

## 'HaltonParents' opens the door to a new online community

### Parenting talk for all stages



by Regional Chair Gary Carr

Parenting is one of the most rewarding experiences in life. It can also be one of the most challenging. That's why Halton Region has launched 'HaltonParents,' a new online community for parents that offers the latest in local parenting news, tips, health matters, events in your community and much more. It's a place for parents to talk directly with an integrated team of Public Health Nurses and Child Development staff from across the Region, and to connect with other parents about their parenting experiences.

The staff on this integrated team each specialize in a particular stage of parenting to help support any parent no matter the age of their child:

- Planning parenthood, pregnancy and the first year of a child's life
- Toddler/preschool – ages 1-5
- Elementary school years – ages 5-12
- High school years (teenagers) – ages 13-18

This team is trained in all aspects of healthy child development, positive parenting techniques, raising competent teenagers, mental health issues, and much more, and can also link families with community services whenever the Region itself doesn't offer the kind of help they need.

The Region, through the Health Department, and the Social and Community Services Department, has been offering free parenting services and support in many ways for years—face to face, over the phone or by e-mail—and now, with HaltonParents, they're bringing that work into the social media space through Twitter and a parenting blog, and also by linking directly to the parenting resources on the Region's website through [www.haltonparents.ca](http://www.haltonparents.ca), or e-mailing the team directly at [haltonparents@halton.ca](mailto:haltonparents@halton.ca).

Staff at Halton also understand that protecting the privacy of every Halton family is paramount in these kinds of discussions. They also know that parenting is a personal journey for everyone and

what works for some may not work for others. So, whenever issues of a more personal nature come up, the team is ready to take any discussion offline to ensure confidentiality, while still ensuring a parent's needs are met.

"Social media has opened up a new way for us to connect with the residents of Halton," said Dr. Bob Nosal, Halton's Medical Officer of Health. "We hope that by offering another way for families to find us, we can build on our capacity to promote healthy growth and child development, and help create strong family units in Halton."

So follow 'HaltonParents' in whatever format works for you. We hope you'll join in the conversation with us.



Halton Parents  
Blog

### 'HaltonParents' in its many formats – online and by phone:

- Twitter ([www.twitter.com/HaltonParents](http://www.twitter.com/HaltonParents)): tips, links, event announcements and more
- blog ([www.haltonparents.wordpress.com](http://www.haltonparents.wordpress.com)): articles on a wide range of parenting topics
- parenting website ([www.haltonparents.ca](http://www.haltonparents.ca)): tips, health information and more for every stage of parenting
- email ([haltonparents@halton.ca](mailto:haltonparents@halton.ca)): we'll respond to your parenting question or concern within 48 hours or less
- Dial 311 or 905-825-6000 for parenting information or to talk directly with a Public Health Nurse: Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

## Meet the 'HaltonParents' team

You can also check out [www.haltonparents.ca](http://www.haltonparents.ca) for more details about each person.

### Preconception/Pregnancy/Early Years

**Anna Piercy:** Public Health Nurse, Baby and Parent Health team; facilitates Calling New Parents drop-in sessions and prenatal classes; mother of two young children.

**Karen Hay:** Public Health Nurse, Preschool Team since 2004 with over 20 years helping families in various healthcare settings; accredited Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) practitioner; mother of two daughters

**Lilly Sulug:** over 18 years of nursing experience; Public Health Nurse at Halton Region, Preschool Team for over 10 years; work experiences include childhood asthma, school-age health and community development; mother of two young children

### School Years

**Kirsty Kohler:** Public Health Nurse for over 20 years, with the School Team at Halton Region for over 11; accredited Triple P practitioner; mother of two young men

**Erika Norris:** Public Health Nurse, School Team since 2006; works with a number of elementary schools in Burlington, assisting them to create healthier school communities; accredited Triple P practitioner.

### Teens

**Meghann Foley:** Public Health Nurse, Youth Health team for over six years, a passion for working with youth; mother of twin toddlers.

**Monique Leparskas:** Bilingual in French and English; Public Health Nurse, Youth Health team, working for Halton Region since 2007; go-to person if you are looking to get connected to resources or services in your community.

### We also have expert staff resources available covering issues such as:

- Mental health
- Immunization
- Child care
- Children with Special Needs
- Sexual health

### Halton Region Meeting Schedule

**Oct. 11** Offices closed for Thanksgiving  
There are no meetings for October.  
Meetings can be viewed at [www.halton.ca](http://www.halton.ca)

Please let us know as soon as possible if you will have an accessibility or accommodation need at a Halton Region hosted event or meeting.

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