



New childcare plan okayed

A revised three-year plan that details the use of \$6.1 million in childcare funding throughout Halton was approved by regional council Wednesday.

The document proposes creating 200 new licensed daycare spaces with the Best Start childcare program money—about 400 fewer spaces than what was projected in the original plan now that the Conservatives intend to cancel a funding deal made with the Province by the previous federal government.

The spaces will be created in elementary schools in each local municipality where the need for child care is high.

“Terminating the childcare agreement will adversely impact our ability to build a childcare system of quality early learning and child care and appropriate intervention that has proven to have a positive, long-lasting impact on children,” said Halton Regional Chairman Joyce Savoline. “We urge the federal and provincial governments to seek alternate sources of funding to support early learning and child development that addresses the childcare needs of families and builds a quality system.”

In addition to endorsing the revised plan, council also approved hiring a program assistant and an individual to support children with special needs on three-year contracts for Best Start.

To support the 200 childcare spaces, the Region should soon be receiving \$6.09 million from the Province— funds that’ll be spread out over four years.

Region notes

Homeless get emergency funding

Regional council has approved almost \$100,000 in emergency funding for local projects that serve the homeless.

The money— which will go toward four Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI) projects geared to homeless youth, families and individuals with serious mental illnesses— was given the go-ahead at council’s meeting recently.

The regional dollars will be used for up to three months, until Halton receives its fourth-year SCPI funding from the federal government.

“The funds provided by Halton Region will maintain critical services for homeless youth, families and individuals with mental illnesses,” said Regional Chairman Joyce Savoline. “Our priority is to ensure our residents are taken care of, and streamlining the gap will secure these initiatives to support their health and wellness.”

The programs that benefit from these funds include Transitions for Youth, Halton Hills Community Support and Information and the Halton Multicultural Council.



JOYCE SAVOLINE

Food Basket report released

Low-income residents in the region are more likely to use the money they have for rent and bills than on healthy food for themselves and their families.

That’s one of the findings in the Halton health department’s annual Nutritious Food Basket report, which measures the cost of an adequate diet against the financial resources of those at the low-income level.

For example, the report illustrates the case of a single mother living in Halton with a seven-year-old daughter who receives assistance through Ontario Works.

Her income would be \$1,212.92 per month, with rent accounting for \$849 of that amount and food, about \$236.

That would only leave around \$125 for things like heat, hydro, transportation, non-prescription drugs and unexpected expenses.

“Families who find themselves in this kind of situation are more likely to pay the rent and necessary bills and have little or no money left for food,” the Food Basket report states.

A Nutritious Food Basket survey was conducted with six grocery stores in Halton last year to determine the price of a healthy diet. This showed the average cost for a family of four to eat healthy is \$120.96 per week.

The information gathered is shared with a variety of community groups, which will use it to demonstrate the difficulty people on low incomes have in affording a nutritious diet and to advocate for increases to minimum wage and social assistance benefits.

Hungry Hollow Ravine Frog Count Workshop

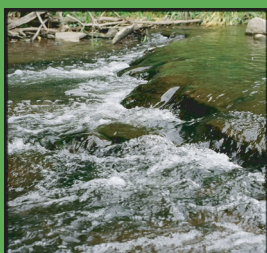
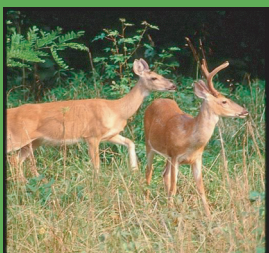
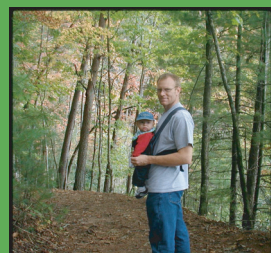
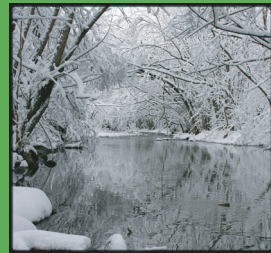
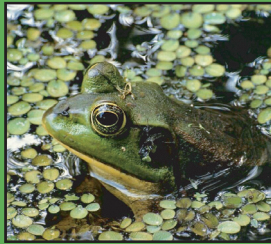
Did you know that frogs are a good indicator of environmental quality?

The Recreation & Parks Department is seeking volunteers interested in learning more about how to identify frog calls and record data from local experts.

A workshop will be held on Monday, April 10, 2006 from 7:00 - 9:00 PM at the Civic Centre. Interested adults or families are asked to register by calling Warren Harris at (905) 873-2601 ext 2274 or warrenh@haltonhills.ca by April 6, 2006.

Amphibian monitoring is the first in a series of monitoring programs to be undertaken in 2006.

Artwork by student of Park and St. Catharines of Alexandria Schools






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... Lend Me Your Ears

By Cory Soal
R.H.A.D.

WHAT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE WHEN PURCHASING A HEARING AID?

The Ministry of Health’s Assistive Devices Program (ADP) provides some assistance to both children and adults. For further information you may contact 1-800-268-6021 or ask your Hearing Instrument Practitioner for the Assistive Devices Pamphlet.

Medical plans through employers, Workers Compensation, Veterans Affairs Canada, and private Insurance Companies cover many Ontario residents for hearing aids. Your Hearing Instrument Practitioner will be pleased to assist you in determining what coverage you might have.

For further information, feel free to call...

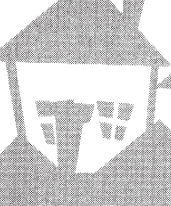


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