

KAMLOOPS THIS WEEK

Cycle of caring motivates police to help



Const. Marian Oden drops by for a visit with Leanne Pentney and her daughter Olivia at their Selkirk Avenue home. Olivia received a front deck to assist a wheelchair lift, built thanks to a donation of money raised by this year's Cops For Kids efforts.

DAVE EAGLES/KTW

By [Jeremy Deutsch - Kamloops This Week](#)

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In a lot of ways, Olivia Pentney is a typical teen.

The 16-year-old has teen attitude; she can be demanding and, above all, a bit cheeky.

But the Valleyview secondary student also faces some extraordinary challenges.

Pentney was born with a host of medical conditions including scoliosis and hip dysplasia.

She can't walk or talk, but she can use sign language.

As she's moved into her teenage years, it's become harder for Pentney to get around.

Her parents used to be able to lift her in and out of her wheelchair to get in their house but, at 70 pounds, she's just too heavy.

It's with Pentney in mind that Kamloops RCMP Const. Marian Oden straps on a helmet every fall and takes to the open highway on a bicycle.

When the member of the Mounties forensic-identification unit isn't scouring a crime scene, she's part of another police team that has raised money for children in any medical, physical or traumatic crisis.

As a cycling member of Cops for Kids, Oden raised more than \$5,000 last year for an outside deck to accompany a wheelchair lift at Pentney's North Shore home.

The home improvements have made it easier for Pentney to go outside and do what she loves to do — watch the cars go by.

For her mother Leanne, it's meant freedom.

"To me, this is priceless," Pentney said.

And mom also can't say enough about the Cops for Kids program.

"It's an amazing organization," she said.

"No matter what the kids need, they just do it."

And mom also can't say enough about the Cops for Kids program.

In the last nine years, the police program has raised \$1.2 million for the southern Interior, while Oden has raised \$30,000 in Kamloops.

For four years now, the officer has taken part in the gruelling 10-day, 1,000 kilometre bike ride.

But, after seeing where the money she raises ends up, Oden said it's not that hard to get on the bike.

"Olivia is a huge motivator for me to raise more money for kids," she said.