



Apropos...

Batshaw Youth and Family Centres

News from Michael Udy, Executive Director

MAJOR STAFF TRAINING INITIATIVE

For many years Quebec has held the reputation as a province with a well developed Youth Protection system and level of practice. But over time, other provinces surpassed Quebec in the matter of basic and mandatory Youth Protection training. This is about to change, and Batshaw is in on the ground floor.

With financing from Ministre délégué Gilles Baril and the Regional Boards, the Association of Quebec Youth Centres is about to implement the pilot site phase of what is to become a province wide training program. The program is adapted from the Comprehensive Competency-Based Training program developed by the Institute for Human Services (IHS) in Ohio. In use there for over 20 years, it is also in use in many other states and Canadian provinces. Dr. Judith Rycus, co-director of IHS, visited Batshaw in February of this year and spoke to us about a family-centered approach to protection and permanency for children, which underlies the competency-based training program.

Batshaw will be the very first pilot site, since the Ohio trainers can only train in English. The bilingual Quebec trainers will be trained by the Ohio trainers at our pilot site, and then hone their skills and expertise at other pilot sites in Lanaudière, Appalache-Chaudière and Bas-Saint-Laurent. Batshaw staffers Marissa Di Meglio, Denis Marois and Linda Piano are among the first wave of Quebec-based trainers.

During the pilot site phase all Batshaw managers, and a total of about 75 social workers and child care workers will receive the core competency training. As the rest of the training program unfolds over the next two to three years the training will expand to cover all new and existing staff at Batshaw and all other youth centres. Specialized modules will also be added, for example, residential and foster care, young offenders and substance abuse.

The long-term goal of the Association is a province-wide permanent program, given to every incoming staff person, delivering the core and specialized training needed for their specific job, and updated as time goes on.

The Batshaw pilot site will last from September 2000 until June 2001, and will require a considerable investment on the part of individuals and the agency. But the short and long term benefits make this a very worthwhile commitment.

BATSHAW EDUCATORS RECEIVE AWARDS

(Contributed by Tony Maciocia, Program Manager, Division of Residential Treatment Services for Adolescents.)

The Quebec Association of Educators (QAE) held its annual conference on April 28th. At the conclusion of the conference, the QAE presented its First Annual Excellence in Practice Awards. This year's winners were both from the Division of Residential Treatment Services for Adolescents. Congratulations go out to Philip Alleyne and Sandra Parkes, for their many years of commitment and excellent practice with youth and families. Both received honorary plaques and a joint bursary from Batshaw Youth and Family Centres and the QAE.

The Excellence in Practice Awards will be held every year, during the month of April. For further information, contact Tony Maciocia at 489-3985.

RECOGNITION OF BRAVERY

Batshaw employee David Lubert was recognized for his bravery by the Montreal Urban Police Service at a ceremony held in July. David went voluntarily to the site of a hostage taking incident in May. There he participated directly in the negotiation process with the armed hostage-taker, which took several hours, and which ended successfully. A member of the Application of Measures team on the West Island, David's professional and personal conduct in this situation was truly exemplary. He is deserving of the recognition he has received, and of our admiration. West Island team members Robert Garnier, Michele Gnamuttu and Cherie Nickel are also to be commended for their efforts during the incident.

FOSTER CARE TEAM IN ACTION

(Contributed by Ruth Potts, Resource Worker / Foster Care Service, Division of Placement Services for Young Children.)

On July 29th 2000, the Batshaw Youth and Family Centres Foster Care Recruitment Team participated in the Jamaica Day celebrations. Garnett Forbes, recruitment worker, with helpers Annie Alexander, Florence Clarke and Ruth Potts occupied a booth handing out literature and giving information on fostering. Three intakes of interested parties were done on the spot, and many people took posters and pamphlets to put up in their community centres and churches. We also asked people to talk to people.

Garnett the Pro was much more adept at pulling in the folk, but after watching her work her magic, the rest of us will do much better next time. The best part is that two foster parents volunteered to help us. So we owe many thanks (and lunch money) to Hyacinthe Smith and Winnie Matthews who made our work easier. We were all pleased when Michael Udy dropped by to say hello. The day went well and thanks to everyone for their help and support.

LOSS OF A SPECIAL VOLUNTEER

(Contributed by Kim Kurtz, Volunteer Services.)

Frank Gallagher, a dedicated and well loved volunteer at Shawbridge and Batshaw, passed away on July 25th, he was 85. Frank volunteered for more than 10 years with us and became an integral part of the organization, contributing over 7,000 volunteer hours during his stay.

Frank was an extraordinary person, offering his services to us as a volunteer when he was in his early 70s, and retiring as a volunteer in 1998 at age 84. Many will recall that Frank was a clerical volunteer, sorting files. But most will remember Frank as that gentleman with the quick wit and composer of verse. Frank was the resident poet laureate, creating little gems to give staff a boost and a smile, and he did. He will be deeply missed.

BATSHAW GOLF TOURNAMENT

It's that time again, the Annual Batshaw Golf Tournament. Friday, September 15th at the Bonniebrook Golf Club. This is a really fun event and you do not have to be a top flight player to participate. For further information contact David Ney at 932-7722.