

Lack of volunteers putting the pinch on home health care

By Graeme Frisque
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Acclaim Health, an organization providing home care health services in Halton Region, says it's unable to keep up demand for its volunteer-run community support programs due to a shortage of volunteers.

The organization offers a number of services for seniors and others in need in Oakville, Burlington and Milton and Georgetown.

Last year the demand for volunteer visiting programs run by Acclaim Health reached a record high, resulting in hundreds of adults who are still unable to receive care because the organization, which services all of Halton, continues to struggle to recruit volunteers, wrote the group in a release sent last week.

Many people don't know about us until they need our services, said Patricia Blakeley, Director of Community Support Services. Which, unfortunately, also means that potential volunteers don't know about us either, and so don't choose us as a place to donate

their time.

There are several volunteer options to choose from including helping seniors stay mobile through a home exercise support program, visiting with those who need a little extra company during the day, supporting bereaved individuals throughout their grief process, as well as other programs aimed at making life a little more comfortable for the elderly and less able.

Volunteering requires a one to two-hour commitment per week and no experience is required.

Acclaim Health provides comprehensive training to prepare all new volunteers for their new roles.

Acclaim Health also provides palliative care services and operates two Adult Day Programs out of senior and community centres in Burlington and Oakville.

Anyone interested in volunteering should contact Joanne Berrigan at 905-827-8800 ext. 2317 or by email via jberrigan@acclaimhealth.ca

Visit acclaimhealth.ca/volunteer for more information on services offered.



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Q: Help! My six year old's teeth are coming in crooked and behind her baby teeth. What the heck is going on?

A: It sounds like you have, what we call in the profession, a 'shark baby'. In most cases I will refer a child to the local aquarium for immediate evaluation and preparation for her re-entry into her natural aquatic environment.

Actually, disregard everything I said in the above paragraph.

The first adult teeth to come in are usually the lower central incisors (lower front teeth). They are thin teeth and as they grow upwards they can sometime miss the roots of the baby teeth they are meant to replace. Sometimes enough of the baby teeth's roots get dissolved so that the youngster can wiggle the baby teeth out themselves (something that should be encouraged). If the adult teeth have grown in all the way or close to it, I would recommend having a dentist check them out, because they may need to be numbed and gently removed.

Most likely, once the baby teeth are gone, the adult teeth will move into position naturally. And unless there are major bite problems, it is way too early to start thinking about braces. Your dentist can advise you to the best course of action.

Next month, I will discuss in detail the rare and fictitious condition of 'octopus gums'.

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Conflict is NOT a Bad Thing

Most of us avoid conflict for fear of upsetting people. Conflict is not bad, it's a part of life. Here are some tips to effectively manage conflict.

1. It is most productive to address conflict as it arises. **Take each issue as it comes.** This leads to constructive conversation and solutions. Holding back tends to build up anger causing a person to explode and appear irrational in their concerns.
2. **Address one issue at a time.** The worst mistake people make is to jump from one issue to another. Stay focused on the subject at hand and if other issues arise, commit to address them on their own time.
3. **Clearly state the problem,** take time to listen to each person's perspective and feelings about the issue.
4. Conflicts often arise from people thinking and feeling they have no choice. **Open your mind** and try brainstorming new possibilities. It is amazing to see how a collaborative solution process can create new options for all involved.
5. **Set clear personal boundaries.** Be clear with what you need to have and protect. Consider how you might be flexible to support your needs and the needs of the other party involved. Collaborate to find a win-win outcome.
6. **Examine your behaviors during a difficult conversation.** Are you competing to win? Do you avoid conflict and hope the problem will go away? Or do you compromise and give up what is important to you?
7. For healthy conflict resolution, there is a need to address the situation, find a collaborative resolution and then **let it go.** Learning to let go is crucial to move forward positively.

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