

# Press Release

## The Ripple Effect: Alcohol, Drugs and Youth

Locally produced documentary premiered in Haldimand and Norfolk!

### *For Immediate Release:*

Young people never think bad things will happen to them or to the people they love. A local group has produced a documentary that will help young people realize the effect of their decisions on themselves and others. The Ripple Effect is a documentary exploring the challenges and consequences of decision making for today's youth, particularly how the use of drugs or alcohol impact one's ability to make positive choices.

"The video is about helping young people to understand the importance of making good decisions and to understand the terrible impact that poor decisions can have," explains Kim Baker, committee member and counsellor with Addiction Services at the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit. Baker adds that using drugs and alcohol can impair a person's ability to make good decisions. "Drinking and using drugs tends to put people in the position to make decisions that put themselves and others at risk. We want youth to understand these risks and take actions that minimize them."

In a time where youth respond to technology as much as people, a professional production seemed to be a good way to reach as many youth as possible. The 25-minute documentary was co-written, filmed and produced by Roger Duck, of Digital Duck Inc., in Brantford. The Ripple Effect was premiered at 2 area schools: McKinnon Park Secondary School on September 21/05 and the other at Port Dover Composite school a day later.

The DVD features youth and families who know first hand how one poor decision can change everything. Haldimand Mayor Marie Trainer attended the screening at McKinnon Park. Trainer comments, “The project has a very personal impact because the people telling the stories are local. The domino effect that one person’s decisions can create on the entire family, friends and schoolmates was clearly demonstrated. It was also good to see different aspects of risk discussed, beyond the risk of impaired driving.”

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Ontario Provincial Police Inspector John Periversoff came from Western Region Headquarters to view The Ripple Effect and was clearly moved by what he saw. “The locally developed resource has had an immediate impact on me. The sincerity, emotion and message of this piece drive home the importance of making good decisions when it comes to substance use.” Inspector Periversoff further commented on the possible use of the resource stating, “It is a must see for youth and adults as it will bring tears to your eyes, stirring sadness as you see the impact of tragedies that can be avoided.”

Constable Mark Foster of the Norfolk County Ontario Provincial Police reports that the goal is to screen the DVD for at least half of all grade 11 and 12 students across the district. “In addition to screenings at local schools, the product will be made available for use in classrooms, and to other agencies working with youth across the region, province, and potentially nationally,” adds Foster.

The Ripple Effect is a project of the Safe Grad/Party Committee of Brantford, Brant, Haldimand and Norfolk. The committee is a not-for-profit group comprised of local community agencies working together to promote the health and well being of youth across Brantford, Brant, Haldimand and Norfolk. Partner agencies include local health units, police services, addiction treatment agencies, Ministry of Transportation and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

For more information about the DVD project or to obtain a copy, please contact either:

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