

## Investing in Social Connection for Seniors: Historic Gift to the Toronto Public Library Foundation

Wednesday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025 (Toronto, ON) – On National Seniors' Day, the Toronto Public Library Foundation announced a transformative gift to increase social connection and belonging for seniors across the city. With this investment, Toronto Public Library will establish a new initiative to reduce social isolation and loneliness among seniors, expanding program access across TPL branches and reaching deep into our communities to create opportunities for older Torontonians to connect, learn, and grow.

The new five-year initiative will focus on three key areas:

- A new service to bring **Community Librarians** to seniors who live in Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs), through outreach vans and a range of programs to support successful Aging in Place.
- A new public library **Social Prescription service model** to ensure healthcare providers are equipped to connect their patients to TPL services that help address loneliness, isolation, financial stress and overall health and well-being.
- **New and expanded library programs** for seniors that help create awareness of the health risks of loneliness and social isolation, while providing social inclusion opportunities, including intergenerational programming.

Toronto Public Library is well-positioned to address the challenges of social isolation facing older adults today. With a proven track record of delivering both in-branch and community-based services that reach people at their point of need, and a robust network of local partnerships, TPL is a vital lifeline for countless older adults across every neighbourhood of our city.

As a key contributor to the library's strategy, the Toronto Public Library Foundation plays an important role in advancing and accelerating the exceptional work of the library through strategic donor support, allowing TPL to innovate, develop new programs, and scale impact to meet the needs of communities faster.

The project is made possible by a \$7 million investment from The Waltons Trust, marking the largest gift ever received by the Toronto Public Library Foundation and the biggest ever made to a public library in Canada.

"This extraordinary gift from The Waltons Trust will be a catalyst for a slate of new programs and services that will meet older adults at their point of need—it has unlocked a brighter, more connected future for older Torontonians. We are deeply grateful for the historic and groundbreaking support." – Will Scott, CEO of the Toronto Public Library Foundation.

"A key focus of TPL's new strategic plan is to foster meaningful social connection through our programs and services. We want Torontonians to feel a stronger sense of belonging – to each other and to their communities. This historic gift will help us accelerate that vision by expanding high-impact programs that make a tangible, positive difference in people's lives. – Moe Hosseini-Ara, City Librarian of Toronto Public Library.

#### *About The Waltons Trust*

Waltons Trust is a limited-life grantmaking foundation focused on reducing loneliness and social isolation among older adults so they live happier and healthier lives.

#### *About the Toronto Public Library Foundation*

The Toronto Public Library Foundation is a fundraising organization that enhances Toronto Public Library's aspirations to be the world's leading library, making us all more resilient, more knowledgeable, more connected and more successful. Since its inception in 1997, TPLF has raised \$127 million thanks to generous donors. Donations have a resounding impact on those who rely on the library's vast resources and welcoming spaces.

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