

Loving, caring atmosphere at day care centre

By Marilyn McDonald

THORNHILL — They're finger-painting in the Rainbow Room. A jar of orange paint has smashed on the floor. Teacher Lynn McFadden is cleaning it up.

"Try not to cut yourself, Lynn," says four-year-old Jason solicitously.

On a big yellow square of shag carpet, the Moppets are acting out the story of Little Red Riding Hood.

Three-year-old Tricia has a purse over her arm. At an easel, another Moppet captures the action with brush and watercolor.

The Mini-Mites are scooping and shovelling sand at a long raised sandbox about waist-high.

Well, waist-high if you're two-and-a-half.

And it's not really sand.

It's a mixture of dark-brown dried cereal and small white beans. Nobody has to say don't eat the sand. It's good for you.

The cuddly Panda Bears are tumbling about on warm green shag, a tangle of arms, legs and toys — and teacher in the middle — hugging, loving, stroking.

Off in the kitchen preparation for lunch is underway.

From outside beyond the playground comes the muted sound of construction.

Through it all, nine-month-old Shawn sleeps soundly in the fresh half-light of the sleep room.

Full swing

It's 10:30 a.m. and activity at Thornhill Community Day Care Centre is in full swing.

The Rainbow Room is one of several classrooms in the centre.

The Moppets, Mini-Mites and Panda Bears describe some of the different age groups.

The day begins at 7:30 in the morning when the 55 children ranging in age from six months to five years start to arrive. It ends shortly after 6 p.m. when the last child has gone home.

In between there are games to play, pictures to paint, stories to tell and, incidentally, diapers to change.

A diaper service keeps a fresh pile of soft, clean cloth diapers supplied.

The nursery "changing-room" is a mother's dream of cozy efficiency.

Pins and powder, antiseptics and sweet-smelling lotions line the half-glass wall overlooking the nursery playroom.

Bright yellow and white high-chairs sit along one wall of the playroom.

Art everywhere

Everywhere, the walls are covered with children's art, murals, big, colorful cut-outs and cartoons.

An adult feels like Gulliver in the land of the Lilliputians in the older children's washroom.

Tiny toilets and sinks line two walls. Towels and face cloths, alternately blue and green and labelled with each child's name are hung along the third wall.

The staff will assist with toilet-training if the child seems ready and the parents have started the training at home.

"We don't force them," says Marsha Sussman, assistant supervisor at the centre.

Around 11:30 lunch gets under way and by one o'clock most of the children are ready for a nap.

Again, they're not forced to sleep. If the child is restless he can play quietly, maybe mould some plasticine, while the others rest.

"We really love to tuck the kids in," says Marsha.

And, she adds, the kids "like to get their backs rubbed."

Loving and caring

The atmosphere is one of loving and caring.

Male supplementary staffer Dean Kemper sits on the floor gently comforting a small boy who, for the moment, carries the woes of the world on his small shoulders.

It's hard to imagine most busy mothers being able to provide the time and attention these children are getting.

A few minutes later, Dean and the weoful one are laughing and sliding across the floor.

"We're water-skiing," says Dean.

Educational program

"One of the problems with a day care centre is that some people get the idea it's a baby-sitting service," says Marsha.

"It's not. We run an educational program here."

Each week the staff plans a program around a color, for example, or a number or a mode of transportation. Something the child can relate to easily.

"Our program is designed to emphasize social, emotional, physical and intellectual development," says supervisor Jan Sipple.

Like most of the staff, Jan completed the course in Early Childhood Education at Centennial College. She also studied the care and education of the developmentally handicapped through a Humber College correspondence course.

Jan worked in the day care field at Newmarket Regional Day Care Centre for two years and a Toronto school for one year.

She was selected supervisor of the Thornhill centre over many other well-qualified applicants.

Even the youngest children make simple experiments with paint, glue and paper.

Skills stimulated

Mental stimulation is provided through music, story-telling and talking.

Motor skills are improved through play with balls, blocks and large, bright plastic toys.

According to Jan, the children are taught to see themselves "in relation to other people."

Picture a child in the centre of increasingly large circles.

He begins by understanding his relationship to his family, then to the larger social circle of the day care centre.

With the accent on "community helpers" such as teachers, doctors, nurses, policemen and firemen, the child gains an awareness of the community around him and his place in it.

Progress watched

Each child's progress is assessed twice a year.

Potentially serious problems such as speech defects and perceptual weaknesses can be identified and correctional therapy undertaken before the problem develops further.

When construction of the new wing is completed, 10 handicapped children will be integrated into the group. They will follow through the regular program on a half-day basis.

The staff will be increased by at least two teachers trained in dealing with developmentally delayed children.

"They'll be backed up by a battery of volunteers," says Jan.

And another dimension will be added to each child's experience in living.



(Photo by Hogg)

Not just a baby-sitter

Toddlers are kept busy and happy at Thornhill Community Day Care Centre, which workers like Peggy Crossland transform into much more than a baby-sitting service. Physical, intellectual, emotional development of the children is the goal of the centre, and plenty of love and affection go along with it. Crossland is shown above with two of the centre's youngest group, Peter and Sarah.

Federal grant given for Bayview viaduct

OTTAWA — The federal government has come through with a \$2,447,860 grant it had earlier promised for an overpass at the Canadian National Railway tracks on Bayview Avenue, in Thornhill.

The Transport Canada grant was announced this week by York North MP Barney Danson and Transport Minister Otto Lang.

It is being made under terms of the Railway Relocation and Crossing Act.

Canadian National will contribute an additional \$62,500 with the balance of the \$3.7 million project paid by the province and York regional municipality.

Work is to begin this year and be completed in 1977.

Bayview, a major arterial road extending from Toronto, has a traffic count of about 22,000 vehicles per day. The count is expected to reach 40,000 by 1992.

There are 22 trains each day this is expected to increase to 40 by 1993. There is also considerable bus traffic.

The overpass will carry four lanes of traffic with provision for two additional lanes. One railway track will run beneath, and there will be provision for three more.

In his announcement of the grant, Danson said the overpass "will relieve a potentially dangerous safety hazard in the area while allowing much more satisfactory traffic flow in a growing area of the region."

This grant brings the total federal contribution in the Toronto area for grade separation projects to \$10.5 million for work beginning this year.

Assault charge laid

KESWICK — A Thornhill man is one of two people charged with assault and extortion, as a result of an attack on two Keswick youths with a baseball bat and bayonet.

He is Marinus Edwin King, 26, of Clark Avenue, who is also charged with breaking and entering, mischief, possession of marijuana, and possession of stolen property.

Charged with him is Michael Madden, 26, of Keswick. The assault occurred last August and revolved around the sale of narcotics.

Recycling depot seeks workers

RICHMOND HILL — The recycling depot on Elgin Mills Road is considering expanding its hours during the summer.

The proposal, according to depot organizer Roy Clifton, is to open on Thursdays from 7 to 8:30 p.m. during June, July and August.

The depot has been open from 10 a.m. to noon Saturdays since it began operation last October.

Whether the new hours will be offered, Clifton said, will depend on the recruitment of 15 new volunteer workers.

He invited anyone interested in the proposal to call him at 884-1355.

Clifton also announced that since the depot opened, it has shipped 12 tons of glass, 12 tons of newsprint and 1.4 tons of metal.

Number of cars bringing material to be recycled has averaged 51.3 for the past 10 weeks. For the previous 10-week period the average was 44.8 cars.

"This likely represents only about 250 families of the 33,000 people living in town," Clifton said.

"Seventy volunteers are working for the depot in shifts Saturday mornings,

quite enough to handle the material, but not enough people are willing to do the small amount of work required to prepare and bring in the newspapers, bottles and cans."

"One of the visitors to the depot pointed out it would take no more gasoline and little more time to bring material from four households instead of one."

"The depot has taken up this suggestion and is asking those who already come to ask three neighbors to prepare and save their material too."

Clifton noted that pools of this kind would bring in material from 1,000 households instead of the present 250.

Commenting on the depot's finances, Clifton said the average income should be about \$800 a year.

He expects the depot to spend about \$700 on building a fire-resistant room for paper and a shop in which to sell wine bottles, gallon jars and fancy bottles.

"It's hoped before the year is over it will be possible to buy two rubber-tired wheelbarrows to make the work of volunteers easier," Clifton said.

Region science fair opens this weekend

RICHMOND HILL — For centuries, scientists have been driven by an innate curiosity to probe the vast unknown.

Young scientists in York region are no exception, and this weekend some 170 of them will display their efforts at the York County Science Fair at Bayview Secondary School.

The science fair, open to students from kindergarten to Grade 13, has been held annually for eight years.

It is organized by the Richmond Hill Rotary Club, York County Board of Education and York Region Roman Catholic School Board.

They are five categories for projects: engineering, environmental, physical, earth and life sciences.

Competition groupings run level 1, which may be a simple drawing, to level 5, a full scientific investigation in an experiment with all variables controlled.

Judges are professionals in the science field, such as doctors or geologists.

From the York County Science Fair, two or three outstanding projects are selected to go to the Canada-wide fair. York County students have traditionally done well in the national competitions.

The science fair timetable:

Thursday is set-up day from 6 a.m. to

10 p.m.; Friday the fair is open to the public from 9 a.m. to noon, closes for judging from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and then reopens at 6 p.m. and runs to 9 p.m. with the announcement of winners within this time slot. On Saturday the fair is open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and the distribution of awards and removal of projects begins sometime after 3 p.m.

Ratepayer group to meet here

RICHMOND HILL — Ward 3 Ratepayers Association will hold its annual meeting Tuesday at 8 p.m. in the Blue Flame Room, Consumers Gas Company, on Elgin Mills Road.

Guest speaker will be Donald King, vice-president of the consultants' firm, Stephenson and Kellogg.

The firm has worked closely with many municipal governments and King himself has been active in the Ontario Council for Local Government.

Members of Richmond Hill council will also be present at the meeting to answer questions or discuss problems.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

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choose our candidate in the next
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THURSDAY, APRIL 22

8 P.M.

LOCATION
THORNHILL COMMUNITY CENTRE
JOHN AND BAYVIEW

Important - You must obtain your
membership before April 15th to be
eligible to vote at this convention

The Ontario P.C. Association's annual meeting will be held
May 14-15-16th at the Inn On The Park, Toronto. Delegates from York
Centre will be elected at our April 22nd meeting. For details call
John Goodbody at 889-2679.

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN — MRS. TERRY BOREHAM 884-3124

IN RICHMOND HILL PHONE — BILL WILLIAMS 884-5642

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