



Paul Dale, Peter Merry and D.T. Breckon and their fathers help at the Hornby Cub Pack's Kub Kar pit stop. The Kub Kars have to meet rigid requirements at sources (141.7 grams) or less and be no more than seven inches in length.

# Board budget

Continued from page 1  
trustees agreed to a step by step process.

When the information was under their belts, Oakville trustee Janice Millman moved all the cuts be made.

Milton trustee Bill Harrison wanted the principals and vice-principals' leadership programs to be kept. That lost.

Board chairman, Oakville trustee Pat Hillhouse, wanted the gender equity funding be kept.

The program was described by education director Bob Williams as a "unique and innovative program." Trustees heard Halton would be the first Ontario board to take it on. It provides for a consulting firm to train teachers in an intense manner making them realize how they might be treating boys and girls differently and thus promoting stereotyping.

Originally proposed to cut funding in half to delay the program, Hillhouse said she wasn't comfortable quibbling over a \$7,500 saving when there is a recognized problem in the area.

"We know we have a problem in the area and I as a female trustee would like to see something done. I'm not all that comfortable with us trying to achieve a saving of \$7,500 frankly, and would like to see us move in that direction," said Hillhouse.

Trustees didn't back up Hillhouse in her request. It lost.

Oakville trustee Patty Wilcox was intrigued with a request for over \$8,000 for equipment to put in hospital education rooms. Wilcox heard the board has teachers teaching students in all four area hospitals.

Special Education Services superintendent Garry Crossman superintended at any given time between six and 20 students might receive instruction at either the pediatric or psychiatric wards of the hospitals.

Trustees also heard that separate school students are also benefiting from the instruction, although the Halton separate board doesn't provide for hospital instruction. Hillhouse asked Crossman to pursue the matter with the separate board.

"We'll still be looking at three major problems," Jenkins warned trustees.

One is an expected minimal increase in (provincial) grants. Although the province announced a 6.1 per cent increase, that will have to include all Ministry of Education initiatives, said Jenkins.

Last year, the provincial increase was 6.7 per cent but Halton only saw a 0.5 per cent increase. The board is expecting a 4 to 4.5 per cent increase this year.

A second problem is that enrolment is going up at the elementary level but still dropping at the secondary level. That translates into less grant money per student since secondary levels run at a higher rate than elementary.

The third problem is the increasing need to make changes to the delivery of education, said Jenkins.

The board is predicting a growth of 523 elementary students and a decline of 346 students for 1989.

The finance committee will continue meeting throughout February to discuss the budget before it goes to the board for a final vote later this spring.

# Lives may have been saved with seatbelts

Continued from page 1

"We're concerned about this because we don't want any fatalities up here this year," Mason says. He and his partner, Rick Ferguson, have been given the job of reducing the number of fatal accidents occurring in the North end of the region. They say the main causes are speed, alcohol and people not wearing seatbelts.

Last year Halton police issued 3,720 tickets to people not wearing seatbelts, according to Mason.

It's important, also, to make sure children are properly buckled in, he says.

A two-car crash in Oakville last month demonstrated exactly how effective child restraints are. Both vehicles were demolished in the January 8 collision at the intersection of the Ninth Line and Burnhamthorpe Rd. The driver of one of the cars was critically injured, but a young baby in the same vehicle escaped without so much as a scratch because, according to police, the baby was safely secured in a child restraining seat.

The three main excuses police hear for not wearing a seatbelt are: 'I forgot,' 'It's uncomfortable,' and 'I'd be better off thrown from the car if I got into an accident.'

The latter, it seems, is a myth. "You have a better chance if you stay inside the car," Mason says. But people have been frightened by a story of someone either being trapped inside a car that ended up under water or on fire, but "that rarely, rarely, rarely happens," Mason says. "I've never heard of or investigated an accident like that."

If the safety aspect doesn't sound convincing, the monetary aspect may. The fine for not wearing a seatbelt is \$53.75. The same fine is on the books

for not wearing your seatbelt properly.

A lap belt should be snug and low over the hips, Mason says. A one inch gap is allowed between your body and the shoulder strap. If you tend to tuck the shoulder strap under your arm to get it out of the way instead of wearing it, you may be doing yourself more harm than good. If you're in an accident the strap will put a lot of pressure on your rib cage which isn't as strong as your shoulder, and you could end up with serious internal injuries.

As for lap belts alone, if they are not worn over your hips your body could "submarine" on impact, says Mason. That means your body could slide through the belt, stopping at your chest. The pressure from the belt could be too much for your heart. You are also risking internal injuries fitting the lap belt over your stomach.

The effectiveness of seatbelts in reducing injury and preventing death is getting more and more recognition in this province. Insurance companies have introduced new policies which will mean a rise in rates for anyone charged with the offence.

And a suggestion made at the Ontario Traffic Conference last year entailed putting the seatbelt offence on the demerit point system, according to Ferguson. However, a Ministry of Transportation and Communications spokesman said the ministry has not and will not consider such a change.

"It (people not wearing seatbelts) has nothing to do with the whole purpose of the program which is to eliminate people with bad driving practices," says Doug Cowan, senior information officer at the ministry.

The demerit point system is based solely on moving violations, such as not stopping for a traffic light or not signalling a turn, and there are not

plans to change the focus beyond that, according to Cowan.

Infants from birth weight to 9 kg (20 lbs) must travel in a child restraint seat facing the rear of the vehicle. The seat must meet certain requirements under the law.

Toddlers from 9-18 kg (20-40 lbs) must travel in a forward facing child restraint seat conforming to the Children's Car Seats and Harnesses Regulations. Preschoolers who have outgrown the safety seat (18-23 kg or 40-50 lbs) but are not big enough to wear the lap and shoulder belts must use only the lap belt, tucking the shoulder strap behind them.

When children are big enough --

usually when they reach 23 kg (50 lbs) -- they must use the full seatbelt assembly as provided in the vehicle.

Sometimes children don't want to wear their seatbelts, but parents shouldn't let them get away with it just to avoid a hassle. If his own child takes off his seatbelt and refuses to put it back on Mason says he will pull the car over and refuse to move until the seatbelt is back in place.

All passengers in a vehicle must be strapped in if seatbelts are available for them. The driver is responsible for all passengers 16 years of age and under, while any passenger over 16 years will be issued a ticket if not wearing a seatbelt.



The evidence that the driver of this car was not wearing a seatbelt is plain to see. This car was going about 50 or 60 kph at the time of collision, estimates Const. Scott Mason of the Halton Regional Police Traffic Bureau, and at that speed the impact of head hitting glass is equivalent to falling out of a three storey building. A number of traffic injuries and deaths in Halton Region last year may have been avoided if the people involved had been wearing their seatbelts, Mason says.



# Jack TANNERS

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