



News from Margaret Douek, Executive Director

# APPROPOS

BATSHAW YOUTH AND FAMILY CENTRES



## SPECIAL DOUBLE EDITION

### BUDGET REPORT

*Margaret Douek, Executive Director*

Managers and staff were invited to meet with the members of the BMC to get an overview of activities undertaken since June to meet the objectives set by our *Agence de Montréal* regarding our budget compressions. We reviewed the context in which we are presently undergoing the reconfiguration of our operating budget and the summary of the changes which will occur as a result. Staff were sensitized to the optimization efforts which will require changes of practice from every sector. These changes will require a steadfast commitment and support to staff so that we reach our objectives.

The budget cuts are severe and impact all services to varying degrees. Many of the cuts target administrative services which are continually called upon to respond to the ever increasing demands placed on them from internal and external sources.

The announced closure of Bridges, our back-up unit, also created reactions from staff who were concerned about how to manage oppositional behaviour from youngsters placed in residential units and group homes and what would be available as alternative measures. A work group composed of individuals who bring a variety of expertise are examining different responses to the different situations which have required a placement at Bridges to date. This work group will also examine certain practices throughout the network in order to make recommendations and formulate alternative responses. Changes in practices are necessary to provide more stability and continuity in a clinically-based process. We will be drawing heavily from the training which we received in Circle of Courage ensuring that interventions have a readaptive component. It is important to salute the excellent work of Bridges staff, who have always made every effort to offer a rich program.

We are presently monitoring very closely the targeted areas identified for budget cuts to ensure that we will reach the desired goals by March 31, 2012.

Despite all our efforts to date, and with all selected measures being executed according to plan we are still \$350,000 short of the final goal. The BMC will continue to explore additional measures to reach our targets.

### Accreditation Process

The Board of Directors approved a resolution to pursue our recertification process, as required by law, with the *Conseil québécois d'agrément* (CQA). We will be consulting with CQA on the calendar of events leading to certification and we will circulate the information shortly. This organizational dossier has in the past proved to be a very productive exercise in mobilizing us around a common vision and engaging us in a process of quality improvement throughout the organization.

### Entreprise en santé

As part of our *Entente de gestion*, Batshaw Centres has to be recognized as a healthy enterprise under the Healthy Enterprise Certification Program. We were the proud recipient of a grant from the *Agence de Montréal* to undertake a process which will enhance our ability to provide a healthy work environment for our staff. Congratulations to Maureen Cohen, Director of Human Resources, and her team who worked on the grant proposal which was selected amongst many because of its quality and its capacity to demonstrate the readiness of the organization to embark on this process. *Entreprise en santé* will be launched at the same time as the accreditation

process. The employee satisfaction surveys will include questions related to four spheres of activity: lifestyle habits, work-personal life balance, working environment and management practices. This process is staff-driven and targets staff well-being in the work place and the all around benefits of a work /home life balance.

### Training of Board Members

Following the adoption of the Act on governance which modified the roles and responsibilities of boards in general, a new Board was elected at Batshaw Centres and assumed its functions on February 1, 2012. To support Board members in their new functions an orientation to the mandate and services offered by Batshaw Centres was given in the spring. On October 1<sup>st</sup>, training on the governance responsibilities of members was provided. Supported by the Division of Human Resources, Staff Development Services, we will be evaluating and planning for further training needs of the Board.

### Foster Family Appreciation Week

On the occasion of the Foster Family Appreciation Week we would like to applaud the work of our foster families who receive our children and youths into their homes. In the continuum of child welfare services, the work of foster families is often not well understood. Foster families are an essential resource for some 400 children placed every year. These extraordinary families open their hearts and their homes to meet so many needs of children facing difficulties for as long as it takes. We salute our foster families and thank them for all their hard work.

### NOVEMBER 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012: PRESENTATION OF THE RUTH AND MANNY BATSHAW AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

*Claire Roy, Manager, Communications and Public Relations*

Here are the names of our colleagues who were nominated in the 3 categories of *The Ruth and Manny Batshaw Awards of Excellence 2011*.

#### Clinical - Psychosocial

Karen Chawkin, Human Relations Agent, AM, DCFS  
Lynn Dion, Human Relations Agent, DPS  
Faith Fraser, Educator, AM, DCFS  
Dorrett Williams, Educator, AM, DCFS

#### Clinical - Residential

Angela Ellington, Educator, DSTSA  
Daina Girard, Educator, DRTSA  
Nancy Jane Gunion, Educator, DRTSA  
Sandu Strunga, Educator, DRTSA

#### Administrative and Support

Pamela Berry, Housekeeper-Cook, DRTSA  
Robert Desjardins, Administrative Technician, DFAS  
Louise Leonard-Smith, Administrative Agent - Class 2, DCFS  
Sylvie Racine, Administrative Technician, DFAS

The Selection Committee will announce the names of the recipients of *The Ruth and Manny Batshaw Awards of Excellence* on **Wednesday, on November 21<sup>st</sup>, at 3:30 p.m. in the Auditorium** at 6 Weredale Park. Write it down! Let's all get together to congratulate and celebrate the outstanding work of our colleagues! Don't miss it!

**November 2012**

5, rue Weredale Park, Westmount (Québec) H3Z 1Y5



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## SPECIAL DOUBLE EDITION (cont'd)

### THE DIRECTORS OF YOUTH PROTECTION AND PROVINCIAL DIRECTORS ANNUAL REPORT 2012: "Children... And parents at the heart of our intervention"

*Madeleine Bérard, Director of Youth Protection/Provincial Director*

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, Batshaw Centres hosted a press conference during which the Directors of Youth Protection of six agencies from the Montreal and surrounding areas presented the Annual DYP/DP Report (available on our intranet).

Provincial statistics were presented, which highlighted the fact that this year again, the number of reports made to the DYP has increased, albeit less dramatically than last year. A total of 77 244 *signalements* were received between April 1, 2011 and March 31, 2012, which amounts to 211 *signalements* per day.

In the situations that were retained for further evaluation (less than half), the concerns most reported provincially were neglect, risk of neglect (36%) and physical abuse, risk of physical abuse (27.6%) although at Batshaw Centres, psychological maltreatment came in second.

Children aged between 6 and 12 represent the largest category of children followed by our services, almost a third of all our clients.

On March 31, 2012, more than half the children (55.4%) followed by our services were living at home or with significant adults.

The annual report is a tool to share information but also to sensitize the population as well as the governing bodies and our partners in the community about specific issues and themes. This year, the focus was on how engaging and supporting parents is key in protecting children.

In spite of the struggles, the lack of means, the powerlessness, the neglect, the sense of failure they may experience, the parents of these children care about their child's situation and they want to succeed in doing better by offering more to them. Very often their difficulties in parenting stem from serious personal problems or the inability to take care of their own needs. The sequelae of childhood trauma can affect the capacity to recognize their children's needs or to adequately address them.

Our role is to help them see to their children's needs by accompanying them in seeking the appropriate services, by facilitating their learning process, by encouraging them, by supporting them and instilling the hope for a better tomorrow. The majority have the capacity to change, the potential to develop and the resilience to overcome their difficulties, and we work with them in that direction.

We believe that the more parents recognize the need to act, help define the problem and identify the measure of protection required, the more they will actively engage and mobilize themselves in the process of resolving the situation.

Concretely, this means that on one-hand, we use a collaborative approach and promote voluntary measures whenever it is possible. On the other hand, if the case must be adjudicated, new judicial modalities introduced in the amendments to the Youth Protection Act in 2007 seek to promote and support parental participation.

We also firmly believe in the fundamental role of the parent-child tie in the development of self and identity. This bond must be preserved as much as possible, regardless of the circumstances. If it cannot be maintained in the everyday concrete life of the children, the bond must be preserved as part of the memories and personal, unique history of each one of them.

Our commitment is to protect every child today but also to help his/her parents to do the same for the future of their child. It is an unwavering and indisputable commitment, the foundation of all Youth Protection interventions.

### SEMINAR ON "HONOUR" BASED VIOLENCE AND FORCED MARRIAGE (in a Child Protection Context)

*Carlos De Castro, Human Relations Agent, AM, DCFS and Madeleine Bérard, Director of Youth Protection/Provincial Director*

We recently attended a workshop on "Honour" Based Violence and Forced Marriage, sponsored by the Department of Justice Canada. The participants came from several child protection agencies across Canada, including Batshaw Centres and *Centre jeunesse de Montréal*. There were also immigration and women's rights group representatives. The tragedy of the Shafia family was likely a contributing factor in this workshop being presented to several child protection agencies.

After a brief overview of the data related to honour-based violence and forced marriage across the world, the morning part of the seminar included guest speakers Mrs. Katherine Rowe, retired social worker from Youth Protection Services in the UK and Chair of Karma Nirvana, and Mrs. Jasvinder Sanghera, founder and present director of Karma Nirvana, based in UK. Mrs. Sanghera herself was a victim of honour based violence. She founded Karma Nirvana in 1993 in order to support victims of forced marriages and honour based abuse. In 2008, Karma Nirvana launched the Honour Network Helpline. Mrs. Sanghera defined honour based abuse as: "*An incident or crime which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and or community.*"

During the seminar, Mrs. Rowe stressed that workers should be alert to the following: health symptoms; runaways; self-harming behaviours; threats to kill or harm; siblings who have been forced to marry; early marriage; family disputes; death of parent; new step-father in the home; unreasonable restrictions at home. Mrs. Rowe stated that children at risk of forced marriages are likely to be fearful of the consequences of talking to anyone and fearful as to who to trust. Therefore professionals need to be aware that they may have only one chance to speak to a potential victim. She also said that schools are critical in identifying and reporting children at risk.

Mrs. Sanghera was adamant that workers must not: use family members as interpreters; mediate with family or community members; engage in family group conferences, because of the potential emotional manipulation of the victim; disclose information of risk, including perceived risk to the alleged perpetrators; send the victim back to the family/perpetrators against their wishes.

These cautionary recommendations are quite different from the concepts of transparency, mediation, parental participation and empowerment being promoted in child protection agencies. Thus, we are faced with the challenge of examining our paradigms; increase our skills in identifying and correctly interpreting the signs of risk in these types of situations and adapt our practices.

In conclusion, the day was rich in content and we certainly benefitted from our exchanges with colleagues across the country. The issues of honour based violence and forced marriages are increasingly visible in child protection services and we are adjusting our practice to address the needs of these very vulnerable girls. For example, we are actively using consultation services from organizations such as the South Asian Women Community Centre and the Canadian Council of Muslim Women. We will also be participating in an advisory committee under the chairmanship of the Shield of Athena, who has received a three-year grant from the Ministry of Health and Social Services to develop screening and intervention tools in the context of honour-based violence.