

Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region Creates Smilezone in Cambridge Shelter to Support Children Moving Beyond Violence

Thanks to the generosity of Mark and Michelle Trombley, Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region has revitalized its Cambridge emergency shelter by introducing its new Smilezone, the Haven Treehouse

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Kitchener, ON, Wednesday, August 14, 2024

In collaboration with Smilezone Foundation, Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region is transforming its Cambridge emergency shelter to feature a new, child-focused feature, the Haven Treehouse! Generously donated by Mark and Michelle Trombley and created by the Smilezone Foundation, the bright, fun Haven Treehouse features murals and sensory development equipment intended to help improve the experience of children and families living in the Haven House emergency shelter.

"We are so excited and grateful to add the Haven Treehouse to our Cambridge shelter so we can continue supporting kids through play in a brand, new way." Said Jennifer Hutton, CEO of Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region. "We can't thank our long-time Cambridge supporters, Mark and Michelle Trombley enough for this incredible addition to our emergency shelter."

Smilezone believes every child deserves to smile, no matter their circumstances. Over a single weekend, their team transformed the Haven House common space into a Smilezone!

"Smilezone Foundation is truly thrilled to be a part of this exciting renovation at Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region," said Scott Bachly, chair of the Smilezone Foundation. "We are delighted with the new Smilezone, giving children and their families a reason to smile during their stay in shelter. Thank you to Mark and Michelle Trombley, whom we gratefully recognize for their ongoing support."

It is Women's Crisis Services' priority to support women, gender-diverse individuals and children of all ages and we can't forget about the youngest members of the Women's Crisis Services community. From January 2022 to December 2023 Women's Crisis Services supported 198 children at Haven House, their Cambridge emergency shelter, which accounted for 46 percent of clients supported at this location.

Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region and Smilezone Foundation are excited for the children who will live here in the future to have a safe and exciting place to play.

About Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region:

WCSWR empowers women, gender-diverse individuals and children to move beyond domestic violence through the provision of safe shelter, outreach services, prevention and education. WCSWR operates two shelters, Anselma House in Kitchener and Haven House in Cambridge, in addition to offering regional outreach services, prevention programming and transitional housing. The organization serves women and children from all cities and townships in Waterloo Region.

About Smilezone Foundation:

Smilezone Foundation is a registered charity in Oakville, Ontario 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 centers, 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 over 83 communities and reaching more than 340,000 children annually. For more information, visit www.smilezone.com.

For media inquiries, please contact:

Jenna Mayne, Director of Communications and Corporate Initiatives
(519) 741-9184 ex 2003 | jenna.mayne@wccswr.org

Micki Benedetti, Smilezone Foundation
(905) 466-2575 | benedetti.micki@gmail.com