

MEDIA RELEASE

Victims and Survivors of Crime Week event recognizes the work of first responders and volunteers

June 1, 2018 – Orillia, ON

Embracing change and transforming culture was the theme of the North Simcoe Victim Services event held today at Geneva Park to recognize first responders and volunteers. The theme was brought to life in a compelling and inspiring talk by guest speaker, Corey Walsh.

Sharing his own traumatic experiences as a child and then as a police officer, Walsh focused his talk on “The Face of Mental Health” and challenged the audience to take a look at what mental health looks like. “It looks like you,” he said. “We are all just one phone call away from a mental health crisis.”

Walsh, a member of Durham Regional Police Service, went on to stress the importance of rethinking mental health and supporting those who have experienced trauma. Comparing mental health to a street fight, Walsh suggested we have many weapons of opportunity and should be doing whatever we can to win the fight. “Call for back-up; it’s there. We can’t afford to lose this fight because of the trickle-down effect trauma has on so many individuals.”

It wasn’t until Walsh was helping to set up a mental health centre with Durham Police that he realized he hadn’t actually faced his own mental health issues. He is now dedicated to helping others as a victim rights advocate, contributing to Canada’s Victims Bill of Rights, volunteering with the Tema Conter Memorial Fund, and speaking to groups such as North Simcoe Victim Services.

Walsh reminded those in attendance – including police officers, fire fighters, NSVS volunteers and community leaders – that they have the power to make significant changes to the lives of others. “Even saying a few words to help someone feel comfortable talking can make a huge difference. When we go through trauma, we are evolving. What we evolve into depends on how we are treated.”

The event was held in recognition of Victims and Survivors of Crime Week (May 27 – June 2), as designated by the Department of Justice Canada, to raise awareness about issues facing victims and survivors of crime and the services, programs, and laws in place to help them and their families. Funding for the June 1 event was provided by the Victims Fund, administered by the Department of Justice Canada. For more information on Victims and Survivors of Crime Week, visit: www.victimswweek.gc.ca.

North Simcoe Victim Services provides assistance to victims of crime, tragic circumstances, and disaster; 24 hours a day, seven days a week. As a community-based organization, specially-trained response volunteers offer emotional support and practical assistance to help with a victim's immediate needs and provide referrals to other community services when longer-term care is required. For further information, visit the organization's website at ns-vs.com.

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Photo 1 - CoreyWalshGroup

Guest speaker Corey Walsh shares a compelling message about “The Face of Mental Health” with a group of first responders, volunteers and community leaders at the North Simcoe Victim Services luncheon on June 1 in recognition of Victims and Survivors of Crime Week.

Photo 2 - CoreyWalshTalk

Sharing his own traumatic experiences, guest speaker Corey Walsh shares his passion for supporting victims during a North Simcoe Victim Services luncheon on June 1 in recognition of Victims and Survivors of Crime Week.

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