

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

YVR AND CANUCKS AUTISM NETWORK HOST FOURTH ANNUAL AIRPORT ACCESSIBILITY TOUR FOR FAMILIES WITH AUTISM



On Wednesday, November 22, the Canucks Autism Network (CAN) and Vancouver International Airport (YVR) will be hosting the fourth annual YVR Accessibility Tour for families living with autism. The tour will take families through the entire pre-flight process, including entering the airport, waiting in line, passing through security and boarding a plane.

The Canucks Autism Network's I CAN Fly program was developed in partnership with YVR three years ago to help make the airport a more accessible environment for families with autism. Since launching in 2014, the Accessibility Tour has been successfully delivered to over 300 individuals.

Due to anxiety or sensory sensitivities, children with autism can be overwhelmed by the pre-flight experience. This can present a significant challenge for families with autism to successfully and comfortably navigate the airport environment. By providing families with a simulated experience, the program will better prepare children with autism for what to expect at the airport.

In addition to the tour, the I CAN Fly program includes a resource kit that features a step-by-step storybook outlining the airport routine, an interactive checklist allowing travellers to check off each step as it is completed, an airport "road map" for families to follow on their journey, and helpful tips for travel.



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The program also aims to educate airport employees and volunteers on how to accommodate individuals with autism and better anticipate challenging situations.

With the success of the I CAN Fly program firmly rooted at YVR, CAN has also expanded the program to Kelowna this year and is offering an Accessibility Tour at Kelowna International Airport (YLW) on Sunday, November 19.

“The I CAN Fly program has been an incredibly valuable resource for families with autism to prepare themselves for air travel,” explains Katy Harandi, CAN’s President and Chief Executive Officer. “With the support of YVR, we are thrilled that the Accessibility Tour will continue to open a world of possibilities for travellers with autism.”

Families with autism that are interested in participating in the I CAN Fly Accessibility Tour at YVR can sign up at canucksautism.ca/events. Participation is exclusive to CAN members. Families can sign up for a CAN membership for \$25 per individual with autism per year at canucksautism.ca/join.

The event has limited access due to security restrictions. Media wishing to attend must RSVP with name, outlet and title by 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 21 to media_relations@yvr.ca. All media must bring valid (not expired), government-issued photo ID to attend the event.

Special thanks to Air Transat and the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA) for their support in making the program a possibility at YVR. For more information about accessibility at YVR, please visit yvr.ca/autism.

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About Canucks Autism Network (CAN)

The Canucks Autism Network (CAN) is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing year-round sports and recreation programs for individuals and families living with autism while raising autism awareness and providing training opportunities in communities across British Columbia. For more information, please visit canucksautism.ca.

For media interviews with Canucks Autism Network (CAN), please contact:

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About Vancouver International Airport (YVR)

Vancouver Airport Authority is a community-based, not-for-profit organization that manages Vancouver International Airport (YVR). Canada’s second busiest airport, YVR served 22.3 million passengers in 2016. Fifty-six airlines serve YVR, connecting people and businesses to more than 125 non-stop destinations worldwide. In 2016, YVR received CAPA Centre for Aviation’s prestigious Airport of the Year Award and



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was voted Best Airport in North America for the eighth consecutive year in the Skytrax World Airport Awards in 2017. Vancouver Airport Authority is a dedicated community partner and in 2016 donated more than \$1,000,000 to local organizations. We are committed to creating an airport that British Columbia can be proud of: a premier global gateway, local economic generator and community contributor.

For media interviews with Vancouver International Airport (YVR), please contact:

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