



## *The History of Rowan House*

In the mid-1990s, the Ministry of Children's Services expanded from 6 to 18 provincial regions. The Windsong Child and Family Services Authority was comprised of a number of districts, including the Municipal Districts of Foothills, Bighorn, and Willow Creek, and the County of Vulcan.

The newly formed region was delegated to deliver all services mandated by the Child and Family Services Act; however, program resources for victims of family violence were not yet in place in the area.

In 1999, local agencies were asked to submit a proposal to the Government of Alberta for a new group home to serve local rural youth in need of emergency placement, stabilization, assessment, & short-term treatment. Gord McDowell, the Executive Director of a local government-contracted agency, was the only person interested in the pursuit. Prior to submission of the proposal, Mr McDowell was asked if he could also incorporate plans for an emergency women's shelter.

The proposed facility was accepted in August of '99. In September of that year, property was secured, & by November, the facility had been furnished & staffed.

The six-bed Eagle Receiving and Assessment Emergency Home admitted its first client in January 2000, and by spring, the group home was full. The shelter, large enough to house two women with up to three children each, accepted its first client shortly before summer of that year. Funding for outreach was later secured, and outreach services were available by 2003.

In its first 9 years of operation, Rowan House has admitted almost 600 women & children, and supported over 400 clients through the Outreach Program. Eagle House has had a total of 185 youth living in the house over the 8 years we have been in operation. Many of those youth returned for a second or third time.