



# À PROPOS

DES CENTRES DE LA JEUNESSE ET DE LA FAMILLE BATSHAW



## SPECIAL DOUBLE EDITION

### AN EVENING OF GENEROSITY

*Linda Piano, Program Manager, DRTSA*

In January, a special adoption project took place: the young women of De Maisonneuve Group Home adopted some of our younger children in care. What did this adoption entail? It involved making an individual blanket for each child living at Tobin House and later delivering the blankets to these children.

Inspired by a blanket-making project led by Cindy Woods and Jennifer Brewerton to benefit babies and children in foster care, the young women at De Maisonneuve Group Home followed suit by engaging in their own act of kindness. After three weeks of cutting, trimming, stitching and creative design (secret pockets and special stitched messages), on February 11, 2009, Tobin House children and staff opened their doors to us and each child living there received a blanket and a stuffed animal. What an evening of giving and generosity! What a wonderful contribution to youth empowerment and positive youth development!

The benefits of evenings such as these are innumerable and it takes the efforts of many individuals to see such projects come to fruition. In this light, I would like to take the opportunity to mention these special folks:

- First of all, I would like to thank all the young women at De Maisonneuve Group Home who participated in this project. I have no doubt that the recipients of their generosity will hold onto their blankets for years to come. These young women have been wonderful “big sisters” to some of our younger children.
- I would like to thank the staff of De Maisonneuve Group Home (and Tony Grondin) who supported and participated in this project. Tony, your commitment to completing your blanket never wavered ... even through the stitching process ...
- Thanks to the folks at Tobin House: Jim Parris for being open to the idea, Darlene Job for immediately jumping on board and coming in on an evening off to join Paul Malizia and Jonathan Francis in ensuring a kind and warm welcome.
- Last but certainly not least, thank you to Cindy Woods and Jennifer Brewerton. Their kindness and patience in teaching us the finer points of blanket making was much appreciated.

Remember ... giving is addictive ... *Givin' is Livin'!*

### LOOKING AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) - GOOD PARENTING = GOOD OUTCOMES

*Hedy Taylor, Program Manager, Implementation of LAC, DCFS*

The LAC approach was developed by the department of health in the United Kingdom in the early 1990s, following extensive research into the outcomes of children living in substitute care and those living at home. Since then the approach has been adapted and implemented in countries such as Australia, Belgium, Germany, New Zealand, Russia, Switzerland and Hungary. It has been used throughout Canada since 1995.

The aim of LAC is to promote resilience while using a developmental focused approach in order to improve outcomes for children and youth in care. It is a philosophy of intervention which stresses maximizing positive outcomes, instead of the traditional role of agencies of simply reducing harm.

LAC uses the AAR (Assessment and Action Record), a comprehensive assessment of the child's progress which is completed on a yearly basis. It uses 7 developmental dimensions, health, education, identity, family and social relationships, social presentation, emotional and behavioural development and self-care skills. A plan of care is developed upon completion of the AAR.

The AAR not only assesses how far children are progressing across the spectrum of development but also examines the extent to which they are given the opportunity to succeed.

Since 2002 BYFC implemented the LAC approach. From 2003 to 2008 BYFC, along with 3 other youth centres, participated in a research project led by the ACJQ and the Université de Montréal regarding the implementation of LAC and its approach. During that period, 140 BYFC clients, their AM workers, resource workers and their foster parents were involved with this research. The findings and recommendations from this 5-year project and a report on the profile of BYFC clients, staff and foster parents are presently being completed.

Since 2008 BYFC is in the process of full implementation of the LAC approach.

Training of the case workers, resource workers and foster parents is key to this approach. We currently have 8 LAC trainers at BYFC from different services who are inspired and committed to the LAC approach. They are also available to provide training to other youth centres.

The successful implementation of this approach in BYFC was due to the committed support of our senior managers from the onset. Thanks are extended to all AM and resources staff, who participated in the research project and are considered the “lead hands”.