

Arts & Entertainment

Local teen breaks rap trend with new CD

Josh Mandryk's CD has nothing to do with drugs or violence

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**
The Champion

Sixteen-year-old Josh Mandryk knows all too well that most rap music these days is an uninspiring medley of drugs, violence and sex.

But unlike many of his peers, he's voicing his opposition to the disturbing trend and is taking his campaign one step further — by providing an alternative.

"My music isn't about guns and drugs like most songs polluting rap music are about, mainly because I don't do drugs and I think gun violence is stupid," said the Milton District High School student, adding, "The image most mainstream rap puts out is messing up kids."

In just a few days, Josh will have 500 CDs ready to sell to his widening fan base. His debut project is entitled 'Emcee OJ: My Foot in the Door'.

The Campbellville resident said he's made sure his project is free of the negative messages that seem to have become the norm in rap culture.

"Rap is rhythm and poetry. It's not supposed to be about killing people," he said.

But he's quick to point out he's no goodie-two-shoes, either.

"I don't preach and I speak anything and everything that's on my mind," he said, explaining writing rap has been a creative outlet of his for some time now.

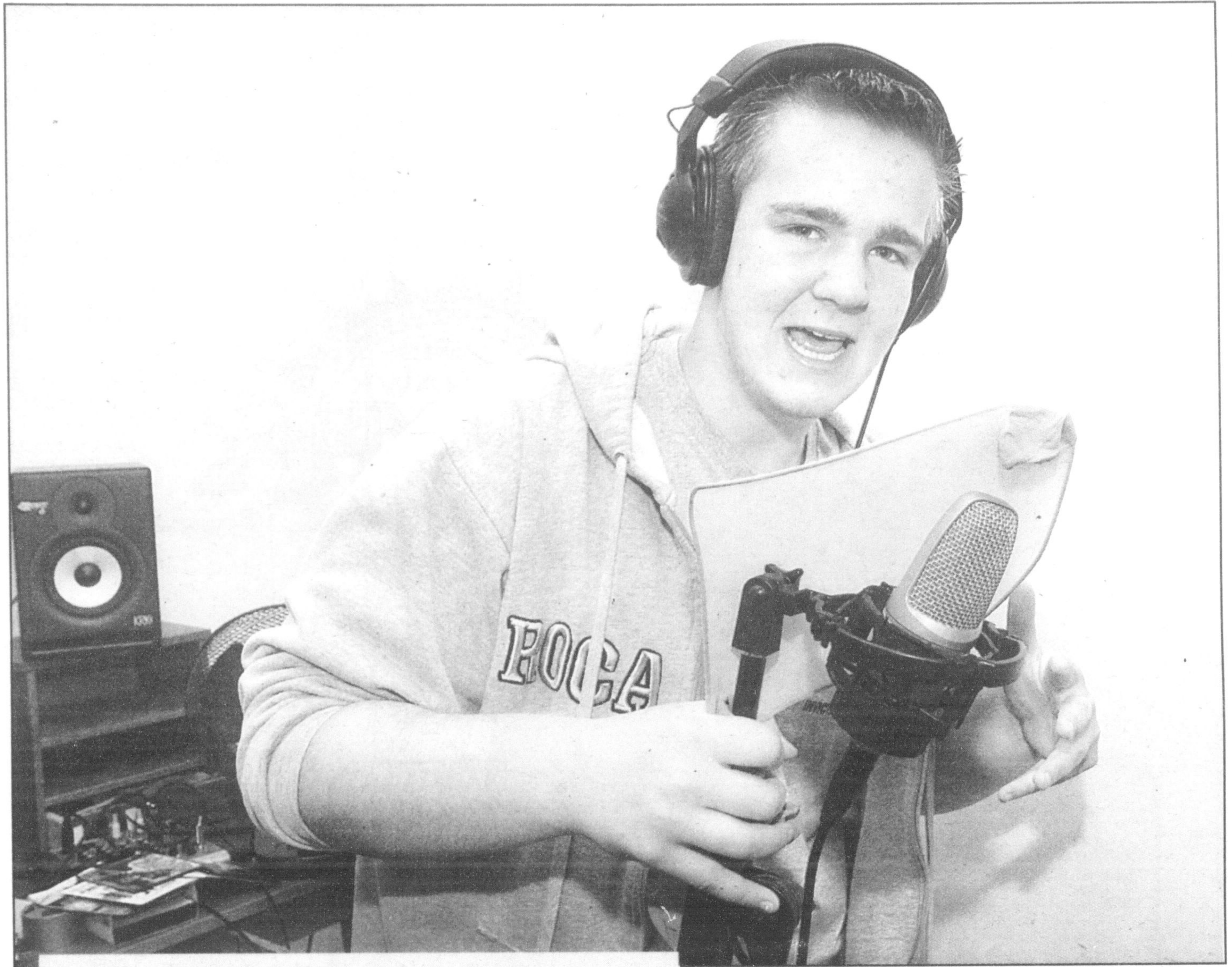
Some artists giving rap bad name

Rap songs should be honest, Josh said. They should reflect what's really going on in the artist's life, and that's what he tries to do. But he said mainstream artists are no longer doing that.

"The way rap is going, it's all about guns and drugs. You can't tell me that's their real lives," he said.

There are still artists without such a penchant for negativity, but Josh said the other artists are giving rap a bad name.

"To the average person, they don't think about the positive stuff (when they think of rap), they think of the stuff they hear on the



Milton District High School's Josh Mandryk eagerly awaits the release of his debut CD entitled 'Emcee OJ: My Foot in the Door'.

Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

radio."

The CD has 11 tracks and features a local R and B singer, a student at Bishop Reding, plus a verse from Bishop Brigante, whom those in-the-know will recognize as a hip hop artist on Toronto's Section 6 Entertainment label.

The CD was recorded at Josh's house, where he has some recording equipment, and then sent out to be mixed and

'pressed.'

Milton isn't exactly a bustling hub for the hip-hop scene. Realizing that, Josh is more than happy to explain things in simple terms to those not familiar with the current rap lingo.

First off, it's important to understand the relationship between rap and hip-hop. Basically, rap is one of four elements that

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