



For Immediate Release

January 20, 2021

'Variety Show of Hearts' Returns to Global BC

(Burnaby, BC) – Due to the increased need for help, Variety - the Children's Charity and Global BC will be presenting this year's *Variety Show of Hearts* in an all-new format with the goal of raising even more money for BC's kids with special needs. The 3-day event kicks off on Thursday, February 18 on *Global News Morning* followed by *Global News at Noon* and *Global News Hour at 6* continuing with the same schedule on Friday, February 19 where viewers will meet some of the amazing kids they've helped in 2021.

Viewers will then get to meet more kids when the 55th Annual *Variety Show of Hearts Telethon* airs on Global BC on Saturday, February 20 from 1:00 pm to 5:30 pm. Returning to the stage will be hosts Chris Gailus, Sophie Lui, Kristi Gordon, Neetu Garcha, Paul Haysom & Kaitlyn Herbst as well as 980 CKNW's Jody Vance. Joining them will be *Show of Hearts* favourites Howard Blank, Alvin Law & Marco Pasqua along with Variety Youth Ambassadors Esabella Strickland, Mihai Covaser & Janelle Milne. And making his Variety debut this year will be Mo Amir, host of the popular podcast, *This is VANCOLOUR*.

"As the pandemic continues, so does the need for support which is growing every day as more and more families are being affected. In addition to lifesaving medical supplies, mobility equipment and specialized therapies, we are seeing an increase in mental wellness counselling and virtual tutoring applications as kids are struggling to cope," said Cally Wesson, CEO, Variety BC. "I'm hoping that British Columbians will once again come together to ensure that this year's fundraiser will be our most successful yet so that we'll be able to say 'yes' to all of BC's kids needing our help and that no child is turned away."

Throughout the three days, viewers will see their donor dollars hard at work when they'll be introduced to children who have been helped by Variety including 5-year-old Emiliano who received leg braces and a standing frame to not only help support his lower extremities and promote spinal alignment but to also prevent future deformities from occurring.

This year's entertainment line-up will feature Special Guest sixteen-time GRAMMY Award-winning songwriter and Canadian icon, David Foster who last appeared on the Telethon in 1992. Joining David will be singer and *American Idol* alum, Pia Toscano. And making their *Show of Hearts* debut will be legendary Canadian rockers, Loverboy.

Last year's *Show of Hearts* raised \$5,515,238 to benefit children with special needs province-wide. Donations can be made by calling toll-free at 310-KIDS as well as online at variety.bc.ca or by texting "KIDS" to 45678 to make an automatic \$20 contribution.

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About Variety - the Children's Charity:

For 55 years, Variety BC has ensured children with special needs across the province have the support to reach their potential. Since 2010, Variety has distributed more than \$33 million in funding to families and organizations in communities throughout British Columbia. For additional information on how you can support Variety - the Children's Charity, visit variety.bc.ca or call 604.320.0505.

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