Montgomery County’s children’s advocacy center, CARE House, officially opened its new facility today after a Valentine’s Day ribbon cutting ceremony.

CARE House is a partnership between Dayton Children’s, Montgomery County Prosecutor’s Office, Dayton Police Department, Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office and Montgomery County Job and Family Services. Construction began last March on the $2.3 million facility.

Representatives from each partner agency collaborate to work on the area’s worst cases of child abuse and neglect. Now located at 410 Valley Street, the new CARE House is just a couple blocks from its original facility, a modified century-old house that opened 15 years ago. Since 1999, CARE House has served more than 8,000 area families.

“We work to quickly address situations and do everything possible to protect children by bringing together Children Services caseworkers, law enforcement, our Prosecutor’s office and medical professionals,” said Deb Downing, Assistant Director for Montgomery County Children Services. "Bringing all these perspectives together at one facility helps to make our county a safer place for children.”

“When that first child walks through the door we hope to see the look in their eyes that shows they know that this place belongs to them,” said CARE House Director Libby Nicholson. For more details, visit thecarehouse.org.

Construction started with a toss of dirt less than a year ago.

CARE House staff enjoy a chat in their bright, new office space.

Ready to comfort young guests, furry friends look in on event attendees at the CARE House opening.

CARE House Director Libby Nicholson speaks of the often difficult task of protecting children.

Dayton Children’s CEO Deborah Feldman shares a story with a packed house at last Friday’s CARE House opening.