

SAFE HAVEN

Fall 2005

nova vita
domestic violence prevention services

Serving Brantford & Brant County since 1983

Maria House: A place to call home

With the official opening of *Maria House – A Home for Families in Transition* on May 6, 2005, Nova Vita embarked on an exciting new phase in our continuum of services for abused women and children in the communities of Brantford and Brant.

The house, conveniently located next to Nova Vita, offers longer term residential services in a safe, comfortable setting for up to eight women and children.

Women and children living in *Maria House* benefit from an appropriate blend of support and independent accommodation to ensure that their transition to violence free living in the community is a long term success.



A *Maria House* resident may, for example, be an immigrant who doesn't speak English or have family and friends in the area to support her. She could be a young woman with infants or an older woman who is escaping an abusive marriage and who has never lived independently in the community. Counselling, life skills training and referrals to other community resources are among the transitional support services available to these residents.

Maria House has been fully occupied since the day it opened. Fueled by the success of this project, Nova Vita is in the process of expanding our transitional housing program to accommodate an additional 18 to 20 women and children.

Watch for more news of these exciting new developments as Nova Vita – with the help of our funding partners – strives to meet a major service gap in our community for families victimized by domestic violence.



Maria House was named after Maria Hacking (second from the left), who recently retired after more than 20 years of dedicated service to Nova Vita. At the ribbon cutting ceremony she was joined by Bob Kondon, a member of Nova Vita's Board of Directors, Executive Director Joy Freeman, and Lloyd St. Amand, MP Brant.



A life free from violence

Nova Vita's Transitional Support Program helps women make a new start

Joanne MacNeil has a busy day ahead: home visits with two clients; accompanying another client to court; a meeting with colleagues; co-leading a support group. But if she hurries, she'll have time to pick up a card for a client celebrating a birthday tomorrow.

It may seem like a little gesture, but it typifies the tone of the relationship between Nova Vita's Transitional Support Workers and their clients.

"For at least a short while, we become part of these women's lives. We get to know them well and tend to develop more of a personal connection," Joanne says.

Some of the clients in the Transitional Support Program are former shelter residents. Many of them have children. All of them are seeking to establish independent, violence-free lives in the community. They want to move beyond the pain and despair of lives that have been characterized by abuse and homelessness. They're ready to start over, but they need some help making a fresh start.

And that's where Joanne and colleagues Julia McGibbon and Evelyn Taylor come in. One of the first things they will do with a new client is assess her current situation and devise a plan of action. That usually includes developing a safety plan so the client and her children will be better prepared in the event of further violence.

Among the strengths of this hardworking team are empathy and a sound knowledge of other resources in the community.

"A big part of what I do with my clients is listen, find out what they need, and match them up to the appropriate programs and services," Joanne says. "I'm always trying to stay on top of what's available and make contacts at the various agencies."

Depending on their needs, a client could be "active" for as little as a few weeks or as long as several months. Transitional Support Workers assist with a range of issues including housing, financial support, employment, child custody/access, education/skills upgrading, parenting, and physical and mental health. They'll provide information and advice, make referrals, and assist in filling out forms.

"We're often called on to accompany clients – for example to court, lawyers visits, Brant Housing and Ontario Works appointments.

These women have been through a lot and may be very intimidated. They need someone who understands the system and who is on their side."

Joanne says the one frustrating aspect of the job are the waiting periods. There is even a waiting list for service in the Transitional Support Program; it can take up to three months for a client to be assigned to a worker. Those on the waiting list are encouraged to attend a weekly support group.

"It gives these women a chance to stay connected and receive some useful information, and it gives us a chance to monitor their situation."

Despite the often hectic pace, Joanne gets a lot of satisfaction from her work. "To be able to do something for someone that makes their life better – that is incredibly rewarding."



Joanne MacNeil is one of three Transitional Support Workers at Nova Vita.

For more information about Nova Vita's Transitional Support Program, or to book an intake appointment, call 752-1005, ext. 248.



“\$100,000” golf tournament sets new record

Nova Vita’s 8th Annual Charity Golf Tournament was a great success, raising a record \$16,500!

This year’s sold-out event, held June 3, 2005 at The Greens at Renton, was called “The \$100,000 Tournament” to commemorate the fact that the previous seven tournaments contributed more than \$100,000 to programs and services.



Daisy Campaign continues to grow

For the fifth consecutive year, Walter’s Greenhouses donated proceeds from the sale of potted daisy plants to the May Daisy of Hope Campaign. Above, Nova Vita’s Rhonda Hendel (left) accepts a cheque for \$1,300 from Diane Hutchinson of Walter’s Greenhouses. The sale of daisy pins at establishments throughout the community brought in an additional \$638. Thank you to everyone who participated in this year’s campaign.

Our thanks go to Kuriyama Canada, Reid & Deleye Contractors, Zellers and to all of our generous sponsors, donors and participants. Next year’s tournament is scheduled for June 2, 2006.

The Bustee Ladies

Many years ago, about 30 Brantford women began to meet for lunch, usually twice a year. This respite from children and family responsibilities gave them an opportunity to catch up on each others activities and develop life-long friendships. During one of these luncheons, they decided to support a charity which benefited a small village in India. The villagers lived in mud huts called bustees which led to an informal name for these Brantford women, “The Bustee Ladies.”

In 1995, The Bustee Ladies decided to bring their charitable support home to Brantford because as one group member said, “We know that while there is poverty and need in many parts of the world, we also know there is great need in our own community. We chose to help Nova Vita because Nova Vita helps so many women and young children.”

After a decade of generous support, we’d like to offer our heartfelt gratitude to this extraordinary group of women. Thank you for caring and thank you for choosing Nova Vita to be the recipient of your support. We value your friendship and you have made a difference in the lives of many women and children. Recently, due to the declining health of some members, The Bustee Ladies made the decision to discontinue their regular meetings. Our thoughts and good wishes are with all of you.

YES! I would like to help Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov.: _____

Postal Code: _____ Tel.: _____

Signature: _____

My cheque to **Nova Vita** is enclosed

or Please charge to my

Visa MasterCard

Card no. _____

Exp. date _____

Please make cheques payable to Nova Vita and forward to:
59 North Park Street, Brantford, Ontario N3R 4J8

A charitable donations receipt will be issued.
Revenue Canada Charitable Tax # 10777 1727 RR0001

Runner's Den fundraising run to benefit Nova Vita

On Sunday, November 13, 2005 people of all ages and athletic abilities are going to do something good for themselves as well as for their community.

The Paris Grand River Run, organized and sponsored by The Runner's Den at 9 Grand River Street North in Paris, will begin at 9:00 a.m.

Events include a half marathon run, a 5K run, and a 1K kids' Fun Run. Proceeds from the run will go towards Nova Vita's programs and services for abused and homeless women and children in Brantford and Brant County.

Early bird registration fees (before October 31st) are \$10 for the kids' run, \$25 for the 5K run and \$45 for the half marathon. Each participant will receive

a t-shirt and a pizza lunch will be served. Incentive prizes will be awarded for pledges collected.

For more information about the Paris Grand River Run, or to obtain a brochure and pledge sheet, please call Debbie Jones at The Runner's Den, 442-1056.

Christmas Hampers

The holidays can be a particularly stressful time for families coping with violence and homelessness. With the help of our friends and donors, Nova Vita tries to make the season a little brighter for the women and children staying at the shelter during the holidays.

If you, or your organization, would like to help us with this year's Christmas Hampers program, the following are some suggestions for donations: gift certificates for grocery, department, music or sports stores; new, unwrapped toys/gifts for children and teens; slippers and pajamas for women and children; non-perishable food; toiletries.

Please drop off any donations between 9 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday, no later than Wednesday, December 14, 2005.

Your assistance and generosity are greatly appreciated.

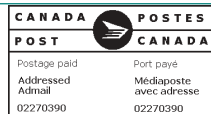
Save those grocery tapes!

Did you know that Nova Vita receives a percentage of the total dollar value of grocery store tapes collected from A&P and Zehrs stores?

If you would like to donate your A&P and/or Zehrs grocery tapes to Nova Vita, you can mail them to the attention of "Save-A-Tape Program" at the address to the right, or leave them in the mail box located at the main door of the shelter.



Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services
59 North Park Street, Brantford ON N3R 4J8



Postage paid / Port payé
Addressed / Adressé
02270390 / 02270390



Nova Vita is committed to creating a violence free society for everyone through intervention, prevention and advocacy.

Our services include:

- Emergency, safe shelter for abused and homeless women and their children, open 24-hours a day, 7 days a week
- 24-hour crisis telephone line, 752-HELP or 752-4357
- Individual and group counselling for women including groups for seniors
- Counselling for children who witness violence against their mothers
- Transitional support program to help women and children establish independent lives
- Men's programs, including counselling for men who are abusive toward their partners
- Caring Families, aimed at helping parents become more nurturing
- Violence prevention and violence education through community outreach

Safe Haven is produced for the friends and benefactors of Nova Vita Domestic Violence Prevention Services.

Any comments or suggestions may be forwarded to:

Nova Vita
59 North Park Street
Brantford ON N3R 4J8
Tel: (519) 752-1005 ext. 232
Fax: (519) 752-0811
E-mail: bwright@novavita.org

24-Hour Crisis Telephone:
(519) 752-HELP or 752-4357
T.D.D. 752-2403

Charitable tax # 10777 1727 RR0001

