

RELEASE

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GOVERNMENT OF CANADA AND YWCA CELEBRATE OPENING OF NEW SHELTER IN PETERBOROUGH

PETERBOROUGH, ON – The Government of Canada, through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), and YWCA of Peterborough, Victoria and Haliburton celebrated the grand opening of YWCA Crossroads Shelter, a 25-bed shelter for women and children who are victims of family violence in Peterborough.

Dean Del Mastro, Member of Parliament for Peterborough, on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development and Minister Responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation; Jeff Leal, Member of Provincial Parliament for Peterborough; Paul Ayotte, Mayor of Peterborough; J. Murray Jones, Warden of Peterborough County; and Lynn Zimmer, Executive Director, YWCA Peterborough, Victoria & Haliburton; along with invited guests attended today's event.

"Our Government is committed to giving a hand-up to those who need it most here in Ontario", said MP Dean Del Mastro. "That's why we are proud to have invested in this new facility which will help women and children in Peterborough access safe and suitable housing, and build a stronger future for themselves".

The Government of Canada, through CMHC provided \$750,000 to YWCA Crossroads through the Shelter Enhancement Program (SEP). The SEP program assists in repairing, rehabilitating and improving existing shelters for women and their children, youth or men who are victims of family violence. It also provides financial assistance for the acquisition or construction of new shelters and second-stage housing where needed. This project also received Proposal Development Funding from CMHC, which helped with the pre-development costs incurred during the process of developing an affordable housing project proposal.

The new Crossroads shelter will replace two shelters, which over the past 27 years have provided a temporary home for over 13,000 women and children fleeing domestic abuse. The new facility will enable women and their families to receive counselling and support programs delivered within the safety of the shelter. Programs and support groups will help women to build a promising and healthy future for themselves and their families.

In addition to the funding provided through the Government of Canada, YWCA Crossroads received funding and support from the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services, the County of Peterborough and the City of Peterborough. YWCA of Peterborough, Victoria and Haliburton completed a highly successful fundraising campaign that raised just over \$4 million in total for the capital project and programs.

“I think we have achieved a perfect blend of participation from our community and from all levels of government. Women and children will be safe at Crossroads because of the combined efforts of community members and policy makers.” said Lynn Zimmer, YWCA Peterborough, Victoria & Haliburton Executive Director.

For 119 years, the YWCA of Peterborough, Victoria and Haliburton has been a leading agency for women who are at a turning point in their lives. Founded in 1891, the YWCA provided generations of women with transitional housing, education, and support as they established new livelihoods in the burgeoning industrial economy.

As the needs of women changed over the decades, so did the work of the YWCA. In 1979, the YWCA opened the third floor of its residence to families who were victims of violence. With demand outstripping the supply of space, the YWCA Crossroads emergency shelters were born in 1983. Since then, the YWCA has been integral in expanding the community's safety net for abused women and creating awareness, policies and protocols around the issue.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has been Canada's national housing agency for more than 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.

In September 2008, the Government of Canada committed more than \$1.9 billion over five years to improve and build new affordable housing and help the homeless. As a part of this investment, the renovation programs for low-income households, including the Shelter Enhancement Program, were extended for two years. For Ontario this represents \$73 million in federal funding for renovation programs off-reserve.

Canada's Economic Action Plan builds on this with an additional one-time investment of more than \$2 billion to build new and renovate existing social housing for low-income Canadians, plus up to \$2 billion in loans to municipalities for housing-related infrastructure.

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