



Lake Simcoe  
Conservation  
Foundation

Every year, Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation donors provide generous support to Conservation Authority initiatives that contribute to our shared vision of a cleaner and healthier Lake Simcoe watershed. The following is part of an information series on programs or projects supported by the Foundation.

*Together we are making a difference.*

## Therapy in the Woods

Therapy in the Woods is a partnership between LSRCA Education and Children's Development Services, Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre (RVH). It is a program designed to support early learners with sensory and physical challenges through outdoor environmental education that aligns with their therapeutic and learning goals. It is LSRCA's first program offering for early learners (ages 2-5) and their families. The program supports therapeutic goals like improved dynamic balance, introduction of sensory opportunities like the auditory exploration of the forest, animals and nature, increased upper limb function and socialization with peers in the community. Learning goals

"I have witnessed few programs as powerful and impactful as Therapy in the Woods. This collaboration has truly helped children and their families connect to the natural environment and work to achieve therapeutic goals at the same time. Words cannot describe how proud I am"

**Rhea Taplin, Manager, RVH**

centre on learning about different animal habitats and characteristics and reducing barriers to participation in environmental education programming. The 5 week pilot occurred weekly in October and November at the Scanlon Creek Conservation Area in Bradford. The program was co-delivered by RVH staff (including speech pathologists, occupational therapists and communicative disorders assistants) and LSRCA Education staff.

Fifteen families participated in the pilot and over 89% agreed that the session helped their children achieve their therapeutic goals. Their understanding and appreciation of nature was improved through activities such as scavenger hunts, games, stories, hikes and arts and crafts. Many parents reported that they would now be more confident in taking

their children to green spaces on their own. Plans are underway to offer more dates for Therapy in the Woods.

*Thanks to support from our donors, LSCF was able provide materials, equipment and supplies.*