

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact Person: Kristen Cuhran
Date: November 10, 2004
Agency: Ozone House
Telephone Number: (734) 662-2265
Fax Number: (734) 662-9724
Email Address: KCuhran@Ozonehouse.org
Web Site Address: Ozonehouse.org

Ozone House Turns 35!

This Fall marks Ozone House's 35th year in operation. Ozone House was created in 1969 by a group of citizens concerned about the number of runaways on the streets of Ann Arbor. Initially a volunteer run organization offering a few essential services like counseling and help returning home, Ozone House has grown dramatically over the years.

"The needs of young people and families is much different today," says Executive Director, Mary Jo Callan. "Back then we were helping kids from all over the country, many of whom were flocking to the Ann Arbor because of the political and social scene. It was a part of the times. That's not to say that many of those youth didn't have serious problems, many of them did. But today we primarily work with young people from our own community. Youth who've been abused or abandoned. Youth with no place to go. And youth and families who need help dealing with conflict. It's another kind of sign of the times."

Ozone House has responded to the changing needs of the community by intensifying and expanding services. Today the organization touches the lives of over 3000 youth each year through a wide range of services that include: 24 Hour Crisis Intervention, Emergency Youth Shelter, Youth and Family Counseling, Life Skills and Leadership Development, Transitional and Permanent Supportive Housing, Outreach, and the Ypsilanti Youth Drop-in Center. It is the only organization solely devoted to runaway and homeless youth and is the only youth shelter in the County.

In addition to offering a variety of services, Ozone House has developed a strong commitment to excellence. Ozone House has been recognized numerous times in the last six years for best practices in youth services and excellence in nonprofit management, including an award from *Crain's Detroit Business* in 2002 for Best Managed Nonprofit.

As a part of our celebrations, Ozone House is having a ***Birthdays Brunch at the Firefly Club on Sunday, November 21 from 11-2***. There will be delicious food and delightful entertainment by the Paul Keller Trio. (For tickets, please call Kristen Cuhran at 662-2222.)

"This is an important milestone. Ozone House has come a long way in 35 years. We hope the community will come out to celebrate with us, and learn more about the critical nature of our work and our success at helping vulnerable youth make a safe and healthy transition to adulthood," says Mary Jo Callan.

###