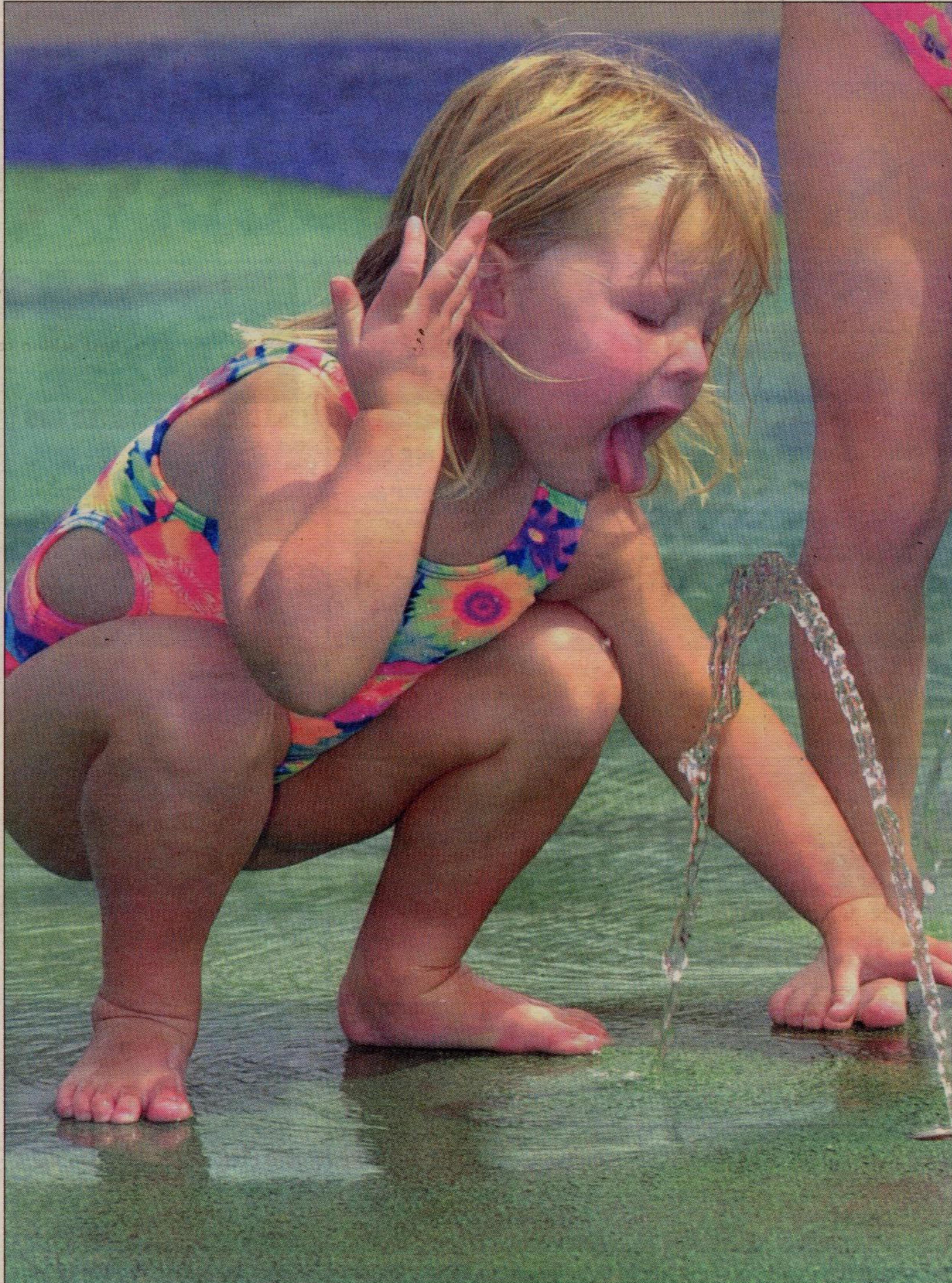


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Fountain of youth

Although the splash pad in Georgetown South Park wasn't really designed to be a gigantic drinking fountain, three-year-old Dana Falk figured that if it was hot enough, and the water's available, you might just as well have a drink to beat the heat. The toddler was among the dozens who ran through the sprinklers enjoying the refreshing water, as well as cooling down, during Friday's heat.

Photo by Ted Brown

Halton CCAC cash-strapped Waiting lists begin for home care help

The Community Care Access Centre is warning its clients and future clients across Halton—lineups and waiting lists for services began yesterday (Tuesday).

The agency, which co-ordinates home care and home nursing services, has been forced into some tough decisions to meet its budget. It means, in some cases, existing clients will be cut off or will have to start paying for private sector help to make room for more urgent cases.

"There are going to be some difficult decisions as you can imagine," said Sandra Shadwick, CEO of Halton's CCAC. "Family members are anxious about their loved ones, wondering what it will mean."

With the Ministry of Health freezing the funds to all of Ontario's community care access centres, Halton's CCAC says it is being forced to provide service first to high-priority clients only, putting everyone else on waiting lists.

Certain clients will be told the home services they now receive will have to be paid for by private providers, said Shadwick. "And some of our clients will have to return to hospital, because we can no longer provide enough service, and they're at too much risk to

keep at home."

The waiting lists will primarily affect new clients initially, but as service demands increase so will the wait for new services among existing clients, said Shadwick. Current policies on funding medical equipment and supplies are also being reviewed.

"We are committed to a balanced approach based on priority of need," she said. "This means that we will continue to serve frail elderly clients who require support, other community referrals and clients referred from hospitals who have acute care needs."

Halton is one of the fastest-growing areas in Ontario, according to the CCAC. This, coupled with an aging population, hospital restructuring and shortage of long-term care beds, has resulted in a growth in the demand for services, in the face of increasing costs and a higher complexity of services needed by CCAC clients.

Halton CCAC's \$32-million budget for this fiscal year is 20 per cent less than was requested. Last year, the CCAC of Halton provided help to 12,354 clients, a six per cent increase from the previous year.

Its services include home care for the frail and elderly, nursing, rehabilitation services

See WAITING, pg. 3



Tykes tops in Ontario
...page S/L 1

INSIDE

Town Hall News.....	4
Editorial.....	6
This 'n That.....	7
Classifieds.....	9-11
Sports.....	S/L 1, 2
Entertainment.....	S/L 5
Leathertown Festival....	S/L 8

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