

MEDIA RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Attention Editor

**COAST TO COAST FOUNDATION AGAINST CANCER HELPS
ONTARIO PARENTS ADVOCATING FOR CHILDREN WITH CANCER**
\$50,000 grant further enhances Parent Liaison role at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children

(Mar 8, 2011 – Barrie, Ontario) Ontario Parents Advocating for Children with Cancer (OPACC) has received the first \$50,000 installment of a three year grant from the Coast to Coast Foundation Against Cancer. The funds from Coast to Coast will be used to further develop and enhance the Parent Liaison role that OPACC has funded in the Hematology/Oncology program at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children (HSC). The Parent Liaison role was established on a part-time basis in 2009 thanks to initial 5 year funding from Lainie's Angels. OPACC strives to place this value added service in all pediatric oncology treatment centres in Ontario as well as in the satellite treatment centers where there is a need for this service.

A Parent Liaison has already experienced the difficulties of having a child with cancer. They understand the complexities and impact this journey can have on the family and can soften the negative emotional, financial, and social impacts. Siblings of diagnosed children have often been described as the forgotten patient and can often struggle in school as they adjust to the new roles their parents must undertake in caring for their child with cancer. OPACC's Parent Liaison is there to offer first hand support to help ease the impact of a child's cancer diagnosis for these families.

OPACC's Parent Liaison meets with parents and families at HSC and helps to address fears or concerns they may have. They pass out information on available services and can direct them to Parent Support Groups if there are any available in their communities. One evening a week, the Parent Liaison is available to parents so they can gather and talk in a comfortable setting. OPACC and the Parent Liaison collaborate with HSC to run a co-facilitated Parent Support Group as well as continue to work in the development of additional needed supports for families.

The diagnosis of a childhood cancer affects the whole family. OPACC is helping families cope with that diagnosis and is working to expand the Parent Liaison role throughout the province.

OPACC Educates, Advocates, Supports and Enables families of children with cancer.

Coast to Coast Against Cancer Foundation Canada's only national charity devoted to fighting childhood cancer

Lainie's Angels Hope, Honesty, Compassion and Support for the needs of the family with a child who has cancer.

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Helping Families of Children with Cancer with the Here and Now!

Charitable Registration #846324168RR0001

Background

OPACC

Ontario Parents Advocating for Children with Cancer (OPACC) is a provincial charity committed to helping families of children diagnosed with cancer and blood disorders. OPACC's primary focus in helping these families is by establishing Parent Liaison professionals in the paediatric oncology treatment centres in Ontario. These Parent Liaison professionals are parents who have already undertaken a childhood cancer journey and understand the impact a diagnosis has on the entire family.

OPACC's mission is to Educate, Advocate, Support and Enable families of children with cancer. They will offer support that only another parent of a child with cancer can. They will collaborate and share information and experiences with other parents through mentoring and educational activities and they will strengthen existing parent support groups and establish new ones.

Coast to Coast Against Cancer Foundation (taken from their website)

As Canada's only national charity devoted to fighting childhood cancer, Coast to Coast Against Cancer ensures 100% of receiptable funds raised goes towards improving the survival rate and quality of life of children (and their families) impacted by cancer.

We raise funds by conducting memorable events that encourage active and healthy lifestyles. From cycling rides to team building activities children across the country benefit from the generous support of our sponsors, participants, donors and volunteers.

Lainie's Angels

Our primary task is to put a network of healthcare staff, counselors and peer support in place for these families that will serve to educate them, help them understand complex medical information, and offer ongoing guidance and support.

Lainie's Angels provides the most current information on caring for a sick child, serving as a clearinghouse for the vast and dizzying array of resources available. Lainie's Angels does not give medical advice; but we do provide support for families and help them get the knowledge they need to make the decisions they face.