

## See kids in a 'different light'

BY DOUG HARRISON  
The Acton Tanner

Mary Piercy hopes each of the parents who attend the Acton Parent-Child Resource Centre's latest workshop will leave with different ways of interacting with their kids.

Every Thursday — starting tomorrow — until March 2, seven different sessions will comprise the workshop *How to talk so kids will listen, Listen so kids will talk*.

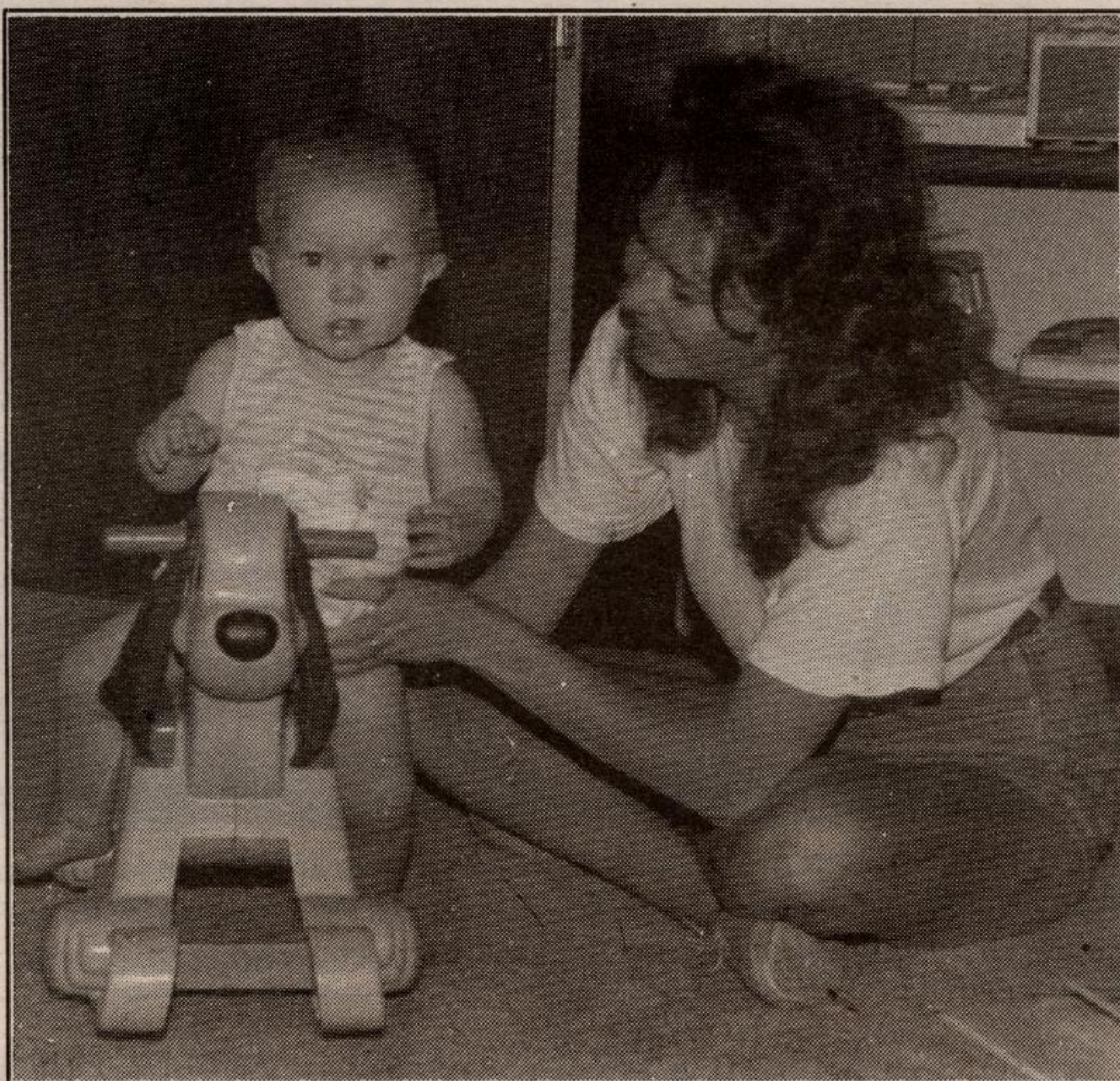
They include helping children deal with feelings, engaging cooperation, alternatives to punishment, encouraging autonomy, praise, freeing children from playing roles and then a summarization of all sessions in the seventh week.

Relating to her experience as a mother, Piercy says her biggest observation of parents is the increase in daily stress levels from five to 10 years ago.

As parents, she says, it's important for each of us to read to our children at a young age and explore what it is we are trying to do to shape our kids' lives.

"Children are not going to look at things the way we do," cautions Piercy, centre manager. "They process information differently than they used to, so it's important to find out where children are at. It can make a difference in how we view what they say to us."

After the workshop, Piercy feels parents will see their children in a slightly different light. She also mentions that parents "almost always" learn something about



COMMUNICATION IS KEY! An upcoming workshop for parents of toddlers will focus on improving interaction between parents and toddlers. (Tanner file photo)

themselves, too.

"After the workshop, parents will have a better idea of how to handle, for example, a whiney afternoon," Piercy says of the workshop participants.

An Erin resident, Piercy admits parenting isn't easy today with a tough economic picture and all, but adds there are places to go for assistance.

"It's amazing," she says, "when the simple idea is presented, how much of a difference it can make. In some ways parenting is diffi-

cult, but in others, an idea can go a long way.

"It's important when you start parenting to explore resources, because you always run into a snag where you can't handle the child's problem. But there are resources in the community."

For Centre members, the workshop is \$3 per session. For non-members, it's \$4 a session which includes baby-sitting for up to three children.

There is a surcharge of \$1 for each additional child.

## Video store closes

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK  
The Acton Tanner

After nine years of taking care of the entertainment needs of Acton movie lovers, P.R.E. View Video is closing.

The store's entire stock of videos are now on sale and are moving fast. The closing date for owners Paul and Robin Elliott is next Saturday.

Robin Elliott blamed the closure on declining business.

"Fewer people chose us when it came to renting their movies," Elliott explained in an interview on Friday.

"With fewer customers it meant that we had fewer new releases and that meant fewer

customers. It was a Catch-22 situation," said Elliott, who had noticed a gradual decline in business for the past three years.

"I'm sorry we are closing. It wasn't the plan but I'm sure the change will be positive."

Asked for her best and worst memories Elliott quickly said that the best part was the people.

"I loved seeing and talking to all kinds of people everyday. The worst? Let's just say the hassles of being in business."

Elliott has already opened a new business in Acton. She is selling Lifestyles - an herbal drink and weight management cookie, from her home. Elliott can be reached at 853-1635.

## Farming group takes on Building Dept.

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK  
The Acton Tanner

Complaints raised by the Halton Federation of Agriculture about the inadequacy of the Halton Hills Building Department will be investigated at an upcoming meeting.

At last Monday's Council meeting, a highly critical Federation President George Bird, attacked the building department for unreasonable delays in processing agricultural building permits, for

the high cost of such permits, and for a lack of understanding of engineering principals regarding farm structures within the building department.

Although a staff report appeared to contradict many of Bird's contentions, Council voted to try to clear the air at a meeting of councillors, Town staff and Federation officials.

In his address, Bird explained that farming is a seasonal business and building permits must be issued promptly, in some cases to accommodate harvests.

After citing examples of lower building permit fees and shorter processing times in surrounding farming communities, Bird accused staff of a lack of expertise.

"Staff is unfamiliar with agriculture structures and practices," Bird told Council.

"Some of our members have experienced problems with Town staff or inspectors who simply do not understand the engineering principals involved with farm structures," Bird said. When asked for an example, Bird told of an incident where one Town official asked where the wood was to build a silo, clearly not understanding that wood is never used in building silos.

Director of Building, Zoning and Enforcement Services, Henry Tse, admitted staff have no "hands-on practical experience" with engineering designs for agricultural building permit applications.

"Of our 800 permits issued in 1994, only 17 or 18 were agricultural permits," Tse explained.

"We are not 100 per cent conversant because 98 per cent of our applications are of another nature."

Bird's allegation that it takes 12 weeks, on average, to receive a building permit for an agricultural structure was refuted by the staff report, indicating that half were issued within six weeks or less.

Of the 17 farm structure building permit applications, two are still in the review process and 15 have been issued.

Of those 15, one was issued in three weeks, seven were issued in three to six weeks, three were issued in six to eight weeks and four were issued in six weeks or less.



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