

## NEW FRANCOPHONE SHELTER IN TIMMINS

*McGuinty Government Supports Women and Children Escaping Violence*

### NEWS

September 19, 2008

Ontario is providing additional safety, security and support for Francophone women and their children who are fleeing violence in their homes by investing in a new 10-bed shelter in Timmins.

Community and Social Services Minister Madeleine Meilleur joined staff of the Centre Passerelle pour femmes du Nord de l'Ontario for the shelter ground-breaking ceremony today. When completed, the 4,000 square foot shelter will be fully accessible to people with disabilities, provide safe and secure play areas for children, and will be the only shelter in Northern Ontario that provides services completely in French.

Minister Meilleur also presented Centre Passerelle with a certificate recognizing its official designation under the French Language Services Act. Centre Passerelle pour femmes du Nord de l'Ontario, a Francophone sexual assault centre, will manage and operate the new shelter.

### QUOTES

"This shelter is the result of the work of a team of dedicated Francophone women in Timmins who identified the need and worked tirelessly to see it through," said Minister Meilleur. "Just knowing they can receive services in their own language will help give Francophone women the confidence they need to escape the violence in their homes and rebuild their lives."

"This shelter represents the realization of a dream to have a Francophone shelter operated for and by Francophone women," said Julie Béchard-Fisher, executive director of Centre Passerelle pour femmes du Nord de l'Ontario. "This investment shows that the Francophone community is being heard by the government and by the ministry. We are especially grateful to Minister Meilleur for her support and her commitment to improving the lives of all women and children who experience violence."

### QUICK FACTS

- In 2007, more than 14,000 women and children fleeing domestic abuse used emergency shelters, staying an average of 21.3 days.
- Timmins is one of the largest French-speaking communities in Ontario, with more than 17,000 Francophone residents.
- The Ministry of Community and Social Services provides \$136 million annually to programs that help reduce domestic violence, a 42 per cent increase since 2004.

### LEARN MORE

Learn more about [Ontario's Domestic Violence Action Plan](#), or the ministry's latest [investment](#) in women's agencies.

Find out more about the services and programs offered by the [Centre Passerelle](#).

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