

HALTON HILLS
PARENTING
MAGAZINE

The Independent
& Free Press

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The Independent & Free Press is published every Wednesday and Friday at 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown Ont., L7G 4B1. It is one of the newspapers published by Metroland Printing, Publishing & Distributing Ltd.

Halton Hills Parenting Magazine is published in conjunction with Barbara Burrows Parenting in May, June, August, October, November and April.

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Where appropriate, professional advice should be sought.

Centre guarantees results

Sylvan Learning Centre guarantees results for its students.

If students at Sylvan don't improve their math or reading skills by one full grade level equivalent after 36 hours of instruction, Sylvan Learning Centre will provide 12 additional hours of instruction at no cost.

"I don't think there is anyone else that makes that guarantee," said Johanna Skalin, executive director, and owner with her husband Goran, of The Sylvan Learning Centre at 18 Regan Dr., Brampton.

She said the centre, located in the Hwy. 7 and McLaughlin Rd. area, is just a short drive from Georgetown and has several students from the Georgetown area.

The centre provides personalized supplemental education in reading, math, writing, study skills and SAT/ACT preparation. Students range in age from four to adult.

Teens come to Sylvan for remedial and enrichment programs to help them in middle and high school, and to get into college. They learn advanced reading skills, algebra, geometry, integrated math and can take the Johns Hopkins University Advanced Youth Scholar Program in math or writing. Adults who want to go to college and need to upgrade their skills also study at Sylvan.

Skalin said they work with a variety of students at the centre including those who have learning exceptionalities, such as ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) and ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), gifted students, and students at every level in between.

Before students begin their personalized instruction they undergo the Sylvan Skills Assessment which Skalin said takes about two hours. The assessment identifies the specific learning experiences the child needs to succeed

and pinpoints skill gaps.

Sylvan uses standardized and their own customized tests, vision and hearing screenings, interviews and information from recent report cards, personality and learning style in the assessment.

She said after the assessment, they go over the results with the child's parents, and she would "have a pretty good idea of how long it would take for that child to come up to grade level."

From the Skills Assessment they find an appropriate match from Sylvan's hundreds of lesson plans and adapt and personalize the curriculum to fit the child's specific needs.

She said the pupil/teacher ratio is usually three to one. Each student has their own individualized program and attends as few as two hours a week of instruction. Students are reassessed after 36 lessons to determine their progress.

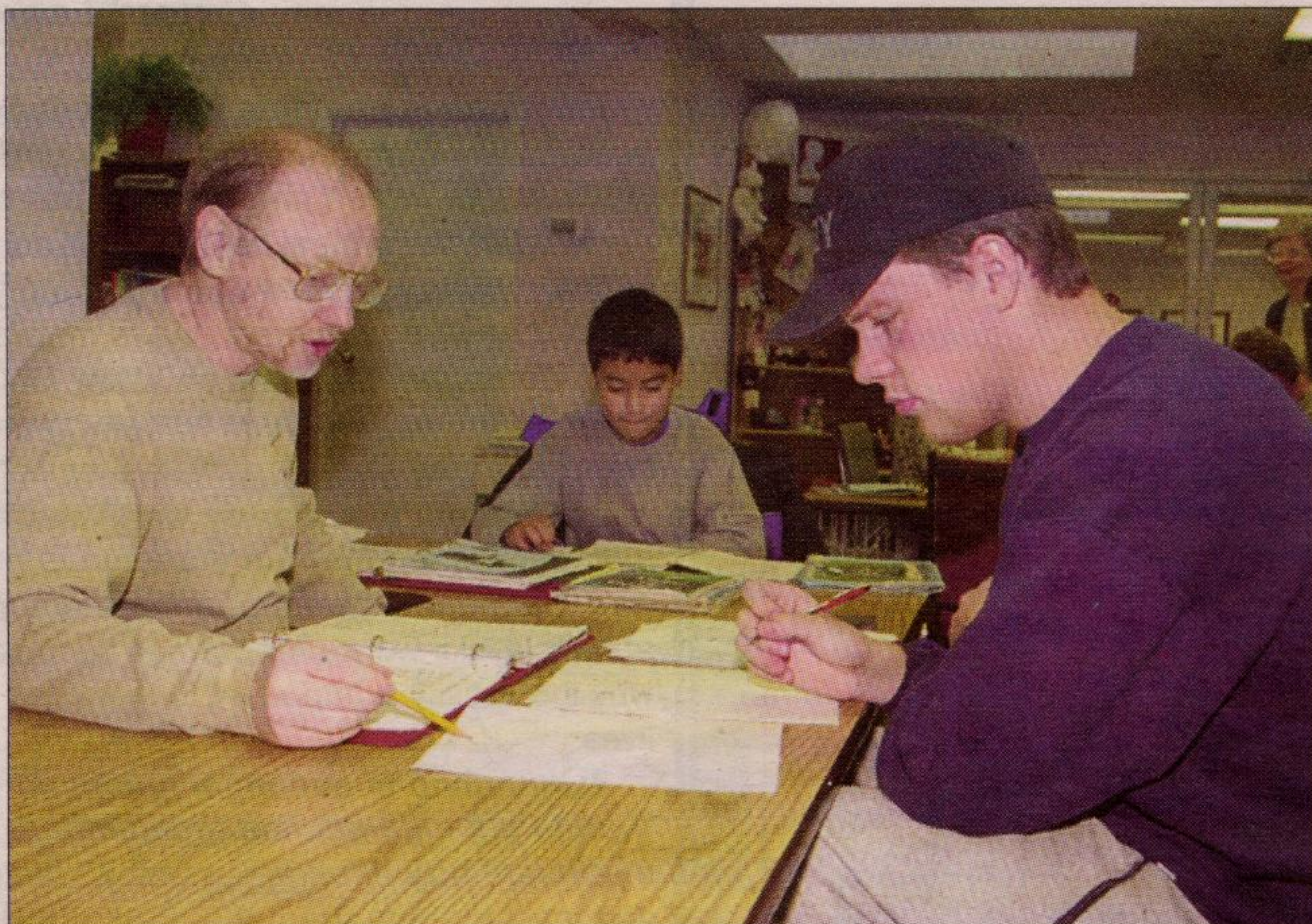
"Normally we are only too happy to meet with the schools as well," said Skalin.

The centre's certified teachers use Sylvan's teaching philosophy, Skill Mastery, which results in the students retaining information long after it's learned. Teachers make sure the students demonstrate mastery of a certain skill with 80 to 100 per cent accuracy before moving to the next level.

The students receive continual feedback, frequent testing and positive reinforcement.

Skalin said the students are rewarded for their efforts by earning tokens which can be used to buy items such as books, stuffed animals, educational games and models, at the Sylvan store. They can also accumulate their tokens and trade them in for gift certificates at malls. The unique rewards system keeps students interested and motivated to learn.

For information call Sylvan Learning Centre at 905-840-1100.



Wyn Godard with Colin Tuckey. Douglas Olivares is in the background. photos

by Bryon Johnson

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