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Parent-Child GUIDE

Covering the Halifax Regional Municipality and beyond!

The Parent-Child Guide newspaper is published by
Rockwell Publishing Incorporated, Halifax
94 Bayview Rd., Halifax, NS B3M 1N9

parentchild@ns.sympatico.ca | 902-209-4461

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Advertising Deadline February 1, 2022

ROBERT ROCKWELL, Owner/Publisher Cell 902-209-4461

Jennifer Park, General Manager 902-209-4461

Design & layout: TC Transcontinental Printing Halifax

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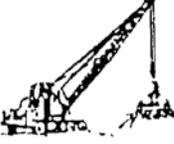
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One of my favourite things

By Carol M. Shirley, Registered Psychologist, with ENIGMA

There is a wonderful book called *The Five Languages of Love*, written by Gary Chapman, that can change your life. The full book is also available on YouTube as an audible which is free.

Mr. Chapman asked a question about what others do for us to make us feel loved and supported. He identified five different categories: quality time, physical touch, acts of service, words of affirmation and gifts. The nuances in each category are described in the book but generally what you think as you read the titles is likely accurate. He calls them languages to highlight the importance of understanding each are distinct and the value of speaking (behaving) the language so the recipient can and will feel understood.

As an example, my primary (usually one is

dominate or primary but we can still enjoy the others) language is acts of service. I feel loved when my partner contributes "around the house". I feel loved when supper is started, or when the laundry is done or the snow is cleared from my car.

My partner on the other hand, his primary is physical touch. Early in our relationship I would bake, cook and clean to show my love for him but I was speaking my language, not his. I was confused when he would say things like "are you still cleaning, why don't you just come and sit with me". Life got easier, I realized he didn't really care if I baked or cleaned, what filled up his love tank was having me close to him, touching his leg or back.

Understand the languages and the people who speak a different language than you do

means your efforts become much more effective.

This is the time of year where it is easy to identify those whose language of Love is gifts. Taking special care to wrap and decorate their gifts pays off. These are the people who always give gifts that are almost too pretty to open.

The holidays are also pretty special for those who speak the language of quality time; just hanging out (watching movies, playing games and eating good food).

I think that those whose

language is words of affirmation really need all of us to say out loud some of the kind things we think. They need to hear the words to feel loved and understood. Words like "Thank you", "You're such a good mom", "You look beautiful". These words are free to say and priceless to hear. Maybe do yourself a favor and listen to the book after all, Love is the reason for the season.

Blessings!

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RRSP or TFSA?

Submitted by The Sutherland Wealth Management Group

Is it better to contribute to a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) or a Tax-Free Savings Account (TFSA)? As one does not replace the other, the best solution is to contribute to both. However, each option has its pros and cons, depending on your age and personal financial situation.

What is the difference between an RRSP and a TFSA?

These two savings vehicles meet different needs:

- An RRSP is a long-term savings vehicle intended for **retirement**.
- A TFSA is a complementary tool to help you save for short-term **goals** (e.g., travel, education, renovations). TFSAs can also be useful in saving for retirement as they do not affect the amount of government benefits you receive, unlike RRSPs.

RRSP contributions can be deducted from your taxable income, whereas TFSA contributions are made with income that has

already been taxed. Therefore, they aren't tax deductible. That having been said, if you withdraw funds from an RRSP, they will be included in your taxable income and taxed at the rate based on your current income, which is not the case with a TFSA.

Which one should you choose?

As with any financial portfolio, diversification should be a key aspect of your retirement savings plans. Essentially, RRSPs and TFSAs enable you to **build tax-sheltered savings**. Your financial advisor can help you determine which one would be more advantageous in your situation. However, we've gathered a few rules of thumb for you below. If your tax rate is higher now than it will be at retirement, an RRSP is likely the better option. However, if you think that your retirement income will be higher than your current income, you're better off with a TFSA.

Do you expect to receive a significant pension? Your

government benefits (e.g., Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement) may be reduced as your pension income is considered in their calculations. Unlike with TFSAs, RRSP withdrawals are considered income. Therefore, a TFSA may be more advantageous as it enables you to better manage your total taxable income.

If you are nearing retirement age, you must also take into account that at age 71, all RRSPs must be converted to Registered Retirement Income Funds (RRIFs), which will impact your taxes. This is not the case with TFSAs, which have no age limit, so you can contribute to them throughout your life. "In the case of RRSPs, your funds are tax-deferred, but the tax rate will likely be lower when you are 65 or 70 as your income is probably going to be lower," added Jean-Philippe Bernard. "As for TFSAs, you have already paid taxes on the funds invested, so you will not be taxed on them again when you withdraw them."

When it comes to estate planning, there are also major differences between the two vehicles from a tax standpoint. Both savings vehicles allow you to des-

ignate a beneficiary. However, all amounts invested in an RRSP will be taxed upon your death (unless an eligible rollover is applied), while TFSA earnings cease to be tax-exempt after death.

How to make contributions

The amount that you can contribute to your RRSP is based on your "earned income" from the previous year as well as any pension contributions made by you or your employer. The amount is provided on your income tax notice of assessment. There are annual limits and any unused contribution room from previous years can be carried forward.

As for TFSAs, the maximum annual contribution may vary from year to year (\$6,000 in 2021). You will find the allowable TFSA contribution room from previous years on the Canada Revenue Agency's web site. Any unused contribution room, starting in 2009, can be carried forward indefinitely.

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

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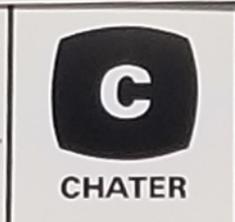
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To All Our Constituents & Friends Seasons Greetings & Best Wishes For The New Year

A Message from Darrell Samson, the Member of Parliament for Sackville-Preston-Chezzetcook

The Year in Review

As 2021 draws to a close, there is much to reflect on. It was another difficult year for many people in our riding as we faced ongoing challenges from the pandemic. Others saw a rebound in our economy as more people got vaccinated which led to more small businesses and restaurants being opened to higher capacities.

We can all look forward to 2022 with confidence that it will bring ongoing signs of improvement. From my family, to you and yours, we wish you **Happy Hanukkah! Merry Christmas! Joyeux Noël! Happy Kwanzaa!**

Let's Not Forget!

This can be a busy time of year for most of us, whether shopping, decorating, or sharing festivities with loved ones and friends.

However, this season can be particularly difficult for those who maybe find themselves alone or unable to afford the holiday experience for their children that they had wished for. Please take time to check on your neighbours or others

who you know who might be struggling.

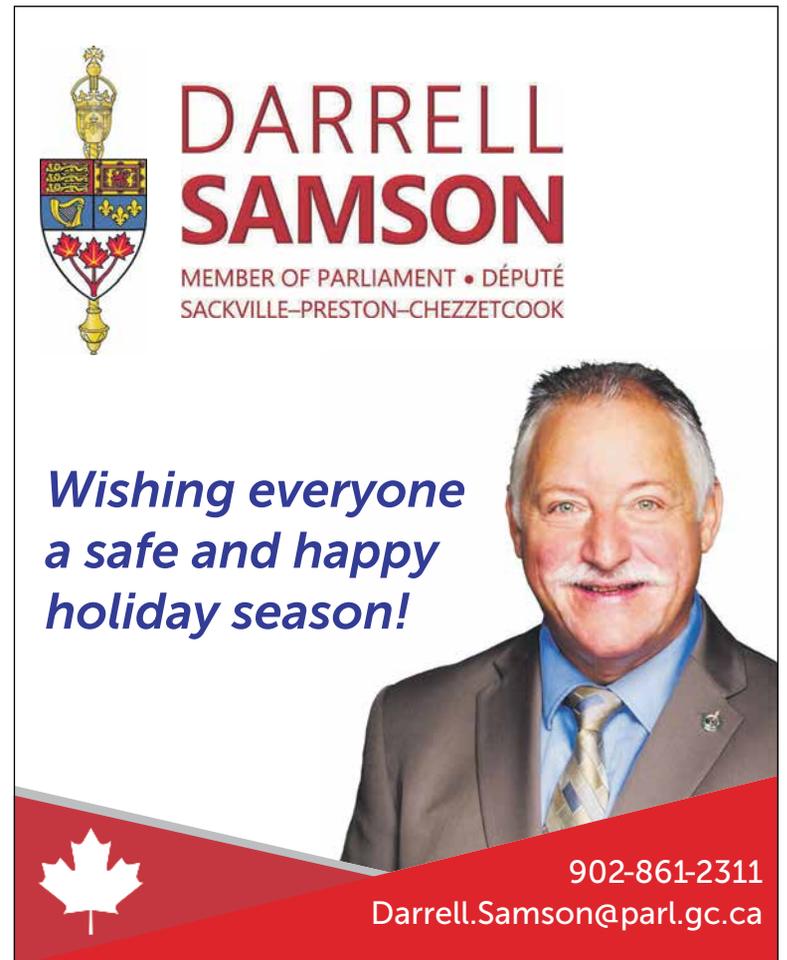
If you find yourself in this situation and things seem too overwhelming, please do not hesitate to reach out for help:

Mental Health Mobile Crisis Line:
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(or toll-free 1-888-429-8167)

Calling on Our Youth in 2022!

The **Constituency Youth Council (CYC)** is a non-partisan program for youth aged 14 - 21, which allows them to have their voice heard on policy issues facing Canada. This is a chance to learn about Canada's political process and most importantly, get involved in our community.

Including youth voices is important. Their perspective brings new light to issues affecting our communities and our country, and I look forward to bringing this fresh perspective with me when I am in the House of Commons.



DARRELL SAMSON
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT • DÉPUTÉ
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*Wishing everyone
a safe and happy
holiday season!*

902-861-2311
Darrell.Samson@parl.gc.ca

If anyone 14 to 21 years of age is interested in joining this year's Constituency Youth Council, which will begin in January 2022, please send us an email with the subject "CYC" to Darrell.Samson@parl.gc.ca.

A Message from Hon. Tim Halman, MLA, Dartmouth East

Happy Holidays, everyone!
2021 has certainly been a busy year as we adjust towards a sense of normalcy again, but the holidays give us time to reflect and take stock of all of the blessings in our lives.

I'm certainly grateful for all of the opportunities that this past year has given to my family and me.

It is my hope that you take time with family and friends and enjoy some time surrounded by loved ones.

While the holidays can be uplifting for most, it can also be a difficult time for some Nova Scotians and our neighbours. If you know of someone struggling in your community, I encourage you to reach out and lend a hand or contact my office to let us know how we can

help. After all, compassion and empathy are key themes for holiday seasons.

On behalf of my family and I, I wish you a wonderful Holiday season filled with joy and laughter with family and friends. I wish you health and happiness for a prosperous 2022.

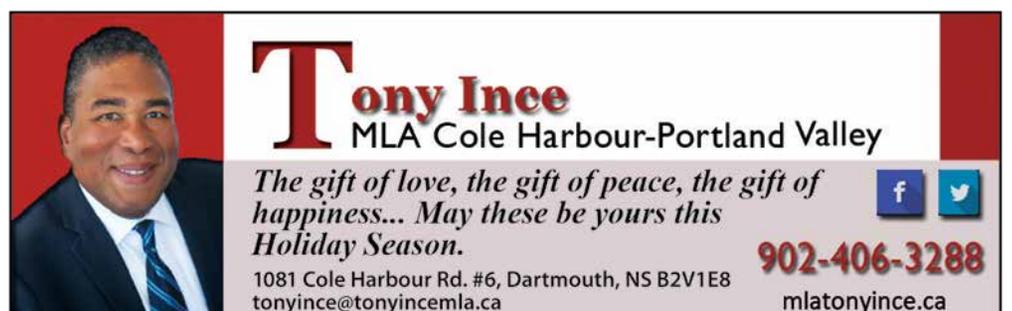


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To All Our Constituents & Friends Seasons Greetings & Best Wishes For The New Year

Seasons Greetings
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Holiday wishes from Rafah Di Costanzo, MLA, Clayton Park West

I would like to wish all my constituents, and all Nova Scotians, a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and a safe and happy New Year.

It is hard to believe that winter has arrived as we prepare for the holidays. Throughout 2021, our communities supported each other as we continued to navigate this pandemic. We found safe ways to celebrate, visit each other, and support our local businesses. Our communities remain vibrant as we fight to end COVID-19.

2021 also saw a provincial election. I am incredibly thankful and honoured that Clayton Park West put their trust in me once again to serve as MLA. In official opposition, I look forward to holding the government accountable on all fronts, including as the critic for Communities, Culture, Tourism, and Heritage, and the Voluntary Sector.

In the Legislature, I raised concerns that the Newcomer Health Clinic is no longer accepting new refugees. I am working with the Minister to address this issue and advocating for positive

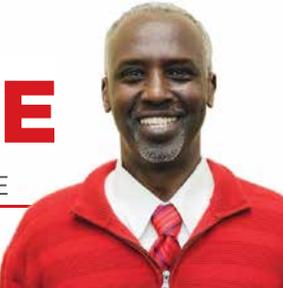
resolution. Furthermore, I am working with the Minister of Education to find solutions to the overcrowding at Park West and Rockingham schools.

In January 2022, our office will be restarting the Litter Prevention and Clayton Park West—Connecting Seniors Committees. I will continue to host *Coffee & Conversation* monthly at the Bedford Basin Café to meet with constituents on a variety of issues and ideas. Please contact our office if you would like to attend our next Coffee and Conversation event.

The Outpatient Centre in Bayer's Lake will continue to be a priority in 2022. I will share information as it becomes available in my newsletter and on my social media. In addition, I look forward to addressing the concerns and ideas you brought forward to me during the campaign.

Once again, I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and best wishes for a healthy and safe 2022!

Seasons Greetings & Happy New Year



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MLA HALIFAX ARMDALE

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A Message from Patricia Arab, MLA, Fairview-Clayton Park

As we enter the second holiday season of the pandemic, we hear more every day about what an effect this period has had on our kids' mental health. The days are short, and the problems of the world can seem overwhelming. Before entering politics, I worked as a Guidance Counsellor and saw first-hand how stress can affect kids at school and how that impacts their whole lives. That work inspired me to push for programs that make schools more prepared for mental health challenges. As parents, it's important to be aware of how important preventative mental health in schools is—we need to be encouraging the promotion of healthy active living in relation to our children's mental health, the same way we do for their physical health.

I was proud to be part of a team that piloted and rolled out the Promoting Alternate Thinking Strategies (PATHS) program in what was then the South Shore Regional School Board. The basic premise of the PATHS program is to teach children starting at age 5 to identify, name, and understand their feelings, both good and bad then teach them how to positively work through these emotions, with the goal being that when crisis occurs in their lives, they will have the tools needed to help handle the situation.

Let your kids know that if they are feeling overwhelmed or very sad they should talk to you about it, and they can also talk to their teachers and guidance counsellors. It's important that they know what support systems are available to them. As a parent feel free to reach out to your child's teacher or their school if you have concerns. We're all in this together.



Hon. Patricia Arab
MLA, FAIRVIEW-CLAYTON PARK

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DARREN FISHER
Member of Parliament for Dartmouth-Cole Harbour

We wish you a warm
and bright holiday season!

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

Greetings from Braedon Clark, MLA, Bedford South

As your new MLA for Bedford South, I would really appreciate hearing from you about any issues facing our community. What are some things you would like to see more of in our neighbourhoods, what celebrations or milestones are happening (ie. special birthdays, anniversaries, special events, festivals, new businesses, etc.). My staff and I are here to serve you as best we can so please feel free to reach out anytime.

Tis the season...

The holiday season is a time for reminiscing about the past and being hopeful for the future.

However it is easy to get lost in the flurry of activity and not take the time to do the things that really matter. So let your inner child come out to truly enjoy and appreciate the small things in life that so often get overlooked.

This time of sharing and giving is also a good time to remember some people are having a difficult time. A little smile, a word of cheer over a coffee together, getting some supplies, and a bit of love will make all the difference to someone who is alone or sick. So please let's all spread the warmth of the season to all those around us.

May your holidays be filled with joy and good cheer and may the New Year 2022 bring you peace and happiness.

Warmest wishes everyone from me and my family for a safe and Happy Holiday Season.

Braedon, Caitie, Beau, and Heidi

Braedon Clark
MLA Bedford South



*Best Wishes for the Holidays
and a Happy New Year*

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A Message from Lena Metlege Diab, the Member of Parliament for Halifax West

As your Member of Parliament for Halifax West, I want to extend my best wishes to my constituents and to all Nova Scotians this holiday season. To all those celebrating, Merry Christmas et *Joyeux Noël!* I hope that the New Year is full of promise, good fortune, and opportunity for you and yours.

It's been an exciting first few months for me as your MP, and I've been hard at work in Ottawa and in Halifax meeting with colleagues and debating important legislation on topics ranging from targeted pandemic supports for businesses and workers, a ban on conversion therapy, the provision of paid sick leave to workers, and more. I'd like to take this opportunity to encourage constituents of Halifax West to reach out to my office at lenametlege.diab@parl.gc.ca if I can assist you with a federal matter. You can keep up to date with my work by following my Facebook (@LenaMetlegeDiabNS) and Instagram (@lena4halifaxwest), and you can sign up for my E-News Updates by sending me an email.

I'd also like to encourage businesses, non-profits, and community organizations to reach out to me for information on potential funding opportunities for community projects. The always-popular Canada Summer Jobs program will soon open for applications, and applications continue to be accepted for the Canada Community Revitalization Fund (CCRF). The CCRF is a short-term infrastructure funding stream for shovel-ready projects that improve and revitalize community spaces for the benefit of everyone. If you are involved with an organization that could benefit from support with such a project, I encourage you to reach out to my office as soon as possible.

In closing, I want to thank the people of Halifax West for the kindness and support they have shown me this year. May the joys and blessings of the season be with you and yours in 2022.

*Merry Christmas
and Happy Holidays!*

*Joyeux Noël
et meilleurs vœux pour la saison!*

عيد ميلاد سعيد
وأطيب التمنيات للعام الجديد

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Keep cozy and warm this Winter with Woolly Flock!

By Pete Cullen, Executive Director, Ross Farm Museum



As I write this the sun has just peaked out behind the clouds on an otherwise gray, late November day. Windchill—minus six degrees. Yesterday I was out in the woods pulling one of our nature trail bridges back into place and soaked up to my knees. Almost dry by the fire over night, I pulled my boots on again today for another trip around the nature trail—this time with a group of school kids for a lesson on trees and their uses. The boots were still wet, but the feet were warm and toasty—all day.

The secret? Wool socks. I don't mean partially wool socks, I mean the real deal. Nothing keeps you as warm even when wet. In this respect, wool is still king. Wool hats, wool sweaters, wool socks. Even wool undergarments are surprisingly scratch-free these days—and anyway, you get used to it. Sheep have been swearing by the stuff for millennia.

There's a reason for it. Wool allows you the comfort and flexibility to do all of the outdoor things you want to do—even in the winter! Whether it is hiking the province's trails or, I say sheepily, leaving little piles of the farmer's coffee beans lying around the paddocks, wool keeps the weather out. Hikers say "cotton kills", referring to the way cotton keeps the moisture next to your skin, so wicks away heat. Wool wicks away the moisture and allows your body to create a

warm-air blanket around you—keeping you much warmer.

So, no excuses! Grab your friendly neighbourhood sheep—or rather purveyor of decent woolens, and gear up to get outdoors! Have a great breakfast with enough healthy calories to get you going, and wear those woolens to keep you warm when you stop!

The kids from the first paragraph and I tromped through the woods for two hours looking at spruce,

fir, yellow birch and maple trees. We splashed through the puddles of half-frozen leaves and mud, scuffed through the snow on the boardwalks and stopped for a snack near our sheep pasture. They were tired, they were hungry, they were excited, but I saw many had decent socks, and nobody complained of cold feet. A woolly flock indeed. Sheep have understood this for millennia and probably chuckle a bit at us as we go by.



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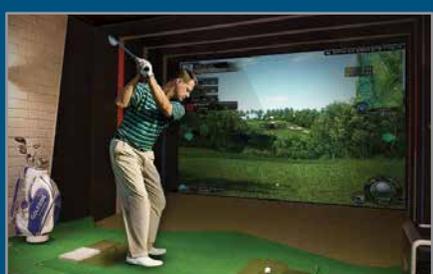
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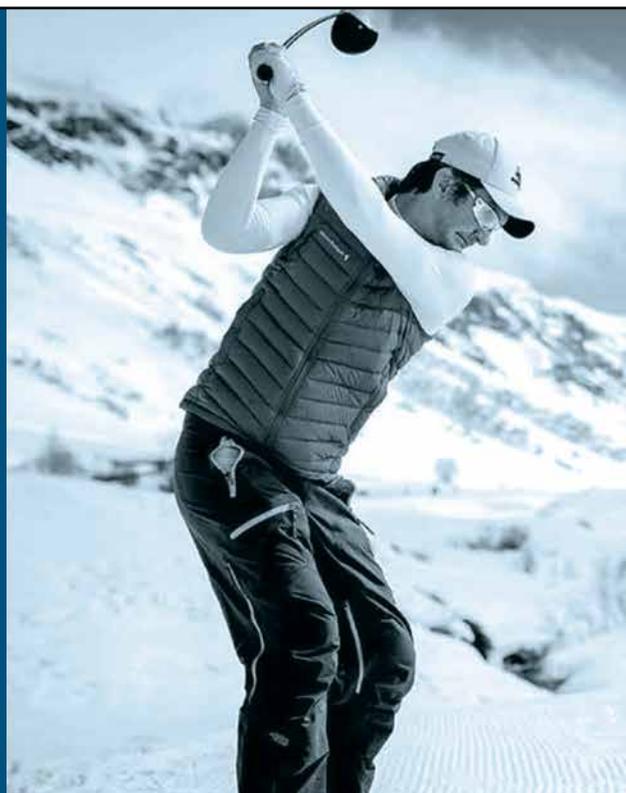
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Grade Pre-primary and Primary

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Grades 1 & 2

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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 may wonder about 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.

We have introduced a new and exciting technology in our clinics, that makes wearing braces easier, more accurate and with the added bonus of shorter treatment times. We are one of the very first clinics to implement LightForce 3D printing technology to create custom orthodontic treatments for every patient.

It is cutting edge, custom and clear. We'd be happy to tell you all about it if you are interested! We have over 100 patients who are already using LightForce and they love it! In my next article, I will give you an update on this new technology.

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

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Seniors' Living Care

Redefining Family Connection

By Bayshore Home Health



photo: benalexander/Pixabay

Being separated from family and friends can be very stressful—after all, humans are social creatures, and we depend on our relationships and social networks for support, friendship, and fulfillment. Loneliness among seniors is also a serious concern.

To stay connected while social distancing, many people are finding alternatives to in-person visits. Here are nine ideas to try:

Regular phone calls. For many seniors, this is the easiest way to stay in touch with friends and family.

Texting and more. For seniors who are comfortable using technology, you can also connect with text messages, emails, video chat, and social media.

Hold a virtual dinner party. Everyone prepares their meal at home and joins a video chat. The

nice thing about video chat is that you can see each other's facial expressions and body language.

Email and blog updates. To keep senior loved ones in the loop about what you and your kids are up to, create a short e-newsletter with photos and text, and send it out every few days. A family blog is also a good way to share updates, and visitors can add comments.

Read bedtime stories together. If your senior loved one can use video chat, see if they'd like to read aloud to their grandkids in the evening. If using the phone is easier, try using speakerphone.

Get crafty. Invite the kids to create digital greeting cards, photos and artwork to email to their grandparents.

Play online games. There are free online versions of classics like card games, chess and backgammon, or newer multiplayer games that kids



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will also enjoy.

Watch a movie together. Netflix Party allows people in different places to watch a movie or TV show together.

Arrange home care services. If you live far away from your loved one and are concerned about their well-being, consider hiring a professional caregiver. Home care services include companionship, housekeeping, meal preparation and more.

Taking advantage of different ways to connect that can help us feel closer and support each other.

For more information call Bayshore Home Health at 902-580-2221.

An Enduring Natural Legacy

Create a lasting natural legacy of pristine landscapes, towering forests and coastal treasures with the Nova Scotia Nature Trust.

Throughout the challenges the world has faced this year, nature has been there for all of us. From seeking out extraordinary views and hard-to-reach habitats to exploring our own backyards, spending time in nature can bring us joy and keep us healthy—mental-

ly and physically. It holds family adventures and quiet moments, restoration and solace.

We need nature now more than ever.

But nature has never been more at risk. Our wild spaces and treasured species are threatened. Many of our most important and treasured natural areas, including critical habitat for endangered species, are privately owned and at risk of development.

There is good news:

we can still save Nova Scotia's irreplaceable wild spaces and species—if we vastly accelerate the pace of land conservation.

The Nova Scotia Nature Trust's mission is to protect the province's ecologically significant lands. Over 25 years they have protected 15,000 acres using a strategic, science-driven approach to identify and protect the most threatened, unique and significant natural areas. And now they are racing to

We need nature now more than ever.



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double their protected spaces to 30,000 acres by 2023. They're making great progress—and with your help, they can achieve that ambitious and critical goal.

Help save the wild places you love. Ensure that our wildlife thrives. Protect a healthy planet. And preserve a legacy of wild spaces for future generations to enjoy.

Contact Barbara Haley at 902-425-5263 or Barbara@nsnt.ca or visit nsnt.ca for more information.

Education

Home For The Holidays

By Nicole Lenihan, The Growing Place

Being an inclusion centre, we make sure to include cultures of all who are involved with our centre. We have just recently celebrated Diwali. Some of our staff shared with the children and other coworkers the cultural background as to how they would celebrate home. They were very excited and thrilled to share their culture with us all. We learned that Diwali is India's biggest and most important Holiday of the year. It is also known as the Festival of Lights and is a five-day celebration that includes good food, fireworks, coloured sand, and special candles and lamps.

By providing our classrooms with a variety of resources for the children such as dress up clothing, photos/posters of clothing that would be worn, ceremonies, toys, etc. creates a variety of learning experiences. We have a range of story books for the teachers to read to the children about different Holidays that are celebrated around the world and how they are celebrated in their cultures. Also, by talking to families and doing some research online we gain information for our teachers to provide the children with.

We have had families bring their children to daycare wearing their ceremonial clothing that they wear to celebrate the Chinese New Year. Those families also provided us with resources such as some books they had at home to read to the children and shared some things that they would do at home as to how they celebrate such as the foods they would eat, their daily routine as to what activities or outings they would do.

We want our families, children, and staff to feel like they are home for the Holidays and to be able to share their culture with us so we can all learn about the different Holidays celebrated all over the world. With those experiences they

provide everyone involved with the knowledge to be able to pass it on.

With many Holidays celebrated around the world comes delicious foods, gatherings, and reminiscing. It is important to learn about how others celebrate especially if they are newcomers this will make them feel more at home and welcomed.

Nicole currently teaches the school age program at The Growing Place (Pleasant Street location), as well as assisting in the office and with Inclusion Programming. For more information, please visit our website at www.thegrowingplace.ca



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Education

Five Ways to Simplify Math Homework

Submitted by Oxford Learning

Homework is an essential part of school and learning that helps students process what they've learned in class. Often this is easier said than done. That's especially true with math homework. Math homework can go beyond simply being frustrating, and even induce math anxiety. Finding ways to simplify math homework makes it less intimidating and more manageable. Students have a lot on their plate, which makes it difficult to stay organized.

Simplifying math homework not only helps improve the experience but can make it enjoyable too. The sooner students complete their math homework, the sooner they can get back to the hobbies they enjoy. Check out these top five methods to simplify math homework.

How to Complete Math Homework Faster and Easier

1. Remove All Distractions. One of the first things to do before starting homework is to remove all distractions. Having cell phones, tablets, or other digital devices nearby can hinder focus. A Consumer Research study found that the mere presence of phones in the room was distracting to students. Taking homework seriously is a valuable tool for long-

term success. After removing digital devices, students can let family (and friends) know that homework is starting and to reduce distractions and interruptions.

Finding a quiet, comfortable place with minimal clutter allows students to remain focused on the homework at hand. While working in clutter-free quiet might be challenging at first, removing distractions ultimately helps students complete work quicker and easier.

2. Identify Mistakes. With continuous practice, math is a subject that can be solved. However, that does not make it easy to understand. A small mistake can ruin the entire math problem. That's why it is so important to be aware of, and correct, those mistakes, whether big or small. Making mistakes is part of the learning process and so is learning how to rectify them. The most common math mistakes include careless errors, computational, and conceptual errors.

3. Prioritize Tasks. When tackling a math assignment, most students will start with the easiest task. This may make sense but is not proven to be

cont. on page 19

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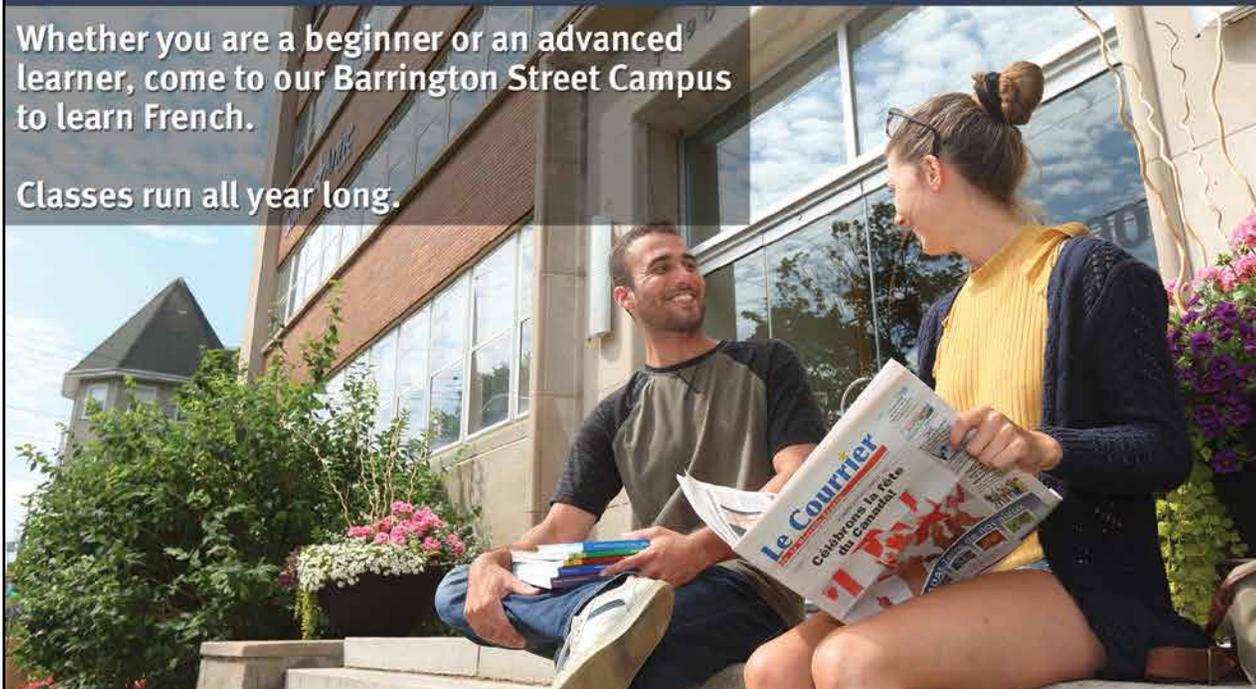
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Merry Christmas & All the Best in 2022 to Everyone!

The holiday season is here again. We are grateful and appreciative to all our advertisers whose continuous support has made our local HRM publication possible for over 26 years. Thank you very much!

COVID-19 is still a challenging time for all of us, but we will never give up our hopes to get through this difficult time.

We hope that 2022 will be a much better year for everyone and that life will get back to somewhat normal.

On behalf of the staff of the *Parent-Child Guide* and all our advertisers, I would like to thank all essential workers who continue to provide essential services during this difficult time with COVID-19. You are all our heroes!

I would also like to thank our writers, whose professional and interesting articles keep the newspaper informative and helpful for our readers throughout the HRM area. And I want to thank all our wonderful readers for their kind words and interest in our newspaper for over the past 26 years.

We are thrilled about our upcoming 27th Anniversary and hope you will celebrate with us. Stay tuned for our Special 27th Anniversary Edition, printing April 20, 2022. We look forward to publishing for many years to come, providing helpful and informative information to our great readers of all ages.



On behalf of everyone at the *Parent-Child Guide*, we wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year.

With Sincere Appreciation,

Robert

Robert Rockwell
Owner/Publisher
Parent-Child Guide



Incorporating Music into Learning

By Chris Parsons, Award-winning Author of *A Little Spark*

Technology limitations and hiccups. A lack of focus by students. Greater feelings of isolation. With distance learning is still the norm for many of us, these are just some of the problems we encounter daily as we navigate our new learning landscape.

But what if I were to tell you of a way to lessen the stress and strain for teachers and students alike and improve learning? It's something so simple and readily available to all of us. I'm talking about music.

We already know, according to a study by the John Hopkins School of Education, that playing reflective music can hold a student's attention for longer periods of time than without. That music instruction appears to accelerate brain development in young children, particularly in the areas of the brain responsible for

processing sound, language development, speech perception and reading skills.

But we don't need studies by highly respected universities to tell us what we already know: That music soothes our soul, stimulates our senses, and opens up our imaginations.

Below are 5 ways you can incorporate music into your home learning program to create a spark for greater productivity, stimulation, and joy.

1. Set the Mood with Music

What would our favorite movies be without music? Think about the theme from *Jaws* or any of the songs from the *Sound of Music*. Think about how music affects mood during a film—how the right tone can calm or excite. Why not use the same techniques of Hollywood moviemakers for your learning program? The next time you read a story, accompany it with

music that fits the scene or development of a character.

Use music as a transition from one subject to another. Use it as a cue to inspire a sense of urgency, such as the *Batman* theme. Create energy with the theme from *Rocky*. Instill calmness with a lullaby.

What music you choose is up to you, but used appropriately, the right piece can set the right mood for the moment.

2. Write a Song, Melody, or Lyrics

Having your students try their hand at writing music or lyrics can deepen their understanding and appreciation for any lesson. Instead of assigning the typical book report or essay, use music to spark new inspiration.

Let the student take ownership and choose whether to create a song, write a rap, or develop a beat. Creating

music is a terrific way for your students to express their creativity.

Remember how you learned your ABCs? Use a sing-along to memorize new material or even their multiplication tables.

3. Let the Music Guide You

Music can be a great teaching assistant. The next time your students are practicing math drills or learning spelling words, for example, let them keep a beat or tap to it with anything they have on hand, such as a toy drum or even an aluminum pot. Of course, be sure they get their parent's attention before suggesting they bang away on their mom's cookware.

Music, in general, works wonders when learning new material. I bet you can still recite the lyrics from the series, *Schoolhouse Rock!* (Two of my favourites are "I'm Just a Bill" and "Conjunction Junction", which can be viewed on Disney+ by the way).

4. Let's Dance

One of the most challenging aspects of at-home learning for children is the



Photo: RODNAE Productions from Pexels

lack of physical activity. Allow them to get up from time to time and shake a groove to the music and release some energy.

Dancing to music also helps to build motor skills while allowing them to practice self-expression.

Flocking is a method of interpretative dance where students mirror or shadow each other's movements in a group. One student will act as the leader and express their meaning to a song by creating a move. The other students will attempt to follow. The Council of Ontario Drama and Dance Educators (<https://www.code.on.ca/resource/flocking>) has all the details. Keep in mind it was written for in-class learning, but you can use your imagination to create ways for it to work virtually.

5. Let a Musician Tell Their Story

Listening to a musician's story can do wonders to increase one's appreciation of their art. The good news about today's Zoom/Google Meets culture is that we're getting use to meeting virtually.

Invite a local musician to discuss their craft, how they got started, and even to perform a tune or two. Although many musicians are night owls, you might be surprised how willing they would be to get up early and talk about one of their greatest passions.

As an alternative, there are plenty of fantastic and inspirational documentaries for older kids on musicians—many of which you can find on Netflix, Amazon and even on YouTube.

CRAFT CORNER

Warming Up For Winter

By Jenny Joan Larisey, Craft Consultant for Maritime Hobbies Crafts

Did you know that marshmallows originated in Egypt as early as 2000 B.C.? It was a treat reserved for royalty made from the mallow plant (*Athaea officinalis*), a plant found in marshes. Sometime in the 1800's French confectioners improved on production techniques to give us the modern day marshmallow.

Most commercial marshmallows aren't vegan friendly because of added ingredients like gelatin. That being said, there's options to make this delicious treat entirely plant based so literally everyone can partake!

For this recipe the gelatin is replaced with a plant based alternative called agar-agar; an extract from seaweed that has properties similar to gelatin. And instead of egg whites, aquafina (the water from canned chickpeas) is used.

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup aquafaba
- 1/2 teaspoon cream of tarter
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 tablespoon agar-agar powder
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Instructions:

1. Cover a baking dish with parchment paper, bottom and sides so the mixture doesn't stick and pour in the marshmallow mixture. Make sure that the sides of the parchment paper sticks above the dish so you can lift the set marshmallow out of the dish easily.

2. Mix the aquafaba with cream of tarter in an electric mixer until soft peaks form. This should be at least 9 minutes to ensure fluffy marshmallows.

3. In a saucepan, bring water and agar-agar to a boil while constantly whisking. Cook for 3 minutes, reduce heat and slowly add the sugar. Sugar burns easily so be sure to turn the heat down after bringing the water and agar-agar mixture to a boil. Continue to cook and whisk this mixture for 7 minutes.

4. Set the electric mixer on low speed and gently pour the syrup and vanilla into the fluffy aquafaba mixture.

5. Let this sit for one day at room temperature before cutting it into squares.

6. Store in an airtight container.

I love making a batch to go with hot chocolate in



the winter and s'mores in the summer. They are so easy to make over and over, playing with the recipe and using different flavors like pumpkin spice, peppermint or caramel.

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Front Door Décor

By Holly Gouthro, Interior Consultant, DWD Interiors

With the holiday season fast approaching no doubt guests will be arriving at your front door. It is the first area of your home that visitors will notice.

There are a few things that you can do to spruce up your front entrance that are fairly simple and budget friendly.

Replacing your house numbers for a new more stylish version or switching out your exterior lighting can add great curb appeal to your home. You can also add a little punch to your front door by painting it a fun or dramatic colour, this is some-

thing that is easy to do and will have a big impact on the look of the home.

Styling the entrance of your home is a great way to change your décor throughout the different

seasons. While you can change your décor for the season, you should still have it reflect the interior styling of your home.

Choosing a few larger pieces that can work

throughout multiple seasons but can also be updated for each season is a way to get great value from a single purchase, such as selecting large planters in a neutral colour and changing the interior decor of them to suit the season is a great way to keep things interesting but not break the bank.

I'm a big fan of layering when it comes to décors and this process can also be done for your front entrance, such as layering door mats, a fun thin pattern mat beneath a smaller more neutral mat or having layers of décor,

something tall, medium and small on one or both sides of the door. Also I always have a touch of nature, whether it be flowers or fresh greenery, it gives your home a cozy and welcoming feel.

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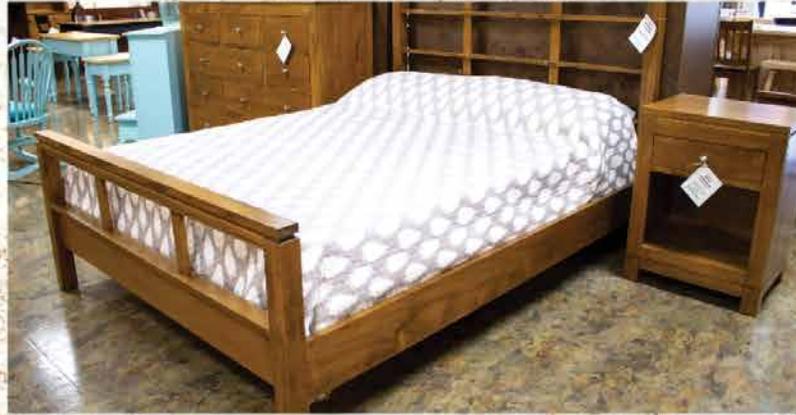
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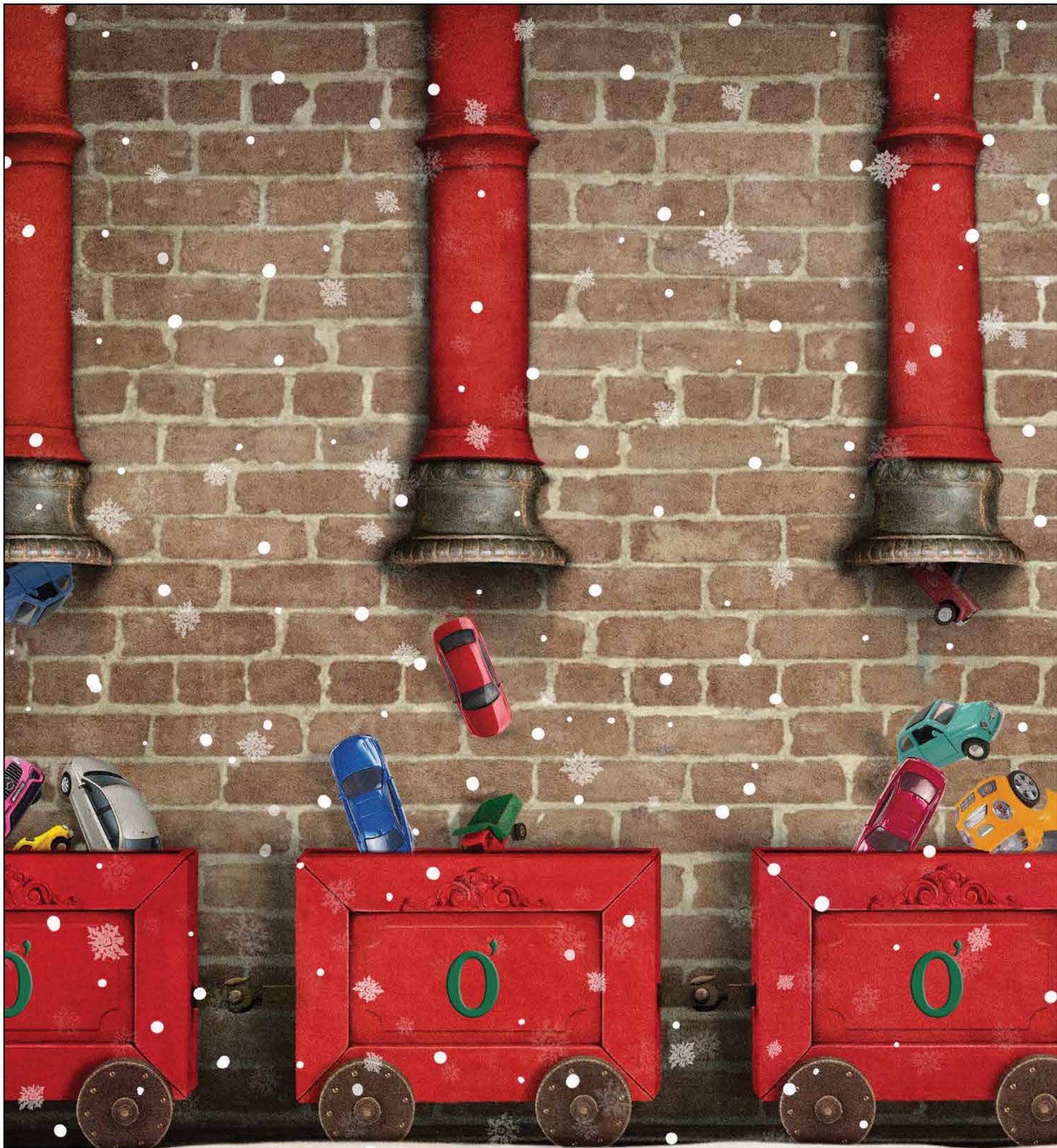


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