

## We have a duty to report child abuse

October is Child Abuse Prevention Month, and this year, both the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies and local Children's Aid Societies will highlight how calls from the community play a vital role in preventing child abuse in Ontario.

Last year over 171,000 Ontarians reached out to Children's Aid with concerns about the safety of a child, an indication of the extent to which the community safety net is working.

The vast majority of families they work with remain as a family unit during DCFS involvement and their work together is for the purpose of mitigating risk.

In 2013, children remained with their families in 97 per cent of CAS investigations.

A removal occurs only when exceptional circumstances exist.

A removal is never undertaken lightly.

Child Abuse Prevention Month is about creating awareness of everyone's responsibility to report suspected child abuse and neglect.

Every Ontarian has a moral and legal role to play in protecting children and supporting vulnerable families in the community.

Types of child abuse:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect

Signs of Child abuse:

• not wearing clothing that's suitable for the weather

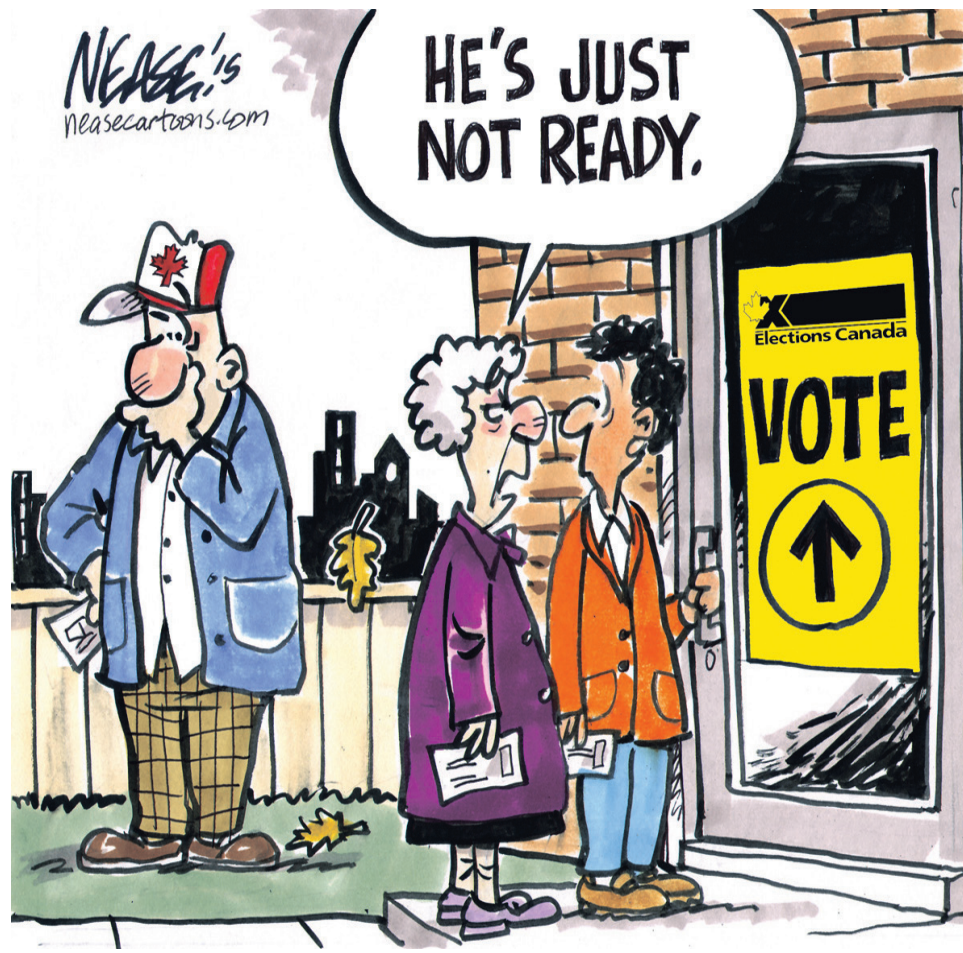
- be dirty or unbathed
- be very hungry
- not be properly supervised

A study published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal, found that 32 per cent of Canadians had experienced physical abuse, sexual abuse, exposure to domestic violence or a combination of these while they were kids.

It's time to end the cycle. Pick up the phone and make the call.

### The Independent & Free Press

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## Letters to the editor

### Investment in housing is important

Congratulations to Mayor Rick Bonnette for joining Greater Toronto and Hamilton (GTAH) Mayors and Regional Chairs in calling on the federal parties, in their Oct. 6 joint letter to five political parties, for enhanced federal infrastructure and social housing funding.

Halton Hills and Halton Region are implementing a comprehensive strategy to encourage a continuum of housing options for all incomes but much more needs to be done.

Investing in social housing, in the Toronto and Hamilton area, with which Halton is very connected through employment, trade and recreation, is an investment in a more prosperous future for all of us. However, as per the 2014 State of Homelessness in Canada Report, over the past 25 years, while Canada's population increased by almost 30%, annual national investment in housing has decreased dramatically, by over 46%. To put it another way, in 1989, Canadians contributed, through taxation, an average of \$115/person to federal housing investments. By 2013, that figure had dropped to just over \$60/person (in 2013 dollars). In Canada, almost 1 in 5 renter households are experiencing severe housing afford-

ability difficulties—spending 50% or more of their income on rent. Over 235,000 Canadians experience homelessness over the course of a year. On any given night, and cold nights are coming to us ever so soon, 35,000 Canadian citizens are homeless.

Will Postma

VP Programs and Research  
Pathways to Education Canada

### Thanks for the help

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the incredible staff (and dentist) at the South Georgetown Dental Care office. Recently at school, my seven year old was knocked to the ground and hit her front teeth, one baby tooth and one brand new adult tooth.

As you can imagine there was a lot of blood and since her adult tooth looked and felt like it had been knocked out of place, we were a little freaked out thinking she was going to lose the tooth. Since our regular dentist office is closed on Fridays, I didn't know where to take her other than to the hospital but a volunteer at the school told me that she had seen a sign for emergency appointments at the South Georgetown Dental Care office. I can't begin to describe the amazing reception we had when we walked into the office. My daughter

was a little scared about going to a different dentist but the hygienist and dentist explained everything they were doing for her and she was immediately comforted by them.

So thank you to everyone in the South Georgetown Dental Care office for turning a very bad situation into a very positive one.

Kelly Warnock,

Halton Hills

### Cartoon was funny, and true

Re: Eric Doubt of Georgetown's letter to the editor in the Oct. 1 edition of the IFP titled Cartoon was out of line: reader

The cartoon Eric refers to was hardly "out of line." It's only reflecting our plight as we get on with it; loss of jobs, new and higher taxes, cuts to health care, et al. Does he have no sense of humour?

The cartoon was funny!

To find the cartoon inappropriate and offensive is just silly, and displays his own stance on the lowest rung of the cultural ladder.

How welcoming is Canada, Ontario, and our hometown? Very.

Norman Paulsen,

Acton