

# Working with developmentally handicapped a challenge

By GARRY J. MURDOCK  
The Herald

Jennifer Tellier, 21, is entering her second year as a student at York University. She is majoring in English and has ambitions to someday enter Law school. What makes her different from the average summer worker is that she is spending her time as a part-time counsellor for the North Halton Association for the Developmentally Handicapped.

The Association is a non-profit agency that has been serving individuals with special needs since 1955. The term "Developmentally handicapped" refers to a condition of the intellect that can cause a person to develop language, thinking, personal-social or motor skills at a rate slower than his/her peers.

It is caused by a number of different reasons, including problems before or during birth. All the individuals who come to the association for assistance are considered

"clients" because, according to Jennifer, "we're working for them."

There are many different types of programs offered by the Association: Residential Services, Day Services, Children's Services, a toy lending library and a Saturday Recreational Centre. Jennifer works with Residential Services.

Residential Services offers assistance to those with developmental handicaps who are of the age 18 years or older. This service includes the Supported Independent Living Program which gives support to those who are living or planning to live in North Halton. The staff will help them search for living accommodations, prepare a budget and help them find a job. Above all, the program aims to assist each client in gaining more independence, although there's always support when needed.

Jennifer assists the clients in a variety of duties: Grocery shopping, money management as well as use of public transportation. Recently they have been encouraging clients to use taxis to get around as well as other community resources so the clients are "not limited by the fact that they can't drive," Jennifer said.



Jennifer Tellier

Counsellors also assist the clients in nutritional counselling, meal preparation, menu planning, personal health care, accommodation search, job search techniques, communication skills and problem solving. Training and support are given in all these areas as well as a concentration on recreation and leisure planning and participation.

As for job search techniques, many of the clients go to work at Arc Industries where they learn a trade. Some go to school while yet others are independently employed in other jobs.

Jennifer said she finds some clients are hesitant to do things on their own. Some are worried something might go wrong and they won't know what to do. In this regard, some clients can go out on their own and others cannot. All are different, Jennifer said.

Jennifer puts in 36 hours a week on average. She enjoys her work, noting that people "see the stereotype. If people knew them, they wouldn't be so discriminating. They are some of the most caring people you'll ever get to know."

There are a variety of methods in which one can be referred to the Association: Besides self-referral, one can be referred by families, health care professionals, social service agencies, schools, advocates and friends. There is no charge to the individual and each case is evaluated on its individual merits. In the case of an emergency where the guardian of a handicapped individual over the age of 18 runs into a crisis (such as a death in the family) and cannot take care of that person, he/she will be accepted immediately into the program for a short period of time, if at all possible.

One downside of the job, the only one Jennifer can think of, is that there are times the client will hurt your feelings without realizing it.

It is times like these, Jennifer notes, that you have to be detached.

On the other hand, Jennifer says, there is a great satisfaction in assisting the client in gaining more independence.

Jennifer does have one unique vantage point different from that of other counsellors. She had a younger brother, Steven, who suffers from childhood Aphasia. Aphasia is a mental deficiency which interrupts the flow and understanding of language. Steven can't communicate what he is trying to say.

Is Steven one of the reasons Jennifer undertook the job?

"He would be one of the reasons I wouldn't," Jennifer said, "because I've had to deal with it all my life. As a sister, I'm very involved. Constantly, I experience the same frustration as my Mom." Steven is currently on the waiting list to become a client of the organization.

Jennifer plans to continue working part-time during the school year for the Association but will be back at the job again with more hours next year. Although she feels Law is something she wants to get into, she has thought about training to become a professional worker in the handicapped field.

"It's not like a job," Jennifer said, "it's like an extended family. Family and friends. I've made so many friends there."

## Police Beat

# Halton constables promoted

On August 23, 1990, the Board of Commissioners of Police approved the promotions from Constable to Sergeant of Constable Joseph Taylor and Constable Jacquelyn Gordon.

Constable Taylor and Gordon are both eleven year veterans of the Halton Regional Police and started as Cadets in 1979.

Constable Joe Taylor is married and lives in Burlington with his

family.

Constable Taylor has served in the Uniform Patrol Branch in various parts of the region.

Constable Taylor was the Community Relations Officer in Burlington and was instrumental in implementing many Crime Prevention Programs in the City of Burlington.

Constable Taylor will assume his Uniform Patrol Sergeant Duties in No. 1 District in Milton.

Constable Jackie Gordon has served in the Uniform Patrol Branch in various parts of the

Region.

Constable Gordon was one of the original Community Directed Patrol Officers in the Warrick Project in the City of Burlington. Constable Gordon is presently assigned to the Regional Criminal Investigations Division which is the Central Investigative Unit dealing with Major Crime and Drug Investigations.

Constable Gordon will assume her responsibilities of Sergeant in the Regional Criminal Investigation Division.

## CRIME STOPPERS



OF HALTON

## Gas bar robbery

Crime Stoppers of Halton and Halton Regional Police in Oakville require assistance in solving a robbery of an Oakville gas bar by three males.

This robbery occurred at about 3:50 p.m. on Friday, August 11th at Synergy Gas Bar, Trafalgar Road and Upper Middle. Three male suspects entered the gas bar wearing nylon stocking masks. One of the males was armed with a crowbar and struck the lone attendant and stole over \$500 in cash. The attendant suffered minor injuries during the attack and described his attackers as follows:

The man who wielded the crowbar was a white male, 5'5", 130 lbs., blue eyes, wearing a nylon stocking mask. The other two suspects were identified as white males also wearing nylon masks.

Crime Stoppers will pay up to \$1,000 for information that leads to an arrest in this case or any other case. Callers are not requested to reveal their identities or to testify in court. The Crime Stoppers toll-free number is 1-800-668-5151.

## Thieves steal \$160 in cigarettes

Police require the public's assistance in locating a male and female involved in the theft of about \$160 worth of cigarettes from the Royal Mini Mart in Georgetown last Tuesday at 2:40 p.m.

Reports say the female suspect distracted the store clerk while the male suspect stole about five cartons of cigarettes and slipped them over his shirt. The store manager, who was entering the store at the time, noticed a lumpy cluster of boxes under the man's shirt.

Police are looking for a white male in his 20's to 30's, about 183 cm, 88 kg, a large build with blond untidy shoulder length hair. It is unknown whether the man had any facial hair. The female suspect is described as a white female, 160 cm, 70 kg, large build with blond

hair pinned in a pony tail. The car, which drove eastbound on Queen Street, is described as an older model dark large vehicle bearing Ontario licence plates.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Det. Sgt. Mike Eacrett at 878-5511, ext. 415 or contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-668-5511.

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