



PRESS RELEASE



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Official Opening of Passage House in Kingston

KINGSTON, Ontario, June 26, 2003 - The Youth Net Expansion Project celebrated the official opening today of its eight-bed emergency and transitional shelter for homeless youth aged 16 to 24 experiencing abuse and domestic violence.

The Honourable Peter Milliken, Member of Parliament for Kingston and the Islands, today welcomed the announcement from the Honourable Steven Mahoney, Secretary of State responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

"This youth shelter will provide a safe, secure environment for those youth in our community fleeing family violence," said Mr. Milliken "Those most in need in our communities will be helped through this project to deal with family violence and homelessness."

The Government of Canada, through CMHC's Shelter Enhancement Program (SEP), contributed \$220,000 towards the project. The SEP program assists in repairing, rehabilitating and improving existing shelters for women, children and youth who are victims of family violence, and in acquiring or building new shelters and second stage housing where needed.

In addition, the Government of Canada's National Homelessness Initiative (NHI) is making a difference in addressing this issue, by encouraging the development of local solutions to help alleviate homelessness. Through the NHI, Kingston Home Base Non-Profit Housing Inc. has received \$30,000.

Building on the successes achieved, the February 2003 federal budget provided \$405 million over three years to continue to address homeless in Canada.

"The opening of our new transitional shelter is the result of a group of individuals, businesses, the faith community, CMHC and the National Homelessness Initiative coming together to support young people in our area," said Tom Greening, Executive Director of the Shelter. "These eight new spaces for homeless youth are a significant addition to the Home Base Youth Net Program and the capacity of our community to respond with appropriate housing and counseling services for youth in very difficult situations.

"It really takes a cooperative approach by government, business and individuals to make these good things happen. Our staff and volunteers have worked hard on behalf of the young people in our community and are looking forward to ensuring that our clients get the assistance they need and deserve."

The Youth Net Program was established in 1994 as a non-profit organization, devoted to providing shelter and crisis services for physically, financially and emotionally disadvantaged teenagers, experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity.

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