

Acton women join forces to help their kids

By **BEN DUMMETT**
Herald Staff

Even in a small town like Acton there are those who feel a sense of community is missing, especially among children.

"There is nothing really here (in Acton) to keep kids off the street at night like there is in Georgetown and Milton," says Charlotte Hendry, a founding member of the Acton Women's Action Group.

Ms. Hendry and four other women living in the Holmesway Place subsidized housing development started the group earlier this year to organize more activities for their children so "they won't be

hanging around and getting into trouble."

Halton Regional Health Department nurse Florence Bonyun, who acts as one of the group's advisors, said establishing more activities for the children also helps parents.

"Parents don't always have to say no. Instead they can suggest a viable alternative."

Besides setting up activities the women used the group to find out about the activities that already exist. Ms. Hendry said social service clubs have helped some parents with financial difficulties enroll their children in such activities as the skating club,

organized hockey and swimming.

Health department nurse Joy Reid initiated the group. She said while making her periodical rounds of the neighborhood, the women expressed similar concerns about their children and the lack of activities available to them.

Ms. Hendry said one of the group's biggest fears is that their children might become involved in a gang. When asked if the women in the area believed gangs are a problem, she said yes.

Acton Village Constable Bill Riddle, who, like Ms. Reid and Ms. Bonyun, is one of the group's advisors, wouldn't confirm that the

town has a "gang" problem.

But he said since they perceived a problem and they wanted to improve the situation, "I was more than willing to give them my support."

Constable Riddle has talked to the group on such issues as the Young Offenders Act, drug abuse and street awareness. They have also listened to speakers on nutrition and physical fitness.

Although the group's membership is so far comprised of mothers living on Holmesway Place, the group wants to eventually involve mothers from other areas of the town. "This is why we used Acton in our name," said Ms. Hendry.

Ms. Hendry said the group's concerns are those shared by all parents. "People have to realize people living in Holmesway Place aren't a downtrodden, hopeless bunch. They are regular people whose children are good."

Brenda Switzer-Erving, of the Halton Housing Authority, which runs Holmesway Place, agreed with Ms. Hendry. "There are good and bad kids in all neighborhoods but the public usually focuses its attention on the kids getting in trouble who live in public housing."

The group's first major program was a "Halloween Day." It ran at Robert Little Public School in Acton Tuesday from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. During the students' non-academic classes the children par-

ticipated in a host of Halloween-type games including a poster contest and guess the number of pennies in a jar contest.

The class whose guess was closest donated the money to UNICEF. "We wanted to teach them that there is more to Halloween than just receiving," Ms. Hendry said.

The children also received Halloween safety tips, like eating something before going out "trick or treating" so that they wouldn't eat anything before their parents could check out the treats.

To organize the day, the group sought the help of the Robert Little Public School parent volunteers. "This way other parents can find out what we're all about," said Ms. Hendry.

The group plans to establish a teen drop-in centre to be run on the weekends. Ms. Reid said the centre will start in the next couple of months.

Long-range plans include setting up a recreation program with the housing authority and a food bank.

Based on its experience, the group believes there is a need for a food bank in Acton. Too many people that need access to a bank have to go to Oakville or Brampton, Ms. Hendry said.

Although no date has been set, a public meeting will be organized to see what the public thinks of the idea, she said.



Members of the Acton Women's Action Group and several Robert Little Public School volunteer parents worked together Monday afternoon to prepare for the Halloween festivities Tuesday. Those affiliated with the action group are in the back row, Sandy Snyder (left) and Joy Reid, (fourth from the right) and in the front Charlotte Hendry (left) and Florence Bonyun. (Herald photo)

Recycling glut could force up prices

The price of waste disposal in Halton could go up at the same time the Region is experiencing a "glut" in the recycling market, Regional finance commissioner Joe Rinaldo said last week.

Mr. Rinaldo estimated that Jan. 1, 1990, tipping fees could increase from the present rate of \$83.50 a tonne to up to \$115. This year's tipping fee - the cost to commission a waste transfer station to transport garbage - increased by \$30 over 1988 prices.

Halton's finance department is scheduled to release a proposed tipping fee at a Regional council meeting Nov. 8. The final rate could receive approval in early December.

Leferink Transfer Station in Georgetown transported 13,800 tonnes of waste from Halton Hills to The Niagara Waste System in Niagara Falls between January and June of this year. The total waste in the Region for that six-

month-period is 93,900 tonnes, according to a Regional report.

In the same period, a Burlington waste transfer station exported 80,100 tonnes of garbage to New York State and Niagara Falls, Ontario. It costs Halton Region approximately \$1 million a month to export its garbage.

John Leferink of Leferink Disposals Ltd. said Tuesday prices will "go up." Although he can give no estimate at this time, he expects tipping fees to be "considerably higher" in 1990.

The amount of waste shipped out of Halton last year totalled 105,000 tonnes between January and June. Halton's waste management direc-

tor John MacKay said that figure was reduced by 10 per cent in 1989 by the recycling effort, including the Region's Blue Box program to collect recyclable goods.

But "the bottom is falling out" of the recycled goods market, Regional councillors heard last week. Mr. Rinaldo said there is presently a "glut" in the market.

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