



News from Margaret Douek, Executive Director

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BATSHAW YOUTH AND FAMILY CENTRES



AS 2009 DRAWS TO A CLOSE...

Margaret Douek, Executive Director

As 2009 draws to a close, we can take a moment to look back over the accomplishments of the past year and forward to the things yet to come. The one common thread that links this year with the one to come is the constant pursuit for quality. Through service delivery to children in their home, in residential care and foster care, research activities, clinical integration groups, studying the needs of our clients, program development and linking with partners in the community, there is a thirst to understand better what produces results and makes a difference in the lives of youth and families. With the New Year, we will be launching our reaccreditation survey and take stock of what was achieved to improve services, and what is left to be done.

Our trademark as an organization is the passion of our staff and their dedication in celebrating the successes of their colleagues and clients. In the last 12 months, we have had much to celebrate, having won the ACJQ award for the most innovative clinical program for the LaSalle project, the Ruth and Manny Batshaw Award of Excellence for a unique staff who contributed to the field of child welfare, Tony Maciocia, and most recently, the Child Welfare League of Canada, in the category of youth leadership, for two of our clients who were recognized for their contribution in the program "Stand Up! Speak Out!"

In our ranks we have staff, foster families and volunteers who give with such generosity every day to enrich the lives of our clients and make a difficult job somewhat easier.

I want to thank each and every one of you for your contribution and for the amazing work you do. I am so proud of our collective achievements, none of which would be possible without the hard work pursued on a day-to-day basis.

Wishing you and your families a Healthy, Happy Holiday Season!

STAND UP! SPEAK OUT!

Linda Piano, Program Manager, DRTSA

On November 19, I had the privilege of accompanying two young women to Ottawa where they were honoured by the Child Welfare League of Canada as the recipients of this year's Youth Leadership Achievement Award. Four days later, the 75 participants attending **Stand Up! Speak Out!**'s presentation entitled *Youth Empowerment: Our Eyes, Our Voices, Our Terms* had the opportunity to witness why these two have been selected to receive a national award for their leadership qualities.

Stand Up! Speak Out! (SUSO), Batshaw Centres' youth empowerment group, was established two years ago. The aim of the group was to create an ongoing forum where youth in care would have the space to use their voice to influence change. While the goal was clear, getting there and what it would look like upon arrival was not. This has been a *learn as you go process* – an unpredictable but exciting one which has led our two young leaders to represent SUSO and as such, present at conferences in Florida and in Montreal, conduct an interview for The Montreal Gazette and perform an encore presentation of their workshop here at Batshaw Centres on November 23.

After each of these events many comments, e-mails and messages were received from colleagues and interested people from within and outside of Batshaw Centres. What resonates is how these two young women have truly moved and impressed people. More than that, however, what they have done is generate an excitement around them. It is as though they are reminding us of our *raison d'être*; their honest and authentic manner pushes us to want to do better for children and families. Great leaders indeed!

I will let the words received from a colleague end this piece: *All of a sudden, everyone in the room felt pride in these girls' accomplishments, in our work and just being part of Batshaw.* Thank you ladies for renewing our sense of pride and purpose and for gently but poignantly reminding us why we are here.

BATSHAW HOLIDAY PARTY

Another BIG HIT!

Tony Maciocia, Program Coordinator, DRTSA

On Friday, November 20, Batshaw Centres and its partners (all bargaining units, cadres association and the QAE) held another successful event at the Crown Plaza Hotel (Plaza Volare). The evening was marked by a nice dinner, music, amazing centerpieces, decorations and the beauty of everyone elegantly dressed. The over 330 participants danced the night away with class. It felt like a real Batshaw Gala evening. Many of us are already looking forward to next year!

Special thanks go out to the planning committee, France Lespérance, Ola Dupelycz, Rosanna Strippa, Lucy Capparelli and Sam Barile, for taking time out of their lunch time to plan the Holiday Party. As well, a special thanks to the BMC and its leader Margaret Douek for supporting events like this and in believing in the spirit of having a good time and thanking all staff for their hard work throughout the year.

MDC PROFESSIONAL DAY: FOR BATSHAW, BY BATSHAW

Gina Carvalho, Foster Care, MDC Organizing Committee

On November 13th, the ninth annual MDC Professional Day began with a Plenary session hosted by Dr. Roberta Sinclair (Canadian Police Center for Missing and Exploited Children) who talked about the response strategies to Child Sexual Exploitation. This was followed by a full day of varied workshops designed and given by clinicians. It was a showcase of Batshaw Centres' clinical expertise and commitment to excellence.

Registration this year was over 100 participants, with equal distribution among educators, managers, human relation agents and other professionals. Many people worked to pull this day together, from all the presenters and their support network of colleagues, the MDC and its organizing committee, support staff, technical staff and all the others behind the lines who we don't see but are there. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

YOU who attended, listened, discussed and went away with fresh ideas and hopefully with a sense of renewed energy, don't forget to pass your learning forward and... see you next year!

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