

Achieving a Goal

How many times have we heard ourselves say, "I've always wanted to do that". Too bad there's always an excuse. No time, no money, too hard. Well guess what? I have a goal for you this week.

Your goal is to think of something that you have always wanted to do. Is it something you've always wanted to learn and need to take a course for? Is it ways of giving back to your community that you just haven't found the time for yet? Is it mending an old relationship that went by the wayside?

I want you to pick something, and do it. We're going to start by taking small steps. Remember, baby steps? Well they're back! So here are your steps:

- ✓ Pick something you've wanted to do and haven't done yet
- ✓ Make a decision to make it a goal and to work on it **this week**
- ✓ Brainstorm: how can you do it, what steps does it involve?
- ✓ List all the steps involved into small easy to handle steps (Baby steps)
- ✓ Take out your calendar and put in a step to do for each day this week.
- ✓ Achieve your goal!

You Can Do It! Live for today, not tomorrow. Stop talking about it and start doing it!

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Hey Moms, Get a Life!

by Hilary Jones

Are your feet tired? Feeling tense or stressed out from running after your kids during march break? Why not give your feet the treat of reflexology. According to the reflexology association of America, the average person walks over 100,000 miles in a lifetime. (I wonder if that includes running after the kids?)

Reflexology is based on the premise that there are zones and reflex areas in our feet, which corresponds to all body parts. It can improve your circulation, thereby reducing stress and encouraging relaxation. The reduction of stress can also make us less susceptible to illness.

Ms Eva Szasz can "treat your feet" at the cost of \$40.00 for a 90 minute session, which can be done in your own home. She can be reached at 624-4039. ENJOY!!

Meet The Exec

By Elaine Des Rosiers

Denise Arseneault, co-committee head for the special events committee, was kind enough to let us choose her as the “exec interviewee” for this issue of our newsletter. (The special events committee is responsible for coordinating all of our parties and outings, which don’t include the kids). Before going any further I would like to say a big thanks to Denise, who had to deal with the world’s biggest procrastinator as her “interviewer”.

For those of you who do not know her, Denise joined playgroup about 5 years ago when her oldest of 2 daughters, Gabrielle, was 1 years old. (2nd daughter Sarah will soon be 4). She has been a co-committee head, along with Micheline Allen, since January 2001. Micheline had been a co-ordinator for playgroup beforehand and started the idea of having 2 coordinators/committee heads. Micheline is also responsible for introducing Denise to her husband on a blind date, thereby making her leave NDG to become a West Islander 9 years ago.

Denise admits that when she first volunteered to be a committee head, she had no idea what she was getting herself into. Her first thought was to, with the help of the communications committee, implant a phone survey to find out what members wanted as special events and what could be done to help bolster attendance to these events. The survey, done last January, showed that the majority wanted outings just for moms; that we liked having dinners out and that if we wanted family events, they should be held on weekends to make sure most could attend. In addition, one of the factors that seemed to hinder attendance was the shyness of some, especially new members, and the fear of not knowing anyone.

Armed with the results of this survey, a typical school year will include 1 family event (i.e.: 20th anniversary picnic), 2 dinners (Christmas and end of year) and 1 speaker concerning kids issues. To ensure attendance, Denise makes sure that there is a greeting committee at every event to hand out nametags and to make sure every one feels welcome and does not feel “lost”. As well, we now must sign-up for events. This not only allows easier planning for food, wine and so forth, but also allows members to see who has already signed up, thereby lessening their apprehensions as to the fact that they may not know anybody there.

Results? Attendance is up to over 50% for every event; in fact, events are getting so popular that Denise is running out of budget!

What’s up next? Mark your calendars for our end of year dinner, which will be held on Friday, May 24th. It will be a huge potluck dinner, and Denise has already reserved Centennial Hall for the occasion. (For those who don’t know Centennial Hall, it is off Beaconsfield Boulevard in Beaconsfield and has a beautiful balcony overlooking the lake). There will be a big poster put up at playgroup in April with more information and a sign-up sheet.

Thanks again to Denise and Micheline for the session on positive parenting, where approximately 30 people enjoyed the lecture and the wine and cheese. Thanks again to Denise for this interview, and hope to see all of you on May 24th!

ASK A DENTAL HYGIENIST

Dental Care For Your Child

By Karen Daley

Hi everyone. My name is Karen Daley. I am on the special events committee. I am a mother of two, Amanda (9 years) and Brendan (3 years). I am also a Dental Hygienist who works part-time at Fairview Dental Center.

I have put together a list of the ten most commonly asked questions concerning your children's teeth. Read on!

When should I start brushing my child's teeth?

As soon as the first tooth erupts. It may be cleaned with a soft toothbrush. A pea-sized amount of children's toothpaste may be used.

At what age does a child have a full set of baby teeth?

The baby teeth begin to erupt at approximately six months and the child will have a full set of twenty by approximately 2 years of age.

When should my child first visit a dentist?

At age three. The goal is to develop a positive rapport with the dentist, begin preventive measures, and catch any problems while small.

Do baby teeth need to be filled if they have cavities?

Yes. Untreated cavities will cause your child pain and can lead to infection. Also, some of the teeth must remain in the mouth until the age of 12. They also act as space maintainers to help the adult teeth to come in straight.

My child won't let me brush his/her teeth. Do you have any helpful hints?

Yes. The best position for brushing a child's teeth is with him/her lying on your lap. This should be done with a dry toothbrush. If your child wants independence, you can try letting him/her brush while you count to five and then it is mommy or daddy's turn. When all else fails; feel free to brush the child's teeth in front their favorite TV show. The child will hardly notice what you are doing.

How often should my child visit the dentist?

Every 6 months. Cavities grow fast, and changes occur rapidly in growing children. It is best to monitor their progress.

Should I floss my child's teeth?

When a child's teeth are in close contact, flossing is important to remove plaque and prevent cavities.

Is it necessary for children to have X-Rays?

Yes. If the back teeth are in close contact it is the only way to detect cavities between the teeth and fix them while they are still small.

When does a child get their adult teeth?

Between the ages of 6 and 12 years the baby teeth will loosen, fall out and be replaced by adult teeth.

Should my child take fluoride supplements?

This can depend on whether or not your water is fluoridated. And if your child is at high risk for decay. Your dentist is the best one to assess your child's needs.

If you are looking for dental services, Fairview Dental Center is conveniently located at the Fairview Shopping Center and offers dental services 7 days a week. With a focus on prevention, as well as overall dental health, the center offers the services of several dentists, hygienists and specialists, including a children's dentist, Dr. Nilesch Amin who is available Wednesdays through Sundays (including Friday evenings).

Feel free to visit the center; the staff is happy to answer any questions you may have at (514) 694-8150



The Vasectomy Solution

By Cheryl Roscoe

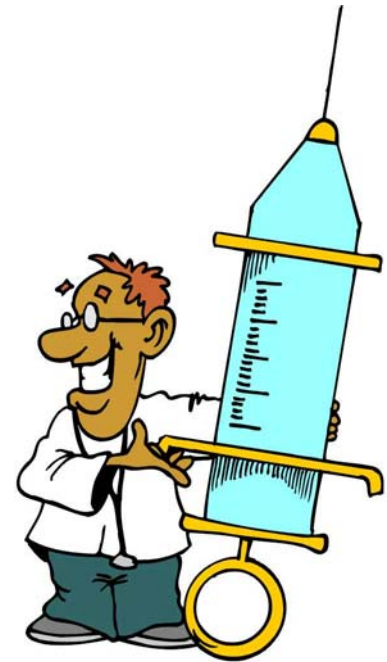
Thinking that maybe you have enough children? Or, like me, you're getting up there in the age department and know you couldn't live through the inevitable sleep deprivation again—but still get all mushy when you see a nice squishy baby? The solution is to get a vasectomy. It takes 10, maybe 15 minutes, and is totally painless – for you. It's not even that bad for the husband. And I know, because I watched (no, it wasn't because I don't trust my husband, I was just interested).

Here's what happens:

Husband must shave parts ahead of time. Husband drops drawers (doesn't actually have to remove them!) and lies on table. Doctor puts sterile pad with hole cut in it over parts. This looks pretty funny. Doctor takes out syringe, and injects parts with anesthetic. Doctor forages around on tray for little knife – although it's pretty good when you loudly proclaim: WOW WHAT BIG SCISSORS. Doctor feels around for tube, makes teensy cut, gets out pliers, and pinches tube then stitches whole thing up. Repeats on other side. See? Nothing to it.

How do get him there?

Good question. I think the answer is to book the appointment for him. My husband readily agreed to the procedure (after token resistance and firm assertions that a vasectomy is indeed major surgery), but it took a while to actually get there. Had I known, I may not have cancelled the surgery I booked for a tubal ligation. All told, it was a good year and a half before he actually made it there, but he did make it. If you're considering this as a birth control option, you could mention that I'd do it cheap – after all, I've seen how its done and it looks really easy. This might help get him to seek out a licensed professional.



What happens after?

I think it's a bit sore. The husband needs to sit with a pillow on his lap for a couple of days to prevent sneak banzai attacks by children. It's a good idea to get this done while the youngest of your children is not yet mobile—especially if he's a wild man like Dex. Otherwise, he dabs a little hydrogen peroxide on it, takes a few Motrin and it's soon all better. A couple months later, they go for a sperm count test, and voila.

Good luck!

West Island Web Directories

Sometimes it is difficult to track down local businesses on the Web using traditional search engines. These web sites may help you locate West Island businesses and organizations.

Check them out!

- ✓ www.westisland.ca (new)
- ✓ www.bar-resto.com

- ✓ www.westisland.com
- ✓ www.Village2online.com

Discipline Lessons That Last

Finally, you can stop the nagging and yelling. Here are the six secrets to getting your messages across – for good.

1. Be consistent

Inconsistency turns kids into opportunists. Because they never know what they can get away with, they try to get away with whatever they can. But when they know what you expect of them and what will happen when they fall short, it allows them to predict the outcomes of their choices, it gives them a sense of control.

2. Never Belittle a Child

Name calling and labeling (“You’re so careless!”) are two great discipline no-nos. These comments do very little to promote better discipline and a great deal to undermine self-esteem. Try, try, try to limit your criticism to your child’s behaviour.

3. Discipline With Praise

The true meaning of the word discipline is “to teach”. If you discipline only through punishment, you’ll miss a lot of opportunities to instruct your children. By offering a morsel of praise whenever your child picks up her toys, you remind her in a positive way how you expect her to behave.

4. Control Yourself

Yelling, door slamming, being snotty – hey, kids aren’t the only ones who misbehave. Few parents can boast that they never lose control in the name of discipline. And most of us feel horrible about it afterward.

5. Teach Consequences

Our poor children. They’re growing up thinking that consequence is the synonym for punishment. It has become a euphemism for “the bad thing that’s going to happen if you don’t cut that out.” Teach your children that a consequence is the result of any action and can be positive or negative.

6. Convey Your Values

At its core, your mission in correcting misbehavior is to raise good kids who grow up to be good people. Though we all agree on the basics – honesty, respect for others, and kindness – each family varies in its emphasis. What values do you want your child to learn? That’s part of discipline.

On losing the pacifier

By Cheryl Roscoe

Even though Merle assured me that Dexter didn't use his pacifier at playgroup, I found the mere idea of unplugging my child intimidating-- I've heard many a horror story, so it was with some trepidation that I decided to try this at home on the weekend. First I would sort of sneak it away while he was eating breakfast (Dexter likes to eat), but was often undone by my well-meaning spouse who would put it in his pocket and give in to plaintive cries for "soucie" when they were at the park, store etc. Finally (after some encouragement from my pediatrician) we decided that "soucie" was for bedtime only. I simply sneak up on an unsuspecting child, grab it and run. I would endure a bit of a tantrum, but if you do it early in the day before they get cranky, it wears off pretty quickly. I still give it to him at bedtime--I value sleep far too much to think about messing with that--and I figure he won't want it by the time he goes to university! Hopefully by then he'll be toilet-trained too...

- Susan Korones Gifford, Parenting Magazine

Things to Do in and Around Montreal this Spring

By Hilary Jones

CPR and First Aid

Taking a first aid and/or CPR course is a great investment. Hopefully, you will never have to use the skills you will learn but its reassuring to know you have them if you need them. Pointe Claire CPR is offering the following courses in March. Call them on 630-1226 for more information and other dates if you can't make these ones.

- Heart Saver Baby, Mar 18 from 7-10pm
- Pediatric First Aid, Mar 18 from 7-10pm and March 21 from 6-10pm

Ecomuseum

Chemin Ste Marie. Ste Anne de Bellevue Tel: 457-9449

Upcoming events at the Ecomuseum include:

- Sun Mar 31 10am-4pm - Easter Egg Hunt, all ages.
- Fri April 5 at 10am - Moms and Tots story time, 3-5 yrs. Story, crafts and animals.
- Sun April 14 1pm-4pm - Ravens and Crows all you need to know, all ages.
- Sun April 21 10am-4pm - Celebration for Earth Day, all ages. Crafts, demonstrations etc.
- Sat April 27 8am-10am - Breakfast with the bears, all ages.

Centre Greene

Centre Greene Community Centre, 1090 Greene Ave, Westmount Tel: 931-2304 Throughout the Spring, Centre Greene has activities on Saturday mornings from 11am - 12.15pm. There is a nominal charge of \$1 per person and the activities are suitable for children ages 2-5yrs. No advance registration is needed.

- Mar 16 - St Patrick's Day craft making
- Mar 23 - Crafty fun
- Apr 6 - Music for tots
- Apr 13 - All about birds
- Apr 20 - Science activities
- Apr 27 - Pottery

Quinn Farm

La ferme Quinn, 2495 boul. Perrot sud, Notre-Dame de l'Île-Perrot Tel: 453-1510 www.quinnfarm.qc.ca Various activities such as sleigh rides depending on the weather. Call for details.

Sugaring Off

Two local places that have sugar shacks are Cap St Jacques (tel: 280-6743) and the Morgan Arboretum (tel: 398-7811). Both also allow you to take a much needed stroll in the fresh air after over indulging in all that maple syrup! Exactly when production will start depends on the weather so call ahead to find out whether or not things are underway.

The Tree House at the Botanical Gardens also has sugaring off on weekends between Mar 2 and 24 from 11am until 4pm. \$1 per tasting.

Log onto the website of the Association des Restaurateurs de Cabane a Sucre du Quebec at www.arcsq.qc.ca for information about other sugar shacks.

Parents and Kids Fair

Place Bonaventure This annual event takes place between Mar 21 and 24. More information in the media nearer the event and at www.parentsandkidsfair.com. If you plan to go, look out for coupons in the press offering discounts on the admission fee.

Date Night Dining

By Cheryl Roscoe

I'll have to confess that I really, really enjoy doing the research for this column! I'm pleased to report that I've made some new discoveries, with all of them providing an excellent cost/value ratio. Of course, you will have to venture beyond the West Island for some of them, but surprisingly, even though farther east, they are really quite quick and easy to get to.



Fandango

3807 St. Andre, Corner of Roy
514.526.7373

Take the 20, exit *St. Laurent/Berri*, Head north on *Berri* just past *des Pins* and you're right around the corner. This chic little restaurant serves authentic Mexican fine dining. Forget everything you know about tacos and burritos, because you won't find them here. Start with a Margarita or other South American cocktail, a Mexican beer, or simply order a bottle of good wine at not-outrageous prices and enjoy the lively, but not too noisy atmosphere. They offer an interesting 3-course Table d'Hôte in the \$25.00 - \$30.00 range Featuring dishes such as pork tenderloin in a tomatillo and pumpkin seed sauce (delicious!) shrimp in cream sauce perfumed with Vanilla bean and tequila, and of course spicier dishes laced with smoky ancho peppers and more. Appetizers are delectable—you'll find the chef has a liberal hand with fresh coriander and other herbs, and desserts (so far) have proved utterly delicious. This spot is definitely worth the trip, and the price is right.

La Bergamote

2101 Sherbrooke East, Corner de Lorimier
514.525.5738

Again, easy to get to via the 20, you're there is twenty minutes, and parking is fairly easy to find. This downstairs bistro is very cute with original stone and brick walls exposed and white tablecloths. The cuisine is southern France bistro (I think) and features such classic main dishes as Quail in Porto sauce, Rabbit in mustard sauce and Filet Mignon Dianne. Here the Table d'Hôte includes soup or salad, the main course and coffee or tea. I'm not sure how frequently the menu changes, but the day I went early in March prices ranged from \$13.50 for the pasta to \$26.50 for the Filet Mignon Dianne, with most dishes falling smack in the middle between \$18.00 and \$22.00. They also offer a selection of appetizers normally at around \$6.00, and desserts are \$5.00. When we went, we shared an additional appetizer of escargots in a creamy pastis sauce (delicious, and a generous portion), we both had the soup, and later each had a dessert. We were somewhat stuffed, but not painfully so. Wine is not marked up excessively, and we enjoyed a rather good wine and still spent less than \$100.00. Another nice feature of this restaurant is they offer several wines by the glass each night, which makes it easier for couples who's tastes are wildly divergent. Service here is also exemplary. Wine and water glasses were always refilled before they were emptied, and our waitress was charming without being intrusive.

Chez Trudi

445 Lakeshore, Dorval
514.631.1403

Chances are you've seen Chez Trudi, but if you've never stopped by for a casual and hearty dinner, maybe its time you did. After years of eyeing it with a mixture of interest and suspicion, I finally gave it a try a few weeks ago. We were looking for a restaurant nearby where we could enjoy some home-style cooking and still get to the movies on time. It being a cold wintry evening, and me feeling the urge for some solid middle European food that preferably included potatoes, off I went dragging the other (and more cautious) half with me. It's a cute little place, with a cheery atmosphere. I noticed a few larger tables of friends getting together for an enjoyable and affordable evening. The table d'hote here includes 3 courses and coffee or tea – all for well under \$20.00. We both had the schnitzel special, and found it tender and flavourful. Vegetables were on the dull side, but I did get the rosti I was craving! The food being Swiss, it makes perfect sense to drink beer, which also keeps the already reasonable cost even lower. Another reason to have beer is that there are only two types of wine served here: red or white. And sorry – call me a snob – but I don't have much faith in house wine, especially in a non-French or Italian restaurant! Desserts on the table d'hote were generally forgettable, so I opted for the rather ordinary fruit salad, but fruit is always a good thing. Next time, I'll try the apple fritters on the regular menu... Anyhow, we enjoyed our dinner, didn't overspend and really enjoyed Gosford Park (its worth if for Maggie Smith's "Oh, yummy yummy" alone).

Dining Notes:

- Le Gourmand has reopened after renovations and now features a lovely little bar area and a bathroom on the ground floor! The addition of a basement and associated storage space also promises some interesting changes to the wine list.
- Another spot for a good and higher-end meal on the West Island is Sonoma, in the Blue Haven Mall on St. John's. It was featured in the Gazette March 9, but it was reviewed in the Casual Dining column, and that reviewer doesn't match up to the late Helen Rochester, so I'll fill you in next issue, and tell you a bit about a well-kept wine buying cooperative at the same time.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE:

"Century" Superyard. It is the indoor/outdoor, portable playpen without a bottom. It's great for anyone looking for a safe outdoor play area for their children for the fast-approaching spring-summer season and it isn't wasted money if you want to bring it indoors as well. It has six 26 inch plastic panels which open at the corners and can be shaped into various forms totaling a 18.5 cubic foot area. It is an extremely practical tool for keeping toddlers and newborns together in the same room while also being separated safely. It is in mint condition. Purchased for \$115. Will accept best offer. Janice Parnell Tel: 450-686-8544 jparnell@captelco.qc.ca

RESERVE YOUR SPACE HERE! – Only one more newsletter left this year. Are you sure you don't have anything you'd like to sell? Looking for something to buy? Would you like to advertise your home business? Let us know!! Contact Cheryl Roscoe or Lisa Fisher.



Happy Easter!!