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Trees as Green Factories

Straight Teeth without Conventional Braces? What you need to know!

FALL REGISTRATION GUIDE
 pg 11-13



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Trees as Green Factories

By Claudette Bouman

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Did you know that on a clear hot day a single forest tree pumps about 10 liters of water, a full bucket, from the soil into the atmosphere?

It doesn't take much to draw children into the wonder and excitement of the world of animals. But what about the world of trees? A child is attracted to dolphins, seals, beavers, even salamanders, and birds, like an iron particle to a magnet. That makes it easy for parents and teachers to use a child's natural curiosity to encourage interest, questions, and investigations about animals and their habitats.

A young child may or may not display the same immediate curiosity about the natural world of trees. In the "Oppenheimer" movie out in theatres this summer, one character says to another: Trees, they are the most inspiring structures! Can you imagine a world where an adult opens her eyes to see a massive, full-grown oak for the first time? What would be her first reaction?

I'm making a plug for more education about these ancient giants for if we are busy teaching children about climate change, then we should also be busy teaching them about the impressive work these green factories perform.

What's the difference between a hemlock and a red oak? Between elm and birch? What's a tamarack? In his small but mighty Trees of Nova Scotia, Gary Saunders tackles the unique variety of 45 different kinds of trees covering about 75 percent of Nova Scotia, grouping

them first under labels of softwoods and hardwoods. He then splits these two sets into species. And that's only the beginning. You can absorb an awful lot about what distinguishes tree species by learning about individual features of needles, twigs, cones, and bark.

It's amazing the detailed knowledge forest scientists have accumulated about trees. For now, let me just focus on the leaves. At a basic level, if you examine several different needle trees, you soon discover two main types: those with needles in bundles, e.g., pine, and those with needles one-by-one, e.g., spruce. Broad-leaved species also come in two kinds: simple one-piece leaf, like birch, and many-parted compound leaves made up of several leaflets, like ash.

Leaves are important for the photosynthesis work they do that's why they deserve the label green factories. All day the foliage of trees inhales through pores carbon dioxide produced by people, animals, and engines, and all day they exhale life-giving oxygen as a spin-off.

If you look carefully at different leaves, they offer a wealth of information including leaf arrangement, leaf structure, leaf duration, leaf shapes, leaf texture, and more. Consider leaf shape for a moment. Leaves are thought to have one of 4 basic shapes, ovate, obovate, elliptic, or oblong, depending on where the blade is widest. If children are encouraged to collect, label, and measure leaves of broad-leaved trees and keep a neat table of their results, a rich field of knowledge unfolds. They learn new words, observation skills,



Photo: Gennaro Leonardi/Pixabay

and develop transferable skills helpful in other subject areas such as math and science. Perhaps they may even grow into forest scientists as it became my husband's dream when he roamed towering beech woods in his youth.

Claudette Bouman retired after 30 years of teaching in Barbados, Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia, mostly at senior high school. Her last thirteen years were spent at Cole Harbour District High School with a wonderful group of colleagues. There she taught chiefly English and Theory of Knowledge in the International Baccalaureate Program (IB). She enjoys writing and is in the process of writing a Memoir title: "Saarland Dream." It's about a year she took off from teaching (2013-2014) to live in Germany with her husband and daughter. She has two adult children and lives in Dartmouth with her husband.

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

Submitted by The Sutherland Wealth Management Group

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

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 contribu-

tion 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 there-

fore 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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 Design & layout: TC Transcontinental Printing Halifax

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HRM MLAs and MPs Working Hard for YOU!

A Message from Darrell Samson, the MP for Sackville-Preston-Chezzetcook

It is Back to School Time! 🎒 🏫

The first day of school for many students and teachers is quickly approaching. I am pleased to welcome back all the students and teachers who are returning and give a warm welcome to those who will be joining us for the first time. I hope you had the chance to rest, relax and recharge over the summer and are ready for an exciting and productive school year.

I sincerely appreciate all the teachers, support staff, school boards, administrators and parents who work tirelessly throughout the school year to prepare students for success and ensure they have the proper supports. As a former educator, your efforts are noticed and are very appreciated.

I would like to wish everyone a happy, healthy, and successful 2023-2024 school year!

Darrell

Canada Disability Act

THE CANADA DISABILITY BENEFIT ACT IS NOW LAW!

This benefit will help lift working-age persons with disabilities out of poverty.

There are 6.2 million persons with disabilities living in Canada. However, the harsh reality is that a person with a disability is twice as likely to live in poverty than a person without a disability.



The Canada Disability Benefit Act is now a permanent part of our social safety net, and it has the potential to lift hundreds of thousands of people out of poverty. The Canada Disability

Benefit will provide low-income working-age persons with disabilities a monthly federal income supplement.

To learn more, please visit: https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2023/06/landmark-canada-disability-benefit-legislation-receives-royal-assent.html?fbclid=IwAR1HG506go0I-WQPx5_5eEFNc7ciENEceECTDNs-Gh_m90SS--Ov4fLiwFbk

Temporary Foreign Workers



Last week the Honourable Minister Sean Fraser announced a new temporary measure that removes the limit on the length of the study programs that temporary foreign workers can enroll in without a study permit.

This will allow foreign workers to seek additional training and education and helps them seek future careers and better settle into permanent residency.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2023/06/new-measure-to-benefit-foreign-workers-looking-to-improve-their-skills.html?fbclid=IwAR1jgX9hW4qJji-259jnuzDsNK6UYk5JWDBpEP-JVZUFbeRE2uEmbUkXNTEWUlooking-to-improve-their-skills-Canada.ca>

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MP for Dartmouth—Cole Harbour

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ANDY FILLMORE
Halifax MP

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The Canada Child Care Benefit is Going Up!



Beginning in July, families received a maximum of \$7,437 for children under 6, and \$6,275 for children aged 6-17. This represents a 6.3% increase from last years benefit providing more relief for young Canadian families.

For more information on eligibility, please visit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/child-family-benefits/canada-child-benefit-overview/canada-child-benefit-before-you-apply.html?fbclid=IwAR0hV4Enog-CRk9Hv4Bxr-Si0DqpY2VkuuET1Ks-rdcE3QGT2ccsnxWsvggv4> (CCB) - [Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca)



Nova Scotia Floods

In July, Nova Scotia suffered devastating floods. The Honourable Sean Fraser, on behalf of the Federal government, announced special measures for Nova Scotians who have been affected by the recent floods.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada will issue free replacement documents that have been damaged, destroyed, or lost such as: permanent resident cards, proof of citizenship, Canadian citizenship certificates, Canadian passports, and other travel documents.

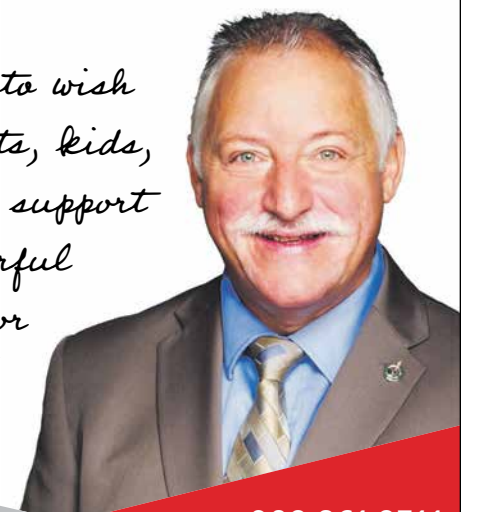
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DARRELL SAMSON

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I would like to wish all the parents, kids, teachers, and support staff a wonderful school year for 2023-2024!



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HRM MLAs and MPs Working Hard for YOU!

A Message from Rafah DiCostanzo, MLA for Clayton Park West—Back to School Is Here!

Fall is Around the Corner

I hope that you all had a wonderful, fun filled summer. We were so thrilled to bring back the Annual Community BBQ with the Friends of Clayton Park. Our neighbourhood is growing so fast, and this barbecue was a terrific way to mingle with everyone. I hope you were able to join us. We would love to hear how much you enjoyed it. Let our office know what your favourite part of the day.

Keep The Community Clean

I am passionate about keeping our community the beautiful place that it is, and part of that is keeping it clean! Our Litter Prevention Committee will be holding two community clean ups this Fall. The

first will be Saturday, September 21st from 10-12. The Litter Prevention Committee is an integral part of the community. If you are enthusiastic about Litter, and would like to join our committee, please contact our office and we will happily put you on the volunteer list. Hope to see you there! Check out our Facebook page for more details on this and the October clean up.

Slow Down Signs

As the children are heading back to school, we are going to see more children on our streets. Our "Slow Down" signs are meant to remind drivers of their speed when driving through the community. Studies show that placing three consecutive signs with short distances apart can help reduce the num-

ber of speeding drivers. Constituents can access these signs by calling our office by phone or email.

Seniors Information Session

We are excited to announce that we will be holding our First Seniors Information Session on Monday, October 2 from 1-3pm at Saint Benedict Church. We will speakers talking about Seniors Fraud Prevention, Seniors Safety Grants, Nutrition and Seniors Walking Programs. I look forward to meeting with you all and enjoying refreshments and snacks. If you would like to register for this event, contact our office at Rafah@RafahDiCostanzo.com or call 902-443-8318.

Coffee and Conversation

Our office is a safe and

welcome place for coffee and conversation. Residents of Clayton Park West are encouraged to share issues, ideas, and upcoming events in our community. To arrange a date and time, do not hesitate to contact our office.

I thank you for the honour of serving our Clayton Park West Community. I wish all the children of Clayton Park West a safe and happy return to school.



Rafah Di Costanzo
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A Message from Hon. Tim Halman, MLA Dartmouth East

As we reach the middle of the summer season, I am hoping that all of you have time to get out and enjoy the sunshine! If you choose to relax at a freshwater beach, however, please be aware of the rising occurrence of blue-green algae.

Blue-green algae tends to develop when a period of hot, dry weather is followed by a heavy rainfall. Appearances are most common between the months of May and October. Despite the name, blue-green algae can be turquoise, green, brown, red, white or mixes of these colours. Blue-green algae blooms can look like fine grass clippings in the water, spilled paint or pea soup. Sometimes they look like a thick scum



Timothy Halman
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on the surface.

If you think you see it in a body of water, don't touch it, swim in it, or play in it, and don't drink the water. The toxins in the algae can make people sick and be fatal for pets if ingested. If you come in contact with blue-green algae, wash yourself and any items that came in contact. If your water source is contaminated, please use alternative water sources for drinking, cooking, bathing, laundry and watering veg-

etables. Contaminated water isn't safe even if it's boiled, filtered in a jug or pitcher or treated with bleach, herbicides, copper sulfate or other algicides.

If you think you see blue-green algae, you should treat it as potentially toxic. Please report it to your local Department of Environment and Climate Change office or call 1-877-936-8476.

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HRM MLAs and MPs Working Hard for YOU!

Child Care Update: Two Years of Progress

By Hon. Lena Metlege Diab, Member of Parliament, Halifax West



Photo: Naomi Shi/pexels.com

To all students and families, I want to wish you all the best with the new school year!

Recently, we passed a big milestone: two years since our previous provincial government reached an agreement with the federal government on the future of early learning and child care in Nova Scotia. Since then, we've made a lot of progress in our work to add new child care spaces and reduce child care fees for fami-

lies towards an average of \$10 per day.

Nurturing resilient and supportive families and communities has always been a personal and political commitment of mine. It's why I was so proud of the \$605 million funding agreement we reached in 2021, and why I've been pleased to see that deal delivering significantly reduced costs for working families and expanded access to quality care—including in Halifax West.

Here's some of the prog-

ress we've made since our game-changing child care agreement was announced two summers ago:

- In Nova Scotia, we achieved an average reduction of 50% in child care fees, and are still on track to reach \$10-a-day childcare by 2026 at the latest.

- In October, Nova Scotia was able to announce a new Early Childhood Educator (ECE) wage scale, resulting in wage increases between 14 and 43 per cent—ensuring thousands of hard-working ECEs receive fair compensation.

- Hundreds of spaces are being added throughout HRM thanks to our agreement, including the 100 new child care spaces being created at the Maritime Muslim Academy in Clayton Park this fall. By Spring 2026, some 9,500 new spaces



will be opened in Nova Scotia.

- The Prime Minister recently announced a \$625 million Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund to help eligible child care providers create even more new spaces, particularly in underserved communities.

- We have also enshrined the fee reductions that our agreement provides into law by passing Bill C-35—guaranteeing savings for families going forward.

- A recent TD Economics report found that the labour force participation rate among women with children under six has skyrocketed since the

pandemic, just as child care fees were coming down.

These measures are just the beginning of our ambitious vision for child care in Canada. With your continued support, I look forward to continuing this work in the fall session and in the years ahead.

Lorelei Nicoll
MLA, Cole Harbour-Dartmouth

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A Message from Lorelei Nicoll, MLA Cole Harbour Dartmouth

Back-to-School season always brings up so many emotions. Excitement fills the air as our children get their first day outfits ready and test their backpacks. Teachers are hard at work setting up their classrooms and formulating their lesson plans to engage and inspire their students.

With all the running around, stress, and everything else that late August and early September brings can overshadow the importance of setting up our children for success at school.

If you need to remind yourself (or your kids!) just how much education matters, here's a list of back-to-school quotes to get everybody's head in the game. Parents, you can stick one in your children's lunch box and teachers can start the day off with an encouraging line to get their pupils pumped.

- *Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.* — Albert Einstein
- *Today a reader, tomorrow a leader.* — Margaret Fuller
- *In a world where you can be anything, be kind.* — Jennifer Dukes Lee
- *None of us is as smart as all of us.* — Ken Blanchard
- *Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body.* — Joseph Addison
- *Never let the fear of striking out stop you from playing the game.* — Babe Ruth
- *Teachers can open the door, but you must enter it yourself.* — Chinese Proverb
- *Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars.* — Les Brown

Wishing all students, teachers, and parents a positive and successful 2023/24 school year.

My constituency office is open to assist residents of Cole Harbour-Dartmouth. Ideas, concerns, and sharing of upcoming events are encouraged. I am also available to connect for Coffee Chats. Contact my office at info@lorelainicollmla.ca or 902-701-2245.

**With you.
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Gary Burrill
MLA, HALIFAX CHEBUCTO

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Welcome back to school!
from MLA Lisa Lachance

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FUN Places To Go!

From Elegance to Practicality: Quill Pens, and Ross Farm Museum

By Melanie Munroe, Ross Farm Museum

September is upon us, which means it's almost time for Family Participation Days! Happening on September 2nd - 4th from 9:30 - 4:30 each day, these are the special days when families can come and do actual hands-on participation and make things with our staff.

One of those crafts includes how to make a quill pen! This amazing invention was an essential tool in writing and creating works of prose and poetry, as well as even journaling! They were perfect for making fine lines, with none of the harsh qualities of a steel tip (paper ripping, etc.), in the days when illegible writing was not accepted.

The proper quills for these pens were made from goose feathers, although crow feathers and even porcupine quills did well in a pinch. But the best, and most commonly used, was a grey goose feather; each goose wing could produce five good quills for writing, and were classified based on their



Photo: Ross Farm Museum

position in the wing - the first one being the best one.

Quill pens were the favoured writing instrument for many years, only giving in under the pressure of steel replacements not because of the quality of their penmanship, but because of the demand for something more durable. In 1885, Great Britain had imported 26.5 million goose and swan feathers—this led to the experimentation of other materials such as horns, tortoiseshell, glass, silver, gold, and eventually steel.

Here at Ross Farm Museum, during family participation days, you'll be able to see just how amazing these pens really were, since you will be shown how to make your own!

FUN Places To Go!

Welcome to Ross Farm Museum



Phone: (902) 689 - 2210
Email: rossfarm@novascotia.ca
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Stagecoach fosters an inclusive environment where students learn to work as part of a team, while creating lifelong friendships along the

way. From rehearsing for the final production to the singing, dancing, and acting lessons, the children are able to learn to communicate effectively, respect diverse perspectives and appreciate teamwork. The performing arts are a collaborative endeavor, these valuable skills will benefit your child greatly in the theatre and in their personal lives!

Stagecoach school programs are designed for kids aged 4-18 and their professional teaching team work hard to encourage everyone to participate in fun and engaging activities. Fall registration is now open so be sure to secure your spot!

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Fall Registration

How CPF French Summer Camps Help with Linguistic Security

Submitted by Rebecca Lancaster, Executive Director,
Canadian Parents for French, Nova Scotia

From Cape Breton to Sambro Head, Canadian Parents for French Nova Scotia's French summer camps are successful each year thanks to our great camp teams. During eight weeks of camp, from July 4 to August 26, campers from Nova Scotia were immersed in the French language. The challenge is helping campers feel comfortable expressing themselves in French.

Like the campers, the counselors show great diversity in their use of the French language. Emlyn Alexander, a Junior Counsellor, agrees that the French spoken at the camps is sometimes slightly different and more complex than usual. But she doesn't feel intimidated and is very comfortable communicating with the other leaders and campers.

According to Sally Raharivololona, Senior Counselor in 2022, the key during all of the weeks of camp was not to feel judged for your accent or the quality of your French. "At first, some of us were unsure of the quality of our French. At the end, we quickly understood that this diversity is more than an experience; but a way to learn from others," she argued.

Along the same lines, Jacques Gerroir, Camp Director in 2022, told us: "it is important to have diversity on the camp staff so the camp-

ers can see and hear the French language is from many different parts of the world and not only Canada or France". He continues, saying that "it can provide many different options for their future wherever they would like to travel later in life."

Jacques also remembers his experience with the language and how he fell in love with French thanks to the French summer camps of Canadian Parents for French "when I started camps as a camper, it was then that I discovered a love for French. I ended up choosing a French university because of the camps and continued my camp experience from a Junior Counsellor to Camp Director".

Canadian Parents for French summer camps aim to promote bilingualism and linguistic security among young people. It is crucial that we teach young people that there are many and diverse ways of speaking French, and that language can evolve according to local needs and realities. In Canada, there are several accents and vocabulary variations from communities and regions to another.

French summer camps are also an opportunity to instill confidence in our youth that they are capable of speaking French no matter the accent of the region or community they come from.



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CPF Nova Scotia French Camps



MANY THANKS

to our camp staff for making our 2023 French camps great!
Our camp kids had a wonderful summer.
See you next year!

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à nos animateurs de camp pour avoir rendu nos camps d'été 2023 formidables! Nos participants au camp ont passé un été merveilleux.
À l'année prochaine!

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Health & Wellness

Straight Teeth without Conventional Braces? What you need to know!

By Dr. Sarah Davidson DDS, MSc (Ortho) FRCD (C),
The Brace Space Orthodontists

You have probably heard that there is a new alternative to conventional braces when it comes to straightening teeth! Invisalign has become a household name for magazines, TV shows and among the many adults and teens who sport them. But although many people can tell you they are familiar with the term; few people understand exactly what Invisalign is and how it works.

Invisalign is a brand name for a clear aligner product that aligns teeth. Invisalign works by having the patient wear a series of clear aligners, in sequence, that gradually guide teeth to their ideal position. Small, tooth-colored attachments are often temporarily bonded to teeth that have especially difficult movements. These discreet attachments aid the aligner in distributing forces to the teeth so that the proper movements are achieved.

Although the technology has been around since 1999, recent years have shown major advances in improving the product resulting in widespread use of Invisalign and other clear aligners as an alternative treatment modality for patients seeking to improve their smile. But buyer beware, all clear aligners are not the same. Plastic quality varies between manufacturers and discount options do not include attachments on the teeth, which limits the amount of movement that can be achieved. Furthermore, software limitations mean an Orthodontist is best equipped to engineer your Invisalign plan to ensure your best outcome.

If at your initial consultation your Orthodontist recommends Invisalign, the next step is to obtain a 3-D virtual model of your teeth. Although traditional molds of your teeth can be made, digital scanners offer a more accurate method for capturing your bite that avoids any impressions. Before your custom-made clear aligners are manufactured, your Orthodontist must use software to manipulate your bite in virtual reality

until the perfect result is achieved. This step is the most important one as your Orthodontist's knowledge and expertise of this technology is paramount to the quality of your result.

Historically, Invisalign treatment was limited to simple crowding and minor bite issues. Orthodontists now have the opportunity to do further training on advanced Invisalign techniques, which means many challenging bite problems can now be treated with Invisalign. Many patients that have previously been told they are "not an Invisalign candidate" are now finding that they in fact are! Check with your Orthodontist as to their experience with Invisalign. The Invisalign website has a doctor locator that lists doctors with a high degree of expertise using this technology.

If that doesn't have you excited, Invisalign users are now benefitting from new technology that uses some AI to track wear and fit of the aligner, ensuring your

smile outcome is just as your orthodontist designed it!

Finally, Although Invisalign traditionally was for adults-only, it is now available in an Invisalign teen product and can even be an option for younger children. If you or your child are looking for an alternative to conventional braces, ask your Orthodontist if Invisalign or Invisalign teen is right for you.

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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Rediscover Routines for a Back-to-School Confidence Boost

Submitted by Oxford Learning

The start of a new grade can be a tricky time for students. This is especially true after two-plus years of learning during a pandemic. Heading back to school this year can make even the strongest students uncertain: what will this year bring? year ahead. Whether your child is a young elementary student or a senior high school student, routines create a sense of control over their daily tasks and activities. Feeling like they're in charge of their day helps children feel secure and boost their confidence!

Changing from summer to school routines can be challenging, but it doesn't have to be.

Returning to school year routines may be the last thing that students want, but research consistently shows that students of all ages tend to perform better both mentally and academically when they have a consistent and reliable routine to depend on.

After two years of disrupted learning and unreliable routines, having a routine in place—even before school begins—can build students' confidence to face the

Whether your child is in elementary school or a senior in high school, make your back-to-school transition stress-free with these tips.

1. Begin talking about returning to school. Preparation can help make the transition back to class much less stressful and difficult for students. Discussing the upcoming school year can help kids manage expectations, set goals, and adjust to increasing workloads and school expectations.

2. Reintroduce evening and morning structure. Virtual

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continued from page 16...

learning led to a virtual collapse of regular schedules for students. It also disrupted screen time limits and impacted sleep routines. Poor sleeping habits can impact student performance, so resetting a sleep routine before school begins is key. Starting the school year will be easier for you and your child and help avoid morning—and evening—rushes.

3. Make sure your child is reading daily. Reading (and writing) help get children's minds working and help keep their brains sharp. Getting back into the habit of reading and writing a bit each day will help maintain school skills like writing and vocabulary so your child can start the school year strong.

4. Review last year's highs and lows. What caused concern or struggles last year? What were the memorable moments worth celebrating? Discuss the previous school year as a primer to help kids transition into an academic mindset. Getting students thinking and talking about last year can help get them excited about the year ahead.

5. Set a goal for the upcoming year. Whether it's bringing up a math grade or curbing bad habits such as sleeping in, setting a goal for the school year is a great way to get kids thinking about how their intentions and actions work together to help them achieve their goals. When talking about the upcoming year, ask students what one thing they would like to achieve this year.

It's never too early to start thinking about getting back into the school-year routine—getting started now will help make the back-to-school transition easier for you and your child. It's easy to have a successful school year. It begins with the proper preparation, a positive attitude, and confidence from a strong routine.

Oxford Learning can help students of all ages and grades feel confident about the school year ahead. After two years of pandemic learning. Our customized learning program allows students to review critical concepts, fill in school gaps, and build stronger thinking and learning skills—and confidence—for the year ahead.

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CRAFT CORNER

Back to School Project: Chalkboard Wall

By Jenny Joan Larisey, Craft Consultant for Maritime Hobbies Crafts

Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter—there is always another season just around the corner and a new project awaiting you. How about one that helps you organize your life? Back to school time seems like the perfect opportunity to jump into this venture by creating your own chalkboard wall. You've seen them on all the DIY sites—big and small chalkboard walls appearing as an accent piece in a prominent place in the house. They create a ready surface where you can jot down lists, reminders and notes to your loved ones, as well as a place to express your artistic urges whenever the mood strikes.

I have had an itch to make a chalkboard for so many years now and I have finally



Photo: Jocelyn Durston, licensed under CC BY 2.0.

found the perfect opportunity. My husband and I are in week 8 of a new venture that we really need to stay organized for, so I am going to be painting a chalkboard wall to help streamline communication.

There are a few things to know before painting a chalkboard wall:

- You'll want to lightly sand

down the texture on the wall—the smoother the surface, the better.

- Have a place to store the chalk. I found a great idea on Pinterest to use an upside down installed drawer pull!
- A 1/4" nap roller works very well for applying the paint.

You'll need to wait a full week before the chalkboard paint is fully cured and hardened. After waiting 1 week, the surface will be ready for the next step, called priming with chalk.

Priming with chalk is a MUST before using your chalkboard wall to prevent what they call "ghosting." Ghosting (an outline) will appear on the board if it's not primed with the chalk as it is a porous surface. If you use the board before this step, it will leave permanent ghosting of what

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You will need GOOD chalk. All the tutorials I have read advise to use soft dustless chalk. To prime the wall with chalk, I suggest holding the chalk stick flat against the wall while rubbing it over the whole surface using vertical strokes of

chalk followed by horizontal. Once the whole wall is covered use a dry eraser to gently erase all the chalk, blending it into the chalkboard for a beautiful chalky finish.

You now have the perfect spot to keep your family organized as we head into

our new season! I hope your new project streamlines your communication and brings out the artist in all!

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