

Muriel and A.J. Billes Family Playground Now Open in Painswick Park

The City of Barrie, Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities, and the Canadian Tire Dealers' Association open inclusive play space for kids of all abilities

Barrie, ON (September 7, 2023) – The City of Barrie, Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities (Jumpstart), and the Canadian Tire Dealers' Association (CTDA) celebrated the grand opening of the *Muriel and A.J. Billes Family Playground* today in Painswick Park, with more than 120 local kids onsite to experience the universally accessible play space.

Named in honour of Canadian Tire Corporation's (CTC) founding family, the *Muriel and A.J. Billes Family Playground* is a tribute to the Billes family in celebration of the company's 100th anniversary. The state-of-the-art facility was made possible thanks to generous donations from Canadian Tire's nearly 500 store owners across the country, whose total contributions to the project exceed \$2 million.

"On behalf of our 500 Associate Dealers, the Canadian Tire Dealers' Association is honoured to present the *Muriel and A.J. Billes Family Playground* to the City of Barrie as a tribute to the Billes family and Martha Billes, who as the Founder of Jumpstart, has given over 3 million kids access to sport and play since 2005," said Doug Waldie, President of the CTDA. "The opening of the playground is a proud moment for all Dealers, who strive to uphold the Billes family's dedication to serving our communities."

Guided by universal design principles, the 21,000-square-foot inclusive playground enables kids of all ages and abilities to play side-by-side. The new play space is the largest of its kind built as part of Jumpstart's *Inclusive Play Project*, which focuses on removing accessibility barriers to sport and play.

"Thanks to the generous contributions of the Canadian Tire Dealers' Association, kids of all ages and abilities will have greater access to joys of inclusive play in Barrie," said Nadir Patel, Chairman of the Board, Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities. "With the opening of the *Muriel and A.J. Billes Family Playground*, we are proud to monumentalize Martha Billes' extensive impact on youth sport and recreation."

Already a community hub for recreation, the new playground is a complement to the recent redevelopments at Painswick Park led by the City of Barrie, which include the addition of eight pickleball courts, three baseball diamonds, and new lit pathways.

"I want to thank the Canadian Tire Dealers' Association, Jumpstart and Martha Billes for giving our city the gift of this amazing inclusive playground that our community will enjoy for years to come," said Mayor Alex Nuttall. "This substantial investment from Canadian Tire Jumpstart paired with our other park improvements has truly made Painswick Park one of the premier outdoor recreation destinations in Barrie."

About Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities

Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities is a national charity committed to ensuring kids in need have equal access to sport and recreation. With an extensive, national network of more than 1,000 grantees and 289 local chapters, Jumpstart helps eligible families cover the costs of registration, transportation, and



equipment, and provides funding to selected organizations for recreational infrastructure and programming. Supported by Canadian Tire Corporation, Jumpstart has provided more than 3 million opportunities for Canadian kids to get in the game since 2005. For more information, visit jumpstart.canadiantire.ca.

Follow Jumpstart on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [Facebook](#) to learn how they are making sport and play more inclusive for kids across Canada.

About the City of Barrie

Barrie is an exciting, caring and progressive community that 153,000 people call home. Situated 90 km north of the Greater Toronto Area on beautiful Kempenfelt Bay, Barrie offers an excellent lifestyle and multitude of recreational opportunities. The City is committed to the growth of prosperity of Central Ontario's leading City and most dynamic waterfront community. Learn more at www.barrie.ca.

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