



MEDIA RELEASE

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\$200,000 OTF Grant from the Ontario Government Helps Build Autism Charity's Post-Pandemic Resilience

Woodbridge, ON – On Friday morning, MPP Michael Tibollo met with the team at Shining Through Centre to hear more about the impact that a \$200,000 Resilient Communities Fund from the provincial government's Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) has had since receiving it in the summer of 2022. Funds from the two-year long grant have helped Shining Through Centre hire relief staff, develop new fundraising strategies to continue their work supporting children and youth with autism, and assist with some administrative costs.

"I am so pleased to be able to see the impacts that the funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation has provided for Shining Through Centre for Children with Autism, helping them to continue their work supporting children, young adults, and families affected by autism," said Michael Tibollo, MPP for Vaughan-Woodbridge. "Shining Through Centre does incredible work providing individuals with skills, independence, and opportunities. Organizations like Shining Through are what keep our community's families strong and supported."

Shining Through Centre provides high quality programs and services for children and youth with autism based on the principles of Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA). They rely on support from local donors, foundations and businesses to deliver these programs and services. The funding from OTF gave them the lift they needed to make the changes necessary to ensure their services remained available and kept the cost of therapy as low as possible, while still hiring the best, specialized staff.

"The reality is, as a charitable organization we rely on community support to be able to continue offering best-in-class autism services, specifically tailored to our learners' needs. Since the pandemic, we have witnessed a significant decline in local support. We must do our best to be proactive in preparing the best future for our learners. Without support from grantors like OTF, we could be forced to lay off staff and reduce services, which would compromise the integrity of our learners' treatment plans, and the positive long-range outcomes we predict for them," said Lorena Muñoz, Fundraising Manager.

"We are very grateful for the generous support we received from the Ontario Trillium Foundation," said Tanya Pausch, Business Manager. "The grant came at a critical time during the pandemic as government Covid supports were starting to decline and Shining Through Centre was still operating at 70 per cent of pre-Covid levels".

Shining Through Centre is a registered charity that was founded in 1999 by five families who had children with autism and no acceptable options for their education in the community. These families bonded together and created an autism therapy centre where their children could get quality therapy specifically tailored to their needs. Shining Through now has four centres across the Greater Toronto Area in Woodbridge, North York, Mississauga and Kleinburg and provides programs and services for children as young as 18 months through to young adulthood. www.shiningthrough.ca

"Non-profit organizations across Ontario deliver programming that makes a difference," said Neil Lumsden, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. "That's why funding that my ministry is providing through the OTF is so important. Our government wants to ensure that these programs and spaces remain the heart of communities across our province."



The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is an agency of the Ontario government with a mission to build healthy and vibrant communities across the province. Last year, OTF invested more than \$110M into 1,044 community projects and multi-sector partnerships. Projects aim to enhance economic well-being, foster more active lifestyles, support child and youth development, provide spaces for people to come together and connect, and create a more sustainable environment. Visit otf.ca to learn more.

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