

# Summer program helps parents, youngsters

While many schools in the county lie empty with only a caretaking crew in the halls, Ontario School for the Deaf remained active with summer programs for residence counsellors and a pre-school program. The pre-school program consists of three one-week sessions with hearing-handicapped children. In all there have been 64 parents and 48 hearing-

handicapped children attending one-week sessions. The program is in its third year at the Milton school and offers help for both parents and children. The children have the opportunity of playing and learning with other children with the same handicap and about the same age. The program is designed to reinforce linguistic skills, give

children the opportunity to be with others the same age and with the same handicap, and generally allows the children to take part in what program director Mary Monette describes as a "painless learning situation".

**Routine**  
The children each receive a one half hour tutoring session each day, play in group activities, work with art, glue and cutouts and also have the chance to play on playground equipment with swings, slides and other outdoor activities designed to assist muscle development.

Miss Monette explained the program is game-oriented with the accent on having fun and doing things. Each year the number of parents attending the school increases.

Assistant superintendent Roy Wollaston noted there are more fathers at the school this year than ever before.

The program allows the parents to see what is available in a residential school setting and allows them to see how their child will react with other children. Probably one of the most significant factors is the parents realize more readily that they are not alone and that other parents deal with the same problems they face with hearing handicapped children.

**Live in residence**  
During the week-long sessions, parents live in residence with their children at the school. Miss Monette suggested the co-operation she and her colleagues receive from parents is excellent.

Some of the fathers took holiday time to come, some who could not arrange holidays took time off without pay, while others worked overtime to make up the time they would miss from work.

Parents attend lectures each day, work with children in nursery school situations and chat with each other about mutual problems. Parents and children attend from a number of cities and towns in the province.

Not all of the children will attend the Milton school. Some will attend the Milton OSD, others may attend a new regional school for the deaf in London or Belleville and some will attend day classes in their own cities while they continue to live at home.

Five cities in Ontario now have classes in their conventional school for the marginal hearing handicapped cases. The big advantage in that type of school for the student is that he or she can continue to live at home and will have no need to be sent to a residential school.

In each of the three schools at London, Milton and Belleville there is a team of travelling teachers who visit pre-school children who are unable to attend a nursery during the school year.

**Day nurseries**  
In centres where the population is great enough, day nurseries are provided for pre-school youngsters. Because of the handicap it is important early attention is given to linguistic training.

For those youngsters who live in areas too far away from large urban centres, there is a travelling teacher program. Each of the three schools runs such a program.

Mr. Wollaston pointed out that where it was impossible to take the child to school, the school is being taken to the child. Four teachers from OSD Milton alone travel about 70,000 miles a year

visiting youngsters and tutoring. At the beginning of last year there were about 45 youngsters on the program and by the end of the year that number had jumped to about 65 for the four Milton-based teachers. Teachers schedule visits with the youngsters about once every two weeks and the sessions last about two to two and a half hours. Teachers spend time tutoring the youngster and advising parents

on how they can carry out lessons or homework in the interim between visits.

OSD superintendent Kennedy explained a move is underway to keep handicapped children at home, as opposed to living in residential schools as much as possible. County boards of education have set up courses for the deaf in several areas. Currently two classes are being held at Lakeshore School in Oak-

ville. **County boards**  
As urban centres grow, the number of classes for the deaf will increase and deaf education will tend to be decentralized. Schools for the deaf assist county boards in setting up courses in supervision and recruitment of teaching staff. Answering a charge by Dr. Graeme Wallace in his report, Canadian Study of Hard of

Hearing and Deaf, Mr. Kennedy said well qualified staff were available.

According to Superintendent Kennedy and other officials at the school the travelling program, the one-week summer course at the school and the pre-school nursery programs carried out in five Ontario cities are all moves to improve the level of education services for the hearing handicapped in the province.



SUSAN HUNTER appears very attentive as teacher Liz Mark goes through a series of skills and activities designed for hearing handicapped children. Instructors work to determine the child's hearing level and offer help with linguistic skills.



PRE-SCHOOL classes for hearing handicapped held at Ontario School for the Deaf, Milton are a happy time for these youngsters. Youngsters at the pre-school sessions enjoy games with each other and their parents and OSD staff. (Photos by B. Burtt)



WHEN IT COMES to painting, hearing handicapped youngsters think it's just great. Kim Irvine, Michael Lemay, teacher Sharon Stanley, Tina Van Every, Edward Rustling and a parent Mrs. Cathy Finlayson take part in a painting session at the nursery school run for pre-school hearing handicapped youngsters.

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