

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Canadian Mental Health Association, Algoma Branch, I am pleased to provide this letter of support for the Welcome Friend Association and its programs, Rainbow Camp® and Rainbow Online Connection.

Welcome Friend Association provides important support, connection, and community-building opportunities for 2SLGBTQ+ youth, seniors, parents and caregivers, and allies. Its programs respond to the need for safe, affirming spaces where individuals can build meaningful relationships, strengthen their sense of belonging, and feel accepted and supported.

Rainbow Camp® offers an affirming residential camp experience for 2SLGBTQ+ youth and allies. The program provides young people with opportunities to participate in recreation, leadership development, peer connection, and community-building in an environment designed to promote inclusion, safety, confidence, and belonging.

Rainbow Online Connection extends this support throughout the year by providing opportunities for ongoing connection, social engagement, education, and access to an affirming community. ROC supports 2SLGBTQ+ youth, seniors, parents and caregivers of youth, and other community members who may experience isolation or have limited access to supportive and affirming spaces in their own communities.

For parents and caregivers, ROC can provide opportunities to connect with others, share experiences, access information, and strengthen their ability to support the young people in their lives. For seniors, it can offer valuable social connection, community participation, and opportunities to reduce isolation while sharing knowledge, experience, and support across generations.

CMHA Algoma recognizes the important relationship between social connection, belonging, acceptance, and positive mental health. Programs that reduce isolation and create safe, supportive environments can make a meaningful contribution to the mental health and well-being of 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, families, and communities.

We also recognize Welcome Friend Association's ongoing efforts to secure a permanent home for Rainbow Camp®. A permanent site would provide greater stability, support long-term planning, and create opportunities to expand year-round mental health, wellness, leadership, family, senior, and intergenerational programming.

CMHA Algoma supports the continued development of Welcome Friend Association, Rainbow Camp®, and Rainbow Online Connection. We also welcome opportunities to continue exploring how our organizations may work collaboratively to support the mental health and well-being of

2SLGBTQ+ youth, seniors, parents, caregivers, families, and community members throughout Algoma and beyond.

We respectfully encourage funders and community partners to support Welcome Friend Association's programs and its efforts to establish a permanent and sustainable home for Rainbow Camp®.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Case', written in a cursive style.

Lisa Case
Chief Executive Officer
Canadian Mental Health Association, Algoma Branch