# Article for your business / organization’s newsletter

**A New Shelter is Desperately Needed to Support Victims of Domestic Violence in Central Ohio**

The Columbus community is joining together to raise funds to support building a new shelter for victims who need a safe haven from a violent relationship.

(Business/ Organization name) is proud to support organizations that are devoted to making central Ohio a great place to live and work. As part of our ongoing effort, we are supporting LSS CHOICES for Victims of Domestic Violence, the only domestic violence shelter and 24-hour crisis hotline in Franklin County.

The organization expects to serve nearly 2,000 individuals in 2016, including 750 in need of shelter. The 24-hour hotline is expected to receive 4,300 calls this year. No one in crisis is ever turned away.

The CHOICES shelter urgently needs a new home to meet the need in our community. The current shelter is often overcrowded and, at one point, housed about 100 victims and their children; nearly double what the facility is configured to hold. In fact, [a recent editorial in *The Columbus Dispatch* underscored the immense need for a new shelter.](http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/editorials/2016/09/16/1-editorial-giving-victims-more-choice.html)

Domestic violence is a problem right here in our local community. It is estimated one in three women and one in four men experience domestic violence in their lifetime.

Victims and their children need a safe place to go to break the cycle of violence and begin to heal, and the CHOICES shelter has been the sole resource in Franklin County for more than four decades.

The new shelter will increase the number of beds from 51 to 120, growing capacity by 135 percent. The design of the building is inspired by a national best practice for domestic violence healing called “Building Dignity” and includes state-of-the-art security, a secure outdoor playground and a garden for shelter residents, as well as kennels and exercise areas for family pets.

Among the unique staffing plans for the shelter are an on-site crisis counselor and a kitchen advocate to work one-on-one with survivors to redevelop healthy relationships with food. A family activities coordinator will support parents with learning parenting techniques and in transitioning children to the shelter.

**How You Can Help**

Join businesses, organizations and individuals across Franklin County in supporting this community-wide effort by making a donation or hosting an in-home fundraising party with friends and family. CHOICES provides an online event toolkit with resources and tips.

To learn more about Our Community’s Campaign for CHOICES and how to get involved, visit <http://www.lssnetworkofhope.org/choices>.