

ST Teach children about strangers during Block Parent Month

During National Block-Parent Week, Oct. 19 through 25, Block Parent volunteers across Canada will be focusing on stranger awareness.

Many parents are concerned about the safety of their children and the possibility that they may be harmed or abducted by a stranger.

The Block Parent Program believes that education is the first step to safety. The fact is, most strangers are good strangers and parents should be prepared and not unnecessarily anxious.

Teach your child what to do in potentially dangerous situations. If he acts from knowledge and not fear, he is more likely to react safely. Keep in mind, however, that no matter how much you teach your child about safety, they are limited by their age and maturity.

As your children grow up, you will be leaving them in the care of others more frequently. Day care, recreation programs, sport activities, music lessons and school can be part of every busy child's life.

As a parent, you are responsible for your child's safety and you should know who will be supervising your child and what training and possible screening they have undergone.

Here are some safety tips to help keep your child safe.

• Teach your child about the Block Parent Program and how a Block Par-

ent can help him if he is distressed.

• Be sure your child knows their full name, address and phone number and how to make an emergency phone call from home and public phones.

• Walk the neighbourhood with your child. Point out potentially dangerous areas and show them safe places to go in an emergency: a Block Parent home, neighbour's house, bank, open store or gas station.

• Tell children never to accept gifts, money or rides from someone unless they have permission from you.

• Encourage children to walk and play with friends, not alone.

• Have your children make a habit of telling you who they're going out with, where they're going (get a phone number where you can reach them, if possible) and when they will be back.

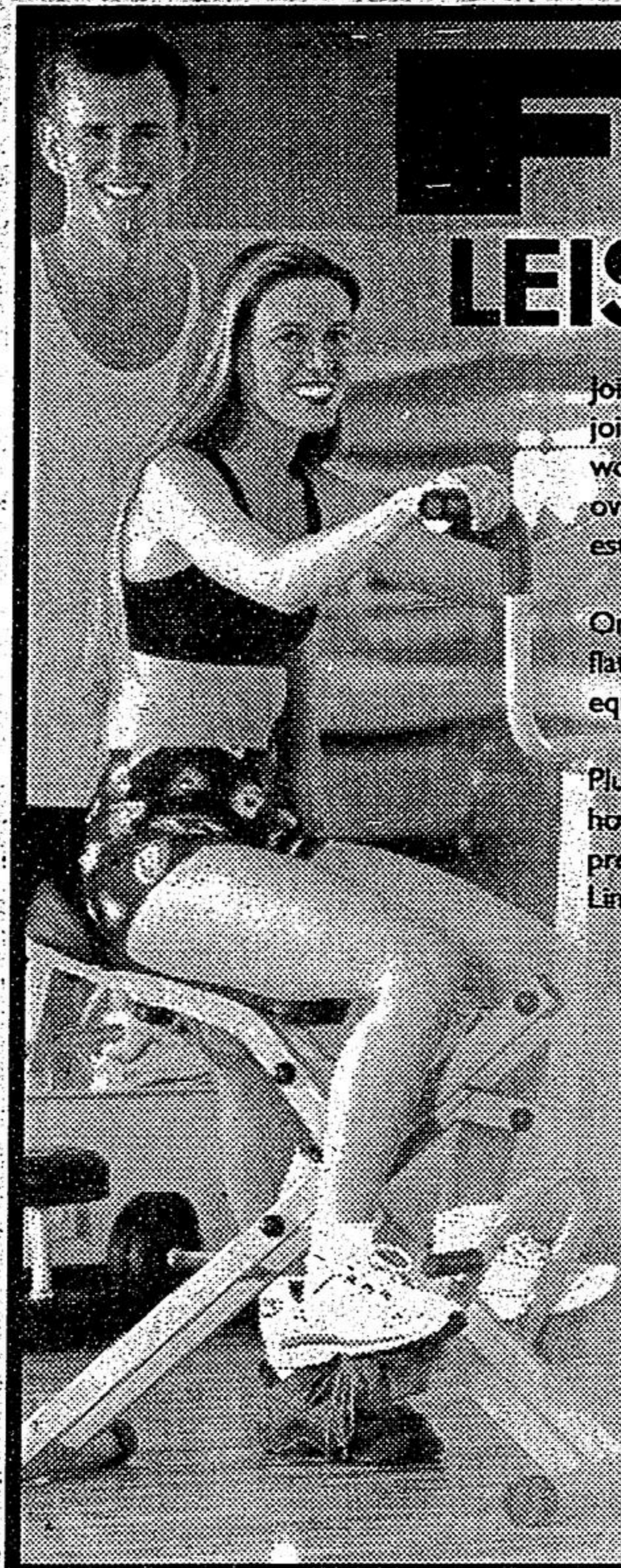
• In busy public places, arrange for somewhere to meet in case you get separated.

• Let children know that they never have to do anything they don't like with an adult or older child — even if it's someone they know. Teach them to "trust their feelings."

Always listen to your children, especially when they are trying to tell you something about things that worry them such as a bully at school or a babysitter they don't like.

To find out more about the Block Parent Program call 1-800-563-2771.

Fax your letters: 640-5477



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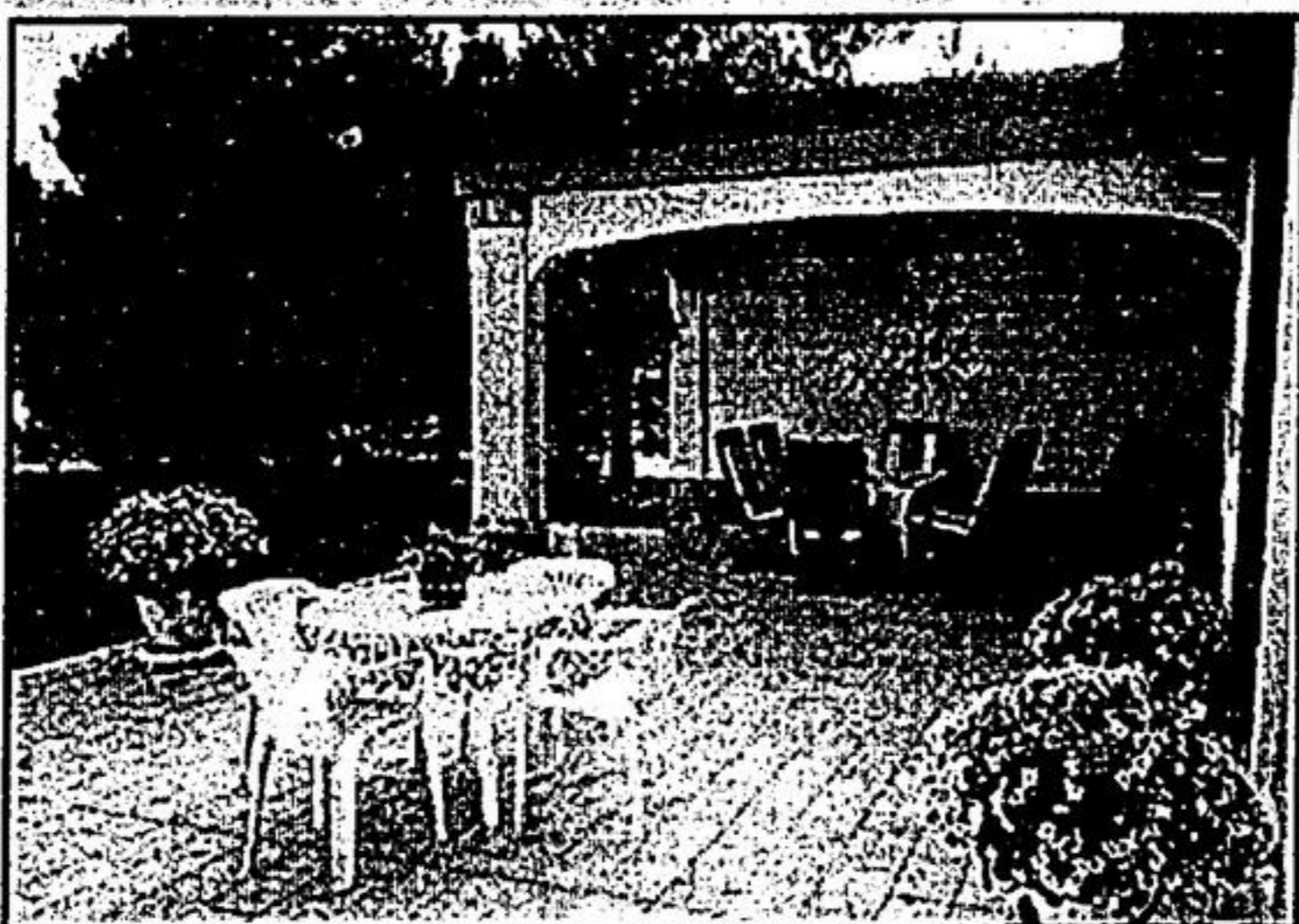
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