

Toronto police are encouraging young people to invest in their future to prevent crime today. 24hourstoronto.sunmedia.ca

ON TRACK: Candida Silva leads the Empowered Student Partnerships program at her high school and works with officers (left to right) Brian Herman, Matt Cunnington and Richard Rhone to help address safety issues in the school community. Silva helped launch Crime Prevention week yesterday.



Crime Prevention week was launched at Toronto Police Headquarters yesterday with the theme targeting youth, "Invest in your future, prevent crime."

The annual campaign, which aims to engage the community and police through education programs, takes place throughout the province and runs until to

Saturday.

"Preventing crime by investing in the future is the only way to go," said Dep. Chief Kim Derry.

One project, the Empowered Student Partnerships (ESP), brings local officers and high school students together to help tackle teens' safety concerns around the school community.

Candida Silva, a Grade 12 student at St. Mary's Catholic Secondary school says she was an at-risk youth on the verge of dropping out before she joined her school's ESP team, which she now leads.

"I never had the intention of working with cops, I used to think they were out to get you," Silva said.

"Now I know they're not like that at all and they helped me get on track ... I hope that other people will see it's not too late to change."