

Shoppers Drug Mart backs crisis line funding



Photo by RIZIERO VERTOLLI

Joseph Lum, owner of the Shoppers Drug Mart at Hopedale Mall, presents \$2,000 cheque to Halton Rape Crisis Centre co-executive-director Mary O'Brien and HRCC educators, Lynda Levins and Jacquelyn Schlatman. Ms. Lum made the presentation on behalf of other area SDM units represented by (from left) Kathi Marling, Upper Oakville and Jeff Hanbali, Burlington.

By **WILMA BLOKHUIS**
Special to The Champion

Pictures of a shattered life, a baby carriage left abandoned, squalor and abuse. These are the images of photographer and Halton Rape Crisis Centre (HRCC) volunteer Bryonie Wise.

The creative photographer presented six images to the HRCC for its new poster campaign to encourage high school students to call its 24-hour crisis line if they have been the victims of abuse, date rape, discrimination, drug and alcohol abuse, or just need to talk.

"They can call us for just about any reason," says Lynda Levins, community educator, "not only if they're in a crisis or have been sexually assaulted or abused."

From the photographic submissions, the HRCC will select four images for the posters to be distributed to every high school in Halton.

Many calls

Last year, the HRCC crisis line received 2,500 calls — about 150 to 200 a month. "Most of our calls come in after our Take Back the Night Walk in September," says Mary O'Brien, co-executive director.

To help finance this campaign, the

HRCC has received a \$2,000 donation from all 12 Shoppers' Drug Mart stores in Halton. The contribution was spearheaded by Joseph Lum, pharmacist-owner of a Shoppers Drug Mart in Oakville.

"Shoppers' Drug sees the value of this service in the community," said Mr. Lum of his participation.

"Joseph gets involved in community projects," continued Ms O'Brien, adding after she and Mr. Lum met to discuss this proposal, Mr. Lum got the other stores to support it.

"I attended a few of the HRCC's education committee meetings, and I got the other stores in Halton to help out," said Mr. Lum.

"We also met with students to ask them what type of poster would appeal to them, and those with a graphic photograph and the least amount of words, are best," said Ms Levins.

"All they need to know is that the service is here, and the phone number." She added the poster had to appeal to male and female students alike.

"We've had calls from males asking us to help their girlfriends or sisters who have revealed something to them," said Ms Levins. "Making that first call is most important."

Eating disorders

The crisis line also gets calls about females having eating disorders and males taking steroids, said Ms Levins. "Kids are falling short of their media image and that's causing problems."

Discrimination is another issue, and the HRCC is planning to launch a similar multicultural poster campaign. "A lot of kids are getting harassment at school because they come from another culture," said Ms Levins.

Mr. Lum said the efforts of the HRCC in education and prevention fit in with what he's doing — offering information and presentations on women's health, menopause, osteoporosis, drug abuse, and other health issues.

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