

# Phone ban met with skepticism

BY JOE FANTAUZZI  
Staff Writer

A veteran crossing guard questions if a proposed ban on motorists using cellphones in school zones can be enforced.

Provincial Progressive Conservative MPP John O'Toole introduced private members legislation Wednesday that would ban the use of a cellphone, pager, personal data assistant, portable computer and fax machine in a community safety zone, within 100 metres of a school crossing and within 200 metres of the scene of a vehicle collision.

Standing at the busy corner of Stouffer and Main streets during Thursday's lunch hour, clad in a fluorescent orange jacket with a reflective green 'X' on the back and stop sign in hand, Stouffville's Sharon Norton said she has witnessed many distracted drivers on cellphones whipping around corners.

Ms Norton, who has served as a crossing guard for nearly two decades, doesn't disagree with the ideas contained in the proposed legislation, but questions the practicality of the plan.

"How are you going to enforce it?" Ms Norton said

between guiding groups of children safely across Main in front of Summitview Public School.

"I'm not saying cellphones are a bad thing, but there is a time and place, I think."

If passed, the bill would also require the province to keep records of collisions in which a cellphone or similar device was used, according to a news release issued by Mr. O'Toole.

Student drivers would be tested on their knowledge of the cellphone bans. Exceptions would be made for the emergency use of cellphones, the release said.

"Each of these locations demands the utmost attention from the driver," Mr. O'Toole said in a statement. "Not all Ontarians agree with a total ban on the use of cellphones while driving."

The ministry of transportation will be monitoring the bill as it moves through the legislature, said Bob Nichols, media liaison officer.

"Our ministry continues to review the latest research and best practices on driver distraction, including the effectiveness of laws in other jurisdictions that ban the use of cellphones while driving," he said.



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

York Regional Police Staff-Sgt. Shelly Rogers (from left), guest speaker and sexual assault survivor Galit Solomon and York Region Abuse Program executive director Alison Peck chat prior to a sexual assault awareness workshop at the Community Safety Village on Stouffville Road.

## Talking about sex assault helps CTV reporter heal

BY JOE FANTAUZZI  
Staff Writer

He struck when Galit Solomon was 12.

In August 1988, Ms Solomon visited her best friend. She had walked the same route as she did so many times before. This time it was different because her friend's father molested her, she said.

At times emotional, Ms Solomon recounted her story as part of a community forum May 2 at the Community Safety Village in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

May has been declared Sexual Assault Awareness Month. York police and the Women's Support Network of York Region held the workshop to increase awareness of the issue.

"I had no idea it was going to be the last time I was going to take that walk and be myself," Ms Solomon, now a CTV reporter, told a packed room.

"Speaking today is a very important part of my healing process," Ms Solomon said. "After 20 years, I learned something: you never quite get over it, but you do learn to manage it."

There were 290 incidents of sexual assault reported in York Region last year, Deputy Chief Eric Jolliffe said, adding fewer than 10 per cent of sexual assaults are reported.

"I was young, innocent and full of life and I was looking forward to my life," Ms Solomon said. "I left there broken and feeling damaged and used. That word: 'damaged' has shaped me over the years because there have been moments where I have described myself to people, at least feeling like I'm damaged goods."

Halting only a moment to weep and then collect herself, Ms Solomon moved on.

She kept the abuse a secret until recently because she could not comprehend what had happened and worried about how people would view her and her family, she said.

"You can never really run away from the images etched in your mind," Ms Solomon said. "There is so much damage done because of the culture of silence around the issue."

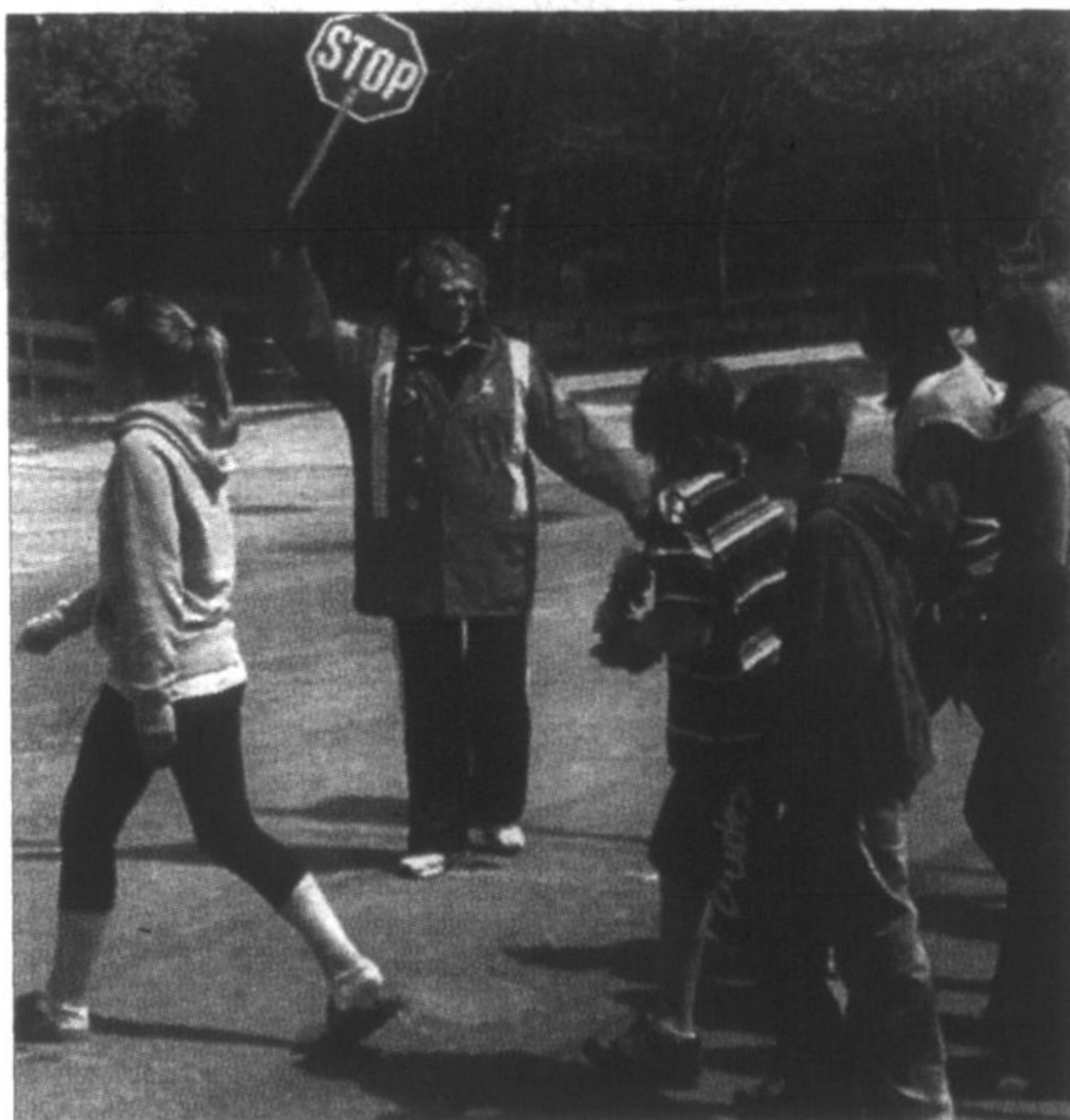
It is time for the issue to come out of the closet, Ms Solomon said. She added while she still struggles with the abuse, she believes speaking out may be why she is feeling a change inside her.

*She kept the abuse a secret until recently because she could not comprehend what had happened and worried about how people would view her and her family, she said.*

"We have to start calling it what it is because if we don't, how can we expect our children to come to us and tell us what they are going through?" she asked.

Ms Solomon chose to speak out because when she was attacked, she felt alone and she knows there are other young people being victimized the same way, she said.

"I want to tell that child you're not alone — I know exactly what you're going through," Ms Solomon said. "I also want to tell that child there are services out there and there are people who are paid to help you and there are people who just care to help you."



STAFF PHOTO/JIM MASON

Sharon Norton, a crossing guard at Summitview Public School in Stouffville for 19 years, wonders if a car phone ban near schools can be enforced.

## Whitchurch-Stouffville News Digest

Visit [yorkregion.com](http://yorkregion.com) for more on these and other stories

### Sunday runs, theme rides on track for tourist train

The York-Durham Heritage Railway is back on track for this season.

June 1 is the official opening for the tourist railway, which will run regularly between Stouffville and Uxbridge on Sundays.

The train leaves Uxbridge at 10 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. and leaves from the Stouffville station at noon.

Horse drawn carriages will meet the lunchtime passengers and offer a tour of downtown Uxbridge at no additional cost.

In addition to the Sunday runs, several theme days take place, including the Unionville Festival June 7, Father's Day June 15 and the Stouffville Strawberry Festival June 28.

Halloween and Santa trains also start in late October through to December.

The return adult fare is \$22 and \$14 for children under 12. Seniors 65 and older and students 13 to 17 are \$20. Children under two travel free.

The train is available for birthday parties, school field trips and corporate events.

For information go to [ydrh.on.ca](http://ydrh.on.ca), e-mail [info@ydrh.on.ca](mailto:info@ydrh.on.ca) or call 905-852-3696.

### Prayer breakfast sold out

It's too late if you still need tickets for the Whitchurch-Stouffville Prayer Breakfast.

Tickets for the Thursday's annual event at Station Creek Golf Club in Gormley sold out this week.

Hilary Price, a Stouffville resident and native of England, is this year's guest speaker.

### Editor chairs faith meeting

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association presents an inter-faith seminar at Christ Church Anglican today from 4 to 6 p.m. Registration starts at 3:30 p.m.

Hear Hindu, Christian and Islamic speakers. Sun-Tribune editor Jim Mason will act as moderator.

Young people are particularly welcome. A discussion period and refreshments follow.

To reserve a spot, call 416-562-0596. To reserve a spot, call 416-562-0596. The church is at 254 Sunset Blvd., next to Orchard Park Public School in Stouffville.



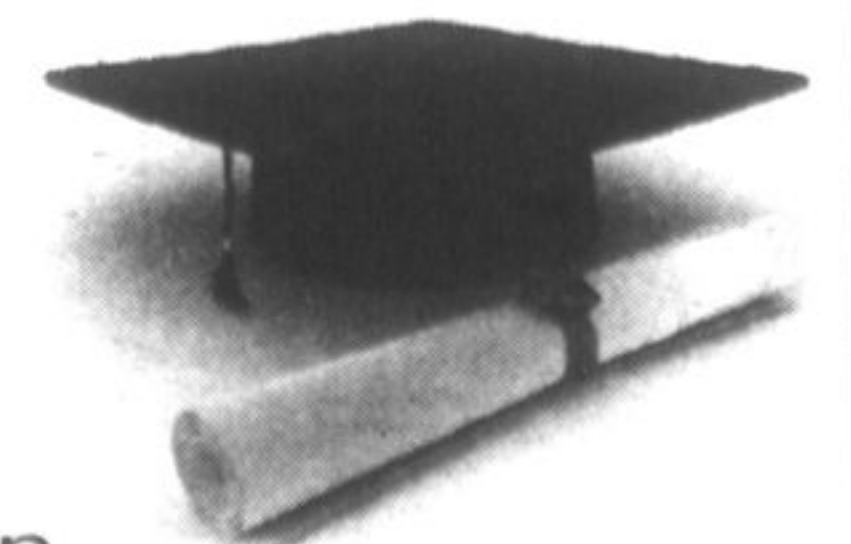
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