



## MEDIA ALERT

### GTA HOMELESS STATUS SURPASSES CRITICAL

TORONTO – JANUARY 5, 2020 – It is with regret that we report the deaths of 8 of our homeless community in the GTA since mid-October 2019. In total, 57 deaths were reported in 2019 among the city’s homeless, putting the death rate among this most vulnerable group at an average of 2.2 deaths per week. On any given night, over 9,500 people in Toronto are homeless. The GTA is facing an insurmountable humanitarian crisis of epic proportions that continues to be placated by official attempts at band-aid solutions. As we usher in a new decade of hope and prosperity, affordable housing remains an oxymoron for this faction and shelter beds are at a premium. While outreach workers and shelters do their best to meet the growing demand of those in need year round, winter in the GTA and surrounding area communities inflicts additional hardships for the city’s most at risk.

On **Saturday, January 18, 2020**, *Engage and Change’s Project Winter Survival* will package 3,000 survival kits for distribution to those in need through approximately 240 social service agencies, homeless shelters, and outreach providers situated throughout GTA and surrounding areas: **9:00 am, The Bargains Group Ltd., 890 Caledonia Rd, Toronto.**

### \$50 TO LIFE FOR HOMELESS

“The growing plight of our city’s homeless goes from critical to deadly during the volatile winter season,” said Jody Steinhauer, *Project Winter Survival* founder. “City cut backs and overcrowded conditions mean increased numbers in need of warmth and shelter are left to fend off the elements as best they can. Tragically the growing number of requests for kits again this year far exceeds the total number of survival kits that we are able to fund through the generous support of our corporate and community partners. For those less fortunate, a mere \$50 donation per kit to *Project Winter Survival* translates into a lifeline of hope against the threat of death by exposure. The call to action for more kits is **NOW!**”

Each Winter Survival Kit contains such items as sleeping bags, clothing, food, and personal and health care items that often make a difference between life and death. Since its inception in 1999, *Project Winter Survival* has assembled and distributed more than 38,000 winter survival kits to GTA and surrounding area homeless. For more information or to make a donation, visit [www.engageandchange.org](http://www.engageandchange.org)

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**MEDIA SCHEDULE:** THE BARGAINS GROUP, 890 CALEDONIA ROAD, TORONTO  
9:00 am - Pack to commence  
12:00 pm - Press Conference  
12:30 pm - Agency Pick-up  
Time TBD - Outreach to the homeless in the downtown core

### MEDIA CONTACT:

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