



MEDIA RELEASE

Shining Through Centre used its \$145,300 Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant to Adapt and Continue Delivering Programs

(Woodbridge, ON – November 29, 2021): At the end of 2020, the Shining Through Centre learned that it was receiving a generous grant of \$145,300 from the Ontario Trillium Foundation's (OTF) Resilient Communities Fund program to help it rebuild and recover from the impact of COVID-19. Funds from the grant were used to help adapt its programs to an online format and make returning to their building safer for everyone.

"Our government recognizes that over the past 20 months, children with autism and their families, both here in Vaughan-Woodbridge and across Ontario, have faced significant challenges as a direct result of the ongoing pandemic," said the Hon. Michael Tibollo, MPP. "This important OTF funding grant being awarded to the Shining Through Centre will help protect our progress in the fight against COVID-19 by ensuring that more of our children, youth and their families have access to the programming and direct supports they desperately need during these difficult times. Our government will continue listening and working collaboratively with our partners, like the Shining Through Centre, to ensure every individual and family is fully supported as we navigate through this pandemic," added MPP Tibollo.

Shining Through Centre provides high quality behavioural programs and services for children and youth with autism based on the principles of Applied Behavioural Analysis. Due to COVID-19, Shining Through Centre had to revamp its services to telehealth and is now doing a combination of telehealth and in person services at four Centres across the Greater Toronto Area.

"Since the initial lockdown in March 2020, we had to switch from in-person program delivery to a video telehealth model," said Shiri Bartman, Clinical Director. "This abrupt switch led to a 70 per cent decline in the number of therapy hours we could provide and a drastic drop in revenue."

Funds from the grant have been used for an online platform license, Personal Protective Equipment and cleaning materials, signage, and over 70 iPads. Shining Through relies on support from local families, foundations and businesses to deliver programs, and funding from OTF gave it the boost it needed to make the changes needed to ensure its services remained available.

"We're so thankful to have the support of OTF to purchase iPads for our staff as well as our PPE costs so that we could safely return to delivering in-person programming to our learners in addition to telehealth," added Bartman. "Many of our learners need that in-person, one-on-one support that our therapists provide."

About Shining Through Centre: Shining Through 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

About Ontario Trillium Foundation: The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is an agency of the Government of Ontario, and one of Canada's leading granting foundations. Last year, nearly \$112M was invested into 1,384 community projects and partnerships to build healthy and vibrant communities and strengthen the impact of Ontario's non-profit sector. In 2020/21, OTF supported Ontario's economic recovery by helping non-profit organizations rebuild and recover from the impacts of COVID-19. Visit www.otf.ca to learn more.

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