

# Early childhood study launched

Children's minister hopes pilot project will identify gaps in York Region's services for young children

BY LISA QUEEN  
Staff Writer

York Region is on a Queen's Park-sponsored fact-finding mission to identify gaps in services for young children.

The study, announced by Minister Responsible for Children Margaret Marland in Newmarket Thursday, makes York's pilot project one of only five in the province.

The findings will be used to establish province-wide programs for children up to Grade 1.

"Even though we invest billions in our children, sadly there are still children falling through the cracks," Marland said.

York was recognized as being one of the fastest growing areas in the province and home to hundreds of thousands of young families.

York's project, the only one spearheaded by a municipal government, is called "All Our Kids (AOK) — They can thrive by the age of five". The provincial study will also include London, North Bay, Southeast Grey and Ottawa-Carleton.

The pilot projects were born out of the Early Years Study by renowned child development expert Dr. Fraser Mustard and Margaret McCain, a child advocate and former lieutenant-governor of New Brunswick.

The study, released a year ago, concluded a child's first six years of life set the foundation for life-long learning, behaviour and health.

The province has responded by looking at communities to identify gaps in services designed to support young children and their parents.

Elizabeth Wagle, the region's director of family and children's services, said there are dozens of exceptional chil-

dren's programs in York. "We're not looking to recreate the wheel. There are a lot of good programs out there. They need to be enhanced and built on."

In York's case, the Tories have given the region \$100,000 to establish new programs, an amount that must be matched by the community.

Regional council has kicked in \$70,000. The region is also hoping to draw on a \$30-million provincial fund set up for Early Years programs.

Marland stressed the province is counting on municipal governments, the private sector and community groups to identify gaps and help fund solutions.

"Marland said she knows first hand the difficulties of raising young children. She brought her first child home, only to spend every night pacing the floor with a screaming baby."



STAFF PHOTO/JANICE SHEAN

Minister Responsible for Children Margaret Marland reads to Markham students Thursday afternoon.

She dismissed her mother's suggestion of singing or speaking to her daughter, thinking a tiny baby wouldn't understand anything. But when she tried it, Marland was surprised to see her daughter's crying decrease.

Marland said many parents get by

"on a wing and a prayer", relying on family and friends for support.

But in today's transient and "pressure cooker" society, thousands of mothers and fathers face enormous pressures with no help to develop good parenting skills.

**NEW OWNER SPECIAL**  
**MARKHAM GOLF CENTRE**  
**DRIVING RANGE**

Before 11:30 am (Mon-Fri) \$5 Jumbo Bucket  
\$4 Large Bucket

After 11:30 am  
\$6 Large  
\$7 Jumbo

New Balls & New Grass Tees  
CPGA Teacher

**MARKHAM GOLF CENTRE**

48 Hwy. Garden Basket  
16th Avenue

Hwy. 48  
(1/2 km north of 16th Ave.)  
471-2221

**Welcome Back Dr. Kushner!**

Woodland Pet Hospital would like to Welcome Dr. Nicole Kushner back! Baby Kierra is now 7 months old and Nicole is looking forward to caring for your pets again.

To serve you better at Woodland Pet Hospital, we have now added client services in Cantonese. May Nardi, is a recent addition to our outstanding client services team and is eager to assist in translating for our valued Asian clientele.

At Woodland Pet Hospital we strive to exceed our clients expectations, and are open 7 days a week to serve you. Come see us at 3155 Hwy #7, located next to Petsmart and the Home Depot, or call us for an appointment @ 905-946-0336.

**CURTIS-E BEAR'S**  
**SUMMER SIZZLER**  
**"IN-STOCK"**

**2000 CHEVROLET CORVETTE COUPE**

5.7 L. V8 engine, 6-speed, manual transmission, air conditioning, power windows, locks, mirrors, memory power seats & mirrors, articulated leather bucket seats, dual removable roof panels, telescopic tilt steering, heads-up display, power passenger seat, AM/FM CD player with 6-PAC CD player in trunk, aluminum wheels, body side mouldings, A.B.S., air bags. Immediate delivery available. SIK #00767

**BLACK-ON-BLACK SUMMER HEAT WITH CORVETTE.**

**ONLY \$534\*** /mth.  
**OR BUY \$64,488\*\*** INCL. FRIT. & AIR TAX

DOWN PAYMENT	TOTAL DUE
\$7000	\$10685.16
\$14000	\$18224.19
\$21000	\$25738.00

\*Lease based on 36 months, 20,000 kms per year, payments are plus taxes, plus money down as shown or trade equivalent. 12¢ per km. charge for excess kms., optional buy out at end of lease \$37,568 plus applicable taxes. See dealer for full details. O.A.C. Ins. extra.  
\*\*Cash price is plus \$175\* admin., PST, GST and licensing insurance extra.

www.northpointchevolds.com  
(e-mail) vintage@ldirect.com

**NORTH POINTE**  
CHEVROLET OLDSMOBILE

5336 Hwy. #7 (Just East of McCowan) MARKHAM  
294-1440  
Toll Free: 1-800-632-2209

**Terra Cotta Garden Emporium**  
Invites you to our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual "Embrace Spring" Show & Sale

located at Cedar Grove Community Centre  
7667, 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Markham  
(South of Hwy. 7, just east of Reesor Rd.)

Friday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, 12 noon - 8 pm  
and  
Saturday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, 10 am - 5 pm

A unique collection of quality Garden products; from tools & plants to, plaques, containers, garden books, antiques & ornamentation.  
Many hand-made by Canadian artists.  
An exceptional selection of items chosen specifically to tickle the fancy of any gardener!

**Wonderful Mother's Day Gifts!!**  
Lots of Garden talk soothing atmosphere, beautiful Plants & Refreshments too!  
Questions? Call 294-9429

**ANTIQUA AUCTION SALE**  
Imported from Europe  
and Sold directly through Auction!

**THURSDAY MAY 11TH AT 6:00 P.M.**  
PREVIEW FROM 3:00 P.M.

At Crystal Fountain Banquet Hall,  
60 McDowell Gate, Markham  
(407 & Kennedy Rd. Area)

Featuring: Quality French and European antiques to include: numerous armoires and bedroom suites, dining suites; cupboards; parlour tables and chairs; book-cases; desks; overmantle mirrors; chandeliers and lighting; clocks; plus many unusual and unique decorative accessories for your home, office, or cottage. All to be sold to the highest bidder with NO reserves and NO buyers premium!

**PAYMENT:** Cash or cheque with 2 forms I.D. only. Delivery available; hot and cold meals on site.

60 McDowell Gate (Crystal Fountain Banquet Hall)

Further listing and sale information available.

BY FAX OR PHONE:  
**JON MEDLEY - Auctioneer**  
(905) 878-2647  
**& ANDREW ZEGERS**  
(905) 685-4643

## The Latest In High Performance Lawn Care.



Why cut, rake and weed another minute.  
Call today for a free quotation and get your weekends off.

**Clintar**  
Canada's Authority on Grounds Care

4210 Midland Avenue, Scarborough, Ontario Tel: 416.291.1611  
www.clintar.com