to teach them how to move through it.*

Now, when my kids hit a rough moment, I let them sit in it for a bit. I call it their "glum chum" face. I'll offer encouragement, maybe a suggestion, but I don't solve problems they can solve themselves. I cheer just as loud for effort as I do for results. We talk about how even the best — LeBron, for example — have missed

thousands of shots along the way.

Because struggle isn't the problem. Avoiding it is. Your kids will be okay if they fail. In fact, they need to.

My oldest recently brought home a 71 on a math test. Instead of disappointment, we treated it as an opportunity — a chance to review, learn and grow. That shift matters.

So let them struggle. Let them get frustrated. Let them feel it. Then be there. Calm them. Support them. Love them. And help them figure it out. That's where confidence is built — not in perfection, but in perseverance.

.....
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.



MOTHER'S DAY RESET: WELLNESS FOR WOMEN WHO DO IT ALL

Mother's Day is often about giving—but for moms and caregivers, it's also a powerful reminder to receive. Between managing households, careers and the emotional load of caring for others, mental clarity and self-care often fall to the bottom of the list. This May, it's time to change that narrative. True wellness starts from within. Mental

fatigue, brain fog and emotional burnout are common among caregivers—but they don't have to be accepted as the norm. At London Plastic Surgery and Advanced Aesthetics, innovative solutions like ExoMind are helping women reset and recharge. Using non-invasive technology designed to support brain health, ExoMind can enhance focus, improve mood

and restore a sense of calm—giving moms the mental clarity they need to show up fully in their lives.

But feeling your best isn't just internal—it shows on the outside too. Stress, hormonal shifts and lack of sleep can take a toll on the skin, leaving it dull, uneven, and depleted. That's where the Sciton Tribrid™ Laser comes in. This advanced treatment works on multiple layers of the skin to improve tone, texture and overall skin health—creating a strong, radiant foundation.

Together, these treatments reflect a more complete approach to wellness: a healthy mind paired with healthy skin. When mental clarity improves, confidence follows. When skin is revitalized, it reflects how you feel inside.

This Mother's Day, shift the focus. Instead of just celebrating what moms and caregivers do, invest in how they feel. Because when women are supported from the inside out, they don't just glow—they thrive.

London Plastic Surgery & Advanced Aesthetics
(519)850-5435 booking@londonplasticsurgery.ca



London Plastic Surgery & Advanced Aesthetics

IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU



YOU ARE THE COMPANY YOU KEEP

There's a moment in parenting when you realize your influence is disappearing. Not gone — just quietly being replaced by Snapchat and someone named "Liv."

It happens somewhere between elementary and high school, when friends start to matter more than family dinners, and suddenly you're not just raising a child, you're watching them be shaped in real time by the people they choose to orbit.

You are the company you keep.

I used to roll my eyes when my parents sang that tune. It felt like that should be something stitched on a throw pillow beside Live, Laugh, Love.

Turns out... It's science. Research shows behaviours — from grades to habits to risk-taking — are strongly influenced by peer groups. In fact, teens are far more likely to

mirror the academic effort and lifestyle choices of their closest friends. Translation: your kid's friend group is basically a walking, talking life forecast.

This year, I've watched my daughter choose her people. At school, she's surrounded herself with a group that prioritizes education, sports, work and family. They're kind. Steady. The kind of kids who cheer for each other without keeping score. And the shift? Incredible.

Despite navigating complex learning disabilities, she's pulling strong grades. More importantly, she's happy. Grounded. Safe. She trusts her friends — and they treat each other, and others, with genuine respect. I notice it in everything.

I'm grateful she isn't following in my

footsteps — the boy-crazy, sneaking out, pushing boundaries phase. Most of those friendships were short-lived. Some of the consequences weren't.

Here's the part we don't say out loud enough, this doesn't stop in high school. As adults, we do the exact same thing. We gravitate toward people who reflect or reinforce our values. If we want to grow our careers? Spend time with people who inspire you, challenge you and raise your standards. Energy is contagious. So are habits.

So now, as I watch my daughter choose wisely, I feel something unexpected. Relief. Because the right people won't just accept you — they shape you. And whether you're sixteen or forty-six, the truth still holds — you are the company you keep.



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

Take a moment this month to care for yourself and your little one

HEALTHY MOMS. HAPPY BABIES.

- Baby Hydrotherapy • Infant Massage • Prenatal & Postnatal Care
- Massage Therapy • Yoga Classes • Workshops

*Direct Billing Available

Dolphin Dive
Baby Spa & Wellness

Activity Plex London
(226) 984-8000

MANAGEPOINT
FOR EVERYTHING IT

IT Services & Support
Software Development
Cybersecurity
VoIP Phone Services

LET'S CHAT

(844) 914-1706 | INFO@MANAGEPOINT.CA



TUMMY TIME TROUBLES

If you've ever placed your baby on their tummy only to be met with tears, you're not alone. Tummy time is one of the most common challenges new parents face, but it's also one of the most important activities for your baby's development.

Tummy time helps babies build the strength they need for key milestones like rolling, sitting and crawling. It also reduces pressure on the back of the head, which can help prevent flat spots (often called flat head syndrome).

Many babies resist tummy time at first. That's completely normal - it's a new skill that takes practice. In the early weeks, even a minute or two at a time is enough. As your baby grows, you can slowly increase their tolerance:

- By 2-3 months: aim for about 20-30 minutes total per day (broken up)
- By 4-5 months: work toward 45-60 minutes total per day

If your baby seems uncomfortable, positioning can make a big difference. A rolled towel or small pillow under their chest

can help them push up more easily. You can also try laying your baby on your chest while you recline—this still counts as tummy time and is often more comforting.

Get down at your baby's eye level, talk, sing or use toys or a mirror to capture their attention. Babies are more likely to tolerate tummy time when they feel connected and entertained. Consistency matters more than perfection. A few minutes here and there really do add up.

It may be worth checking in with your healthcare provider if your baby:

- Strongly resists tummy time despite consistent attempts
- Always prefers turning their head to one side
- Has difficulty lifting their head after several weeks of practice
- Is developing a flat spot on their head

In some cases, babies benefit from additional support such as physiotherapy



or further assessment for conditions like torticollis (tightness in the neck muscles). Early guidance can make a big difference and often leads to simpler solutions. If you have concerns, you don't have to wait—your pediatrician, a pediatric physiotherapist or a local orthotics clinic can help.

Tummy time doesn't have to be perfect, it just has to be consistent. With patience, creativity and a little flexibility, you can help your baby build the strength and skills they need for the exciting milestones ahead.

.....
*The Custom Orthotics team (519) 850-4721 |
 office@customorthoticsoflondon.com | @cool_bracing*



CUSTOM ORTHOTICS OF LONDON INC.

Keeping You Ahead, One Step at a Time since 1987



At Custom Orthotics of London Inc. we are dedicated to providing our patients with an opportunity to return to their highest level of functionality by developing a treatment plan that meets their unique need.

We believe in earning the trust of our patients, not only by providing the highest quality and leading edge orthotic care, but also by treating each patient and their family with sincere compassion.

☎ (519) 850-4721 www.customorthoticsoflondon.com

WHY DOES MY BODY FEEL DIFFERENT IN PERIMENOPAUSE?

Why is this suddenly not working anymore?" Many women in their late 30s, 40s and early 50s notice changes that feel frustrating and confusing. Weight gain (especially around the midsection) and other symptoms seem to come out of nowhere.

Welcome to perimenopause. The good news? These changes are common and there are ways to support your body through them.

Perimenopause is the transition leading up to menopause, and it can last several years. During this time, hormones, especially estrogen, begin to fluctuate. These hormonal shifts can impact how your body stores fat, your hunger and fullness cues, energy levels and sleep quality, and muscle mass and metabolism.

One of the most common concerns I hear from women is: "I haven't changed anything, but I'm gaining weight." There's truth to that. But this doesn't mean weight gain is inevitable, it just means

your approach may need to evolve. Focus on supporting your body with simple, sustainable habits:

1 PRIORITIZE PROTEIN

Protein becomes even more important in midlife. Aim to include a source of protein at every meal and snack. It helps preserve muscle mass, keep you feeling full and supports metabolism.

2 DON'T SKIP STRENGTH TRAINING

Muscle is your metabolic ally. Even 2-3 sessions per week of resistance training can help maintain or build muscle, improve body composition and support long-term weight management.

3 BUILD BALANCED MEALS

This combination helps stabilize blood sugar and energy levels throughout the day:

- Protein
- Fibre-rich carbohydrates

- Healthy fats

4 SUPPORT YOUR ENERGY, NOT JUST YOUR WEIGHT

Poor sleep and high stress can make everything feel harder, especially weight management. Focus on consistent meals (avoid long gaps without eating), gentle routines that support sleep and managing stress in realistic ways (not perfection).

5 SHIFT THE GOAL

Instead of focusing only on the number on the scale, consider:

- Strength
- Energy
- Consistency
- How your clothes fit

Perimenopause isn't a problem to "fix", it's a phase to understand. If you're feeling unsure about where to start, you don't have to figure it out on your own. Working with a dietitian can help you cut through the noise, focus on what actually matters, and create a plan that fits your life.

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



MEDPOINT HEALTH CARE CENTRE

3 Pillars of Medpoint

Health Screening
Healthcare Navigation
Lifestyle Modification

10 family doctors
28 specialists

Healthcare Solutions That Work!

1295 Riverbend Rd. Suite 200
519-432-1919 x223
INFO@MEDPOINT.CA

JOIN TODAY!



A New Chapter, Shared with Confidence at Bloom London



Making the move to a retirement residence is a meaningful decision—for both residents and their families. For one mother and daughter, choosing Bloom London has brought not only comfort and care, but also a renewed sense of connection, independence, and joy.

A Daughter's Peace of Mind

For Judy, the greatest reassurance comes from the sense of community her mother is now part of.

"I know she is in a beautiful environment surrounded by staff and friends who engage with her, help her, care about her and they have fun together."

That vibrant social life has had a clear impact.

"My mom has made some great friends and she is enjoying many of the activities. Often mom starts her day at coffee hour and of course she will always participate in ice cream events! We knew she loved euchre/cribbage before she moved in so you will often see her at the card table. She also has a new found love of Bingo! I think those wins keep her coming back."

There's comfort, too, in the level of care and attentiveness.

And perhaps most telling is how their visits have changed.

"Mom's life is much simpler now

so we can spend more time together. I enjoy the coffee hour, puzzle time, and the odd card game with mom and her Bloom family."

A Mother's Everyday Joy

For Joanne, daily life at Bloom London is filled with ease, enjoyment, and connection.

"I love the fact that there is a large number and variety of activities that I can participate in if I wish. The people around me are lovely - always friendly and willing to help however needed."

She's found joy in both routine and recreation.

"Euchre! Any time, any place with anybody who wants to play. I also enjoy the morning coffee time with my friends. A great way to start the day!"

The environment also brings a strong sense of security.

And when it comes to feeling at home, the transition felt natural.

"I brought my own familiar furniture into this beautiful new home so



Judy and Joanne

right away I felt comfortable... It was an easy transition to my new home and I am thrilled to be here."

Stronger Together

This new chapter has brought them even closer.

Their time together is more meaningful than ever.

"Now that she is here we can spend more time together enjoying activities and I love hearing about all the great things happening at Bloom."

That peace of mind extends beyond everyday moments.

A Decision Worth Making

At Bloom London, it's more than just a place to live—it's a place to feel at home, stay connected, and truly enjoy each day.

You are invited to our Strawberry Social

Friday, June 19th, from 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm

Strawberry forward drinks and tastings from local strawberry farms
RSVP required - call 548-866-1200 now to reserve your spot!



Scan to learn
more!

Looking forward to meeting you!

3050 Tillmann Road, London
548-866-1200 • BloomLondon.ca

COGIR
SENIOR LIVING

CogirSeniorLiving.ca

Making your life easier
Giving you the freedom to live life to the fullest
Being cared for by a dedicated team

That's priceless to us.



***Stronger
Immunity,
Stronger
Community***

**Report your child's immunizations
to Public Health through ICON:**



Or by calling 519-663-5317

ML
**BUREAU DE SANTÉ DE
MIDDLESEX-LONDON
HEALTH UNIT**
www.healthunit.com