



# Apropos...

## Batshaw Youth and Family Centres

News from Michael Udy, Executive Director

### BLACK HISTORY MONTH IN PROGRESS

By the time you read this several events will have already taken place at Batshaw to celebrate Black History Month. You will still have time to see the Talent Extravaganza on Friday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, at 3 p.m. You can also attend the lunch prepared by some of Batshaw's foster families especially for Black History Month on Friday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, at noon. To purchase luncheon tickets (\$10 each) call 989-1885, # 203. Both events will be held in the Auditorium at 6 Weredale Park.

### CHILD WITNESSES OF CONJUGAL VIOLENCE

*(Contributed by David Lubert, Human Relations Agent, Division of Child and Family Services)*

The Group Treatment Program for Children and their Mothers who were Exposed to Conjugal Violence has been in existence since 1999. The goal of the program is to provide children a safe place to discuss the violence they saw, heard, or were aware was going on in their homes.

These children are at high risk of developing serious emotional and behavior problems. In extreme cases, they present symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. They are typically caught in the middle of the violence, and struggle with loyalty conflicts, fear, and anger and blame themselves for the violence – that they did something to bring it on.

Children, from ages 6 to 12, can be referred to the program. Their mothers participate in a mother's group, which runs at the same time as the children's group. It is not recommended for children who continue to be living with the batterer or for children with serious behavior problems. All referrals or questions are to be directed to Joanne Tavalier at Auberge Shalom...pour femmes at (514) 731-0833.

### SUICIDE PREVENTION WEEK

*(Contributed by Kees Maas, Ph.D., Psychologist, Division of Professional Services)*

The week of February 17<sup>th</sup> is Suicide Prevention Week in Quebec. The youth centres of the province have adopted a protocol to intervene with youth exhibiting suicidal behavior. Batshaw's board has adopted an orientation regarding suicidal behavior in 2002 and is implementing the provincial protocol, which foresees three levels of intervention and responsibilities. The goal is to identify youth potentially at risk for suicide, intervene to reduce that risk, and to do so systematically.

The first-line staff (educators, program managers and caseworkers) are involved in screening and the application of security plans and further intervention. A second-level multidisciplinary team (GP, psychologist, nurses, on-site managers, educator, caseworker) is available on a 24/7 basis as a support to the first-line in order to assess risk, assist in the planning of intervention as well as to refer, if necessary, to the third level of psychiatric assessment and intervention. A multidisciplinary second-level team for the divisions with youth in residential care was formed and trained during the month of March. The first-line staff in these divisions will be trained in the screening, referral and intervention process that is called for by the protocol. The goal is to have a clear, systematic and supportive process to deal with this highly emotional and stress-inducing symptom some of our youth display.

### MANNY BATSHAW MEETS THE MANAGERS

At a recent meeting all of Batshaw's managers participated in an exchange with Manny Batshaw. For those who had not met Manny before, this was a delightful opportunity to benefit from the long experience and the clarity that Manny brings to the work we do. The themes he gave particular emphasis to were to always keep in mind that our first purpose is to assist young people and their families, and to commit ourselves and our resources more to researching the methods we use to be sure we are really being of help. Manny emphasized his strong personal interest in assuring that adequate research is done and announced his intention to assist the agency to obtain funds to increase our research efforts.

### YOUTH CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACT

The federal government adopted the Youth Criminal Justice Act last year to replace the Young Offenders Act. The new Act comes into effect on April 1, 2003. In Quebec, there are 16 Provincial Directors responsible for the application of the Act, and they are the same people as the Directors of Youth Protection. Michael Godman and his staff have been hard at work over the last few months to implement the new Act and prepare for its implementation. Training programs organized by Batshaw lawyer, Sym Davis, will take place over the next several weeks, and provincially-organized training will take place in March.

It is anticipated that over the long run the effect of the new Act will be to have fewer youths in custody, but those who are may have longer sentences, and more youths under different kinds of probation and community-based supervision. The implementation of the Act will be progressive as all youths under the Act on March 31, 2003, will continue to be dealt with under the old Act, while youths charged after April 1, 2003, will be under the new Act.

### FROM THE BOARD

At the January 20<sup>th</sup> board meeting members elected the following officers:

President:	James Grant
Vice-President:	Anna Grafton
Secretary:	Joy Lepage

The board received a report from Director of Professional Services, Claude Laurendeau, to the effect that the "report cards" concerning youth centres, planned by the Ministry to be published in the same vein as those published on hospitals, have been put off indefinitely as the response rate by clients to the questionnaire was quite low.

The board also received the annual reports of the Nurses' Council for 2000- 2001 and 2001-2002, as well as that of the Multidisciplinary Council for 2001-2002.

### THE BATSHAW CALENDAR

February	<b>Black History Month</b> For information contact: Denise Bertrand at 989-1885
February 17 <sup>th</sup> to 21 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Suicide Prevention Week</b>
March 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Scheduled opening of Centre Relax-Action Centre 6 Weredale Park For information see Batshaw Intranet
March 17 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Batshaw Board Meeting</b> For information contact: Thérèse Gauthier at 989-1885