

Children's Aid Society needs more foster parents for Halton

By Kelly Frank
The Children's Aid Society of Halton is in a state of urgency. According to executive director Ron Coupland, never has the need for foster care parents been more critical, in Oakville and the entire region.

"It's becoming almost a point of alarm for us," Coupland confessed in a recent telephone interview. "Halton has never had this problem before but, in this current year we're really facing a crisis," he added. Coupland says that the number of foster care families has decreased from 115 to 85 in the past 18 months, while the need for more care is growing. And he is afraid the trend will continue.

Coupland is not sure what has happened but, it's apparent to him that local families have become discouraged about offering their services to loveless children. "I don't know whether people are finding it's just too expensive to look after children or whether with modern living they're finding that looking after themselves is all they can handle," he commented. Coupland adds if the notion is that people are assured the CAS can handle its wards on their own, they're wrong. The

society is feeling inflation's pinch and is operating on a reduced budget this year. Recently the CAS was forced to close its only 24-hour home in Oakville, forcing seven children to move out of the area. "The nuts and bolts of it is that for older children (ages 11 to 15) there are fewer and fewer places for them to live in their own communities. They're being placed in group homes

outside of the region," he said. Coupland stresses that group home care is adequate, but not ideal. His biggest concern is having to move the wards in the first place. "It's another major disruption in an already disrupted life. These kids are emotionally unbalanced. They've never known the love

and caring of home life," he explained. The CAS is currently planning a regional campaign to encourage families to consider foster parenting. Coupland predicts that by mid-August through September, information booths will be evident in local malls. He personally encourages foster parenting, calling

it a challenge and a rewarding one. "It's a fulfilling obligation although the experience can be difficult," he admits. For the foster parent who offers love but receives rejection, it can be a frustrating, heart-breaking experience, according to Coupland. He explains that it's important for foster par-

ents to form their own network of support for new parents. "New foster parents are enlisted in a training period so that they'll know what to expect. It's hard to learn about managing a child who has not grown up in their own home but, we find other foster parents are our greatest asset," he said.

Coupland admits that developing the trust and love of a child who has never known love is the hardest battle and he guesses that it's parents' fear of failure that may be keeping them from offering their services to foster care. "Foster parents are afraid to give knowing it is the very challenge that they may not get anywhere. But, they

have to remember that these kids sometimes grow up in a pretty frightening world, a world in which they've learned not to respond to anything. To them, adults sometimes seem more frightening than friendly," he explained. Yet Coupland persists it is the very challenge that they may not get anywhere. But, they

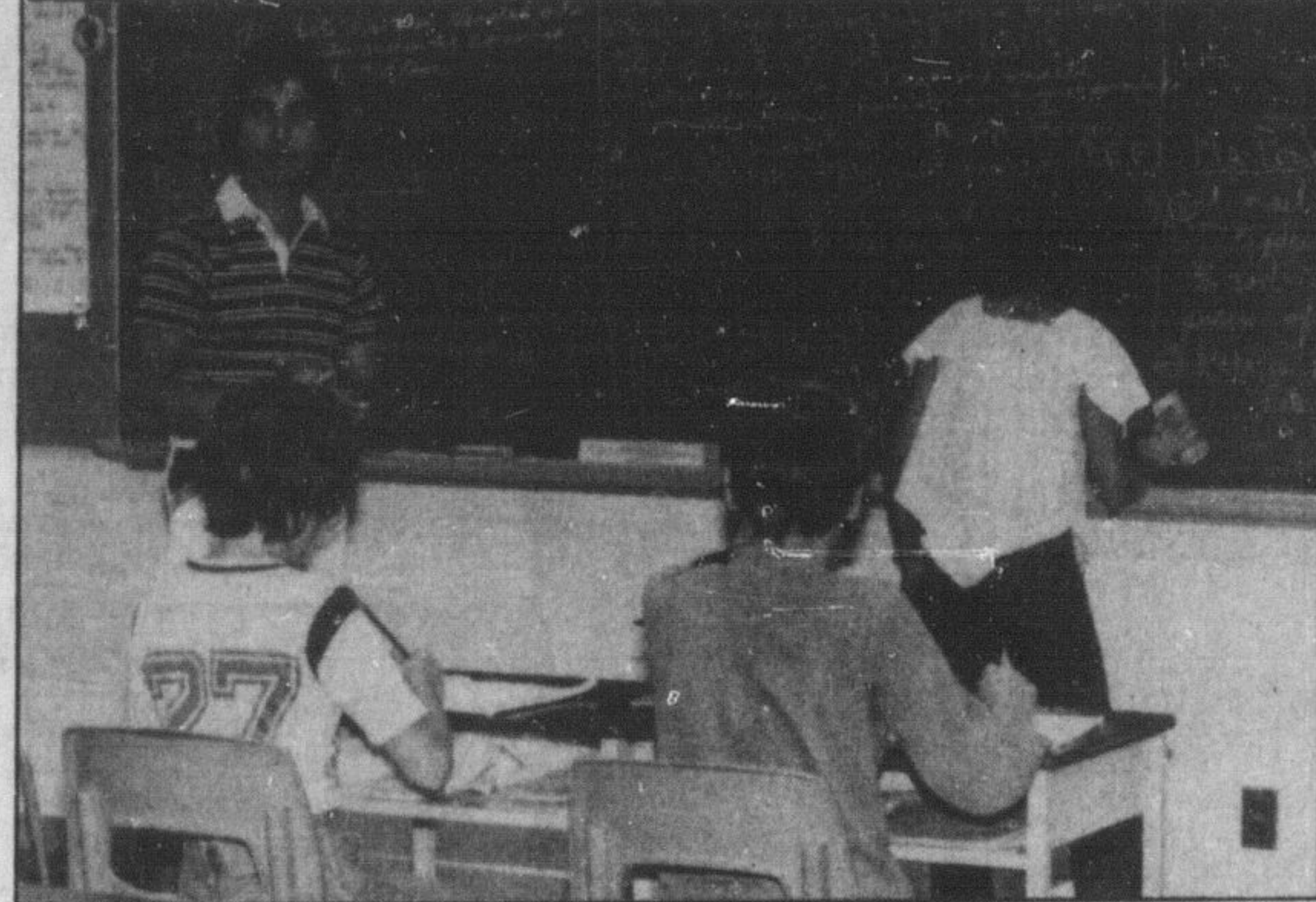
School not out for some

By Jane Muller
While most children are enjoying a fun-filled summer vacation others have been busy improving language arts and math skills at W.I. Dick School.

Mr. Ross has taught, math during the five-week summer school, starting the same year the classes were offered in Milton. Prior to this, local students requiring extra

education were transported to Georgetown or Burlington. Mr. Vidler explains classes are kept small to allow for the necessary individual attention students require.

A total of 27 children are enrolled in the language arts program and are divided into two separate classes. The 31 math students are also divided into two groups.



A total of 58 Grade 6, 7, and 8 students will be spending their mornings in the classroom until Friday, Aug. 7 when the summer will be theirs to enjoy.

The elementary summer school offers one and a half hour classes aimed at improving language arts and math skills.

"We gear programs to the individual," said Pete Vidler, Halton Board of Education Language Co-ordinator.

"Teachers can recommend students but it is basically a parental decision."

According to summer school instructor Fred Ross, the school provides supplementary education in the form of remedial exercises. This is the third year

Strengthening weaknesses. Elementary summer school may not be for everyone but those who attend are being helped to reach a better understanding of math and language arts in preparation for the coming school year. Fred Ross leads this math class at W.I. Dick school where he teaches physical education and health the rest of the year.

Main-Brown shops get the green light

A small commercial building at the intersection of Main and Brown Sts. has been given the green light to proceed by Milton council.

The site, the former Milton Inn property, has caused some concerns in that it will be 14 parking spaces short of the minimum required in the Milton Official Plan. Milton Planner Bob Zsadanyi said he was very pleased with the semi-mall style facade the building will have,

saying it is perfect for the theme of Miltowne Centre.

He said the building was being recommended because the developer had agreed to pay \$1,000 each for the 14 parking spaces he will be short.

Access to the building will be off Brown St. beside the Post Office.

Mr. Zsadanyi said that while it is common practice to accept money in lieu of parking spaces, he would like the amount being charged to be increased.

"It is also appropriate to raise at this time the concern of staff for the appropriateness of the amount of cash-in-lieu payment as well as the appropriateness for the need of a thorough parking study for the town," he said.

Councillor Blanche Hinton said as far as she is concerned there is no parking problem or need for a study.

"We have lots of parking... it's just that people are too lazy to walk to it," she said.

Trailer permit gets turned down

Milton has turned down an application from a woman who wanted to put a house trailer on her parents' land to keep an eye on things while the parents are away.

The trailer application was for a 12 by 60 foot home to be placed on the east side of Guelph Line adjacent to the south side of Dad's Restaurant.

Building and Zoning Director Ray Weido said the application for the trailer noted the purpose was to watch the other house on the property and to take care of a dog. It was also noted the rent

would go to supplement the income of the parents.

"In the past, the town has supported trailer permit applications for farm help on a bona fide agricultural operation, however this does not appear to be the case in this instance."

"The applicant's parents only own approximately one-half acre in an area that has been extensively severed in the past."

"There are a number of single family dwellings in the vicinity and the placement of the trailer on any one of these properties would

detract from the area even if the trailer was properly landscaped," Mr. Weido said.

Mr. Weido explained it has been town policy to discourage the use of trailers as second dwellings, and if this application is allowed, a dangerous precedent will be set whereby other residents in the area and in fact the entire town could come forward with similar applications and expect favorable responses."

Councillors agreed with Mr. Weido and turned down the application.

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BY **JACKIE VERDURMEN**

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True, the house should present a favourable appearance - mowed law, trimmed shrubs, clean windows and no obvious indications of neglect, but it's rare when a large financial undertaking will bring more than its cost in the final selling price.

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