

Milton children's dental health is the worst in the region, according to regional report

By **JASON MISNER**

The Champion

Milton had the highest percentage of elementary school-aged children in the region last year with non-urgent dental needs like loose fillings or gingivitis.

And Halton Hills wasn't far behind.

A report released to the Region's health and social services committee earlier this month showed that 16,767 Halton students in kindergarten and grades 2, 4, 6 and 8 were screened in 2002, and the percentage of kids with non-urgent dental needs was 5.55, or

about 930 kids.

Specifically, 1,609 Milton students were screened and health officials found 7.33 per cent of them – or about 117 kids – had non-urgent dental conditions, nearly two percentage points higher than the regional average.

Of the 2,411 screened in Halton Hills, 6.97 per cent – or about 168 kids – had non-urgent dental needs.

Of the 5,870 screened in Burlington, 5.33 per cent – or about 312 kids – had non-urgent dental needs; and of the 6,877 screened in Oakville, 4.83 per cent – or about 332 kids – had non-urgent dental needs.

All elementary school students in Halton are screened every

year.

Dr. Robert Hawkins, a public health dentist with the Region, said there's no definitive reason for the higher-than-average number of kids with non-urgent dental needs in Milton and Halton Hills, and noted assessing these kinds of factors weren't part of the screening report.

But a key contributing factor is likely lack of adequate access to get dental care, he said.

"Higher access to care might not be so easy in Milton and Halton Hills," he said, noting it's "a cause for concern."

He said there could be transportation barriers that make it difficult to get to a dentist. For example, there is limited bus service in Milton and none in Halton Hills.

Dr. Hawkins also said the location of dentists in the two municipalities could be a hindrance.

Perhaps some families living in the rural areas may not have access to a vehicle or bus to get to a dentist's office that isn't within reasonable walking distance, he said.

There are 18 dentists in Milton, 27 in Halton Hills, 112 in Oakville and 91 in Burlington.

Financial assistance programs available

The Region has established a number of financial assistance programs for families in need that don't have appropriate dental coverage. They include a program for kids 14 years of age under called Children in Need of Treatment (CINOT). Funding is split 50-50 between the Region and the Province and a family must apply and qualify for subsidy.

For more information about the programs, call the health department at (905) 826-6000.

Meanwhile, the Region isn't sure when it will have ready its report detailing whether Milton's well water should be fluoridated and the process required to do it.

"A timeline hasn't been established," Dr. Hawkins said.

Originally it was anticipated to be ready in the spring but was postponed because the health department was busy dealing with SARS. The hope was to have it ready perhaps this month but that won't happen.

(Water fluoridation wasn't part of the recent screening report's findings.)

A report released by the health department last October showed a link between a higher prevalence of tooth decay among kids in Milton – on average the highest in Halton – and non-fluoridated water.

Some 33,000 Milton residents are on well-based systems that aren't fluoridated.

In the mid-'70s there was a referendum that asked residents if they wanted their water fluoridated and the majority said no.

Jason Misner can be reached at jmisner@miltoncanadian-champion.com.

Toronto man killed in crash on Steeles Ave.

A Toronto man is dead after he lost control of the car he was driving and hit a hydro pole on Steeles Avenue Sunday afternoon.

Reza Maljeh, 43, was pronounced dead at the scene just after 3:30 p.m. He was driving a 2002 Ford Thunderbird convertible eastbound on Steeles Avenue, west of Peru Road, when the vehicle crossed a set of train tracks and became airborne, Halton Regional Police said.

The driver lost control of the car and it left the road, colliding with a wooden hydro pole, police said. A female passenger was taken to Milton District Hospital where she was treated for minor injuries and released.

The vehicle caused guy wires to make contact with live hydro wires and a small fire erupted, cutting off power to the area, police said. Hydro crews quickly resolved the hydro outage.

Steeles Avenue between Tremaine Road and Industrial Drive was closed for five-and-a-half hours while the Regional Traffic Bureau investigated the cause of the collision. Police said speed may have been a factor. It was the 11th death on regional roads in Halton this year. Any witnesses are asked to contact Det. Const. Paul Davies at (905) 825-4747, ext. 5056.



TOYOTA RACING DAYS

Fun for the whole pit-crew.



Corolla CE
LEASE FOR
\$219 PER MONTH FOR 48 MONTHS WITH \$2,110 DOWN
FREIGHT AND P.D.E. INCLUDED

\$17,300 MSRP

- 1.8 Litre, 4-cylinder, 130 hp, DOHC, 16-valve, VVT-i engine • Air conditioning • AM/FM Stereo with 4 speakers
- Power locks and mirrors • Keyless entry • 60/40 Split rear seat • Dual stage driver & passenger airbags
- Tilt steering • Outside temperature gauge • 15" wheels • 5-speed manual transmission
- Lease for an additional \$14.12 per month and get automatic transmission
- Fuel consumption: Hwy 5.3L/100km (53mpg) / City 7.1L/100km (40mpg)**

3.9%
PURCHASE
FINANCING

4.9%
PURCHASE
FINANCING

Camry SE
LEASE FOR
\$299 PER MONTH FOR 48 MONTHS WITH \$4,172 DOWN
FREIGHT AND P.D.E. INCLUDED

\$26,000 MSRP

- 2.4 Litre, 4-cylinder, 157 hp, DOHC, 16-valve, VVT-i engine • 4-speed automatic transmission with overdrive • AM/FM CD Cassette with 6 speakers • Air conditioning • Power windows, locks and mirrors • Cruise control • Keyless entry • 60/40 split folding rear seat • Leather wrapped steering wheel and shift knob • 16" aluminum alloy wheels • Aluminum dash accents and illuminated instrumentation • Engine immobilizer • Tilt steering • Rear spoiler • Fog lamps
- Fuel consumption: Hwy 6.9L/100km (41MPG) / City 10.2L/100km (28mpg)

5.9%
PURCHASE
FINANCING



Matrix
LEASE FOR
\$259 PER MONTH FOR 48 MONTHS WITH \$3,688 DOWN
FREIGHT AND P.D.E. INCLUDED

\$21,025 MSRP

- 1.8 Litre, 4-cylinder, 130 hp, DOHC, 16-valve, VVT-i engine • Air conditioning • AM/FM Stereo CD with 4 speakers • 16" alloy wheels • Power windows, locks & mirrors • Cruise control • Keyless entry • 60/40 split rear seat • Leather wrapped steering wheel • Tilt steering • 5-speed manual transmission
- Lease for an additional \$15.41 per month and get automatic transmission
- Fuel consumption: Hwy 6.0L/100km (47mpg) / City 7.7L/100km (37mpg)**

5.9%
PURCHASE
FINANCING

NOW OPEN OUR NEW TOYOTA TRUCK CENTRE IS NOW OPEN.

If you're in the market for a new truck, come & test drive one of Milton Toyota's great trucks at our exclusive new centre located next door to Milton Toyota.



Highlander



Tacoma



Tundra



Rav 4

& Many More

NOW OPEN

MILTON TOYOTA

400 Steeles Avenue 905 875-1700

www.miltontoyota.com