

*For Your Information and Inspiration*

## Bryce House Helps Women Build New Lives

### Respect.

It's what the women say they're most grateful for at Bryce House, a Queens-based domestic violence shelter that opened its doors in 2007.

The new shelter joins three JBFCs domestic violence shelters in The Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens, making the agency the third largest provider of shelter beds in New York City for survivors of family violence and their children.

Bryce House expands the JBFCs domestic violence program in two significant ways: The shelter offers Tier II transitional housing and the capacity to take in victims of domestic violence living with mental illness and their children.

"A Tier II designation means a woman has already found the courage to leave her abuser and has received services in an emergency domestic violence shelter for up to three months, and has now entered the transitional housing shelter, known as Tier II, for an extended period of time, up to a year," explains **Lesley Samuel-Young, LMSW**, Director, Queens Domestic Violence Services. "During this time women continue their search for permanent housing while they have become more stable, go to work or attend school."

The typical Tier II resident at Bryce House is a woman in her mid- to late-twenties, with children. At Bryce House, which provides 16 apartments for up to

56 residents, 16 adults and 40 children, women attend weekly group meetings about issues of domestic violence, self-care, housing and budgeting. A psychiatrist has been available to provide evaluations, prescribe medication and oversee psychoeducation groups. The Human Resources Administration Office of Domestic Violence and Emergency Intervention makes referrals to the program.

Emergency child care for children up to four-years-old is also available between 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. to enable women to attend appointments during the day. An after-school program from 3:00 pm to 8:00 p.m., offers homework support and recreational activities for school-age children under the supervision of **Steven Waters**, Direct Care Worker/Recreation Coordinator. Arts and crafts, sports (basketball is a favorite) and chess and checkers keep the children engaged while their mothers are at work or preparing dinner in their apartments.

"At Bryce House, a woman is better able to identify patterns of behavior that have made her choose someone who would batter. She is stronger.

She copes better, is less fearful, and is not taking days off from work because her eye is black or her body bruised," Lesley says. "She no longer walks with her head down but with her head held high. That is our success story."



Lesley Samuel-Young