

OPINION

www.independentfreepress.com

Phone: 905-873-0301
Fax: 905-873-0398

Bigger is not better

Like too many Canadians, Halton residents are losing the battle of the bulge, placing their health in jeopardy and putting more stress on an already overburdened health-care system.

According to statistics recently released by the Region's health department, 37 per cent of residents are overweight, while another 13 per cent are obese. Even more disturbing are the statistics related to children—usually the most physically-active members of society.

According to the senior research advisor for Halton Region's Children's Services, 13 per cent of five year olds in the region are overweight, while eight per cent are obese. Moving to 15 year olds, 16 per cent are overweight and four per cent are obese.

One quarter of children across Canada are either overweight or obese.

Although what and how much we eat plays a significant role in maintaining a healthy weight, so too does activity—or lack of it.

According to those who study the problem most closely, this is where society is failing its children.

"The vast majority of our kids are not active enough," said Dr. Mark Tremblay, chair of Active Healthy Kids Canada, a non-profit organization advocating for quality, accessible and enjoyable physical activity participation experiences for children and youth.

Tremblay's most damning claim is that Canadians are actually eating less but continuing to get heavier; a sign we are at an all-time high for inactivity.

He believes many children choose sedentary lifestyles—where video gaming becomes their primary activity—because of the environment adults have created for them. As a result, children are developing childhood onset diabetes—one of several health consequences of obesity—at an alarming rate.

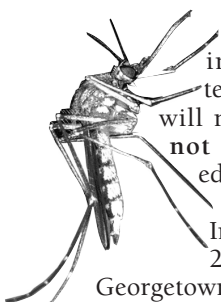
While Tremblay promotes simple spontaneous activities that don't require being driven somewhere, parents counter concerns for personal safety that didn't exist 30 years ago are limiting opportunities for unsupervised physical activity.

If we insist on ignoring the risk of living a sedentary lifestyle, entire generations are going to be doomed to lives of chronic illness and shorter life expectancy.

Still, in a society that markets bigger—homes, cars and hamburgers—as better, we shouldn't be shocked when many don't see the long-term harm in living large.

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.

Mail or drop off:

Independent & Free Press,
280 Guelph St., Unit 29,
Georgetown, ON., L7G 4B1

E-mail:

jmcmghe@independentfreepress.com

THE INDEPENDENT & FREE PRESS

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

Advertising is accepted on the condition that, in the event of a typographical error, that portion of the advertising space occupied by the erroneous item, together with reasonable allowance for signature will not be charged for, but the balance of the advertisement will be paid for at the acceptable rate. In the event of typographical error advertising goods or services at wrong price, goods or services may not be sold. Advertising is merely an offer to sell which may be withdrawn at any time.

Editorial and advertising content of The Independent & Free Press is protected by copyright. Unauthorized use is prohibited.

Price: Store copies 50¢ each; Subscriptions \$26 per year by carrier; \$92.50 per year by mail in Canada; \$130 per year in all other countries. Plus G.S.T.

Second Class Mail Registration Number 6869. The Independent & Free Press is a member of The Canadian Community Newspaper Association and The Ontario Community Newspaper Association.



Steve Nease



STAFF DIRECTORY

Publisher

Ken Nugent

Advertising director

Steve Foreman
(sforeman@independentfreepress.com)

Retail advertising manager

Cindi Campbell
(ccampbell@independentfreepress.com)

Managing editor

John McGhie
(jmcmghe@independentfreepress.com)

Distribution manager

Nancy Geissler
(distribution@independentfreepress.com)

ADVERTISING

Advertising co-ordinator

Jennifer Christie (jchristie@independentfreepress.com)

Retail Sales:

Jennifer Spencer (jspencer@independentfreepress.com)

Adam Spinney (aspinney@independentfreepress.com)

Amy Sykes (features@independentfreepress.com)

Real estate:

Sue Spizziri (realestate@independentfreepress.com)

Classifieds:

Kristie Pells (classified@independentfreepress.com)

ACCOUNTING

Rose Marie Gauthier, Michelle Wimmer

EDITORIAL

Cynthia Gamble: News editor

(cgamble@independentfreepress.com)

Ted Brown: Photography

(tbrown@independentfreepress.com)

Lisa Tallyn: Staff writer

(ltallyn@independentfreepress.com)

Eamonn Maher: Staff writer/sports

(emaher@independentfreepress.com)

PRODUCTION:

Mary Lou Foreman, Kevin Powell,

Shelli Harrison, Dolores Black, Debbie MacDougall

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Recycling plan doesn't go far enough

Dear editor,
This letter is in response to the May 30 article "Region plans major shakeup for trash collection".

Hornby cleans up

Dear editor,
Ninety volunteers with the assistance from Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette, Councillors Bryan Lewis and Joan Robson, cleaned Hornby roadside ditches, parks and creeks. All in all the cleanup brought in nearly 300 bags of garbage plus approximately 2,000 lbs. of tires, mufflers, plywood and many other items.

On behalf of the residents and membership, the executive of Hornby Association of Ratepayers (H.A.R.P.) would like to thank the Town of Halton Hills and their staff for their assistance in planning this event and for permission to use Hornby Park as a staging area.

We would also like to thank sponsors Agram Meats, A&P Georgetown, Hornby General Store, Hornby Glen Golf Course, Maple Lodge Farms, Tim Hortons and Superior Glove for their generous donations.

Thanks to Bahr Saddlery and Recovery House for assisting us again this year. Everyone is welcome to join our crew of volunteers for Hornby Cleanup April 2008.

Cash was found during the cleanup and may be claimed at 905-878-2527 with identification.

Peter Vaughan, event co-ordinator,
Hornby

I strongly believe that Georgetown should address the garbage issue in our community. However, I think that council is overlooking the most important aspect of "going green": that is, our recycling program.

The Greencart program is excellent, but is only supported by a minority of residents—it was suggested that only 17 of 90 carts were currently being used. If the council extends this program we will produce two additional plastic containers for each household, many of which will not be used, and we will be putting an additional truck on the streets producing harmful emissions.

Has council looked into the overall environmental effectiveness of this action?

On the other hand, at this time,

FoodShare appreciates community's support

Dear editor,
Acton FoodShare celebrates the generosity of our community every day.

Our gratitude goes to our "angels" who are actively involved at the centre itself. We are grateful for the support received from the community represented by the guides, scouts, Calvinist cadets, businesses, organizations, schools, churches and individuals. We are also grateful for the food drive helpers and all the wonderful supporters in our community.

A very special thanks to Eileen Dix for her 13 years as treasurer as

our town only accepts plastics for recycling marked with a 1 or a 2. Many other communities, such as Kitchener-Waterloo, recycle all plastics, hard or soft. This includes plastic grocery bags, food wrap, containers, etc. Most of the discarded plastics that our community dumps into our landfill will not decompose during our lifetime.

By recycling all plastics, we would simplify the program for all residents, thereby encouraging participation and avoid adding these items to the landfill.

This would extend the lifespan of our local landfill, while also addressing the larger picture of having a positive effect on the global environment.

Helga Urie, Georgetown

we welcome Carol Clark as our new treasurer.

A very special thanks to Arlene Humphreys for her 11 years as chairperson. Thankfully, both will stay on the board and Arlene will continue as the FoodShare co-ordinator.

A final thanks to our clients for allowing Acton FoodShare to serve them.

The ongoing support of the people in the Acton area is edifying and a sign of our hands-on support for those in present need.

Rev. Robert Bulbrook, chair,
Acton FoodShare