

Camp offers policing skills for kids

BY DANIEL SCHWAB

A group of pre-teen campers are becoming junior police officers this week, during the 13th annual Essex OPP Cop Camp.

Throughout the week, 25 Ontario Provincial Police officers will teach the youngsters team building skills, self-defence methods and crime scene investiga-

tion tactics at Camp Cedarwin on County Road 23.

"We're taking your normal leadership camp and adding a police theme to it," said O.P.P. Sgt. Rico Tonial.

Tonial said the officers have drawn on their own experiences from the Ontario Police College in Aylmer, Ont. to instruct the campers.

OPP Const. Will Chisholm said the 11 and 12 year olds are at a particularly impressionable age and the camp helps to steer them in a positive direction.

"They are open to our opinions and what we have to teach," Chisholm said. "And they're kind of fearless. I really think this is an experience they'll never forget."

Chisholm said the campers are learning and doing things they've never been exposed to before, such as rock-wall climbing.

Raymond Masse, 11, said he is especially excited about this activity.

"I've tried it twice before and didn't do that well," he said. "This time I'll do better."

Chisholm said the camp also teaches kids determina-



Janet Hayes, right, talks about the importance of team building skills and leadership with her "Emergency Response Team" at Camp Cedarwin Aug. 14. The weeklong camp, run by Ontario Provincial Police officers and auxiliary members, offers kids instruction on crime scene investigation, self-defence methods and marching.

tion and perseverance.

"A lot of these kids will push themselves to the limit," he said. "We are encouraging them not to give up."

The campers are divided into five teams—emergency

response, K-9, marine, patrol and motorcycle, each representing a branch of the OPP.

Some of their activities also include bowling, fishing and a trip to Colasanti's Tropical Gardens.

Campers will also be

treated to a fireworks display and a performance by the OPP Drum Team.

To conclude the week, on Aug. 18 the kids will participate in a formal march around the campground for their parents.

Family to Family Education Program

The Family to Family program is designed for the families and friends of individuals with, or exhibiting signs or symptoms of a serious and persistent mental illness, for example: schizophrenia, major depression, bipolar illness, panic disorder, obsessive compulsive

disorder or borderline personality disorder.

The 12-week course starts Tuesday, September 12 from 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. There is no charge for those who participate.

Participants in the program last year described it as empowering, enlighten-

ing, insightful, encouraging, comforting, and life changing.

Contact John Norton at Leamington District Memorial Hospital at 519-326-2373, ext. 4155 for further information and registration. Registration is limited to 25.

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