



## Egale Canada Launches 'Friends of Ruby'

November 18, 2019 (Toronto, ON) – [Egale](#), Canada's national LGBTQI2S organization, today announced that **Egale Youth Services** and **Egale Centre** will become an independent organization called '**Friends of Ruby**'. Friends of Ruby will focus on the comprehensive and progressive mental health and wellbeing of LGBTQI2S youth. The new organization will continue to operate its counselling and drop-in centre and soon open the Friends of Ruby Home (formerly Egale Centre), A housing initiative created by Egale to address the needs of LGBTQI2S homeless youth. The home will be operated by Friends of Ruby and provide transitional and emergency housing, as well as mental health and wellness support services, dedicated to serving homeless LGBTQI2S youth, aged 16 to 29.

*"Friends of Ruby's transition to independence is the result of a natural maturity and evolution of Egale's youth services,"* said **Helen Kennedy, Executive Director of Egale Canada**. *"Egale created a housing advisory board to help address acute needs in the community. Now, we've served over 800 LGBTQI2S youth to date and have outgrown our mandate. Friends of Ruby will be able to build upon the services that we've pioneered as it continues to deliver progressive programs for the wellbeing of LGBTQI2S youth,"* she added.

Egale's Housing Advisory Board will become the Board of Directors for Friends of Ruby which will continue to offer services at the Friends of Ruby Centre and the Friends of Ruby Home, a state of the art facility with the capacity to house 33 youth, with 26 units serving as transitional housing and 5 serving as emergency units. **Carol Osler will continue as Executive Director at Friends of Ruby.**

*"Carol has 25 years of experience in public housing and has provided extensive support to non-profits in various capacities,"* said **Kennedy**. *"We have full confidence in her ability to continue to lead Friends of Ruby successfully with her team,"* she added.

This transition will also allow Egale to continue to focus on providing services designed to improve the lives of all LGBTQI2S people in Canada and to enhance the global response to LGBTQI2S issues. Egale does this by providing expert advice informing public policy, inspiring cultural change, and promoting human rights and inclusion through research, education, legal advocacy and through community engagement.

Egale's commitment to youth will be furthered through complementary programs such as leading research in the areas of inclusion in schools, providing diversity and inclusion training to educators, operating a Section 23 school running our Draw-The-Line Against Transphobic Violence program focusing on bystander intervention, as well as our biennial GSA Summit, OUTShine. **Egale will continue to look for opportunities to create new and needed frontline services for youth and seniors as we seek to replicate the success we've seen with Friends of Ruby.**



### **About Egale Canada**

Egale works to improve the lives of LGBTQI2S people in Canada and to enhance the global response to LGBTQI2S issues. Egale achieves this by informing policy, inspiring cultural change and promoting human rights and inclusion through research, education and community engagement. Egale's vision is a Canada, and ultimately a world without homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and all other forms of oppression so that every person can achieve their full potential, free from hatred and bias.

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For more information on Friends of Ruby, please visit the website:  
[www.friendsofruby.ca](http://www.friendsofruby.ca)