

## Police start new KIDS program in schools

By Bill Rea

Last month saw the launch in Caledon of the OPP KIDS Program.

KIDS (Knowledge, Issues, Decisions and Supports) was launched at Caledon Central Public School. It's a nine-week program that Constable Christina Sanghera said addresses the issues young people have to face today, including the law, peer relationships, online and social media, and drug and mental health awareness.

"It's got all the relevant issues of today," she commented.

The program was developed by OPP as a tool for officers to talk to young people about the decisions they may need to make and what supports are available to them. The program is being offered province-wide, and last Monday's session was the first one in Caledon.

"I believe you guys have a purpose in life that is bigger and greater than what's apparent at face value," she told the Grade 7 students who were on hand for the session. "We don't want you guys to be involved with us on a bad side."

"We want to make sure that you guys understand that we as police officers, we're approachable," she added. "We actually want to make sure we're helping you guys."

With the use of videos, workbooks and interactive games, police are talking directly with kids about these issues.

"The OPP is committed to the delivery of public safety on many levels, and the OPP KIDS Program is one more example of how officers are working proactively in communities to make a difference," commented Caledon OPP commander Inspector Dom Beckett.



Caledon OPP Constable Christina Sanghera was on hand to launch the KIDS (Knowledge, Issues, Decisions and Supports) program at Caledon Central Public School recently. Photo by Bill Rea