



## PRESS RELEASE



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### **Northumberland Services for Women Celebrates Shelter Renovations**

**COBOURG, Ontario, September 29, 2006** — Northumberland Services for Women celebrated the unveiling of renovations to its shelter in Cobourg today. The shelter provides a safe environment and services for women and children in crisis as a result of family violence and abuse.

The federal government provided \$22,287 through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) Shelter Enhancement Program to renovate and upgrade the shelter.

"Canada's New Government values the work of organizations such as Northumberland Services for Women and is proud to assist them in making a real difference in the lives of vulnerable women and children in Northumberland county," said Rick Norlock, Member of Parliament for Northumberland – Quinte West, on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development.

As part of the renovations to the seven-bedroom, 14-bed shelter, an unused games room was converted into a bedroom and a quiet sitting room with a bed for emergency use. In addition, a barrier-free laundry facility was installed, exterior siding was replaced on the Women's Resource Centre, new toilets were installed, and lighting fixtures were repaired.

"We very much appreciate the support of CMHC's Shelter Enhancement Program in the improvement of our facility," said Mandy Aiken, Chair of the Board of Directors of Northumberland Services for Women. "Without funding through this program, the enhancement of living space for women and their children would not have been possible".

Northumberland Services for Women provides safety, support, counselling, and an inclusive environment for women and children who have experienced violence. They also advocate against violence and oppression, and collaborate with community partners to provide a continuum of services including a transitional housing and support program, a child witness program, and community counselling services.

"The renovations and upgrades to our buildings will enhance services for women and children in our community in many ways," said Linda Janzen, Northumberland Services for Women's Executive Director. "Prior to the installation of the barrier free laundry, women who were unable to use stairs could not take care of their own laundry needs. The addition of an extra bedroom allows us to house more women when they are in crisis, meaning that fewer women will have to leave the county for safe shelter in an emergency. The quiet room will provide a comfortable haven away from the bustle of the busy shelter living spaces."

Each year, Northumberland Services for Women helps approximately 600 women and their children in Northumberland County, while the crisis line receives over 2,100 calls. Volunteers provide over 2,300 hours of service to women and their children annually.

CMHC's Shelter Enhancement Program offers financial assistance for the repair, rehabilitation and improvement of existing shelters for women and their children, youth or men who are victims of family violence, as well as for the

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acquisition or construction of new shelters and second-stage housing where needed.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) has been Canada's national housing agency for over 60 years. CMHC is committed to helping Canadians access a wide choice of quality, affordable homes, while making vibrant, healthy communities and cities a reality across the country.

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