



PRESS RELEASE



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Families in Danger of Homelessness Find Refuge at Hope House

WELLAND, Ontario, July 28, 2005 — Men, women and families in danger of becoming another homeless statistic now have a safe and supportive place to turn to in Wellands' Hope House. The newly created emergency hostel, operated by The Hope Centre, formerly The Welland Community Resource and Action Centre was officially opened in a ribbon cutting celebration held earlier today.

John Maloney, Member of Parliament for Welland attended today's event on behalf, of the Honourable Joe Fontana, Minister of Labour and Housing.

"The renovations to Hope House were essential to ensure at-risk citizens of Welland have access to safe housing and the services they require to help them succeed," said MP John Maloney. "This project is another example of the Government of Canada's ongoing commitment to supporting those who are most in need in the community."

"We are proud to be setting a standard in Welland for emergency shelter accommodations and services that are dignified, respectful, safe, keep families together, and address the diverse needs of the citizens of our community who are homeless, or at-risk of homelessness," said Sylvia Berkhout, Welland Hope Centre Executive Director.

The Hope Centre received \$240,000 through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) Residence Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) — Conversion to create Hope House, a 15-bed hostel for men and women, in addition to two self contained units for families. CMHC's RRAP — Conversion provides assistance to convert non-residential properties into affordable self-contained rental housing units or bed-units.

Additional funding was provided by the Canadian Tire Foundation for Families, which contributed over \$83,000, the Ontario Trillium Foundation with a grant of \$51,500, and the City of Welland contributed \$100,000 toward the purchase of the building. An additional \$60,000 was raised through The Hope Centre's own fundraising efforts.

The Hope Centre is designed to provide emergency food and shelter; help with finding and maintaining permanent housing; provide emotional, social and tangible support; help clients find and use existing community services; and engage in social action to change societal structures that create poverty and homelessness.

CMHC RRAP programs help low-income Canadians, people with disabilities and Aboriginals live in decent, affordable homes. These programs also support renovations to rooming houses and rental units to increase the availability of housing for those in need.

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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