



### **For Immediate Release**

## **The Cowan Foundation \$76,000 Grant Supports Risk Benefit Assessment Toolkit for Outdoor Play**

**OTTAWA, ON (AUGUST 20, 2019)** - All children and youth should have the opportunity to foster meaningful connections to the outdoors by playing and learning in nature. Playing outdoors positively impacts mental health, resiliency, physical health, development, and cognitive function. Specifically, outdoor “risky play” enables children and youth to strengthen their risk management skills and build self-confidence by testing their boundaries and determining by themselves their level of risk.

“Currently, there is no national quality standard for managing risk and keeping children safe as they engage in outdoor play programs,” explained Marlene Power, Executive Director, Child and Nature Alliance of Canada. “We have been working with consultants, researchers and an advisory committee to bridge this gap by developing the first Canadian Risk Benefit Assessment Toolkit for Outdoor Play. We are thrilled to partner with Frank Cowan Company for the second phase of this project and announce a donation by The Cowan Foundation of \$76,000 over two years.”

“We are pleased to partner with the Child and Nature Alliance of Canada on this toolkit that will provide the information needed for insurance brokers, institutions and service providers to make educated decisions about risks of liability in the outdoor play sector,” explains Michael Lough, Vice-President, Specialty Programs & Associations, Frank Cowan Company. “We hope that this national quality standard will break down misconceptions of risk and liability and ensure that the insurance sector no longer remains a barrier to the outdoor play sector.”

“Fostering resiliency in children and youth will have a significant impact on improving their ability to problem-solve and cope with life’s challenges,” says Mary D’Alton, Executive Director, The Cowan Foundation. “The Foundation is proud to support this project as it closely aligns with our goal of improving the lives of Canadian children and youth.”

The Canadian Risk Benefit Assessment Toolkit for Outdoor Play will be released at the upcoming Breath of Fresh Air Outdoor Play Summit, September 27-29th, 2019 and will include an online digital format of the toolkit to ensure wide implementation across Canada in outdoor play, as well as professional learning opportunities.

### **About Child and Nature Alliance of Canada**

At the Child and Nature Alliance of Canada (CNAC), we strive to give as many children as possible the gift of connecting with nature through outdoor play.

As a result of our work, more children climb trees and get to know where grasshoppers live. More educators feel confident in opening their classroom doors to support a meaningful connection with the land.

We’ve reached 26,000 children and families a year for the past three years. That means 80,000+ muddy boots in parks, cities, meadows, and mud puddles! We want to continue using our unique voice and expertise to promote this type of change. [www.childnature.ca](http://www.childnature.ca)

**About Frank Cowan Company**

Frank Cowan Company is a Canadian leader in providing specialized insurance programs, including risk management and claims services for municipalities and public service, healthcare, education, community, children's and social service organizations across Canada. Proven industry knowledge, gained through over nine decades of partnering with insurance companies and independent brokers, gives Frank Cowan Company the ability to effectively manage the necessary risk, advisory and claims services for both standard and complex issues. Frank Cowan Company's head office is located in Princeton, Ontario with a branch office in Cambridge, Ontario. Clients and broker partners receive support out of both locations. For additional information about Frank Cowan Company visit [www.frankcowan.com](http://www.frankcowan.com).

**About The Cowan Foundation**

The Cowan Foundation was started in 1995 in honour of Frank Cowan, the founder of Frank Cowan Company and Cowan Insurance Group. The Foundation is sustained by the ongoing success of the Princeton Holdings group of companies including Cowan Insurance Group, Frank Cowan Company, The Guarantee Company of North America, Cowan Asset Management and Fountain Street Finance. Together they provide insurance and risk management products and services for individuals, businesses, organizations and public entities, as well as assisting employers with their group benefits, retirement and health and disability management plans. The goal of The Cowan Foundation is to make a positive difference in the lives of Canadians and the broader well-being of our communities. For more information, please visit [www.cowanfoundation.ca](http://www.cowanfoundation.ca)

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