



## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

# **VOLUNTEERS GIVE OUT FREE HUGS FOR KINDNESS WEEK**

## **Ottawa 67's mascot Riley the Raccoon joins in to spread kindness**

**Wednesday, February 22, 2017, Ottawa** — In celebration of the tenth annual Kindness Week (February 17-24) volunteers will be giving out free hugs on Sparks Street over the lunch hour on Thursday. Ottawa 67's mascot Riley the Raccoon will be joining in on the festivities.

"This year's theme for the week focuses on inclusivity in our community," explains Cindy Smith, Executive Director of the Caring and Sharing Exchange. "We decided to add the free hugs event this year because it has the ability to bring people together in a fun way."

The Kindness Committee chose to hold this event during the lunch hour on a business day as a way of brightening the work day of those who work downtown.

This event marks just one day of a weeklong celebration of kindness throughout the city, which has included many visits to schools to talk about the importance of kindness as well as a weeklong blood drive at Canadian Blood Services. For more information on events that have happened this year, check out our calendar at [www.kindottawa.ca/calendar](http://www.kindottawa.ca/calendar).

**WHAT: Free Hugs Event**

**WHEN: Thursday, February 23, 2017**  
**12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

**WHERE: Bank and Sparks**

### **About Kindness Week**

Now in its tenth year, Kindness Week Ottawa, proudly presented by the Caring and Sharing Exchange, is a city-wide initiative that encourages community members to choose to be kind and recognizes those who engage in everyday acts of kindness. The brainchild of Rabbi Reuven Bulka of Congregation Machzikei Hadas, Kindness Week was launched to help make a difference in the community by spreading kindness. Kindness Week is made possible thanks to an organizing committee of volunteers, generous sponsors, and is facilitated by the Caring and Sharing Exchange. For more information about Kindness Week visit [www.kindottawa.ca](http://www.kindottawa.ca) or follow updates on Twitter at @kindottawa.

### **About The Caring and Sharing Exchange**

The Caring and Sharing Exchange helps Ottawa families facing economic hardship during the Christmas and back-to-school seasons. The Co-ordination Service verifies the names of clients registered by hundreds of partner agencies in Ottawa in order to eliminate duplicate applications and redistribute funds fairly, helping more people in need. For more information, or to make a donation, please visit [www.CaringandSharing.ca](http://www.CaringandSharing.ca) or call 613-226-6434.

### **For further information, please contact:**

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