

# HOPE hosts support meetings for local LGBTTTIQQA youth

Local youth seeking information and answers to their questions about sexual orientation can find HOPE—a non-profit agency offering a youth support group in Halton Hills.

HOPE (Halton Organization for Pride & Education) is a volunteer-run charitable organization with no core funding.

“We run completely on volunteer donations, talent and time,” said HOPE board chair Elizabeth Barnett. “We offer social support and events, a sense of commu-

nity, youth groups, mature adult groups, and Positive Space Training.”

HOPE serves the LGBTTTIQQA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Two-Spirited, Intersex, Queer, Questioning, Asexual) community in Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville.

“One in four people identify as being non-straight, and, as 25% of the population, the LGBTQ community represents a significant proportion of our society,” said Barnett. “HOPE is about tearing down walls of hatred and building up healthy and positive relationships and communities. We promote understanding, diversity, inclusivity, self-acceptance and positive self-esteem.”

HOPE aims to create social support networks and services for the LGBTQ community while also providing educational opportunities for the non-LGBTQ community.

Since January, HOPE began offering “Colouring Outside the Lines” youth groups in Halton Hills in addition to its Burlington and Oakville groups.

All LGBTQ youth ages 14 to 24 are welcome said Barnett.

“LGBTQ youth are often marginalized at school and at home, with family and with friends. HOPE’s youth groups offer a safe environment to meet up, spend some time, learn a little, and enjoy themselves!” said Barnett.

HOPE facilitators plan activities such as discussing

queer-themed literature or movies, craft nights, and games nights, along with allowing for time to chat and socialize with like-minded peers.

“Our youth groups are youth-directed,” said Barnett. “We invite the youth to help plan the groups, ask for guest speakers, etc.”

All of the groups meet on Tuesday night, 7-9 p.m. In Halton Hills, the group meets on the second Tuesday of every month (June 14, July 12, Aug. 9 Sept. 13, Oct. 11, Nov. 8 and Dec. 13).

But youth are also welcome to attend any of Halton meetings; Oakville meets on the first Tuesday of each month and Burlington meets on the last Tuesday. For locations of the meetings or more information, please email info@haltonpride.org

For more information on HOPE go to www.haltonpride.org



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## Vendors are wanted for Canada Day in the Glen

Vendors are wanted for the Canada Day in the Glen on Friday, July 1.

Handcrafted items are preferred and cost for a booth is \$50. Charitable booth spaces are also available at no charge. Info: Jacqui Vaccaro, 905-873-7443 or vaccaro@cogeco.ca

Also, the annual Canada Day Duck Race will be held at 4 p.m. on the Credit River in Glen Williams.

The race is hosted by and will support the OFSAA-champion Georgetown District High School swim team. Tickets will be on sale during the last couple weekends in June at Metro (Georgetown South), Georgetown Real Canadian SuperStore, Georgetown Farmers Market, Classic Car Show, Prestons, and from any swim team member.

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