

# In Love And In Danger



Core Leaders and Peer Mentors from our school, St. Francis Xavier, attended the In Love And In Danger Day on Monday, October 31, 2011. This extraordinary event was hosted at Confederation High School and was truly, a life altering experience.

Our day began by indulging in some tasty donuts and drinks in the morning at 9am. When this was done, we made our way back to our seats to begin the ice breaker game. In the Halloween spirit, candy was handed-rather, thrown to the audience as they answered the questions asked. It was filled with laughter and smiles, but, of course, the true reason we went to the I.L.A.I.D. event, began. Speaker Gen Fareau, an idol to many, talked about her life experience with abuse. Abuse from her mother, boyfriends, and even strangers in her life. She talked about her life struggles, bringing some to

tears. Thankfully, Gen was able to attend Algonquin College and complete a three year college program in Child and Youth Work, and now works as a General Patrol Officer. Next, we received a break where we were able to munch on some more treats supplied by the I.L.A.I.D. event. When this was over, Bruce Kyerah-Addo put the many different schools, including ours, in groups. Every school was mixed and so we were able to make new friends. In our group we were told to write anything, could be a song, a poem, or a rap, about Love, Violence, Danger, and Support. This was fun as we were able to then present what we wrote to the big crowd and receive the positive feedback of cheers and clapping. When we were done with the presentations, we received a free Subway lunch. Very tasty as you could imagine.

Finally, we were all split into different "Break Out Groups." Each group had a different speaker and left us with a different view on life. Katherine Watson was one of the speakers in one of these groups. She is a twenty-three year old woman who spoke openly about her experiences living in an abusive relationship. A relationship she stayed in for eight years. I say abusive, but truly you have to listen to the stories of experiences to truly understand the meaning of abuse and to see its effects. I realized it as I witnessed Katherine shed a tear as she told her personal story. I fully came into understanding of how unaware I was of what was going on in my surroundings. I left the I.L.A.I.D. day knowing that I wanted to be that person who made a change and upon returning to school, that is my mind set.