



## Media Release

March 22, 2021

### **\$20,900 OTF Grant Brings Virtual Camp Programs to Children Affected by Cancer**

**Toronto, ON** - With the presence of COVID-19, Camp Quality Canada made the decision to cancel in-person camp programs early in 2020. Its year-round volunteers and staff quickly got to work and pivoted core programming to offer virtual camp to campers through its new Camp-at-Home program.

Thanks to the \$20,900 Resilient Communities Fund grant received from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Camp Quality Canada can continue to do the important work of supporting children affected by cancer. The Resilient Communities Fund was developed to help non-profit organizations recover and rebuild from the impacts of COVID-19 to continue meeting the needs of Ontario communities. The grant will be used to help with the costs involved with developing an online program and purchasing needed licenses and equipment as well.

"I am glad that the Ontario Trillium Foundation is helping this critical support for children," said Peter Tabuns, MPP for Toronto-Danforth. "They are going through a lot and this kind of camp experience can make a real difference for them."

The new season of Camp-at-Home will offer increased accessibility to programs, with new ways for campers and families to connect. Additionally, it will support training volunteers and educating our community and external stakeholders about new programming.

Childhood cancer survivors report higher levels of anxiety, depression and social isolation than their healthy peers. Because of COVID-19, children affected by cancer are experiencing further isolation due to their compromised immune systems. The need for our programs and support has never been greater.

"What we know from experience is that camp is more than a physical space. Camp is a feeling. Camp is a community. Camp is truly wherever we are – we know that despite being physically apart from our campers this summer, we'll still be able to bring the magic of camp, the people, the programs, and the fun directly to the campers' homes virtually," said Lauren Burke, Senior Director of Programs.

Over the course of days, campers can participate in virtual programming that includes games, songs, crafts and more – all through a safe teleconference platform that will allow cabin groups to connect, have cabin chats and take part in typical camp rituals. Thanks to OTF, we are now able to purchase new tablets that families can borrow - making our program more accessible to those in Ontario.

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“We are so grateful to the Ontario Trillium Foundation for their support of Camp Quality, our campers, volunteers and programs. Thanks to the OTF grant, we are able to continue offering support to those who need it most during these unprecedented times,” said Jarvis Strong, Executive Director.

Each camper this summer will receive a Camp-in-a-Box delivered directly to their home! Activities have been intentionally designed to be fun, engaging, meaningful and challenging. The Camp-in-a-Box includes age-appropriate activity cards, supplies, camp t-shirts and much more. It will compliment virtual programming and make the camp experience accessible to families.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is an agency of the Government of Ontario, and one of Canada’s leading granting foundations. OTF awarded \$115 million to 644 projects last year to build healthy and vibrant communities in Ontario ([www.otf.ca](http://www.otf.ca)).

For more information about Camp Quality virtual camp programs, volunteering, introducing new campers and their families or donating, head to [www.campquality.org](http://www.campquality.org).

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