

OPINION

Make a difference

October is Child Abuse Prevention Month and the Halton Children's Aid Society wants to use the attention to remind residents their assistance is needed to ensure children in the region remain safe.

While CAS staff work with schools, service agencies, police stations and other regional locations, contacts from the general public play a vital role in helping the agency protect children from abuse or neglect.

Last year, the Halton CAS was contacted on 4,434 occasions about concerns for child safety.

More than half of those contacts (2,310) resulted in CAS investigations.

According to Executive Director Nancy McGillivray, "It takes a community to keep children and youth safe from fear, harm and violence. We need people to speak up for people who don't feel they have a voice that can be heard."

Specifically, Halton residents are asked to watch out for some of the signs of neglect, physical, sexual and emotional abuse, which can include frequent absences from school, listlessness, poor hygiene, injuries such as bruising, cuts and welts that are inconsistent with the explanation for them, extreme aggression or withdrawal, age-inappropriate sexual knowledge, seductive behaviour, severe depression and frequent psychosomatic complaints such as headaches and nausea.

While the ultimate goal of the CAS is to keep families together — 95 per cent of all cases handled by the agency result in children remaining at home — when the need arises children are brought into CAS care.

If you suspect a child may be the victim of some form of abuse or neglect, call the Halton Children's Aid Society at 905-333-4441. Your call could make a real difference in a child's life.

WEB POLL RESULTS

(Go to www.theifp.ca)

Would you support amalgamating the Georgetown and Milton police offices in Milton?

- No. We need a local Georgetown office (84%)
- Yes. If it saves taxpayers' money (8%)
- It would make no difference to me (8%)

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Letters to the editor

Law-abiding driver won't be 'bullied'

Dear editor,

I commute daily into Toronto and to avoid traffic, travel along Highway 7 at 5:30 a.m.

My issue is with the stretch of Highway 7 between Trafalgar Road and Moore Park. The speed limit decreases from 80 km/h to 60 to 50. The speeds are clearly posted in addition to the speed monitoring sign.

Without fail, there is a driver who isn't interested in heeding the 50 km/h limit and follows so close you can't see the licence plate. They intimidate and push, trying to either move you out of the way or get you to increase your speed.

I refuse to be bullied and maintain the speed limit with cruise control. More often than not, the vehicle either passes where it is not permitted or continues to tailgate until the second lane appears—then accelerates at a speed far exceeding the limit.

Dealing with impatient drivers and dangerous conditions should not be

what anyone has to face every day.

I suggest our local constabulary increase their visibility on a regular basis in this area and perhaps their presence would be enough of a deterrent to some of these drivers and allow the rest of us to have a safer and unbothered drive.

Sandy Collins, Georgetown

System 'idiotic'

Dear editor,

A number of cars on our street were recently ticketed for parking violations.

Although not posted anywhere there is a five-hour maximum for street parking but it's only enforced if there is a complaint. What I find completely unfair is the enforcement by complaint which is idiotic.

Should you happen to street park where no one complains you are okay; otherwise parkers beware. I think violators should revolt and not pay and send a message that being targeted by complaint is brutally unfair.

Local enforcement should either ticket all violators or none at all, fair is fair.

Ray Eckert, Georgetown

Cash for kids, not HQ

Dear editor,

In the Sept. 26 *Independent* I gleaned this irony from stories I read.

A new police headquarters to be built needs almost \$70 million to be paid for by Halton taxpayers.

Youth centres are at risk of closing as they can't pay \$150,000 to run the centres which provide counselling and referrals. Two youth staff workers give daily counselling to youth with drug and alcohol abuse problems, bullying issues, pregnancy and homelessness.

I think we could save a bundle by helping our youth. Can my taxes please be used for the youth centres instead of the fortress, I mean, police headquarters?

Jane Wilson, Glen Williams

Letters policy

Letters must include the author's name, address and daytime phone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 150 words and may be edited for content and/or length. Publication is not guaranteed.

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