

Teens Develop ABCs of Relationships

by Dawn Currie

During the coming weeks, members of the general public will be able to observe a colourful poster which will appear at several sites around the community. The poster is the creation of local teenagers involved with the Adolescent Health Project, and promotes the "ABCs of a Good Relationship."

Beginning with "A" is for Affection, Assertiveness, Awareness," the poster continues through the alphabet to 'Z', using each letter to encourage the qualities that make for healthy relationships among and between teenagers, their friends, dating partners and families.

The teenagers explain that the poster emerged after a weekend workshop on communication and relationships held last spring with 15 local teenagers in attendance.

Facilitated by psychologist Dr. Chris Tragakis; public health nurse Betty Ann Fraser; a St. F.X. University nursing student; and project workers Susan Jewkes and Barbara Hayes, the workshop covered such issues identified by teens as being of particular concern: positive communication; issues in dating relationships; violence among youth and community; and abusive relationships.

Project co-ordinator Susan Jewkes says that over a number of sessions following the weekend workshop, a group of the teens designed the poster using 'ABCs' as a theme.

"ABCs are the building blocks of our language and it was felt that they could serve as a foundation for identifying what makes a good relationship as well. It is hoped that the message for positive relationships this poster promotes will be read, enjoyed and practiced," she adds.



PARTICIPANTS in the Adolescent Health Project Yan Desormeau (front, left), Joey MacEachern, Cyril Campbell; Meghan Mulcahy (back, left), Rosemary Curry, Cynthia MacDonald and Annique Doucette have created a poster which spells out the ABCs of a Good Relationship. The colorful posters will be placed at strategic sites in the community to promote the qualities that make for healthy relationships among and between teenagers, their friends, dating partners, and families.