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## SHARE A SMILE ON DECEMBER 19TH

Family asks community to spread some cheer in memory of a child who loved to smile.

L'ORIGINAL, ON, December 9, 2015— Jason and Jacquelyn Chenier are asking the community to share a few smiles on December 19<sup>th</sup> in memory of their son Sacha. Sacha's birthday would have been on December 19<sup>th</sup> and members of the community are being asked to do a random act of kindness to bring a smile to someone's day in his memory. The event, known as "Smiles for Sacha Day" first took place last year on what would have been Sacha's 12<sup>th</sup> birthday. Over a thousand people participated in the 2014 event, with participants posting photos and description of their acts of kindness on the event's Facebook page.

"Smiles for Sacha Day was never meant to be an annual event, but we received so much positive feedback last year from those who participated that we decided to go ahead with it again this year" said Sacha's mother, Jacquelyn Chenier. "It was a day full of love and joy, which is something we can all use a little of during the holiday season".

A list of suggested ways to participate posted to the event's Facebook page includes things such as:

- \* fill an expired or about to expire parking meter;
- \* buy a little extra grocery for the local food bank;
- \* instead of just thinking it, compliment someone;
- \* hug someone you know for no particular reason;
- \* collect clothes to take to a local shelter;

- \* pay for the person behind you at the drive-through;
- \* pick up the tab for a random table at a restaurant;
- \* put \$10 on a random gas pump;
- \* buy flowers for the cashier at the grocery store;
- \* give your waiter or waitress a generous tip;
- \* read to a child;
- \* give a lottery ticket to a stranger;

*“There aren’t any rules per se” explains Sacha’s father Jason Chenier. “It’s simply about doing something kind for someone else. Each participant is encouraged to make someone smile in whatever way they feel best able to do so”.*

The Cheniers encourage people interested in participating to join the event’s Facebook page where they can share the ways they made someone smile. The event page is located at:

[facebook.com/events/1598807360352764/](https://facebook.com/events/1598807360352764/)

Jason and Jacquelyn Chenier also hope that the event will bring further awareness to their on-going efforts to build a universally accessible playground in L’Original. The project, to be known as Sacha’s Park, was recently chosen as a \$100,000 Grand Prize Winner in the Aviva Community Fund contest. Once built, Sacha’s Park will be one of the most inclusive playgrounds in Canada.

*“It will be the ultimate tribute to our little boy, as a playground for children of all abilities will certainly bring smiles to an untold number of children who currently don’t have anywhere to play”,* adds Jacquelyn.

For more information about Sacha’s Park, please visit: [gofundme.com/EveryoneCanPlay](https://gofundme.com/EveryoneCanPlay)

**(Attached photo: Sacha Chenier)**

#### **About Smiles for Sacha Day:**

Smiles for Sacha Day began on December 19<sup>th</sup> 2014, when over a thousand people participated in an online event organized by Jason and Jacquelyn Chenier to do a random act of kindness in memory of their son Sacha. The numerous participants shared their stories on the 2014 event page which can be found at: [facebook.com/events/1521615218087799/](https://facebook.com/events/1521615218087799/)

#### **About Sacha's Park:**

A playground, to be known as Sacha's Park, is being proposed for the new Place La Seigneurie development in L'Original. The playground, once built, will be different than a typical playground in that it will be universally accessible allowing children of all abilities to fully enjoy the park and its equipment. The goal for Sacha's Park is to create a playground that is inclusive and where the equipment works for everyone, including children with disabilities. A playground where EVERYONE can play. The Chenier family have purchased property for the park to be built on and are working with the Township of Champlain, who are supportive of the project, to secure funding for the equipment, which will cost several hundred thousand dollars.

#### **About Sacha Chenier:**

Sacha Chenier was an 11-year-old boy who lived in L'Original, Ontario. He was severely affected by cerebral palsy and required the use of a wheelchair for most of his life. He was also born blind, epileptic, and with severe cognitive delays. Sacha required assistance for his daily care, as he was unable to do the most basic of tasks without help. He was lovingly cared for at home where he lived with his parents Jason and Jacquelyn and his older brother Sebastien. Despite his many challenges, Sacha was a happy little boy who loved to be around other children. He attended school in Hawkesbury at École Paul VI where he was loved by his many friends. Sacha always had a smile on his face and his infectious laughter could brighten up a room. Sacha passed away suddenly on June 9th 2014 due to epilepsy related complications.

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#### **More information about Sacha's Park:**

[GoFundMe.com/EveryoneCanPlay](https://www.gofundme.com/EveryoneCanPlay)

[Facebook.com/SachasPark](https://www.facebook.com/SachasPark)

Tumblr: [sachaspark.tumblr.com](https://sachaspark.tumblr.com)

Twitter: @SachasPark

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If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Jason & Jacquelyn Chenier at 613-676-0517 or email at [SACHAsPARK@gmail.com](mailto:SACHAsPARK@gmail.com).