

# OPINION

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## This kind of fat is not phat

Parents, understandably, tend to look at the own children's behaviour through rose-coloured glasses.

It's often the *other* child who started the fight or didn't do what they were told or was acting up.

A new poll commissioned by the Canadian Medical Association (CMA), suggests the self-delusion of parents may be putting their kids on the path to poor health.

According to the poll, only 9 per cent of Canadian parents believe their children are overweight or obese when, in fact, data collected by Statistics Canada indicates 26 per cent of Canadian kids are overweight or obese.

"I have a very real fear we are killing our children with kindness by setting them up for a lifetime of inactivity and poor health," said Dr. Ruth Collins-Nakai, president of the CMA.

In the eyes of adult respondents, only 6 per cent gave Canadian kids an 'A' for overall health, but when it came to assessing their own kids 40 per cent gave their children top marks.

The CMA releases an annual report card to measure public feelings about the health system and the overall grades vary little from year to year. However, this year the report card focused on child health and the CMA, which represents 62,000 physicians, is expected to push both federal and provincial governments to adopt specific targets for improving kids' health.

Poll respondents suggested adopting initiatives such as mandatory physical education from Kindergarten to Grade 12, a mandatory school curriculum on the benefits of physical activity and healthy diet and removing all junk food from schools.

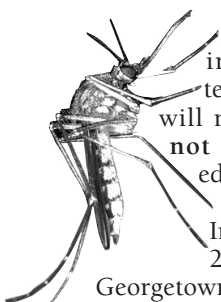
But better child health must begin at home. Parents can follow simple guidelines such as those on the Ministry of Health Promotions HealthyOntario.com website. Suggestions range from having the family eat together to educating yourself on proper diets to getting rid of the sugary drinks kids love.

Making sure your child spends more time playing outside and less time with the video games also helps.

Oh yes, and stop fooling yourself that *your* child isn't overweight.

## Something bugging you?

Send us a letter!



Letters to the editor must include an address and daytime telephone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 200 words and may be edited for content and/or length.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Repatriated Canadians are Canadians

Dear editor,

I must reply to Rein Pater's August 2 letter in which he implies that you have to live, work, and pay taxes in Canada in order to be considered a worthy Canadian citizen.

I know a Canadian mining engineer who was sent to manage a mine in South America for a number of years and to suggest that makes him less of a Canadian in some way is ridiculous.

Many companies who work internationally have representatives based in other lands who remain there for many

years. The company I worked for in England, before I came to Canada, had established sales and service offices in Australia, South Africa and Canada and their employees were not considered to be somehow less than British.

In a more extreme example, my father was born in England and went to India as a young civil engineer to supervise the construction of railway bridges over some of the major rivers. He later taught engineering in India and served as a fairly senior officer in

the Indian army. He lived there for 25 years and was honoured by the British government for his service there. If anyone had questioned his loyalty to Britain they would have been held up to ridicule.

As a final comment, I cannot accept the view that there are some "first-class" Canadian citizens and that there are others who are somehow only "second-class".

J. M. Graham-Smith,  
Georgetown

### Ambassador says thanks

Dear editor,

I would like to thank the Acton BIA, Josey Bonnette, and the Town of Halton Hills for all the kind words and gifts I received recently as Acton's new ambassador.

Thank you to last year's ambassador, Dana Bowman, I hope I'll do as good as you, I'm looking forward to seeing you at McKenzie-Smith Bennett.

A big thank you to the Acton community for buying my breast cancer key chains, I raised \$89. I will be donating the money to the Canadian Cancer Society.

Also thanks to my friend Kim Baker for walking around with me the whole day. I hope everyone had as much fun as we did.

See you at The Acton Fall Fair!

Emily Loewen,  
Acton Leathertown  
Festival Ambassador

Dear editor,

Re: Editorials "Silent majority" too quiet" (July 14) and "Ambitious plan in hands of public" (July 2).

Many of us can sympathize when council decisions seem to be taken with insufficient public consultation. However, we all have a responsibility to be aware of upcoming events that will affect us, and in the case of the downtown median reconstruction plan the Town placed more than one newspaper notification and held several meetings.

The public meeting in the Gallery at the library was well attended. While we will not all agree with council's decision regarding the median there was ample pre-notification of the meeting to allow those interested to make plans to attend and to provide the several councillors there with input. All Ward 3 councillors, and the mayor, were there.

Perhaps the notices placed by the Town to announce public meetings could be clearer—they seem to use the

same format whether tendering for a new snow plow or announcing a public meeting—but generally they do give adequate advance notice.

Our responsibility as citizens to be informed will be even more important during the next term of council. The new council will have the responsibility of developing local plans to deal with the requirements of the provincial government Places to Grow legislation. Places To Grow will impose population growth upon Halton, and the plans our next council put together to deal with the Halton Hills portion of that growth will affect life in Halton Hills for decades.

Town council and staff have a responsibility to create and publicize a process of public participation, and we, as residents, have a responsibility to keep aware of, and become involved in, the planning process if we are to maintain the unique nature of our community

David Adair, Georgetown