



Apropos...

Batshaw Youth and Family Centres

News from Michael Udy, Executive Director

A NEW BOARD PRESIDENT

On January 17th the Batshaw Youth and Family Centres board of directors named Bill Rowe as the new board president. Outgoing president, Diane Tsonos, stepped down after more than four years at the helm to allow more time for her personal life. Diane steered the Board through difficult times with a steady hand. During her tenure the Board selected a new Executive Director, dealt with continued budget cuts, one of which was the largest ever suffered by the organization, responded to crises, yet managed to continue to help equip the organization with appropriate policies, and emerge with a balanced financial picture. Diane's solid leadership was a key component in guiding the agency through this difficult period.

Bill Rowe has been a member of Batshaw's board since 1996, and has been Chair of the Board's Program and Services Committee during that time. He also chaired the board committee that reviewed the situation of the agency's closed custody units. He is the Director of McGill's School of Social Work and a recognized contributor to social work literature. Among other activities, he participated in the Mount Cashel inquiry into institutional abuse in Newfoundland. He takes on the task of president at a time when the agency is aiming to sharpen its focus on our mission, our services and the way we manage the agency.

YOUTH CENTRES ON TV

Beginning in February, the Association of Youth Centres of Québec (ACJQ) will run 30 second public service announcements on English and French television stations across Québec. The purpose of the messages is to explain to the public that it is the Youth Centres that provide protection services for neglected and abused children, and that this is an important, but complicated matter, handled by people who care and have expertise.

If you have any reactions positively or negatively, e-mail them to me at Batshaw and they will be passed along to the Association. The announcements will run for three months.

BLACK HISTORY

A MILLENNIUM CELEBRATION

Once again a committee has prepared a calendar of events that enables Batshaw staff and clients, and members of the community to celebrate the life of the Black community in Montreal and enable us to learn more about the history and reality of the members of the Black community.

This year activities will take place from February to June. Please check the posters at all points of service for the schedule of events. Be sure to attend one, or more, and add to your knowledge and understanding.

LOCATION CHANGE FOR BRUNSWICK OFFICE

In December the Batshaw Management Committee (BMC) altered the plan with respect to the relocation of our Brunswick offices in Pointe Claire. The plan up to that point was to renovate the Dorval campus to accommodate those staff who could not be relocated elsewhere.

Essentially, increases in costs have rendered the project not viable, as no money will be saved. Keeping in mind the question of ease of access for clients, the plan now is to relocate the staff who cannot be moved to any of our other facilities, to adequate and less expensive quarters in the West Island.

INTRANET/INTERNET

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

The intranet is a service already available and accessible to Batshaw employees on their computers. It serves as a documentation site where a library of Batshaw related documents is starting to be built. Eventually, every Batshaw public document and form will be available on our intranet.

Information services is about to hire someone to develop the potential of our intranet. It has the potential to completely transform everyone's access to Batshaw information. At the same time this person will also build a Batshaw web site on the internet where anyone can become acquainted with our services, and any other information we wish to publish. In the meantime, Batshaw employees can consult our intranet site by double clicking on their internet explorer icon, typing in <http://batshaw> in the address box and then pressing enter. Should you have any problems accessing the site contact Berry Khawam at 989-1885, extension 263.

CULTURAL CONSULTANTS & INTERPRETERS

The Cultural Consultants and Interpreters' Service, coordinated by the Division of Professional Services, is in its fifth year of operation. Presently there are approximately 80 staff who contribute to this service. Our rich cultural diversity is well illustrated by the fact that this represents 22 languages and 27 cultures. Last year a total of 216 requests, or 168 different families benefited from this service, and almost half of these requests were met by our staff.

The success of the service is in large part due to the staff who make themselves available, whether it is as cultural consultant at an orientation table, as an interpreter at an interview or for a meeting with extended family. These staff take time from their own workload to provide their cultural expertise.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their commitment and for the valuable contribution they make to our service to clients. If you are interested in participating as a consultant or interpreter, you can contact Kathy Faludi at DPS for further information.