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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

There's a new litter in town to help comfort kids *YNCU donates 1,200 stuffed dogs for Police Pals program*

LONDON, ON (July 31, 2019) – The London Police Service Police Pals program received a huge boost from Your Neighbourhood Credit Union (YNCU) today with the delivery of a litter of 1,200 new German Shepard stuffed animals to be given to children who experience emotional or physical trauma.

When police are called to an incident where there is a child present, officers can provide the toy to help provide comfort the child in the moment and, for some, for years to come.

Rachael Polakovic received one in 1990 – the first year of the program – when she was hit by a car at the age of seven. It is close to 30 years later and she still has 'K9.'

"He is literally all I have left in terms of material items from my childhood," she says. "The dog became a bit of a reminder of what had happened and how I survived something that could have been much worse. He was one of my favourite stuff toys throughout my childhood."

The London Police Service is extremely grateful for YNCU's ongoing support of the program.

"When there is collision or a criminal incident where a child is involved or is a witness, it can be incredibly overwhelming for them," says Deputy Chief Trish McIntyre. "Our officers are able to help provide some comfort for the child and that means a lot to them, the child and the parents."

The program has delivered thousands of the donated toys over nearly 30 years. YNCU provided its first litter in 2016.

"We join all residents in pledging our support for the London Police Service and the important work they do," said Kerry Hadad, YNCU's Chief Executive Officer. "We are particularly proud to continue our sponsorship of the Police Pals program, ensuring positive experiences for children and officers in difficult circumstances."

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ABOUT YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD CREDIT UNION

With 20 branches, handy digital services and a network of surcharge-free ATMs, you can bank close to home across southwestern and northern Ontario. At \$2 billion+ in assets under administration and 53,000 members strong (and growing!), we're one of the largest credit unions in Ontario.

*As a community-based organization, we can see the difference our partnerships and investments make, because we live here, too. A foundation of our business is being connected with the communities where we operate, so each year **we set aside a minimum of 1% of the pre-tax profit earned by the credit union in the previous fiscal year, to be used for charitable organizations and associations that share our focus on family, skills and activities, and financial literacy.** Together, we're helping to make life better in the places we all live, work, learn and play!*

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