

OPINION

Time to watch out for kiddies

In just 11 days, nearly 80,000 students will return to class within Halton's public and Catholic schools and our town's streets will become noticeably more chaotic.

School buses will begin their daily routes and school crossing zones will become active intersections where pedestrians and motorists must co-exist.

According to Young Drivers of Canada, more than 4,000 children are hit by cars each year while playing outdoors or walking to school.

As drivers, the new school year reminds us to re-familiarize ourselves with safe driving practices. Young Drivers of Canada offers the following advice to all drivers as we approach the start of another school year.

School zones/school bus safety

- Look well ahead to spot school buses and school zone signs.
- Reduce speed in school zones (40 km/h) and wait for children to cross completely before proceeding.
- If you are driving your children to school drop them off in a safe area away from traffic (most schools now have designated drop off zones).
- Stop at least 20 m behind a school bus when the upper red lights begin to flash.
- Motorists travelling in both directions must stop for the school bus except if the road is divided by a median.
- Do not proceed until the school bus 'stop sign' is closed and the red lights stop flashing.
- Use the ground viewing technique by scanning under parked vehicles for the feet of children approaching traffic.
- Lane change early to make room for children on bicycles, skateboards or roller blades.

In the car

- Child seats — children under the age of 13 are safest in the back seat away from passenger air bags, and it's the law. Have the correct type of seat that corresponds to your child's weight and size. A booster seat should be used for a child weighing 18 to 36 kg (40 to 80 pounds) and less than 145 cm tall (four-foot-nine). The child may be ready to use a seat belt alone once they exceed either one of the above criteria.
- Avoid driver distractions such as using cell phones, eating or drinking, and personal grooming which impact on how effectively you drive. Give items such as books or toys to children to occupy their attention so that your focus is on the road.



ReadersWrite

E-mail your letters to miltoned@haltonsearch.com.

Lack of activities for teens in town will lead to big problems in future

DEAR EDITOR:

I have been mulling over the Census data that Statistics Canada presented last month on Milton being the fastest growing community for ages zero to six, and I have been contemplating its long-term implications.

We are all well aware of the current effect — the strain on the child-care

and education systems. Just visit any new school and count the portables.

I wonder if any of our community leaders are considering the impact this will have 10 years from now. We can project that at that time the Census will show that Milton has the fastest growing teenage population in the country.

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MyView

Trip to the States a major pain in the neck — literally

Have you ever had a stiff neck that is so bad you can't turn right or left without yelping in pain? Has the pain ever been so severe that you are forced to sit upright in bed because your neck is so firmly fixed in one spot that resting your head on a pillow is impossible?

That happened to me while trying to enjoy a much-anticipated 25th wedding anniversary trip with my ever-patient husband. We were just three days into our California/Nevada dream vacation when I developed an acute neck pain. It was not the garden-variety type of pulled muscle.

No, this was something more sinister that did not respond to extra-strength Tylenol. My husband knew something was wrong when I simply stared straight ahead while in the car. I couldn't even glance in his direction.

"Are you okay?" he asked.

"I need to stop at a drugstore and pick up some Robaxacet," I said, explaining that my neck was locked.

My hubby has always gently kidded me about packing every pharmaceutical item in my carry-on bag for those just-in-case emergencies, but alas there was no Robaxacet. Little did I know that this readily-available muscle reliever in Canada is by prescription-only in the U.S.

"Try Aleve," said the pharmacist.

I took two of these painkillers and waited for the spasm to subside. It did not. Indeed, it was worse. I wondered how to tell my husband that I needed to either a.) Go home or; b.) Visit a hospital.



Jill Davis

We were in the City of Lost Wages and it was smack in the middle of a heat wave.

Usually I love hot weather, but not when I can't move my neck and felt feverish. It was so hot (110 F) that the soles of my sandals began sticking to the sidewalk while waiting for a light to change.

Fortunately my husband has a sense of humour and managed to keep me smiling as I sat waiting to see a doctor at an urgent-care clinic.

This MD decided that I could not leave the clinic until I could at least move my head in one direction. If you have ever tried to cross a street in Las Vegas you will understand why it is imperative that individuals

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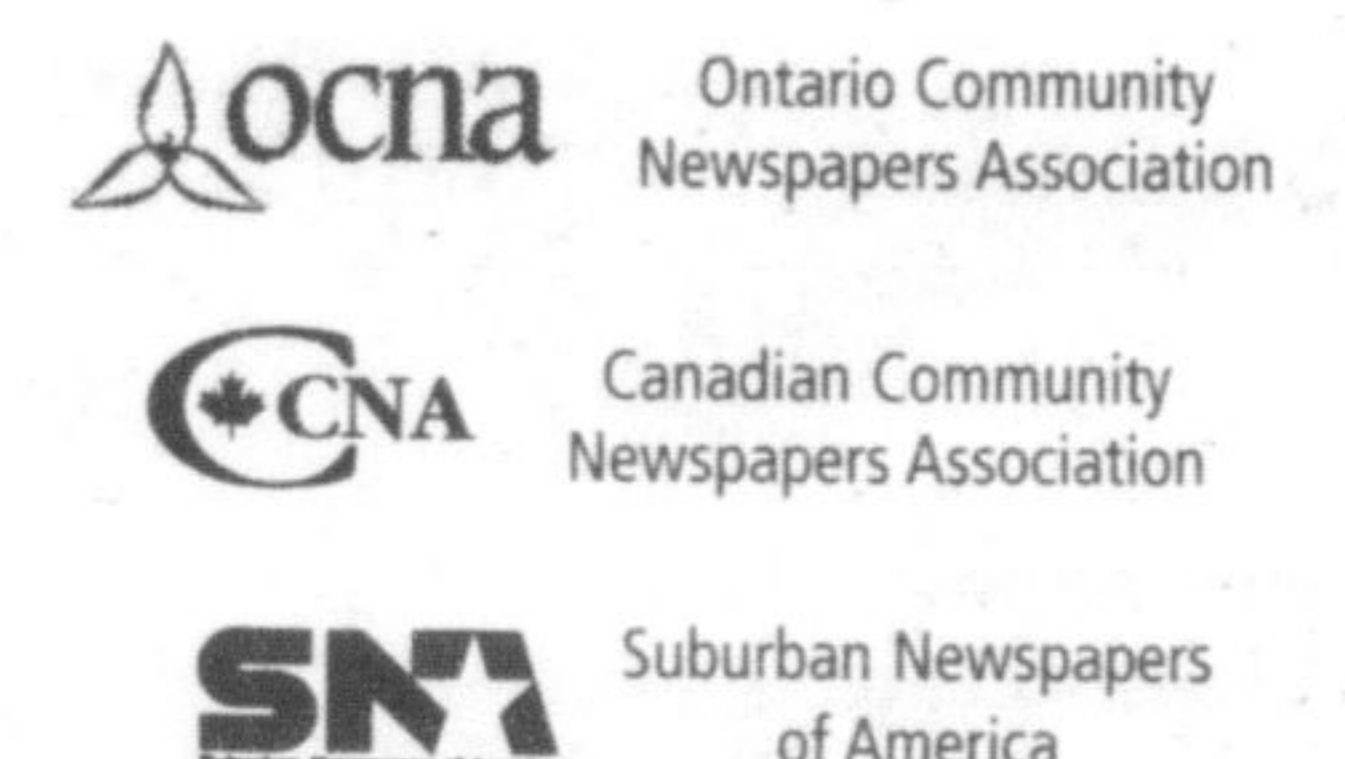
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