

# Children learning to cope with loss of friend

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things. The children expressed confusion and anger, said Sampson. Many of them had patted the dog (that attacked Courtney), knew the dog, so they had

very mixed emotions," she said. "We have many children right now that are fearful of their own dogs because of this situation." Eventually, the school may bring in an expert to advise children on when they can trust

dogs. "We want to respond and address that concern," said Campbell. The children's display included artwork Courtney had done in Grade 1 ("La pomme est rouge," said one, with her drawing of a red apple), as well as

stories the girl had written. One, "La Chate et ses Ghattons" (the Cat and its Kittens), is dedicated to her little brother Carson. Its three kittens, which the girl also illustrated, are named after friends. "Absent for a PA day yesterday, students will write letters to Courtney's

mother and father, and to Courtney herself, when they return. Some are slower than others in dealing with their friend's death, said Cameron Sauder, another member of the response team. "When they come in Monday, it might be a bit more real," he said.

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## More than 30 attacks in town

Last year, 33 incidents of biting or scratching by domestic animals in Whitchurch-Stouffville were investigated by regional health inspectors. In 1996, 29 such attacks in the town were investigated.

Across the region last year, a total of 774 dog or cat attacks were reported and investigated. Ten days in quarantine is required for the animals to see if they show signs of rabies.

This month, Rabies Awareness Month in York Region, inspectors will visit at least 50 daycares in the region to teach young children to avoid strange animals. A short film, colouring exercises and a flipchart will be used to reinforce the message that "they should not approach animals they don't know, despite the fact that they look cute," Siobhan Kearns-Shannon, supervisor for public health inspections said yesterday.

—Mike Adler

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