

Dear Editor,

Although your teenage years are the most defining years of your life, they can also be the most challenging. With the “D.A.R.E.” and “Keeping it R.E.A.L.” programs, we – the grade 8 students of O’Gorman Intermediate Catholic School - have learned so much about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse, as well as how to make good choices. Sometimes it may be difficult for teens to open up to adults about the pressures they face; however, as Constable Rick Lemieux promises his D.A.R.E. students, “You can contact me at any time and I will always be there to help. I’m not just a police officer. I am your D.A.R.E. officer first. ”

Have you ever heard adults say that kids need to learn through trial and error? Well, that may be true in some instances; however, in situations where drugs and alcohol are involved, letting kids learn through trial and error can prove to be fatal. There are two main strategies that Constable Rick has taught us - they are the “D.A.R.E.” and “R.E.A.L.” strategies. **Define, Assess, Respond, Evaluate and Refuse, Explain, Avoid, Leave.** They teach us how to identify a situation and, if there are drugs or alcohol involved, how to avoid or resolve it. Some strategies that he has taught us are to be assertive when you want to leave an uncomfortable situation, or simply how to not place yourself in that position to begin with.

Parents, you may never know when your child will be faced with such problems. However, have comfort in knowing that when they do arise, your children will be prepared to make the right decisions thanks to the proactive approach of the “D.A.R.E.” and “Keeping it R.E.A.L.” programs. Please understand that these programs really help - so does your involvement with us! Constable Rick, thank you so much for teaching us something that will help us throughout our lives...we won’t let you down!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Reeder’s 8B and Empower students

O’Gorman Intermediate Catholic School