

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Scary Fun!

Local Celebrities Celebrate Halloween by “Carving for the Cause” October 22-25, 2015

Children at Risk, Ottawa presents their **20th Annual Celebrity-Carved Pumpkin Contest!!** This popular seasonal fundraising event is being held from **Thursday, October 22 to Sunday, October 25**. For over 36 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.

2015 marks **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 & Fury, Ottawa Champions** as well as **MPP's Lisa MacLeod, Bob Chiarelli, John Fraser, Marie-France Lalonde, Madeleine Meilleur & Yasir Naqvi** 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 2015 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 22** – then additionally at **Carlingwood Shopping Centre, Place d'Orléans and Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre from Friday, October 23 to Sunday, October 25**. Visitors to the Malls can vote for their favourite pumpkin or celebrity by donating spare change. Celebrities have also 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 **19 years total over \$114,449!** 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, Amy Volume (KISS FM)

Nuvo Eye Centre de L'Oeil Orleans

Jack May Chevrolet, Buick, GMC

Jock Climie (CFL Alumni & TSN Analyst)

101.9 DAWG FM

Sue's Sweets & Within The Grain

Adrian Harewood, Ian Black & Teri Loretto (CBC)

West Ottawa Board of Trade

The Morning HOT Tub (The New HOT 89.9)

Shaun Van Allen (Ottawa Senators Alumni)

Stuntman Stu & Angie Poirier, Katharine Dines & Candace Drover (Majic 100 FM)

Lowell Green, Steve Madely & Shelley McLean (CFRA AM), Mr. Hollywood

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

The Saint, Dean Valentine, Johnny Novak & DJ Ilon, Tony, Jesse & Brooksy (JUMP! 106.9 FM)

Jen Traplin & The LIVE 88.5 Startup – Katfish, Dave & Amal (LIVE 88.5)

Dean Brown (TSN 1200 AM) & Steve Warne (TGOR – TSN 1200 AM)

Ryan & Sophie - New Country Mornings, MaryAnne, Brittany & PJ - Country 94 FM

Councillors Jeff Leiper, Riley Brockington, Keith Egli, Mark Taylor, Bob Monette, Diane Deans, Jody Mitic

George Darouze, Allan Hubley, Catherine McKenney, Jean Cloutier, Tobi Nussbaum & Michael Qaqish

Tammy Wagar's & Lesia Gilbert's AVON, 167th Ottawa Pathfinders, Orleans Family Dentistry

Ottawa Safety Council, Jim Durrell Capital Dodge, Mortgage Brokers Ottawa, Speedy St. Laurent

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

Lisa Zanon-Speech Therapy, Ottawa Bride, CM Photography, Dr. Bryan Altshuller – Orleans Orthodontics

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

Lincoln Fields: Wine Rack, Century 21, Dental Centre & PAMS Coffee, West End Academy, Ink Plus

Family Harmonies Familiales, REMAX Core Realty Inc., Paul Rushforth Real Estate

Sylvan Learning, Jennifer Chamberlain–Royal LePage Gale Real Estate, The Exercise Lady.com

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

Hilton Garden Inn Ottawa, Carol Kassis-Pampered Chef, Fatboys Smokehouse, ANK Audiokits

Doc & Woody and Eric the Intern (CHEZ 106.1 FM), Rogers TV

Bruce Garrioch, Chris Hofley, Susan Sherring & Dani-Elle Dube (Ottawa Sun)

JJ Clarke, Patricia Boal, Katie Griffin & Michael O'Byrne (CTV Ottawa News)

Lianne Laing, Lois Lee, Annette Goerner & Melissa Lamb (CTV Morning Live)

Shock & Sharkey, Heather Ray, Dylan Black – (boom 99.7 FM) Danielle Allard – Ottawa Musician

Photo Opportunity

Celebrities have been invited, to deliver their pumpkin creations to Merivale Mall (Centre Court) at **10:00 AM on Thursday, October 22nd**. Pumpkins will then be divided and transferred to Carlingwood Shopping Centre, Place d'Orléans and Lincoln Fields for Friday, October 23rd with voting continuing until 3:30 PM on Sunday, October 25th.

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 2015, 338% 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 offers 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!**