

## **Waypoint Centre and Chigamik Unveil Smilezone Spaces Designed Make Kids Smile**

**Midland, ON – May 21, 2024** – Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care and Chigamik are delighted to announce the grand opening of five Smilezone spaces located in the child and youth waiting rooms, treatment room, youth nook, and Hub Café.

Smilezones are specially designed areas that provide children with a safe, engaging, and supportive environment where they can relax and feel at ease. These vibrant and interactive spaces have been proven to increase children’s receptiveness to treatment, reduce anxiety during clinical visits, and offer a refuge from the stresses of their health journeys.

“Smilezone isn't just any play area—it's a transformative space designed to bring comfort and joy to children and their families during medical visits,” said Suzanne Marchand, Executive Director Chigamik. “With vibrant murals, interactive sensory activities, and cozy furnishings, Smilezone creates an environment where kids can play, relax, and feel at ease.”

"With sincerest thanks, Waypoint celebrates the Smilezone Foundation's remarkable partnership in enhancing our clinical spaces, making them warm, inviting, and tailored to the needs of children and families,” said Dr. Nadiya Sunderji, President & CEO, Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care. “Their commitment to transforming healthcare environments will make a lasting impact on the well-being of our youngest patients and their families, fostering a sense of comfort and healing for all who enter.”

Generously donated by Smilezone Foundation, with additional support from community donations, North Simcoe Rotaract, and various fundraising events, the newly established Smilezones feature bright murals and interactive elements to enhance the healthcare experience for children, youth, and their families.

“We are pleased to unveil these vibrant Smilezone spaces at Waypoint Centre for Mental Health,” said Scott Bachly, Smilezone Foundation Co-Founder. “Uplifting and comforting spaces can calm nerves, decrease fear and anxiety, and be a source of encouragement and strength. Smilezone Foundation is dedicated to creating these healing spaces for children and their families. We are grateful for the community support and donations that made this possible.”

### **About Smilezone Foundation**

Smilezone Foundation is a registered charity in Oakville, Ont., committed to improving the lives of children receiving medical treatment at health facilities across Canada. In 2012, founders Adam Graves and Scott Bachly were approached to make a financial contribution to the construction of a local hospital. Through partnerships with hospitals, community centres and other organizations, Smilezone creates accessible, fun, and therapeutic environments where children can heal and thrive. Smilezone has transformed 400 spaces into Smilezones across Canada, benefiting more than 83 communities and reaching more than 340,000 children annually. For more information, visit [www.smilezone.com](http://www.smilezone.com).

### **About Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care**

Waypoint is a 315-bed academic and teaching hospital providing specialty mental health and addiction services and geriatric services for Simcoe County, Muskoka and central Ontario, as well as forensic mental health services for all of Ontario. Waypoint's main campus, which includes the Waypoint Research Institute, is located on the beautiful shores of Georgian Bay in the Town of Penetanguishene. As a regional provider of specialized services, the hospital has an extensive range of acute and longer-term psychiatric inpatient, outpatient, and community-based programs to meet the diverse needs of people of all ages, cultures and identities. The team of forward-thinking experts provides leadership to the broader healthcare system. Waypoint harnesses partnerships, innovation and research to advance understanding of mental health and addictions and improve lives locally and around the world.

### **About Centre de santé communautaire Chigamik Community Health Centre**

Chigamik is a non-profit, community-governed organization that provides our community with a combination of primary health care services, free community programs and community development initiatives. Our 'Model of Health and Wellbeing' is based on a health care system that is community driven and proactively addresses the social determinants of health. Our services and programs are culturally-relevant, holistic and available in English and French.

### **For more information:**

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