

# DRUG AWARENESS

## Ontario residents want warning labels about possible health hazards on alcoholic beverages

By **BARB JOY**  
Special to the Champion

A recent opinion poll by the Addiction Research Foundation shows a growing number of Ontario residents favour warning labels on bottles of alcoholic beverages.

In favouring warning labels on bottles of alcoholic beverages, Ontario residents are moving toward the U.S.

According to a recent Addiction Research Foundation opinion poll, this is the one item showing a definite trend. In many other aspects relating to alcohol consumption, results of this poll veered little from results of surveys of Ontarians taken in the past year.

While some have seen the labels on American bottles, the increased support for them came at a time when U.S. legislation came into effect. It was a move that probably sparked discussion in many Canadian quarters, noted the Addiction Research Foundation which released the poll.

Ontario residents thought the government's advertising campaign against drinking should be increased or remain the same. They thought more effort should be made to keep drunken customers from being served and they were fairly evenly split on whether the minimum legal drinking age of 19 should be raised.

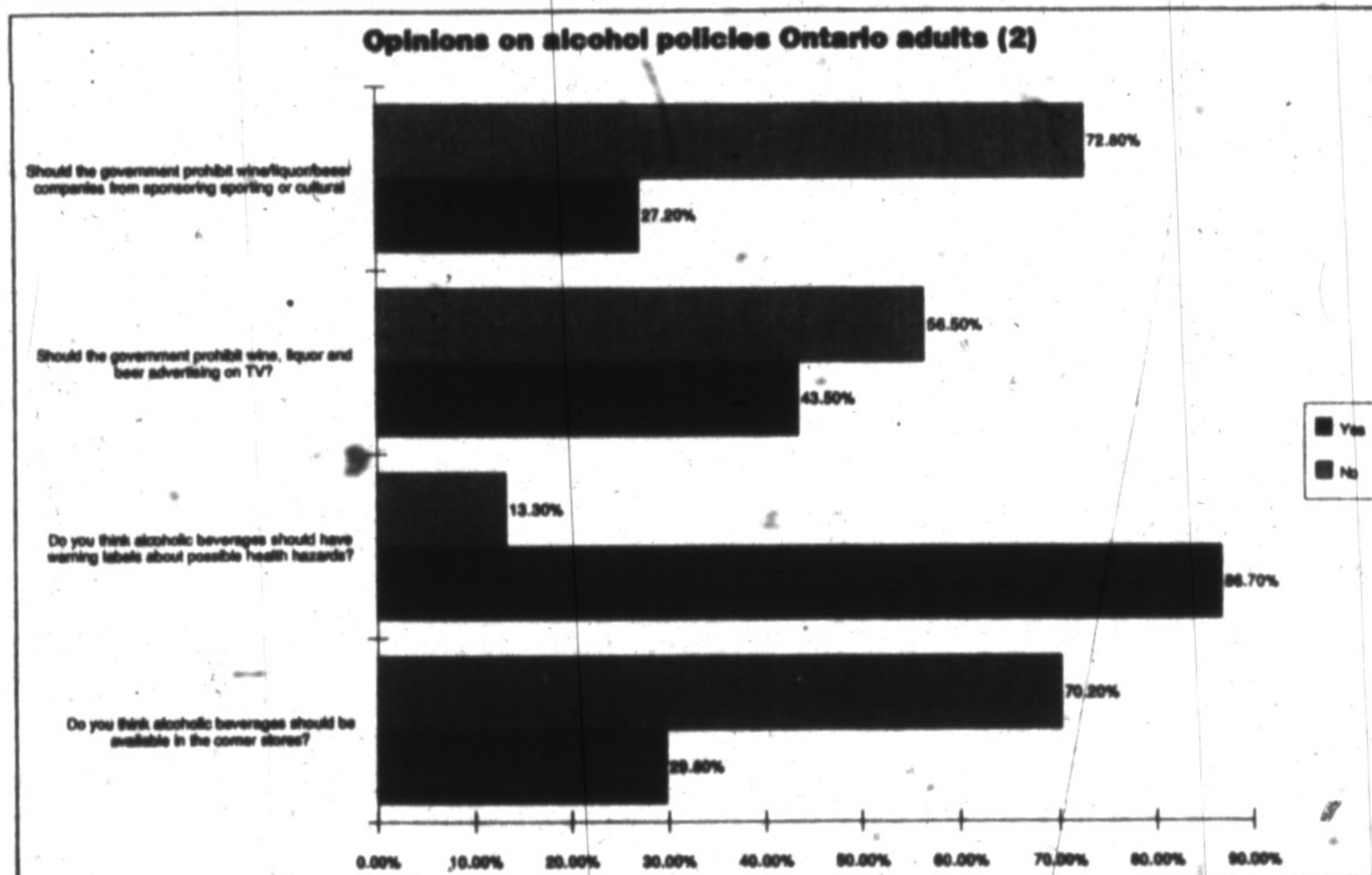
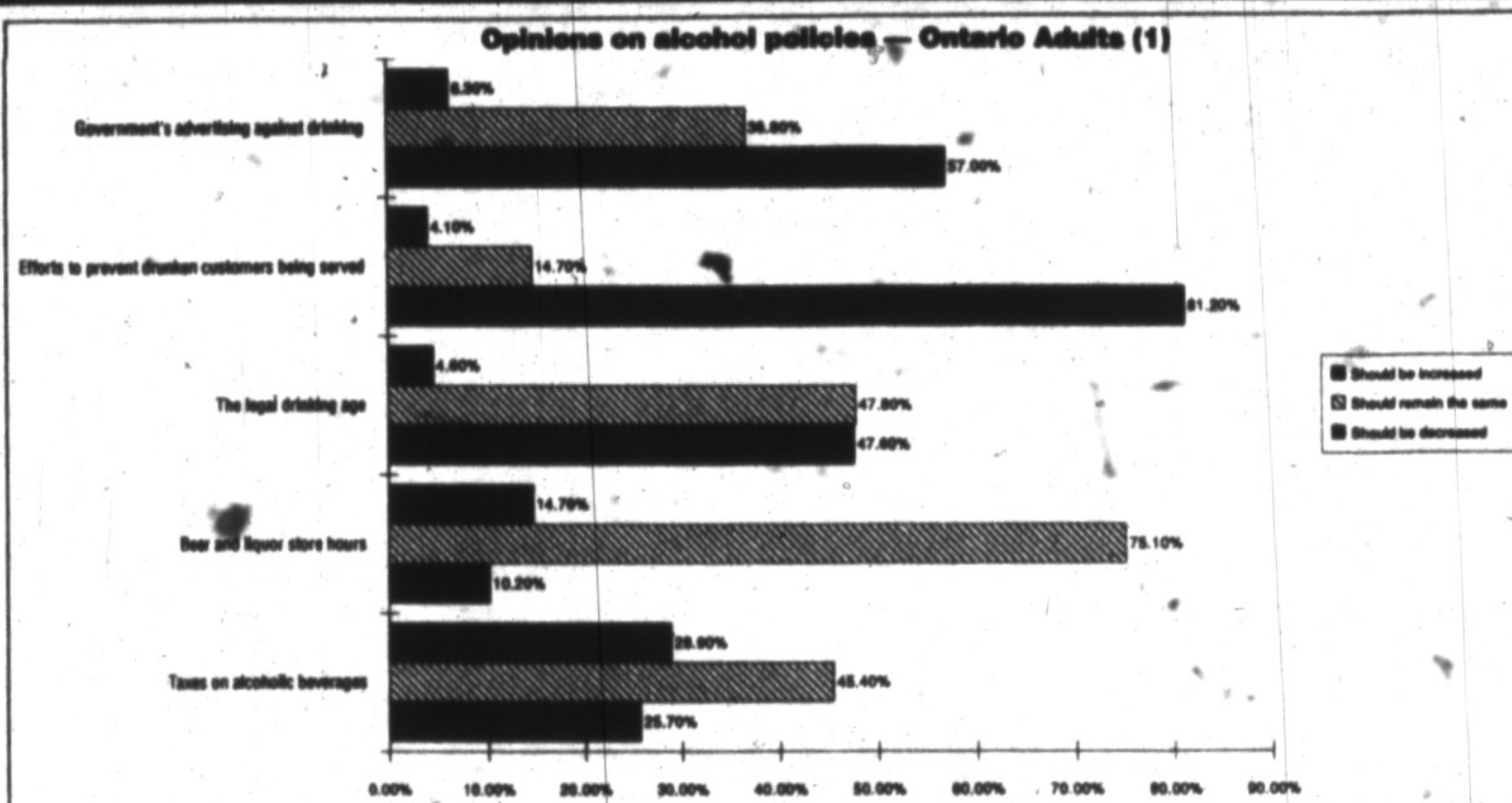
Most people polled didn't want to see all advertising of alcohol taken off television and not many wanted a ban on alcoholic beverage sponsorship of sporting or cultural events. When asked about the sale of alcoholic beverages in corner stores, about 70% said they were opposed.

Opinion on alcohol policies are condensed on Table 1.

Dr. Robin Room, vice-president of Research and Development at the ARF, said that free trade and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade has meant less protection for the alcohol industry. These economic shifts could result in some of the biggest changes to government policy since prohibition, he added.

"We need to make health related issues part of the debate," he countered. "This poll shows that the people in Ontario recognize that."

In general, Ontario adults in 1991 wanted the government to keep — and, in some cases, increase — a fairly strong measure of control in dealing with the problems of alcohol.



## Even moderate drinking can harm unborn children

### Alcohol use declining among pregnant women

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Halton has "better resources than most" for abusers caught in Ontario's growing drug and alcohol problem, according to the Addiction Research Foundation.

The Halton Alcoholism and Drug Addiction Program (ADAPT) offers professional out-patient assessment and treatment services for individuals experiencing problems with alcohol or drug abuse. Referrals to ADAPT come from doctors, lawyers, community agencies, schools, health care facilities,

industry. In fact, anyone can make a referral.

Clients are first assessed to determine the extent of the alcohol or drug problem and then treated to resolve it. The few having a severe addiction may go into an in-patient program at addiction centres in Toronto, Hamilton or Guelph. Counselling services include individual, group, family or counselling of children or adult children of alcoholics. All of the ADAPT services are available at no cost to youths, adults and seniors. The program is funded primarily by the Ontario Ministry of Health.

Besides dealing with the drug or alcohol problem itself, ADAPT also provides education and information about alcohol and drug use.

Halton Recovery House in Hornby (for men) and Hope Place in Milton (for women) are two residences for the treatment of alcoholics. As well, many Alcoholics Anonymous self-help groups are available in Halton to lend support to those who, without it, might revert to drinking again.

Besides promoting a nicotine-free lifestyle, the Halton Lung Association conducts smoking cessation clinics.

The Addiction Research Foundation dispenses information about alcohol and drugs. Whatever is not available from its small library in Burlington it can get from its head office in Toronto. The ARF also refers those seeking help to appropriate agencies and encourages them to try it again if they cannot find satisfactory assistance.

Halton Family Services will offer a program for adult children of alcoholics in the fall if at least eight people show an interest in it.

The Halton health department's mandate is prevention and one of its programs, Ready or Not, is aimed at

parents of children 8 to 14, teaching them skills to use in preventing drug addictions in the family.

The health department also works with the Community Action Group, a coalition of agencies brought together two years ago with funding by the Anti-Drug Secretariat. Through a series of public forums, the Group determined what drug and alcohol prevention activities were available in Halton. It recently received additional funding to work with sports coaches on devising drug prevention activities for the children these coaches encounter.

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