



PRESS RELEASE



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Former University Residence Transformed Into Innovative Youth Housing Project

PETERBOROUGH, Ontario, November 12, 2004 — Abbott House, Peterborough's only second-stage youth housing facility, held an official opening event today, as local dignitaries, residents and support staff celebrated with a ribbon cutting.

The acquisition of the former Trent University residence was made possible by \$331,700 in capital funding through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) Shelter Enhancement Program.

Operating under the Youth Emergency Shelter and located in the city's north end, Abbott House is a 10-bed rooming-style home available for youth aged 16 to 24, in need of semi-supported, independent living.

"The opening of Abbott House as a second stage housing facility is a significant accomplishment for homeless youth in the Peterborough community," said Peterborough Member of Parliament Peter Adams, on behalf of the Honourable Joseph Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing. "The program run by Youth Emergency Shelter will help ensure these young people have access to the housing and services required to help them succeed in the community. It is an excellent example of the Government of Canada's commitment to supporting those who need it most."

"The funds available from CMHC have allowed for the provision of a much needed service in our community," said David Haw, Executive Director of Youth Emergency Shelter. "Appropriate housing for disadvantaged youth in our community is very hard to come by; in fact less than 20 units in Peterborough are specifically available for young people and we provide 10 of them in Abbott House."

Support from Abbott House is available to youth, who if accepted, can stay for up to one year. Residents pay market rent for a room, which in turn covers the operational costs of the facility.

Supervised and mentored by Youth Emergency Shelter staff, the youth are able to make the transition into society. Residents are able to function independently with daily living tasks such as purchasing groceries and paying rent, but will be supported with their independent living goals.

"If you're not a university or college student, it is very difficult to find housing in Peterborough," adds Haw. "The funds from CMHC allow us to offer semi-independent living for up to 10 youth at any one time in a supportive rooming house environment. This would not have been possible without the capital funding provided from CMHC, and they are to be commended for their support for this program. We are very appreciative for this support."

Youth Emergency Shelter also recently received \$49,213.00 to upgrade electrical wiring and renovate various aspects of the façade of another facility of Youth Emergency Shelter, through CMHC's Shelter Enhancement Program.

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CMHC's Shelter Enhancement Program offers financial assistance for the repair, rehabilitation and improvement of existing shelters for women and their children, youth and men who are victims of family violence as well as the acquisition or construction of new shelters and second stage housing where needed.

CMHC is Canada's national housing agency with a mandate to help Canadians gain access to safe, quality and affordable housing. CMHC supports the Canadian housing industry and improves the living conditions of Canadians through mortgage loan insurance and securitization, assisted housing, research and information transfer and the promotion of Canadian housing exports.

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Background Information

Youth Emergency Shelter of Peterborough Inc.

In 1993 a group of frontline housing workers came together and formed an ad hoc committee to share resources and concerns over the issue of homelessness in the Peterborough area. In 1997 the Youth Emergency Shelter (YES) was born from the original committee and subsequently became an incorporated, non-profit organization in March 2000.

In early 2001, YES began offering housing crisis services to the youth of the Peterborough community. Funding for the Housing Support Workers program has been through the Job Creation Program of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), allowing unemployed adults the opportunity to train as Housing Support Workers. This program is unique to Peterborough, and in turn, it has become a valuable referral source for local groups dealing with homeless youth.

In April 2001 funding was confirmed from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), allowing the purchase of a permanent site, along with the necessary structural renovations to the existing building. The facility, with its continuing renovations, created a multi-program facility, with 30 beds for homeless youth. YES recently received \$49,213.00 to upgrade electrical wiring and renovate various aspects of the shelter's façade, from CMHC's Shelter Enhancement Program.

Abbott House

Operating under YES umbrella, and located in the city's north end, Abbott House is an 10-bed rooming-style home available for youth aged 16 to 24 and in need of minimal support in order to achieve their independent living goals. The purchase of Abbott House in 2002, a former Trent University residence, was made possible by \$331,700 in funding through CMHC's Shelter Enhancement Program.

Support from Abbott House is available to youth between the ages of 16 - 24, who if accepted, can stay for up to one year. Residents pay market rent for a room, which in turn covers the operational costs of the facility. Supervised and mentored by YES staff, supported youth are able to make the transition into society. Residents are able to function independently and are responsible for daily living tasks like purchasing groceries and paying rent and are supported with their independent living goals.



(Left to Right) David Jarvis, Chair of the Board, Youth Emergency Shelter (YES), David Haw, Executive Director Y.E.S. and Abbott House, Peterborough MP Peter Adams.