

Fundraiser aids group working with teens

BY ALI RAZA
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They're online, connected and far more adept at social media than anyone before them.

But past the screens they spend most of their day looking at, teenagers face unprecedented and cumbersome challenges in their lives. One organization – Young Life – in Stouffville aims to help teens face those challenges through their most formative years.

On April 12, Young Life is hosting a fundraiser at Stouffville's Royal Canadian Legion. The event features music from the Marion Drexler Band, free appetizers and desserts as well as presentations about Young Life's vision in Stouffville.

The organization helps teens establish and enhance their values and self-confidence through the promotion of Christian moral values.

Stouffville's branch opened two years ago, but the organization has been present in parts of Canada since 1954 when it first started in New Westminster, British Columbia.

"Teens today are so conscious of what other people think of them and they get so

insecure," said Young Life committee member Diana Bohemier. "I think one of the most freeing lessons in life is you have to do what you believe is right and not worry about what others think."

Teens are paired with group leaders, young adults in their early to mid-twenties. Group leaders act as mentors volunteering to spend time with teenagers, engaging them by texting, going out for lunch and participating in activities together.

"We only have one person on salary, Sam Bligh (area director)," Bohemier said. "All the rest of the leaders are volunteers."

A committee of older adults oversees operations and finances. Young Life's budget isn't that big, but costs include taking participating teenagers out for lunch and paying for various activities.

Chairperson Catherine Eeuwes will host the fundraiser. Stouffville's branch of Young Life hosted a square-dance fundraiser at the Stouffville Arena last year.

The legion is at 50 Mostar St. and the fundraiser runs from 7 to 9 p.m. For more information contact Catherine Eeuwes at cme_mln@hotmail.com

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