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Weather



TODAY:
SNOW OR FREEZING RAIN
HIGH OF -4
LOW OF -5



TUESDAY:
RAIN
HIGH OF 5
LOW OF -6



WEDNESDAY:
FLURRIES
HIGH OF -7
LOW OF -18



THURSDAY:
SUNNY
HIGH OF -14
LOW OF -21



FRIDAY:
SUNNY
HIGH OF -8
LOW OF -14

Quebec Provincial Police spend an evening at the Missisquoi North Youth Centre (CABMN) in Mansonville



THE SCOOP
MABLE HASTINGS

On Friday, January 19, the Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) group in Mansonville invited Quebec Provincial Police Officer, Steeve Cote to come to the Youth Centre to do a question and answer period with the youth and then to stay for a while to share snacks and fun with those present.

The week before the visit, the youth were encouraged to write three questions each that would remain anonymous. The questions were put into a bowl and the animator presented them to Officer Cote who answered each with honesty, precision and humour. Those present were also encouraged, if not too shy, to ask any questions they had or to add to those posed. Many felt comfortable speaking and sharing as did Officer Cote.

With two children of his own, Officer Cote spoke to the youth with ease and switched from French to English (as did the youth) in the same manner; each helping the other to get their point across. Cote explained why he became a police officer sharing that he liked the

variety of tasks and not having the same routine day after day. He also shared that, he feels accomplished in his work and like it is something he does with the hope that he can teach and learn from his experiences while enforcing the law. The youth asked questions about a variety of topics from drugs, alcohol, driving and vehicle use to many that revolved around the internet, social media, snap chat, Facebook and more... Officer Cote strongly advised the youth to be very careful about the information shared on social media and gave examples of times where the law might get involved.

Following the question and answer period, the youth asked the Officer to explain what the things were attached to his belt and how they were used. This took the group in a variety of directions with Officer Cote showing the youth (all of whom were more than willing to be arrested in a mock scenario), what happens when someone is arrested with the reading of their rights...as well as the result if someone resists. Many of the youth took turns experiencing this and all decided that, while pretending was fun, the reality would be the opposite.

The session began at 6pm and was wrapping up by 8pm with 18 youth and three adults in attendance. Officer Cote then joined the youth in a few games of pool and even challenged some of the others to a "Just Dance" competition. Soon, all were laughing and Officer Cote had become one of them. He was invited back and many youth took turns asking him questions one on one about things of concern to them, before he left. After his departure, the youth were quick to ask when they were going to have an-

other session and a couple of them took papers out and started formulating more questions to pose when he returns.

The Missisquoi North Volunteer Centre Youth Programs have been in operation for over thirty years. The SADD Mansonville Chapter started in 1987. Youth come and go and each year, a group of kids gather to attempt to do awareness sessions, alternative events and programs as well as providing ongoing support and information in the fight against destructive decisions. The relationship built over the years with the Quebec Provincial Police is an invaluable one. All communities should be so lucky and feel that they can call upon these professionals to come into a space where youth feel comfortable and are encouraged to share and grow.

Officer Steeve Cote made an impact that evening and likely his words will resonate in the minds of many when faced with a situation the likes of which was discussed during the session on Friday evening.



Youth from the Students Against Destructive Decisions(SADD) and Drop-In youth group at the Missisquoi North (CABMN) youth centre in Mansonville hosted Quebec Provincial Police (QPP) officer Steeve Cote for an awareness session on Friday, January 19.

Ben by Daniel Shelton

