

Media Release



HAPPY THANKSGIVING FROM TRILLIUM GIFT OF LIFE NETWORK

Reminding Ontarians to register their organ and tissue donation wishes and talk to their family

October 9, 2008 – Toronto, ON – As Thanksgiving approaches Trillium Gift of Life Network (TGLN) is reminding all Ontarians to talk to their family about their organ and tissue donation wishes.

“Thanksgiving is a time for all of us to give thanks. I am especially grateful for all those who when faced with the tragedy of losing a loved one made the courageous decision to donate their organs and tissue and give the gift of life. This Thanksgiving please take a moment and give thanks to all organ and tissue donors who selflessly donate their loved ones organs and tissue and save hundreds of lives a year,” said Frank Markel, President and CEO of TGLN. “This holiday weekend talk to your family about your organ and tissue donation wishes.”

One organ and tissue donor can save up to eight lives and enhance the lives of up to 75 others.

“When my four-year-old son Fraser died my world ended, but I am forever thankful that in the face of overwhelming grief my husband and I chose to donate Fraser's organs. Nothing would ease the pain and heartache from the loss of our oldest son but we had the opportunity to make a difference with what otherwise would have been such a senseless loss,” said Claire Alexander, of Guelph.

“We made the choice to give another child a chance at life - an opportunity that Fraser did not have. Our decision made a difference in the lives of seven children. I have met a number of organ recipients since Fraser's death and I feel such pride that my family has played a part in giving others a second chance. I know in my heart that there are mothers smiling because of Fraser's gift and that makes my loss a little more bearable.”

Today in Ontario there are 1731 people waiting for an organ transplant. Of those, 1076 are men, 633 are women and 22 are children.

Debbie Bredin is thankful everyday because of the decision her donor families made.

“Saying thank you doesn't seem enough for the magic we see everyday in our daughter Kailyn and our son Ayden. We are thankful everyday because of the brave choice someone made,” said Bredin, of Ajax.

Both Kailyn and Ayden were born with the same heart defect and required life-saving heart transplants, almost immediately after birth. Kailyn received her heart transplant when she was seven months old, almost 11 years ago and Ayden received his heart transplant when he was just 20 days old, almost eight years ago.

You have the power to save a life by registering your wishes to be an organ and tissue donor. Today, you can register your wishes at an OHIP office when you renew your health card. If you have the red and white card or have recently renewed your card and did not register your wishes, you can go to the Trillium Gift of Life Network website and download an “Organ and Tissue Donor Registration” form, fill it out and mail it in to the address on the form.

Please visit our website at www.giftoflife.on.ca or call 416-363-4001 or toll free 1-800-263-2833.

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