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Back to School: what will that look like?

By Carol M. Shirley, Registered Psychologist, with ENIGMA

I don't know but I trust we will figure it out as we get closer to September.

One of the interesting aspects of anxiety is its need to know. Anxiety wants no surprises and will work to plan for all possible outcomes. What feels like a need to know is anxieties way of protecting us from suffering consequences similar to those suffered or feared in our past. We cannot always know what will happen next. Most things are surprises its only

when we suffer humiliation, guilt, shame, embarrassment and the like that fear is created. We don't give it a second thought if the outcome was a positive surprise; mostly we enjoy those and if we do reflect on them it feels good.

Trying to control all factors to achieve a positive outcome is exhausting. Often it involves controlling others which results in conflict. Just feel what I am saying and recognize anxiety as the opposite of confident. The two are oppos-

ing behaviors, one cannot be confident and afraid or anxious. We can be confident and a bit nervous but that's different than being anxious.

We need to teach our child to trust themselves to handle whatever comes up for them. Children will follow your lead. They look to their adults for assurance and reference or to check in with parents to see if they are on the right path. They do this through the accumulation of our responses to them. If they get it right that builds. If they are not aligned with their adults they question their ability to trust themselves and spend a life time looking for you to make decisions for them.

Over thinking, worry, concern over a need to know or questions to which there are no immediate answers begets more worry and

eventually a whole lot of anxiety. Not knowing is really Okay. Getting comfortable with not knowing is a great way to diminish anxieties. Learn and practice being Okay with not knowing while learning to trust yourself to figure it out as the information is available. When you do trust yourself saying things like "I will cross that bridge when I get to it, or let's wait and see, or we will know when the time comes' do not create anxiety.

Anxiety is a fear base feeling. It's the voice in your head talking about all the things that could go wrong and unless you're an amazing fortune teller you just don't know. Yes, things can go wrong so there is a possibility but the probability of the things happening that we think could happen is pretty low. Anxiety is irrational, it doesn't feel that way if you're the one feeling it but once we calm



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down its easy to see.

Starting back to school (especially after the past year and a half) or starting for the first time is anxiety provoking. It is normal to feel nervous in these circumstances. This is where we need encouragement and your confidence that things will work out. The fear is of the unknown. The questions who will my teacher be, who will be in my class, where is my classroom, will all be answered the first day of school by teachers and administrative staff who work with the new and returning students every year.

Answer what ever questions you can. Tell your children that teachers ex-

pect kids to feel lost for the first week or so until they become more familiar with the way things work at the school. Assure your child they are safe and that you trust them to figure out what they need to figure out as school gets closer and in the first few days of starting school. Best advice is do not let your fears get in the way of your child's life. They really do learn about themselves through you and your responses to them. Be their biggest fan! You got this!

For more information go to www.carolshirley.ca or phone 902-495-3181.



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All the Benefits of a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP)

Less than one out of four children benefit from the financial assistance provided by a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP).

Submitted by The Sutherland Wealth Management Group

On top of the general grant, eligible low-income families may receive the Canada Learning Bond (CLB), which consists in an initial one-time payment of \$500, followed by annual payments of \$100, for a maximum of 15 years. To benefit from the CLB, one only needs to open an RESP account, since no contribution is required. Unlike the Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP), the RESP contributions do not allow the subscriber to reduce his/her taxable income. However, the capital invested in the RESP and admissible grants grow tax-free. That said, it is important to note that the EAP is exclusively made up of money from grants and investment income. It does not therefore include the amount of contributions made by the RESP subscriber (usually the parents). Unused RESP grants can accumulate until the child turns 17 and can be claimed, through additional contributions, up to a maximum of \$1,000 per year at the federal level.

What Are the Tax Benefits of the RESP?

From the moment when EAPs are paid, the subscriber can recover the RESP contributions without any tax impact, since tax on these invested sums was already paid in the past. The subscriber can use them as they see fit, for example, to make RRSP contributions. At any time when the amounts are withdrawn from the RESP, only the earnings and gains accumulated on the capital and grants are taxable.

This assistance provides a helping hand to children whose dreams won't be cut short by a mountain of unpaid bills. RESPs also benefit parents, since every dollar they invest in the plan quickly multiplies due to governmental subsidies and tax-free accumulation of income. And contrary to popular belief, a RESP investment isn't beyond the reach of families on tight budgets.

Here is what you need to know about RESPs.

Who Can Contribute to a RESP?

To open a RESP, the subscriber must have a social insurance number (SIN). The recipient or recipients must also have a SIN and be Canadian residents.

There are three types of registered education savings plans: the individual RESP, family RESP and group RESP. Rules and restrictions vary according to the plan. Sale fees, file opening fees, and some annual fees or penalties in the event of changes made to the plan can also apply.

What Return Can You Expect?

RESP returns will obviously vary according to several factors linked to financial markets and the types of investments chosen. But as a general rule, the sooner you start saving, the higher the amount will be, thanks to the tax-sheltered cumulative earnings.

That said, the main appeal of a RESP in terms of earnings stems from the fact that each contribution is enhanced by a federal government grant, and by a provincial grant in some provinces. Indeed, the Government of Canada offers grants to encourage Canadians to save for their children's post-secondary education. Through the Canada Education Savings Grant (CESG), the federal government awards 20% on each dollar invested in a RESP, up to \$500 annually (i.e. 20% of a \$2,500 contribution) and up to a lifetime grant of \$7,200.

On top of the general grant, eligible low-income families may receive the Canada Learning Bond (CLB), which consists in an initial one-time payment of \$500, followed by annual payments of \$100, for a maximum of 15 years. To benefit from the CLB, one only needs to open a RESP account, since no contribution is required. Eligible low- and medium-income families who can contribute to the plan may also qualify to receive an extra 10% to 20% on every dollar of the first \$500 saved annually through the Additional Canada Education Savings Grant (A-CESG). Unused RESP grants can accumulate until the child turns 17 and can be claimed, through additional contributions, up to a maximum of \$1,000 per year at the federal level. Thanks to this governmental assistance, regardless of the family's financial situation, money invested in a RESP earns a one-time initial return of up to 30%, before accumulating in an investment product.

What Are the Tax Benefits of the RESP?

Unlike the Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP), the RESP contributions do not allow the subscriber to reduce his/her taxable income. However, the capital invested in the RESP and admissible grants grow tax-free. The beneficiary may receive the money from the RESP in the form of Educational Assistance Payments (EAP)

when it is time to start his/her post-secondary studies in a Qualifying Educational Program.

The EAPs are taxable income in the hands of the RESP beneficiary. The latter may however be exempt from paying taxes on the amounts received if the EAPs are judiciously planned and if the child has no other significant source of income. That

said, it is important to note that the EAP is exclusively made up of money from grants and investment income. It does not therefore include the amount of contributions made by the RESP subscriber (usually the parents). From the moment when EAPs are paid, the subscriber can recover the RESP contributions without any tax impact, since tax on these invested sums was already paid

in the past. The subscriber can use them as they see fit, for example, to make RRSP contributions. At any time when the amounts are withdrawn from the RESP, only the earnings and gains accumulated on the capital and grants are taxable.

For more information check out Canada Revenue Agency's website or reach out to us at terry.sutherland@nbc.ca

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FUN Places To Go!

Back to school in 1901!

By Pete Cullen, Executive Director, Ross Farm Museum



The Trail to Ross Farm © Ross Farm Museum

What if your walk through the fields and down the dusty roads lead you to school and home again each day? After a few kilometers of picking the tops off the timothy, spying frogs, kicking rocks and jumping puddles you entered a small cottage-like building and learned to read, write and do math along with a few other kids of all ages from your road. Welcome to school 100 years ago!

Today we arrive in cars, school busses, and public transport. At the time of your grandparents and great-grandparents, much of Nova Scotia was serviced by the one-room school house. Just the area of New Ross, in Lunenburg County, boasted 9 school houses within the roughly 20km wide territory. There was one for every major area and you would walk there and back again every day. It is true—sometimes “uphill—both

ways!”.

You learned a lot on the way there and back. At the end of the 19th century, Alexander MacKay, Superintendent of Schools in the Province, realized that school children saw much of what was happening in the province’s rural areas. He organized a data collections system that asked the children of every school in the province—including New Ross’s 9 one-room school houses—to report each day on what they observed as they walked to school. When did the first apple blossoms come out? When were they generally out? When did the first potatoes go in the ground? When did everyone generally plant their potatoes? When did the first bees appear? The school children of Nova Scotia contributed hundreds of thousands of bits of information to their teachers over the decades of the program. Their teach-

ers reported the data to MacKay and he summarized and analyzed it. His findings indicate that over time these natural and agricultural occurrences were generally taking place a little earlier at the end of the study than they had been at the beginning. It was an

early study on climate change and ecology—made possible by school children and having the time to walk, talk and observe the world around them. Beautiful.

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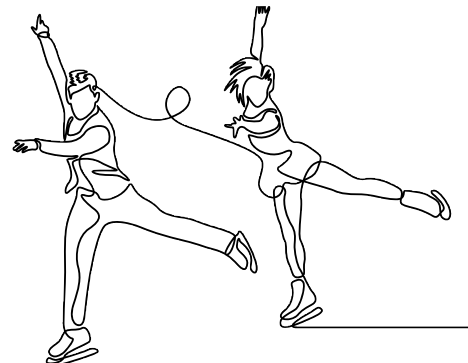
The St. Margaret's Bay Skating Club is honoured to be chosen as part of the National Pair Initiative (NPI) with Skate Canada. To further support the development of pair skating, Skate Canada in collaboration with our sections is pleased to announce a new mentorship initiative dedicated to support pair coaches that are interested in expanding their technical and tactical skills and to further develop the pair discipline.

The club is pleased to add to their coaching team Pair Coach Joe Jacobsen. Joe trained in Lake Arrowhead, California under renowned coaches Irina Rodrina, Frank Carroll and Rafael Arutyunyan. Multiple national medalist and Junior world competitor. Joe left competition to travel the world as a principal performer with Disney On Ice for 8 years. He brings an amazing energy to the ice, technical knowledge, and a passion for pair skating.

The number of teams are growing as the opportunities surrounding pairs are many. Teams have their eyes on Canada Games, national medals, and hopefully someday international assignments. The coaches are focused on teaching the skills needed to be a top team; but always prioritize fun and safety.

We are looking for new skaters to try pair skating. Many of the lifts and skills are done off ice and the basics are worked on until the skill level is strong. The program has gained a few hockey skaters that really that were interested in a new opportunity and loved to skate. Also, as the program is growing there is interest from international skaters coming to train at SMB. Skaters from other areas can do pairs without changing their singles training or coaches.

Anyone interested in the pairs program can contact the club or check out the videos on the SMB facebook site. There is a learn to do pairs program for the young skater that the skaters learn to skate together and do very basic fundamental skills. The St. Margaret's Bay Skating Club has a large learn to skate program right up to competitive levels. If you are interested in any of the programs or want more information, email skate-coach@gmail.com.



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What Exactly are Study Skills, Anyway?

Submitted by Oxford Learning

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It's easy to say that study skills are important, but it's less easy to identify what study skills actually are. Maybe that's because study skills—the techniques students use when learning in class, doing homework at home, or preparing for a test—are very rarely taught in school, which is why homework and studying can be so stressful for students.

Practice Makes Perfect

Think of study skills as a tool you use to get a job done as efficiently as possible. If you were sweeping the floor, you wouldn't just drag the broom along behind you—sweeping is more effective when you use the proper back-and-forth sweeping technique. Performing a task using the right skills just makes it easier.

The good news is that like any skill, whether it's riding a bike, flying a kite or even sweeping the floor, study skills become easier with practice. The more students use them, the more second nature study skills become.

Top Nine Study Skills to Use This School Year:

1. Use An Agenda—There's a lot to think about in a day and memory is imperfect. That's why

writing assignments down in an agenda is so important!

2. Create a Study Studio—Keep all homework and learning supplies materials in one area of the house to make getting into the homework groove easier.
3. Make Handwritten Study Notes—Writing notes by hand when studying activates many different areas of the brain, which helps boost retention and memory.
4. Colour Code and Highlight—the brain is better able to remember information that is different than the rest. Highlighting can be helpful to draw attention to information to focus on.
5. Pick the Right Time To Study—night or day, students can set themselves up for study success by studying during the time of day when they are the most alert..
6. Manage Time Effectively—Whether in an agenda or on an app, following a study schedule helps students use the time wisely, avoid procrastination and cramming, and meet deadlines.

continued on page 15...

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How you start is how you finish

Submitted by Birch Hills Academy

"Tell me and I forget, show me and I remember, involve me and I understand." — John Gay, English poet

I'm sure we have all experienced cramming for a test, only to forget all of the information once we've written it. This is because we are not truly involved in the process of learning. Traditional learning is a passive process, where teachers communicate information to students and students are meant to absorb that knowledge. While some people can magically transfer passive knowledge into action, the majority of us cannot. This is where Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) comes in.

IBL places students at the center of their learning experience. Instead of the teacher being the source of knowledge, the teacher guides their students in exploring, asking questions and discovering information. This enables students to learn by doing, becoming active participants in their learning. The

main benefit to learning by doing is that the skills and knowledge gained are better integrated into a child's long-term memory.

In main-stream education, the same goals are set for all students, regardless of their abilities. Students who struggle or who are gifted can easily become disengaged and discouraged. IBL supports students in developing their own learning goals, building on their natural personal strengths and interests. This more personalized approach to learning empowers students to take ownership of their learning and to reach their full potential by exploring these strengths and interests; this can be very motivating.

Anyone who has young children or who has worked with young children knows that children are naturally curious and inquisitive. Unfortunately, mainstream education discourages the natural process of inquiry, instead focusing on listening and regurgitating in-

formation. However, memorizing facts and information is not the most important skill in today's world. We have a world of information at our fingertips at all times, making it far more important to be able to sort through the abundance of information available to determine what is true and relevant. Particularly where we don't know what future jobs will look like, it is important to teach our children to problem-solve so that they can deal with anything that may be thrown at them.

Early Elementary programs at Birch Hills Academy utilize small class sizes to develop skills for independent learning, literacy, collaboration and encouraging curiosity leading to a love of learning. How you start is how you finish!

For more information, please call our Founder, Pam Streeter at 902-832-6700.

Visit our website at birchhillsacademy.com

Education

...continued from page 16

7. Break it down—large, multi-day assignments can be daunting. Breaking large projects into smaller tasks and scheduling the tasks in an agenda makes something big feel much more manageable.
8. Quiz Yourself—Whether it's writing out questions and trying to answer them, or reading something, covering it up, and trying to recite it back, self-testing boosts comprehension and confidence on test day.
9. Paraphrasing—paraphrasing simply means putting it in your own words. Expressing a concept or idea by using their own words, helps students grasp concepts or ideas better.

Study Skills are a collection of learning techniques used together to make preparing for a test easier. When used regularly as part of an overall learning strategy, they help students become more organized in all areas of their education.

Whether learning in class or studying for a test, each study skill plays a role in helping to make learning easier, tests less stressful, and grades higher.

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Education

Ways to Bridge Learning Gaps

Submitted by Eye Level Learning Centre

Lockdowns and limited school time are putting pressure on kids' learning needs. In addition, the learning gap was even more challenging in cases where children did not get an opportunity to learn the way they are used to. It is challenging among children who were previously struggling, setting them behind in their learning. These challenges are concerning for educators and parents alike. With kids returning to school later this year, it is important that they are given an opportunity to stay on track with more focused learning.

Learning centres, such as the Eye Level Learning Centre are helping kids with their individualized math and English programs. With Eye Level Learning, kids receive systematic and one-one coaching from qualified instructors, with proven learning booklets. The programs at the Eye level centres have been effective in enhancing students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills in countries around the world - while making them lifelong learners by building confidence and self-directed learning habits.

During the pandemic, kids had limited access to their teachers—and they were confined to online learning for most of their school year. These scenarios are putting pressure on the kids—and if not addressed they will have a lasting impact on their learning.

Staying focused and following through the proven curriculum is incredibly valuable for kids in their learning journey. At Eye Level, kids have access to the booklets apart from having direct 1-on-1 access to trained instructors. By understanding the unique learning needs of each student, the instructors are able to set appropriate goals and tailor the curriculum to help the student attain them.

Math & English programs at Eye Level have been carefully designed to provide a small-step approach that builds confidence in their own abilities so they feel success week after week. This small step approach allows students to properly master the learning material before moving onto the next. Eye Level Learning Centres help children develop academic skills, build confidence, and establish a love of lifelong learning in a safe learning environment.

Check our Facebook page: [facebook.com/eyelevellearninghalifax](https://www.facebook.com/eyelevellearninghalifax), find us on Google or contact us at the below address, walk-in, call or email to fix an appointment. We are located at 30 Farnham Gate Road, Suite #114, Halifax, NS B3M 4R8, tel: 902.454.5555, email: halifax@myeyelevel.com

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Education

Lunches for Picky Eaters

By Aileen Sullivan, Assistant Director and Inclusion Coordinator, The Growing Place

Back to school is among us. Most of us know how hard it is to make a lunch for your child who doesn't like a whole lot of things. There are many ways you can get your child to eat. A couple ideas you could try are to let them help make their lunch, or they could pick out some things they like when you are grocery shopping. If you don't want to have unhealthy snack in your child's bag, you could make your snacks. Some healthy recipes are:

Fruit Roll Ups

2-3 cups fruit
2-3 tbsp honey
2 tsp lemon

Blend fruit in food processor or blender until smooth. Mix in sweetener and lemon juice.

Pour into a pan lined with plastic wrap or parchment paper then spread out 1/8 to 1/4 inch thick.

Dehydrate in oven at 140 to 170° F (or as low as oven will go) for 4 to 6 hours, or until the middle is not longer tacky. Allow

to cool, then remove from sheet. With clean scissors, trim off edges then cut into 1 inch wide strips. Wrap with strips of parchment or tissue paper, then use tape or string to seal.

Pita Chips

Rip your pita chips into chip sized pieces and put them into a bowl. Drizzle oil over the pita chips and spices of your choice. Bake at 375



Image by Wikimediaimages from Pixabay

for 15 minutes.

Granola Bars

2 cups quick cooking oats
1 cup almond butter
1/2 cup mini chocolate chips
1/4 cup honey, more if needed

Combine the oats, almond butter, almonds, chocolate chips and honey in a medium-sized bowl. Stir until well combined. Add more honey if needed to hold shape and salt and cinnamon, to taste. Line a pan with parchment paper, allowing the paper to fall over the edges. Press the oat mixture into the pan. Place in the freezer for 45 minutes to 1 hour, or until firm. Cut and Wrap bars individually with parchment paper or plastic wrap and store in the refrigerator or freezer.

Aileen is currently the Assistant Director at The Growing Place (Pleasant Street location). She also serves as Resource Coordinator where she specializes 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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Health & Wellness



Expand your knowledge: Does your Child need an Expansion?

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

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 child'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 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 make-up. The second reason is that oral health has finally received due recognition for its importance to overall health. With this acknowledgement 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 person can reap the rewards of having a beautiful and healthy smile for their lifetime, is invaluable.

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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), The Brace Space Sackville and Stuart & Davidson Orthodontics in Dartmouth, offering conventional braces and Invisalign for children, teens and adults. For more information, contact 902 455 7222 or 902 252 7222

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Seniors' Living Care

Retirement Living—the Cost and the Value

Submitted by The Berkeley



At The Berkeley, our residents see the value of living in a community where most, if not all, of their needs are met. It is a lifestyle that offers seniors a sense of safety, security and simplicity. In addition, there are benefits inherent to living in a community with others who are like-minded such as always having the opportunity to be in the company of others. Our residents are interested in being social, staying active and enjoying life. In a nutshell, they want a simple and convenient lifestyle with the benefit of a healthcare professional in case of an emergency.

A common misperception is that retirement living is expensive and that it is for people with lots of money. This is simply not true. Though it might seem expensive at first glance, it is actually quite affordable when you stop to

consider what is included in the rent. It is important to compare the cost of a retirement living apartment to what you currently pay to live in your house or regular apartment. Our rent includes:

- Two meals per day
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- A warm, friendly, supportive environment with dedicated, caring employees 😊

I would encourage seniors to compare the cost of where they live now to what they would pay to enjoy all the benefits of retirement living before assuming they cannot afford it. The difference between living at home alone and living at The Berkeley, with the company and support of others, is truly invaluable. It has helped maintain and, in some cases, improve the overall health of many who have made The Berkeley their home. It is both proactive and strategic to consider future needs while ensuring you can fully enjoy the present.

For more information and to book a tour, please visit theberkeley.com or call Jenn at (902) 802-0346.



Bayshore Care Journey

Submitted by Mary Grace Firmeza CCA, Bayshore Field Staff

My name is Mary Grace Firmeza, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and a Registered Nurse back in the Philippines. My pathway as a nurse completely changed when I moved to Canada; given that there is no nursing reciprocity between the countries, so I decided to pursue a career at homecare. Thus, I took the Home Care Assistant Curriculum at one of Montreal's best schools: Wilfrid Laurier University.

This may appear to be a step-down from being a nurse; however, I always believe that my sole purpose is to touch lives and make a difference. After graduation, it was challenging for me to look for a job that aligns with my goals and aspirations.

After research, job hunting and networking, I came across Bayshore Health Care. I heard many good things about the company, so I decided to apply and explore my chances. Given my current immigration status at that time my chances were slim. What company would support me with my current state? Would they be able to see my potential? Are the reviews about them too good to be true? Yet, it's all about taking chances and taking a big leap of faith. I got

the job, and after one month, I transferred to a beautiful province of Nova Scotia. I fell in love with this place immediately since it's surrounded by beautiful beaches, lakes and genuine people.

In my first weeks as an employee of Bayshore, I already felt that I am part of the family. My supervisors and colleagues assisted me with work, but the most memorable experience so far was when COVID-19 started. That was the time I felt the camaraderie of the Bayshore team. They not only made sure all the clients were safe but mostly their employees. Working as a home care worker during a pandemic was risky since we do house-to-house care. It was scary, but the Bayshore immediately provided us with a full PPE to protect the clients and us. They made sure we are supplied with detailed information with our clients ahead of time, gave a list of exposure for us to be aware of where to go and not to go, assisted us in getting our total vaccine doses, and continued to remind us with all precautionary measures.

Also, being with Bayshore allows me to help our clients in their activities of daily living. It always feels too great



to go home after a long day knowing that all your clients are comfortable and well cared for. This is one of the main reasons why I am still with Bayshore.

Being a Home Care Assistant is a very fulfilling job. I am grateful for all the people who helped me gain much knowledge and most thankful to Bayshore Health Care for trusting my ability to render care to the clients. I believe that life is continuous learning as we meet different people and deal with different situations. Knowing that there is a company like Bayshore to continue to support my journey as I meet my goals in life.

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“One of the most important aspects of retirement living is the luxury of having friends ‘at the ready’, living in the apartment down the hall or a few floors away with daily activities to enjoy alongside others. Staying active and engaged is important for overall health and wellness, and it improves one’s quality of life immeasurably. Retirement living is a strategic way to prepare for the future while enjoying the present. As many residents have said to me, there is always something to look forward to each and every day.”

– Catherine Campbell

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CRAFT CORNER

Simply... Fire Cider

By Jenny Joan Larisey

Craft Consultant for Maritime Hobbies Crafts

Tinctures, tonics and teas. These are some of the things that inspire me to grow herbs. Another is to make an annual supply of fire cider. Those who embrace natural medicine call upon this spicy and tangy tonic to stay healthy during the winter months and cold season.

Simply put, fire cider is a vinegar based health tonic also known as an oxymel. Made with healing plant ingredients and infused into raw apple cider vinegar to create a powerful immune boosting, anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial, anti-viral, decongestant, circulation and digestion system boosting beverage.

Rosemary Gladstar coined this herbal tonic in the 1970's using just 7 core ingredients. However, you can be creative and mix all sorts of beneficial and tasty additions. More so than with regular cooking I try to use all organic ingredients with ferments and infusions for the cleanest results.

To start off you will need a glass jar, garlic, onion, fresh horseradish, fresh ginger, apple cider vinegar (raw and unpasteurized), honey and cayenne pepper. Optional in-

redients that I have deemed essential in my "Jenny Fire" recipe are; citrus, fresh turmeric, black pepper corns, jalapeño (or any other hot pepper) for a spicy batch, and as many herbs from my garden that I can get into the jar. Use as much or as little of the ingredients as you like depending on how you want it to taste.

To start you want to chop and grate the ingredients described above. The smaller the pieces, the better it will all infuse.

Add all the goodies into your glass container (with the exception of honey and cayenne pepper that will be added later), 2/3 to 3/4 full leaving room to cover the mixture by a few inches. Slowly pour in the apple cider vinegar making sure to knock out any air bubbles. Cover the jar with a plastic lid or if using a standard jar lid, add a piece of waxed parchment paper on top before putting the lid on. This is so the acidic nature of the vinegar won't corrode the metal lid.

Store the infusion at room temperature, somewhere that you will see it and remember



to give it a daily shake. You want to shake it up well to not only increase the steeping action, but also to prevent any mold growth by keeping the contents submerged and moving. You do not want to let the same ingredients float on top for multiple days. Keeping them moving and mixed decreases the chance for mold to grow.

After a minimum of 3-4 weeks, your fire cider will pack a punch but you can keep infusing it for much longer if you like. When you're ready, strain out the liquid using a mesh strainer and cheesecloth.

Lastly, add honey and cayenne pepper to taste. To help the honey blend, soak the jar in a hot water bath to melt a bit, and then use a whisk to rapidly stir.

Your tonic should stay good

Tired of old news? Read the Parent-Child Guide ...

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well up to a year or longer. I store what I think I will need for the year in the fridge and in a cool dark cupboard and give the rest away as gifts.

Please note: Omit any of these ingredients as needed for

health reasons or otherwise. The best thing about making Fire Cider is that you can adjust the ingredients according to taste and wellness support that you are looking for. With fire cider, a recipe is merely a suggestion.

Drop in to Maritime Hobbies & Crafts to see our craft corner and for many craft ideas. 1521 Grafton Street, Halifax, 902-423-8870

Bathroom Bliss

By Holly Gouthro, Interior Consultant, DWD Interiors



Bathrooms have come a long way and the technologies and trends that are happening now are ever changing and upgrading.

For most master bathrooms having a separate shower and freestanding tub is ideal. Even in small spaces this can be achieved by creating your bathroom into a wet room. More people are veering towards open showers, using a fixed panel or nothing at all, instead of a fully enclosed shower area. This not only gives you more leeway with the layout of the room but also gives the room a bigger, more open feel.

Finishes in bathrooms just like everywhere else in

the house are still trending with black, and gold is also continuing to make an appearance. Doing something different like a coloured freestanding tub is fun but the novelty could fade quickly, stick with black or neutral if you wanted something other than white.

Powder rooms are a perfect place to jump out of your comfort zone and into something bold. Being a room in the house that you don't spend a lot of time in, but that everyone usually sees, you can have fun and add a little drama. Going with dark walls or a bold wallpaper is a great way to spice things up. Or go for a dramatic floor to ceiling accent tile, powder rooms are fairly small, so this is a perfect place to add impact without breaking the bank.

Technology in bathrooms is definitely something that is upgrading constantly. Built-in speakers for your shower, smart toilets, towel warmers, steam rooms, touch/ sensor faucets, light up rainheads, back lit/ anti fog mirrors are just a small offering that bathroom tech has to offer and can bring your space into the now.

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Pets Post Pandemic

Courtesy of Carney Animal Hospital

Our pets, like us, have had to adjust during the pandemic. The biggest adjustment for many was learning how to spend much more time with their human owner who was at home so much more during the last year and a half. And as owners, many had to adjust to working remotely and looking after their pets. In many instances, this also met those pets were in the company of young children as well.

Certainly, many people adopted pets during the pandemic, and this has resulted in a very close bond between the pets and their adoptive humans. There was very little, if any, opportunity to socialize these pets with other people, visit places and engage in activities like obedience classes where the pet would be able to develop their social and training skills.

Humans take comfort in their pets; pets take comfort in their humans. So, moving forward as we

return to a more normal pattern of work and social life, the question often asked is how is the pet going to adjust?

Pets for the most part will be able to adjust to a change of routine but as a pet owner you should help them by preparing for change in stages.

You may want to start by leaving them alone for only a few hours at a time at first. Perhaps consider day care as facilities start opening or a day sitter at your home. If you are unable to get home mid day, you may be able to schedule a mid day walker. Exercise and socialization will become important next steps especially if they have been limited during the pandemic.

Try and maintain as much of the routine you have been doing—if there was a walk at lunch or in the evening, try and keep that in place. It is important to not forget about your pet's needs as you make changes yourself.

Research shows that pets have a long-lasting memory and to successfully affect change may take four weeks or even months for your pet to adapt to a new routine.

Distractions for your pet may help as well. In the case of cats, there have been great successes with leaving "cat videos" on when you are out of the home! Dogs may enjoy the radio being left on.

You may wish to consider the addition of Feliway or Adaptil products.

Watch for signs of extreme stress and behavioral issues. Don't hesitate to reach out for help from a qualified person. During the pandemic, many non-essential services were not available by veterinarians which meant many pets may be behind on regular visits for vaccines, nail trims, weigh

FOR THE LOVE OF PETS



ins, a trip to the groomer and other needs. Expect to re-acquaint your pet on these outings, it's been a while and you will want it to be a positive experience for your pet. Most veterinary clinics are still limiting the number of clients

and pets into their waiting area at any one time—this will be helpful for your pet, a quieter less stressful environment until they are used to being out and about.

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