

7th ANNUAL COMMUNITY SPORTS EQUIPMENT DRIVE

*Local Community Generosity Makes a Difference to Children in Need in
First Nations Communities and to the Halton Children's Aid Society*

BURLINGTON, ONTARIO – October 12, 2016: On Saturday, November 5 from 9 am to 1 pm at Mainway Arena in Burlington (4015 Mainway, east of Walkers Line), The Winch Group Benefits Consultants Inc. of Burlington will be holding their **7th Annual Community Sports Equipment Drive**. Volunteers will be accepting new and gently used sporting equipment and monetary donations.

Seven years helping kids receive sporting equipment in remote areas of Ontario

Equipment will be packed in trailers provided by the Ontario Provincial Police for transport to Northern Ontario First Nations communities. On the day of the drive at Mainway Arena, corporate donations and proceeds from an event barbeque are 100% directed to the Halton Children's Aid Society (CAS) to help fund sport and extracurricular activities for local children in need.

For the past six years, Burlington and the surrounding area has shown that it is a sport-loving community with a heart. Thousands of pieces of used sporting equipment have been donated to benefit young people in remote Northern Ontario First Nations reserves who would not otherwise have access to such essential equipment. Numerous studies have shown that participation in sport and recreation at a young age builds confidence and self-esteem.

Lindsay Webb, a Winch Group partner and organizer of the equipment drive, enjoys delivering the sporting equipment personally and seeing the positive impact it has had in some of the remote First Nations communities.

"Last year, we collected over 50 bicycles at the drive and over 110 bags of hockey equipment and other youth sporting goods," says Webb. "Year after year, we see how excited the kids are and it is all thanks to the generosity and kindness of our local community."

Working with members of the Ontario Provincial Police Highway Safety Division and Aboriginal Policing Bureau, this year's host First Nation community will be the Wasauksing First Nation in Parry Sound. Three other First Nation communities will be invited: Shawanaga First Nation, Henvey Inlet First Nation, and Magnetawan First Nation – all from the Parry Sound area.

In addition, OPP Sergeant Marty Singleton of the North West Redwater Provincial Liaison Team, will be flying in remotely to Neskantaga First Nation to deliver some of the collected donations to that community.

MEDIA RELEASE

Attention: News & Feature Editors



Officer Gilles Lachance, Provincial Liaison Team Coordinator North East Region, adds, "Anishinabek Police Service (APS), who police Wasauksing, Shawanaga and Magnetawan, will also be working in partnership with the OPP for this great event."

Last year's funds from the event barbeque contributed over \$800 in financial donations to the Halton CAS Futures program that supports mentoring, life skills and tutoring opportunities to youth in care.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for people to support children and youth in our northern communities where the need is so great," says Tina Blatchford, Executive Director of the Children's Aid Foundation of Halton.

"The Children's Aid Foundation of Halton also appreciates the chance to remind everyone that not all young people in Halton have access to recreational programs, nor the equipment needed to participate. So we are especially grateful to see such generous enthusiasm for anyone in need and to once again be included in the Annual Winch Group Equipment Drive."

The Winch Group covers all costs related to the equipment drive and the transportation of donated items to the First Nation settlements.

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For more information about the Equipment Drive for Northern Ontario First Nations youth, please contact:

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