

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Ghoulish Delight!

Local Celebrities Celebrate Halloween by “Carving for the Cause” October 20-23, 2016

Children at Risk, Ottawa presents their **21st Annual Celebrity-Carved Pumpkin Contest!!** This popular seasonal fundraising event is being held from **Thursday, October 20 to Sunday, October 23**. For over 37 years, **Children at Risk** (a local charity) has been providing supports to **Autistic children** & their families in the Ottawa Region – filling in “the gaps” in services available through government agencies.

2016 marks over **2 Decades** that enthusiastic and talented local Celebrities, Politicians, Media Personalities and Businesses have been helping to recognize **October as Autism Awareness Month** by carving orange orbs into gorgeous gourds! Veteran Carvers will be challenged by first-timers, with over **100 pumpkins** being transformed in the name of charity!! Participants include **Jill Skinner - Ottawa Police Services, City of Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson and Councillors, Ottawa Senators, Ottawa 67’s, RedBlacks and Fury** as well as **MPP’s & MP’s Lisa MacLeod, Bob Chiarelli, Jack MacLaren, John Fraser, Marie-France Lalonde, Yasir Naqvi, David McGuinty & Chandra Arya** to name just a few - plus many other local businesses, radio, television and newspaper personalities. Participants compete for the lucky “Top Thirteen” list of carvers for 2016 and a Trophy for the Top Carver!

The pumpkin creations will be on display at **Merivale Mall** after our **Reception at 10 AM on Thursday, October 20** – then additionally at **Carlingwood Shopping Centre, Place d’Orléans and Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre from Friday, October 21 to Sunday, October 23**. Visitors to the Malls can vote for their favourite pumpkin or celebrity by donating spare change. ****NEW**** this year will be Ballots for 3 Grand Prize Draws from all 4 Malls! ALSO Celebrities have donated “Prize Packages” for silent auction bidding (on-site & on-line www.childrenatrisk.ca) Our Auction Site this year is with:

VONALITY ONLINE CHARITY AUCTIONS

With the support of the Celebrity Carvers and generous donations from our community, funds raised in the previous **20 years total over \$126,617!** All proceeds will help Children at Risk “fill in the gaps” in publicly-funded Autism services with their Community-Based Special Projects, which include **Camp Kaleidoscope** – our All-Day Summer Camp, Family Support Groups, Information Seminars and Educational Training Workshops. Children at Risk recognizes the importance of supporting the whole family as they cope with the daily challenges of raising an Autistic child. With the funds raised through events like the Celebrity-Carved Pumpkin Contest, these children can be provided with the best opportunities to achieve their maximum potential!

Not being able to speak is not the same as having nothing to say!

Other Participating Celebrities Include:

Carter & Sandra (KISS FM)

Susan Sherring (Ottawa Sun)

Surgenor Barrhaven Chevrolet, Buick, GMC

Jock Climie (CFL Alumni & TSN Analyst)

Rebel 101.7 FM

Danielle Allard – Ottawa Musician

Chelsea Miller (LIVE 88.5)

Matt Demers – Hollywood In The Valley

Ian Black & Doug Hempstead (CBC)

Daytime - Rogers TV, Cable 22

The Morning HOT Tub (The New HOT 89.9)

Shaun Van Allen (Ottawa Senators Alumni)

Brittany Thompson (New Country 94 FM)

Jesse, Jenna & Gord, Eilish Sullivan (JUMP! 106.9)

Katherine Dines, Jeff Hopper & Angie Poirier (Majic 100 FM)

Tim Morgan, Heather Ray & Dylan Black – (boom 99.7 FM)

Codi & Nida (Jewel 98.5 FM Morning Show) Steve & Brian (Jewel 98.5 FM Afternoon Drive)

Carol Kassis's Pampered Chef, Capital Chordettes Ladies Barbershop Chorus

City of Ottawa Councillors

Jeff Leiper, Keith Egli, Mark Taylor, Bob Monette, Jean Cloutier, Jody Mitic, George Darouze, Diane Deans, Allan Hubley, Catherine McKenney, Tobi Nussbaum & Michael Qaqish, Riley Brockington

Lesia Gilbert's AVON, Sue's Sweets & Within The Grain, Fatboys Smokehouse

Ottawa Safety Council, Jim Durrell Capital Dodge, RM Lawncare, Ferrari Club of America-Ottawa Chapter

Tiny Hoppers Riverside South, Barrhaven, Orleans, Rockland, Kanata North, Findlay Creek & Bridlewood

Lisa Zanon-Speech Therapy, Ottawa Bride, CM Photography, Christina McNabb's Scentsy

Cora's Lincoln Fields, Il Paradiso Spa & Strandz Hair Design, Canadian National Institute of Health,

Wine Rack Lincoln Fields, West End Academy Beauty School

Family Harmonies Familiales, REMAX Core Realty Inc., Hilton Garden Inn, Jay's Barber Shop

Jennifer Chamberlain-Royal Lepage Gale Real Estate, Sky High Snow Removal & Roofing

Wayne Scanlan, Joanne Laucius & Lynn Saxberg (Ottawa Citizen)

Brian Lilley & Alison Sandor (580 CFRA AM) Dean Brown (TSN 1200 AM)

Doc & Woody and Eric the Intern (CHEZ 106.1 FM) Melanie Adams (1310 News)

JJ Clarke, Annie Bergeron-Oliver & Megan Shaw (CTV Ottawa News)

Nepean-Barrhaven News & Ottawa East News – Metroland Media

Nepean, Rideau, Osgoode Community Resource Centre, Success In Steps

Photo Opportunity

Celebrities have been invited, to deliver their pumpkin creations to Merivale Mall (Centre Court) at **10:00 AM on Thursday, October 20th**. Pumpkins will then be divided and transferred to Carlingwood Shopping Centre, Place d'Orléans and Lincoln Fields for Friday, October 21st with voting continuing until 3:30 PM on Sunday, October 23rd.

Background -Autism is a lifelong neurological, developmental disorder that now affects **1 in every 68 North American children, with 1 in 54 boys** (boys more than 4 times more likely than girls to have Autism). With a **new case every 20 minutes**, these numbers reflect more children being diagnosed with Autism than with AIDS, Diabetes and Cancer combined! Autism impacts the typical development of the brain in the areas of social interaction and communication skills. Children diagnosed within the Autism Spectrum Disorders are often, without help, unable to speak, relate to others, be aware of dangerous situations and even play appropriately with toys. **Children at Risk** continues to help Autistic children and their families in the Ottawa area - solely supported on fundraising and donations. **Children at Risk** strives to address the gaps in government services for Autism, providing representation and community supports. Responding to the need, we piloted our **1st All-Day Summer Camp in 2011 and increased our spots yet again in 2016, 343% from 2011!** Our Friendship Social Skill Therapy Support Groups help to provide the children with the tools to function in this complex world of communication and social interaction. Saturday Fun Club & Family Fun Nights offer Respite for Families – and recreational FUN for the children! Our Sibling Support Workshops allow brothers and sisters the opportunity to understand their disabled sibling. Our Seminars explore existing and new interventions to provide information for parents, caregivers and professionals. Information and Knowledge can lead to Understanding and Support, assisting children with Autism so as to improve the quality of life for both the child and their family!

Kids – Autism....Let's Help!