

Celebrating stories from the North and getting inspired

Northern News Services

As we embrace the new year, it's a perfect time to reflect on the local heroes in our communities who promote healthy living. From athletes to coaches and dedicated community members, their stories inspire us to create a more active lifestyle through family dances, skating on the Dehcho (Mackenzie) River, and so much more.

We celebrate our achievements, no matter their size, shape, colour, or number, and we recognize the importance of physical literacy: being competent, comfortable, knowledgeable, and having fun with physical activity. Whether we're walking on ice on a cold winter day, preparing for the Wade Hamer Challenge Cup hockey game between Sir John Franklin and St. Pat's High Schools, or training for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, anyone can lead the way.

Don't you just love those frosty cold days when the hoarfrost settles on the branches outside, and you walk out to feel the inside of your nose freeze?

With the new year comes another "Walk to Tuk" (www.walktotuk.com). If you're reading this, I'm sure you've already signed up. If not, hurry up! Gather your co-workers, enable your family team to join, and if you're part of a sports team, get them to sign up with you. Create

a fun team name and start logging those walking or workout hours. Not only does this help you stay active and kick off your year inspiring yourself, but it also gives you a chance to win fun prizes while being active.

And of course, your photography skills will come in handy for those photo prizes as well. If you've already joined, good on you! If you haven't, no worries — just do it now!

Now that you've empowered yourself, let's dive into some podcasts that are available straight from the North:

Tune in to hear about the resilience of our Northerners in the NWT Recreation and Parks Association's podcast *How I Survived* (<https://podcasts.apple.com/ca/podcast/how-i-survived-podcast/id1774961156>). There's also *Stories from the North* hosted by former NextGen

short-track speedskater Wren Acorn from Yellowknife, which shares the amazing achievements of our athletes, the obstacles they faced, and the lessons learned from their experiences. These podcasts highlight the opportunities and possibilities available to help you become the best version of yourself. Get inspired by these great listening opportunities while staying active.

The #weareallteamnt campaign supports these stories, recognizing everyone who plays a role in our athletes' journeys. From the par-



GUEST COMMENT

Thorsten Gohl is the co-ordinator of Physical Literacy NWT



Adrena McDonald, left, and Hayden Murray captained their respective Sir John Franklin teams to victory in the 40th Wade Hamer Challenge Cup at the Multiplex this past November. Events like this are one way to help celebrate the achievements of our Northern athletes, writes columnist Thorsten Gohl. NNSL file photo

ents who wake their kids for early morning practices to the Zamboni drivers preparing the ice for the next hockey session, and the officials who show up to ensure the games can happen, each person contributes to the fabric of our sporting community. Family members cheering for their kids in the stands, on live streams, or simply wishing them well are also vital to this support

network. There are countless Team NT members among us, and it's time to celebrate them.

In the North, we are already doing great things by continuing the tradition of storytelling. Let's embrace this practice, build upon it, and empower our youth to become the best versions of themselves, whatever that may look like. When they become role models and future

leaders, younger generations will look up to them, aspire to follow in their footsteps, and ultimately create a cycle of positive reinforcement, support, and love.

Together, let's celebrate our achievements and continue to foster a community where everyone can thrive in physical literacy and healthy living.

Thorsten Gohl is the co-ordinator

Parenting in Focus: Resolutions that matter

Cynthia Martin
Northern News Services

It is never too late to make New Year's resolutions. Just because the New Year began a few days ago doesn't mean you can't try to make things better in some areas of your life.

One area that frequently needs some cleaning up is the area of parenting. It is not unusual for people parenting to wish they had done something different with their child. Regrets are common. So what things could you change to make yourself a better parent? Notice I do not say a perfect parent. They do not exist. While we can't expect to be perfect, we can all hope to be better.

Good parenting happens to parents in a moment. The key is recognizing these times when what you do is helpful to your child to help him or her grow and learn in the best ways possible. The trick is recognizing those moments when your actions and reactions can really help your child learn and grow in the best possible ways. Here are some ways to become the best parent you can be.

1. Set A Positive Example. Kids watch you and watch what you do. Many times your behaviour is more powerful than your words. You are the model your child is watching. Everything you do is teaching



No one has all the right answers to raising children. Talk with others but don't let them decide what makes sense for you. Pixabay/serrano1004 photo

your child. When you say hello to a neighbor, your child is watching you and learning from your behavior. Just having your child with you as you go through each day is teaching your child how to behave.

2. We All Make Mistakes. Learning from mistakes helps your child understand better than trying to shield him from mistakes. When your baby is trying to learn how to use a

sippy cup or is learning to dress himself, as a parent you need to let mistakes happen. Instead of trying to prevent the mistakes, let him try a few times and he is then likely to succeed. It isn't just your child who learns from mistakes; it is also the parent.

3. Give Attention for Comfort. If every time your child falls and cries you offer him a cookie you are making a mistake. What is important to give

your child is your attention. That is what he seeks and what he needs.

4. Be Careful Comparing and Labelling. When there is more than one child in your family, it is easy to compare the children. This leads to labels. One child might become the "happy baby" and another one a "smarty pants." One could become a "wild child" or an "energetic child" and the next

one the "quiet one." Labels can even become part of the problem. If you have a child you have labeled a "picky eater" this might cause him to really become a "picky eater."

5. Talking About Behaviour. One of parents' most important tasks is to help their child learn to control their behaviour. Children over time will break every rule you make. You don't want to over react or to show the same amount of disapproval each time. Talk with your child about what happened. Have a calm and compassionate conversation about it. Ask your child questions and make suggestions. What are ways your child could have handled the situation that you might suggest?

6. Do Your Best. No one has all the right answers to raising children. Talk with others but don't let them decide what makes sense for you. Consider what is best for your child

and for you. Think it through and then try it. Nothing is in concrete. If things work, try it again. If they don't, change things.

7. Love Your Child. A baby who once loved an activity now rejects it. Parents can be quick to assume that something's wrong when, in fact, it may be that he's matured and changed. The parents' role as their children evolve from infants to toddlers and beyond is to love them as babies, toddlers and all the way through. Your love should evolve right along with them.

Enjoy your role as a parent. It is vitally important and also rewarding. Be the best you can be.

—Cynthia Martin is the founder of the First Teacher program and former executive director of Parenting Matters Foundation, which published newsletters for parents, caregivers and grandparents.



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