St. Malachy's educates on drug awareness

ERIC ELLIOTT   Telegraph-Journal

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Cory Jamieson, Community Response Unit for the Saint John Police Force, was one of three other speakers who presented as part of the It Takes a Village to Raise a Teen forum on drug awareness held on Monday evening at St. Malachy's High School.
Photo: Eric Elliott/Telegraph-Journal

Saint John • When Natalie Hughes finished her story, detailing how she hit rock-bottom with her drug use before she got the help she needed at Portage Atlantic drug rehabilitation centre, she was met with a room full of applause.

Hughes was one of four speakers who presented on Monday evening inside St. Malachy's Memorial High School auditorium as part of the, "It Takes a Village to Raise a Teen" series of forums put on by the Parent School Support Committee of the four Saint John area high schools.

Committee member Kathy Dumouchel said the series was created to talk about some of the important issues for local parents while bringing in experts to discuss specific areas of concern.

In October of last year, the committee held its first presentation, focussed on mental health. Dumouchel said bringing in members of the Community Services Unit of the Saint John Police Force and Dr. Tunde Apantaku, in addition to hearing from Hughes who detailed her personal journey with drug dependency and subsequent road to recovery, was a good starting point for parents to educate themselves in the fight against drug use in teens.

"I would say the only negative thing about the evening is that every parent in the Saint John should have been here," Dumouchel said. "It's all about educating and supporting one another and being real about these issues because they're out there in our community and they may not be in your household today but chances are, there's somebody you can help by coming to this information session."

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