

# Street race the police

PROGRAM CHALLENGES YOUTHS TO A DRAG RACE, SAFELY

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ADVOCATE STAFF

Red Deer RCMP are challenging heavy-footed young drivers to burn some rubber around the track.

A legal racing program — Youth Initiatives and Education in Lifestyles and Driving (YIELD) — revs into Red Deer at the Sportsman Show this weekend.

YIELD invites drivers between the ages of 14 and 24 to challenge police at any sanctioned drag race at the Castrol Raceway in Nisku and at Central Alberta Raceways in Rimbey.

The police will race in a 1979 Pontiac LeMans, painted classic RCMP blue and white and fitted with a 350-cubic-inch engine with 425 horsepower. The car will make its big reveal at the sportsman show.

Challengers will receive a T-shirt with *I raced the law and I won* or *I raced the law and the law won* on the front.

Red Deer RCMP Const. Lee Watt said movies like *Fast and Furious* and *Need for Speed* have glorified racing. He said they want to teach youth not to race on the streets and encourage them to make smart decisions on and off the road.

"The youth were the ones who said we need this program in the community because it is available in other places," said Watts. "It's also about (the police) having positive interactions with youth. ... We use the car to break down the barriers so we can have a discussion with them."

Watt said this often leads to other conversations about trouble at school or trouble at home.

Watt said the wheels began turning for the program when he began attending Red Deer Cruise Night last year. The YIELD Association is based out of Stony Plain and Red Deer is the first offshoot of the program. There are seven local RCMP officers involved in the program.

Later this year, YIELD will travel to schools and community events to promote education and healthy lifestyle choices for youth in Red Deer and area and



Photo by ASHLEI BARRETT/Advocate Staff

Sportsman Show attendees admire the RCMP's new 'tricked-out' 1979 Pontiac LeMans on Friday evening at the Westerner.

Southern Alberta.

The YIELD car will be at the Castrol Raceway on Friday nights from April 25 to Oct. 11. Watts said they would like to attend more events such as drag shoot-outs when the season gets underway in the spring.

To find out more about the program, visit YIELD Association on Facebook.

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Link: <http://issuu.com/blackpress/docs/i20140228224543402>