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MEDIA RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Algonquin Inòdewiziwin Child and Family Centre to Be Established Through the Journey Together Initiative

As part of the Journey Together: Ontario's Commitment to Reconciliation with Indigenous People, Hastings County is pleased to announce funding in the amount of \$386,910 for operating, start-up and capital costs for the year 2018 and \$297,598 for the year 2019 to the Anishinaabe Baptiste Community Organization.

Hastings County received Journey Together funding through the Ministry of Education to support the implementation of the Algonquin Inòdewiziwin Child and Family Centre in Maynooth. Inòdewiziwin is the Algonquin word for "family". Members of the Algonquin Nation Kijicho Manito Madaouskarini chose this name for the Centre as family is central in the Algonquin culture.

The Journey Together EarlyON Centre will be based in Maynooth Public School located in Hastings Highlands. Outreach services will be provided to families throughout North Hastings for children ages 0-6. Children, families and caregivers will have access to cultural responsive programming, healthy food preparation and cooking. The Centre will also include healthy child development, parent and family supports, and supportive early learning programming.

Partnerships have been developed with the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board, North Hastings Children's Services and the Anishinaabe Baptiste Community Organization along with the Hastings County.

The Centre will support indigenous and non-indigenous children and families.

Key goals of this program include:

- Parents and caregivers will have access to high quality indigenous services that will support them in their role as their children's first teachers, enhance their well-being and enrich their knowledge about early learning and development. In particular, children and parents will both learn the Algonquin language, history and culture.
- Children will have access to play and inquiry-based learning opportunities and experience positive developmental health and well-being, in part using natural and traditional materials.
- Access and education to better nutrition and healthy foods by teaching about plants and the abundance of food that can be gathered.

“We are very pleased to receive funding to support the creation of this worthwhile project,” stated Warden Rodney Cooney. “It is imperative that the Algonquin language, history and culture be taught and preserved to children and parents within the indigenous and non-indigenous population of North Hastings.”

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