FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HOLIDAY CAMPAIGN SUPPORTS CHILDREN AND FAMILIES DEALING WITH TRAUMA

Kitchener, ON, 1BNovember 27, 2015– Next week we celebrate Giving Tuesday. In recognition of this day of giving back, Carizon is launching its holiday campaign and asking our community to support children and families dealing with trauma.

This is one little girl's story (Ali is a pseudonym):

She was only twelve, but Alison was holding the weight of the world. When Ali first came to Carizon she was quiet, sad, fragile and extremely shy to the point of barely being able to say, "hello." Ali had been experiencing a variety of trauma symptoms such as nightmares, crying, bed-wetting, and feelings of inadequacy. She lied a lot, withdrew into herself and didn't have friends.

Through counselling, Alison's story was told. Alison's mother struggled with an addiction and was in an abusive relationship with her boyfriend. Ali witnessed her mother being physically, sexually and emotionally abused. Ali adopted the role of protector for both her five-year-old brother and her mom. But even as protector, Ali saw herself as a failure. When her mother threatened to leave the relationship, her boyfriend began beating Ali's mom. Her mom screamed at Ali to run to the neighbour's. But, Ali froze in fear and was unable to go for help. Ali blamed herself for what happened.

Through counselling and community supports, Ali's life has taken a significant turn. Ali's mom was connected with the Family Violence Project of Waterloo Region, has left the abusive relationship and is dealing with her addiction. Through the use of trauma treatment, Ali's symptoms have decreased significantly, her self-esteem has improved, and she understands that she is not responsible for anything that happened. Ali is excelling academically, has joined the running club at school, and has found a friend who survived a similar situation and can relate to Ali's experience.

In a perfect world, every child would have a safe, happy and healthy childhood. But, sadly, Alison is just one of many children that come to Carizon for help. We all have a role to play in making life a safe, happy and healthy experience for all children. Donations to Carizon's holiday campaign provide the critical foundation that allows us to support children, like Ali and help families to find solutions.

Carizon is a source of hope for our community. When children, youth, adults, couples or families face life’s challenges, Carizon programs and services provide the care and compassion to help them achieve wellness. Carizon specializes in children’s mental health, youth engagement and development, family violence services, individual and family counselling, parental support and education, credit counselling, workplace resilience, settlement support and community wellness.

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If you would like more information, please contact Jennifer Berry, Director of Communications at jberry@carizon.ca.