



NHLPA GOALS & DREAMS, SMILEZONE FOUNDATION PARTNER ON NEWLY TRANSFORMED SMILEZONE SPACES AT STOLLERY CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL IN EDMONTON

Edmonton, AB – [March 3, 2025] – Smilezone Foundation, in partnership with NHLPA Goals & Dreams, is thrilled to announce the grand opening of newly transformed Smilezone spaces at Stollery Children's Hospital in Edmonton, Alberta. The Smilezone spaces in the hospital's Pediatric Diabetes Education Centre and the Outpatient Psychiatry program are designed to put a smile on a child's face and ease the tension of a hospital visit. This milestone marks Smilezone Foundation's first grand opening of 2025, following an extraordinary 2024 that saw the completion of 96 Smilezone spaces across eight provinces.

Funded by a generous \$150,000 contribution from NHLPA Goals & Dreams in celebration of their 25th anniversary, the new Smilezones were officially unveiled this afternoon. On hand for the announcement were **Adam Graves** (Smilezone Foundation Co-Founder), **Marty Walsh** (NHLPA Executive Director), **Christine Westerlund** (Senior Operating Officer, Stollery Children's Hospital, Alberta Health Services), **Zach Hyman** (NHLPA member/Edmonton Oilers forward), **Corey Perry** (NHLPA member/Edmonton Oilers forward) and **Jeff Skinner** (NHLPA member/Edmonton Oilers forward), along with Stollery family Ashley Rietveld and sons Sebastian and Carrick. The Smilezones at Stollery Children's Hospital will provide young patients and their families with vibrant, engaging, and comforting environments designed to ease stress and enhance the healing process.

"We are incredibly excited to kick off 2025 with the grand opening of these beautiful Smilezone spaces in Edmonton," said Smilezone Foundation Co-Founder **Adam Graves**. "Giving back and supporting communities has always been a core value of Smilezone's and we truly believe in the power of creating positive spaces for children facing difficult times. Thanks to the incredible support of NHLPA Goals & Dreams, we can continue our mission of making hospital visits a little brighter and more positive for children and their families."

Each Smilezone features custom murals featuring local nature and hockey themes, interactive technology, sensory-friendly elements, and comfortable seating, ensuring that children at Stollery Children's Hospital have a welcoming and uplifting space during their medical journey.

"We are incredibly grateful for the generous donation from the Smilezone Foundation and NHLPA Goals & Dreams. The thoughtful clinic design helps children feel safe, engaged, and comfortable, helping them stay connected to their care and reducing stress during visits," said **Christine Westerlund**, Senior Operating Officer, Stollery Children's Hospital, Alberta Health Services. "By improving the emotional and physical experience of medical appointments, children and families feel valued and supported in their health care journey, which ultimately leads to better long-term outcomes."

“NHLPA Goals & Dreams is proud to work with Smilezone Foundation on one of the largest single donations ever made by the players’ charity to brighten 14 rooms in two areas of the hospital at Stollery Children’s Hospital in Edmonton,” said **Marty Walsh**, NHLPA Executive Director. “These displays will bring smiles to patients and families for years to come as they see some of their favourite Oilers players and other hockey and nature themes throughout the different Smilezone rooms. Together with Smilezone Foundation and Adam Graves, who was an instrumental member when NHLPA Goals & Dreams was founded in 1999, this is a fitting way to celebrate 25 years of NHL players giving back in their communities.”

The newly transformed Smilezone spaces were first announced at Smilezone Foundation’s annual golf tournament by Graves (Smilezone Foundation Co-Founder), Ron Hainsey (NHLPA Assistant Executive Director) and Devin Smith (NHLPA Senior Director of Sponsorship & Player Marketing).

This latest project builds on Smilezone Foundation’s commitment to transforming healthcare spaces into places of comfort, hope, and joy. With 17 grand openings completed in 2024 alone, Smilezone Foundation continues to expand its impact nationwide, ensuring that children across Canada have access to the healing power of play and positivity.

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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 450 spaces into Smilezones across Canada, benefiting over 96 communities and reaching hundreds of thousands of children, parents, health care workers and families. For more information, visit www.smilezone.com.

ABOUT ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES:

Alberta Health Services provides a range of healthcare services for more than four million adults and children living in Alberta. Our mission is to provide excellent, patient-focused healthcare that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans. Our current focus is on reducing emergency department wait times, improving EMS response times, increasing access to surgeries, and improving patient flow.

ABOUT NHLPA GOALS & DREAMS:

In 1999, the National Hockey League Players’ Association launched NHLPA Goals & Dreams as a way for the players to give back to the game they love. The Players’ charitable program’s primary focus is on supporting grassroots hockey programs by providing complete sets of new equipment to deserving youth. For 25 years, NHLPA members have donated more than \$26 million to grassroots hockey programs in 40 countries around the world.

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