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Parent - Child Guide

June/July 2017 Vol. 23 No. 2 Est.1995

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Will Be Our Back To School Edition with Fall Registraton Section!

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Mindfulness

By Carol M. Shirley, Registered Psychologist, with ENIGMA

I don't believe it's news when I say we live in a "stressed out" society. Our senses are constantly being bombarded by stimuli that overloads our body's systems. Consider the visual stimulation being received on a daily basis. The things we see and look at being taken in and processed. Visual stimuli like email, texts, and TV programming can easily overwhelm us. Our hearing sense is another

overwhelming modality; listening to all of the sounds we are subjected to can over stimulate us and stress us out. When one simply cannot tune this out, we feel exhausted, stressed, and out of control.

Mindfulness practices, such as meditation and yoga, are about learning to be present in any given moment and exercising our awareness of the sensory


information being received through our senses.

Most of us crave Peacefulness; a state of mind that feels good in our body. Mindfulness practices tend to support us in finding the peace and stillness of our "new moment".

To understand the difference between mindfulness (awareness) and a lack of mindfulness (automatic pilot) one only needs to remember a time when you laid something down and couldn't find it or walked into a room but didn't remember why. Have you watched a child eat an ice cream? Their entire focus is on what they are doing and is on the pleasure they desire from the activity.

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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: theplaybox@outlook.com; facebook: theplayboxltd; website: www.funattheplaybox.ca; twitter: @theplaybox1

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Step Into 1867 This Summer At Sherbrooke Village

Visitors of all ages are invited to take part in the newest program being offered at Sherbrooke Village this summer in recognition of the 150th year of Canada's Confederation. "Step Into 1867".

You're always the right age to play dress-up at Sherbrooke Village! Who will you become? Who will you be next time? For added fun, if you're travelling with friends or family, try mixing up class roles to see how different your lives would have been.

Experience the life of a villager in the 1860s by dressing in period costume and stepping into the shoes of an apprentice, socialite, maid or another resident to see first-hand the important role they played in Sherbrooke Village.

At Sherbrooke Village every day is a trip back in time as Nova Scotia's 19th century heritage is brought to life for visitors of all ages by costumed interpreters, potters, blacksmiths, weavers, printers and crafters in 25 original buildings.

Sherbrooke Village is an authentic heritage village, with 25 original buildings, that was once a bustling community—rich from gold and shipbuilding. 1867 was the year of Confederation and many Sherbrooke residents did not support joining the rest of Canada. After all, they were living the high life in their riverside boom town and didn't see how Confederation would benefit them or Nova Scotia.

Village activities, learning camps, weekly concerts and schedule of special events including St. Mary's River Days; Traditional Day of Horse Driving; Rally That Gives Motorcycle Rally and Show & Shine Antique Car Show, make it easy to get your hands on history all summer long!

Visit us 45 minutes south of Antigonish at exit 32, on Highway #7. Join us on facebook.com/sherbrookevillage for regular updates, online at www.sherbrookevillage.ca or call 1-888-743-7845."

Get immersed in your villager role by following their social etiquettes, trying the hands-on activities they took part in, and learning first-hand what their life was like. The activities you take part in throughout the day will help you both create a memento that you take home with you, and leave your mark on the village.



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Health & Wellness

Are Braces in your Future?

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

Every parent wonders this from time to time; the only real way of knowing? Book an early screening exam by a certified Orthodontist. The Canadian and American Orthodontic Associations, age 7-8 is the ideal time for this early exam but even if your child is older they will benefit from the check up.

Although the adult teeth may be just starting to erupt, this check-up provides valuable information to your orthodontist and dentist about your child's growth patterns and jaw relationship. It also provides you, as the parent, a better understanding of the development of your child's bite. If a potential problem is identified, your Orthodontist will recommend monitoring your child at a regular interval (often yearly) until a time that treatment is indicated. Usually orthodontic treatment is recommended around age 11-12 when the main growth spurt happens and many of the permanent teeth are present, but in some cases early treatment is necessary. Early, interceptive treatment may

prevent a problem from becoming more serious (possibly requiring surgery) or may achieve results that would otherwise be unattainable if treatment is delayed.

So do you know what to look for? A developing smile can be a bit intimidating from a parent's perspective but here are some "bad bites" (or malocclusions) to watch for.

- An underbite (bottom teeth bite over top teeth)
- Crossbite (s) (top teeth bite inside bottom teeth on one or both sides)
- A deep bite (top teeth completely cover bottom teeth)
- An open bite (teeth don't come together in front)
- Protrusion ("buck teeth"),
- Excessive spacing or crowding
- Any of the following: Early or late loss of baby teeth; difficulty chewing or biting; mouth breathing; a thumb or finger sucking habit; jaws that shift or make sounds; grinding or clenching of teeth; biting the cheek or the roof of the mouth; speech difficulties or facial imbalance.

Don't be alarmed if you see one or more of these features in your child's bite. Many changes

occur as a child grows and some problems are temporary. However, mentioning your finding at your child's next regular dental visit or calling your local Orthodontist for a

screening exam is a good idea. Now that you've looked closely at your child's teeth, what about your own? Look for information about Orthodontics for Adults in an upcoming issue of Parent-Child Guide.

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 455-7222.

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Summer Camp Guide

"Broadening Your Horizons - Alderney Summer Camps Offer New Teen Series!"

The Summer of 2017 proves to be jam packed at Alderney Landing with the offering of 3 new Art and Theatre Camps designed specifically to challenge the creative Teens 11-15 years old!

From July 3-7 we start off with a FRIGHT in our exciting Horror Movie Camp! Students this week will work on writing, directing and acting in a Horror Movie Short. These will be featured on our Media wall in October during the Bluenose Ghosts Festival Haunted House! We'll have guest speakers throughout this week from the local Horror movie industry with their spooky filmmaking tales!

Something for the writers out there! July 10-14 is our Scriptwriting week, students will work intensively with a local Director learning the skills to create and workshop a full theatre script which will later be performed in our Theatre Camp. Industry professionals will be stopping by to offer their words of wisdom.

We round out July 17-28 with Haunted Sculptures, a two week Camp of designing and building extra large hauntingly scary sculptures to be featured on the Dartmouth Waterfront through the Bluenose Ghosts Festival in October. Throughout this week, students will explore how public art is made, how to create life sized statues, and they'll have loads of fun exercising those creative muscles to the max!

And don't forget, we'll also continue to have our amazing Art and Theatre Camps for the 6-10 year old crowd, Circus Camp with Willy Badger exploring circus and performing arts. Superhero Versus! Theatre Camp building on superpowers and battles in the skies. A Whale of A Time! Art Camp exploring the monstrous looks of deep sea creatures and Pet Portraits Art Camp! Where our projects will explore our family pets!

These Camps are a great way to meet other artist friends their age and work with professional artists in the community. We take pride in the quality of our programs and their fun, inclusive atmosphere!

For more information please contact 902-461-8401, www.alderneylanding.com

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Campers get an insider's view of film and animation productions, as they take ideas from concept to script to the big screen! It is the same with creating and designing video games. They get to go behind the scenes, learning how to how to design and

program video games! They design and draw original characters and monsters!

Unique to Artech is the infusion of art activities with STEM learning: inspiring creative problem solving and promoting digital literacy. Kids 7 through teen years benefit from our one-to-six instructor to camper ratio - each child receives quality instruction time.

There is a full roster of creative week-long options: from mobile movie making to computer and stop motion animation, video game design and 3D Minecraft world design!

More information and registration is available on the Artech website at www.artechcamps.com. Or call at 902-579-3317 - we are always happy to answer any questions you may have!

"Inquiring young minds don't take a summer break!"

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Summer Camp Guide

GIVING KIDS THE EDGE: The Valuable Skill of "Debating"

After 18 years of experience in the education system, debating is still one of the most effective ways for students apply their learning

By Nick Szymanis

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Have you ever asked your child after school, "What did you learn today?" and they reply with, "I don't know." In your mind you hope they are just saying "I don't know" because they don't feel like talking. But in reality, this "I don't know" is real and much of what children learn at school is not being retained. Educational research of the last 10 years has advocated a set of declining percentages for just how much students remember from year to year. The model is called the "Learning Pyramid" and it is widely accepted that students retain 5% of what they hear, 10% of what they read, 20% of what they see, and 30% of what they see demonstrated by another person. The questions remains: What about the other 70%?

As a teacher of 18 years, at some of Canada's best schools, I still find myself stepping back from the school day and questioning "where is the learning here?" How can teaching professionals make learning meaningful and have what children learn "stick"? In many cases, students default to the age-old habits of hard work and well-developed study habits. The ultimate goal for most students in Canada, is admission to a good university and hopefully the sound preparation for a successful career. Education systems are built to facilitate this journey and inside the schools, teachers aim to keep the learning meaningful and rigorous.

But does this always work?

Good teachers generally check their classes, for understanding and retention, often with tests or exams. We assume, that as students advance successfully to the next level, they have learned something. But what if we are wrong?

Feedback from the universities themselves asks the same question. We at the secondary school level track our graduates as far as second and third year university - just to ensure we are doing our job well. A common lament among the universities we poll is that a number of undergraduates lack a true foundation. In sum, there is a feeling in the universities that many students have advanced by figuring out how to earn good marks, but when truly tested in either the university seminar group, tutorial, or when the level of their analytical skills are put to the test in writing, students are falling short.

I believe Canada's best teachers are constantly striving to ensure they do not produce graduates who have mimicked knowledge and "played the system" for marks, but who have actually "learned" and / or knowledgeable. The answer is not in harder exams, but in the design of a learning experience that demands students to apply their knowledge; to engage their learning at several points in the school day - not simply at the end of a term.

In Ancient Greek times this used to be in the form of a Socratic dialogue, where students at the Academy would be questioned constantly in a kind of academic sparring with the teacher - this was seen to sharpen the students' minds. This ancient method of learning still appears in the modern classroom in such forms as the inquiry approach or Harkness table discussion / dialogue.

But after 18 years in the system and seeing my graduates in most cases, thrive in university, I remain convinced that one of the most rigorous and exciting ways to have students apply their learning is debating. To bring traditional debate into the lives of young people stands to provide an intensified learning

experience - one kids always remember and here's why:

Debating asks student to take a side - whether they believe in it or not. Immediately, they need to suspend their subjective worldview and learn to construct a case or argument in favour (or against) a topic. They need to access their learning - - with purpose. They have to learn how to organize and prioritize information, align it with a greater point, and ultimately make their learning make sense to an audience.

Perhaps best of all, debating honours knowledge itself because it is a 2 way street: Too often in education, students are acquiring knowledge and then putting it back on the page. In debating, students must not only present their side, but they must listen effectively to their opponent's points. This honours the true aspect of knowledge itself - - that the further we develop an understanding of something, the deeper we probe the depths of an argument by accessing all of it's possible sides, the closer we get to real knowledge - - something philosophers call "the truth" of a subject. In real educational forums, it is clear this level of learning is not achieved easily, and not achieved by simply taking in knowledge from one source. Debating engages students, right from the beginning, asking them to delve into the opposing views and honour what is being said by countering it well. A sharpening of the mind indeed...

From Ancient Greek times till today, debating stands to be among the richest, most rewarding intellectual exercises young people can participate in. The universities also recognize it, with accomplished high school debaters being among the most sought after by leading universities - - largely because they have stood out against their peers in the university setting demonstrating their educational foundation is well-built. Moreover, as I stand inside schools and listen to my students, I remain convinced that debating, is one of those activities that guarantees learning is happening, and happening well.

According to the Learning Pyramid, students retain 50% of what they learn if they can engage it in discussion, 75% of it if they can practice in some form and 90% if given the opportunity to teach it to others! So next time you pick up from school, and ask that very general question "what did you learn today?" - don't take "nothing" for an answer. Ask instead; "Any interesting conversations today?" See what they say - and then follow with, "So what do YOU think about that" Prepare for an opposing view - - and then enjoy the debate! Ultimately, you are setting up a forum for your young learner to teach you! Believe it or not, you are helping the learning "stick" and perhaps even become more meaningful along the way...

Nick Szymanis has been teaching for 18 years, as well as having been Head of Social Studies at both Crofton House School in Vancouver, and Havergal College in Toronto, as well the past 4 years as Academic Director at The Sterling Hall School in Toronto. He is the founder and lead director of Debate Camp Canada, a summer training program in public speaking and debate for students in grades 5 - 11. In 2017, he and his team will facilitate 15 camps across Canada, serving over 1000 learners. For more information visit: www.debatecamp.com

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Summer Camp Guide

5 ways to encourage problem solving in your child

Courtesy of Bricks 4 Kidz

Whether your child is 2 or 12, many parents are familiar with a certain twitch that flares up inside: Time to fly in and rescue the kid from that tangled mess.

The intention is always good. After all, we don't expect kids to solve problems too big for them to handle. But being in rescue mode all the time does your child no favours in the long run.

The world is changing. Your child's future job may not exist today. If they

can learn to work through uncertainty and open-ended answers, and become superstars at problem solving, they'll have a life skill that can carry them far.

So take your intention to help and be a little smarter with them. While asking questions is one way to help them think their way through the problem, here are some other ways to help them navigate through the bumps of the day.

1. Help with frustration: Sometimes they're working on some-

thing you know they can handle, such as your preschooler learning to zip a jacket. Except they won't. That's because intense emotions are getting in the way. Stay calm and take a break. Once things have cooled off, have a talk about identifying emotions. You can help them recognize the signs so they can cope before the eruption.

2. Offer encouragement: Sometimes, all they need is an expression of faith in their abilities. "I know you have what it takes to put this

together." Older child sometimes appreciate perspective and humour through nonsense consequences: "If your project doesn't look perfect, they're not going to take away your birthday!"

3. Break it down: Sometimes, the task may appear simple enough, but it's overwhelming in your child's eyes. Write a list of steps to make the problem seem more manageable. (As time goes on, have them become more involved with coming up with the steps.)

4. Allow mistakes: So often, we value the end product over process. This can kick in once the kids are in school, where it's too easy to compare their efforts to that of their peers. While this has its merits, it can also get in the way of progress. Back off from hovering and helping, and let your child work it out. As we've learned from many inventors, amazing things can happen after a mistake.

5. Be flexible: There are many ideas on how to boost your child's thinking with hands-on, enriched activities. At the same time, don't overdo it. Kids need time to explore, play, imagine and innovate through unstructured play. Leave ample time for exploration after the activity is done.

In fact, we embrace this very approach at our Bricks 4 Kidz workshops. After all, when kids get a chance to use a

new skill on their own terms, they are also given a chance to internalize the lessons.

Learning doesn't stop just because it's summer. Sign up your child for a fun and enriching

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Inscrivez votre enfant dès maintenant à : campdejour.ccgh.ca

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Summer Camp Guide

Extracurricular Activities Are Fun And Essential To Learning!

Submitted by Canadian Parents for French, Nova Scotia

Many factors will contribute to your child's success at school, such as curriculum, learning materials, teachers, school setting, administrative support, your child's motivation, as well as your support and encouragement, to list a few. However, additional exposure to French is important when trying to achieve the program goals in French second language. Therefore, experiencing French at home and within the community 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. In addition, the CPF newsletters and website are an excellent resource for other ideas. 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. With summer just around the corner, many parents are looking for summertime activities to keep their child occupied and on the path to success. Extracurricular activities, such as summer camps, regardless of a student's age, are a great way to do this.

So what are the benefits to doing extracurricular activities? That depends on the activity, but they all build valuable skills. Studies show that students involved with extracurricular activities tend to have better academic performance, better attendance, and fewer disciplinary issues. This may be due to increased self-esteem, motivation and better time management.

Your child will learn new skills from extracurricular activities, and integrate these skills into their academic lives. They will develop life-long relationships with their peers and learn how to lead others. These skills will be beneficial in later life and in the workplace. No matter what extracurricular activities a student becomes involved in, it is best to start early.

Remember learning any language is a life-long experience! Just as your child's first-language skills will mature and expand 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. Research shows that students whose parents have positive attitudes toward French do better in Immersion programs.

Make French a part of your child's life!



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Education

Myths About Summer Learning

Submitted by Oxford Learning

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MYTH: KIDS NEED THE SUMMER OFF TO RECHARGE.

While the school year can be tiring and mentally demanding, kids actually thrive within the structured framework that the school year provides. A break from the school-year routine can be invigorating for a short period of time, but a too-long break rarely helps students feel recharged; rather, it leads to boredom and academic malaise.

Without replacing the school day structure with summer camps or other regular day programs, children can become disengaged from not only their routines, but also from learning. Video games, texting, movies, and lounging by the pool are fun, but eventually relaxation and downtime become boring too. And boredom is rarely a pre-cursor to a willingness to jump back into learning.

Providing mentally stimulating summer activities that are reliable and routine is the best way to avoid summer boredom and keep kids charged up and ready to take on a new school year.

MYTH: IF SUMMER WAS NOT INTENDED TO BE A BREAK, SCHOOL WOULDN'T SHUT DOWN.

The most common school year

as we know it—from September to June—exists because of two main historic reasons: At the turn of the last century, agricultural societies required children to help out with farming chores during busy growing seasons and, in cities, schools were unbearably hot during summer and made teaching and learning in poorly-ventilated buildings a health hazard. The current 180-day school calendar is still in place, even if the reasons for it are no longer valid.

In fact, many school boards have made the move to year-round schooling, offering several shorter break periods throughout the year, rather than one long one in the summer.

School boards don't intend summer to be a "break" for students—policy makers are simply continuing to follow a system that has been in place for many years, and, coincidentally, one that has come to be beneficial to cash-strapped school boards.

MYTH: SUMMER ISN'T PART OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.

Summer is just as important to a student's overall learning experience as what is learned from September to June. In terms of the brain, learning runs 24-7, all year round.

The time away from school is a very important opportunity for many students to fill in learning gaps, make sense of material learned during the school year, and improve/develop important learning skills such as reading comprehension and organization. It's the time to get extra help that there may not be chance to get while school is in session. It's the chance to experience in-class lessons first hand. And, it's the only chance that students have to adequately prepare for the year ahead.

It's time to stop thinking about the school year as September to June: there is no final bell on a student's education.

MYTH: SUMMER WILL MAKE STUDENTS REFRESHED AND READY TO LEARN IN THE FALL.

This is the scariest myth about summer learning. After a summer spent relaxing, students may feel refreshed, but they are far from ready to learn.

Research into summer learning has shown that after taking a two-month break, students have lost approximately 20-30% of their academic learning momentum: they've gone backward in terms of learning. These studies also show that teachers typically spend up to six weeks re-teaching last year's material. Students aren't ready to learn after a summer off: they've lost their learning momentum after two months of video games and relaxing at the beach.

The summer slide, the brain drain, or summer learning losses—whatever you call it, it can be easily prevented. A few hours a week of active academic learning keeps the brain sharp, so that when falls rolls around, students are ready to learn and take on the challenges of a new school year.

For more information on summer learning, or to find out which Oxford Learning summer program is best suited for your child, contact Oxford Learning Halifax at 902-423-4484 or halifax@oxfordlearning.com or Bedford at 902-405-4116 or bedford@oxfordlearning.com

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CRAFT CORNER

Living Wreath

By Jenny Joan Larisey

Craft Consultant for Maritime Hobbies Crafts

Making a wreath out of growing plants is a DIY project I have been wanting to try for many years. I like to think of the wreath as a symbol of life, eternity, welcome to my home.

A wire wreath frame, potting soil, water-retaining crystals, moss and 20 or 22-gauge copper wire are the basic supplies needed for a living wreath. Choosing the plant varieties was the challenging part for me, to restrain myself around that many beautiful plants. I decided to hang the wreath on my front door so I needed plants that could tolerate shade in the morning and strong bright sun in the afternoon, finally deciding on a variety of small begonias.

I read that sheet and sphagnum moss are the best types of moss to use for a living wreath but I couldn't find either. What I did find was Cocomoss, a planter lining material made of coconut fiber. It's a good idea to have a surplus for patching thin areas and

for tucking around the plants. When planning out the design of your living wreath consider using plants that work well in containers, also the plants you choose will determine the soil mix you need. Succulents and cacti require a soil made specifically for these low water varieties. Other plants will benefit from having an added fertilizer and you can mix polymer water-retaining crystals into the soil for moisture loving plants. The polymer crystals should be mixed into moist soil awhile before planting to allow full absorption as the crystals

swell and increase the bulk of the soil.

When you finish putting your wreath together leave it to sit flat for a week so the roots of the plants have time to anchor in. Rest assured that it's difficult to make an incorrect wreath! Enjoy your personalized interpretation and embrace the wildness of your creation.

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What Are Daycare Teachers Made of?

By Jo-Anne Bayers – Director, The Growing Place

With childcare awareness days happening once again throughout the month of June, I find myself contemplating just what goes into the making of an early childhood teacher. The cute answer is sugar and spice, and everything nice with a touch of Mary Poppins thrown in for good measure!

Of course, the real answer is that we are a group of highly educated teachers, dedicated to not only meeting the educational needs of the children in our care, but because of the unique nature of early childhood education, to meeting their emotional, and physical needs as well.

During the past three decades as an early childhood teacher I have witnessed numerous changes to the field of early childhood education, what was once considered to be little more than a professional babysitting service is now more widely acknowledged, and respected for the vital role it plays in the educational development of young children. Programs that were once led by a mish mash of trained, and untrained staff are now taught by teachers with recognized early learning credentials which must be kept current through continuous professional development. Additionally, we must also now maintain vulnerable criminal record, and child abuse registry checks as well as child based first aid training.

However, the making of an early childhood teacher goes far beyond

obtaining the required credentials, and mandatory safety checks. But just what else does it take? Certainly, every parent hopes that their child's first teachers will be the embodiment of a loving, and kind Mary Poppins, but just as necessary are qualities like empathy, flexibility, humor, dedication, competency, and of course patience along with a healthy level of physical, and mental stamina to keep up with the demands of helping young children learn, and grow.

Although recognized credentials, and continuous professional development are now required they are only the first steps on the journey to becoming, and sustaining a career as an early childhood teacher. The real, and lasting lessons on how to be an early childhood teacher are taught by the very children in our care, it's the children who inspire, and challenge us to meet, and exceed not only what we thought possible for them, but for ourselves as well.

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

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* See dealer for details ** Comparison data sourced at time of printing - 2017 Toyota RAV4 FWD LE vs. 2017 Honda CR-V LX FWD, see dealer for complete comparison.