

The youth bureau: What do they do?

If your boy or girl gets caught shoplifting, damaging property or breaking and entering by Halton Regional Police, likely you will be meeting Sgt. Al McQueen, chief of the youth bureau in Halton Hills.

"Most people think once police grab a youthful offender, he's hauled off to court," Sgt. McQueen told the Herald this week. He explained that except in the case of breaking and entering, an automatic court appearance, there's a big difference in how children are treated by the police.

"A youth officer has much greater discretionary powers in dealing with kids than in dealing with adults." He said there is "a vast difference between a criminal and a foolish child."

The "discretionary powers" which guide Sgt. McQueen, 43, are contained in the Juvenile Delinquents Act which says in part:

"Where a child is found to be a delinquent, he shall be dealt with, not as an offender, but as one requiring help, guidance and proper supervision."

McQueen said this section of the act and the one following are the "crux" of his work.

The act says: "...the care, custody and discipline of a juvenile shall be as nearly as possible as should be given by its parents. As far as practicable, every juvenile delinquent shall be treated, not as a criminal, but as a misdirected and misguided child, and one needing an encouragement help and assistance."

When your child has been picked up by the police, Sgt. McQueen said, you are contacted as soon as possible to attend with your child in an interview with the Sargent.

"The main reason for the interview," Sgt. McQueen said, "is to establish a recommendation to the court." He added that a court appearance may not be necessary because the bureau had a number of methods of dealing with children.

The 14-year police veteran, who has headed the youth bureau since its inception in Halton Hills in 1972, told the Herald that for minor offences, "Perhaps we'll take no action."

This would be the case if he could be satisfied that the child came from a good family and had good discipline. He pointed out that the "vast majority" of

children in trouble come from middle class and upper middle class homes.

"Less than three percent of the kids I see come from broken families."

Emphasizing that each case is approached on an individual level, Sgt. McQueen said should the child be in trouble again, he or she would receive a reprimand with a caution.

"Well over 95 percent of the kids, you can talk to. You point out he has made a mistake and must bear the responsibility."

"When I get together with the parents and a boy, it's for one reason. We're not here to discuss a criminal. We're here to discuss a boy and how to ease him back into the main stream."

A further method the youth bureau uses, Sgt. McQueen said, is a "voluntary supervision programme," an agreement between the parents, the child and the youth officer which sets out guidelines to govern the conduct of the child for a specific period. Often, this takes the form of a curfew and a warning to stay away from potential trouble spots.

He said that probably 50 percent of his work deals with

family problems which are not included in the statistics of the bureau.

"Parents may wish a bit of advice on who to see," he said. If so, they are referred to the Children's Aid, Family Counselling, Department of Public Health, Addiction Research Foundation, Board of Education attendance counsellors, psychiatric facilities in Brampton, Guelph and Burlington, or any other suitable agencies.

Sgt. McQueen also works with local sports groups, service clubs and army cadets in attempting to get a youngster back onto the rails. Local groups are "most co-operative," he said.

"When you bring a child to Juvenile Court," he said, "it's for authority to get the child treated."

In reviewing the statistics for the number of juveniles and the number of offences in 1975, Sgt. McQueen was delighted to note a decline of about 12 percent over the previous year. Pointing out that the bureau will release only percentages and not actual figures, he added that one out of five juvenile offenders was female.

An important part of the work of the youth bureau is to make youngsters and adults too, aware of what the youth bureau does. Last year, Sgt. McQueen estimated he had 35 speaking engagements, all of them outside working hours.

In addition to attending "bear pit sessions" in local high schools, Sgt. McQueen and Constable Wayne Jessup who also works on the youth bureau covering the Acton and Milton areas, make a special effort to quench any sudden upsurge in glue-sniffing or shoplifting, for example.

"If high school kids were running our society," Sgt. McQueen said "they would be much tougher on society."

He said, "the minute the kids have the slightest feeling you are taking them along the garden path, or just throwing out cliches, they'll back right off."

He said he often points out to kids that it can be a "dirty, rotten world but a person has to live in it. But once you learn to live, life can be wonderful. But God help us when the day comes when children don't make mistakes."

Sgt. McQueen said he believes children have to be influenced by parents who set a good example and "not the big stick" but he sees nothing wrong with corporal punishment.



SERGEANT AL MCQUEEN counsels a father and a little boy

"It saves a lot of words and can't be misunderstood," he said, adding that it should never be more severe than a "cuff on the head. If you didn't make a point with the first, three won't make any difference."

Sgt. McQueen originally wanted to be an opera singer but after five years in the navy and a year with the Ontario Provincial Police he decided on the police force here.

He is married and has two sons and a daughter and the only hobby he admits to is a 10-acre farm near Ballinacree. "Why did I get into the youth bureau? Well, for the record, I'd have to say for the challenge and the obvious need, but off the record, because it's extremely fascinating."

Parents must accept responsibilities



YOUTH BUREAU CONSTABLE Wayne Jessup, with John Hancock (left) of Georgetown's Canadian Tire Store set up a poster warning of dangers of shop-lifting.

Since last March Constable Wayne Jessup has worked with Youth Bureau head, Sgt. Al McQueen and is responsible for the bureau's activities in Acton and Milton.

A four-year veteran of the District 1, Halton Hills police station, Const. Jessup, 34, told the Herald in a recent interview that he did not get into police work with burning eagerness.

After graduating from Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Toronto in 1964 with a diploma in metallurgy, he worked for the Orenda Division of Hawker-Siddeley, aerospace manufacturers in Windsor and Streetsville.

But working as a "part-time cop" with the auxiliary of the Ontario Provincial Police for a year gave him an insight into police work, he said, and he made the switch.

"Being rather conservative," he said, "I don't jump right into a thing."

But after getting a chance to work on the sensitive Youth Bureau, "I didn't turn the opportunity down."

In the Youth Bureau, he said the "majority of our problem is willful damage of public and private property."

A problem that stays with the Youth Bureau is why children from good homes where they receive discipline should become vandals.

"I'm not a philosopher, but it must mean something."

He said parents must accept responsibility for their children and discuss their own children if they wish those children to keep out of trouble with the police.

Of the Youth Bureau, he said, "We're here basically to help the kids."

Something that has not helped keep children out of trouble is the lowering of the drinking age from 21 to 18, Const. Jessup believes. He said children of "14 and 15" are being found drunk at school dances. Even more dangerous as a consequence of the lower drinking age is the fact police are discovering more impaired 16-year-old drivers.

Next to alcohol and the problems it causes children. The next most serious problem is shop-lifting, said Const. Jessup who was unhappy to note that for many children, "it's the first time caught, not the first time stealing."

Like Sgt. McQueen, head of the Youth Bureau, Const. Jessup is a believer in "a certain amount of corporal punishment."

You definitely don't want to beat your kids," he said, "but you do need to get the message across."

He re-emphasized the belief

that parents who must bear total responsibility for their children, adding that the job of the Youth Bureau could be easier if more parents were able to answer the question: "Do you know where your children are now?"

Of working on the Youth Bureau he said, "I enjoy it. It's

got its frustrations but what job hasn't?"

When he is not out looking for runaway children, holding interviews with concerned parents, speaking to children, Const. Jessup enjoys snowmobiling with his family. He has two girls aged ten and six.



GET INVOLVED WITH THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES.

INFANTRY

Consider the Infantry as an opportunity to discover yourself and the world. It is a hard demanding job but the rewards are great. Consider these:

TRAVEL
The Infantry are stationed in Victoria, B.C., Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, Petawawa Ontario, London, Ontario, Quebec and Lehr, West Germany. In addition soldiers are found in Cyprus and Egypt. Exercises are conducted from the Arctic Circle to Panama and from Norway to Alaska. We guarantee that you will know more of Canada and the World in five years.

COMPANIONSHIP
When you work, live and travel with 600 other guys for five years you develop some pretty good friendships which will last a lifetime, in or out of the Services.

PAY
An Infantryman earns the following:
Initially \$450 a month
After 1 year \$575 a month
After 4 years Up to \$1,952 per Year

In addition you receive foreign living allowances in Europe, UN pay in Cyprus, field pay on exercises and numerous little benefits such as movement allowances at every move. Further, you receive free medical and dental care and inexpensive room and board.

CAREER
Although many get out after five years of service, for those who decide on a career the opportunities for promotion are available to anybody who applies himself. Of course with a career a soldier becomes eligible for a great pension scheme which will provide for you on retirement.

PURPOSE
The Infantry are keeping the peace in Egypt and Cyprus. They are contributing to our defence commitment in Europe. Soldiers participate in exercises designed to guarantee Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic, and the last picture you saw of Forces personnel assisting in searches for lost children or escaped convicts or building dikes to prevent flooding were in all probability Infantrymen. We work for peace in Canada and around the world.

Requirements to join the Infantry can be found at the Canadian Forces Recruiting Centre, 150 Main Street West, Phone 523-2751 Monday to Friday - 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., or visit the Mobile Recruiting Unit, Georgetown Armouries 2nd and 4th Wednesday each month 12 noon-4:30 P.M.

RYDER'S TV PRESENTS

Quasar value time

NEW FROM QUASAR:



Micro-circuitry for greater reliability. Fully integrated circuits mean the work of hundreds of transistors, resistors and diodes. This means more compact construction, greater reliability and lower power consumption. It's the best advance in Solid State design (patented by Quasar).

NEW FROM QUASAR:

In-Line Matrix Stripe Picture Tube for a brilliant picture on color portables.

RYDER'S PRICE

\$851²⁰

RYDER'S PRICE

\$551⁹⁵

26" diagonal WORKS IN A DRAWER Color TV

Handsome Mediterranean-styled credenza in rich dark Vintage Oak grain finish.

- QS3000 100% Solid State Chassis
- Replaceable Plug-in Circuit Modules
- Super Insta-Matic color tuning
- Matrix Plus picture tube

MODEL WU9283MK
29 7/8" high, 35" wide, 18 1/2" deep



RYDER'S PRICE

\$433⁵⁸

14" diagonal SMALL SCREEN Color Portable

Compact portable designed for elegant simplicity

- QMX-1 100% Solid State chassis
- In-Line Matrix Stripe picture tube with pre-focus lens
- Picture Control
- Concealed carry handle and hideaway dipole antenna

MODEL WP3802MU



RYDER'S PRICE

\$458⁸⁵

16" Diagonal COLOUR PORTABLE

Compact Portable designed for elegant simplicity

- QMX - 1 100% Solid State Chassis
- In-Line Matrix stripe picture tube with Pro Focus Lens
- Picture Control
- Concealed carry handle and hideaway Dipole Antenna



RYDER'S PRICE

\$458⁸⁵

Model WP 4204 MW

15 1/4" High 22 1/4" Wide 15 1/8" Deep

RYDER'S PRICE

\$458⁸⁵

ALL THE WORKS IN A DRAWER TV MODELS COMPLETE WITH 2 YEAR WARRANTY



RYDER'S T.V.

MOORE PARK PLAZA

877-9796

