

# Stouffville students learn mediation solution

BY HANNELORE VOLPE  
Staff Writer

Partners in Mediation, a new program being developed at Stouffville District Secondary School, will allow students to choose a peer mediator to help them resolve conflicts.

The program grew out of discussions with BridgeBuilders, a group from the Stouffville Community Mennonite Church, SDSS, Community Mediation Services of York Region (CMSYR) and Willowgrove in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

A two-day workshop, held at Willowgrove from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on March 11 and 12, will introduce conflict resolution and peer mediation skills. It's geared towards those who want

to become peer mediators through a co-op program. Two facilitators from CMSYR will lead the sessions.

*Mr. Lewis hopes to eventually build up a pool of about 10 peer mediators...*

Several presentations on conflict resolution were made by members of Willowgrove and BridgeBuilders at the high school.

About 20 participants, including students, are expected at next week's workshop.

Peer mediation is something that works, SDSS principal Tony

Lewis observed. He noted the incidence of repeat suspensions handed out at junior high school in Baltimore, Maryland, he visited last year decreased by 80 to 90 percent after such a program was put in place.

Mr. Lewis hopes to eventually build up a pool of about 10 peer mediators of various ages who are trained to follow a specific process to help resolve student conflicts at SDSS.

Willowgrove, which offers camp programs and outdoor education programs for schools, will be one of the co-op sites.

The initiative for Partners in Mediation started almost two years ago when three members of the Community Mennonite Church in Stouffville formed the BridgeBuilders group and approached SDSS with the idea for a conflict resolution program.

There is no charge for the two-day workshop. Costs have been defrayed by a \$900 donation from the Stouffville Ministerial Association and a \$4,000 contribution by the Mennonite Savings and Credit Union.

Registration and other information is available by calling 905-640-2127.

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To enter, e-mail name and daytime phone number to editor Jim Mason at: jmason@econ-sun.com

No phone calls please. We will randomly draw 11 names.

Entry deadline is noon, Thursday, Mar. 14.

## CORRECTION

An article in the spring edition of Good Life, Camp Gottapickemgood, contained incorrect information for contacting the Ontario Camping Association.

The correct telephone number is 416-485-0425; the fax number is 416-485-0422.

Good Life regrets the errors.

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**IRON CLAD GUARANTEE**  
I'm so confident that you will save at least 20% on your cooling and heating bills (I'm projecting more like 30% to 50%), that I will pay you Double The Difference for two years if you don't! Our Home Comfort Advisors will show you how it works.  
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Warmly,  
**John Brandemark**  
General Manager

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