



News from Margaret Douek, Executive Director

APPROPOS

BATSHAW YOUTH AND FAMILY CENTRES



JOINT STATEMENT ON PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Margaret Douek, Executive Director

At the February meeting, the Batshaw Centres Board passed a resolution endorsing the Joint Statement on Physical Punishment of Children and Youth. The joint statement is an initiative of the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario. Endorsement of the joint statement signifies confidence in its review of research on physical punishment and support of its recommendations.

The complete document is available in the library and division directors have a copy. It can be used to increase public awareness messages to inform parents and caregivers on the harmful effects of physical punishment on children's development. Key findings and recommendations are clearly presented, and scenarios depicting disciplinary situations can be used for educational purposes.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2009: A GREAT SUCCESS!

Hermina Antoine, co-chairperson, Black History Month Planning Committee

Was it the theme that was chosen this year "ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE; YES WE CAN!" or Barack Obama's election that made this year's Black History Month feel so special? The whole of Batshaw was mobilized by this very special event.

It would have been impossible to realize the different activities without the incessant work and dedication of so many Batshaw staff. The MRMC Committee, together with the Black History Month Planning Committee, would like to take this opportunity to personally thank all those who have helped make the 2009 Black History Month such a success. You have accomplished an outstanding job!

Thank you for all your help.

WE ARE ALL IN IT TOGETHER

Contributed by Kerry-Ann Carty, Educator, Boys' Transition to Community

"Say it loud, I'm black and I'm proud." was the chorus sung by everyone and that launched this year's 2009 BHM Panel Discussion. On February 12th, Batshaw Centres had the privilege of having four influential members of the Black Community come and share their experiences in terms of reaching their goals in order to continue our motivation of our clients to achieving their own goals.

Our first guest was the talented Pat Dillon of The National Film Board, Black Theatre Workshop and CKUT McGill Radio. She spoke about how using arts and media can be a useful and accessible tool to engage the youth that we work with. Pat challenged us to explore our creative side.

Next was Luigi Marshall, a co-ordinator from BCRC. His message was one of gratitude for the work we do with youth and families (which we don't often hear) as well as encouragement to keep up the great work. Thanks Luigi!

We then got to know the accomplished Yvonne Sam. Ms. Sam is definitely the "Jacqueline" of all trades. Yvonne humoured us with her life stories. Her father's quotes hopefully resonate in all of us: "Change your direction, not your destination!"

Lastly, the Honourable Judge Juanita Westmoreland-Traore inspired us through selected readings and reminded us that you can fulfill your dreams through hard work. Her hope is that one day society will come to a place where someone's accomplishments will not be highlighted simply because they are the "first" based on factors such as color, gender, religion as such factors will not be an issue.

A special thank you to Edward Potter-Mäl for co-animating this event.

The morning was wrapped up by honouring BYFC employees, past and present, who initiated BHM events right here at Batshaw. Our pioneers were ahead of their time in following the theme of "Anything Is Possible!" Congratulations to all!!

On behalf of the BHM Planning Committee, thank you to everyone for attending; it was a great morning. Keep up the good work!

YOUNG BLACK ACHIEVERS AWARDS

At the Talent Extravaganza on February 19th, four young Black Achievers were recognized. May they be an inspiration to all!

Anna: Anna believed in herself and stepped forward, trying new experiences that have and will continue to change her life. Given all the challenges that Anna has had, she very easily could have hidden behind them and looked to others to owe her; instead, she has looked ahead with a resilience and energy that one cannot help but admire! In the summer of 2007, Anna completed a 10-day wilderness canoe trip that challenged her to the very depth of her own fears and physical limitations. She was able to persevere and succeed with an ear-to-ear smile on her face! She has turned her school life around and has received "student-of-the-week" award many times. Anna can accomplish anything she wants and for this reason she's a Young Black Achiever.

Charles: Charles has been living in foster care for much of his young life. He is attending high school. From the first day Charles has demonstrated positive leadership skills with his peers. He was able to use his influence with his peers to help them understand the other child's perspective and was able to stop the ongoing bullying of these students. Charles has shown a capacity to learn from his mistakes and integrate his leanings into his everyday life. He has been approached by the school administration and other students to run for school president next year. He always strives to develop himself. Charles is a Young Black Achiever because of his empathy, his positive leadership, his capacity to learn and to integrate his learning.

David: David was born in Canada from African parents. He was placed in a foster home for more than 10 years, and developed a positive and close relationship with his foster parents and the extended family. David tries very hard to achieve something in life. During his high school years, the school always praised David's good behavior. Because of his good grades, he was able to enroll at CEGEP. David was accepted at Concordia University where he will start in May 2009. He plans to enroll in business. David has been working part-time jobs all these years in order to support himself. David is a Young Black Achiever because he is a role model for youth who were in care and now he is empowered and fully living his potential.

Kevin: Kevin is a 16-year-old youth who first came to Batshaw for behaviours that put him at risk. He has taken control of his life and is accountable for his behaviour at home, at school and in the community. Kevin is a well-mannered teenager who is in grade 8 in high school. His favourite subjects are math and social studies. Kevin's ultimate goal is to open his own business after completing high school; he plans to pursue a business diploma at college. Last summer, Kevin successfully completed an eight-week business course sponsored by the Quebec Board of Black Educators and Concordia Molson School of Business. He is presently involved in the moving business; he has volunteered at the N.D.G. Food Bank and is working on weekends in the hotel business. Kevin is a Young Black Achiever because of his courage, determination and resiliency in turning his life around, and his optimism about a hopeful future, filled with endless possibilities.

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