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New Pontiac CARE House will serve abused children

By SHAUN BYRON of The Oakland Press

The community is being asked to come together as plans are under way to raise funds for a new facility to better serve abused children.

The CARE House Campaign For Kids is seeking to raise \$4 million to build a new 14,000-square-foot building that will replace the existing 6,500-square-foot CARE House building and the shuttered Ducky's Bar and Grill on Woodward Avenue.

"We are going to be doing a series of small events to bring donors in and go through the details of the project," said Cathy Weissenborn, board of trustees president and co-chairwoman of the campaign.

CARE House provides programs for children who have been abused.

There are also several prevention programs, one of which works directly with at-risk families to help parents form nurturing skills and educate adults of their responsibilities to report abuse.

The new building will be built at the same location as the existing structure, on Woodward Avenue between Earlmoor Boulevard and Nebraska Avenue, near St. Joseph Mercy Oakland hospital.

Ground breaking has been planned for April and an opening is scheduled for spring of 2011.

About half of the funds needed to pay for the new structure have been raised for the project, which has been three years in the making.

The new facility will provide additional room to care for the victims of child abuse by nearly tripling the current space used for therapy, and will eliminate waiting, officials said.

The additional space also will provide more room for abuse prevention training and add to the volunteer program.

Weissenborn said the new facility will help them in their mission against child abuse, adding one in four girls and one in six boys will be sexually abused before they reach their 18th birthday.

"Of that 6,500-square-foot facility, we have used every nook and cranny," she said. "That is why this new facility is so critical. It will serve more kids ... expand our prevention program. All of these things we can't do right now until we get more space to work in."