



Apropos...

Batshaw Youth and Family Centres

News from Michael Udy, Executive Director

NEWS FROM THE BOARD

At the June meeting the Board nominated Norman Wale to occupy the last of the vacant co-opted seats on the Batshaw board of directors. His nomination has been submitted to the board of the Regional Board for approval. Father of five, Mr. Wale, before his recent retirement, was Vice President of Strategic Planning for Canadian Pacific. He currently serves on the board of the Ste. Anne's Hospital Foundation.

Confirmation of Mr. Wale's nomination will complete the renewal of the board membership for the 1999-2002 period. However, I anticipate that approval of the merger of the four establishments will occur in the fall. At that moment a new corporate entity, Batshaw Youth and Family Centres, will come into existence, with a board composition slightly different from the current one, which has 20 members. The merger will cause the disappearance of the three seats on the board named by the owning corporations. In fact, the owning corporations and the founding establishments will cease to exist at that moment. Simultaneously, the supporting foundations will acquire the right to elect two members instead of one. The net result will be that the board of the merged Batshaw Youth and Family Centres will have 18 members. These changes will be announced here as they occur.

THE ADOLESCENT DAY TREATMENT PROGRAM

(Contributed by: Madeleine Bérard, Program Manager in the Family Preservation Service of the Youth Protection Division.)

After a year of operation outside of Batshaw premises, the Adolescent day Treatment Program, formerly known as Contact, will be moving in November to facilities located at 5010 Paré. While waiting for renovations to be completed the school board has kindly offered use of one of their empty buildings located in N.D.G.

The program has also changed its name to better reflect its revised mandate and clientele. The clients were invited to participate in a name contest, whereby they had to submit a name which would reflect their perception of what kind of work is being done with their families and themselves. We had almost 20 submissions, the majority very innovative and pertinent.

We then presented these submissions to a selection committee which was comprised of four groups, each having one vote: the Batshaw team, the teachers, one parent and one ex-client. The name which was unanimously agreed upon was the FOCUS program. Formal recognition of the new name by the Commissioners of the English Montreal School Board and by the Program Development Committee of Batshaw is under way.

We are very excited about the way the program is evolving and look forward to collaborating with the various services of Batshaw. In the meantime, we are accepting referrals. We will keep you informed of our progress and most likely will be hosting an open house, sometime in the fall of 2000.

VISITORS TO BATSHAW

In August an international social work conference was held in Montreal. Batshaw was selected as one of the agencies to offer a site visit to conference-goers. The visit was quickly booked up, and conference organizers asked us to make additional spaces available.

A group of Batshaw staff made a presentation about the agency to over 30 attendees, all involved in child welfare in such places as the United States, England, Central and Western Europe, Scandinavia, Africa and Japan. From their reactions they seemed to find the level of integration of our services, and our efforts at inclusion of clients and minorities particularly interesting.

THE VICTIM IMPACT PROGRAM FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS

(Contributed by Julia Paré, Program Coordinator in the Division of Residential Treatment Services for Adolescents.)

The Victim Impact Program for Young Offenders is a joint effort of our Residential Services and our Young Offenders' Services. Phil Alleyne and Sam Barile of the Intensive Probation Program in Residential Treatment Services for Adolescents, with Wayne Quartz of Young Offenders' Services, have together developed a nine-week group session of two hours each, taking principles from the Goldstein model to zero in on the victim's experience in a crime. (The Goldstein model is a cognitive-behavioural approach to working with young people with serious behavioural and delinquency problems.)

Clients are selected and accepted into this group work program by the aforementioned staff and are referred from our Young Offenders' Services or our Intensive Probation Program. The group helps clients develop a better awareness of the feelings of other individuals and their community as well as themselves, using a cognitive and experiential approach. In addition to a number of exercises which aim to put clients in "other people's shoes" and thereby work on empathy skills and moral reasoning, the program has guest speakers who represent victims, past perpetrators and the police. The staff also administers a pre-treatment and post-treatment questionnaire to measure clients' shifts in thinking and to evaluate the effectiveness of the work.

The program sessions always conclude with a community volunteer experience where clients and staff give back to their communities by devoting time and energy to a community in need, for example through Sun Youth and Share the Warmth.

BATSHAW EMPLOYEES HELP SEA SCOUTS

(Contributed by Roy Durant, Program Coordinator for Safety and Security, Division of Human Resources and Administrative Services.)

Praise to our staff who volunteer to enrich the lives of our youth. Gordon Applebee and Sheldon Segal, tireless employees of Batshaw, have devoted tremendous time and energy to the "Second Shawbridge Sea Scouts". After intensive planning and fund raising, this culminated in a summer 2000 adventure, that saw Skipper (Gordon), first mate (Sheldon) and two volunteers set out for a nine day camping/touring expedition to Nova Scotia with seven young Sea Scouts.

Based on the property of Robbie McIntyre, an ex-Batshaw employee, they set up camp and began their adventure. Blessed with excellent weather and an abundance of down East hospitality, the whole crew were dazzled by the arrival of the Tall Ships (several of which they toured). Their visit included lunch on board a Canadian armed vessel and a day aboard a 40 foot ketch on which they greeted a Norwegian Tall Ship on the open sea. For more information on this trip and their other adventures, visit www3.sympatico.ca/musky/2000.htm

LOSS OF ERNEST HIRSCHBACH

It is with regret that we learned of the death on September 10th of Ernest Hirschbach. Mr. Hirschbach was the Executive Director of Summerhill Homes for many years. Summerhill Homes brought the group home approach to working with English-speaking youngsters in difficulty. The agency was a pioneer in this approach in Quebec. Summerhill Homes was later merged in the creation of Youth Horizons, which subsequently was merged into Batshaw. Mr. Hirschbach had a distinguished career in social services to young people and families in Germany, the United States and Canada. The results of his accomplishments live on in Batshaw today. We extend our sympathies to his family.