

# The Boston Globe

ROXBURY

## In the heart of Dudley Street, the good Sisters raise Hope

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In 1981, when the Little Sisters of the Assumption opened Project Hope at their home on Magnolia Street, the shelter was one of the first in the area to cater to homeless families.

Over the years, the mission grew to include families with other issues and eventually outgrew the old Victorian, forcing the nuns and other staffers to borrow space from other organizations for a variety of outreach and education programs.

But with the August opening of a new four-story "green" building at 550 Dudley St., those programs are under the same roof for the first time.

Following a dedication ceremony on Wednesday, staffers were on hand to show how the new building improves their mission, letting them serve more people more effectively. A training program for child-care providers can now serve 25 to 30 people, up from 15 to 20.

The adult learning program has expanded from 25 to 35 single mothers, and will be able to offer an adult ESL class for the first time starting this week. A new computer room on the first floor, meanwhile, lets clients find housing and jobs with help from a full-time staffer.

These were all vital changes for a program that previously had services scattered around the neighborhood.

"It's so exciting to be right here, in the center of Dudley Street, to experience how excited the neighborhood people are about this coming up," says the director, Sister Margaret Leonard, an Everett native who has worked with Project Hope since 1985. "It's like a sign of hope for them, and it is for us."

WILL KILBURN ■