

# Increasingly, children in Halton being affected by recession

By Ben Dummett  
the Herald

The recession has meant more than a loss of jobs for many in Halton; it has also meant an increase in family breakdowns.

The number of days of care provided to children in Halton by the Region's Children's Aid Society has increased by 19.7 per cent over last year, says CAS spokesperson Theresa Pitman.

According to a Regional staff report, the society expects to care for 215 children by year-end instead of 161 as originally predicted at the beginning of 1991.

"We're (CAS) dealing with the psychological fallout of the recession," said Ron Coupland, CAS Executive Director.

There is a direct correlation between an increase in unemployment and the number of child abuse cases, he explained.

Ms. Pitman points out the number of cases involving the most severely disturbed children in Halton has increased 100 per cent over last year.

An example of this type of child would be one who is suicidal and therefore in need of constant supervision and therapy, explained Ms. Pitman.

Not surprisingly, the heavy toll the recession has taken on many area families has placed a heavy burden on the CAS coffers. The society predicts a 1991 \$1.5 million deficit.

To cover the deficit CAS has approached both the Region and the

province for additional funding. Halton and the Ontario government fund 20 and 80 per cent respectively of the CAS budget. The society wants an extra \$300,000 from the Region and \$1.2 million from the province.

Contacted Friday, John Fleming, Halton's Chief Executive Officer, said the Region will fund its share as long as the province does the same.

"We don't normally pay for subsidized programs if there is no provincial money there," said Mr. Fleming.

Mr. Coupland has had a preliminary meeting with the

province concerning the required additional funding. He is confident the provincial money will be forthcoming because the "CAS has followed all the rules."

Since the province dictates under what circumstances the Children's Aid Society must take in children, it follows the province should cover the society's cost to fulfil its mandate, explained Mr. Coupland.

If the province doesn't provide the additional funding then it will have change the rules the Children Aid Society follows," he added.

North-Halton MPP Noel Duignan couldn't be reached for comment at press time.

## Halton foundation gets needed grant

By TERESA PITMAN  
Halton CAS

On Wednesday, (today), Ronald McDonald Children's Charities of Canada will present a cheque for \$16,640 to The Children's and Youth Foundation of Halton. The presentation will be made where the money is to be used: in the CAS receiving home at 121 South Forster Road in Oakville.

Adolescents who live at this home are between the ages of eleven and fifteen and have been removed from their families for a variety of reasons. They may be in crisis, and will certainly be experiencing pain and stress due to

the separation. CAS believes that providing a comfortable, warm environment helps to ease the transition.

That's why the grant from McDonald's was requested. It will be used to renovate the home's attached garage - currently used for storage - to create a multi-purpose room. It will provide a private area where the young residents can meet with families and social workers, or a place to study for those who cannot attend school, as well as room for quiet recreational activities.



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