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# Free parental assistance

By DONNA DANIELLI

In today's fast paced world, raising a family can be quite a challenge. Parents often find themselves searching for resources to assist them in overcoming these challenges. Fortunately, helpful resources are now more accessible.

The new Parent Resource Library at the Early Years Learning Centre of Halton, in Milton, offers a wide variety of resources available to anyone that just needs a little bit of help every now and again.

Parents can choose from hundreds of different topics in varying forms such as books, videos and audio cassettes. The library has also taken into account that time is a very limited commodity these days. Those limited by time, need not worry. There's also a file cabinet filled to the brim with take-away articles that condense information from various publications into a shorter form.

"People like the file cabinet resources because they don't have to worry about returning a book," says Parenting Educator Susan Brathwaite. "If it's not in the file, I will ask a parent to give me 24 hours and I'll do a search. Our resource library is a work in progress."

There's also parents' kits of books and toys available in 25 themes ranging from toilet training to bullying, or speech problems.

Membership in the Early Years

Learning Centre is free and the Parenting Resource Library is open from Monday to Wednesday, 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Thursdays from 9 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. and Fridays from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.. It is also open the first Saturday of each month to provide easier access to working parents.

The library will also be offering a series of free workshops over the next few months. Monday networking workshops will run both mornings and afternoons beginning January 20 and will offer guest speakers, make-and-take activities and more.

A three part series called *Kids have Stress Too*, will run Tuesday evenings, beginning on January 28. *You Make the Difference* will promote social, cognitive, and language development through positive parent/child interaction for nine weeks beginning February 6. All workshops have free childcare available on a first come basis.

"We're getting some very positive feedback," says Ms. Brathwaite. "People like to come in, have a coffee and curl up in the big, comfy chairs with a book. It's a good spot to have a browse or a quiet moment."

Anyone wanting more information about the Parenting Resource Library is encouraged to call Susan Brathwaite at 905-876-1244, ext. 22.

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