

EDITORIAL

with Frances Niblock

It Gets Better?

Bullying for any reason would mean expulsion in Ontario schools with legislation introduced at Queen's Park on Wednesday to ensure students are free to be who they are. The legislation, called *It Gets Better* is designed so students, regardless of their culture, gender, faith or sexual orientation, feel safe at school.

Bullying is repeated, persistent and aggressive behaviour intended to cause fear, distress or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem or reputation. A national survey found 64 per cent of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer students (LGBTQ), and 61 per cent of students with LGBTQ parents felt unsafe at school.

Premier Dalton McGuinty told The Canadian Press that bullying is a violation of the Safe Schools Act, but he wants to "take it up a notch" and give the rules force of law with legislation.

In a video McGuinty tells bullying victims they are not alone, and calls on students, teachers, parents and the community to help end bullying. If passed, schools would have to actively prevent bullying, step in when appropriate, and apply fitting consequences. School boards would be required to develop policies and guidelines with greater supports for students.

Education Minister Laurel Broten said: "We have taught our children three fundamental "Rs" in school – reading, writing and arithmetic – but now we need also to focus on the fourth "R" – relationships."

Hopefully, tough talk from Queen's Park is comfort to people who are being bullied, or are alone.

Looking Back



Ten Years Ago

- Acton Scouts may open the doors to their Scout Hall for local Guiding groups, faced with fees up to \$12,000 annually to rent two Acton schools for their weekly meetings and activities.

- Ace gardener, Acton's Max MacSween was honoured with a Community Champion Award for his work to beautify the Town, making Acton a nicer, prettier place to live.

- Throngs of shoppers crowded into the new Garden Market IGA store for the grand opening in the Acton East plaza.

Five Years Ago

- Wellington-Halton Hills MP Michael Chong chose principle over politics and resigned from cabinet hours before a Commons vote to formally recognise the Quebecois as a nation within Canada.

- Security guards were posted at a Peel Street residence where a court-ordered environmental cleanup was underway, following complaints of health issues.

- Lawn signs urging residents to keep "Christ in Christmas" sprouted up all over the Acton area – an ecumenical message to counter the growing tendency to secularise the religious holiday.



PEEWEE PROFIT: The Acton Pee-wee Select Chargers served hot dogs, baked potatoes, and raffled great hockey paraphernalia to raise \$1,375 from the generous public outside Sobeys on Saturday. The Chargers say "thanks." – Submitted photo

Letters



Sparks say thanks

Dear Editor,

RE: Community Boosters

Not often do we take the time to thank businesses for making our little town a community, but in this instance we must.

This past week the wonderful ladies of Black Creek Animal Hospital opened their clinic doors to the 2nd Acton Sparks. They provided an amazing hands-on tour for our 22 members that was not only incredible, but incredibly generous. They were prepared, personal and completely committed to the concept of helping these five and six year olds feel empowered in their understanding of a vets office and a

pet owners' responsibilities.

Dr. Jones, Miss Maxine, Miss Ashley and Miss Stacy were fantastic ambassadors of the profession and our community. I think they have clearly demonstrated how strongly they care about Acton and the many people and animals that call it home.

On a side note, Miss Maxine introduced our unit to their current resident, Captain Morgan, a sleek and sweet black cat in need of some fairly extensive surgery. While not once did they ask us about financially supporting their efforts for the Captain, I think it would be a lovely gesture from our

community to support this wonderful group and their generous efforts. Clearly Captain Morgan deserves a second chance at a happy healthy life and what better way to show our community spirit then to give to another at Christmas time.

Best wishes to all and again thanks to Black Creek Animal Hospital for being a wonderful part of OUR community!

Most truly,
Trish "Firefly" Bell on behalf of
Rainbow, Sparkie, Starlight,
Bumblebee and our 22 Sparks
2nd Acton Sparks
Girl Guides of Canada



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Distributed to every home in Acton and area, as well as adjoining communities.

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