

Photo by STEPHEN UHRANEY
Milton Mayor Gord Krantz and friends officially kicked off Block Parent Week Friday at town hall by raising the organization's flag. October is also Block Parent Month. From left to right are members Cynthia Harris, Lyn Wynch, Dana Uhrig, Grace Irci, Mayor Krantz and Susan Robertson with her son one-year-old Gregory. The children in front are four-year-old Ian Robertson (left) and five-year-old Julian Irci.

Block Parents geared to boost sagging numbers

October is the month to honour Block Parents, but unfortunately they're a dying breed.

Members of the local organization are hoping Block Parent Month will attract the support it urgently needs.

Support for the program has been steadily decreasing over the last few years. About 600 Block Parents are currently available in the Milton area.

A Block Parent sign in the window lets children in distress know that someone is home to provide a safe haven.

Fewer people at home during the day is one reason for the decline in membership. Another reason, according to Susan Robertson of the organization, is that current Block Parents don't take the time to fill out forms needed to renew their memberships.

Upon joining and after every five years, members must be checked by police to ensure they are suitable for the program. The process is confidential.

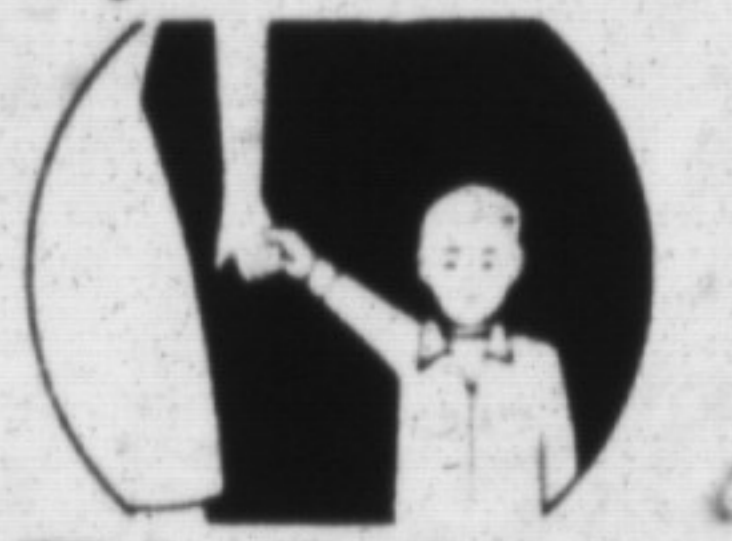
Endorsed by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, the program receives assistance from the police department, municipal government and the board of education.

The Town of Milton provides a small grant for the local organization, as does the Halton Safety Council. Other money comes from fundraising activities.

All Block Parents must be at least 16 years of age and their responsibilities include offering children help in dangerous or frightening situations, phoning police or home for children in distress and assisting police by reporting suspicious or criminal activity in the neighbourhood.

As well as Block Parents, the organization is in need of volunteers for its steering committee.

For more information, call Susan Robertson at 878-8568.



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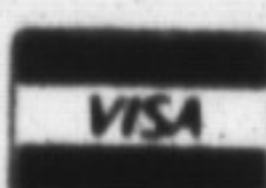
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