



ENTERPRISING YOUNG MEN

Hot weather, like we had last week, always seems to bring out the entrepreneurial spirit in the younger set. Above, young businessmen Emile Savole, 13, and Andy Kavanagh, 12, set up a fruit juice stand on Main Street in Georgetown. Business was good, the young men reported.

CAS director stresses Halton needs only

Ron Coupland, executive director of Halton Children's Aid Society (CAS) said he doesn't "give a damn what happened in the rest of the province, only what affects Halton."

Coupland, speaking in a panel discussion on integrating children services throughout the province, said there has always been a push-pull system between the province and the CAS, but whether the province liked it or not it could not exist without the CAS.

Although he welcomes the need for integrated services he stressed there has to be services in the community to co-ordinate. He doesn't want to see the CAS torn apart at the seams.

About 150 persons were present to hear the panel discussion, with four highly qualified panelists, invited by Halton's Youth Services Network to hear an update report on the subject from Judge George Thomson, Ontario associate deputy minister of community and social services.

Several members of the audience murmured their approval of Coupland's comments and the feeling that Halton region has been ignored, done without for too long.

Coupland pointed out a number of flaws with the integrated services. Not once, he said, has the difference be-

tween youth and children been clarified. Also, he said, it is important that parents in the community are aware of the changes so they will not be confused with the conglomeration of services and not speak out, or be afraid of contacting the wrong authorities.

Speaking from a political standpoint, Walter Mulkeiwich, a Burlington regional councillor and chairman of Halton community and social services committee said that if regional children's committees are set up and modeled after health councils he would be against the move. He said he approves of health councils, but there is a vagueness surrounding council concerning its mandate and budget.

"In our system of government the budget should be controlled by persons who have been elected," he said, "and this means committees have to answer to either the region or to MPP's at Queen's Park."

Mulkeiwich questioned who the children's committees would answer to and if they would receive a grant from the ministry. The province will have to set guidelines, and also accept Halton as a region.

Up to this point, he said, residents in south Halton relate to either Hamilton or Toronto and in the north, either Guelph, or Brampton.

He suggested that perhaps the regional government shouldn't be involved with the committees at all, or share a budget program with the province. He said most of the regional councillors are in the dark about the integration which is being carried out.

Another point which can't be overlooked, Mulkeiwich said, is the theory that if regional government is responsible for a program, the public sets the priority of how much attention the program should receive.

Judge George Thomson said it is not the province's intention to create a body similar to health councils. Health councils are a recommending body, but children's committee will be involved in decision making.

On mental health, Dr. Nancy Adsett, executive director of Children's Assessment and Treatment Centre, Burlington, (CATS) said the services in Halton are very uneven. CATS should be serving the whole region not just Burlington, but with a small staff of six professionals it is impossible, she said.

She is "excited about the integration of services. The government has been making improvements in fragments of each program throughout the province. Now it is possible CATS may be able to meet the needs of the electorate."

A comprehensive program should include techniques for speech development, social behavior, parenting skills, training a slow learner and deal with family functions.

The mental health centre should share components in joint programs for supporting children of psychotic parents, children with learning disorders, children with language difficulties or anti-social behavior should be living in a group home.

The mental health centre, she said, needs liaison with courts and the CAS to share their services. The per-capita expenditure of the Children's Aid Society is the lowest in Halton and the board is looking at implementing special education facilities, but already there is a year's waiting list for CATS.

Speaking from a complete different viewpoint, Robert Pond, superintendent of Oakville Reception and Assessment Centre, a provincial resource, is in favor of amalgamating children's service and feels it is a move in the right direction.

He is concerned with the long-term effects, if a local program will provide enough structured control, or if the province has all the control if local communities will lose its initiative. He wondered also if a community would accept the responsibility of caring for severe cases.

The way the system is now, there are checkpoints before a child is transferred from one service to another. For example before a child becomes a ward of the CAS he must appear in court. This same mechanism must be provided, he said, even if the services are integrated.

Would the persons holding the purse strings at a local level be willing to spend the money on children's services? Judge Thomson said the ultimate responsibility of handling money would be that of a standing committee of council. As a Judge, he said he will be restrictive when deciding on the facilities offered for children.

When Judge Thomson was asked if the assessment centre in Oakville would be changed into a training school, he said he couldn't answer until this fall because he isn't sure what will happen with training schools across the province.

The strongest feeling from the meeting was that everyone feels Halton is not a bedroom community of Hamilton or Toronto, and has definite needs of its own.

A surprise even to Carol Gooding, chairperson of Youth Services Network, was a member of the liaison committee Al Strang was in the audience. Strang will be working with Bob Bain, senior probation and aftercare supervisor for community and social services in Halton and Natalie Moga, manager of Halton operation ministry of community and social services.

Acton Hydro to crackdown

Homeowners who have erected high-backed fences to ensure privacy while swimming in the pool or lazing in the back-yard have caused problems for hydro meter-readers, which will result, Hydro superintendent Doug Mason said Friday, in higher estimated bills.

The meter-readers go out every two months, and if the gate is locked and no one at

home, they leave a card for the resident to fill in and return. But as Audrey Urguhart, secretary-treasurer for Acton Hydro, pointed out, many customers neglect to fill the card in.

Electrical heat, which is common in condominiums on Kingham Road, "a real problem area", she said, is hard to estimate, and she is never positive if the estimate is high or low.

Mr. Mason said when persons receive estimated bills from now on, they may wish they had left their gate unlocked. It is illegal he said for customers to block access to the meters during reasonable working hours of the day. He is requesting Acton residents to leave their gates unlocked. Although this may seem a nuisance to Acton residents, Mr. Mason said the meter-readers have put up with the

problem for a long time, and it is time for the Acton hydro commission to crackdown.

Hugh Campbell, of Georgetown Hydro, said meter-readers in Georgetown have had no problem with high-backed fences and being locked out of the yard. The news of Acton's decision to send letters of high estimates to residents was a surprise to Mr. Campbell.

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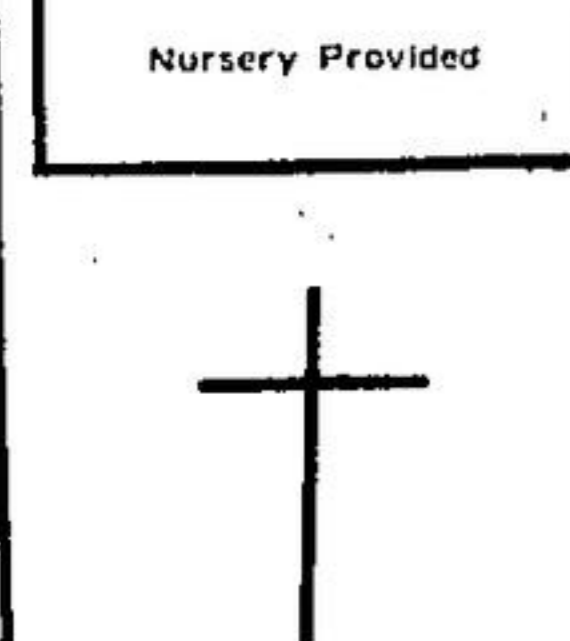
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