

Meal feeds understanding

By MIKE SAVAGE

Last Friday morning I had breakfast with about 40 public school children, three or four teachers, and some mothers who all help to maintain the breakfast program at the Duke of York public school.

The school, on Pembroke Street, is in the Dundas-Jarvis area of Toronto. Behind the school a new RCMP building is under construction on Jarvis Street. It's an area of rumbling streetcars, rooming houses, small parks, the Moss Park armory, and Allen Gardens.

Breakfast is served every school morning from about 7:30 until 9 in the school's main auditorium. A portrait of the Queen looks out on the room, and paintings of Halloween still adorn the walls.

Vice-principal Nancy Mallett sits down every morning with the children and has breakfast with them. The meal is nutritious, consisting of various cereals, brown sugar, raisins, and orange juice. The food is bought in bulk from the head offices of various companies. A fresh supply of orange juice is laid on every day.

The menu "is a planned menu in consultation with a home economist," said Miss Mallett. The children may eat as much as they want, and what they want.

The whole idea started last winter after the Senate committee on poverty conducted an open meeting at the school. A citizen came forward and suggested the breakfast program. The program was started on May 20 of this year on an experimental basis. It was an instant success.

The school staff supports the project, and works closely with some of the mothers of the children. Staff and mothers work on a rotating basis to administer and supervise breakfast. Walter Sinclair, principal of the school, supports the project wholeheartedly and occasionally drops in to speak to the children over breakfast.

Why so much support from the staff? Miss Mallett said that getting together with the children before school gives both staff and children a chance to get to know each other. She said, it's an opportunity of "getting to know children as people, they get to

know us as people. There is a personal touch about it."

The cost of the breakfast program is in the area of \$2,500 a year. Buying food in bulk reduces some of the cost. Monetary support comes mainly from private individuals who are interested but can only afford a small amount.

Some money comes from the Lions Club and the United Church. Another donation came from a labour union after hearing of the project from a husband whose wife works for the program.

Miss Mallett forsees financial difficulties in keeping the program going. "We need someone to finance this," she said.

The breakfast costs the children five cents a day. It's "not enforced, but encouraged," Miss Mallett said.

No children are turned away if they can't afford the breakfast. Some children come from other schools for the breakfast, pointing up the need for such programs in other areas of the city.

"A core group of about fifty children" turn up each morning for breakfast, Miss Mallett said, although the average is between



sixty and seventy. One morning ninety-five children wanted breakfast.

The thrust for the program came from the parents. They made the decision and helped plan the menu. Parents open up the school for breakfast every morning.

Tom Fry, guidance counsellor for the school, like Nancy Mallett, feels the informal breakfast atmosphere is a great chance for both staff and children to get to

know each other. Besides, he said, he can judge the mood of individuals early in the day and perhaps help someone with their problems.

Jonathan is seven years old. He had shredded wheat and raisins for breakfast. How many did you eat this morning? "Two," he said. Then, with healthy interest, he began asking questions about my camera. "How long does it take to take a picture?" Well...uh...yeah...

The trickle down your armpits.

Some things make us nervous.

Some things turn us into a kind of stranger to ourselves. The old dryness of the mouth sets in. The sweat starts down.

How about those job interviews, where all of a sudden you've got to stand out very clearly from the herd? Inside half an hour you've got to establish yourself to a world you never made and may not even like.

Does the prospect make you just a little nervous? No? You're lucky.

Oh, it does? Join the club. It gets us all, even those over thirty.

You could write a book about being nervous about interviews. As a matter of fact, we have written a book. A little one: "How to separate

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We wrote it because we've been there. Without any modesty whatsoever we can tell you we're a company whose very life depends on our skill at coming face to face with strangers.

Our little book is tucked into a bigger one: The Employment Opportunities Handbook, a kind of dictionary of the companies who are looking. This brand new handbook is yours for the asking at the placement office.

"How to separate yourself from the herd" won't work any magic between now and your first interview.

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