

# Advisor

Fall 2013



[www.sffa.sk.ca](http://www.sffa.sk.ca)

# Advisor

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## Saskatchewan! Show us your culture!

Saskatchewan residents are invited to share what they love about our province, with an opportunity to win some fabulous prizes, through a new online contest called "I Heart Culture!" The contest invites people to submit photos, videos, poems, stories, blogs or even recipes, that reflect what they love most about our province—the places and people we love, food, landscapes and skylines, poetry and storytelling, films, music, art, dance, crafts – or whatever they believe is important to them.



**4<sup>TH</sup> GREAT YEAR**  
7000+ EXPERIENCES  
PLAN YOUR WEEKEND  
**CULTUREDAYS.CA**

**culture days**  
CREATE, PARTICIPATE & CELEBRATE  
September 27, 28 & 29, 2013



Entries can be submitted by simply posting a photograph or video on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, using the hashtag #iheartculture.

Entries submitted will qualify for a draw to be held during Culture Days 2013. The prize packages are being called the Ultimate Saskatchewan Cultural Experience, and include tickets to major festivals, concert venues, galleries and museums for 2014. By sharing what you love about Saskatchewan's culture, you could win tickets to the 2014 Craven Country Jamboree (including campsite!), the Regina Folk Festival, the Summer Solstice Festival d'été in Gravelbourg or the Long Day's Night Music Festival in Swift Current (among many others)!

*For more information, check out [www.iheartculture.ca](http://www.iheartculture.ca) and start posting your photos! Remember to hashtag with #iheartculture... it's that simple!*

## SFFA Executive Director's Message

Welcome to the fall edition of The Advisor. This edition shares stories that capture and celebrate the success and achievement of the SFFA, and valuable information that will assist foster families in their day-to-day duties.

I want to take the opportunity to again thank you for the work you do in supporting the children placed in your care, whether it be for a day or for many years. Recently I was asked to do an interview with the media, and one of the questions I was asked was "If there was one thing that I could tell people about fostering... what would it be?" I quickly replied and told the reporter about the tremendous support our foster families provide to families needing assistance in caring for their children. I proceeded to tell the journalist the day in the life of a foster parent... we may get calls at 3:00 in the morning by mobile crisis asking if the foster parent can take a child into their home for the night. Sometimes with very little information, our families open their doors to provide a safe, loving home for children each day... there is never a "CLOSED" sign on our families' homes.

We need to celebrate the accomplishments: how foster families have assisted young people

to transition into adulthood and grow to become very successful adults; how foster families have helped families in being reunited with their children, assisting and supporting those families long after their children were returned home; how families have made long-term commitments to children, supporting those children to have forever homes.

I've often been asked if there are many rewards in being a foster parent. My reply is absolutely there are! Those rewards sometimes can't always be seen at first but when you reflect back on the children that you've cared for and see that you've assisted in helping a child feel safe, the rewards are incredible!

The third week of October (October 20-26, 2013) we will again be celebrating Foster Families Week. This is a week that is proclaimed in our province to say thank you to foster parents and to acknowledge the commitment of our families. There will be events held throughout the province to celebrate this special week. Please try to attend the event being held in your area.

The year 2014 marks the 40th Anniversary of the incorporation of the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association. We plan to celebrate



When you reflect back on the children that you've cared for and see that you've assisted in helping a child feel safe, the rewards are incredible!

this milestone at the upcoming conference in June. Stay tuned for more details!

In closing, I will again take the opportunity to say thank you. Some days may be tough and you may ask yourself a million times if it is worth the heartache... it is! Foster parents are changing the world each and every day, families helping families! It is the toughest job you will ever experience, but it will be the most rewarding!

Regards,

*Deb Davies*

Executive Director, SFFA

### We need your e-mail

We are now sending e-mails to our foster parents on a monthly basis. To be added to our list and receive the latest news, please send your e-mail address to **wayne@sffa.sk.ca**

Thank-you!

# Child Poverty—Time for Action

SASKATOON – Bob Pringle, Advocate for Children and Youth, reiterates his expectation that immediate action be taken to eliminate poverty affecting children, youth and families in Saskatchewan and Canada.

Pringle is responding to the recent report indicating fifty percent of First Nations children and youth in Canada live in poverty. In Saskatchewan, two of three children on reserve live in poverty. This rate is significantly higher than the national average.

Pringle says, “The dire economic and social conditions of Aboriginal children and youth, is the number one human rights issue in the country. The human, economic, social and cultural cost of such pervasive poverty is staggering.” Pringle states this level of child poverty in Canada and Saskatchewan is deplorable and must be addressed. “We need to place our children at the front of our agenda to give this issue the

attention it requires. Surely we can do more than just say we value children. Action is required here.”

Pringle highlights the rights of young people in accordance with the 54 Articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, reminding governments that Canada has ratified the Convention. The Advocate continues to call both federal and provincial governments to embed these rights in domestic law. “Meeting the basic needs of children is a shared responsibility of parents, communities and governments,” states Pringle. “We must partner to address the social, education, employment, economic, housing and health disparities affecting our children.”

Pringle chaired the Child Welfare Review (2010) that speaks directly to the issue of child and family poverty. One of the key recommendations of that Review was to address the conditions that cause poverty,

because poverty drives child neglect and a host of other social problems. Pringle continues to highlight this issue in each of his Annual Reports, and many other official forums.

“I support efforts underway to transform our child welfare system and provincial investments in training, education, and early childhood development, but as a society we will never eliminate child abuse and neglect until we get at the root causes – and number one on that list is poverty,” said Pringle.

“The national study puts the onus on the federal government to show leadership in this critical area. We urge collaboration to develop and implement a viable anti-poverty plan,” concludes Pringle. The Advocate for Children and Youth is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan with responsibility to advise the provincial government on matters related to children and youth.

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## Damage Compensation

Please ensure that you submit your compensation request after the damage has taken place. If a child does damage to your property please:

- 1) Contact your resource worker right away to let them know of the damage. The Ministry of Social Services will process your compensation request if it is under \$300.00 otherwise contact us.
- 2) If the request for compensation is over \$300.00:
  - a. Contact your insurer and ask if they will cover the damages. In the event that they do cover it, the Ministry of Social Services will cover the deductible and premium increase for an extended period.
  - b. When you contact us we will ask for:
    - i. A copy of your insurance policy

- ii. Your particulars
- iii. A letter of denial from your insurer stating reasons why the damages are not covered
- iv. Description of the damages
- v. Receipts from when you originally purchased the item and a request for you to attain repair estimates

### ONCE WE'RE DONE

When we are finished processing your compensation request we will forward the damage report to the Ministry of Social Services.

### IF YOU ARE NOT HAPPY

If you are not happy with any aspect of the outcome please contact us and we can take you through the conflict resolution process.

# culture days

## CREATE, PARTICIPATE & CELEBRATE

**F**ounded in 2009, Culture Days is a non-profit organization dedicated to building a national network of cultural connections devoted to providing Canadians with opportunities to participate in, and appreciate, all forms of arts and culture. Through an annual three-day national celebration each September, hundreds of thousands of artists and cultural organizations in hundreds of cities and towns come together and invite Canadians to participate in free interactive and “behind the scenes” activities to discover their cultural spirit and passion.

The fourth annual Culture Days weekend will take place **September 27, 28 and 29, 2013**, and will feature thousands of free, hands-on, interactive activities that invite the public to participate “behind-the-scenes,” to discover the world of artists, creators, historians, architects, curators, designers and other creative people in their communities.

There are 95 activities taking place in Saskatchewan alone! *See more at:* <http://sk.culturedays.ca/en>



## Culture

**C**ulture is part of a child's identity and heritage. Preserving the culture of all children in care is crucial for their development and identity. While efforts are made to consider culture when deciding placement of a child, often the child and the foster family may have differences in culture and religion. It is essential that you respect the religion or culture of any child in your home. At no time should the child be required to adopt the foster parent's religious beliefs or rituals.

Culturally relevant information about Aboriginal people of Saskatchewan has been added to the PRIDE pre-service. This is a mandatory three hour training session for all foster parents in Saskatchewan. As the diversity of cultures continues to grow in our province, being respectful and inclusive of everyone (regardless of culture, background, race, language, ability or ethnic origin) becomes increasingly more important. It is beneficial to discuss any cultural needs of the child with the caseworker.



### Husky Community Rebate Program

Remember to support the SFFA by using your Husky Community Rebate Program Card. **Husky supports us by rebating 2% of your retail purchases** at Husky and Mohawk gas stations, convenience stores and Husky House restaurants.



## Creating a **stress-free** morning routine

by Connie McCarthy

*A missed school bus. Forgotten homework. Arguments over outfits.*

*Does all this sound unbearably familiar? Don't worry, you're not alone; almost all parents have experienced some frustration about their child's morning routine. The good news is that a little patience and planning can go a long way toward better school mornings for everyone.*

All parents have, at some point, dealt with mornings where it seemed to take forever to get everyone out the door. And while it might always be a challenge to completely eliminate the rush, a little bit of planning and patience can really help reduce stress.

Make bedtime the same time every night during the school week, even if your child doesn't go to sleep right away. As well, get your child up at the same time Monday through Friday. Plan on your child needing at least 15 to 20 minutes for personal hygiene and dressing.

Allow enough time for a nutritious breakfast. Studies show that children who eat a balanced breakfast do better in school, are more attentive, and are better behaved. A mix of protein and carbohydrates is best.

Carbs (cereals, fruits, and breads) give a quick energy boost, and protein (milk, eggs, meat, and peanut butter) sustains your child until lunch.

Prepare backpacks the night before. If your child has homework, make sure she immediately puts it in her backpack upon completion. This eliminates the "My mom forgot to put it in my backpack" excuse!

Try choosing two outfits of clothing the night before that you both agree will work. Put each entire outfit in a large plastic bag and in the morning, let your child choose which "bag" to wear that day, knowing that the clothes in the other bag can be worn the next day. This empowers your child to make choices and usually takes care of two days at a time.

Set aside at least 15 to 20 minutes to read together at bedtime. This can be done by a parent or an older sibling. This short period of individual attention usually calms a child and eliminates the "getting up" questions that often follow just going to bed.

If your child misplaces belongings such as sneakers, for example, try tracing an outline of the sneakers onto construction paper or contact paper. Then tape the tracings to the child's closet floor. At bedtime each night, make sure the shoes are sitting on their "feet" in the closet. (The same can be done for lunch boxes, backpacks, boots, etc.)

Encourage your child to talk about the upcoming school day. Planning the tasks your child will accomplish will put him in the right frame of mind to tackle the day.

# Foster care & social media questions

Many foster parents have asked if there are any specific things that they should know about social media, networking and texting. There are a few basic principles that foster families should apply.

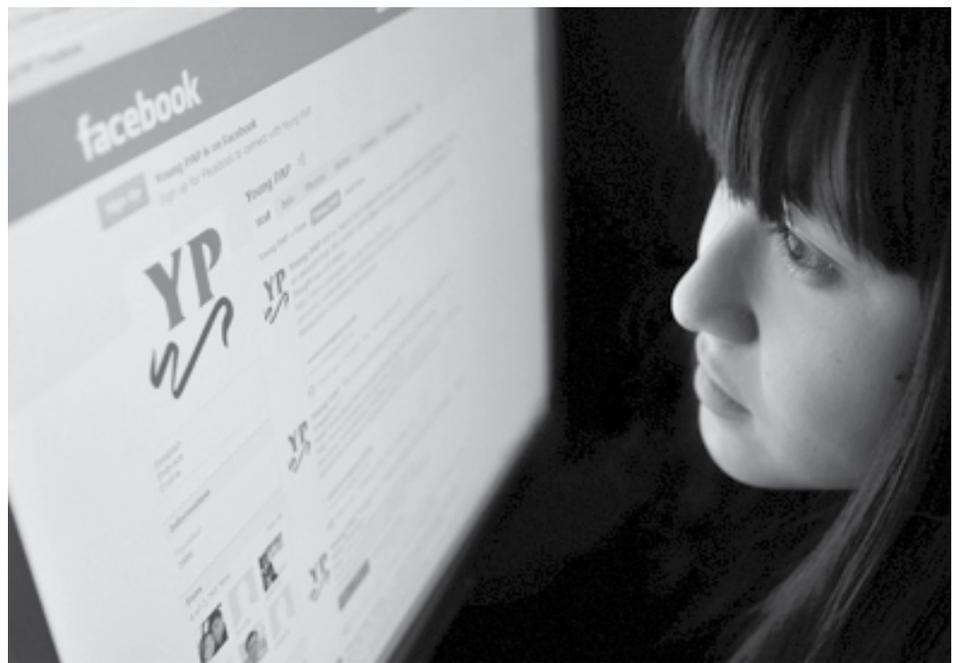


Here are a few frequently asked questions:

***How should I maintain confidentiality about the youth placed in my home on social networking websites like Facebook?***

As an approved foster parent, you must always maintain confidentiality about any youth placed in your home and their family. This means that pictures and any information about the youth placed in your home and their family should never be posted or written anywhere others have access to that information. This is especially important online for social media and social networking sites like Facebook.

***If a youth in care owns a cell phone and/or portable gaming device before they came to my home, can they use those items all the time in my home?***



If a youth owns something like a cell phone or handheld gaming device, those items belong to the youth and may not be damaged or destroyed.

***Are youth in care allowed to have e-mail, Facebook accounts, blogs or YouTube accounts?***

Yes, youth in care are able to have online accounts as long as they meet the minimum guidelines for the website. However, foster parents don't have to provide accessibility to the internet in their home. Many parents have opted to set up specific rules and guidelines about internet access for youth in their home.

***A youth placed in my home is posting pictures and information about himself on a social networking website. Is this allowed?***

Yes, youth in care are allowed to post pictures and information about themselves anywhere anytime they want. Youth in care do not have to follow the confidentiality guidelines that licensed foster parents need to, except when it pertains to other youth in care in the home.

***Am I allowed to develop or use a "Family Internet Safety Agreement" as a foster parent?***

Yes! Parents need to stay educated about social media and have some household rules or guidelines for family members. Ideally, members of the youth's team will be part of the agreement, so that everyone is clear on what is expected.



## **"Like" us on Facebook!**

The SFFA now has a Facebook page! "Like" Us on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) to find out about special events, to connect with other foster parents and for daily inspiration to support you in your journey as a foster parent!



*As school doors open, traffic gets a little heavier on our streets. People are back from holidays, school buses and public transit are on regular routes, and more people are walking, cycling or driving to school.*

To help with the transition and share the roads safely, read our safety tips. Help everyone stay safe this school year!

### **1** Observe School Zone Speeds

Although you should always obey posted speed limits, it is especially important during the school year. Children crossing the road on their way to and from school can easily get distracted and step into harm's way. Slowing down and being vigilant is crucial to keeping kids safe. Children are often out throughout the day at recess, lunch, and for certain classes, so it's important to drive slowly throughout the day.

### **2** Obey the Crossing Guard

A crossing guard is there to keep children safe. If you come up to a set of lights, and the light turns green, but the crossing guard still says stop, follow his/her direction and not the traffic light. There might be a child still crossing the street that you can't see.

### **3** Watch for Darting Children

Kids are small and easily distracted,

# Get Prepared for Back to School Safety!

and for drivers, this can create dangerous situations on the roads. Be vigilant and alert behind the wheel. You never know when a small child might step out from between parked cars or off a sidewalk. Your fast reflexes might be needed to prevent an accident.

### **4** School Buses

Most mishaps take place outside the bus. Make sure children don't arrive too early at the bus stop where they can wander or get into mischief. Make sure children wait well away from the road and stay back until the school bus makes a full stop and the doors open. Explain that they must walk at least three metres (10 feet) away when crossing in front of the bus so the driver can see them. When driving your car near a school bus please note that extra caution is needed. You shouldn't pass a school

bus when the signal lights are flashing (as children are often crossing the road at that time), and drive slowly as a general precaution.

The following information is useful for school bus passengers and their parents.

### Rules for getting on the bus safely:

- Be at the bus stop on time. Never run to or from the bus.
- Wait at the designated stop in a safe place well back from the side of the road.
- Remember the danger zone around the bus. The danger zone is anywhere close enough to touch the bus. The bus driver cannot see you when you are in the danger zone.
- If you cross the street to get on the bus: when the bus comes, wait

until it has come to a complete stop. The bus driver will make sure all the traffic stops. The stop arm will be out and the red lights will be flashing. Watch the driver. When the driver knows it is safe, he or she will signal you to cross, but watch for traffic yourself. Walk, don't run.

- Hold the hand rail as you get on the bus. Don't push or shove.

#### Rules for on the bus:

- Take your seat as quickly as possible and sit properly, facing forward at all times.
- Hold bags and parcels in your lap. Do not put your feet into the aisle: someone might trip.
- Keep your head, arms and everything inside the bus. Don't throw anything out the windows or around in the bus.
- Talk quietly. The driver must concentrate to drive the bus safely.

- Save snacks for snack time at school or for when you get home. They may spill or you may choke if the bus goes over a big bump.
- No fighting, shouting or playing in or around the bus.
- Always follow the bus driver's instructions.

#### Rules for leaving the bus safely:

- When you leave the bus, hold the handrail and step away from the bus.
- To cross the street in front of the bus, walk ahead at least 10 giant steps (three metres). Cross only when the driver gives a signal. Cross the street in single file.
- If you drop something near the bus, don't pick it up. Tell the driver or another adult first.
- If everyone is getting off the bus, the people at the front leave first.



Do not push.

- Be familiar with the bus driver's rules for emergencies.

*This safety tip was prepared by Public Safety Canada in collaboration with the Canada Safety Council.*

## CAA Safety Patrol History

Since the creation of the School Safety Patrol Program (SSP) in 1922 by the Chicago Motor Club, millions of youthful volunteers have served as School Safety Patrollers in more than 30 countries. CAA/AAA Clubs sponsor school safety patrol programs in more than 50,000 schools.

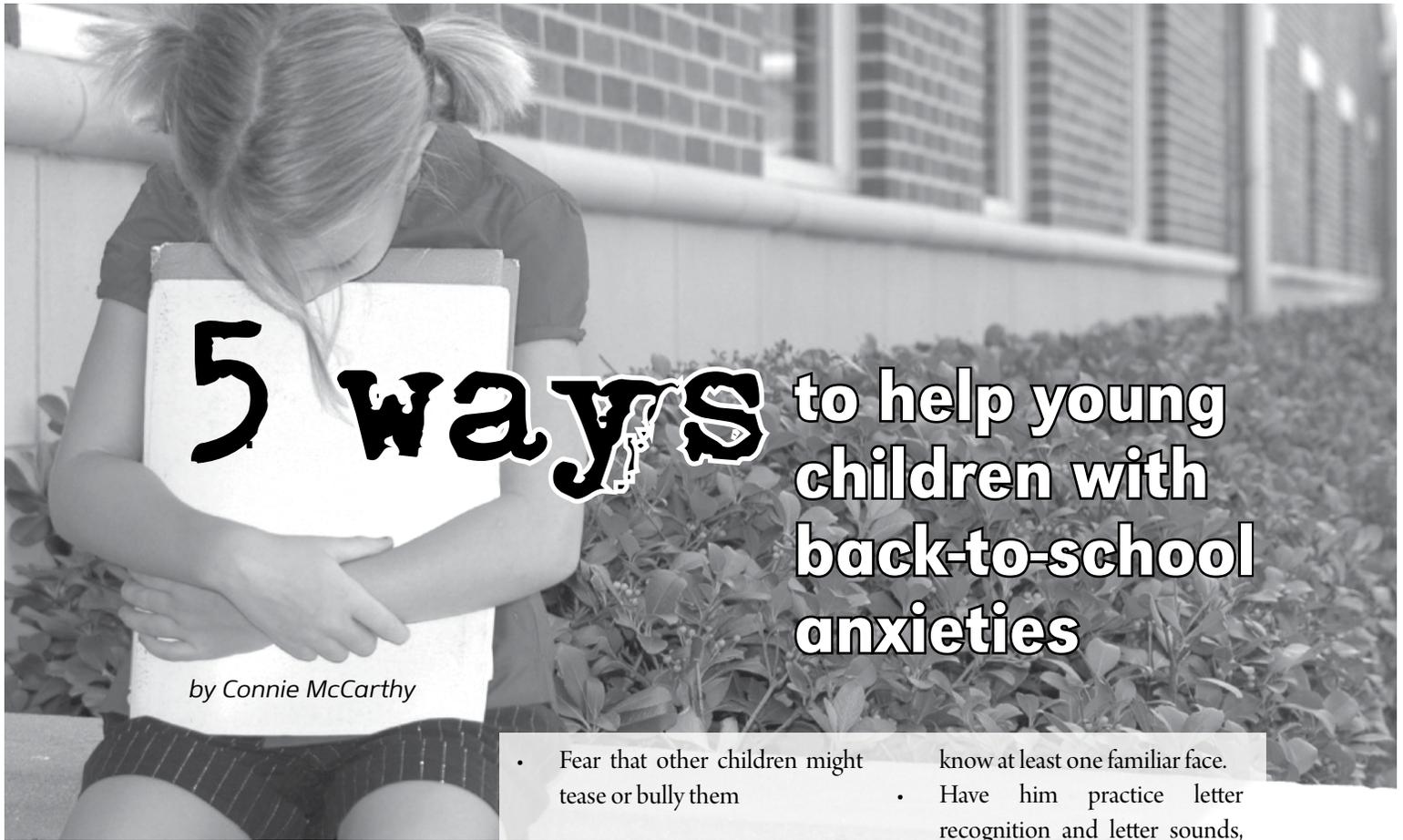


CAA Saskatchewan began sponsorship of the SSP in 1951 and now, approximately 4,500 patrollers assist in 68 communities with approximately 161 schools around the province. CAA Saskatchewan supplies training materials, supplies, stop paddles and reflective vests free of charge or at cost. There has never been a serious or fatal injury collision at a crosswalk controlled by our School Safety Patrollers.

*For more information regarding CAA Saskatchewan's School Safety Patrol program call 306.310.6222 ext.0991.*

The 2013 **National Foster Family Week** is in the 3rd week of October, from the 20th to the 26th. It is the week we recognize foster parents/families across Canada.





by Connie McCarthy

- Fear that other children might tease or bully them
- know at least one familiar face.
- Have him practice letter recognition and letter sounds, number recognition to 50, writing his name, and other basic skills for academic confidence.

As August approaches, most young students are excited about starting a new school year. They are ready to go. However, some children experience anxiety about going to school. This can affect the entire family. Morning routines can be interrupted and getting him on the bus or dropped off at school can become an ordeal.

Why does this happen? There could be various reasons:

- Fear of separating from a parent or caregiver
- Concern that the work will be too hard
- Fear of missing what's happening in the family, when they are away at school
- Worry about responsibilities outside the classroom—for example, getting lunch in the cafeteria

Here are five easy ways to help your young child ease school anxiety:

- If the problem is separation from a loved one, try a technique that worked extremely well in my 1st grade classroom. Have the student bring a photo of a family member, sibling, grandparent, or even a special pet. By keeping the photo on the desk or table, the student was able to have family close by for comfort. Ask your child's teacher if this is allowed.
- If possible, bring him to his new class before school starts. Let him see the space and, if the teacher is there, meet his new teacher. Check out the lunchroom and recess areas as well.
- If you know of another child or children who is going to the same class, see if you could set up a playdate so your child will

Recognizing and acknowledging your child's fears will help you both look for easy and workable solutions...and keep your morning school routine running smoothly!

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# Handwashing for PARENTS & CHILDREN

## Why is handwashing so important?

Germs are always collecting on your hands—when you open doors, wipe children's faces, play with toys and change diapers. You can't avoid germs, but you can reduce the chance of passing them to others by washing your hands often. Washing your hands and your children's hands is the best way to stop the spread of germs. Teach your children to cover their nose and mouth with tissues when they sneeze or cough, or to cough into their upper sleeve or elbow.

## When should parents wash their hands?

### *Wash your hands before:*

- preparing or eating food.
- feeding your baby or child (including breastfeeding).
- giving medication to your child.

### *Wash your hands after:*

- preparing food.
- changing a diaper.
- helping a child to use a toilet.
- using a toilet yourself.
- wiping or blowing your own or your child's nose.
- taking care of a sick child.
- handling pets or animals or cleaning their cages or litter boxes.
- cleaning around the house.

## When should children wash their hands?

It's important to help young children to wash their hands to make sure it is done well.

### *Children should wash their hands before:*

- Eating or handling food.
- Water play.



### *Children should wash their hands after:*

- Using the toilet.
- Playing outdoors or in sand.
- Playing with pets or animals.
- Sneezing or coughing into their hands or blowing noses.



### **Four steps to proper handwashing**

- Wet your hands under running water.
- Scrub your hands well with soap. Remember to scrub between your fingers, to wash both the front and back of your hands, and to clean under your finger nails.
- Rinse your hands under running water.
- Dry your hands with a clean towel.

When water and soap are not available, use pre-moistened hand wipes or alcohol-based hand rinses.

Keep hand rinses out of the reach of children because they may be harmful if swallowed.

### **How should I wash my baby's hands?**

- Wash your baby's hands with soap and a warm, wet, fresh towel (either paper or cloth).
- Rinse the baby's hands with another fresh, warm, wet towel.
- Dry the hands well.

### **Is there anything else I should know about handwashing?**

- Don't use a single damp cloth to wash a group of children's hands. Each child should get a clean cloth.
- Don't use a standing basin of water (such as dirty dish water) to rinse hands.
- Don't use sponges or non-disposable cleaning cloths unless you change them daily and clean them using detergent. Germs thrive on moist surfaces.

Reprinted with credit to: <http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/handwashing>

# Don't let the **bedbugs** bite!

**A** lovable phrase your parents used to say before tucking you in at night has now become a fearful reality for many. In recent years, Canada has seen an increase in the number of bedbug reports due, in part, to increases in international travel. Anyone, anywhere could experience a bedbug infestation, and is not necessarily associated with poor living conditions.

Bedbugs are small, flat, wingless insects with six legs that feed on blood from animals or people. They range in colour from almost white to brown, but they turn rusty red after feeding. The common bedbug doesn't grow much longer than half a centimeter. They multiply quickly and travel easily. Bedbugs get their name because they like to hide in bedding, mattresses and box springs.

Other sites where bedbugs often reside include curtains, the corners inside dressers and other furniture, cracks in wallpaper (particularly near the bed), and inside the spaces of wicker furniture. Bedbugs are found worldwide, but are most common in developing countries, often in hotels, hostels, shelters, and apartment complexes where lots of people come and go.

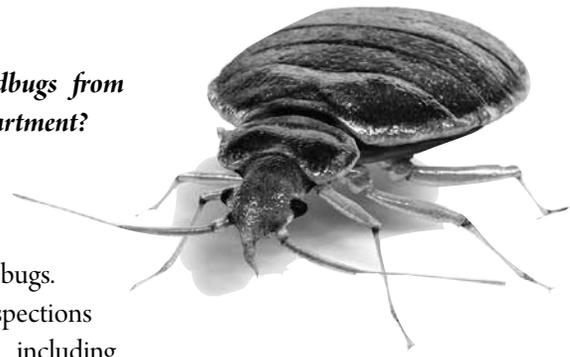
Bedbugs usually feed on humans during the night, with peak biting activity just before dawn. They can obtain their meal in as little as three minutes, after which they are engorged and drop off the host, then crawl into a hiding place to digest their meal. Bedbugs can live for 10 months, and can go weeks without feeding.

## *How do I prevent bedbugs from entering my home or apartment?*

Sometimes even the cleanest homes and apartments can have bedbugs. Performing regular inspections and house cleanings, including vacuuming your mattress, can help prevent or assist in discovering an infestation in its early stages. Keep rooms clean and free of clutter to help reduce the number of places bedbugs can hide. This also makes inspections easier. Seal cracks and crevices with caulking, even if you don't have bedbugs. This will help prevent bedbugs and other pests from entering your home or apartment.

When travelling, before unpacking anything, inspect your hotel room and furniture to look for blood spots, droppings or live insects. (See How to inspect your hotel room for bedbugs). Ask to switch rooms if you find evidence of bedbugs. Upon returning home, and preferably before you bring anything into the house, inspect your luggage. Make sure to wash clothing in the hottest water possible followed by 30 minutes at the highest dryer heat immediately after returning from your trip.

Always be cautious when buying used furniture, clothing, or other items. Make sure to inspect the item before bringing it in to your home. Never bring discarded bed frames, mattresses, box springs, upholstered furniture or electronics into your home. These items may be infested with bedbugs.



**Bedbugs are small, flat, wingless insects with six legs that feed on blood from animals or people.**

## *How will I know if bedbugs have entered my home or apartment?*

Amazingly, these sneaky little bloodsuckers dine on you without waking you. You don't feel their bite because they inject a numbing agent into your body, along with an anticoagulant to keep your blood flowing as they suck. After feeding, they poop, creating telltale brown stains of your clotted blood. You typically won't see the bugs, as they are fairly small and can scurry quickly, but you will see the stains on your sheets, mattress or box spring.

The first sign of bedbugs may be itchy, red bites all in a straight row on the skin. Most bedbug bites are initially painless, but could turn into large, itchy skin welts. Some people have no reaction at all. Most bedbug bites eventually go away by themselves and don't need treatment. A local antiseptic lotion or antibiotic cream or ointment may help with secondary infections, usually from scratching.

***How do I get rid of bedbugs if they've already entered my home or apartment?***

There are various non-chemical methods to help in getting rid of bedbugs including vacuuming carpets, floors and furniture, cleaning fabric items at high temperatures, covering mattresses and box springs with plastic covers, and repairing household items.

Ensure that you vacuum all crevices on your mattress, bed frame, baseboards and any objects close to the bed. It is essential to vacuum every day and empty the vacuum bag immediately.

Wash all your clothing, bed sheets, blankets, mattress pads, pillows and their cases in the hottest water possible and place them in a hot dryer for 30 minutes.

Source: <https://canadasafetycouncil.org/safety-canada-online/article/dont-let-bedbugs-bite>

Remove all unnecessary clutter. Seal cracks and crevices between baseboards, floors and walls with caulking. Repair or remove peeling wallpaper, tighten loose light switch covers, and seal any openings where pipes, wires or other utilities come into your home (pay special attention to walls that are shared between apartments). Dispose of infested items that cannot be cleaned. Seal all items tightly in a plastic garbage bag and discard, making sure to label that items contain bedbugs.

It is advisable to hire an experienced pest control company that can employ various methods in controlling your bedbug infestation. This ensures that you rectify your bedbug problem completely.

## Grant Allocations for Each Local

Grant allocations are used for expenses such as training, Christmas parties, gatherings, meetings and other miscellaneous expenses. The presidents and treasurers of each local must complete a "Proposal Form for Additional Funding" form when requesting funds.

The form is available on page 31 of the Foster Families Association Local Committee Policy Manual, which can be found on the [www.sffa.sk.ca](http://www.sffa.sk.ca) website or by following this link: <http://www.sffa.sk.ca/wp-content/uploads/Additional-Funding-Request-Local-Committee.pdf>

## Babysitter Training Course

The Saskatchewan Safety Council's Babysitter Training Course is designed to prepare young people for the important job of babysitting. Information on child care changes on a continual basis and requires new babysitters to know and understand the requirements of the job including up-to-date child care information, communicating with parents, preventing and treating injuries, and managing any other challenges that may arise.

Please download the Babysitter Training Course brochure for more information about the course and how to organize one in your community. Both instructor and student kits are available for purchase

through the Saskatchewan Safety Council. To order course materials, please call our office or fill out a materials order form, which can be found on our website. Completed forms can be faxed, emailed or mailed to:

### **Saskatchewan Safety Council**

445 Hoffer Drive  
Regina, Saskatchewan  
S4N 6E2

Phone: 306.757.3197

Fax: 306.569.1907

Email: [admin@sasksafety.org](mailto:admin@sasksafety.org)

**\*Please have your materials order form sent to us at least 2 weeks prior to the start of the course.**



### **Cost:**

Instructor Kit - \$20.00

Includes Instructor Handbook, Fire Smart DVD, full Student Kit and all accompanying forms.

Student Kit - \$10.00

Includes Student Handbook, Certification Card and all accompanying forms and letters.

<http://www.sasksafety.org/programs/babysitter-training-course/>

# Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

## What is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)?

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is the term used to describe the range of harms that can result from prenatal alcohol exposure. FASD is often found in combination with a range of other health and social problems faced by pregnant women. These harms can include vision and

Abuse (CCSA), as the logical location to house such a service. In response to that recommendation, CCSA successfully negotiated with three sponsors (Health Canada, the Association of Canadian Distillers and the Brewers Association of Canada) for the creation of an FAS/FAE Information Service, which was implemented in April 1994.

parent-led provincial organization. When the Network began, very little was known about Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Families were facing stigma, lack of services and misunderstanding. A group of like-minded parents came together seeking support and understanding. They had common concerns about the challenges of parenting children affected by prenatal exposure to alcohol.



hearing problems, as well as slow growth and brain damage that result in lifelong problems with attention, memory, reasoning and judgment. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a leading known cause of developmental disability in Canada. As important as this issue is, effective prevention remains a key challenge.

People with FASD can have problems with learning, memory, math, communication and socializing. They may have characteristic facial features, slowed growth, and vision and hearing problems.

FASD may affect as many as 9 in 1,000 babies.

## Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Information Service

In 1992, a Parliamentary committee report on fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effects recommended the establishment of a national FAS/FAE resource centre, and cited the National Clearinghouse on Substance Abuse, operated by the Canadian Centre on Substance

The service provides links to support groups, prevention projects, resource centres and experts on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. It also provides bilingual information to a variety of clients, including caregivers, educators, social workers, health care and treatment professionals, members of the legal community, policy makers and planners, researchers and the general public and maintains a searchable database of Canadian resources on FASD and substance use during pregnancy.

A reference desk, staffed by a bilingual information specialist, can be accessed from across Canada by calling a toll-free number, 1-800-559-4514; by calling the CCSA at (613) 235-4048, ext. 223; by faxing (613) 235-8101; by emailing [fasd@ccsa.ca](mailto:fasd@ccsa.ca); or by mail at: CCSA, 75 Albert Street, Suite 500, Ottawa, ON, K1P 5E7.

## The FASD Support Network of Saskatchewan

The FASD Support Network of Saskatchewan, fondly referred to as the Network, is a community based

As a group, the parents learned more about FASD and recognized the value of working together to bring greater awareness and understanding of FASD to our province. Now, many years later, parents and families are still at the core of the Network. A 12-member Board of Directors, most of whom are parents, offers experience and wisdom to help the Network continue to be a vibrant and growing provincial organization.

Hours of Operation: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday

## FASD Family Support Program

The FASD Family Support Program has been created to give families direct support in their daily lives. It is our hope that we can help to build healthy families and healthy communities. The program will aim to work with families and circles of support to gain positive outcomes for those living with FASD.

The FASD Support Network of Saskatchewan is pleased to now offer direct support to families in Saskatoon and area. For more information, call our support line toll-free at 1-866-673-3276.

# Safeguarding

Foster care is a high-risk profession. It is demanding and can be stressful. Foster families are in a unique relationship with the child compared to the child's birth family or guardians; while performing the day to day responsibilities of a parent, the foster family is not legally defined as a parent of a child in care. Foster parents are in a contractual relationship with the Ministry to provide quality service for a child in need of protection placed in their care. The Ministry is required to provide foster families with adequate support to provide this service. Due to the nature of foster care, foster families may be at greater risk of an allegation than other families. Stresses and limited coping capacity can occasionally lead to an environment where a particular foster family's parenting ability is impaired, leading to an abusive or neglectful reaction.

## How can I effectively safeguard my family?

While there is no absolute way to protect your family against allegations of abuse, there are ways that foster parents can protect themselves in case of an allegation.

*The most effective way is to document:*

- Keep a daily log of events that occur in your house.
- Date every entry in your log or journal.
- List the activities of the day. Include the time and who was involved.
- Be sure to record both positive and negative situations that your children may have encountered each day.
- Also include any people who visit on any given day. Document who visited, when, why and how long they stayed.
- If an incident occurred, state only what happened. You can use direct quotes but make sure you are accurate with whom you are quoting.
- Identify every reliable witness and piece of corroborating evidence.
- If possible, take pictures.
- State just the facts. Leave your personal opinion out, however, you may write down your thoughts in another section.
- Document any cancellations of meetings, appointments, absences or changes in plans.
- Document any changes in a child's health or behaviour – confirmed or suspected.
- Document any modifications to medication or medical or dental appointments.
- List any damages or changes to the child's physical environment (prescribed or not) which could affect

their safety, behaviour or quality of life.

- Report any bruises, scratches, wounds, sores, bumps, infections, headaches, etc. which have occurred through accidental injury, self-injury or any difficult to explain circumstances. From an outsider's view, injuries could be perceived as being sustained through negligence or abuse.
- Record any telephone calls with professionals or extended family or friends regarding the incident of the child's behaviour at the time of contact and the advice given verbatim.
- Document statements regarding actions to rectify a possible emergency or safety hazard, such as first aid treatment given or boarding up a broken window, etc.

## Other ways to help safeguard your family:

- Participate in Core Training available on working with children and youth that have been abused physically or sexually.
- Make time to read books or pamphlets that will increase your awareness of abuse. Obtain a copy of the Ministry of Social Services procedures for handling allegations of abuse.
- Have 'house rules' for everyone about privacy, night wear, etc. This is particularly important when dealing with foster children who are sexually aware or who have been sexually abused.
- Open communication with your caseworker is extremely important. Inform your caseworker of any significant events or changing dynamics in the home. Insist that the caseworker sign the log whenever he/she reviews it.
- It is strongly recommended that you have an appropriate and authorized adult present with your children and foster children. Make sure you know what constitutes an authorized adult through the Ministry of Social Services regulation.
- Build and maintain a support system. You may experience additional pressures due to the children you have in your care, disrupted family dynamics or from difficulties that arise from dealing with the caseworker or the Ministry of Social Services. Attending local foster meetings, connecting with your local peer support member or counseling provided by the Ministry can help give you the support you need. Keeping confidentiality in mind, it is very important that you have someone to turn to in a time of crisis.

# Creating Supportive Food Environments

“ *Child care homes and centres have an important role in shaping the eating behaviours of children through the food environment they create.* ”



Parents and caregivers have the most influence on what a young child eats and drinks. Because of this, they have a big role in establishing healthy eating behaviours for children. Be a positive role model. The children in your care may adopt many of your attitudes about food, eating and health.

Part of a healthy feeding relationship is providing the children with regular meals and snacks. Allowing children to eat according to their own feelings of fullness or hunger is also very important. Encourage children to eat when hungry and stop when full.

“ *Caregivers are responsible for when, where and what foods are offered. Children are responsible for if they eat and how much.* ”

In their early years, a child's appetite and food likes and dislikes may change frequently. Therefore, children are the best judges of how much they need to eat. Establishing good eating habits for a lifetime requires knowledge and skill. Teach the children, by way of conversation, about your menus, shopping and cooking as well as the benefits of healthy eating. You are laying the foundation for good health. Have healthy foods available for the children to practice what they have learned.

Create a calm and pleasant environment for the children to enjoy their meals and snacks. Give positive

recognition for making healthy food choices or positive eating behaviour.

Promote social development and language skills during meals and snacks by encouraging good manners and conversations. Have children talk about their families, their customs and their cultures and feel proud of whom they are. Food is a part of everyone's culture. Children may be alike or they may be different, but certainly, they are all special. They will learn to know and respect each other.

## PRACTICAL TIPS

### ALLOW ENOUGH TIME FOR MEALS AND SNACKS

Rushing meals and snacks is frustrating for both you and the children. Do kids seem to dawdle at the table? Young children do not have the skill or muscle development to eat fast. They are developing their fine motor skills. They need time to practice eating with appropriate utensils. Let them eat at a pace that they can enjoy their table time. Allow about 10-15 minutes for a snack and 20-30 minutes for a meal. It takes about 20 minutes for them to start feeling full.

### BE A GOOD ROLE MODEL

Children want to grow up doing what others do. Chances are, if you eat your broccoli, turnips and whole grain buns; the children will try them too – if not now, then in the future. You are a role model for them along with their parents, siblings and friends.

### CHOOSE A NON-FOOD APPROACH

Reward the children with your attention, kind words and hugs. Show you care for them by having fun together and spending time with them.

- Choose not to reward, appease or punish a child with food. Eating for your approval creates unhealthy beliefs about food and themselves.
- Some comments may lead children to eating problems. These include “eat everything on your plate so you can play” or “stop crying and I'll give you a candy”. These comments may lead to conflict or struggles between you and the child that are unnecessary.
- Rewarding children for a clean plate teaches them to ignore their own body signs and may encourage them to overeat.
- Giving food as a treat to make them feel better teaches a child to overcome a negative feeling by eating. This may lead to overeating later in life.

- If you do fundraising, choose healthy food items or nonfood items for selling.
- When choosing rewards, use non-food items such as free play, a story, a craft, a game or stickers for older children.

### CREATE A NURTURING PLACE TO EAT THAT IS...

#### ... *Relaxed*

Plan a relaxed atmosphere with appropriate conversation. Focus on the food, mealtime and people they are eating with. Turn off the television.

#### ... *Safe*

- Stay with young children who are eating, even if you have other things to do.
- Have easy to hold, child sized plates, cups and utensils.
- Have a comfortable, supportive chair (with a back) at the appropriate height for the table.
- For small children, don't serve hard, small whole foods such as nuts, seeds, candy or popcorn. Slice grapes, carrots and wieners into small strips. Avoid marshmallows.
- Teach the children to chew foods well so they won't choke when swallowing.
- Spread sticky foods like peanut butter or cheese-spread thinly.

*This publication can be found on the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education website: [www.learning.gov.sk.ca](http://www.learning.gov.sk.ca) in the Early Learning and Child Care section.*

<http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/adx/asp/adxGetMedia.aspx?DocID=1970,219,212,136,107,81,1,Documents&MediaID=4847&Filename=Mealtime+Mentoring+November+2008.pdf>



## A Star for Rae: A book about foster children

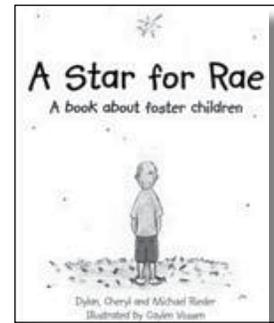
by Dylan, Cheryl and Michael Rieder

Illustrated by Caylen Vossen

Soft cover; 8" x 8"

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An illustrated book for young readers and adults, *A Star for Rae* tells the story of the special baby girl who first made the Rieders a foster family. The story is told by 10-year-old Dylan as he describes bringing Rae home, caring for her, watching her grow, and then having to say goodbye when Rae is adopted by new parents.

Touching and often funny, *A Star for Rae* provides a voice for younger biological children in foster families, as well as insight into the child protection system. It also highlights the fact that foster children and families are found in just about every community. "Whoever they are, foster children are kids just like you and me," says Dylan.

## Leisure Access Program

The Leisure Access Program allows eligible low-income residents within the city to participate in City of Saskatoon leisure facilities and programs. The program includes unlimited admission to drop-in programs at the City of Saskatoon Leisure Centres and one registered program per year.

## Discounted Bus Pass Program (2013 Rates)

The Discounted Bus Pass Program allows Saskatoon residents with low income, the opportunity to purchase a monthly bus pass at a reduced rate. This applies to each eligible family member.

|                  |         |
|------------------|---------|
| Adult Pass       | \$62.40 |
| High School Pass | \$44.80 |
| Child Pass       | \$37.60 |

You are qualified for one year from the date of approval. Qualification: If your total household income (Before Tax, Line 150 of your most recent Notice(s) of Assessment(s) from Canada Revenue Agency) is not more than the amounts listed on our website, you are eligible for the Leisure Access Program. For more information, please view our website at: <http://www.saskatoon.ca/DEPARTMENTS/Community%20Services/Communitydevelopment/Pages/LeisureAccessProgram.aspx>

## The 2013 Provincial Annual General Meeting

The 2013 Provincial Annual General Meeting was held on June 15, 2013 in Saskatoon. Our guest speaker was Darci Lang from Regina, Saskatchewan.



Darci has been a professional speaker for over 20 years. The emphasis of her presentation was her philosophy that one simple tool can change the way you view your life. Darci generously provided free copies of her book "Focus on the 90%" to all of the attendees.

Thank you to all who attended!

*For more information, you can visit Darci Lang's website at [www.darcilang.com](http://www.darcilang.com)*



## Saskatoon Health Region Launches 'Germ Smart'

A new public hand hygiene campaign "Germ Smart" has been launched by the Saskatoon Health Region. The program teaches good hand hygiene and shows how such an easy task can prevent the spread of contagious illnesses such as norovirus and the flu.

According to recent studies, only 5% of people wash their hands long enough to prevent the spread of illness. In addition, 15% of men and 8% of women observed in the study didn't even wash their hands after going to the washroom.

The results of the program have been overwhelmingly positive. Various school divisions, daycares and workplaces have participated in the program. The goal of the program is 100% compliance. The region's overall



hand hygiene compliance was only 68% just two years ago, but has jumped to 81% today and is still growing.

You can learn more at [www.germsmart.ca](http://www.germsmart.ca)

## Respite

Due to the number of requests we receive for information on respite, the SFFA office is looking to build a respite provider list. If you or someone you know is willing to provide respite for a foster family, please contact our office at **306.975.1580** or **1.888.276.2880**. Please specify whether you are willing to go into someone else's home or if you prefer to provide respite in your own residence. Please be aware that all respite providers must have current a Criminal Record Check and Vulnerable Sector Check in order to provide care.



# Teen Mornings

by Elizabeth S. Leaver

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Adolescents are famously sleep-deprived. As with younger children, try to instill a regular bedtime, which should help the mornings go more smoothly.

Tweens and teens generally require more time to get ready in the morning, so build in enough time—at least half an hour—for personal hygiene and dressing.

In addition to homework and backpack, make sure your child gathers any other needed items, such as school library books or outfits for sports practices, the night before. Almost nothing waylays a morning more than hunting around for items like that at the last minute.

Try to make sure older children have their homework completed in enough time to allow them to wind down for a while. Likewise, try to instill a habit of no electronics (cell phones, video games, etc.) for at least an hour before bedtime.

Don't expect too much. While it would be nice if your child were able to make her bed and tackle a few chores before school, it might not be realistic. Focus on what absolutely must be done to reduce the chaos and forget the rest for now. In time, once a routine is in order, you might be able to add back a small chore or two.



## Healthy, Nourishing After-School snack ideas...

### 1 Tortilla chips & salsa



Bake a whole wheat pita and cut it into wedges. Serve with a fruit salsa or tomato salsa for flavourful dipping.

### 2 Popcorn



Kids will love the fact that they are eating "junk food" after school, but low-fat and air popped popcorn is surprisingly low fat and since it is high in fibre, it will keep them satisfied until supper.

### 3 Trail Mix



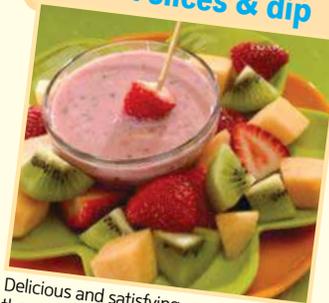
Mix together nuts, seeds, raisins, dried fruit or cereal such as Chex or Cheerios for a sweet and salty snack.

### 4 Homemade muffins



Easy to make in big batches and freeze, muffins can be made in endless variations and are a convenient snack.

### 5 Fruit slices & dip



Delicious and satisfying, you can sprinkle the apples with cinnamon and dip them into nut butter, peanut butter or yogurt.



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