

Police Chief warns students about drugs

By Ken Lusk

On Thursday, April 3, Terrace Bay Police Chief Russ Phillips held an informal session with parents to show them his presentation on drugs that he gives to students as part of the VIP program (Values, Influences and Peers).

The session was held at the Terrace Bay Public School and included information about drinking and drugs. Phillips had an overhead projector and tabletop displays to aid his presentation.

Phillips said he asks the students to define drugs; he asks them if they know where and how drugs can be obtained; what is the difference between prescription and non-prescription drugs; how they are used and should the youngsters be reading the labels on drugs.

He also said he explains to the kids that even though a person gets a certain prescription, a doctor may change it in order to acquire the desired result. He said sometimes a reaction to a drug may not be what was expected.

Phillips said he tells the kids that alcohol is also a drug and that "abuse can lead to personal, school or financial problems".

He said people who have a drug problem may also find themselves having problems with the law.

These people may turn to theft or break-ins, he said, to support their habit.

Different types of drugs

Phillips told the parents that mood drugs, or psychoactive drugs, alter the way a person thinks, feels and acts because they work on the mind.

He talked of prescription drugs and how important it is to read the labels on them. Using these too long is bad, he said. His example was that if the doctor prescribes them for a week, you should take them for a week.

Using these drugs for the wrong reason is bad too, Phillips said. Mixing these drugs with alcohol and then driving slows down your reaction time because they affect the motor controls of the body, he said.

Students old enough

Chief Phillips told the parents that the students he's presenting to now are old enough to realize what's going on.

The students are shown the effects of drinking because he shows them by example. Examples are asking a person who has been drinking to touch the tip of their nose with the tip of their finger or asking them to walk a straight line.

Phillips explains to the students how dangerous PCP, or Angel Dust, is. It gives people "unnatural strength" and is "extremely dangerous", he said.

Phillips talked of tolerance to a drug, in that you need more and more of the drug each time it's used.

His presentation also touched upon street drugs and "quality control". "We tell them [the students] that users don't know exactly what they're taking," said Phillips. "It is never pure- it is cut down" by things from under the sink in many instances.

Rat poison

Phillips said that many drugs are

"cut down" with products found under the average kitchen sink like strychnine (rat poison). Phillips said he emphasizes to the students that you don't know who has handled drugs and you don't know what is in them.

Phillips ran through some facts about alcohol. He said it is a "depressant- "few people realize

that." He said the students know that there is alcohol in vanilla extract but they don't know about shoe polish.

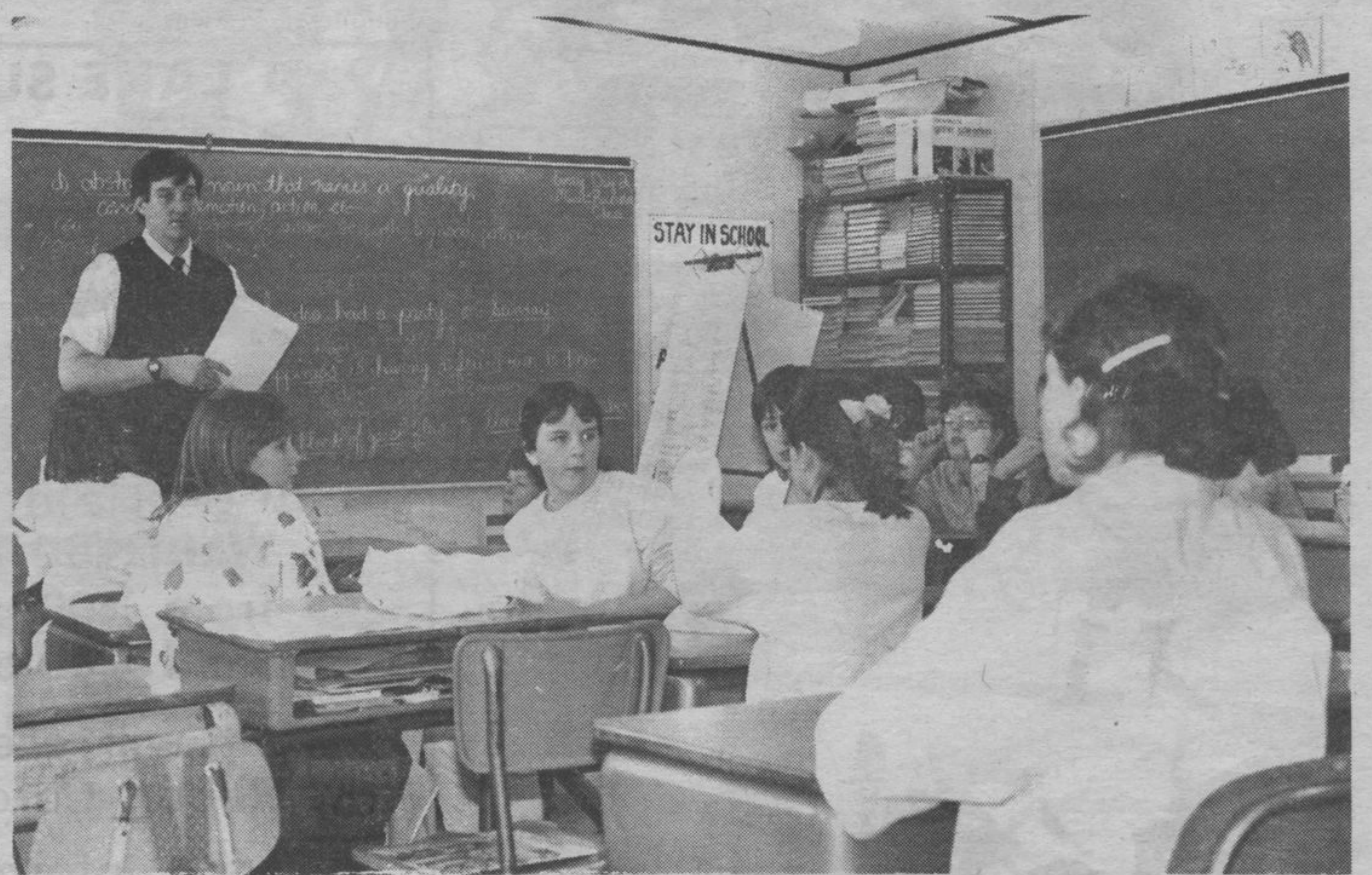
It is shown through the Drinking and Driving program, Phillips said, how alcohol affects people physically. The alcohol results in loss of co-ordination and people often suffer from delirium when

they withdraw from it.

Many alcohol-related incidents

Police Chief Phillips said that the following incidents are alcohol-related: 60 per cent of suicides; 70 per cent of murders and violent crimes; 45 per cent of all falls; 26 per cent of fire deaths; 60 per cent

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Danger of drugs

Terrace Bay Police Chief Russ Phillips can be seen above answering questions of the Gr. 6 class at the Terrace Bay Public School. It was on Friday, April 3, and he talked to the students

about the dangers of drugs. His presentation is part of the VIP program (Values, Influences and Peers) ongoing at local schools. *See related story on page 1. Photo by Ken Lusk).

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