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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Award-winning children's mental health program receives Ruth Atkinson Hindmarsh Award**

**TORONTO – October 6, 2015** – More children with serious disruptive behaviour problems will have access to mental health programming thanks to the Atkinson Foundation's support of Child Development Institute's award-winning Stop Now And Plan (SNAP®) program.

SNAP is a proven program that teaches children with behavioural problems, and their parents, effective emotion regulation, self-control and problem-solving skills they can use to make better choices "in the moment."

"We are grateful to the Atkinson Foundation for their support of Child Development Institute," says Tony Diniz, CEO. "Together we are creating more opportunities for at-risk children and their parents to access the help they need and making lasting changes in their lives."

As a result of this prestigious award, Child Development Institute will have the funding required to expand SNAP to two additional high-needs Toronto neighbourhoods via the Boys and Girls Clubs of East and West Scarborough.

Children who have completed the 13-week SNAP program demonstrate reduced aggressive, antisocial and rule-breaking behaviour, in addition to a reduction in criminal activity. Parents also participate in concurrent SNAP sessions and report less stress in their interactions with their children and increased confidence in managing their behaviour.

"The Atkinson Foundation is pleased to present the Ruth Atkinson Hindmarsh Award to Child Development Institute and their SNAP program," says Colette Murphy, Executive Director of the Atkinson Foundation. "In her lifetime Ruth worked tirelessly to create a more equitable environment for children and youth growing up in tough circumstances. As SNAP continues to grow in reach and recognition, we look forward to CDI being at the forefront of the movement to make Ontario a healthier and more equitable province for all children."

The SNAP program is currently available in 20 sites across Canada, and a national expansion strategy is underway to implement 120 new sites across the country over five years, reaching 20,000 high-risk children.

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## FACT SHEET

### **Quick facts on children with behaviour problems**

- Approximately one in five children – that’s more than half a million children and youth in Ontario – have a serious mental illness, with the majority of those children diagnosed with Conduct Disorder.
- Approximately 80 per cent of these children are not able to access the help they need.
- If left untreated, 75 per cent of children are at risk of engaging in criminal behaviour, being incarcerated and suffering serious mental health concerns.
- The middle years (ages 6 to 11) are the optimal age range for learning self-control skills.
- CDI’s Stop Now And Plan (SNAP) program is the most widely used program in Ontario for Conduct Disorder under the age of 12.

### **About SNAP®**

- SNAP was developed by Child Development Institute (CDI) 30 years ago as an intervention program for children under 12 in conflict with the law.
- It has evolved into an internationally-recognized model for teaching behaviourally troubled children, and their parents, effective emotion-regulation, self-control and problem-solving skills.
- Gender-specific SNAP Boys and SNAP Girls programs are offered at CDI in Toronto, and through SNAP Affiliates across Canada and around the world.
- After being selected as LEAP: The Centre for Social Impact’s inaugural partner in a venture philanthropy model to create massive social change, we have embarked on a SNAP National Expansion, with the goal of making SNAP available to more Canadian children and families from coast to coast.
- SNAP was also awarded the Prime Minister’s Volunteer Award for Social Innovation in 2012.
- For more information about SNAP, please visit [www.stopnowandplan.com](http://www.stopnowandplan.com)

### **About Child Development Institute (CDI)**

- CDI is an accredited children’s mental health agency providing a range of programs and services for children ages 0-12, youth ages 13-18, and their families in Toronto.
- We offer evidence-based programs across four streams:
  - Early Intervention Services
  - Family Violence Services
  - The Integra Program
  - Healthy Child Development
- Our approach is family-focused, and we work with each child and family’s unique strengths, needs and challenges.
- For more information, please visit [www.childdevelop.ca](http://www.childdevelop.ca).