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FREE

June/July 2025

Vol. 31 - No. 2

Est. 1995

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# Is Inclusive Education a Cost Cutting Strategy?

By Claudette Bouman

According to The Canadian Encyclopedia, a gradual progression in Canadian education saw a move from segregation to integration, mainstreaming, and ultimately, inclusion of students with special needs. Inclusion in education is

a motherhood concept. Who could possibly be against including all children in a classroom learning environment.

Nova Scotia's recently announced Provincial School Code of Conduct Policy, approved in April 2025, rattled the cages of parents concerned about

the ideals and practices of inclusive education. The loudest voices came from parents whose children could be affected because of behaviours associated with autism. But any dialled-in parents of children with special needs, and learning and behavioural challenges

would likely have been just as concerned. Does this new policy mark a significant departure from past practices?

The "new" Code of Conduct aims to create and maintain safe and inclusive learning and working environments in school communities. As such, the Code "establishes expectations for acceptable behaviour of children and students and provides guidance on how schools should

respond to and accurately record incidents of unacceptable behaviour." This means severely disruptive behaviour by any child or student could result in brief or longer-term removal from the teaching and learning environment.

But how does this square with the Nova Scotia Inclusive Education Policy? Approved in August 2019, it states: "inclusive education is a commitment to ensuring a high-quality, culturally and linguistically responsive and equitable education to support the well-being and achievement of every student."

To create classrooms where all students of various abilities, backgrounds, or learning needs participate and learn together requires appropriate and adequate supports. In my opinion, this calls for specialized training and equipment. Special needs teachers need to be trained in special needs education programs that would include courses in human anatomy and physiology as well as neuro-psychology.

Ever since the clear trend in Western societies towards inclusive education, the supply of qualified trained educators and provision of appropriate and adequate supports have lagged behind.

A recent article in Germany's Tagesschau newscast highlights these problems. German teachers see the opportunities of inclusion, but experience a lack of equipment and support on a daily basis. Sixty-nine percent of teachers surveyed believe that shared learning for children with and without disabilities is beneficial in principle. This is six percentage points higher than in 2020. However, only twenty-eight percent of them think its implementation would be actually practical in the current school environment. They list many reasons: lack of staff, inadequate training, overcrowded classrooms, and buildings that are not accessible. To be fair, accessibility may be more of an issue in Germany than in Canada.

It leads me to wonder: What is really lies at the heart of governments' inclusive education policies?

*Claudette Bouman retired after teaching for 30 years in Barbados, Saskatchewan, and Nova Scotia. Her memoir, Failing Forward in Saarland published by FriesenPress, is available from her at: claudette.bouman@gmail.com. It is sold at Helen Creighton House in Dartmouth, and Atlantic News and Bookmark stores in Halifax.*

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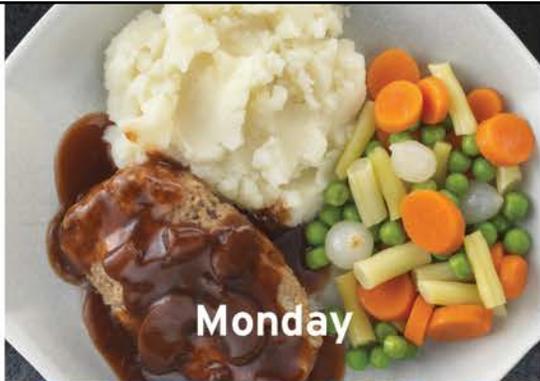
ROBERT ROCKWELL, Owner/Publisher,  
Jennifer Park, General Manager 902-209-4461  
Design & layout: TC Transcontinental Printing Halifax

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# HRM MLAs and MPs Working Hard for YOU!

## A Message from Brad McGowan, MLA Cole Harbour -Dartmouth

Last November, I received the honor of a lifetime when I was elected to represent the people of Cole Harbour-Dartmouth. In the time since, I've been working hard on your behalf, and I'd love to share with you how I've spent that time. From February through into March, I had the privilege to take my seat for the first time in a session of the Legislature, where I participated in supporting legislation and a budget designed to prepare Nova Scotia for the future. I've also been made Ministerial Assistant to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, where I use my experience in a leadership role at

HRCE to support Minister Brendan Maguire in his role as Minister. Most importantly, I've been learning so much about my community. I've been very happy to attend neighborhood celebrations and cleanups, and meeting with constituents who share with me their vision for a better Nova Scotia for all.

I said on many doorsteps during the campaign that if it matters to you, it matters to me. If you are a constituent in Cole Harbour-Dartmouth, feel free to reach out to me if you have an idea for how we can better improve our community. My number one job is to echo the voices of the commu-



nity I represent, and it's a duty I take very seriously. As I continue to move forward as your MLA, I'm sure that my growing experience in this role will translate into results. Thank you again for the honor of serving in this role.

## A Message from Hon. Leah Martin – MLA for Cole Harbour

Wela'lin for taking the time to read my article.

My name is Leah Martin, I am the MLA for Cole Harbour and I am also a proud member of Millbrook First Nation. I am so excited for summer in Cole Harbour; with Lawrencetown and Rainbow Haven to Abenaki and beyond, there's so much fun to be had over the next few months!

Below I've included some of my best tips for success as we head into the coming weeks.

Heading outdoors with your child? It's essential to plan ahead to protect their skin and keep them hydrated. Here's a simple guide to ensure a safe and enjoyable day in the sun.

### 1. Apply Sunscreen

Choose a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher. Apply it generously to

all exposed skin areas, including the face, ears, neck, and tops of feet. Reapply every two hours, or more frequently if swimming or sweating. Remember, sunscreen works best when combined with protective clothing and shade.

### 2. Wear Protective Gear

Equip your child with a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses that block 99–100% of UV rays. This shields their face, neck, and eyes from harmful sun exposure. Opt for lightweight, long-sleeved clothing made of tightly woven fabrics for added protection.

### 3. Stay Hydrated

Encourage your child to drink water regularly, even if they aren't thirsty. On hot days, aim for at least 5–8 cups of fluids, depending on age and activity level. Include water-rich snacks like watermelon, cucumbers, and or-



anges to help maintain hydration and support healthy skin.

### 4. Seek Shade During Peak Hours

The sun's rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Whenever possible, plan outdoor activities for earlier or later in the day to minimize direct sun exposure. If your shadow is shorter than you are, it's time to find shade.

This summer, I hope you take time to enjoy the land and water that surround us—and the people who make this place home. And if you see me around town, don't hesitate to stop for a chat. I'm always here to listen. In the meantime I am wishing you all a joyful, safe, and sunny season!



# HRM MLAs and MPs Working Hard for YOU!

## Eye See... Eye Learn!

A Message from Paul Wozney MLA, Sackville-Cobequid

**D**id you know that the Nova Scotia Association of Optometrists is launching a program to give eye glasses to kids who need them at no charge? With Eye See... Eye Learn, children in grade primary or pre-primary who need glasses can get them completely free!

1 in 4 children suffer from issues with eyesight, but eye glasses are too costly for many Nova Scotian families to afford. With Eye See... Eye Learn, families need not worry about the cost of getting their pre-primary or prima-

ry student this crucial tool for success.

But eye glasses aren't the only thing your child's eyes may need. Eye development is a fundamental part of a growing body, and routine eye care from an optometrist is key to your child's development. The Nova Scotia Association of Optometrists recommends that kids get an eye exam every academic year from an optometrist, who can provide a more comprehensive examination than kids may receive in school. You can find help with the cost of these appointments

too, as MSI coverage provides for an eye exam every two years until your child turns 10.

If you learn that your child's optometrist recommends

eye glasses for your grade primary or pre-primary age child, don't fret the price, get them the eye glasses they need with Eye See... Eye Learn!



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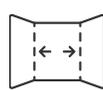
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# FUN

## Places To Go!

### Experience History Happening — in Sherbrooke NOW!

By Lanny Boyer, Events Manager & Marketing Coordinator  
Sherbrooke Village

Nestled along the banks of the **St. Mary's River**, Sherbrooke Village invites you to step into a living, breathing 1860s village — one that's not just preserving history, but making it. As the

first entire watershed in Canada to be nominated as an **Ecologically Significant Area**, the St. Mary's River provides a stunning natural backdrop to a season packed with new adventures and timeless traditions.

There's more to discover in Sherbrooke NOW than ever before. In 2025, visitors can dive into the *Gold Rush! Escape Room*, an exhilarating new attraction created with **Captured Escape Rooms**. Solve clues, hunt for treasure, and feel the thrill of striking gold — all within the walls of a hands-on historical mystery.

Starting July 4th, Victorian Nights light up the Village every Friday evening. Stay late to explore Sherbrooke by lantern light, with exclusive activities, artisan demos, and evening-only surprises that reveal a whole new side of the past.

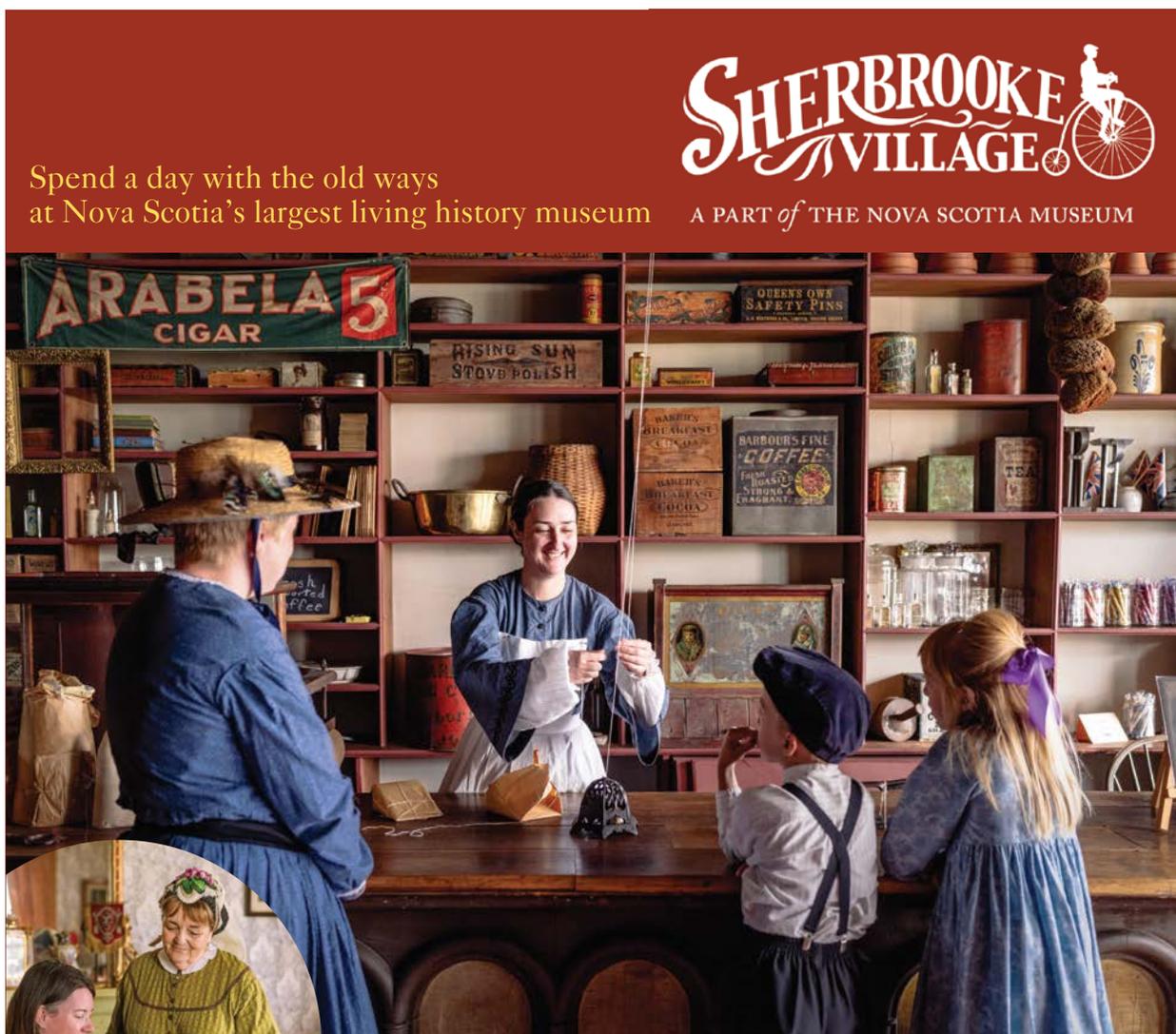
Back by popular demand and bolder than ever, our **2025 Ghost**

**Tours** continue the chilling tale introduced last season, expanding the story and raising the stakes. With new twists, eerie characters, and dramatic effects, this after-dark experience will keep visitors on edge — and coming back for more.

Meanwhile, the **Courthouse Concert Series** returns with live performances from June through October, offering a perfect blend of culture, history, and incredible acoustics in one of Nova Scotia's most unique venues.

Whether you're learning to blacksmith, spinning wool by hand, or chatting with costumed interpreters, Sherbrooke Village brings history to life in unforgettable ways. Seasonal events like **Heritage Day** and **Old Fashioned Christmas** offer even more chances to connect with the stories, skills, and spirit of the 19th century.

**Come see what's new in Sherbrooke NOW — where history comes to life!**



Explore our historic buildings to uncover tales of tall ships, timber, and gold; Experience our thrilling Ghost Tours, Courthouse Concerts, and Escape Room; Learn about heritage skills, crafting alongside our village artisans; Find serenity along the storied banks of the Napu'saquuk/St. Mary's River.

Whatever your calling, Sherbrooke Village is more than a destination. It's a journey into the heart of historic rural Nova Scotia.

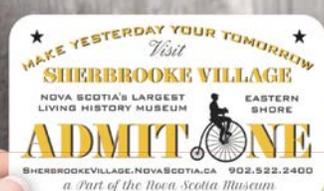
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# The Value of Performing Arts: 10 Benefits for Children

Submitted by Stagecoach

Studies have shown that afterschool activities can play a vital role in a child's overall development and performing arts has proven to have significant impact. At Stagecoach Schools, we believe that the impact of performing arts through Singing, Acting and Dancing will provide each child with Creative Courage for Life! Here are 10 reasons why participating in performing arts is incredibly valuable for your child:

- 1. Confidence Boost** Participating in the performing arts help children overcome shyness and build their self-assurance. Taking part in shows and presentations encourages them to take risks, speak up, and be proud of their accomplishments.
- 2. Creative Expression** Through drama, dance, and music, children learn to express themselves in a unique way. These mediums provide a safe space to explore emotions and ideas, helping the student develop a healthy outlet for self-expression.
- 3. Teamwork and Collaboration** From learning a group dance or putting on a play, children work together to achieve a common goal. They learn the value of listening, supporting one another and contributing to a team.
- 4. Stronger Communication Skills** Performing in front of an audience teaches children how to project their

voice, use body language and communicate clearly. These skills build their public speaking abilities and help them become effective communicators.

- 5. Problem-Solving and Adaptability** Theatre and performance often involve thinking on your feet. Children learn how to adapt when something goes wrong during a rehearsal or performance, developing valuable problem-solving and critical thinking skills.
- 6. Emotional Intelligence** Portraying different characters helps children develop empathy and understand different perspectives. They become more emotionally aware and better at managing their own feelings.
- 7. Discipline and Focus** Learning lines, choreography and music requires dedication and attention to detail. Children learn to stay focused, follow directions and manage their time.
- 8. Resilience and Confidence in Mistakes** While performing, mistakes are part of the process. Children learn that setbacks are opportunities to improve, helping them develop resilience and a growth mindset.
- 9. Cultural Appreciation** Introducing new music, dance and scripts, exposes the student to new cultures. This encourages inclusivity and global awareness.

**10. A Lifelong Love of the Arts** Early exposure to performing arts often leads to a lifelong passion. Whether as a hobby or a career, the arts can bring joy, creativity and fulfillment for a lifetime.

For more information on how Stagecoach Schools can enrich your child's life through performing arts education, visit [www.stagecoachschools.ca/halifax-ca.today.out.ns.cpf.ca](http://www.stagecoachschools.ca/halifax-ca.today.out.ns.cpf.ca) for more information on our camps in July and August 2024!

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## Ross Farm Museum's 2025 Summer Programs

By Rhea Hamlin, Ross Farm Museum

**T**he Ross Farm Museum's 2025 summer programming features a variety of demonstrations, including tool sharpening, straw hat crafting, spoon carving, flax processing, and candle making.

### I Have an Axe to Grind

Join us for "I Have an Axe to Grind," a weekend event focused on the art of tool sharpening using a grindstone. This event will take place on July 19th and 20th. The staff at Ross Farm will demonstrate effective sharpening techniques and showcase the various types of tools that can be sharpened with a grindstone. Do not miss this opportunity to enhance your tool maintenance skills!

### Nice Hat!

As labourers worked all day

under the scorching sun, having protection became essential. During the late 18th to early 19th centuries, straw hats were a common sight among farmers and workers in both North America and Europe as the materials were inexpensive & readily available. On August 9th and 10th, interpreters will demonstrate the traditional craft of straw hat braiding, allowing visitors to experience this historical practice.

### Spooning Weekend

Wooden spoons have long been cherished utensils in kitchens worldwide, including in Nova Scotia. Join us on August 16th and 17th as skilled interpreters showcase the fascinating process of transforming a block of wood into a beautifully crafted

spoon in our farm workshop!

### Flaxing Around

Our 'Flaxing Around' weekend on August 23rd and 24th will showcase the process of turning flax into linen. Learn all about ripping, retting, breaking, scutching and hackling to turn flax plants into linen sheets.

### Do You Have a Light?

In the early 1800s, candles were the only source of light. Join our interpreters on September 13th and 14th as they demonstrate how dripped candles were made, just as settlers did many years ago.

*For more information about these events and others we are hosting, please visit our website or follow us on social media.*



HTTPS://ROSSFARM.NOVASCOTIA.CA/



The Ross Farm Museum is open for the summer season, from Wednesday to Monday, from 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM, until mid-October.

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## Young Amputee Embodies Legacy of The War Amps CHAMP Program

**T**he Child Amputee (CHAMP) Program, now in its 50th year, provides financial assistance for artificial limbs, peer connections and so much more.

Born without her left arm below the elbow, Harper was enrolled in CHAMP when she was just shy of two years old. As a "Champ," she received financial assistance for artificial limbs, including those for activities like swimming and dancing, and received life-changing peer support through the program, particularly at CHAMP seminars.

"CHAMP provides opportunities for amputees and those with limb differences to share, connect and laugh together. From big topics like driving and shoe-tying to how to hold a burger with one hand, this is what CHAMP seminars are all about," says Harper, now an elementary school teacher.

"Every seminar brings new learning as we enter new seasons of our lives. I wouldn't be half the teacher, leader and human I am today without The War Amps and the CHAMP Program. My world has opened up because of my amputation, and it has given me an edge in everything I do."

Harper experienced a full-circle moment at a recent CHAMP Seminar, where she gave the keynote speech to an audience of Champs and their families. Cathy Blakely, Harper's mom, has fond memories of attending the seminars with her daughter over the years and watching her interact with other amputees.

"We leave these seminars feeling so inspired and so very lucky to be a part of this wonderful group of people. What an amazing support system," Blakely says.

The CHAMP Program was created in 1975 by war amputee veterans who recognized their knowledge and experience could benefit children across Canada who were living with an amputation.

CHAMP serves children under 18 who are born with a limb difference or who have lost a limb due to an accident or medical causes. The legacy of "amputees helping amputees" remains a hallmark of the program, as regional seminars and other CHAMP events are often the first occasions where child amputees and their families meet other amputees and parents who have "been there."

The War Amps does not receive government grants. Its programs are made possible through the public's support of the Key Tag Service.

**Learn more: [waramps.ca](http://waramps.ca) or call toll-free 1 800 250-3030.**



(Now) Kendra Harper gives the keynote speech at a recent 2025 CHAMP Seminar

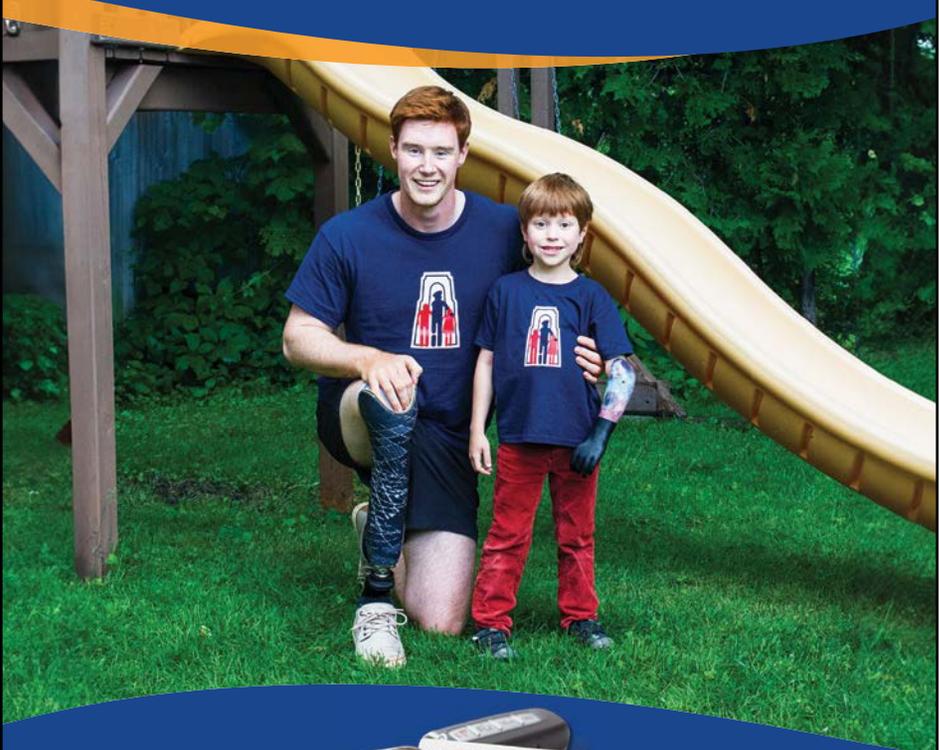


(Then) Harper holds War Amps key tags at a CHAMP Seminar in 2008.



## The War Amps

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# Education

## Summer Learning Loss Is Real— But It Doesn't Have to Be

Submitted by Oxford Learning

**B**y June, most students (and parents, too) are more than ready for a break. The routines of the school year give way to sunny days, later bedtimes, and well-deserved downtime.

However, while looking forward to summer break, many parents and students don't realize that between 62% and 78% of students can lose academic ground over the summer. That's not just a stat—it's real loss of learning that occurs every fall when students return to school, forgetting their times tables or struggling to get back into reading routines.

This is what's known as the summer slide. And the good news? It's preventable.

### What Exactly Is Summer Learning Loss?

Summer learning loss happens when kids take a full academic break for two (or more) months.

Without practice or reinforcement, skills in core areas such as math, reading, and writing start to fade. Think of it like a muscle: it weakens if you don't use it.

This doesn't mean kids need a full school schedule during summer. But a little bit of learning—just a few hours a week—can go a long way toward keeping those skills fresh.

### It Doesn't Have to Be Boring

The words "summer" and "learning" don't usually go together in a kid's mind, but they should! The trick is to make summer learning fun, interactive, and low-pressure.

Think math games, creative writing challenges, reading books that kids actually want to read, and hands-on science experiments that feel more like play than school. The goal isn't to overwhelm students—it's to help them stay engaged and

confident.

The best summer learning programs do exactly that: they combine fun with purpose, helping kids maintain momentum without burning out.

### Keep the Routine (Just a Little Bit)

One of the hardest parts of the back-to-school season is getting back into the routine. A completely unstructured summer can make September feel like hitting a wall. Kids are tired, out of practice, and often frustrated when school starts.

Adding just a touch of structure to summer routines—say, scheduled reading time or weekly math practice—helps students stay in the zone, so returning to school is exciting, not stressful.

Avoid the summer slide! Check out our Summer Learning Guide for everything you need to support summer success.

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### Summer Is a Great Time to Get Ahead

Summer isn't just about catching up—it's also the

perfect time to get ahead.

When students review material from the past year and preview content

for the next grade, they walk into the classroom in

*carry to page 17*

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# Embracing French in Nova Scotia: A Gateway to Family Bonding

Submitted by ÉQUIPE D'ALPHABÉTISATION-NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE

Learning a new language goes beyond academic achievement; it opens doors to strengthening family connections. For parents in Nova Scotia whose children are learning French as a second language, embracing French together can bring many personal and familial benefits. Équipe d'alphabétisation Nouvelle-Écosse supports Nova Scotian families through the free "Je parle français avec mon enfant langue seconde" program, promoting French learning across the province.

When both children and parents engage in learning French, language acquisition transforms from a solo endeavor into a collaborative family activity. This shared learning experience promotes stronger relationships as families can practice basic conversational French at home and read books together in French. These shared activities not only enhance language skills but also reinforce the family bond.

The "Je parle français avec mon enfant" free pro-

gram meets these diverse needs through a structured, beginner-friendly curriculum that fits into the busy schedules of parents. Offering 20 weeks of in-person classes or 21 weeks of online instruction, this program supports parents not only in fostering their children's love for French but also in advancing their own personal learning.

Here are three tips for practicing French this summer:

- 1. Read French Books:** Summer is an excellent time to enjoy literature. Pick books at your language proficiency level. Children's books and comic books are particularly suitable for beginners, as they are generally easier to understand and include helpful illustrations.
- 2. Watch French Movies and TV Shows:** Take advantage of the wide array of French films and series available on streaming platforms. Watching with subtitles can help beginners follow along.
- 3. Cook French Recipes:** Cooking French dishes introduces you to both the language and culture. Following recipes in French can help you learn culinary vocabulary and phrases.

Engaging in these activities can make learning French both enjoyable and productive, enhancing your language skills over the summer. We hope you all have a wonderful summer filled with enriching experiences and joyful educational opportunities.

*continued from page 16*

### Stop Summer Learning Loss

the fall feeling confident and prepared. That head start can make a huge difference, especially for students who struggled with certain subjects during the school year.

Summer learning doesn't have to mean sacrificing fun. It's about keeping the brain active, staying curious, and continuing to grow—even if it's just a little bit each week.

### A Little Effort Now, Big Payoff Later

We all want our kids to have a relaxing summer. But that doesn't mean letting go of learning completely. A balanced summer, with plenty of fun and a little academic time, can help students retain what they've learned and start next year strong.

Next year's school success begins in the summer. With the right support, your child can beat summer learning loss and head into the new school year feeling motivated, prepared, and ready to shine.

So, instead of spending the first few weeks of school reviewing old material, your child could be moving forward, raising their hand confidently, and building a strong foundation.

Want to learn more about how to keep learning going this summer, without the stress?

Discover how our summer programs are designed to keep kids engaged, confident, and having fun.

**Contact us today at [bedford@oxfordlearning.com](mailto:bedford@oxfordlearning.com) 902-405-4116 or [halifax@oxfordlearning.com](mailto:halifax@oxfordlearning.com) 902-423-4484**

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# Health & Wellness

## Is your Child's Smile Making you Frown?

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



Both as an Orthodontist and mother, I am always meeting parents who are very concerned about their children's teeth or bite. The truth is, normal development can look a little scary, especially as children transition from the primary to permanent dentition. As recommended by the Canadian and American Orthodontic Associations, age 7-8 is the ideal time for an early screening exam where an Orthodontist can explain what is happening with your child's bite and recommend any early treatment, if it is even necessary.

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); a crossbite (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; or 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 is a good idea. Your Dentist is an excellent resource and will likely refer you to an Orthodontist as they see fit. A referral from your Dentist is recommended, as your Orthodontist will want to work with your Dentist to ensure the best overall care and results for you or your child.

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

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