

Technology brings cops, students together

BY CAROLINE GRECH
Staff Writer

York Regional Police got together with 1,000 students from six high schools in York Region the high-tech way Monday morning.

The first ever video conferencing assembly featured a panel of officers answered questions from the cafeteria of Dr. J.M. Denison Secondary School in Newmarket, as part safety week events.

Cameras and computers projected each speaker's image to high schools as far away as Vaughan.

Each school participating in the event was likewise shown across the screen in the Newmarket high school.

"Our nation and our community is

not on the verge of a youth crime crisis," Chief Armand La Barge told students. "Youth are more likely to be the victims of crime, rather than committing the crime."

Presentations covered everything from relationship abuse to traffic safety, followed by a question and answer session.

But true to technology, audio problems led to the session being cut short after a few questions.

Students snickered as officials tried to fix the audio problems that made questions impossible to hear.

When told there would be no more questions, a large groan rose from students.

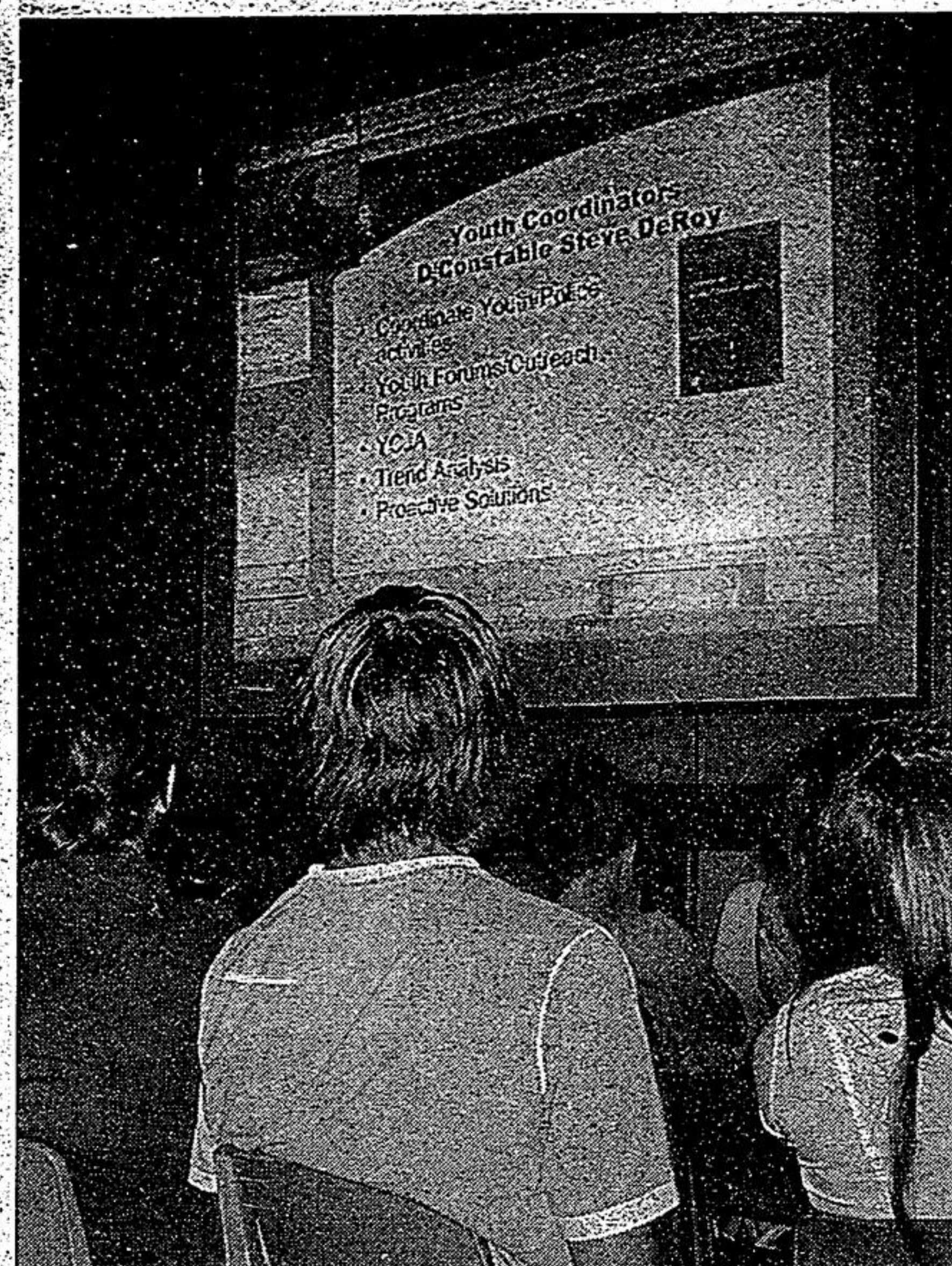
"I wish there were more questions asked," Grade 10 student Matt Woronecki said, adding he was hoping to hear more about teen gangs. "We didn't address many of the issues."

Some found the session informative, despite the technical glitches.

"I learned about cyber bullying. I didn't know it happened so often," Grade 10 student Dayna Upson said.

Despite the technical glitches, board spokesperson Ross Virgo called the presentations a benefit to students.

"As far as learning is concerned, an interactive environment is always preferable and many students would have liked more time to ask more questions," Mr. Virgo said.



STAFF PHOTO/CAROLINE GRECH

Students at Dr. J.M. Denison Secondary School in Newmarket watch a video presentation by York Regional Police. Schools across the region were linked for the video-conference Monday morning.

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