

FIVE YEARS OF HELPING KIDS FEEL LIKE STARS

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

BURLINGTON, ONTARIO – October 14, 2014: On Saturday, October 25 from 9 am to 1 pm at Mainway Arena in Burlington (4015 Mainway, near Walkers Line), The Winch Group Benefits Consultants Inc. of Burlington will be holding their **5th Annual Community Equipment Drive**. Volunteers will be accepting new and gently used sporting equipment and monetary donations.

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, corporate donations and proceeds from the barbeque are 100% directed to the Halton Children's Aid Society (CAS) to help fund sport and extra-curricular activities for local children in need.

For the past five 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. Maureen Richardson, a grade four teacher at St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Elementary School in Waterdown, is contributing to the equipment drive with the help of the school and her students.

"We got involved last year to teach our students that we are never too young to make a difference in the lives of others," says Richardson. "The students took great pride in promoting the event through announcements, posters and classroom visits. This year, our drive is from October 6 to the 24 and hopefully we can match what we contributed last year."

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 30 bicycles at the drive and it was a huge hit with the children—especially one family who was sharing only one bike amongst five siblings," says Webb. "Year after year, these donations create wellness for kids and it is all thanks to the kindness of our own community."

Working with members of the Ontario Provincial Police Highway Safety Division and Aboriginal Policing Bureau, The Winch Group has designated First Nations on Manitoulin Island as recipients of donated sporting equipment from this year's drive. These include the Anishinabek

MEDIA RELEASE

Attention: News & Feature Editors

of Whitefish River, M'Chigeeng, Aundek Omni Kaning, Sheguiandah, Zhiibaahaasing and Sheshegwaning.

Sergeant Kevin Morgan of the 407 Detachment of the O.P.P.'s Highway Safety Division coordinates the transportation and distribution of donated equipment with members of the O.P.P.'s Aboriginal Policing Bureau. "Many O.P.P. members throughout the province are active volunteers in local minor sports, whether as coaches, referees, or organizers," he adds. "This initiative is a great way for us to reach out and support First Nations youth who can really benefit from the equipment."

In 2013, over \$2,000 in financial donations were successfully collected and given to Halton CAS Futures program that supports mentoring, life skills and tutoring opportunities to youth in care.

"The Children's Aid Foundation of Halton (CAFH) is thrilled to be a partner in the 5th Annual Winch Group Equipment Drive," adds Tina Blatchford, Executive Director of the CAFH. "Last year was our first time being involved and we were so pleased to see such enthusiasm and generosity from the community for those in need."

Blatchford notes that Halton has much to offer yet there are still many children and youth who don't have the same opportunities and fun experiences as their peers. The CAFH, together with the Halton CAS and organizations such as the Winch Group, strive to change lives for the better by offering equipment, tools and funds for those in need.

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

###

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

Lindsay Webb

The Winch Group Inc.
l.webb@winchgroup.com
905-639-4287 ext. 29

ABOUT THE WINCH GROUP:

The Winch Group Inc. is one of Canada's largest independent benefits consulting firms specializing in Employee Benefit and Retirement Programs. We focus on advising and assisting our clients in the implementation and review of their benefit programs, with special attention given to better communications and enhanced services.
www.winchgroup.com

The Winch Group is also an Imagine Caring Company, committed to donating a minimum of 1% of pre-tax profits to charitable and non-profit organizations.