



Apropos...

Batshaw Youth and Family Centres

News from Michael Udy, Executive Director

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS

The week of April 18th to April 24th is National Volunteer Week in Canada. More than one-quarter of all working age Canadians volunteer, contributing over one billion volunteer hours per year!

National Volunteer Week provides a great opportunity to say thanks and show appreciation to our volunteers at Batshaw. At present, we have over 80 volunteers who give their time to 26 different programs and services. Our board members and board committee members all volunteer their time as well. **Thank you volunteers for your contribution to Batshaw, you are much appreciated.**

Batshaw volunteers will be invited to a special gathering on April 19th to celebrate their contribution to our organization. Frank Gallagher, a clerical volunteer at 6 Weredale Park, will be recognized for his 10 years of dedicated volunteer service to our organization.

MERGER

At long last we can proceed with the creation of a single corporation and employer known as Batshaw Youth and Family Centres. The Treasury Board has approved the transfer of the undeveloped land at Prévost to a non-profit corporation (ERS). This had been the main obstacle. The steps towards merger will now go ahead full steam. Soon we will all work for and be paid by the same organization. All of our union locals will continue as they are, but related to one and the same employer. More news in the near future.

REPORTS GALORE

Our field of work is shaped from time to time by the observations and recommendations of committees and their reports. Several years ago the Harvey report, the Jasmin report and the Bouchard report had an influence on the way we organize and carry out Youth Protection and Young Offenders services, and in particular, services for young children.

We are now in a situation where five more reports are in the process of influencing our work. Two of them are recent reports from the Quebec Human and Youth Rights Commission. Last year, the Commission published the Beaumont report and this year the report on Centre jeunesse des Laurentides. Both of these focused largely on the need for rigor in the assessment of Youth Protection cases and the clinical tools we use, the importance of the supports and supervision available to interveners, and the need for a strict administrative approach in documenting what we do. To these themes we can add those found in the recommendations of three other reports: the Cliche, Lebon and the Auditor General reports.

The Cliche report is a broad review of the situation of vulnerable children and youth and the services available to them from all sectors (education, justice etc.), not just our own. The global recommendations call for an explicit coordinated engagement of all these sectors, for a greater accent on preventive and early intervention, for a focus on the local integration in the delivery of services, and a better financing and management by the evaluation of results.

The Lebon report has a more narrow focus, looking at what is required to get the waiting lists for Youth Protection services under control. Its global recommendations focus on early and coordinated intervention in partnership particularly with CLSCs. Other recommendations include adequate financing and staffing of Youth Protection and placement services across the province and a review of the workload of interveners.

The report of the Auditor General of Quebec is part of the regular and continuing activities of the Auditor General's office to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of different government activities. Every year they select a few areas of government service to examine. In 1998 they examined the performance of the Regional Boards, the CLSCs and the Youth Centres with respect to delivering services to youth in difficulty. Their findings were determined through a sampling process, by evaluating three regional boards, eight CLSCs and three Youth Centres (we were not studied, but Centres jeunesse de Montréal was). The report has many detailed findings.

Of significance to us in the report: they noted the weak cooperation between Youth Centres and CLSCs, the inconsistent and sometimes inadequate use of service and intervention planning, the relative lack of the use of standardized tools in assessment and clinical work, the relatively weak training, supervision and evaluation supports available to interveners, the uneven distribution of resources from one region to another, the weak supports to foster families, the weak state of management information systems, and therefore, the difficulty in managing the system by the results it produces.

I have not done justice to the complexity of each report. But you can see the common themes: fund the system evenly and adequately across the province, act in concert locally with CLSCs and other partners, adopt validated clinical tools, use service and intervention plans to guide the work, standardize the workload and improve the training and supervisory supports available to interveners, develop management systems that permit an overview of the results produced and that support planning.

Next month I will tell you what Batshaw is doing about these topics. If you are interested in one or more of these reports or any other literature for that matter, contact our librarian Janet Sand at 989-1885.

CROSSROADS 10TH ANNIVERSARY - MARCH 29, 1999

The following is a submission from Bruce Cummings, Program Manager, Crossroads. Crossroads is an open residential program located on the Dorval campus.

"A very heartfelt thank you to all who've contributed over the years to the development of the program and to the successes that we've attained at Crossroads.

The creativity and dedication of the staff team towards maintaining a high quality of care in line with a clear philosophy of treatment has allowed us to work successfully with arguably some of the most challenging youngsters in residential care. It is fitting that names be mentioned at this important milestone of those workers that have contributed so much over the past several years. They include; Kuldip Thind, Monique Laverdure, Mike Smeaton, Cathy Millar, Patricia Charles, Elaine Palmer, John Carzello, Nektaria Tsontakis, Sid Weiss, Faith Fraser, Jim Klimas, Fro Arvanitis, Lenore Caterson, Fred Anderson and Linda Dion.

A special acknowledgment and thank you to those current team members who were present at the opening of the program ten years ago. They include; Karen Goodhand, Rob Gillen, John Trakas and Sandu Strunga. I would also like to thank everyone who's name I haven't mentioned including the many students who have helped us over the last ten years. Happy Anniversary Crossroads! "