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## Youth crisis center opens in Ypsi

Ozone House offers teens free intervention

By **Daniel Sczomak** / News Editor  
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Ozone House, a Washtenaw crisis and support agency for young people, opened the Youth Drop-In Center at a new location in Ypsilanti to provide teenagers with free afternoon services such as crisis intervention, counseling, life skills development and opportunities to socialize.

The Youth Drop-In Center has existed since 1998, but it opened its new facility on July 10. It is located on 102 N. Hamilton.

It operates from 4 to 8 p.m. on Mondays-Thursdays and 6 to 8 p.m. on Fridays. It's intended for children between the ages of 13 and 19, but people in their 20s also visit the facility and receive its services.

Outreach and Education Coordinator Rodney Fryar said 4 to 8 p.m. are high-risk hours for teenagers. "That's when they get into the most trouble," he said.

He said the Drop-In Center is a place where they can come for help or just relax in a comfortable environment.

"Some kids don't necessarily need services. They just want somewhere safe where they can hang out with friends, listen to music or get a free meal," he said.

Fryar said the Drop-In Center provides a space where kids can be creative, open-minded, and not feel like people are judging them.

Visitors also get the opportunity to participate in activities such as "Lyricist Lounge," and can share poetry or music.

Ozone House also provides a 24-hour crisis line, and the number is 734-662-2222.

"We have people working around the clock -- someone to talk to or someone to listen," Fryar said.

He said the crisis line is intended to help people of all ages with all sorts of problems, including depression, suicidal thoughts, teen pregnancy, family conflicts, domestic abuse and illnesses.

Rodrecus Tartt works at the Drop-In Center as a peer outreach worker. He said he likes helping children and the community.

"Basically, I just like to give back," he said, and that he hopes to be a positive influence on Ypsilanti's young people.

Christopher Coward, 18, has been coming to the Drop-In Center for over two years.

"The reason I like this place so much is, the moment you get here, you're pretty much like family. They greet you with open arms," he said, and there is no bias or prejudice.

He said poetry is his favorite activity at the Drop-In Center. When he's there, he also enjoys spending time with his friends.

"There's a lot of people here to just talk to," he said. "If you got a problem, you can talk to the mediators upstairs. It's a really comfortable place to be."

Anyone who would like to help Ozone House continue to provide its free services may donate money or volunteer.

To learn more about the Drop-In Center, call 734-485-2222 or go to **[www.ozonehouse.org](http://www.ozonehouse.org)**.

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