

# Program is 'finally' launched for deaf with mental health problems

By **LISA CARTWRIGHT**  
*The Champion*

Deaf and hard-of-hearing youths with mental health problems now have a place to go to receive the help they need from people who understand.

On Tuesday, Doug Brown, executive director of the Children's Assessment and Treatment Centre, officially launched PAH, which means 'finally' in American Sign Language (ASL).

PAH is a three-year pilot project that's being funded by the Ministry of Community and Social Services and works in partnership with the Bob Rumball Associations for the Deaf, the Griffin Centre and the Children's Assessment and Treatment Centre.

Brad Saunders from the Bob Rumball Associations said members of the deaf community have wanted a program like this for many years. "There are some people in the deaf community who have been advocating it forever. We first met with the ministry six years ago in May."

Mr. Saunders said while there are programs to help children with mental health problems, there aren't any designed specifically for the deaf community.

"For the first time in Canadian history, the government recognizes the need for mental health services for people (in the deaf community)," said Carrie Cardwell, one of three staff members for PAH.

Ms Cardwell said all children, regardless of whether they hear or not, have the same



Photo by LISA CARTWRIGHT

The Dancing Hands, a troupe made up of deaf and hard-of-hearing students, performed its rendition of Rock around the Clock during the launch of PAH Tuesday.

problems. What makes it different is that many therapists don't understand the needs of the deaf child, she said.

And that is what makes PAH unique.

Staff members at PAH are either hard-of-hearing or deaf and are able to communicate with the children in whatever language they are most comfortable with.

Using programs tailored to the individual's needs, PAH helps both the child and his parents. The other problem the community faces is the lack of resources for deaf and hard-of-hearing children and their families.

PAH is available for children from birth

to 18 years old. Clients must have mental health issues and either live in Halton, Peel or Dufferin or attend the Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf.

## ✓ Aug. trial date set in alleged welfare fraud

The trial of a Campbellville couple charged with welfare fraud and perjury has been set for August 2.

Frances and Tibor Nagy made a brief appearance in Ontario Court (provincial division) in Milton Monday to set the trial date.

It's alleged the 60-year-old man and 59-year-old woman defrauded social assistance of \$22,897 from March 1997 to June 1999.

During that time, the couple allegedly received benefits while working and failed to report the employment or income.

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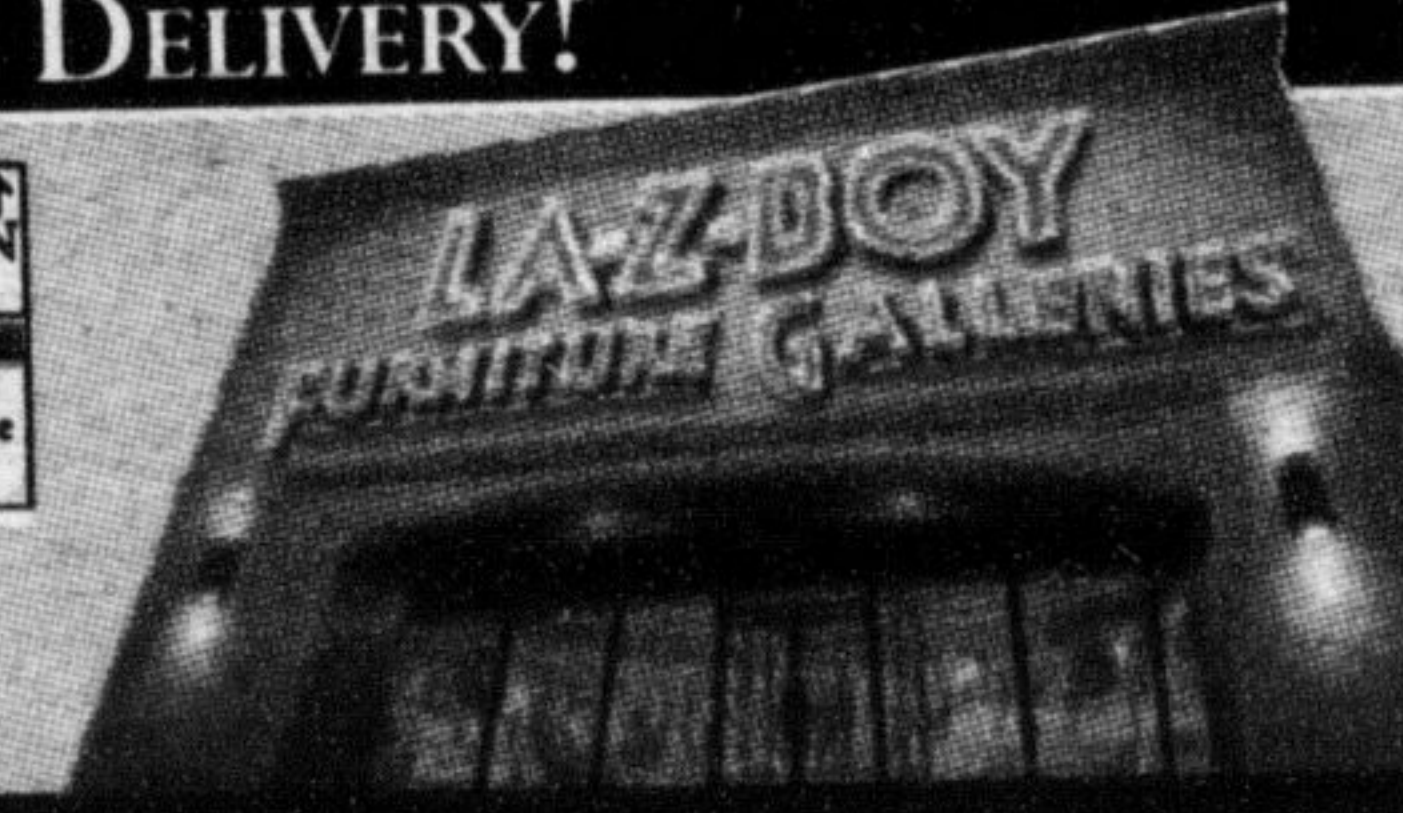
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