

## Students just don't get the message

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Another violent attack at a Toronto school has parents and community leaders upset some students aren't practising safe schooling.

A 15-year-old at Don Mills Collegiate Institute went to hospital yesterday after a dispute with a 17-year-old student in the hallway allegedly erupted into a knife attack.

One Toronto Public School Board trustee said she was "discouraged" the message of safe schools was not getting across to students.

### REFLECTS SOCIETY

"Our schools reflect society as a whole and it seems like kids are carrying weapons and that's very unfortunate," said Gerri Gershon, who represents the ward neighbouring Don Mills Collegiate.

"It's not a way to settle disputes, we have all sorts of tools we try to give the kids so they understand there are adults in the school they can go to for help."

A pilot program to have cops in 19 Toronto public schools was introduced in the wake of last year's shooting death of Jordan Manners at C.W. Jefferys Collegiate.

Don Mills Collegiate Institute was not on the list.

Manners' death sparked the creation of the School Community Special Advisory Panel, headed by lawyer Julian Falconer, who reported there was a culture of fear and violence at many TDSB schools.

Stu Auty, head of the Canadian Safe School Network, said the anxiety level of students "ratchets up" when violence occurs in their school.

### 'SAFE HAVENS'

"Schools are supposed to be safe havens and when something like this happens, it changes the way kids feel about their place," Auty said, adding parents need to teach kids the difference between right and wrong by Grade 2.

A parent of a 17-year-old girl who attends Ajax's Archbishop Denis O'Connor Catholic High School accused school boards of "sweeping violence under the carpet" after parents weren't told about a lockdown last Friday when a student was stabbed.

"I think the numbers are higher than what's reported," said the dad.

Four teens were arrested after a 16-year-old girl was stabbed in an alleged dispute about a boy.

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