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York Region Media
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The Sun-Tribune welcomes your letters. All submissions must be less than 400 words and must include a daytime telephone number, name and address. The Sun-Tribune reserves the right to publish or not publish and to edit for clarity and space.

Letters to the Editor
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Editorial

Don't squander momentum

They were still finalizing the figures yesterday, but you texted, tweeted and Facebooked millions of times Tuesday in support of mental health.

Part of Bell Canada's five-year, \$50-million commitment to mental health initiatives, the annual Let's Talk Day encouraged public participation in exchange for five-cent donations.

Beyond the funding, which Canada's health care providers desperately need, the campaign got us all thinking and talking about mental illness — and that's the real success story here.

Fronted by Olympic medallist Clara Hughes, who has been open about her own battles with depression, the effort also encouraged other celebrities, and citizens, to speak up about their mental health challenges.

It all helps start the "national conversation", one of the campaign's platforms, in an effort to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness.

As a nation, we've become more knowledgeable about this disease in recent years, but so much more can be done.

More than half of the people living with mental disorders say they are embarrassed about their condition and half reported discrimination as a result of it, according to a Canadian Mental Health Association survey.

Another survey found the majority of Canadians would cease being friends with someone with a drug or alcohol problem and almost half of those surveyed thought mental illness is simply an excuse for bad behaviour.

More than half of the people living with mental disorders say they are embarrassed about their condition and half reported discrimination as a result of it.

These studies prove we truly have a long way to go.

Bell and its many partners in the Let's Talk Day initiative should be congratulated for being good corporate citizens for working to improve the lives of our friends and family members who battle mental illness.

It's now up to us, as Canadians, to maintain the momentum and continue that national conversation to break down the stigma still associated with this disease.

YOU KNOW I'M ON A DIET!



Letters to the Editor

School board should learn from privacy breach at SDSS

Re: Privacy breach at SDSS: Parents angered after student information sent with newsletter, Feb. 7.

The recent breach of the privacy at Stouffville District Secondary School showed improper response and failure to follow basic guidelines, but represents an opportunity for schools across the region to improve student protection and demonstrate due care.

The incident impacted 1,000 student records, with personal e-mail addresses and confidential Ontario education numbers sent as an attachment to newsletter recipients. Because this information is part of the Ontario Student Record (OSR), the breach created the risk of identity theft and further breaches of privacy for students and their families.

Parents are right to be angry. The school board publicly disseminated enough personal information for anyone to impersonate their child, and potentially gain access to their OSR.

Although the school's response has correctly been to take the matter "very, very seriously", the board's initial reaction was disappointing. Its spokesperson, Christina Choo-Hum, simply stated that breaches do happen in every organization.

The board has to comply with MFIPPA, Education Act and PHIPA laws, but personal information is the most important data in their custody. The board doesn't own this data but is required to protect it at all costs.

Unfortunately, the school board's cavalier response demonstrated a lack of understanding and decorum, hinting that this has happened before and it may happen again.

There are simple best practices

HAVE YOUR SAY, STOUFFVILLE

▶ What do you think of these issues or others? E-mail letters to the editor to jmason@yrmg.com

would have prevented the breach but there is still a real opportunity to show leadership and due care by:

- Assigning a privacy officer in each school and investing in their professional training;
- Ensuring OSR data is properly classified, clearly identified and tracked;
- Using encryption to ensure data confidentiality.

It is clearly unacceptable to hear about serious incidents like this when the public is so sensitized to cyber-bullying, online fraud, abuse of child information and other types of crime.

I don't mean to plug free training, but this is basic stuff that I — as a security expert recognized by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner as a privacy ambassador — even teach youths who attend my community events.

To register students, parents or teachers for KnowledgeFlow Cyber-safety Education, contact Catherine Sword at the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library (905-642-READ) or e-mail Register@KnowledgeFlow.ca. Reach me at www.privacybreach.ca or e-mail soundbites@securityand-privacy.ca

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You can read letters, columns and stories from *The Sun-Tribune* on yorkregion.com



Off The Top

with Jim Mason

Not all hockey fights take place on ice

Search YouTube and you'll uncover a buffet of evidence of sports fans behaving badly at events around the world.

The hit list will include video of barroom style brawls from NCAA football game to Croatian soccer matches. From in-game streakers to hecklers who cross the line.

And we haven't even mentioned Philadelphia, where fans boo Santa Claus and safe landings at the airport with equal fervor.

I went to see my alma mater play basketball last fall at the rejigged Maple Leaf Gardens, officially the Mattamy Athletic Centre at Ryerson University, when a hockey-style fight broke out in the stands. Tie Domi and Eddie Shack were smiling somewhere.

The Stouffville juvenile Clippers beat a Pickering Panthers team that only brought nine skaters to the Stouffville Arena for an Ontario Minor Hockey Association playoff game 5-0 Saturday night.

Some of the Pickering supporters were particularly upset with the job the referee was doing. One guy let him have it with an expletive-laced tirade that would have made Andrew Dice Clay blush.

Not everyone agreed.

An exchange between fans followed that featured plenty of loud words and finger wagging and finished with one guy being pushed into the recycling bins.

More finger pointing followed but, luckily, cooler heads eventually prevailed.

A couple of decades back, I had to be rescued by some Clipper fans during an over-heated OMHA final on the same rink.

A half-dozen dads from the Leamington team apparently didn't like me taking photographs of their kids, who were swinging sticks at the local fans after being ejected, and surrounded me.

The beat goes on.

Jim Mason is editor of *The Sun-Tribune*.