



Herb Garbutt / Torstar

Sabrina Corker, a financial adviser with Edward Jones, speaks to a group of Georgetown District High School students, at Monday's Reality Check event.

STUDENTS GET REALITY CHECK ON WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

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As a financial adviser with Edward Jones, Sabrina Corker often hears the same refrain.

"When I'm dealing with the finances of people in their 40s, they always say they wish someone had explained finances to them when they were in school, that they would be in a much different place now."

Georgetown District High School's Reality Check, was set up to do just that — to get students thinking about the realities they will face when they graduate. Fifteen businesses and organizations recently set up in the school's gym to offer advice on a wide variety of topics, including choosing a career, finances, buying a car, accessing public services and living a healthy lifestyle.

"I never thought I would hear the advice to get a credit card," said Sydney Patten, who was

among approximately 300 Grade 11 students taking part. "But they explained that using it, and making payments, will help you establish credit."

Real estate agent Silvana Bezina, from Sil Sells, explained credit scores to students and how having a good credit score will help them when it comes time to make big purchases down the road. She also cautioned how failing to make payments can have a negative effect, even when it comes to renting an apartment.

"You don't think about having to borrow money," said student Nadia Nikolov, "but at some point, you're going to have to."

The event also offered up advice from career planners, tips on interviewing and resume preparation while also giving students some exposure to careers they may not have thought about.

"Not a lot of people are going into trades," said contractor Lisa Haller, of My Brother Lisa. "It's a

great time to get involved and it can lead to other things like project management."

Jana McDonald, of Serendipity Careers, worked as a career adviser at the University of Guelph and said many students at the university level are still unsure about the career they'd like to pursue. She tries to find an intersection of where the student's interests meet a need.

The students also heard from Melissa Maker, who has built her own cleaning company, using her Clean My Space YouTube channel to promote organizing and cleaning tips to help build her brand.

She encouraged students to pursue what they are passionate about, to improve their communication skills and broaden their interests.

"We prepare kids academically, but (Reality Check) is more, 'what's life like after high school?'" said GDHS vice-principal Patricia Clark.

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