



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
March 19, 2013

## CHILD WELFARE SOCIETY GIFTS BUILDING TO SHELTER OF FLINT *Local Nonprofits Pay it Forward*

**Flint, MI** – Flint area women who need emergency shelter and housing for themselves and their children will soon have a new home. Shelter of Flint will be moving to the Cedar Street Children’s Center near downtown Flint as the result of a gift from the Child Welfare Society of Flint. The Child Welfare Society will turn over the 21,000 square foot building and surrounding grounds as part of its reorganization. The Child Welfare Society will remain a nonprofit organization and will continue its mission to help children throughout Flint and Genesee County.

Ten Flint women established the Child Welfare Society in 1915. For 35 years the Society provided residential care for children and for another 37 years offered day care at Cedar Street Children’s Center, a building built with money raised by the organization. This was one of the first day care facilities in the area and offered affordable care with a sliding fee scale.

Through this upcoming move, Shelter of Flint will consolidate its administrative office and shelter facility into one location. Priority Children, currently located in the Cedar Street Children’s Center, will re-locate to the Shelter of Flint administrative building on East Sixth Street. Shelter of Flint will also be gifting the shelter facility on Delaware Avenue to another local nonprofit.

Shelter of Flint and Priority Children will move offices in mid-April, with the emergency shelter moving to Cedar Street in late summer after the required renovations have been completed. Through this move, Shelter of Flint will expand its capacity for emergency shelter from 50 beds per night to roughly 75 beds per night. The consolidation will also reduce operating costs.

The leadership of Shelter of Flint is excited about the opportunity. “This is a tremendous move for both organizations,” says Anne Grantner, Executive Director of Shelter of Flint. “We will be moving to a more central location, which will make it much easier for our clients to access additional community resources. It will also allow us to add more beds, which is critically important, and it is much more cost-effective than building a new building or adding on to our existing facility.”

This move makes sense from a resource perspective as well. None of the buildings will be left vacant: all will be fully utilized. This exchange is also demonstrating a “pay it forward” mentality among the cooperating non-profit agencies involved. “The Shelter of Flint received its emergency shelter building as a gift,” explains Eric Gasper, board president of Shelter of Flint. “We are therefore gifting the building to another nonprofit, which will be announced soon, so that it will remain occupied and so that they can continue doing their important work.”

Homelessness is not a new problem, but it is a growing challenge for Flint. Forty percent of families who come to the Shelter of Flint are homeless for the first time. Sixty percent of the people who sleep in the emergency shelter each night are children under the age of 10. Grantner explains, "We get calls every day from people who have either lost well-paying jobs, or who cannot make ends meet even though they are working two or even three jobs. Low-wage jobs and high unemployment have create a 'perfect storm' that is uprooting more people every day."

Although emergency shelter is an important component of the Shelter of Flint's work, it is not the only part. "Our mission is to help people achieve independence and stability in their housing," says Liz Ruediger, Director of Development for Shelter of Flint. "So while emergency shelter may be a critical band-aid in the short-term, it is not a long-term solution. We work with clients to help them establish a budget, find affordable housing, and create a life that is stable so that children can attend school and parents can work. Affordable housing, and the ability to access and keep it, are two huge challenges facing Flint. We have found that our most lasting impact comes from helping families get out of crisis and find stability."

Shelter of Flint is celebrating 30 years of service to the Flint community in 2013. "This move and the additional capacity it represents are very fitting milestones for this year of celebration," says Grantner. "The very fact that we have been serving and expanding for the last 30 years is a testament to the transformational power of stable housing."

You can follow the move and see construction progress at [www.facebook.com/shelterofflint](http://www.facebook.com/shelterofflint), or on their website at [www.ShelterofFlint.com](http://www.ShelterofFlint.com).

#### **About Shelter of Flint, Inc.**

Shelter of Flint has served the homeless population of Genesee and Lapeer counties since 1983, when it opened as an emergency shelter for women. Throughout its 30 year history, Shelter of Flint has expanded services to meet client needs. Today, Shelter of Flint's core programs include: Emergency Shelter; Transitional Housing; Permanent Supportive Housing; Rental Assistance; Supportive Services; and Children's Programs.

Mission Statement: Integrating programs and services with safe, affordable housing to help low-income and homeless individuals and families achieve independence and stability.

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