

EDITORIAL

with Frances Niblock

Inclusive sexuality policy

Let's hope the Halton Catholic District School Board's decision to quash the ban on gay-straight clubs gives some comfort, or a sense of security, to any student who has a different sexual orientation or sexual confusion.

In a 6-2 vote in Tuesday night, trustees rescinded the controversial policy, approved by the Board before the municipal election, to not permit gay-straight alliances. Until trustees develop a new policy, they will use an Ontario Education Services Corporation policy which doesn't ban gay-straight alliances.

Board Chair Alice Anne LeMay said the ban on gay-straight alliances was "too restrictive and narrow in focus," for a Catholic school system that teaches respect, dignity and love of all people. She said they take seriously their faith-directed and legislated responsibilities to provide safe, equitable and inclusive school environments. It was LeMay that inflamed the debate when she said gay-straight alliances don't fit the teachings of the Catholic Church, the same reason the Board doesn't allow Nazi groups. She was forced to apologise for the comparison.

Maybe the Catholic Board could learn from the Halton District School Board, which has active gay-straight alliances in 14 public secondary schools and also has a staff trained to deal with sexual orientation and gender identity issues.

It's tough enough being a teen without the narrow and antiquated opinions of some educators/trustees about different sexual orientations – opinions that don't lead to safe, equal and inclusive schools.



SNOWY CAPS: These plants in an Acton backyard look like they have helmets on following the weekend snow. – Submitted photo

Sing a song of six pence - but leave the tails on

Lately, Little J has been even more into music than she ever was. She has always loved music of all types. One of her grandmothers insists she loves Pavarotti when she goes to visit them. I wasn't expecting that, however, it doesn't surprise me.

When she was first born, I remember singing Christmas carols to her in the hallway of the hospital on her second night at about three in the morning while daddy tried to catch a few winks on the convertible chair/bed they had for him to sleep on. Maybe, that is when music in her life started. A few months later, she had her own playlist on my iPod. Her favourite then was Tom Jones singing the Green Green Grass of Home. I remember my grandfather signing it when I was little and there I was playing it for her. Almost every time I played it for her, she would fall sound asleep while I had post-partum tears starting to flow down my cheeks.

Now, however, she is walking and she still loves music and every possible musical toy every created and has added the intrigue of dance to her repertoire. She's a funny little dancer. She almost looks like she has to go potty instead of trying to "get jiggy with it," as they say.



By **Angela Tyler**

As we go for drives here and there running errands, the days of me enjoying my satellite radio in my truck are long gone. The music in our life revolves around a small collection of toddler tunes.

At the beginning, I had one lone CD and I quickly learned that her collection had to grow for my sanity. We added a Fisher-Price CD with about 50 songs, or should I say retro toddler songs. I remember them from when I was little, and they haven't changed.

Once again, for my sanity, two CDs were still not enough. Even with Fisher-Price slightly adjusting the B-I-N-G-O song to D-I-S-C-O and making it a little more "hip," Christmas was the perfect opportunity and Santa was kind enough to give her a few more CDs in her stocking this year.

When we first started listening to the songs everyone was happy. I sang...thankfully she is the only one to hear my so-called singing...while she clapped along to everything from the Wheels

on the Bus to Head and Shoulders. However, after a dozen or so songs, I noticed the one C.D. that Santa brought hadn't been 'Fisher-Priced'.

What I mean is Fisher-Price adjusts words or changes the tempo a bit and makes them more, shall we say, politically correct. This CD wasn't the case. I'm the first one to chew out the Dude, or others around her, if they are saying something that isn't good for a toddler to hear, and yet here I was singing along to a song where the little girl sings about how the world will be a better place if the boys were all far, far up north. I'm all for women's lib, girl-power and all that stuff, but what the heck was this?

We still have the CD and still play it; however, I have learned to recognize the beginning of that particular song and a couple others in which I quickly fast forward. I know I can't protect her from everything in the world that I don't agree with, however, let's not learn about discrimination this early, and while we're at it, isn't it time the bedtime story about the lady chopping off the tails of the mice is retired? That one is just plain nasty when you really look at it. Maybe we just need to stick to Pavarotti and Tom Jones.

Looking Back



Ten Years Ago

- While the majority of people speaking at a public meeting favoured Magna International's proposal to build a truck plant in Acton, seven people raised concerns about potential traffic, noise, pollution and property values.
- The Federal government said that safety gates will be installed by May at the Fourth Line rail crossing where three Acton teens were killed in a train/car crash.
- Mediation sessions continue negotiators for Halton's 1,000 high school teachers – including 32 in Acton – who have been without a contract since September.

Five Years Ago

- The Acton Soccer Club pledges to give the Town \$100,000 – money raised by working at a charity bingo – to pay for a lighted soccer field in Acton East.
- A number of Acton residents found trying to vote in advance of the Federal election a frustrating experience because of incorrect polling locations from Elections Canada.
- An Acton man urged Town Council to pass a bylaw to force "lazy" people to shove the sidewalk in front of their homes to improve safety.



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