

November growing on police

Should you be pulled over for speeding in York Region this month, don't be surprised if the constable at your car window is sporting a fu-man-chu, handlebar or walrus-style moustache.

Close to 100 York Regional Police officers will be donating their upper lips to the November prostate cancer awareness initiative, known as Movember, featuring men worldwide growing moustaches.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer for males and one in seven Canadian men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime. Roughly 4,500 die from the disease in Canada each year.

Despite these grim statistics, prostate cancer is curable if caught in time, so raising awareness is key, said Movember Canada director, Pete Bombacci, Monday.

"Like any cancer, the question we ask ourselves with prostate cancer is 'how can we prevent it?'. What better way to raise awareness than by growing a moustache for the month. If it's on your face, it (prostate cancer) will be on your mind," said Mr. Bombacci, adding warding against prostate cancer can be as simple as maintaining yearly check-ups with your physician.

"As men, we will readily spend thousands of dollars to tune up our cars, but often avoid giving our bodies the same attention," he added.

Last year's Movember Canada initiative raised \$22.3 million, with 119,000 registered volunteers and participants. More than half of those moustaches were in Ontario.

To view the YRPA team page, start or join a team and make a donation, visit ca.movember.com

Chores, sleep top time list

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Relationships and health were priorities. One in five Ontarians would invest the hour in family and friends and 13 per cent would exercise. Nationally, 25 per cent said they would spend their hour with family and friends and the 14 per cent said they would exercise.

The last thing time-stressed Canadians want to do is work. A solitary 4 per cent in the province said they would spend their hour on the job, versus 3 per cent nationally.

Five per cent of Ontarians would pursue personal interests or hobbies, compared to 6 per cent in other parts of Canada. Eight per cent of Ontarians would devote their extra hour to community service, compared to 5 per cent nationally.

The survey sends a clear message, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada president Bruce MacDonald said.

"Ontarians, like people right across this country, need to make room in their busy lives for their human needs," he said. "Imagine what could happen to levels of personal satisfaction and connectedness if everyone could free up just one hour to improve life in their communities."

Big Brothers Big Sisters of York executive director Grant Peckford agreed.

"From our perspective, it's the power of the hour," he said. "When we look at what can be done in that time, an hour is huge."

Specifically, his organization's in-school mentoring program is in need of volunteers who could spare a bit of time each week.

Here is how Ontarians will spend their extra hour.

- ▶ 1. Completing household errands and chores (28 per cent)
- ▶ 2. Catching up on sleep (23 per cent)
- ▶ 3. Family and friends (20 per cent)
- ▶ 4. Exercise (13 per cent)

"The program benefits a child who could use mentoring one hour per week," Mr. Peckford said. "It's a no fuss, no muss way to put an hour to good use and impact a child's life."

The organization has 274 mentors and can use more, he said.

"The challenge is finding male mentors," he said. "There's no cap on the number. The volume and need for our services are growing in leaps and bounds."

"The economic stressors have put enormous strain on families. It changes family dynamics."

You can voice your ideas about the value of an hour by visiting bbbsc.ca and bbbsc.ca/facebook. You are invited to join the discussion and upload videos describing how your life is being stretched by today's hectic pace and how you would make the world a better place with a single hour. Two video or comment submissions will be randomly drawn, with each winning a return air travel voucher for two to any destination served by WestJet.



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