



Tracy Moore, an instructor with the Milton Children and Youth Centre, plays with three-year-old Emily Van Dop using an educational toy.

Photo by GRAHAM PABE

Local centre may help relieve the summer blahs

Are you running out of ideas on how to keep your toddler and pre-schoolers amused?

Tired of hearing "there's nothing to do" from your school-aged child?

The Milton Children and Youth Centre at 917 Nipissing Rd. may provide the answer. Programs of interest to families and caregivers with infants to 5 year olds are offered in two sessions — July 6 to 23, and August 10 to 27.

Family Time is available Monday, Wednesday, or Thursday mornings from 9 to 11 a.m. It provides parents and caregivers with a chance to enjoy a full range of play activities with their little one in a bright air conditioned playroom. The cost is \$15 per family per session.

Drop In runs on Tuesday mornings from 9 to 11 a.m. Newcomers to town and people wanting a morn-

ing out can enjoy a chat while their children are engrossed in play. There is no charge for this program.

Preschool Fun runs on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 1 to 3 p.m. Specifically geared for 3 to 5 year olds, the program provides a special time without Mom or Dad for youngsters to experiment with creative arts, drama, sand and water play, songs, story telling, and much more. The cost is \$20 per child per session.

Summer Social Skills Program for children and youth 6 to 16 years of age are also available. The programs run in one-week blocks and include recreational activities, outings to conservation areas, swimming, hiking, arts and crafts and more.

The cost is \$40 per child. Call 876-1244 for more information or to register.

Thinning ozone threatens life, says health unit

Many people are still ignoring reports about a thinning ozone layer and the dangers of being out in the sun, according to the Halton Health Department.

Here are the facts. The ozone layer is a concentration of ozone gas that is found 10 to 40 km above the Earth's surface.

Ozone is made naturally when sunlight reacts with oxygen in the upper atmosphere. Most ozone is made near the equator where the sun is strongest.

Winds and other weather conditions then move it away from the equator and spread it throughout the upper atmosphere. The ozone layer is usually thickest at the north and south poles, and gets thinner as you move towards the equator.

Ozone in the upper atmosphere is important because it screens out ultraviolet radiation (UVR) from the sun. Too much UVR can cause skin cancer and cataracts in people, damages some vegetable crops, and harms microscopic ocean life. It's also believed that too much UVR can lower people's resistance to disease.

The first "hole" (not really a hole but a thinning) in the ozone layer was found over the south pole in the 1980s. This, and other changes in the ozone layer in other parts of the world, led scientists to the fact that man-made chemicals were destroying ozone in the upper atmosphere.

There are a number of different chemicals that can destroy ozone, but the most common ones are chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). CFCs are used in aerosol spray cans; as coolants in refrigerators and air conditioners; for making foam products;

and as solvents for cleaning electrical equipment. When CFCs escape into the air, they move up to the ozone layer. One molecule of CFC can set off a chain reaction that can destroy hundreds of thousands of ozone molecules.

Right now, no one really knows how far the thinning of the ozone layer has gone. Environment Canada reported in May that there has been a five percent drop in ozone over Eastern Canada since 1980. However, the big hole that was predicted in the early spring hasn't shown up.

Whatever the level of damage, it's important that the clean-up of CFCs and other ozone destroyers start now. These chemicals can stay in the ozone layer causing damage for over 100 years.

Sun and your health

In Ontario, it is already illegal to make or sell aerosol sprays or foam products (including styrofoam coffee cups) that use CFCs. It is also against the law to let the coolant from automobile air conditioners escape into the air during servicing. Unfortunately, laws covering refrigeration and air conditioners in buildings haven't yet been passed.

Ontario's work to control ozone destroying chemicals is part of a move by Canada and other industrialized nations to phase out the production of CFCs by the year 2000.

Even when the ozone layer isn't damaged some UVR in sunlight always gets through to the earth's surface. That means it's always important to be careful when working and playing in the sun.

Too much exposure to UVR can cause skin cancer. In Canada, the number of cases of melanoma (the most serious type of skin cancer) has doubled in the past 15 years.

Anyone who spends a lot of time in the sun is at some risk for skin cancer. However, people with fair skin who sunburn easily must be extra careful. That's because their skin doesn't contain a lot of pigment called melanin. Melanin protects the skin from burns and other damage that can lead to skin cancer.

While all this information may sound a little gloomy, being careful with the sun doesn't mean you have to be afraid of it. With a little protection you can still enjoy those hot summer days ahead.

Keep sun exposure to a minimum, especially between the peak hours of 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. when the sun's rays are most intense.

Use a sunscreen and reapply it every two hours when working, playing or exercising outdoors. Sunscreens with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or more are recommended preferably with a UVB and a UVA sunblock. Check the label of the product or ask your pharmacist.

Protect children by keeping them out of the sun as much as possible. A good sunscreen should be worn by babies of six months or older. Note that keeping your child's exposure to sunlight to a minimum will not cause Vitamin D deficiency.

Beware of clouds since the sun can penetrate light cloud cover, fog and haze, causing severe sunburn. Reflective surfaces such as snow, water and concrete that can intensify your exposure to UVR.

Wear appropriate clothing in the sun including hats, long sleeved shirts and pants.



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