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A METROLAND COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER VOL. 146 NO. 53 TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2005 \$1.00 (GST included) 48 PAGES "Using Communication to Build Better Communities"



They're off!

Competitors dash off to start the one-lap, seven-eighths-of-a-mile run for kids Saturday afternoon at Mohawk Racetrack. It was part of the Giddy Up & Gallop fundraising event in support of the Children's Wish Foundation. The winner of the race was Todd Cambell (far right), 14, of Milton.

Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Crystal meth use will likely rise in Halton, health officials predict

GTA trend will likely hit region

By **MELANIE HENNESSEY**
The Champion

Health and social service providers in Halton say they expect to see an increase in the rate local residents are using the dangerous illegal drug crystal meth.

This is one of the findings of a recent informal scan conducted by the Region's public health nurses to determine the scope of crystal meth

— formally called crystal methamphetamine — use in Halton, resulting from a concern raised at a recent regional committee meeting and the media attention the drug has received lately.

Halton Medical Officer of Health Dr. Bob Nosal reported to the health and social services committee Thursday that the majority of professionals questioned currently aren't

seeing much crystal meth use in the region, but there's a general feeling that they expect an increase.

He said he thinks this sentiment is largely based on what these individuals are hearing and seeing from their counterparts in Hamilton and Toronto, since trends usually spread.

"If things (trends) happen in the GTA, they tend to start in the bigger centres," Dr. Nosal said.

Nurses consulted with school staff, addictions treatment staff, communi-

ty youth workers, emergency room staff, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, the Canadian Mental Health Association and relevant Regional program staff to gather the information.

The informal survey found that service providers in Oakville who work with high-risk youth are sensing an increase in crystal meth use.

And throughout Halton, Dr. Nosal's report said, "Concern was noted for youth that attend raves,

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