

CHOICES Youth Shelter
59 Townline, Orangeville, ON L9W 1V5

MEDIA RELEASE
For Immediate Release

April 22, 2007

Youth Shelter to Improve Services to Homeless Youth Thanks to \$47,900 OTF Grant

Orangeville - Thanks to a \$47,900 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF), CHOICES Youth Shelter will be adding the counseling services of a Child & Youth Worker to the organization as well as conducting a full operational and community needs assessment. Sylvia Jones, who represented John Tory, MPP for Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey, joined OTF representative Spencer Finch in congratulating the CHOICES Board and staff at today's open house.

John Tory, MPP for Dufferin-Peel-Wellington-Grey, was unable to attend the event and sent his best wishes. "Ontario's strength comes from the many individuals and organizations that help make a difference in the lives of others," said MPP Tory. "I want to congratulate the many board members, staff and volunteers who have helped to secure this new location at 59 Townline. Your commitment will help the youth at CHOICES reach their potential."

This grant is more than just an investment in CHOICES Youth Shelter, it is an opportunity for the community as a whole to establish where there are gaps in service to the less fortunate and to create services to fill those gaps, ensuring that all those in need have a better chance at obtaining the assistance appropriate to their situation. The new Child and Youth Worker/Counselor will allow CHOICES to provide more effective guidance to the residents as well as getting the youth involved in the new Youth Educating Youth program, which will also raise understanding and awareness of risk factors relating to homelessness.

"The grant from OTF will raise our visibility and acceptance in the community, through which we will hopefully increase acceptance and tolerance for the youth as they try to make life-altering changes and will result in increased awareness of the homelessness issue within the broader community," said Administrator Mary Vervoort.

Dufferin Youth Shelter, which operates as CHOICES Youth Shelter, was founded by a group of concerned citizens in 2000, began its existence in a rented three-bedroom townhouse and moved last summer into its new home at 59 Townline, which is owned by the organization. Even with the increased number of beds available at the new premises, CHOICES maintained an 81% occupancy rate in 2006, with over 135 admissions, providing 3,517 bednights in that year.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Ministry of Culture, receives funds from the government's charity casino initiative. The Foundation allocates grants to eligible charitable and not-for-profit organizations in the arts and culture, environment, human and social services and sports and recreation sectors. For more information, please visit www.trilliumfoundation.org.

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