
St. Edmund Campion Students Offer Youngsters an Alternative Halloween

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St. Edmund Campion Secondary School students are offering trick or treaters a safe place to have fun this Halloween.

The school's student council is inviting neighbourhood children and their parents to enjoy Halloween in the safe, dry and warm confines of the school. Students are organizing the "alternative" trick or treat event that allows children to collect candy, play games and enjoy the annual festivities in a controlled and fun environment Halloween night.

"We wanted to open up the school to the community," said Maria Ranieri, a special education teacher and student council advisor.

The school is open to children 10-years-old and younger. "We're promoting it as a warm, safe environment," explained Ranieri.

Planned activities include a haunted house, spooky storytelling, face painting, piñatas filled with candy and variety of games inspired by the Halloween theme. Admission and the candy giveaways are free. Doors to the school open from 6-8 p.m.

Organizers are encouraging parents to bring non-perishable food donations for local families in need.

Organized by the school's student council, the first annual event is being sponsored by the student body, local businesses and families. Students have gone out in the community to raise money and other items for the event.

About 60 student volunteers have been enlisted to help set up games, make decorations and provide other assistance that will turn the school's halls into a Halloween playground for local children.

Flyers and notices announcing the event have been distributed to neighbouring elementary schools.

Student Council President Stacie-Ann Sammott said the project is a neighbourhood outreach initiative intended to give students an opportunity to make a positive contribution to their community. It is also a chance for the community to get a real perception of the school and its students. According to the 16-year-old, the school of more than 2,000 has acquired a bad and underserved reputation. "It's really not a bad place," Sammott said.

There are plenty of positive things happening at the school, insisted the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board student trustee for Brampton.

The school regularly raises money for various local charities, added Ranieri. "It's trying to give back to the community," she said.