

Opinion

Facts of life

Education, in its purest form, is rarely a bad thing. Being informed gives us the best chance to make educated decisions throughout our lives.

We support information versus misinformation every time. And when it comes to raising physically and mentally strong children, our public education system and parents have a shared responsibility.

We rely on our schools to provide a foundation of learning. Educators, in turn, count on parents to supplement that knowledge with guidance so that children become responsible contributors to society.

With each passing generation society carries with it an accumulation of knowledge — both old and new. What may have been considered appropriate to teach our children 20 years ago, may not offer the complete picture of what we now know today.

Such is the case with the sexual education of our kids.

Since the late '90s, which the last time Ontario's sex-education curriculum was updated, so much has changed.

While we understand parents want what's best for their children, not every parent is up to date with what our young people are being exposed to both in and outside the family home. Also, since not every parent shares the same level of comfort talking to their child about their sexual health, our education system has devised what it believes are age appropriate lessons in human development and sexual health.

We entrust professionals to teach our children to read and write and explore math and sciences and yet some are quick to draw the line at sex-education.

More than a dozen protesters of Ontario's new sex education curriculum stood outside the Milton office of Halton MPP Indira Naidoo-Harris earlier this month holding signs that read Stop Radical Sex-Ed and My Child, my choice! A similar sized-group gathered outside the Oakville office of MPP Kevin Flynn, on the same day.

For all their catchy slogans, the protesters seem to have ignored some basic facts. Sex education is hardly a new concept in our schools, nor is it a static subject to be taught the same way to each generation of children.

Until this year's introduction of new curriculum, our province had the most outdated health/physical education in Canada.

Sex education represents only 10 per cent of the Health and Physical Education curriculum being taught to children from Grades 1-12. It falls under the Healthy Living section of the curriculum, which provides students with information to make healthy decisions about things such as food; safety at home, school and in the community; alcohol and other substances; and sexual activity.

For parents who have read the new curriculum and still have objections, there are other options. They can pull their kids from sex education class, according to Ontario's education minister. Others may choose the step of home schooling their child.

In the interest of ensuring that every child receives an equal level of education, we certainly hope it doesn't come to that.



Heritage Matters

167-171 Main St. East was built in 1847 by Edward Hampton, who owned Milton's first inn. Originally, it was built as a livery stable to accommodate the horses of guests staying at the Hampton House and Thompson House hotels. It is one of Milton's oldest buildings as demonstrated by the use of handmade bricks laid in a common bond pattern. For many years, it was known as Anderson's Livery Stables. In 1920, Richard McDuffe moved his auto repair shop and gas station to the building. He also sold farm implements and owned the first John Deere dealership in Ontario. The building has had many owners and was home to many businesses over the years, the latest being Recycled Reading, a used bookstore.

— Submitted by Heritage Milton and Milton Historical Society

My View

The countdown is on

The countdown to the federal election is on. With October 19 fast approaching, now's the time to get acquainted with the candidates who are vying for your vote, the national party leaders and their respective platforms.

Each candidate and party leader has a plan they think will move Canada forward. Each believes theirs is fiscally and socially responsible. And, of course, they would want nothing more than to put their plan into action. But in order to do so, they need your vote.



Catherine O'Hara
Acting Editor

So, who can do it best? That's up to you to decide.

In the new riding of Milton, five candidates are appealing to constituents for support. They include Lisa Raitt (Conservative), Azim Rizvee (Liberal), Alex Anabusi (NDP), Mini Batra (Green) and Chris Jewell (Libertarian).

In today's issue of the paper, the *Champion* introduces you to each candidate. We encourage you read their profiles, penned by our award-winning journalists, in an effort to become familiar with their background and qualifications.

We also encourage you to visit our website, www.insidehalton.com, where you'll find comprehensive coverage of the fast-approaching federal election.

It is our hope that our efforts enable you to make an informed decision as you head to the polls on Monday, Oct. 19. Catherine O'Hara can be reached at kmice-li@miltoncanadianchampion.com or on Twitter @Review_Reporter

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