



Apropos...

Batshaw Youth and Family Centres

News from Michael Udy, Executive Director

FUTURE PLANNING

During the past month all staff received documents addressing the future direction of Batshaw. Staff will also be invited to participate in divisional meetings to discuss the documents in greater depth. This marks the beginning of a large-scale effort to help Batshaw recover from the effects of the reorganizations and budget cuts of the last few years.

The goal is to develop a Batshaw Youth and Family Centres common vision. The end result will be a plan concerning how we will fulfill that vision in the years 2000-2005. This plan will be submitted to the Batshaw board of directors in June 2000.

NEW SERVICE FOR CHILDREN WHO WITNESS CONJUGAL VIOLENCE

"Auberge Shalom... pour femmes", a centre for women in abusive relationships, and Batshaw Youth and Family Centres are offering a 10 week group program for anglophone children, ages 6-12, who are witnesses to conjugal violence.

The purpose of this group is to help participants express their emotions about what they have witnessed and understand the impact of violence on their lives. The mother is required to attend a concurrently run parents' group to support their child's participation in the program. Transportation and babysitting of siblings are available. Referrals are now being accepted, contact David Lubert at (514) 695-5251 to obtain more information on this new program.

NEW ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT PROGRAM

Work has been continuing on the development of a new residential program for English-speaking adolescents with significant substance and alcohol abuse problems. The junior minister for Health and Social Services, Gilles Baril, has announced publicly that he wants to see such a program set up, and that he has some funding available. The program will be offered by Portage as an addition to their existing range of services. Batshaw will refer clients to the service, which will also accept referrals of English-speaking youth from other regions and from First Nations communities.

Nick Paré, Director of Residential Treatment Services for Adolescents is leading Batshaw's discussions with Portage on the development of the program. The program will add to the existing range of residential and external services for Batshaw youth with alcohol and substance abuse problems. Presently we receive services from Portage and Foster Pavilion. It will help fill a long acknowledged gap of services for youth who have a combination of alcohol and substance abuse problems, and behaviour problems too difficult for the existing programs to manage. It is hoped that the program will accept its first clients early in the new year.

FROM THE BOARD

At its October meeting the Batshaw board of directors welcomed Joy Lepage as the new member from the electoral college of staff of the Child and Youth Protection Centre. Joy has extensive experience in Batshaw's programs, and is currently Coordinator of Family Preservation programs in the Youth Protection division.

At the same meeting the Board adopted a resolution calling on the Regional Board to act and correct the fact that Batshaw receives 24% of the allocation of the region's Youth Centre budget to serve a population base of 33% of the region's youth, 0-17yrs old. Such measures are important to Batshaw's capacity to serve the population and its future development.

At the November meeting, Roger Fortin was welcomed as the new member from the electoral college representing all Batshaw staff, and Yves Paprocki was re-elected as representative of reception centre staff. Natasha McMullen and Leon Essing were elected by the Council for Clients and Community electoral college. Donald Bishop, James Grant and Diane Tsonos were nominated to represent the owning corporations. Allan Aitken was re-elected as Foundations representative.

Also at the November meeting, the board approved the budget for 1999-2000, which includes a reinvestment in building projects and services of just over \$1 million. The budget for the renovations at Prévost campus to create the new backup and admissions services was also approved.

FEEDBACK FROM THE BLACK COMMUNITY

At the request of Batshaw, the Black Advisory Committee held a public meeting on November 17th to give members of the Black community an opportunity to voice their views on the strengths and weaknesses of Batshaw's services to their community. The meeting was well attended. The results will be put in the form of a report and recommendations that will be presented to myself and the Batshaw Management Committee.

HOLIDAY WISHES

We have already arrived at the end of 1999! It has been a challenging time for all of us. I am taking this opportunity to thank all of you for the hard work and dedication you have given to Batshaw.

This New Year is special as we move into the year 2000. As we recover from the budget cuts of the last few years and rebuild the organization, I see positive days ahead for Batshaw Youth and Family Centres. I wish you and your family a safe and happy holiday, and we'll see each other in the New Year.