



Apropos...

Batshaw Youth and Family Centres

News from Michael Udy, Executive Director

CHANGES IN GOVERNANCE

You have probably been following the media accounts of the government's intention to change the Health and Social Services Act. These changes would alter the way boards of directors are composed, and the way executive directors function.

At the board meeting of May 10th the board adopted the following resolution:

"It is resolved,

That the board of directors of Batshaw Youth and Family Centres is opposed to the changes currently proposed by the government to the composition, roles and responsibilities of boards of directors, and the method of appointment and the roles of executive directors in the Health and Social Services network. Further, the board objects strenuously to the excessive rapidity of the timetable proposed for legislative change on these matters.

The board requests that the government take more time in an open parliamentary process, to identify legislative and other changes that will strengthen the management capacity of the Health and Social Services network, without losing the essential democratic input of:

- ♦ Community representatives (including minority community representatives where they are served by the institution);
- ♦ Users;
- ♦ Staff;
- ♦ Partners (both professionals and organizations)."

Since that time we remain very concerned about the effects of the proposed legislation on Batshaw and have been following developments very closely. Along with some thirty other groups and institutions we endorsed a public declaration that appeared in the Gazette on May 22nd. We'll have a follow up to this topic in the July/August issue.

POW WOW, DON'T MISS IT

The fourth annual Pow Wow will be held at the Prevost campus on Saturday, June 23rd. Activities will be similar to those of last year, and it is expected that there will be an even bigger participation from the members of the various Nations. Thirty-one dancers have already confirmed their participation and a first group of drummers is confirmed. A group of kids will create their own drum group and a group of elders will perform some native country music. Lance, a well-known emcee in the community has once again agreed to do the honours this year.

Children and youth in care (residential and foster care) and foster parents are invited to attend. Batshaw staff are invited to participate with their families and to collaborate as volunteers. For further information contact Dave Brown at 932-7722.

PORTAGE WEST ISLAND, OPEN HOUSE

(Contributed by Gary Grace, Access Service, Youth Protection Division)

You are cordially invited to an open house at the new West Island residential center for Anglophone adolescents on Thursday, June 7th, 3-5 p.m., 141 Elm Avenue in Beaconsfield. This visit will provide you with an opportunity not only to tour the site but also to speak with the residents currently in treatment and struggling to challenge their lifestyle. For further information or to RSVP, please contact Liane d'Orsonnens at (514) 939-0202.

SELF RECRUITS – MISSION POSSIBLE

(Contributed by Ingrid Gonsalves, Teacher, Dawson Alternative School)

They did it with attitude! Each and every student at Dawson Alternative School jogged ten laps around the gym to raise money for Children Affected by Aids in Africa. They raised \$110, enough for an Aid Kit, to help educate, train and sensitise case workers to the home placement needs of children born with HIV.

It all began at the celebration of Black History Month—an event celebrated in most every school and municipality of North America. This year, at Dawson, the theme was, "Let's Walk the Talk". Presentations were made. Black heroes and their contributions were remembered. Portrayed also was Africa, a continent in peril—the need for new heroes.

The students were touched. They were moved. There was no need to encourage them into action. They reached out. When presented with the six needs of the eleven-year-old activist and founder of the Nkosi Johnson Foundation for Children Affected by Aids, they voted unanimously, they voted to raise money for the Foundation's Child Placement Kit.

Three class reps, with the help of their teachers and Batshaw staff, organized the jog-a-thon. Sponsors were all part of the student's circle—families, staff and schoolmates. On March 30, 2001, they feel in step. They joined in the International March Against Aids in Africa. Every single step; every single lap of their maximum ten; took every single student out of the boundaries of the system, their school, their campus, their community, their nation.

Those Dawson Alternative students... They got attitude!

NURSES WEEK

The week of May 6th-12th was National Nurses Week. Marie Leduc, Manager of Batshaw Health Services writes: "All the nurses from Health Services would like to thank everyone that contributed in making Nurses Week very special."

CCC CONFERENCE

The members of the Council for Clients and Community held another successful conference on May 10th, more people attended than ever before (this is the 6th conference) and all five workshops were full to capacity. This year's theme was the empowerment of Batshaw youth (the title was *Youth: A Voice and a Choice*) and all the workshops in some way dealt with this theme.

There was an excellent session on dealing with children of conjugal violence, one focused on the sexual exploitation of youth, another was all about resources for youth living independently, and one featured children who are part of foster families speaking about what it is like to be a foster sibling. Youth themselves met in their own workshop to look at placement issues from their perspective - these issues were later presented at a meeting with management, along with recommendations for changes.

As usual there was the luncheon Bar-B-Q which has become a tradition at these conferences. It was a chance for people to get outside, socialize and exchange ideas on what was a beautiful spring day. Thanks to Tony Maciocia and all of his cooks. The CCC members also wish to thank Batshaw for all the support they receive in putting this conference together.