

SO SWEET

Colombian favourite suits smoothies and salads, **L3**

Saucy Lady: Jennifer Bain checks out the brunch at Linda Modern Thai, **L4**



LIFE



Julia Gibran leads students through a yoga session at C.W. Jeffreys Collegiate Institute.

Just breathe

In-school program teaches kids that yoga is a way to cope with stress at school and home

ISABEL TEOTONIO
LIFE REPORTER

On those mornings when Blain Romain is in a “terrible mood” at school — the kind when he doesn’t talk about what’s bothering him, slams doors and ignores teachers’ requests to remove his hat — only one thing brings him comfort.

“I go to yoga and I feel better. Relieved,” says the 16-year-old in Grade 11 at Bendale Business and Technical Institute in Scarborough.

“It’s like a dog being let out of a cage. It’s like ‘Woooo.’ I can’t explain it, but it takes away the bad and brings in the good.”

It’s a sentiment being echoed by a growing number of youth participating in classes offered by New Leaf Yoga Foundation, a charitable organization that teaches yoga and mindfulness to kids from marginalized communities where there’s a lack of supportive services. The goal is to work with kids who are strug-

gling with issues at home and school, which could put them on the path to facing bigger challenges.

Through yoga movements and conscious breathing, youth are learning to be still, to focus, to relax and to have greater self-control — life skills that stay with them after they’ve rolled up the yoga mat.

This fall, New Leaf expanded its partnership with the Toronto District School Board and now offers weekly programming in eight schools — three elementary and five secondary.

Last month, classes started in the Jane and Finch area at Westview Centennial Secondary School and C.W. Jeffreys Collegiate Institute.

YOGA continued on L7



Landon Rands, 11, says that yoga has taught him to walk away from conflict.

STEVE RUSSELL PHOTOS/TORONTO STAR

Skip the basement references and give millennials more credit



It’s time to stop the conflicted attitude that boomer parents have toward their young

Judith Timson

Enough with the “basement-dwellers” label! Can’t we find a less demeaning way to characterize an entire generation of twentysomethings desperately anxious to be employed and independent?

Bank of Canada governor Stephen Poloz, now the rueful subject of snarky cartoons depicting him as a fat cat banker, recently expressed concern about youth unemployment and doled out some pin-striped wisdom: “If your parents are letting you live in the basement, you might as well go out and do something for free to put the experience on your CV.”

Most critics rightly took him to task for the unpaid work part. But many people, including those beleaguered twentysomethings irate about being asked to work for free, seem oblivious to how humiliating, demoralizing and even self-fulfilling it is to be characterized as living in your parents’ basements.

I’m a parent of two — both employed and living independently — and I’m sick of the negative connotations this easy, lazy label confers on millennials, that much lamented “lost” tribe: bargain basement, basement of the economy, nowhere to go but up. Moochers, gamers, losers. It’s dark down there.

TIMSON continued on L7



Bank of Canada governor Stephen Poloz suggested that young people living in their parents’ basements should seek out unpaid work.

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