

New family justice center opens doors in Richmond

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RICHMOND -- Ten years ago, it was a mere dream.

On Thursday, the West Contra Costa Family Justice Center will finally open its doors to the public at a grand opening celebration starting 3 p.m.

The center, located at 256 24th St. in Richmond, will be a refuge for victims of domestic and sexual violence, a one-stop shop where clients can meet with police, counselors and attorneys, obtain emergency shelter, safe housing and job-placement help.

The new center, a 7,200-square-foot facility located inside a former mental health patient intake center, will be within walking distance to the Richmond BART station.

"What's unique about the center is that it's client-centric," said Contra Costa Family Justice Center Executive Director Susun Kim. "Without it, the victim has to navigate through 20 to 30 different systems, travel to different locations and navigate different systems all while in crisis. This makes it easier for them to access services and get to safety faster."

Beyond crisis intervention, the center will also offer housing, educational and other services to help clients not only get back on their feet but also thrive, Kim said.

Thursday's festivities are open to the public and begin with guided tours starting at 3 p.m., followed by a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 4 p.m. and an open house at 5 p.m.