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# Parent - Child Guide

December 2017/January 2018 Vol. 23 - No. 5 Est. 1995

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**Being Your Own Best Friend**

**When Life Gets Complicated, 211 is Here to Help.**

**The Upside of Change and a New Lease on Life**

**Is "good enough" Enough?**

**It's Beginning to Look a lot Like a Tradition**

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## Being your own best friend

By Carol M. Shirley, Registered Psychologist, with ENIGMA

If you and your body were two separate people would you be friends? If you and your thoughts were two separate people would you be friends? Interestingly, when I ask people these questions the answer is most often a resounding No!

I realized a long time ago, that of the billions of people on this planet, I am the only one who spends 24 hours a day; 7 days a week with me; in my own company. Sadly, many people neglect the most important and intimate relationship in their lives. Me and my body; you and your body will be together for life; for better and for worse; in sickness and in health until death do us part.

I used to cringe when someone would say "you can't love anyone else until you love your self" and although I still do not completely agree, I would say it is hard for people to receive love (accept love from others) when they don't love themselves or see themselves as worthy.

Do you judge your behaviors? Do you judge your body? Do you call yourself names or put yourself down? Do you restrict your pleasure or tell yourself to suck it up

when you feel disappointed? Do you put everyone else's needs ahead of your own? Do you feel guilty when you say no to others?

We live in a society wherein if we put our needs first we are judged as selfish. As parents we do, do, do and do some more for our kids "so they won't suffer". In the mean time we are suffering (which in turn so are they) we are teaching our children and others that they are more important than us. I'm not suggesting that we are in fact more important than our children or others' but I am suggesting we are no less important.

We talk a lot about balance these days and can easily understand concepts like a balanced diet, or work-life balance but what about balancing our physical, emotional and mental health? Finding balance in a relationship with ourselves is an essential ingredient in Happiness.

I called it "my best friend" model of being. It reflected my goal of becoming my own best friend. It involves learning to enjoy my company, giving myself emotional support, speaking up for myself and giving self compassion.

To begin this practice I would ask myself, many times a day, this question: if this were my best friends problem what would I tell her; or if my best friend felt the way I do right now what would I do for her; or if my best friend was doing what I'm doing (watching TV, napping etc.) how would I feel/would I judge her? Using this model really helped me to see that the standard I held for myself was not only unreasonable but lacked compassion.

*cont. on page 5*



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# When life gets complicated, 211 is here to help.

By Suzy Teubner – Director of Communications & Outreach for 211 Nova Scotia

Dr. Seuss once said, "sometimes the questions are complicated and the answers are simple". Now, finding out the answers to what may appear to be a complex or confusing life situation is as simple as dialling three numbers – 2-1-1.

The holiday season brings forth a myriad of emotions and memories. Some may be happy thoughts of childhoods past, others may more serious in nature relating to the present such as, "How do I feed my family and buy presents for my children?" Whatever the situation your family faces, 211 is here 24/7 to connect you to the help you need, when you need it, and how you need it. You can dial 2-1-1 or visit the 211 website at ns.211.ca any time to find programs and services in your community offered by local

community groups, non-profits and government departments. You can also email help@ns.211.ca, chat online at our website, or text 21167 if you prefer to reach out by other means. 211 is free, confidential, and offers over-the-phone interpretation services in over 100 languages.

211 is your link to thousands of programs and services province-wide including after-school programs, recreation, counselling, sports & fitness, day camps, drop-in centres, sexual health, mental health and addiction services, wellness and leadership programs, and volunteer opportunities. And we're not just here for parents and caregivers seeking programs for their children or those they care about.

"211 can provide information on programs and services for everyone in your family, no

matter what season or time of the year," said 211 training coordinator Kim Wolstenholme. "Currently we are receiving many calls for food support over the holidays and for toys. But we also receive calls from people who want information about senior support services for an aging parent, homecare, newcomer support and many other needs. We are here for everyone, any time of the year, when someone needs help."

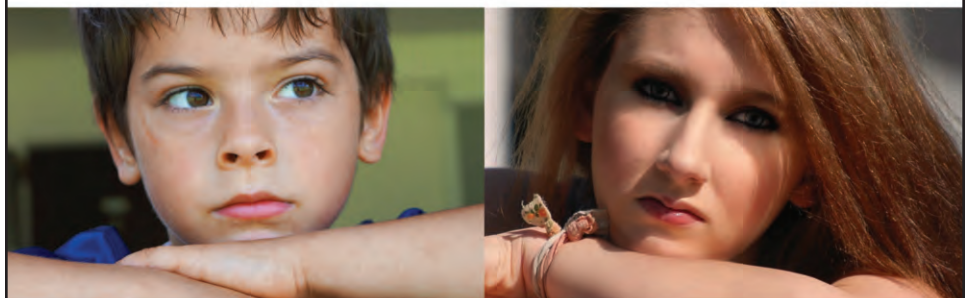
And if you are interested in giving help this holiday season, 211 is your first stop to help connect you to the causes that matter most to you and your family.

For more information about the 211 service, dial 211, text 21167, or visit [www.ns.211.ca](http://www.ns.211.ca) to search for resources or to chat online.

**Whether they're tiny, a toddler, a tyke or a teen, for programs, services and support, just call 211.**



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cont. from page 4

My mantra became "no more; no less". It is a funny thing (not ha ha funny but funny) that happens when we see our value; our humanness (flawed by design) and accept ourselves as we are. When we spend our lives trying to please others we are rarely successful. We are often left feeling resentful and disappointed. "No more; no less just reminds me that I am no more deserving than other's, but I am also no less; I am no more worthy than others but I am no less worthy either: why do I treat

myself like I am?

Being my own best friend means that I give myself some of the things I may look for from others. It means supporting me in my goals, accepting the way I feel, sometimes changing my plans and being Okay with that.

On a daily basis, being my own best friend may mean slowing down and nourishing my body, or taking time to nicely brush my hair. It might mean taking my work breaks and it definitely means being kind and not critical of myself. I'd suggest you consider

being your own best friend. The benefits will please you.

Note: Dr. Marc Blumberg will be running a parenting class (Toyota effect) starting early February. Details will be available at Enigma in January 2018.

For more information go to [www.carolshirley.ca](http://www.carolshirley.ca) or phone 902-495-3181, and we are located at 255 Lacewood Drive, Suite 301, Halifax



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By Mary Nash & Phil Shannon, Century 21 Trident Realty Ltd.

### Preparing Your Home for the Spring Market!

One of the busiest times for Real Estate is the Spring. Mary and Phil know that by listing your property in the New Year before the Spring Market kicks into high gear has some obvious monetary benefits. Exposing your Home early to Motivated Buyers allows your Home to "Shine" above the rest and be in the Spotlight.

Call Mary and Phil to ask about our Proven Tips on Getting your Property ready to LIST and SELL in 2018.

#### Proven Tip #1

**Pricing Your Home Correctly is "KEY".** Having a Clear Understanding of the Current Market and Pricing Your Home appropriately. This is where working with Knowledgeable Real Estate Agents like Mary and Phil is beneficial!

#### Proven Tip #2

**Decluttering!** Taking the time to Declutter your home is advantageous prior to listing. Cleaning and Staging are Vital to Optimizing your return on your Investment. Sometimes "less" is "more".

By removing some pieces of furniture it can visually increase the size of a room. It is Important to present your home in it's best light. Buyers will appreciate the care you have

taken as the home owner prior to listing. You only get one opportunity to make a Good first Impression!

#### Proven Tip #3

**Updates and Home Improvements.** Consider taking on a few "smaller" projects that can make a "big" Impact. Fresh Coat of Paint on Walls and Trim, Update light fixtures, Clean Light Switchplates, adding New Hardware to Kitchen Cabinetry and Creating that Welcoming Curb Appeal! The smallest upgrades can sometimes reap the largest rewards.

#### Proven Tip #4

**Knowing Your Market!** If you unsure or thinking about purchasing before the Sale of your home VERSUS waiting for your Home to Sell before buying your new dream property Mary and Phil can advise the benefits of both!

Thinking of Selling in the New Year? Curious about a List Price for Your Home? Contact Mary and Phil to arrange for a Complimentary CMA, (Comparative Market Analysis).

To You and Yours All the Best in 2018.

Please visit us on Facebook, realestate with mary nash and phil shannon  
Mary Nash and Philip Shannon, Century 21  
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*Mary and Phil*

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# To All Our Constituents & Friends Seasons Greetings & Best Wishes For The New Year



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## What's new in Education?

Submitted by Claudia Chender, MLA for Dartmouth South

As we approach the holidays and a well-deserved break for kids across the province, it's a good time to reflect on the many changes happening in the early childhood and P-12 education landscape.

The first major change is the phase-in of pre-primary programs across the province. The first sites opened at the end of September, with a plan to have programming available to all children by 2020. Hopefully as the program progresses there will be after-school care and bussing options to allow more families to take advantage of this program. Consultations have begun with Early Childhood Educators and other stakeholders to inform the roll-out of the remainder of the program

and, hopefully, to mitigate its impact on the existing childcare landscape for children under four.

There are two other large consultations going on in P-12 education. The first is an Administrative System review due to be released December 31st. Consultant Avis Glaze is reviewing the entire system including the existence and composition of school boards. If you have strong feelings please contact the Department of Education and make sure your voice is heard!

The Commission on Inclusive Education is currently meeting with stakeholders and the public to discuss inclusion in schools. Their interim report in the fall made it clear that our schools are not serving the needs of differently-abled stu-

dents appropriately, and that we need a new model. The final report is due to be released March 31st, 2018. Visit <https://inclusiveedns.ca/> for more information about the work of the commission and how to participate.

All of these consultations will play a large role in potentially reshaping the landscape of education from very early childhood to how our schools operate; from the governance level right down to staffing and class composition. I urge all Nova Scotians to make their voices heard in these important conversations.

Please don't hesitate to contact our office for more information, 902-406-2301, [www.claudiachender.ca](http://www.claudiachender.ca)



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Season's Greetings and Happy New Year!

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Wishing you peace and happiness this holiday season

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Icons: +, house, fork/knife, hammer, dollar sign, people

**211** Nova Scotia

## Wee Care Developmental Centre 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, February 1973 - 2018

Every kid deserves to achieve their full potential. We're here to help them be their best.

Wee Care Development Centre is a non-profit childcare centre specializing in early intervention and integration programs for kids aged six months to six years.

Based in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Wee Care is the only early childhood education service in Atlantic Canada dedicated to supporting kids with special needs, helping them reach their full potential in an integrated environment that also serves typically developing kids.

Through a unique combination of interdisciplinary education, clinical support and integrated programs, our mission is to maximize the abilities of the kids we serve.

The Wee Care team also plays a broader leadership role in Atlantic Canada, sharing expertise with other early childhood education providers to increase capacity for supporting kids with special needs.

Wee Care provide a training ground for students from a wide range of health sciences and child care studies from local & international universities and from the Nova Scotia College of Early Childhood

Education. And through the years, we've developed strong relationships with the wider community with organizations including the Early Intervention Program of Nova Scotia, Early Intensive Behavioural Intervention (EIBI), the Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority (APSEA), the IWK Health Centre, charitable foundations, service clubs, and especially the Canadian Navy with the HMCS Iroquois and HMCS Halifax.

Founded by the Cerebral Palsy Association in 1973, Wee Care was the first day care in Eastern Canada designed to meet the needs of children with physical disabilities and developmental delays. Over the last four-and-a-half decades, the centre has become a lifeline to children with special needs and their families.

The Wee Care team will mark our 45th anniversary on Wednesday, February 28th, 2018 with an open house. We are inviting all the kids and families who've been part of our centre to take part, as well as past teachers and other professionals, volunteers and donors.

We rely on community support to sustain our programs, and we'll be using our 45th anniversary to say thank you to the many organizations and community members who have helped our centre to thrive, and our kids to grow.

Join us on February 28th, 2018 to help our team celebrate 45 years of amazing accomplishments.

For More Information:  
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As one of the owners, Stewart Adams, states; 'we wanted to make the party as easy as possible for those who have to organize it. The idea is that they bring the cake and the kids and

we take care of everything else.'

Private parties are also available after normal opening hours. Anyone who is considering holding a party at The Play Box is more than welcome to go for a look around and chat to the owners.

With two bright party rooms, a fantastic play structure and a café offering a range of snacks, meals and espresso based drinks, there is something for everybody.

The Play Box also offers great rates for HST registered organizations. Day cares and Summer Camps can bring their children along and enjoy the facility.

In addition to offering

admission discounts to military, fire and police, The Play Box also operates a loyalty card system. Punch cards for multiple visits and individual play passes are also available and ideal for presents.

The Play Box is located at 104-105 Evergreen Place (opposite Penhorn Mall/Sears) 530 Portland Street, Dartmouth. Catering for 0-12 years of age; opening hours are Mon-Sat 9.30 - 5.30, Sunday 10.00-4.00.

For more information The Play Box can be contacted on (902) 463 0034; e-mail:

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# FUN

## Places To Go!

### CRAFT CORNER

#### Seasonal Syrups

By Jenny Joan Larisey,  
Craft Consultant for Maritime Hobbies & Crafts

To help combat cold and flu season this year I decided to get a little crafty and make some seasonal syrups and tonics. It's nice to have natural remedies on hand to use as a preventive measure. Your family will thank you for these delicious remedies.

Fun and easy to make, fire cider is a popular and traditional herbal remedy coined by herbalist Rosemary Gladstar. It is a tonic made by hundreds of herbalists around the world used to stimulate blood circulation, warming up the body while

putting detoxifying herbs into the blood. I like to add a teaspoon or two into hot water and breathe in the steam as I sip to relieve congestion. If you are up for it, a shot of this tonic daily can help to keep your immune system strong and it is also a great addition to marinades and salad dressings.

There have been many variations of fire cider, much like a chicken soup. Everyone who makes this will have their favorite version, but the base consists of a few key ingredients: onions, ginger, horseradish and garlic

that sit in apple cider vinegar. I came up with my own interpretation making sure to use up the last harvest of herbs from my garden. I also added turmeric, black peppercorns, parsley, jalapeño, lemon, orange, thyme, oregano and rosemary. After 3-6 weeks it is strained and then a bit of honey can be added.

Besides making fire cider, I also made different combinations of honey herb syrups. The concept is as simple as it sounds; citrus and honey layered into a jar with fresh herbs. The mix-



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ture will keep in a sealed jar in the fridge for up to 2-3 months, but in my house I can't keep it around for more than a week. Add a couple of spoonfuls into hot water or use as a cough syrup.

A few combinations I like to make are:

- Honey, ginger, lime and thyme
- Lemon, ginger and honey (sometimes I'll add cinnamon)
- Clementine & cardamom
- Orange & clove
- Lemon & lavender

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**FUN** Places To Go! **FUN** Places To Go!

# Get an Early Start on Art

Submitted by Little Picasso Art Centre

We are pleased to announce the opening of our new creative space for children in Halifax. Little Picasso Daycare & Art Centre offers a unique Art-Enriched licensed child care program during the week in a bright, clean, and colorful environment. During the weekends, the Centre offers art classes for children and hosts art-themed birthday parties and events. In art classes, children are introduced to the basic techniques and fundamentals of drawing and painting. Experimenting with various tools, media and techniques, and exploring the endless world of color and painting. Children will have the confidence and skills to freely express themselves with their own creative and imaginative works of arts.

Little Picasso Art Centre will also offer full day art camps during school closing days, March break, Winter and Summer breaks.



At Little Picasso Daycare & Art Centre we strongly believe that creating art supports young children's development across many domains. Using art tools helps children develop small muscle coordination and control. Children can practice thinking skills while experimenting with color, texture, and design. Art gives children an opportunity to express their ideas and feelings, relieves their tension, and provides them with self-

confidence. In a warm, supportive environment, we instill in children a love for visual arts, and provide them with the skills and knowledge that lasts them a lifetime.

*Please visit our website for further information and registration. Little Picasso Art Centre, 7 Langbrae Drive, Halifax, NS, B3M 4N7 [www.littlepicasso.ca](http://www.littlepicasso.ca) Tel: 902-802-7583*

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# Health & Wellness



**Dr. Negin Ghiabi**

Sports activities have an inherent risk of orofacial injuries due to falls, collisions, contact with hard surfaces and equipment. Children between the ages 7-11 years old are most susceptible to sports-related oral injuries. Consequences of orofacial injuries for children and their families are

## Prevention Of Sports-Related Dental Injuries

By Dr. Negin Ghiabi, Pediatric Dentist at Pinnacle Dental Specialists

substantial because of potential for pain, psychological trauma and cost. The latter includes indirect cost such as hours lost from school (for children) and work (for parents).

The majority of sports-related dental and orofacial injuries affect the upper lip, upper jaw and upper teeth. Although some of these injuries are unavoidable, most can be prevented. Helmets, facemasks and mouthguards have been shown to reduce the frequency and severity of den-

tal/ orofacial trauma. Using these protective pieces should be mandatory during field or ice hockey, football, baseball and other such sports activities.

A mouthguard is an appliance placed in the mouth to reduce injuries to the teeth, jaws and the lips. It will protect the teeth and jaws from fracture and displacement and the lips from bruising and laceration. Custom-fabricated mouthguards made in the dental office using a model of the patient's teeth provide max-

imum protection against injury. Over-the-counter mouthguards, on the other hand, provide less protection against injury to the teeth and may interfere with speech and breathing. These temporary devices could serve as short-term options during orthodontic treatment and during the period of transition from baby teeth to adult teeth.

Routine dental visits can be an opportunity to initiate parent/ child education and recommendations for the use of a properly fitted



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*Dr. Negin Ghiabi is a Board certified Pediatric Dentist. Her private practice, Pinnacle Dental Specialists, in Halifax limited to dentistry for*

*infants, children and adolescents. We welcome new patients as young as 1 year old. No referral is needed. For more information please call 902-407-7377.*



## Is "good enough" Enough?

By Dr. Sarah Davidson DDS, MSc (Ortho) FRCD (C), Halifax Orthodontic Specialist Group

sporting braces and that many young kids these days are excited to get their braces, if for no other reason than all of their friends have them. Some people even call braces "a right of passage." While I disagree with the notion of braces being a right of passage, there are some very solid reasons why braces are so widespread these days.

There are two main reasons braces have become so prevalent. It is a fact that malocclusions, or the deviation from a normal bite, are on the rise. Genetics and a host of other factors have ensured that bite and excessive crowding or spacing issues are part of our genetic makeup. The second reason is that oral health has finally received due recognition for its importance to overall health. With this acknowl-

edgement there has been an increased value placed on teeth and their surrounding structures. There is an awareness that teeth can be maintained throughout life and that maintenance means that today's youth should never need to wear dentures, which were commonplace in the elderly not so long ago. The reason you see more braces is because more people are choosing to set up their children or themselves for excellent present day and future oral health, not to mention the improved self-confidence that comes with

a beautiful smile.

Any orthodontist will tell you that braces are never "needed." True needs in life are few: food, shelter, water. Braces are almost always elective in some nature but that does not mean that they are "just cosmetic" and are not indicated to improve function, decrease breakdown and wear of teeth and to foster a healthy bite and smile. Most orthodontists are focused on the occlusion or bite first and esthetics second. The truth is, teeth that are aligned and in a proper bite look better and last

longer. Minor rotations or deviations in tooth position can have a large impact on the health and prognosis of teeth.

So I would ask is "good enough" enough?" For all that we do to set up our youth for the future, oral health should not be neglected. It is not the place to cut corners. We get one permanent set of teeth and we need to protect them to maintain them for a lifetime. Given the opportunity to do this at an early age, when damage to the teeth can be minimized and a young per-

son can reap the rewards of having a beautiful and healthy smile for their lifetime, is invaluable.

*Dr. Sarah Davidson is a Board-Certified Orthodontic Specialist with the Halifax Orthodontic Specialist Group. She is a co-owner of The Brace Space in Bedford (Larry Uteck) and Stuart & Davidson Orthodontics in Dartmouth, offering conventional braces and Invisalign for children, teens and adults. For more information, contact 902-455-7222.*

I recently had a very open and candid conversation with a friend and fellow parent about the need for braces, and while we looked at his daughter's teeth he uttered the phrase: "I think they are good enough." It is a phrase I often hear. As an orthodontist and as a parent I understand. Some patients we see are 'good enough.' In fact their occlusion is correct and there would be no benefit from braces. But there are many others who would greatly benefit from a correction and timeliness of this treatment can limit invasiveness. I can appreciate that it seems every teen you see is



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# Health & Wellness

## Overcoming Obstacles

By Tara C. MacDonald

Often, during the holiday season basic tasks and errands may feel overwhelming and out of reach as everyone around you (at work and at home) rushes around. Our daily actions are made from choices we make. In this busy season, don't forget the choice of "you." Where self-care is needed more than ever.

When these tasks become obstacles that you don't believe will be overcome I encourage my coaching clients to take a step back by breathing in through the nose and out through the mouth. This breathing technique may sound silly but often breathing in this way for five times is enough time to give you that step back. Your heart rate calms down as does your nervous system. Give yourself the time to breathe, make the choice and tackle the next item that feels overwhelming.

We can't make ordered decisions when overwhelmed. As a side note, another client of mine loves to sing out loud in her car when stuck in traffic. Stress release can happen in different ways.

For more information or to register, please contact Tara MacDonald Fit Club, 133 Baker Drive, Suite 103, Dartmouth, 902-407-7502, [www.taramacdonaldfitclub.com](http://www.taramacdonaldfitclub.com)



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Harding Medical, in partnership with the Nova Scotia Curling Association is proud to be the leading Sponsor of the 2018 Nova Scotia Wheelchair Provincial Curling Championship being held at the Bluenose Curling Club in New Glasgow Nova Scotia February 2-4. This is the 5th year that Nova Scotia has had a wheelchair championship and we expect 2018 will be the most exciting one yet.

Wheelchair curling has a slight variation on the rules (no sweeping) to regular play, but the fun, excitement and passion for the sport is quite evident in the athletes. The Championship winner will represent Nova Scotia at the Canadian Championships to be held in Alberta in March 2018.

The NS Curling Association is looking to recruit new wheelchair players, no experience is necessary. If you have any questions

We are excited to introduce the P Pod, Inspired by Drive's newest entry into the Activity Positioning Market. This innovative product was designed with the intention of allowing children of special needs to interact with their family in a fun and engaging way, while offering substantial postural support.

The P Pod offers a whole different seating experience for those with specialized seating needs and is great for a range of ages from infants to young adults. P Pod was developed as a response to customers who said, "we want a different seating option at home!" Bean bags have traditionally been used for years with the disabled but they lacked the true support needed. So we developed the P Pod.

There are three components to the P Pod – the seat, a bolster support and the beanbag or Pod. The "P" in P Pod stands for postural, and postural support technology is an integral part of this design.

The P Pod was brought to life through the teamwork of a Physician, ATPS and engineers that all shared a common passion for enhancing the lives of special needs children and their families. The combination of its fun and playful design and high levels of postural support differentiates it from all other

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# Senior Living Care

## The Upside of Change and a New Lease on Life

Submitted by The Berkeley

Without question, change can be difficult and overwhelming. It is a transition that includes modifications to present circumstances and, as creatures of habit, most of us like familiarity and regular routines. We like to know where we belong, what role we play and how we fit in. But, what if change was for the best and it would improve health, happiness and overall satisfaction with life?

It is no surprise that moving

from a family home of many years is not a simple task. After decades in the same home, seniors are often left with a house full of belongings and memories. The task of cleaning out a full house and downsizing can be daunting. As for memories, they are portable, and you can never have too many. It is the recounting and sharing of your history that keeps those memories alive. They live on in those who remember and share them, not in the homes or places

where they happened.

Change is part of life and, as some might say, a change is as good as a rest. Despite a general resistance to change, it is often necessary and can bring with it positive energy and revitalization. In the case of seniors who are living at home alone, this change from their home to a retirement residence - better known as their new home - is also a new lease on life. Retirement living enhances one's ability to be independ-



ent, enjoying life in the company of others who share the same interests. It allows for opportunities to make new friends and possibly reconnect with old ones, while enjoying an array of activities and programs. It is a place where new memories can be made while old ones are shared.

Being at home alone does not offer seniors opportunities for regular social

engagement and isolation can lead to mental, emotional and physical health issues. Seniors who move to a retirement residence enjoy a multitude of social activities giving them a greater sense of satisfaction and happiness. Eating nutritious meals leads to improved health, especially when coupled with having access to onsite health care professionals and nursing services. Ultimately, these

benefits of retirement living, along with the absence of household maintenance and chores, eliminate stress, providing peace of mind for residents and their families. Seniors who have made the move will tell you the benefits far outweigh the drawbacks of change.

For more information and to book a tour, please visit [theberkeley.com](http://theberkeley.com) or call (902) 802-0346.

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Friendships - both new and old - are the foundation of communities. At The Berkeley, we recognize the importance of community and we believe that maintaining strong connections to others is vital to enjoying life to the fullest! Our monthly social calendar is chockful of activities designed to keep our residents active and engaged. Of course, enjoying quiet pursuits in their own apartment is always an option. Come for a tour and see for yourself the many benefits of retirement living!

For more information, call (902) 802.0346 or visit [theberkeley.com](http://theberkeley.com).



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*cont. on page 22*



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# Winter Programs

## Parents Are Key To Supporting Children In French Immersion

Submitted by Canadian Parents for French, Nova Scotia

With grade primary registration coming up in February (HRSB), many parents are considering the French immersion program as a choice for their child. Parents often wonder if their lack of French will hold back their child. The key to success in school is parent involvement, French is not a requirement. Parents are not expected to understand or speak French, but research shows that parents who have positive attitudes to French achieve more.

Many factors contribute to children's success at school, such as curriculum, learning materials, teachers, school setting, administrative support, and motivation. Additional exposure to French is also important. Experiencing French at home will enhance your child's abilities in French, their understanding of francophone culture, and their confidence in using the language.

There are a wide range of things you can do to enrich your child's French language learning. Many aren't expensive or time consuming. Below you'll find a few ideas to get you started.

Help your child to use French outside of the classroom! Watch French TV and DVDs, borrow or buy French books, and choose activities in French like plays, courses and sport activities. Borrow French cookbooks from the library and make a recipe, or work on a family tree in French. Play board games in French. Many activities can be done in French as a family.


During the summer many parents are looking for summertime activities to keep their child occupied and on the path to success. French summer camps, regardless of a student's age, are a great way to do this.

Children learn new skills from extracurricular activities, and integrate these

skills into their time in the classroom. Remember learning any language is a life-long experience! Just as your child's first-language skills matured and expanded with age and new experiences, so similar factors will affect the development of their second language. A long-term commitment will produce the best results! Be supportive and enthusiastic.

Make French a part of your child's life!

*For more information on French Language programs, contact Canadian Parents for French! Canadian Parents for French founded forty years ago by parents for parents.*



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# Winter Programs

## Simply Music Piano

By Emily Bolhuis, Eminflow

Simply Music is the largest playing-based music education institution in the world. The revolutionary Simply Music Piano program offers a breakthrough in music education, and has students playing great-sounding contemporary, classical, gospel, blues and accompaniment pieces – immediately – from their very first lessons. Simply Music focuses on the sheer pleasure of playing. It's a 'hands-on' approach, delivering immediate results.

The Simply Music Method is based on the premise that everyone, without exception, is naturally musical. Traditional methods insist that beginners learn to read music as the means of learning to play. In stark contrast, Simply Music temporarily

delays reading and introduces a revolutionary, 'playing-based' approach.

"This is a wonderful music program and the results are astounding! Even if you don't consider yourself musically inclined, this program is for you. I also think it could be a major breakthrough for children with a variety of cognitive delays and learning difficulties. I love Simply Music's approach." — Dr. Anne Margaret Wright (Psy.D.) Educational Consultant

"I have seen a lot of music programs over the years. Some were fun. Some were clever. Some were thorough. Here's one that has it all. In terms of presentation, effectiveness, philosophy—you name it—there's nothing



out there that compares at all." — Mary Pride, Publisher, Practical Homeschool Magazine

To find out more contact: Emily Bolhuis, [eminflow@gmail.com](mailto:eminflow@gmail.com) (902) 497-6177

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## Support your child's visual processing skills with these activities



When it comes to learning, the eyes have it. At school, some 80 percent of the information your child takes in will be visual based.

That means you'll definitely want to make and keep those annual eye exams. At the same time, something even more important is going on behind those peepers. Once the visual information goes in, the brain gets to work interpreting what it sees and deciding the next step. That's called visual processing.

It's easy to see how visual processing skills are crucial to success in school and learning. Kids need these skills to

recognize a misspelled word, to notice when math problems on a worksheet switch from addition to subtraction to multiplication, and to spot the correct LEGO piece in a jumbled pile so it can be snapped in place to complete the latest model.

As children develop and reach adulthood, visual processing skills do improve over time. To support your child's visual processing development, here are some vision-based cognitive activities and games you can do together at home.

**Challenge the memory:** In addition to classics like Memory and the electronic game Simon Says, here's one

that brings a building challenge into the mix, thanks to the blog Imagination Soup. Create a simple structure with LEGO Bricks, reveal it and give them a minute or so to examine it. Then hide it away and have the child recreate it from memory. (Give yourself and your child a limited, identical set of bricks to work with, or things could get overwhelming, especially if you have lots of LEGO!)

**Lift the ban on screen time:** That's right, plug in the console and fire up the app. Researchers measured subjects who were new to video game play, and after completing a strategy or first-person game an hour a

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day, five days a week, they showed improvement in their sight-processing abilities — which has a correlation with higher math scores!

**Keep family game night alive and well:** Off-screen, games can also help with visual processing. With older kids, try games like Boggle, where you have to create many smaller words from one large word as best you can, or Uno, where you have to make split-second choices. Logic puzzles, kid-

friendly crossword puzzles and jigsaw puzzles are also good ways to spend time with kids while benefiting their visual processing skills.

**Play letterball:** Remember how you used to bounce a tennis ball off the side of the garage? This variation of bounce the ball improves eye tracking and hand-eye coordination. Take a bouncy ball and write a large letter on opposite sides. Take turns throwing and catching it off the side of

a wall, calling out the letter you see as it lands and makes its return.

Just a note: This is not meant to take the place of therapy. If you have concerns about your child's visual processing abilities, it's important to consult a professional.

For more information please contact us at [www.bricks4kidz.com/halifax](http://www.bricks4kidz.com/halifax), or call 902-240-2457

# Education

## Gallant Learning - Ensuring Confidence, Academic Excellence, and Peace of Mind

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## It's Beginning To Look A lot Like A Tradition

By Jo-Anne Bayers –  
Director, *The Growing Place*

Christmas, it seems doesn't come from a store, or at least that's what the Grinch discovers near the end of the story, and I must say that I wholeheartedly agree with him. For many of us our strongest Christmas memories aren't about the things we did or didn't find under the tree, but rather all the traditions or what I like to call the trimmings that come with the holiday. Christmas are those rituals or activities that we repeat each year, and are as varied as the families who celebrate it, each of us adding our own little twists that will ebb, and flow as children grow, new members are added, and sadly loved ones are lost.

Although traditions at first glance may appear to be little more than a bit of holiday fun, they actually play an important role in early childhood development helping to form who we are, and what we stand for. Traditions help young children build a strong emotional foundation connecting them to other family members while providing them with a feeling of belonging, and a sense of family history as well as creating lasting happy memories that will continue to be a source of joy, and strength for years to come.

Traditions don't have to be elaborate, or costly, curling up to watch *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* or the Santa Claus parade every year as a child with my siblings is still one of my fondest memories, and a tradition my sisters continued with their own children. Traditions can be carried forward from our childhoods or created in the here and now to become new, and beloved traditions that your children may pass along to their own children. Traditions bond us together, give us common memories that are warm, loving, and often funny like the year my father nailed the tree to the floor, and while not exactly a tradition, the retelling of the story has in its own way become one.

Spreading Christmas wishes is a tradition that has stood the test of time, so on behalf of my colleagues and I, we wish you a holiday filled with traditions both old and new, that we hope will bring you the merriest of memories to last for years to come.

Jo-Anne is currently the Director at *The Growing Place*, and has over thirty years of experience. She has previously served as Resource Coordinator where she specialized in supporting children with special needs as well as offering support, and advice to parents on a variety of child, and family related issues. For more information please visit our website at [www.thegrowingplace.ca](http://www.thegrowingplace.ca)

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# Education

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discover and then deepen their personal relationship with Jesus.

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## Differentiated Instruction

By Pam Streeter

**D**ifferentiated instruction utilizes instructionally intelligent strategies based on best practices that enable teachers to create different pathways to learning that responds to the needs of diverse learners. Differentiated instruction respects student's learning profiles, readiness, and interests as they develop and move along the learning continuum.

Behind the scenes: In a differentiated classroom teachers engage their students in activities to determine their learning styles, identify multiple intelligence, interests, and prior learning. Simultaneously they are teaching the students the routines and rituals of the classroom and school, while with the students developing the rules under which the classroom will function.

Anchor activities are taught and practiced for competency which when used in the classroom will allow the teacher to work with individual or small groups of students. Assessment tools are used prior to the teaching of new content to determine prior learning; ongoing to identify the learning that is taking place to inform the teacher

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# Education

## The Trouble With Words

Submitted by R.N. Whitehead, Oxford Learning

Your son's report card is sitting on the table and you are not happy. Math is lower than it should be, his teacher noted that he did not hand in all his assignments, and he got a "Needs Improvement" for effort. What do we do? If you are like most of us, you will sit down with your son and have a little talk.

How well do those talks work? Do they actually motivate our kids or do they just fly in one ear and out the other? Maybe it is the words! When we are stressed, frustrated, tired or annoyed, we sometimes use words that work against us. Often they bring about the opposite result.

Most of these counter-productive words occur at or near the beginning of a sentence. Here are some examples of words that can do more harm than good:

**"Why?"** This word is usually followed by "don't you, can't you, won't you," or "did you." For example: "Why can't you keep your room clean?"

The word Why asks for an answer, but we are not really asking for information when we utter it. We are just blaming or criticizing. Kids will not be motivated to help if they feel that they are being criticized. In fact, for most children, this question cannot be answered. Most children do not know why they do things, they just act on their emotions.

Leave out the Why and change the question to a clear, precise statement such as, "I want you to keep your

room clean." Even if your child could answer the question, why would you want to know the answer anyway? You really just want a change to occur. Be clear about your expectations and you will achieve them more often than not.

**"If..."** In this context, the word If is usually followed by the word "you," especially when it is being used as a threat. For example: "If you do that again, you'll be sorry!" or "If you don't treat your clothes better, I won't buy you any more."

The problem here is that we often can't carry out our threats. They are uttered when we are angry and not really rational. But, if we don't carry through on our threats, our children become confused and we lose our ability to speak with authority. Often the threat uttered this way is out of proportion to the actual offence.

Use the words, "as soon as" or "when" instead of If. These words are more precise and positive. Kids will not perceive them as a threat and they encourage you to stay rational and to weigh the deed against the consequences. For example: "As soon as you have hung up your shirt, we can play that game."

**"Never," "Ever," and "Always"** These words etch a trait into a concrete reality and can become self-fulfilling prophecies. In addition, they are damaging to an emerging self-concept because kids will believe what you tell them. Sentences such as "You never pay attention to her feelings!" can make children believe a

negative quality about themselves that may not even be completely true.

Instead, describe your expectations clearly and make it plain that you expect them to be lived up to. "You know that I expect you to be kind to your little sister. I will not allow violence or threats to be used. Please find a way to fix your problem that is kinder and less likely to get you into trouble with me."

**"You"** These are blaming statements and can damage a child's self-esteem. "You're a bad boy"; "You don't care about anybody else!"; "You're acting like a baby."

These are large statements about a child's character instead of specific statements about his behaviour! They are negative and accusatory and will put kids on the defensive. Instead, use 'I' statements that describe your own feelings and expectations. "I'm angry about this behaviour" or "I am upset when other people's property is not respected."

As parents, we must learn how to motivate our children. That is part of our job. We can make our own lives much easier if we pay more attention to what we say and the words we use. Try to follow this old axiom: "If it is important, say less, not more." You will probably be amazed at the results.

For more information about Oxford Learning's programs, contact Halifax at 902-423-4484 [halifax@oxfordlearning.com](mailto:halifax@oxfordlearning.com) or Bedford at 902-405-4116 [bedford@oxfordlearning.com](mailto:bedford@oxfordlearning.com)

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For more information contact Pam Streeter at 832-6700 or [pstreeter@bha-ns.com](mailto:pstreeter@bha-ns.com).

cont. from page 20

regarding areas that need to be revisited or to continue with the content; and at the end of content areas to assess acquisition of material.

To the observer: Students are actively engaged in learning activities in large and small groups. The teacher is working with the whole group, small groups, or individual students. Both students and teacher understand and carry out their roles in the classroom.

Students may be working independently, in small groups (that change over activity), at learning centers, with activities that are problem-based, and/or with activities that

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## Hazards of Winter

Submitted by Halifax Veterinary Hospitals

Enduring long, harsh winters is a given for us and our pets. Just as you bundle up against the bitter cold, shovel snowy sidewalks and winterize your belongings, your pets need your attention in the winter more than ever. As a responsible pet owner, you need to be aware of the variety of hazards facing your pets due to extremely low temperatures and other winter conditions, and take the necessary steps to keep your pets safe.



### Protect Your Pets from Injuries

Your pet can be easily injured from stepping on sharp objects and ice hidden under snowy streets and walkways. Make sure to walk your pet in a cleared area to prevent these injuries.

Ice melting chemicals and salt can leave painful burns on your pet's feet. After a walk, always check your pet's footpads and wash them immediately if you think they've been exposed to these substances. You can also purchase booties for your dog or apply a protective wax to your dog's footpads prior to a walk that prevents injuries and reduces slipping on ice. There are also pet friendly ice melting products like Safe Paws.

Antifreeze, although vital to keep your car running in the dead of winter, is poison to your pets. The sweet, sticky liquid can prove irresistible to pets. Check under and around your car for leaks in the garage or driveway, cap antifreeze containers tightly, and keep them out of reach of your pets. Just a small amount ingested by your pet can be toxic. Take your pet to the veterinarian immediately if you suspect your pet has ingested antifreeze.

### Shield Your Pets from Freezing Temperatures

Just because your dog or cat has a fur coat doesn't mean he's safe from extreme cold. A good rule of thumb is if it's too cold for you to be outside, it's too cold for your pet. Frostbite and hypothermia are real hazards to your pets when the temperature plummets, especially for young animals that don't have enough fur or a strong metabolism to protect them.

Frostbite occurs when your pet gets so cold that all blood flow to the extremities is restricted as the body tries to keep vital organs warm. The ears, nose and feet can develop ice crystals that destroy tissue. If you see signs of frostbite, take your pet to the veterinarian immediately. Don't attempt to remove the ice crystals yourself.

A pet can become overcome by hypothermia if left too long in freezing temperatures. Wet fur can accelerate the process. The animal's core body temperature can drop rapidly leading to the following symptoms:

- Stiff Muscles
- Uncontrollable shivering
- Slow pulse
- Lethargy
- Lack of appetite
- Cardiac arrest

Take your pet to the veterinarian immediately if you notice any of these symptoms. Prevent hypothermia by keeping time out doors limited. Steps you can take to avoid hypothermia are:

- Accompanying pets outside for a short period, and then coming back inside.
- Letting your pet (especially the young, old or sick) relieve themselves on training pads so they don't have to go outside at all. Training pads are square, waterproof liners designed to let your pet do his business indoors (place it on a kitchen or bathroom floor) without making a mess.

Nobody likes to be left out in the cold. By following these simple steps, you can make winter more bearable by snuggling up with your healthy, happy and warm pet.

For more information, [www.HalifaxVeterinaryHospitalinc.com](http://www.HalifaxVeterinaryHospitalinc.com) or call your regular veterinarian.

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Payment examples are based on \$0 down payment. Etching/Road Hazard, DMV fees, taxes additional. Complimentary Walkaway included. See dealer for full options and details.