

## **\$549,400 OTF Grant has Helped Children Face their Fears**

**Whitby, ON** - On Monday, local MPP Lorne Coe met with representatives from Lake Ridge Community Support Services to hear from them about the impact that a \$549,400 Grow grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) has had. The three-year grant was awarded in early 2020 and is now coming to its conclusion having helped provide free clinical treatment, the *Facing Your Fears* program, to 67 families with someone diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and who is dealing with significant anxiety.

“The investment of \$549,400 by the Ontario Trillium Foundation in Lakeridge Community Support Services has enabled them to provide the 'Facing Your Fears' program for free in the Region of Durham over the last 3 years,” said Lorne Coe, MPP for Whitby and Parliamentary Assistant to the Premier. “This financial support has allowed 67 local families with a member diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder to engage in skills development, social development, and education close to their homes in Whitby and other parts of the Region of Durham.”

The sessions incorporate education, skill development, and home practice while also promoting the use of social skills between participants. In addition, *Facing your Fears* incorporates caregiver training in each session to ensure families feel confident supporting their children at home and in the community. The grant helped Lake Ridge Community Support Services with key costs like helping with staffing and training costs for multiple Clinicians over three years, developing and producing printed program and marketing materials, helping with costs for a part time clinical psychologist, purchasing furniture and program materials as well as helping with some key administrative costs.

“We are very appreciative of the grant we received,” said Sandie Hoskin, Executive Director, Lake Ridge Community Support Services. “This endeavour would not have been possible without the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The grant allowed us to introduce a new program that was able to support youth with ASD and Anxiety. The outcomes of the program demonstrated significant benefits for the youth and their families.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation’s (OTF) mission is to build healthy and vibrant communities across Ontario. As an agency of the Government of Ontario, and one of Canada’s leading granting foundations, last year, OTF invested over \$110M into 1,022 community projects and partnerships. Visit [otf.ca](https://otf.ca) to learn more.

Lake Ridge Community Support Services strives for an inclusive community where everyone can thrive through the science of behaviour. In service of this vision, they have been providing autistic children, youth and adults and those with intellectual disabilities with high-quality behaviour therapy since 1986. Lake Ridge Community Support Services provides services that are evidence-based and individualized to meet the specific and evolving needs of those they serve and their families.

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