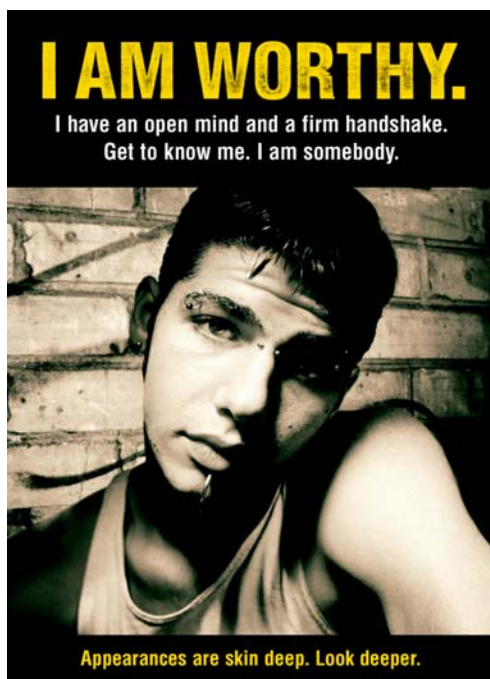


CAMPAIGN TO HIGHLIGHT ASSETS IN YOUTH

By Christiane Sadeler

The Community Safety & Crime Prevention Council (CS&CPC) is a multi-disciplinary group of people who want to increase community safety by making crime prevention everyone's responsibility. The Waterloo Region CS&CPC is part of a broader national strategy to prevent crime by attending to the social situations out of which crime arises.

With a mandate to raise awareness about the root causes of crime and educate service providers and members of the public in building the capacity to prevent crime, the Council believes it's important to be keenly aware of the social environment we create for young people. Our social structure mirrors to citizens and communities what we value and how we set priorities. When a community demonstrates that it places a high value on the well-being of its children and youth, the impact will be felt by all now and in the future. The tools to stop crime before it happens often lie within the reach of ordinary citizens and can be found in social actions that ensure a strong community. The Developmental Assets Model encourages everyone to contribute to making life better for kids and to build a stronger community through positive involvement and interactions with young people. Building assets is an important form of crime prevention.



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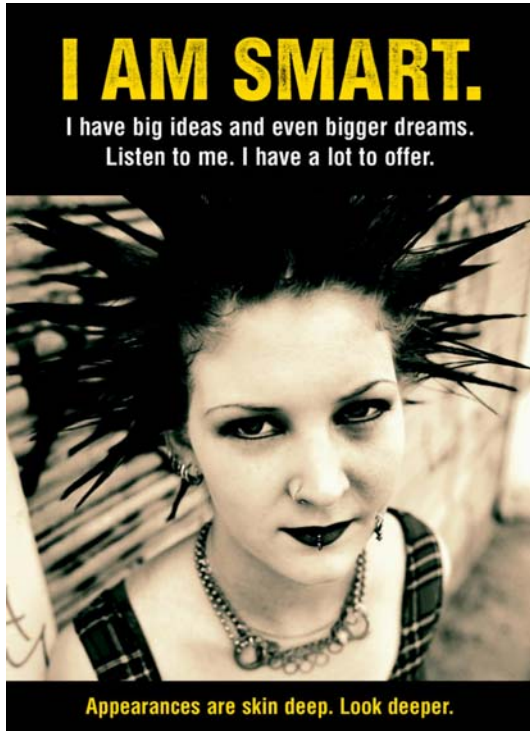
From the beginning, the Council acknowledged the need to pay particular attention to children and youth. It was clear that working preventatively meant reaching into the future and working with and for future generations. Using the African proverb: "It takes a whole village to raise a child" as its mantra, a team was formed at the Council's inception to make recommendations concerning children and youth. One major recommendation from the team that still informs the work of the Council today is to destigmatize the public's image of youth.



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To this end, the CS&CPC, with the expertise and generous support of Quarry Integrated Communications, has recently launched a visual media campaign to promote the importance of valuing youth and to draw attention to what teens have to offer. It is a reminder for adults to look beyond the stereotypes generally associated with young people, and to recognize youth as a time of change, opportunity and strength.



There are three images in this first phase of the campaign – all pictures of young people attached to the messages ‘I am worthy’, ‘I am strong’, or ‘I am smart’. These may not be messages the general public is accustomed to hearing with regards to teens and crime prevention, but it’s a refreshing and encouraging direction. The intention of this first phase of a larger media campaign is to make people stop and think about their reactions to and interactions with young people and begin to connect them to crime prevention.

The poster campaign was complimented by a series of newspaper and bus ads, and will be followed by TV and radio commercials all built upon the same concept. Together these methods have broad reach and impact and help to empower the citizens of Waterloo Region to think positively about young people.

In 2004, the Look Deeper campaign was awarded an ICON Advertising Award for Best Print Educational piece for not-for-profit organizations.

For more information on this and other work of the Waterloo Region Community Safety and Crime Prevention Council visit:
www.preventingcrime.net.

**Or contact the CS&CPC office at
(519) 883-2304**