



"Be a Friend", an educational program aimed at training volunteers to help mentally handicapped adults live independently, will soon be launched in north Halton, thanks to the work of these two ladies and Sheridan College in Oakville, which is sponsoring the course. Patti Wilson, director of the North Halton Association for the Mentally Retarded's residential services and Barbara Aubray, "Be a Friend" program co-ordinator, hope that the idea will eventually help mentally handicapped adults cope with the everyday responsibilities of living alone—banking, paying rent, making medical appointments—which most of us tend to take for granted. The course begins in May.

**Course trains volunteer helpers**

**'Be a Friend' helps retarded live own lives**

"Striking out" on your own for the first time—getting an apartment, buying your own clothes, paying bills—marks an important milestone in adulthood.

For mentally handicapped men and women, breaking away from the family atmosphere of the institution or home for the retarded presents an equally exciting opportunity, but they still welcome a hand in getting to know the responsibilities which come with independent living.

Proud of its own success in moving seven area mentally handicapped adults into apartments in Georgetown and Milton, the North Halton Association for the Mentally Retarded (NHAMR) and Oakville's Sheridan College have launched a "Be a Friend" program aimed at recruiting volunteers to help retarded residents cope with life beyond the protected environment they're used to.

Starting in May, Sheridan College will train volunteers from north Halton to act as "big brothers" or "big sisters" of mentally handicapped adults faced with independence or near-independence for the first

time in their lives. Although the Association's Countryside Residence north of Hornby provides training for mentally handicapped adults in social skills such as housekeeping and daily planning, residential director Patti Wilson told reporters Thursday that the same kind of care and education should continue once the men and women move out on their own.

Mrs. Wilson and program co-ordinator Barbara Aubray point out that there are four goals behind the "Be a Friend" idea: socialization, friendship, helping with everyday situations and protecting the rights of the handicapped.

"Sometimes they really don't know how to make plans," Mrs. Wilson said. "Socialization—getting to the bank, going to movies, joining groups—is a new aspect of their lives. These are everyday things that we take for granted."

While it may only require a few hours per week of the volunteer's time, the program provides an important bond for the mentally handicapped adult living independently, even though

they may continue to work at the Association's Arc Industries workshop. "The 'Friends' would provide the emotional support and companionship they need," Mrs. Wilson said. "Often the closest people in their lives are the paid staff people here at Countryside. It's really important to have somebody else to turn to."

Like everyone else, mentally handicapped adults need to know about rent controls, tax regulations and, as highlighted by the recent provincial election—their right to vote. The program will provide volunteers to speak up for their "protoges".

Under the proposed course, which will span several weeks, volunteers will meet mentally handicapped adults, learn their problems and hopefully erase some of the stigma which surrounds mental retardation.

Matched with an adult either at Countryside or with one of the four men or three women already living independently in north Halton, volunteers can apply

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**The Beauty Spot**

by Barb Presswood

**While winter hangs in**

Proper care and protection can help you save your face...and your hands, arms, legs and feet. In winter, freezing temperatures, snow, sleet and wind all help remove moisture from unprotected skin. The chill in the air is a drying force, causing chapped skin, and when your skin becomes wet from snow and dried by the wind, additional moisture escapes. Don't think your home or office will help you regain lost moisture, since the heat there draws moisture out of the air and out of your skin.

To help you fight the winter weather, we suggest this advice for avoiding chapped, rough or dry skin: Keep your thermostat between 65 and 70 degrees, providing the best environment for your skin. Using a humidifier is another good idea to make up for moisture lost through heat.

Outdoors, the air has more moisture than the house, so it's basically healthier for your skin. However, over-exposure to the extreme cold, blustery winds and the sun should be avoided. Too much of these can cause the skin to lose moisture.

Changing wintertime grooming routines: Avoid hot lingering baths. They dry the skin. Take showers, which are more likely to preserve natural moisture on the surface of the skin.

Use warm water, not hot. Don't let the skin dry; pat it dry with a nice thick towel. Apply moisture cream to the whole body after it's been wet to increase the level of moisture on the skin surface.

The only cure for chapping and cracking, for all dry skin problems, is helping the skin to retain moisture. But the environmental factors, aging or improper care can cause it

to lose its effectiveness. The use of a moisturizer helps the outer layers of the skin maintain the skin's proper moisture balance.

**DIALOGUE WITH A DERMATOLOGIST**

**Q**—Is it realistic to think you can improve the quality of your skin or is good skin something that you're born with?  
**A**—Proper and regular skin care can slow down the aging process, and in all cases it can improve your skin. You have to remember not to dry out your skin, and not to add too much oil to it. When cleansing, use a cleansing milk and tonic, which is quite mild. Also, remember when purchasing cosmetics, keep to the water-based ones. If you tend to have oily skin, don't use much powder or oil-base makeup; this will close up pores, causing blemishes. An older woman may want to use an oil-base makeup to add oil to the skin, which aging removes.

**Q**—What are skin care regimens?  
**A**—The three primary concerns of any skin care program should be: 1. To clean the face properly with a mild cleanser. 2. Avoid excess drying. 3. To use a moisture cream, and a sunscreen to prevent sun damage, and loss of moisture.

Don't forget "Spring Fever", the gala fashion and beauty show being co-sponsored April 14 by The Beauty Spot and The Lingerie Boutique at North Halton Golf and Country Club in Georgetown. CITY-TV's Dini Petty will host the seasonal display of spring fashions and demonstrations about cosmetics and skin care. Other special guests include internationally-known beautician Zebava and local council members May or Fete Pomeroy and Coun. Pam Sheldon. Tickets are available from both sponsoring shops and will be on sale at the door for the 8 p.m. show.

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