

# The Sabourin Family

Our family is made up of our dad, Tim, our mom, Ruth-Anne, our precious first born Emily, and our charming boy Noah.

We try hard as a family to offer a balance of structured activities, mixed in with free time.

Emily and Noah have taken swimming lessons since they were each 6 months old. Mom was the lucky one who got in the pool with the kids 'in the early years'. Now she gets to sit in the bleachers and watch. Dad usually ends up meeting us at the pool after he leaves work, but does his best to make sure he is there to watch us.

Grandma and Papa started coming to see the kids swim, which as it turns out, set a precedent for them to attend most of the kids' school and extracurricular activities.

The kids love helping dad in the yard when he is cutting the grass, cutting down trees, or trimming the shrubs. Dad has been known to give shoulder rides to the kids while he pushes the lawnmower around the yard. And through dad's guidance, the kids are well adept at sorting laundry and starting the washer and dryer.

Mom is active on the parent council at the school. From time to time she will need to staple notices, or sort order forms, or count money. The kids love sitting down on the floor with her and pitching in.

On the nights that mom attends the council meetings, dad and the kids tend to do some baking. Usually cookies, but we have also made muffins and a few cheese cakes over the years.

If dad is bringing something for an office potluck luncheon, the kids are right there the night before helping him prepare the item. Clam Chowder, and crock pot macaroni and cheese are his specialties.

We use the cooking and baking sessions to practice measuring, counting, cooperation, and patience.

Besides swimming, the kids have taken gymnastics, skating lessons, played soccer, baseball and hockey.

Mom coached them both in soccer one season.

Mom started with them on the ice for skating lessons, but Dad took over when they started hockey school. Actually, Noah was in hockey school, and when Emily realized that she would be going to the rink to watch him every Saturday morning, she decided to join us on the rink.

The family hockey interest continued to tyke hockey where dad coached both kids, and mom took on the 'team mom' role, organizing all the change room and off-ice activities.

This year, dad is still coaching Noah on the tyke team, and mom is the team mom. Emily has moved on to the novice team, where dad helps out during practices and fills in on the bench if needed during games. Dad is also a member of the league hockey council.

And yes, grandma and papa do their best to make every hockey game. Games are usually Sunday mornings, scheduled back to back, so sometimes grandma and papa will come to the game dressed for church, and stay as long as they can, before they have to leave.

Mom started reading to the kids when they were both very young. Both kids really enjoy the time that we all spend reading together now. Usually we will split up, dad/Emily and mom/Noah for a couple nights, and then switch it up for the next couple nights. Our reading time is divided between the kids reading to mom and dad, and mom and dad reading to the kids.

We also spend a lot of time playing board games. It would not be unusual if you came into our house and found all, or some of us sprawled out on the living room floor playing a game, with a couple extras stacked beside us, waiting their turn. Connect Four is our favorite.

Grandma and papa love having Emily and Noah over to their condo. The kids swim there in the summer, and ride their bikes around the grounds. So many of the residence know the kids, that when we are out at the mall, people are say hello to the kids, and mom and dad have to ask the kids who they are, and the kids will say they are from grandma and papa's building.

Grandma and Emily love card games like go-fish and crazy eights. They lose track of time sometimes when they play. Noah and papa enjoy the simpler things like sitting together on papa's recliner and watching a hockey game. The New York Islanders are the team for them.

Both kids also show their culinary skills at grandma and papa's, helping out whenever a meal is in need of making.

Now the girls like to be girls, and will go off to the mall shopping or the nail salon or get their hair done form time to time. While the boys have been known to go to the golf driving range, or out to drive go-carts. Noah and dad have found themselves at Home Depot 'testing' the ride-on lawn mowers, or seeing how many forklifts are driving around the store. Not to say that we all haven't enjoyed a few laps around the go-cart track or a few games of family putt-putt, but there are certain things that the girls only do, and certain things that the boys only do.

Of course, there are many things that we do as a family. The kids received a Wii game system from Santa this past Christmas. The games are a great opportunity for the family to get together and spend some time together. Of course the kids are near pros, but mom and dad do their best at bowling, tennis, and Mario cart. Grandma and papa have also spent some time with the controllers in their hands.

Now we also enjoy some of the simpler things that families do, like snuggling on the couch to watch TV. Some of our favorite television shows are Cash Cab, Americas Funniest Videos and Wipeout. The kids and dad have recently started watching downhill skiing and curling. We cannot wait until the Olympics start. The kids and mom often snuggle in together on mom and dad's bed, leaving dad to carry the kids to their own beds after they fall asleep. At least the bed is warm when dad comes to bed.

Mom took the kids skiing at Kissing Bridge a few weeks ago, and the kids loved it.

One thing about the kids is that they love being outside, all year round, rain, snow, or sunshine. Mom is lucky enough to be off work at the same time the kids are during the summer. They usually plan a weekly trip or adventure to somewhere. Dad cannot always get away from work to join them, but the joke is that dad 'funds their fun'!

Even with the Wii, the board games, the daytrips, and all the other things we do together as a family, one of the simplest things that we have the most fun doing is...wrestling. Without warning, one or both of the kids will attack dad when he is not expecting it, and then it turns into a wrestling match than usually carries on until mom tells us to stop, or someone is too tired from laughing so much.

We are not sure if we would call them traditions, but we do have some things we always do around the various holidays. In our basement are a number of boxes filled with various window stickers, lawn ornaments, inflatable characters and other items, that the kids and mom take pride in hauling up the stairs and decorating the inside and outside of the house with, depending on the holiday or event.

Actually the one tradition that takes place every year like clockwork, is that mom packs away the Christmas tree and household decorations on Boxing Day. The tree and decorations get put up at different times each year, but come Boxing Day, they all get put away. The kids are a great help decorating, and then deconstructing the tree. Now dad on the other hand is in no rush to take down the Christmas lights from outside. He likes to appreciate the lights for as long as he can. Plus, it's always colder taking them down, compared to when he puts them up.

There is a tradition that mom has passed on from when she was a little girl. Mom and dad buy Emily and Noah a new pair of pajamas that they lay out for the kids on Christmas Eve with their Christmas stockings on their beds. Although it happens every year, the kids are always surprised when they find the pajamas and stockings.

Christmas morning, the kids wait patiently for grandma and papa to come over before any gifts get opened. Papa coordinates the morning, reaching under the tree and handing out the gifts to the kids, while grandma, mom and dad get to sit back, take pictures, and enjoy some warm baked goods.

Both of the kids have a great sense of humour. They both have a great sense of timing, and make some interesting observations that make mom and dad laugh.

Both kids love music. Mom and dad have bought them various instruments that the kids play and perform with. Of course what is a singer without some dance moves? Both kids love to bust a move whenever they can, and wherever they are!

So, that's it. We hope you know a little more about us now. Thank you for your time.

By the way, our email account is also about our family: [trensab@cogeco.ca](mailto:trensab@cogeco.ca). The 't' is for Tim, the 'r' for Ruth-Anne, the 'e' for Emily, the 'n' for Noah, and 'sab' for Sabourin. Drop us a note if you have a moment.