

OPINION

www.independentfreepress.com

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

Slimming down schools

We applaud the Ontario government's action this week to take steps toward eliminating all food and beverages in schools that contain trans fats.

There's an overwhelming body of medical evidence to suggest that today's young people are more likely to struggle with obesity and a host of related health problems.

Levels of obesity among young Canadian children have nearly tripled over the last 25 years.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation estimates consumption of processed trans fat contributes to 30,000-50,000 deaths in Canada every decade.

Being raised in a society where our young people are confronted by the triple enticement of television, video games and the Internet, is it any wonder the end result is an entire generation of less active and, potentially, less healthy citizens?

While the province does not and should not exercise control over how parents choose to raise their children, it has a responsibility to ensure that publicly-funded institutions, such as schools, do promote a healthier lifestyle.

"Our message is clear: a lifetime of good health starts with healthy practices in childhood. Healthier choices for students mean healthier habits later in life," said Health Promotion Minister Margaret Best.

What better place is there than our schools to introduce a 'curriculum' of eating right and remaining active. Poor eating and exercise habits established at a young age become much harder to break as teens graduate to adulthood.

By passing legislation this week that requires schools to drop trans fat from cafeterias, vending machines and tuck shops — some foods that naturally contain small amounts of trans fat, such as beef and milk, as well as special food event days will still be allowed in schools — the provincial government has taken a proactive step to address the alarming rate of obesity in our children.

What do you think?

Below are the results of our most recent online poll. For the current poll go to www.independentfreepress.com

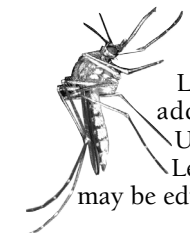
Halton Hills is experiencing a growing seniors population. Are there enough activities/facilities to serve them?

Yes (23%)

No (77%)

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.

E-mail:

jmcghie@independentfreepress.com

Mail or drop off:

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

THE INDEPENDENT & FREE PRESS

The Independent & Free Press is published Wednesday and Friday and is one of several Metroland Media Group Ltd. community newspapers. Editorial and advertising content of The Independent & Free Press is protected by copyright. Unauthorized use is prohibited.



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

(jmcghie@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)

Katie Borg (kborg@independentfreepress.com)

Brendan Louth (blouth@independentfreepress.com)

Amy Sykes (features@independentfreepress.com)

Andrea Lefebvre (alefebvre@independentfreepress.com)

Real estate:

Sue Spizziri (realestate@independentfreepress.com)

Classifieds:

Kristie Pells (classified@independentfreepress.com)

ACCOUNTING

Rose Marie Gauthier, Michelle McEachern

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

Speeding is just part of the problem

Dear editor,

Reading about the Halton Regional Police Services "war on speeders" presentation to Halton Hills council left me bemused. As reported, one of the many actions being taken is to dress radar equipped police officers as construction workers. Wow! It looks like we're a fake cowboy and a biker away from having the Village People patrol our streets.

Now I say this in jest, but I don't find this subject amusing. Actually, the whole subject of road safety is a serious one where I find proper analytics and sound judgment to be lacking. Many, if not most experts on the subjects of road safety who don't have a vested interest in collecting speeding revenues would say that driver error and distractions are the leading cause of accidents. Speed is usually, at best, a secondary factor.

Yet, police in Halton will continue to focus on finding drivers on rural roads driving at the 85th percentile speed, yet ignoring far more serious offences. Considering that most of the 2007 collisions occurred during Nov. and Dec., shouldn't we focus on awareness and preparedness for winter driving conditions? Or shouldn't we focus on pushing for a ban on hand held cell phones as was recently done in Nova Scotia and Quebec? Just looking at Halton's own stats should suggest that the real problem lies elsewhere, since we handed out 16% more tickets yet saw collisions increase by 10%.

Remembering the tragedies that have occurred on Halton roads recently, I'd like to see more focus on our impaired driving campaign. In the eight years that I've

lived here, I have yet to encounter a single RIDE program.

Halton residents may be wise to remember that we just witnessed a double digit realty tax hike, a good chunk going towards a similar increase towards Police Services. So here's a headline I'd like to

Business people take time out for the kids

Dear editor,

Recently students at Stewarttown Middle School participated in a Career Day. It was a phenomenal success due to the overwhelming support from members of the local community.

We would like to thank the following who so willingly gave their time to meet with students sharing their experiences and knowledge about their professions:

Jason Turner from Turner Automotive
Claudio Bezina from Capina Restaurant

Fabio Dirisio and Nick Noorzad from Sheridan College

Lea Gothe, Sylvia Bragg-Smith and

Youngsters take initiative to clean up road

Dear editor,

Finally the snow has melted and we can all walk and play outside again. The first look at all the garbage once hidden by the white blanket along 15 Sideroad, took the smile from our faces.

BUT I am proud to see that three young boys care so much about our town— Chase O'Dor, 8, Logan O'Dor, 3 and Vincent Fisher, 9— spent two hours walking up and down the road collecting five black garbage bags of litter, because

see: "Citizens declare war on too much bureaucracy, poor decisions, and high taxes". Maybe then, we can have a serious discussion on road safety.

Rui Pita,
Georgetown

Rapi Maan from Adamson Spa and Salon

Jeff Wilkinson and Amy Douglas from Left of Center Photography Services

Doug Hannah from Air Canada
Constable Chris Borak from the

Halton Regional Police Service
Constable Omar Ktabi from the RCMP

Jill Somerville from CAA Travel Services

Dr. Heather White from Britannia Animal Hospital

Dr. Nigel Phipps, Diane Parsons,
Cathy Brydie and Natalie Tuitman

Jane Jolly
Stewarttown School teacher

they wanted to.

I have to acknowledge St Catherine School. Ms. Cooke has taught and instilled into my sons' heads (O'Dor) the seriousness of pollution and looking after our earth.

It came at the perfect time, as the GreenCart collections started. It was lovely to see such young kids care and take the time to stop and clean up before hitting the park for a nice cold juice

L.Edwards, Georgetown