

CHILDREN & TEENS

Strangers are just friends waiting to happen.

KIDS MAKE FRIENDS INSTANTLY ON THE BEACH



Sylvia Lismore

Molly, 7 years old, and her sister Valerie, 9, jumped out as soon as their mother Elizabeth parked the car. They took the buckets and shovels for making sand castles, but they also helped their mother to carry the picnic baskets and the blankets to cover the sand. Whooping with joy they ran to the beach. Using their buckets they built sand castles and bridges, and ran to the lake to fill the buckets with water. They dug a channel around the castle, which quickly became a moat. People stopped to admire their work. A short while later a woman and her two sons, Philip and Matthew, about the same ages as Molly and Valerie, sat in the vacant spot beside them. As children do, the four became friends immediately. Suddenly, Volley Ball nets were being erected along



the beach. The boys were thrilled. When the nets were installed, they took one of the balls that were supplied and started playing. The girls sat and played in the sand while Elizabeth and Joan, the mothers, were deep in conversation.

Philip ran up to his mother and whispered in her ear. She gave a wide smile and nodded. Turning to Elizabeth she said, "The boys would like to play volley ball with your girls. Do you think they would?" "I'm sure they would," replied Elizabeth. Pretty soon a fast game of volley ball developed. One boy called out, "I think we're winning." Molly and Valerie looked at each other. "No you're not," they said laughing. Teenagers stopped to watch and cheer. It became obvious that the girls were winning. The four of them played until they were very tired. "You won," said the boys to Molly and Valerie. The girls hugged the boys, "Maybe you'll win next time." "We have to go home tomorrow," they said. "We are visiting our Grandma. We will come again next year though. Can we play Volley Ball with you then?" "Of course," the girls said. They all went to the ice cream store a short distance up the beach and celebrated with well-stacked cones. Elizabeth and Joan exchanged phone numbers. The girls promised to look for the boys the following year when they came back to the beach. *Sylvia Lismore writes short stories.*

"Playing polo is like trying to play golf during an earthquake." - Sylvester Stallone, 1990

FORCE-4-WIND SPEEDMINTON IN MISSISSAUGA

Brian Chiasson

The Clarkson Community Centre is teaching speedminton, also known as speed badminton, on Sunday mornings starting July 8. Students, 15 years and older, will learn the basic fundamentals and skills of the sport, through individual and team achievement. They also learn the basic fundamentals and skills as each player gets to play every other player, one at a time. Speedminton is a combination of squash, badminton and tennis but it's played without a net. Playing without a net means it can be played on tennis courts, streets, beaches, fields and gyms. All you need is two squares of land 18 feet wide by 21 feet long. They touch each other for a distance of 42 feet. Both players need a specially produced racket similar to squash. They are 58 to 60 centimetres long, but with different material and strings. The ball, called a speeder, is heavier than a badminton shuttlecock. It can withstand a wind of force 4. The speeder (ball) flies fast, traveling 260 kilometres an hour in a fun game. But, in an official match, it travels 290 km/h (three times the highway 403 speed limit). Frightening? No! Kids have fun with it. The purpose of the game is to reach the square of the opposite player with the speeder. If it falls outside the opposite square, the other side gains a point. Players can step outside their square during play. The game ends when one player garners at least



16 points over their adversary. However, 16 points is not enough without at least a 2 point advantage. The game must continue until there's a 2 point difference. Also, every time a set finishes with 16 points, the players switch sides. A game can last three winning sets. One other thought, the serve is played from three metres behind the front offensive line and must be played bottom-up. The first serve of the next set is done by the loser of the previous set. Speedminton was invented in Berlin by Bill Brandes. He called it "shuttleball." By 2003, Germany had 6,000 play-

ers. Now, tournaments are organized worldwide. In Mississauga, there are 90-minute classes beginning on Sunday, July 8, from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., and they run every Sunday until Sept. 2. Residents pay \$74.25, but it's \$79.25 for non-residents (people living outside Mississauga). There are 26 spots available in their gymnasium, located at 2475 Truscott Drive, and withdrawals must be completed five days prior to the start date. For more information, call the Clarkson Community Centre: (905) 615-4840.



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