

Community

Open Door special programs

By ANN SCHEEPERS-NEVINS
Herald Special

The Young Parent Program has enjoyed interesting and informative sessions of late.

On May 21, Constable Barnet came to talk to the young parents about street-proofing their kids. Pamphlets were handed out and fingerprints were taken of the children for the parents to keep on record.

The confusion of getting the children's hands clean afterwards kept everyone cool and laughing.

Special thanks to Constable Barnet for taking time from her busy schedule to talk to us.

The same evening, the Parks and Recreation Department demonstrated summer safety and artificial respiration as part

of the P.A.W.S. program. Thanks to Michael Zuraw and Kim Daquano for their sensitive and thought-provoking presentation.

The Youth Centre has been a bustle of activity due to the upcoming formal "Night at the Ritz" May 25. Talk of dresses, flowers, tuxedos, limos and hairdos has been uppermost in the minds of most Open Door Youth. Excitement is running high and everyone is anticipating a wonderful evening.

The hot dog barbecue was a great success and the weather cooperated nicely. The Open Door would like to thank everyone personally for their generous donations. Thanks to: Miracle Mart, Loblaw's, IGA, A and P, Knechtels and The Butcher Shop.



Fond farewell

St. George's Anglican Church gave a fond farewell to the Edwards family, which left the congregation on Sunday. Joe Edwards was recently ordained a minister and will be the new pastor of St. Alban's Church in Hamilton. Pictured here, back

row, left to right, Adam Edwards, People's Warden Jan Costain and Rector's Warden Bill Warren. Front row, left to right, are Reverend Tom Kingston, Dorothy Edwards, Joe Edwards and Sarah Edwards. (Herald photo)

Parenting Tips

Georgetown Parent-Child Centre

Handling child abuse

By VALERIE CUNNINGHAM
R.N., B.A.

What should you do if your child reports sexual abuse?

This column is not a quiz, but first I'll mention some of the "wrong" but very natural reactions.

1) Dismissing the story as untrue, or exaggerated, or imagined. The child has probably agonized about telling. If you do not believe him he is unlikely to talk about it again for a long time.

2) Threatening retaliation to the perpetrator of the abuse. This reaction may create guilt in the child. It is likely that the perpetrator is a "friend" and has told the child not to tell. So what do you do.

Take the child to a quiet place and listen. Allow the child to tell his or her story. Don't interview, don't interrogate, don't worry about detail... just listen.

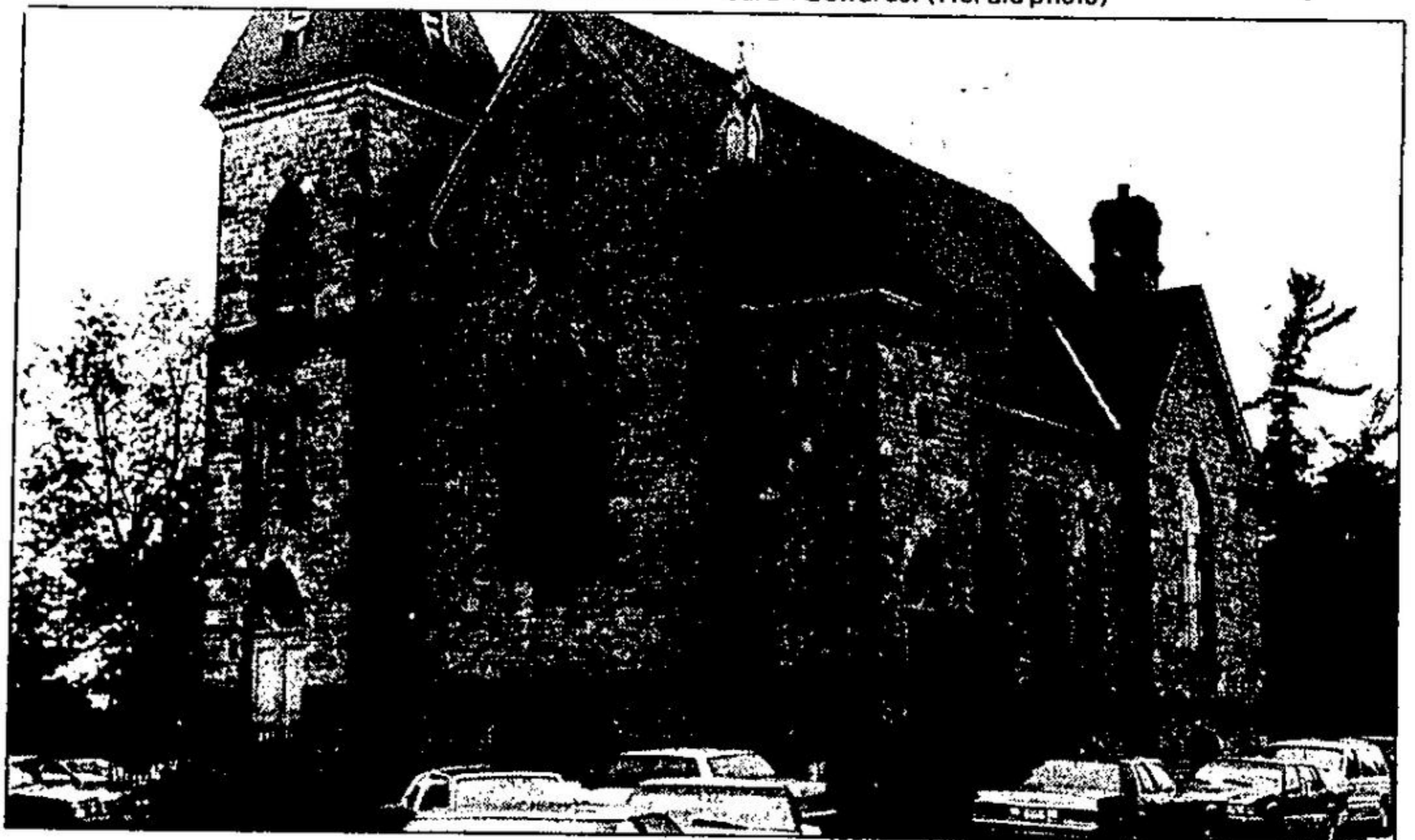
Accept what the child is saying, even if you find it difficult. You may know the alleged abuser.

You may be appalled that abuse took place. You may feel angry, but make it clear that the anger is not directed towards the child.

It is important to reassure the child, affirm your belief in his/her story. She/He did the right thing to tell you. She/He did not do anything wrong. Some of the experts recommend that soon after you hear the story that you make notes. These notes may be useful in court proceedings.

Then report the abuse to the police or the local Children's Aid Society. They have staff who are specially trained to deal with complaints of sexual abuse. You are helping the child by stopping the abuse. You do not have to prove the abuse; you just have to report it.

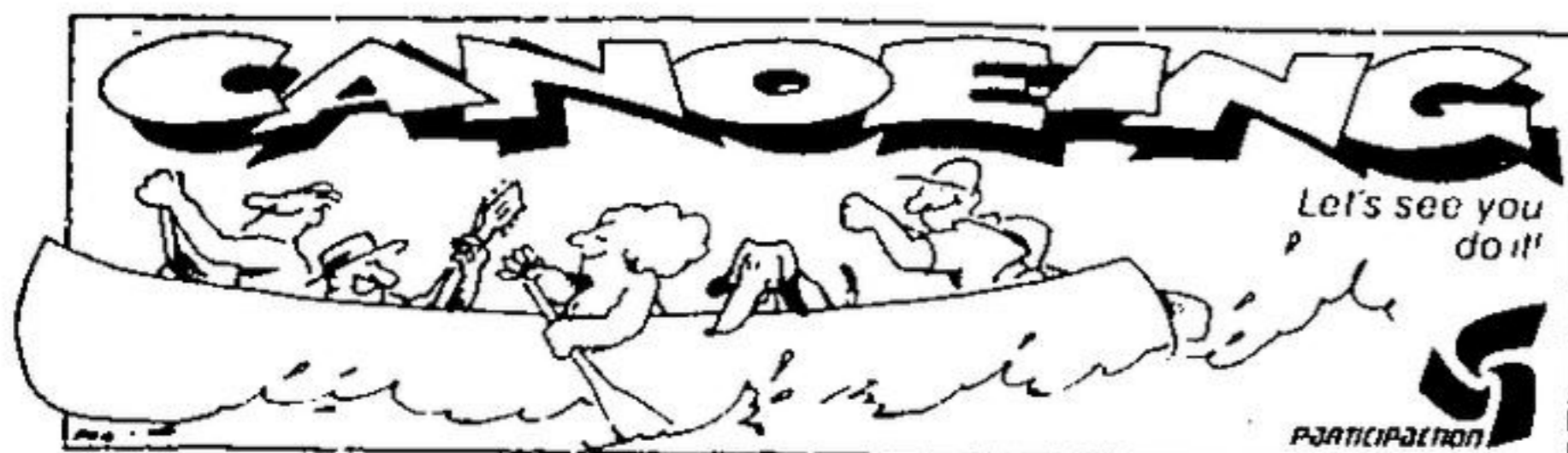
Learn more about Streetproofing: Gently and Creatively from author Sharon E. McKay at the Georgetown Parent-Child Centre's Annual Meeting Tuesday, June 18 at 7:30 p.m. at St. Andrew's Church on Mountainview Rd.



Church anniversary

Many people were in attendance at the Presbyterian Church in Terra Cotta on Sunday to witness a special occasion. The church celebrated

its 158th anniversary and its congregation is looking forward to many more. (Herald photo)



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