

There is a severe affordable housing shortage in Simcoe County. Women & Children's Shelter of Barrie regularly faces this sobering reality when a woman returns to her abuser because she is unable to manage on her own financially. Our shelter has the opportunity to win a grant of \$25,000 from The Keg to provide affordable housing and support to families moving forward with hope and opportunity in our community – a 'New Beginning'

Our shelter is most often over capacity. We have approximately 2000 families access our services annually from the Barrie community. We regularly have to move families from Women & Children's Shelter of Barrie to another shelter as they have stayed for over four months and have yet to find affordable housing in Barrie.

Barrie Police receive 137 calls a month concerning violence against women. 1 in 4 children have watched their mother being abused. 75% of these children will become perpetrators or victims of violence themselves unless there is intervention, counselling and the opportunity to move forward.

'New Beginnings' will provide Transitional or Second Stage Housing for both women & children leaving the shelter & transitioning to the community or to women & children remaining in the community who are leaving abusive relationships. Housing will offer affordable, individual family apartments and the support of Outreach Services such as Housing, Legal Advocacy, Group & Individual Counselling & Safety Planning on the Base floor of the building. This project will help families move forward with Hope and Opportunity; a New Beginning.

The Keg is celebrating 40 years in business this year and is giving 40 grants of \$25,000 to the project/region with most votes:

<http://www.thekegthanksamillion.com/en/phase2/projects/show/p/746>. We are in Toronto North Region – a vote/day will take 30 seconds of your time but provide such an essential long – term service in our community.

With this grant funding, we will renovate an existing apartment building in Barrie to provide safe and affordable housing while at the same time providing a supportive environment for families to move forward on their own in our community. Families will be able to stay for a period of up to 1 year at which time they will be able to move forward safely on their own, with continued support from our Outreach team.

Renovations will take 8 months to complete and will include enhanced security and lighting surrounding the building as well as renovations to move our Outreach staff to the building of 'New Beginnings'.

We believe in the value of each life and empowerment through respect - 'New Beginnings' will show families in Simcoe County that the community is supportive of each life. The #1 reason influencing whether a woman will leave an abusive relationship is a visible increase in the level of community support - PLEASE show your support for this initiative!