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Michael Langford and daughter Bronte spent the Tuesday afternoon of the March Break on the tobogganing hill at Cedarvale Park. Wind-chill temperatures reaching the -20C mark kept many winter enthusiasts away, but a few took to the hills for some fun on the sleds.
 Photo by Eamonn Maher

Mumps case confirmed in Halton

By Graeme Frisque
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A recent outbreak of the mumps virus in the province has made its way to Halton, with the region's health department confirming one case so far in 2017.

In a release issued by the region on Friday, Halton Region Health Department said there has been an increase in confirmed cases of mumps involving mostly 20-40 years olds. The release added there have also been some confirmed cases of the virus in school-aged children in Toronto.

According to the release, mumps is a contagious viral disease which can infect people of all ages, but is more common in school-aged children and young adults.

The Halton Region Health Department is reminding individuals born between 1970 and 1992 to check with your doctor to ensure you have had a booster shot for the mumps vaccine (MMR) if you only received one MMR vaccine in the past, said Dr. Daniela Kempkens, acting medical officer of health in the release.

Among the main symptoms are swelling of the glands in the cheeks and jaw caused by an infection of the salivary glands.

Mumps is spread from per-

son to person through coughing, sneezing and coming into contact with a person's saliva by sharing food, drinks, utensils, drinking bottles, cigarettes or by kissing, wrote Halton Health in the release, adding most of those infected can remain sick for up to 10 days.

The release added the disease has a long gestation period, with most people noticing symptoms 12 to 25 days after coming in contact with the virus. The symptoms can be more severe in infants.

Mumps can be prevented through immunization with two doses of mumps vaccine, explained Kempkens.

People who have mumps need to isolate themselves while they are ill and for five full days after the swelling first appears.

Anyone believing they or their child may be infected must call ahead to their doctor's office, walk-in clinic or emergency room to advise them in order to properly prepare.

This will allow health care staff to prepare for your arrival and help avoid contact with other patients. In a doctor's office you may be given the last appointment of the day.

Visit halton.ca/mumps for more information or contact the Halton Region Health Department by dialing 311.

Population growth slows in latest census

By Graeme Frisque
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The Government of Canada released population information in February as part of the 2016 census, showing a significant increase across Halton Region.

In total, the region's population spiked 9.3 per cent between 2011 and 2016, from 501,674 to 548,435, an increase of 46,761. During the previous five-year period the region's population grew by 14.2 per cent.

The province's population meanwhile, grew from 12,851,821 to 13,448,494 between 2011 and 2016, an increase of 4.6 per cent. Between 2006 and 2011, the province saw a 5.7 per cent spike in population.

Leading the way in Halton by a wide margin, and accounting for more than half (55 per cent) of the region's five-year growth was Milton, which saw a 30.5-per-cent population increase over the last five years from 84,362 to 110,128 residents.

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