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67 James Street, Parry Sound • Issue No. 09 • Friday, March 1, 2013

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Bailey McPhaden, 15, snatches up a pink cookie at the information booth set up by the Esprit Place Family Resource Centre.



Lindsey Scarr, 14, shows both her school spirit and her Pink Shirt Day support with the panther mascot costume during the anti-bullying event Wednesday.

Roland Cilliers/Beacon Star

High school students see pink

BY ROLAND CILLIERS

PARRY SOUND - Local students are taking a stand against bullying, and it starts with some flamboyant clothing choices.

Wednesday was Pink Shirt Day all across Canada. Thousands of people wore pink to show their opposition to bullying, and in Parry Sound the movement was student-driven.

The local campaign has been spearheaded by students of a class for girls called the Relevance Project. The program, currently in its third semester, is aimed at girls in Grade 9 and 10 who have significant truancy



issues.

Attendance at Tuesday's anti-bullying event was no issue, as the event brought in roughly 300 people from both the high school and nearby elementary schools.

Meghan Appleby, one of the Grade 10 students behind the campaign, said events like this have become important in order to raise awareness on a major issue.

“Bullying is a huge problem in the high schools and elementary schools,” said Appleby. “People all over the world are bullied and it's really hard for them to deal with.”

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 Aspen, page 5



Stingers lose to Bracebridge
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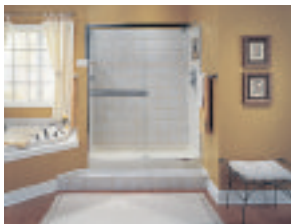
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Roland Cilliers/Beacon Star

Students from the Relevance Project class at Parry Sound High School talk about the effects of bullying to several hundred elementary students from surrounding schools.

PSHS opposes bullying

continued from front

The nationwide Pink Shirt Day got its start in a Nova Scotia school several years ago. Students noticed a boy being bullied for wearing a pink t-shirt and so the next day they came to school with pink shirts for the male students to wear.

Here in Parry Sound, this year's event had its start through student action as well.

"We sat down at a table and we all talked about it for a couple weeks and decided to do this," said Nicole Chevrette, a Grade 10 student. "We have two people come from Esprit place, Pam and Keli, and they helped us through it and gave us the idea."

At Wednesday's event, students were able to see presentations on the damage caused by bullying and pick up useful information around the topic.

Keli Taylor, who works with Esprit Place Family Resource Centre, said the organization was there to show support for the message and to provide resources to the

students.

"I hope they take away a clear understanding about bullying and the effects bullying can have on students and friends," said Taylor.

The teacher behind the Relevance Project students is Jennifer Norton, who said she was very happy with the work the students did. She feels the students showed a lot of leadership in taking on such a sizable project.

"It's very important to get out the message on bullying. It's happening. It's not something that's going to go away. The girls feel it needed to be student-driven so it had a little more impact than just coming from adults and teachers," said Norton.

"We had our feeder schools come, which were the 7 and 8s who are going to be here at Parry Sound High School next year, and they are the future of Parry Sound High School. If they can come in with a non-bullying message, that's great."

CORRECTION

In the February 22 article, *Job seekers wanted for YMCA job fair*, the incorrect date for the job fair was given. Job Fair 2013 will be held on March 6 from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Beacon Star regrets the error.

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