



**Media Advisory
For Immediate Release
May 29, 2018**

**Abilities Centre in partnership with Ontario Basketball and Rugby Ontario launch new initiative
“Centre for Sport Innovation and Inclusion”**

Decreasing both physical and systemic barriers to sport participation

Whitby, ON – May 29, 2018 - Abilities Centre is excited to announce the launch of the Centre for Sport Innovation and Inclusion (CSII) in partnership with Ontario Basketball and Rugby Ontario. On Friday, June 1st from 10:30 AM to 11:30 AM, Abilities Centre will host an event to launch our newest initiative, the CSII, and to promote accessible and inclusive sport throughout Ontario.

Abilities Centre will launch the CSII in a one-hour event, with statements from those involved with the initiative including Ontario Basketball, Rugby Ontario and Ontario Trillium Foundation. Eighty local elementary students from grades 1–2 will be in attendance to listen to the speakers and to participate in accessible basketball and rugby activities.

The Centre for Sport Innovation and Inclusion has been introduced to encourage provincial sports organizations to adapt their facilities, programming, and regulations to increase participation by people of all ages and abilities. Through the support of a \$120,000 Ontario150 Community Capital Program grant awarded in early 2017 and administered by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, and Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities, Abilities Centre has implemented changes to our facility, including six adjustable basketball nets, to meet the ever-growing needs of our members and community.

About Abilities Centre

Abilities Centre is operated and incorporated as a charitable, not-for-profit organization. Today, it is a 125,000 square foot innovative “Community Hub” where people of all ages and abilities enrich their lives by engaging in social and health programs. Located in Whitby, Ontario, Abilities Centre delivers sports, fitness, arts, research, education, health and life-skills opportunities. The Centre is focused on bringing together families, friends and neighbours in a spirit of inclusion and possibility. For more information, visit www.abilitiescentre.org

About Ontario Trillium Foundation

Administered by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Government of Ontario, Ontario150 Community Capital Program grants have helped nonprofits, municipalities and Indigenous communities renovate, repair and retrofit existing community and cultural infrastructure. For more information, visit www.otf.ca.

Quick Facts:

- The Centre for Sport Innovation and Inclusion will create formal relationships between sport organizations to support key areas such as programming and coach and official development.
- The CSII will work in collaboration with community groups that serve diverse populations and identify strategies that support sport participation opportunities for children who have traditionally not had equitable access to these opportunities.
- The organizations currently involved with the CSII include: Abilities Centre, Ontario Basketball, Rugby Ontario, Ontario Wheelchair Sports Association and Wheelchair Basketball Canada.

- The Centre for Sport Innovation and Inclusion will decrease both physical and systemic barriers in sport participation at all stages of the Long-Term Athlete Development Model by leveraging the expertise of each CSII partner.

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