

200 hear informative drug discussion



Velia Ciccone of Jacey Anne Blvd., Richmond Hill holds her daughter Adele, who was born April 25 at 7:02 p.m. She is a new baby sister for Ricky and the apple of daddy Leonardo's eye. (Liberal Photo by Bruce Hogg).

Look who's arrived

The race is still going on, but last week it was almost a tie. Baby girls edged out baby boys by one at York Central Hospital in Richmond Hill.

Monday, April 23
Janice and Angelo Risi, Richmond Hill, a son at 8:53 a.m.
Ingrid and Peter Don, Vandorf, a son at 10:03 p.m.

Wednesday, April 25
Leonarda and Velia Ciccone, Richmond Hill, a daughter at 7:02 p.m.
Teresa and Michael Burkart, Newmarket, a son at 8:32 p.m.
Susan and Keith Irwin, Oak Ridges, a son at 1:59 p.m.

Thursday, April 26
Catherine and David Carnell, Newmarket, a daughter at 9:28 p.m.
Barbara and Richard Lawford, Thornhill, a daughter at 3:27 p.m.

Friday, April 27
Naseen and Rashan Jessa, Thornhill, a daughter at 1:46 a.m.
Lynn and Patrick Broughton, Stouffville, a daughter at 3:27 p.m.

Sunday, April 29
Christine and David Elms, Thornhill, a son at 7:52 p.m.
Brenda and John Calder, Thornhill, a daughter at 5:25 p.m.

By STEVE PEARLSTEIN
Liberal Staff Writer

More than 200 concerned parents and teachers came out to a seminar on drug abuse at St. Robert's Catholic High School last Wednesday and before the night was over, many got their first chance to inhale some marijuana smoke — second hand, of course.

An able panel of guests presented different views on the reasons for the use and misuse of narcotics, alcohol and barbituates. Parents were given a chance to ask questions anonymously at the end of the 2½-hour session.

The panel was composed of Norm Panzica from the Council on Drug Abuse; York County Probation Officer Jack Oosterveer; Separate School Board Chairman Larry Pelliccione; St. Robert's guidance counsellor Fran Peake; and the head of the criminal investigation branch of the York Drug Unit, Detective-Sergeant Robert Wilson.

Mr. Wilson kicked the evening off by telling the audience the number one drug problem in York Region today by far, is alcohol. He said many people don't want to believe it is either a problem or a drug.

He claimed enormous amounts of money are spent as a result of alcohol-related accidents but large sums change hands regularly in the buying and selling of illicit drugs.

Most common of the controlled drugs is marijuana. He described it for parents and lit some up during a break so they could identify its acrid, odiferous quality.

"Columbian weed sells for \$60 per ounce and is very common on the streets of York. That amount will produce between 50 and 60 'joints'. Where do kids

get this kind of money?" he asked.

"Well, maybe a regular user will buy an ounce a week. You'll find many of the kids involved with drugs are often involved in other crimes to get their money," he said.

OTHER DRUGS
The Detective-Sergeant went on to explain the details and costs of a number of other drugs his department comes into contact with, including chemicals.

He stressed 95 per cent of the control of the illicit manufacture of drugs is in the hands of the 'vicious, organized motor cycle gangs' like Satan's Choice, the Outlaws and Black Diamond Riders.

Some of the drugs he mentioned: hashish — eight times more potent than marijuana; hash oil, derived from the same part of the cannabis plant (a weed) — the most common quantity is a 5-gram vial, which sells for \$80-\$90 (the 'working ingredient' THC, is again more concentrated than that found in hash).

Hash oil is also referred to as 'honey oil' and will often be cut or mixed with commodities like Vick's Vapo-rub.

One of the chemicals which has become a serious problem for the drug unit is PCP or pencycladine, also commonly known as Angel Dust.

This stuff is often sold as cocaine and snorted. The only known use for it is by veterinarians as a tranquilizer for animals.

The cost of a gram of coke (cocaine) is \$80 and one pound of the sugar-like substance will get about \$30,000 on today's market.

Other drugs briefly discussed were heroin, methamphetamine or speed (both controlled

under the Food and Drug Act), LSD or Lysergic Acid Diethylamide, which is restricted under the Narcotic Control Act and MDA, a chemical falsely reputed to enhance sexual performance.

Mr. Pelliccione informed parents the board staff is currently at work on a policy dealing with drug abusers in the school system.

"I can tell you from the start, trustees will be taking a hard line in these cases. Hardline is likely to be given to principals to expel students caught for these infractions," he said.

Acknowledging students also have rights, he said an opportunity would be provided where a student could appeal to a

special committee of trustees, who would decide if re-admittance to school should be allowed.

RIGHT TO EXPEL
The chairman read a section of the Education Act of Ontario which gives school boards the right to expel students from the system where their behavior might in any way be injurious to the performance of other students.

"Students, as well as parents, must be made aware of the consequences for the actions of drug or alcohol abusers," he said.

Mr. Panzica, who has written several newspaper articles and appeared before the Senate Sub-committee on Drug Abuse as well as working for the Council

on Drug Abuse, took a lighter approach to today's problem by examining the "Me Syndrome" and why kids are turning to drugs.

He prefaced his presentation by saying "most kids don't do dope and most of those who do, get off it without getting caught, busted or into other trouble."

He also quoted several drug studies and told about a dozen anecdotes or "parables" concerning drug abuse.

"A U. S. biologist, a famous one, said everyone has denied the relationship between the hardened drug user and the vulnerable non-user except the police, who have to deal with reality everyday."

He feels the best way to teach kids anything is to

get them to admit to their own deficiencies so they don't turn their own compassions on themselves encouraging egocentricity.

He also said it is every parent's responsibility to explain their own shortcomings to their children to help avoid setting false examples and inaccurate impressions by kids.

Mr. Panzica is a crusader opposing the legalization of marijuana. He told the Senate sub-committee he would agree with that idea "over my dead body".

The committee also denied his suggestion the Bail Reform Act be revoked. The act says a drug offender doesn't have to post bail if the court feels he is likely to

appear in court and that the accused can be released from custody as long as there is no parent or present danger to the community. Panzica thinks both Decisions are absurd.

He told the audience he spoke to Monique Begin, the federal health minister, about the government's part in deterring marijuana use.

Her reply was the government is continuing its policy of active discouragement of the use of marijuana.

"That policy is almost non-existent and there's something else — the media is sinning because it is responsible for keeping all the facts and data about the effects of grass, from the public," he said.

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