

Blue Box program

Noel Duignan, MPP Halton North, announced a payment of \$110,537 to the regional municipality of Halton for its Blue Box program.

The payment, part of total grant of \$1,521,400 will help pay for the operating costs of the program. The funding, announced on behalf of Environment and Energy minister Bud Wildman, is made available under the Municipal Recycling Support Program.

Duignan said, "This program has the potential to further promote 3Rs activities in this area. Today, more than three million households in Ontario use the Blue Box to recycle materials that once went directly to landfill sites.

"Successful Blue Box programs like this one have helped municipalities meet the 25 per cent waste diversion goal in 1992. And with these kinds of programs, we can help communities reach the 50 per cent reduction target by the end of this decade," he added.

Mother favors full day kindergarten classes

By DIANE YANCHUS
Special to The Independent/Free Press

Diane Salter may be a lone voice in the barrage of parental voices against full day alternate day kindergarten - she is in favor of it.

Salter studies children, how they think, how they learn, their development. She has earned her Masters in Educational Psychology and is currently working towards her PhD in Cognitive Psychology at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education as well as teaching psychology at Sheridan College. On top of those academic qualifications, Salter is a concerned mother.

"My slant is...these kids are quite capable of handling a full day at school," said Slater, whose oldest

daughter was involved in such a program. "A lot of these kids have the benefit of a day care setting and that's a much longer day."

Salter said if a coalition of educators and parents feel that five-year-olds can't cope with a full day, perhaps they should not be part of the system at all and the whole concept of kindergarten should be wiped out.

"I know it's an outrageous thing to say, but if we're looking at cost cuttings..." she said.

Even if pre-schoolers aren't in day care, most mothers have established some kind of a socialization program for their kids by the age of three and four, said Salter.

A full-day program gives the children consistency, and as for

being tired or unable to concentrate for a full day, she believes very few four and five-year-olds still have afternoon naps.

"And the school day is much shorter," she said. "As any teacher or educator will tell you, kindergarten is for socialization, to get the kids used to the whole school routine...kids have the energy to cope with a full day."

Salter feels it's only a matter of altering our parental mindset that kindergarten must be a half-day everyday program.

"I'm not advocating that schools take the place of day care or be a babysitting service," emphasized Salter.

As for concerns about the lack of assistants to deal with all the concerns the children might have during the course of a full day, Salter believes there are enough, along with the parent volunteers.

In Salter's case, the program change would be beneficial because her youngest daughter could ride home on the bus with her sister. Otherwise she will have to place her daughter in day care for the other half a day but be charged for a full day program.

"So, it's a really big plus for me," said Salter, who believes other parents might be in the same position.

"My costs would be half."

Post office still in limbo

The Ballinafad post office is still in limbo said Nancy Berg, owner of the Ballinafad General Store.

Berg sent a petition to Minister of Government Services, David Dingwell, asking that their post office remain just as it always has been, operated by Canada Post. Berg said she received a reply from Dingwell saying thank you, but nothing else.

"Really a decision should have been made in August, but it wasn't," Berg said. The Liberals are reviewing the Tory policy of closing rural post offices, but there's no time limit on the review, so no indication of when a decision will be made, she said.

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