

Parents are important for teaching exceptional students

Autistic children who demonstrate the repetitious behavior similar to that depicted by American actor Dustin Hoffman in the recent film Rainman, are an example of the "exceptional students," that graduates from Sheridan College's Educational Assistant program help integrate into the classroom, says one of the program's teachers and Georgetown resident, Catherine Kirby.

Ms. Kirby was recently promoted from the position of teacher to that of teacher master at the Oakville Campus.

The word "exceptional" is used to describe the children the program's graduates work with, said Ms. Kirby. The idea is to avoid labelling the children. Graduates of the two-year program are trained to help "non-average" children - those that are either gifted or slow learners.

Ms. Kirby has 14 years experience working with autistic, developmentally delayed and emo-

tionally disturbed children and adults. She said students study family dynamics, psychology, behavioral management, personal hygiene, sign language, and various learning assistant devices used by "exceptional students."



Catherine Kirby

Support should be in the form of listening to the parents, Ms. Kirby said. "Parents presumably know their child better than the teacher."

Once in the field the graduates will have to involve parents in the decision making process in order to best help the child.

Ms. Kirby said students who have completed their work placement have told her they realize the importance of parents. She explained students completing their work placements tell her how responsive and appreciative parents are when asked for advice.

However, Ms. Kirby stressed successful communication between the educational assistant and parents will only occur if the teacher uses language familiar to the parents. Parents are turned off if the teacher uses jargon to discuss the child, Ms. Kirby said.

She said the Educational Assistant Program was started four years ago and grew out of a community need.

Family dynamics is a course on which Ms. Kirby places high priority. She said parenting is difficult and therefore parents of "exceptional children" have a much more difficult time. Consequently students are taught to provide parents with support.

Town is being "double-taxed"

Halton Hills town councillors claim that the town is being "double-taxed" as combined federal and provincial government increases take two per cent or almost \$100,000 of the town's budget over the next 18 months.

"We have to express to the federal government our disagreement with (the taxes)," said Mayor Russ Miller.

Treasurer Ray King said the town will pay two per cent of its budget for the remainder of 1989 and for all of 1990 to the two levels of government.

The federal government budget will cost the town \$12,000 for the rest of 1989 and over \$70,000 in 1990, says a town report.

Federal government tax increases apply on construction materials, telecommunication systems, and general federal sales

tax. There are also excise taxes, payroll deductions, and unemployment insurance costs.

"Most of the items that are in the federal and provincial budgets that I've outlined here (will see the town) absorb additional costs,"

said Mr. King.



The rain held off Saturday long enough for a successful day on Queen Street celebrating Back to Acton Days. Here, 12-year-old Stuart Ginn slam dunks while his buddies look on. (Herald photo)

Spend time at the library

Dr. Bookenstein's Summer Reading Machine Club
Spend the summer as a member of Dr. Bookenstein's Reading Machine. Read and earn surprises, a poster and a free concert ticket. Watch your progress and that of your friends, on the giant game board. Join June 29 or after.

Dr. Bookenstein's Read-to-me Club
Children who cannot yet read, may be a part of the summer fun at the library, by joining Dr. Bookenstein's Read-to-me Club. Parents, other family members, caregivers, etc., may read to the children. Keep a record on the book log and return it to the library for a certificate and a special surprise. Join June 29 or after.

Reading Club Meetings
Reading club meetings are held for members, every Thursday afternoon from July 6 to August 17. Here the club members have a chance to join their friends, have some fun and report on their books. The club runs from 1-2 p.m.

Eureka
Drop in, spend some time with us and learn new crafts, games, puzzles, etc. Most activities can be completed in 10 to 20 minutes.

Children must be 5-years-old or older. Eureka runs on Tuesdays and Fridays from 1-4 p.m.

Movies
Could you think of anything better than watching an hour of movies in air conditioned comfort? See the brochure for movie dates and times.

Sleepytime Stories
A half hour of before bed stories, just for you and your family to enjoy. Hop in your P.J.s, bring along your teddy bear and come for some fun! The program runs on July 5 - Aug. 17 in Acton, Wednesdays 7 p.m. and in Georgetown, Thursdays, 7 p.m.

James Gordon
Join us for an evening of entertainment with singer James Gordon. A great way to end the summer and finish off Dr. Bookenstein's Reading Club. Children who complete the Dr. Bookenstein Reading Club will receive a free ticket to attend the show. James Gordon will appear Aug. 22 in Georgetown at 7 p.m. and Aug. 23 in Acton, 7 p.m. Tickets are \$2 and on sale Aug. 1.

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