

# EDUCATION



## Making back-to-school a breeze

Every school year begins with students, parents and teachers who are full of optimism and committed to making this the best year ever. Unfortunately, for some, it doesn't take long for the sizzle to fizzle and for students to fall behind.

Chances are that if your child had trouble with a subject last year and didn't work on it over the summer, the challenges could be even more overwhelming in the new school year. If you wait until the first report card, it's often too late. Parents can help their children avoid the vicious cycle of falling behind, then playing catch-up for the rest of the year, especially if you take action now.

Parents often allow six to eight weeks for a "settling in" period, but doing so can be detrimental to a student's learning momentum. By the time October rolls around, some students are already becoming frustrated and the learning curve is too steep. All of a sudden, minor problems become major obstacles to success, and very stressful situations develop for everyone involved.

Enrolling in one of Oxford Learning's programs this summer is the best way to keep the brain in learning mode and avoid a sluggish start in September.

If you take action now, back-to-school will be a breeze. We have many programs available, so one is sure to meet your child's particular needs. Enrolment is always open and we tailor the schedule to fit your needs.

Come see us at our NEW location at 324 Guelph St. for more information today!

**324 Guelph St., Georgetown**  
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[www.oxfordlearning.com](http://www.oxfordlearning.com)

## That's a lot of doughnuts!

Acton Tim Hortons owner John Malinowski presented his employee Abby De Bruyn with a cheque for \$1,000, after she was awarded the Tim Horton's Scholarship for her commitment of giving back to her community. The 18-year-old Acton resident graduated from Christ the King Catholic High School and will be attending the University of Western Ontario this fall. The scholarship was awarded after De Bruyn took part in an essay competition. She has plans of becoming a high school teacher.

Photo by Ted Brown

## Long-Term Care homes looking for high school student volunteers

Are you interested in gaining some practical skills at the same time as earning community hours for high school graduations? The Summer Student Volunteer Program provides young people an opportunity to learn about a variety of different careers, including recreation programming and hairdressing in and outside Halton Region's long-term care homes. Volunteers also assist on outings, clerical work, and with the Adult Day Programs. Students who are interested in obtaining an information package or taking a tour of one of the homes should contact Halton Region, 1-866-442-5866, ext. 4011.



# Helping teens make it into... and out of ... high school

Whether teens are on their way into high school or on their way out, parents have an important role in helping them to grow and develop during this critical time.

We know that teens worry about increased workloads, how to fit in with their peers, making new friends, and their safety. They are entering a new world and they require support and encouragement in order to succeed. The question is, how can parents support their teens during these transitions?

Here are some concrete things that parents can do to support teens on their journeys:

- Stay involved without taking over— Ask lots of questions, look for information together, actively listen to their opinions. The goal is to develop independent teens.

- Encourage them to sign up for meaningful activities— Getting involved in the school or community will help them feel like they belong and help them to balance the school work with something fun. Seventy-three per cent of Canadian youth aged 12 to 17 engage in volunteer activities.

- Praise and nurture— Say things like, "You

can do this", "You did a good job at that", "How I can help?" Show pride because teens still need to hear positive things about themselves.

- Help them to plan ahead— Talk about things they may need to get organized, what they can do in uncomfortable or risky situations, and how to make new friends. It is also important to negotiate rules and responsibilities and set limits.

- Reinforce the importance of learning - It's a good time to talk about family values related to learning and your commitment to helping them succeed, but don't forget to include the importance of social time, fun and relaxation. Remember to be realistic and accept individuality. Every teen has different strengths and aspirations. School, communities, and peers are key influences on healthy adolescent development.

- Discuss issues that they may face - Talk about your fears with them as parents by using "what if" scenarios, for example; "What would you do if you were at a party and your ride left without you?" or; "What if someone offered you drugs in class?" Talking these things out is the best way to protect your teens and reinforce the

need to plan ahead. Parents also have an important role in monitoring their teens' behaviour.

- Remind them that most youth don't use drugs, have sex or skip class. Many adults have a negative view of what teens are really doing, and most of it is just not true. If teens have a positive outlook of where they are going, as well as nurturing parents, they are more likely to look forward to experiences and make better decisions.

Remember, this is an exciting time for your family and it doesn't have to be stressful. If you require more support, Halton Region offers Triple P - a positive parenting program that is free of charge to parents. Triple P promotes good communication and strong relationships between parents and teens. Children who grow up with positive parenting are more likely to feel good about themselves and develop to their full potential.

For more information about parenting or the Triple P program, call Halton Region at 905-825-6000, toll free 1-866-4HALTON (1-866-442-5866) or visit [www.halton.ca/health](http://www.halton.ca/health)

—Halton Region Health Department

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