

York marking January as International Crime Stoppers Month

Crime Stoppers of York Region is joining its counterparts around the world in celebrating January as International Crime Stoppers Month.

Crime Stoppers is supported by all levels of government.

"Crime Stoppers has a proven track record in helping to keep communities safe both in Canada and around the world," Prime Minister Stephen Harper commented.

"By fostering vigilance at the local level, Crime Stoppers is helping Ontarians live, work and raise families with a society that is prosperous, harmonious and safe," Premier Dalton McGuinty added.

Crime Stoppers of York Region was founded in 1986 and has seen success over the past 21 years. Since its inception, more than 2,240 arrests have been made and 5,256 charges laid. As well, in excess of \$97 million worth of property has been recovered and illegal drugs have been seized.

York Regional Police Chief Armand LaBarge acknowledges and supports January as International

Crime Stoppers Month.

"Crime Stoppers of York Region has been an integral partner in the fight against crime in this region for more than 20 years," he remarked. "I commend those who have been part of that; from the Board of Directors and volunteers who give of their time to promote and ensure the program's success, to the dedicated officers investigating the anonymous leads. This program continues to be effective because of the concerned individuals, local businesses and the media that support it, and most importantly because of the citizens of York Region who phone in or go on-line to provide the tips needed to make our communities among the safest places to live."

Crime Stoppers of York Region is holding a Student Crime Stoppers' launch this Friday (Jan. 18) from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Region of York Headquarters at 17250 Yonge St. in Newmarket.

Dan Timmins, chair of the Crime Stoppers of York Region, explained the board's goal is to enhance Crime Stoppers to a new

level within all the secondary schools throughout the region. Organizers of the program wish to demonstrate crime concerns in the school environment and acquaint delegates with the Crime Stoppers concept as a method of improving both safety and security.

LaBarge will lead a group of dignitaries at the opening ceremonies and deliver the keynote address. Others scheduled to attend are the Vice-Chair of the York Regional Police Services Board Joe Persechini and representatives from the local school boards.

The event is expected to attract upwards of 200 students, teachers and police personnel from throughout the school community who have dedicated themselves to eliminating crime from the schools through the Crime Stoppers program.

The event will include the release of the new Student Crime Stoppers video. The attendees will receive an overview of Crime Stoppers and assistance on implementing and running a successful program within their school. The students will be

taking a leadership role in crime prevention and a proactive role in preventing crime within their schools.

Crime Stoppers is a three-way partnership, involving the community, police and the media, by using an

anonymous tipster system and cash rewards to help solve crimes.

This is a low-cost program that has been one of the most effective crime fighting tools in more than 24 countries, and it has proven itself

as an effective and cost-efficient program in combating crime around the world. It's expansion to the school has been seen as instrumental in reducing criminal activity and violence in school communities.

Police quick to make arrest after car stolen with baby

The mother of a six-month-old boy received a quick lesson Monday in the dangers of leaving children unattended in a car with the motor running.

York Regional Police reported the mother had left the baby securely strapped into his car seat in a Mazda and went into a home in the area of Davis Drive and Yonge Street in Newmarket to collect a second child from day care at about 4:25 p.m. The car was left in the driveway with the motor running.

The car was gone when she came out, and police were informed immediately. Officers began an urgent search, involving the police helicopter Air 2, along with

nine other police vehicles.

Police reported the stolen vehicle was discovered heading south on Highway 400 about 15 minutes later. The driver of the car apparently lost control near Rutherford Road, and ended up in a ditch.

He apparently tried to run away on foot, but police quickly caught up with him.

The baby was examined by Emergency Medical Services as a precaution, and found to be unharmed.

A 37-year-old man from Toronto was charged with theft over \$5,000, abduction of a person under 14, possession of stolen property over \$5,000, possession of break-in instruments, flight from police and dangerous opera-

tion of a motor vehicle.

Police remind all drivers that if you must warm up your car, don't leave it unattended. Either remain in your car or lock it and keep a spare key with you. Car owners are reminded that if the keys are left in the ignition, immobilizers will not work. Do not leave vehicles running and unattended at gas stations, convenience stores, bank machines or any other premises, even if it's just for a few minutes. Thieves are waiting for you to make that very mistake. While you are at home, keep keys out of sight, not near the door or hanging on a hook near the door. This is the perfect opportunity for a thief.

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