



PRESS RELEASE



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Construction Begins on New Youth Shelter

CAMBRIDGE, Ontario, July 3, 2003 - The Argus Residence for Young People, an emergency and transitional shelter for homeless youth between the ages of 15-24, celebrated the start of construction on a 10-bed shelter with an official ground breaking ceremony today.

"The construction of this shelter demonstrates the Government of Canada's commitment to providing housing for at-risk and homeless youth," said Janko Peric, Member of Parliament for Cambridge on behalf of the Honourable Steven Mahoney, Secretary of State responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. "This new shelter will not only provide a safe, stable environment for homeless youth, but will also teach them essential life skills. Federal strategies to address youth issues are helping those most in need at the community level, and this project is a prime example."

Eva Vlasov, Executive Director of Argus Residence said, "This new shelter is the result of a group of individuals, businesses, CMHC and Human Resources Development Canada coming together to support young people in our area. These 10 new spaces for homeless youth are a significant addition and will allow our community to respond with appropriate housing and counseling services for youth in very difficult situations."

"It really takes a cooperative approach between 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 they are looking forward to the completion of this new shelter."

CMHC, Canada's federal housing agency, committed \$180,000 to the project through its Shelter Enhancement Program(SEP). The SEP offers financial assistance for the repair, rehabilitation and improvement of existing shelters for women, children and youth who are victims of family violence as well as the acquisition or construction of new shelters and second stage housing where needed.

Other partners contributing to the project include HRDC, contributing \$150,000 through the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI), \$26,245 from the Provincial Homelessness Initiative Fund and approximately \$35,000 raised from local community and service clubs.

The shelter will also provide services, amalgamated with a comprehensive life skill acquisition program that, with the support of community partners, prepares young people for independent living or if feasible, a safe and healthy return home.

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