

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Monday, November 29, 2021**

## **Hand Knit Hope program provides warmth to lives in need**

The **National Initiative for Eating Disorder's** (NIED's) beloved *Hand Knit Hope* program and its small but mighty army of caring knitters, has been hard at work knitting and crocheting hats, scarves, headbands and neck warmers to provide warmth to those in need, while also raising awareness about Eating Disorders as a way to give back on **Giving Tuesday**, 2021.

This year, more than 400 items were lovingly crafted and donated to five different Eating Disorder organizations across Canada including the Bulimia Anorexia Nervosa Association (Ontario), Credit Valley Hospital Eating Disorders Program (Ontario), BridgePoint Center for Eating Disorders (Saskatchewan), and the Silver Linings Foundation (Calgary).

Now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year, *Hand Knit Hope* was initiated by a NIED volunteer who discovered the therapeutic benefits of knitting and crocheting while in treatment for an Eating Disorder. She subsequently pitched NIED founder, Wendy Preskow, the idea of forming knitting circles with people struggling with an Eating Disorder. Before you could say “knit 1 and purl 2”, people ranging in age from 6 to 90 were knitting and/or crocheting items to distribute to treatment centres, support groups and anyone on their Eating Disorder recovery journey who needed a bit of warmth and love on their path to wellness.

*“NIED’s Hand Knit Hope program warms our hearts knowing that donating these items will keep someone a little warmer during the colder days ahead,” says NIED founder Wendy Preskow. “This program began as a way to support individuals affected by Eating Disorders who were in treatment or attending support groups.”*

This year, Hand Knit Hope extended its reach by donating to the **Barbara Schlifer Clinic** which offers legal, counselling and interpretation services to marginalized and racialized populations of women who have survived violence and the **Stop and Out of the Cold Programs**.

An estimated 2.7 million Canadians would meet the diagnostic criteria for an Eating Disorder. Eating Disorders have the highest death rate of any mental illness with 1 in 10 people dying from their disorder. Eating Disorders affect all genders, ages, racial/ethnic identities, sexual orientations and socio-economic backgrounds.

NIED assists people cope with the effects of Eating Disorders by providing access to educational, informational and other recovery-oriented resources related to the prevention and treatment of Eating Disorders and related mental illnesses in Canada.

Anyone interested in participating or in need of a warm item, please contact [wendy@nied.ca](mailto:wendy@nied.ca)



(Left to right) - Wendy Preskow (Founder/President of NIED) and knitting and crocheting helpers Kay Epstein and Rohna Lubner get cozy amidst over 400 items lovingly crafted for Hand Knit Hope 2021, to raise awareness for Eating Disorders as part of Giving Tuesday.

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