



Appropos

Batshaw Youth and Family Centres

News from Michael Udy, Executive Director

MDC PROFESSIONAL DAY SUCCESS

On November 18th, the 5th annual MDC Professional Day began with the Annual General Meeting, followed by a presentation of the Outstanding Achievement Award in Social Service of the Child Welfare League of Canada for 2004 to Batshaw's Sue Silva, child care worker in the Foster Care Department. Peter Dudding, Executive Director of the League, presented the award. Sue's friends, colleagues and the audience showed their appreciation. Dr. Nico Trocmé, Director of McGill's Centre for Research on Children and Families, presented some interesting findings from the Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Abuse and Neglect, of which he is the principal investigator. Then a group of Batshaw staff, directed by Doris Low of the Foster Care Department, adapted the words of a popular song to Batshaw's history. It was very funny as were the costumes and antics of the group of staff who acted out the words. Finally, we saw with our own eyes that Batman is actually Batshaw lawyer François Sainte-Marie! After a break the serious part of the day began with 8 workshops on a variety of subjects. The day was a great success and congratulations go to Karen Fox of the Division of Professional Services who led a group of volunteers that brought together presenters who demonstrated the quality and innovation in Batshaw's services.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT FOCUS ON THE BLACK COMMUNITY

(Contributed by Kim St. Hillaire, Interim Coordinator, Human Resources Development)

On November 7th, over 40 Batshaw staff from the Black Community, chaired by Hedy Taylor, Manager in Application of Measures, participated in a consultation to contribute to *The Full Participation of Black Communities in Quebec Society*. This is the focus of a parliamentary Task Force, chaired by Yolande James, MNA for Nelligan, to form and strengthen partnerships with the Black Community in Quebec. Batshaw contributed to the brief of the *Association des centres jeunesse du Québec*, but felt because of the make-up of our staff and the services that we provide to children and families in the Black Community, that we should produce our own brief.

The consultation process included valuable feedback solicited by members of the Multiracial/Multicultural Committee from teams including Application of Measures, Foster Care, Young Offenders, Youth Protection, Residential Services and Professional Services.

A work group consisting of Hedy Taylor, Felicia Agyekum, Michael Smith and myself held several meetings and produced a final brief for the Task Force.

On November 21st, Michael Smith and I presented the salient points from the report to the Task Force. We focused on the ineffectiveness of government policies on immigration and education, and the prejudicial and discriminatory way in which they are enforced; how racism continues to be an everyday part of our lives, and on improving communication between the government and the Black Community. As social service interveners who have witnessed the effects of these policies on children and families of the Black Community, we stressed the importance of developing partnerships with public, private and community institutions to prevent and reverse the effects of discrimination, poor integration and marginalization.

AND THE WINNER IS.....

(Contributed by Kim Kurtz of Batshaw's Volunteer Services)

A number of young people, families and services at Batshaw receive great support from volunteers. At any point there are between 80 and 120 volunteers acting as tutors, older brothers/older sisters, and numerous other roles. Many referrals come from you, fellow employees. The winners are the volunteers who give and get a worthwhile experience, and the youth and families who benefit from volunteer support.

Volunteer Services needs **your help** to spread the word. We are in dire need of older brother volunteer candidates. Volunteers dedicate at least three hours a week for at least one year of visiting and outings with their little brother. All volunteers are interviewed, police and reference checked. They receive an orientation, supervision, and sign a pledge to maintain confidentiality.

If you know of anyone, between the ages of 19 to 40, who could make a serious commitment, please ask them to contact Kim Kurtz at 932-7161, #340.

NEW COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

The budget for the current year includes a new position for a manager of Communications and Public Relations, responsible for developing and helping implement an integrated plan that addresses both internal and external communications needs. Internally this includes all aspects of how information is conveyed to staff. The objective is to enable all staff to feel and be in the know and connected to Batshaw. Externally this includes how Batshaw is explained to the public at large and how we can get positive information reported by the media on a continuing basis. The objective is to enable the public to have a realistic understanding of Batshaw and to support us. I am pleased to announce that **Mme Claire Roy** will assume these responsibilities beginning January 4, 2006. A lawyer, with training in communications, Mme Roy has been Director of Communications at CAA Québec for the last eight years. Previously she was responsible for international adoption in the Québec Ministry of Immigration. Her knowledge of this has been enhanced by the fact she is mother to two adopted children, a daughter from China and a son from Columbia. I am confident Claire has the knowledge and experience to help us with these important aspects of agency functioning. Please take the opportunity to welcome Claire to Batshaw when you meet her.

HOLIDAY GREETINGS

I wish all readers a peaceful, enjoyable holiday season, and good health and fulfillment in the year to come.

BATSHAW CALENDAR

January 30th: Board meeting (for info.:
Thérèse Gauthier. 989-1885, loc. 202)