

THE VALUE OF HUMAN SERVICES



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Men working in human services careers can make a difference.

That was the theme of the day at a "males in human services" event on Wednesday at Mohawk College. About 160 Grade 7 and Grade 8 boys from across Brantford gathered to learn about the human services industry – an industry typically dominated by woman.

Steve Csordas, a support worker for Community Living Brant, and Special Olympian and service recipient of CL Brant Jason Richardson, were the keynote speakers at the event, which was organized by the Workforce Planning Board.

Richardson spoke to the students about how Csordas has made a difference in his life.

"When you're working with women, you can't talk about certain things," Richardson said. "At 40 years old, there are some things you can't talk to your parents about. It's good to have another person to talk to, but we need more males."

Less than eight per cent of Community Living Brant's support workers are male, Csordas said, which is an issue since people who receive support are almost an equal balance of males and females.

"There tends to be a lack of males in (human services) fields," said Megan Murphy, project co-ordinator for the event and Laurier student intern at the Workforce Planning Board.

"The careers are really important in the community. They're helping careers, they're people-oriented and you need to have a balance. You need as many males as females.

"Males tend to bring a different perspective."

Students participated in activities throughout the day, which taught them about various human services career choices, like social work, ambulance services, life skills work, developmental services and children's services.

They also participated in high-energy activities like leadership games and wheelchair basketball.

"(The students) get involved in talking initiative and interacting with other people and that's a big part of human services," said Jaymie Stallman, project co-ordinator for the Workforce Planning Board.