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Local School Embraces Environmental Sustainability with a Responsible Fundraising Program

Hillside Middle School in Mississauga, Ontario is committed to environmental responsibility and sustainability.

The local school is already a designated 2008 Arbour School and recently took part in the Credit Valley Conservation Authority's Naturalization Program. In partnership with the CVC and the City of Mississauga, students and teachers from Hillside Middle School helped plant 200 native trees and 500 native shrubs to help ease climate change, help improve forest cover, air and water quality, and biodiversity in the Sheridan Creek watershed and throughout the city.

The school is now taking a further step forward in its commitment to environmental sustainability with their newest responsible fundraising initiative – the first of its kind in the GTA!

In partnership with Georgetown, Ontario's Fundtastic Fundraising, Hillside Middle School is the first school in the GTA to introduce Nature's Treasures 100% all natural Belgian chocolate as a responsible fundraising choice. With cacao sourced from the Rainforest of Costa Rica, Nature's Treasures all natural chocolate is the first chocolate in Canada to receive Rainforest Alliance certification. Each 50-gram bar contains all natural ingredients and features outer packaging that is recyclable and reusable.

Each Rainforest Alliance certified farm has been certified based on a strict set of criteria to reduce their environmental footprint. Under the auspices of the Sustainable Agriculture Network, the Rainforest Alliance works with farmers to ensure compliance with standards for protecting wildlife, wild lands, workers' rights and local communities. Only farms that meet these rigorous standards are awarded the Rainforest Alliance Certified seal. Rainforest Alliance certification means less water pollution, less soil erosion, reduced threats to the environment and human health, protection of wildlife habitat, less waste, less water use, more efficient farm management, improved conditions for farm workers, improved profitability and competitiveness for farmers, and more collaboration between farmers and conservationists.

Nature's Treasures all natural chocolate also responds to the need for responsible and healthy snacking choices in our homes and school communities. In response to the province of Ontario's recent trans fat legislation, all five flavours of Nature's Treasures 100% pure chocolate meet Ministry guidelines for healthy eating, are kosher, gluten free, and peanut and nut free.

Fundtastic Fundraising is committed to responsible fundraising: socially, environmentally, within our schools, our communities, and personally.

As a further testament to environmental responsibility, Fundtastic Fundraising has recently partnered with Tree Canada, a charitable organization that is committed to improving our quality of life by planting and caring for trees. Tree Canada partners with local volunteers and businesses to help us understand the economic and environmental value of trees. Tree Canada's goal is to leave a living, breathing legacy by planting trees across Canada.

Hillside Middle School will be the first school in the GTA to benefit from Fundtastic Fundraising's support of Tree Canada. Fundtastic Fundraising will supply one tree kit procured from Tree Canada for every collective selling unit of Nature's Treasures sold. Hillside Middle School can use these tree kits as part of their school yard greening initiative, in support of Earth Month.

According to Hillside Middle School's principal, Dr. J. Eagle, "Hillside students have already shown their commitment to social and environmental responsibility in many ways. They have raised money for many causes...from helping local families through our annual food and toy drive, building a well in Africa, planting trees in our school yard, raising money for Terry Fox, and in-school campaigns raising awareness of equity and social justice. We believe that we can change the world one step at a time and our students act on that belief every day. The Nature's Treasures is not just a fundraiser, it is a case where we take one more step to change the world, however small it may be."

Hillside Middle School, the Rainforest Alliance, Tree Canada and Fundtastic Fundraising are proud to be working together on this unique fundraising program as part of a responsible ecological chain that supports our communities, our schools and our environment.

Hillside Middle School, part of the Peel District School Board, will be launching their environmentally responsible fundraising program on Friday, November 28th, with an in-school assembly for staff and students.

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For further information and media enquiries, including interviews and photographs, please contact:

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