

Halton CAS holds up under judge's queries

By THERESA PALOMO
Halton CAS

We were all shocked and saddened by the tragic death in 1976 of Kim Anne Popen, the 19 month old Ward of the Sarnia-Lambton Children's Aid Society. Provincial Court Judge H. Ward Allen spent four years studying the case and with the release of his findings, the question has arisen - "Could it happen here?"

There is no pat answer to that question. We at the

Halton Children's Aid Society would hope not, but no person and no child welfare agency is perfect. We can only do our utmost and hope for the best. Judge Allen points out deficiencies in the ministry and the Children's Aid Society and has made numerous recommendations. We will use those recommendations as our points of reference for looking at the operating procedures of Halton CAS.

Judge Allen has criti-

cized the Sarnia-Lambton Children's Aid Society for not having a set of procedures for the management of cases of child abuse.

In 1978, the Halton CAS formalized and further developed its own "Standards and Guidelines for the Management of Child Abuse Cases" which uses the ministry's guidelines as a basis and then expanded on them. Helping to develop Halton's guidelines was Society supervisory staff along with ministry consultants and outside specialists. In addition, Halton's definition of child abuse already includes sexual abuse and neglect, not only physical abuse, which was another of His Honor's recommendations.

Judge Allen found fault with the Sarnia-Lambton CAS for assigning an inexperienced worker to the Popen case and

recommended that all child-protection workers have training in the management of child abuse cases. Not only do the family service workers at the Halton CAS have training in dealing with child abuse cases, but in addition, the Society has run trainer's workshops in child abuse for the board of education, the Halton regional police and many other groups who deal with children.

Judge Allen also criticized the police force, members of the medical profession, the judicial system and the Sarnia-Lambton CAS for not working together with regard to the Popen case. Currently, there are three (one in Burlington, one in Oakville and one in north Halton) multi-professional child abuse treatment and case management teams operating in Halton.

In addition, a child

abuse council has been formed in Halton, which is aimed at reducing the incidence of abuse and neglect. The ministry also employs a case planning coordinator for the region, whose main responsibility is to coordinate services on an individual basis for hard-to-serve children.

Finally, Judge Allen concluded that the ministry placed inordinate importance on the financial affairs of Societies in comparison to their child protection functions. Ron Coupland, executive director of the Halton CAS, made the following comment with regard to that statement:

"We at the Halton CAS have to spend an inordinate amount of time trying to resolve budget issues with the ministry, but we have been able to surmount some of this because of our tremendous staff support, and also

because of the support of our board of directors, local political figures and ministry staff. Halton has experienced a significant increase in funding but it still doesn't quite meet our needs. The continuing increase in cases that we have been experiencing will inevitably have a cost."

As the Garber Task

Force on Child Abuse reported in 1978, there are no "magic wands" to wave away the problems of child neglect, abuse and sexual molestation, and no easy answers to complex social issues. We at the Halton CAS are constantly striving to improve our methods and to meet the challenge of a changing society.

Engineers sponsoring job seminar

Herald Special

"Professionals aren't used to being without jobs," says Bob Walteson of Georgetown, an executive of the Brampton Chapter of the Association of Professional Engineers of Ontario (APEO). "We've got about 540 unemployed engineers in the province right now, and some of them don't know how to go about getting another job."

That's why the Brampton Chapter is sponsoring an evening seminar on "Managing Career Change" in Brampton next Wednesday (Dec. 15). The seminar, open to all professionals, has two objectives: to help people prepare effectively for career changes, and to show them proven job hunting methods.

The seminar will deal with such topics as: what it's like to be fired, how to answer job ads, where to

look for jobs, interview techniques, and where to get help.

Ken MacLeod is manager of employment advisory services with the APEO and will be one of the principal speakers at the meeting. "Strangely enough, our employment advisory service isn't well known to many members," he says.

The seminar will be held at the band room of the Brampton Civic Centre, 150 Central Park Dr., Brampton (crossroad of Highway 7 and Dixie Road) Dec. 15 from 7 to 10 p.m.

Because a large turnout is expected, please phone in your registration to Bob Walteson 965-8613 during office hours and at 877-9289 in the evening. The registration fee is \$5 and includes coffee and doughnuts.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

General Committee of the Town of Halton Hills will conduct a PUBLIC MEETING to discuss and examine an application for plan of subdivision and an amendment to Zoning By-Law No. 74-51, to permit the subdivision for 12 single family residential lots on a 7.32 hectare (18.08 acre) parcel of land located at the intersection of Wildwood Road and the Eighth Line on Part Lot 21, Concession 8, (Gen Williams) Town of Halton Hills.

ALL INTERESTED CITIZENS ARE WELCOME

Time: 7:00 p.m.
Date: December 13, 1982
Place: Municipal Administration Building
7th Line, Trafalgar Road,
Town of Halton Hills.

B.D. MacLean, B.A., M.C.I.P.
Deputy Director of Planning
Town of Halton Hills