

Batshaw Centres | Supporting Indigenous Youth

November 4, 2021

The following actions have, and continue to be implemented by the Batshaw Youth & Family Centres in order to continue to improve the care received by our Indigenous youth:

LANGUAGE

- 1) All written documentation and rule books at Batshaw Youth & Family Centres have been updated to reaffirm that Indigenous youth have the right to speak in Inuktitut.

EDUCATION

- 2) A streamlined process for Indigenous youth to obtain English eligibility was created between Batshaw Youth & Family Centres, the school boards, and the ministry of Education. This has been a long and arduous process of 7+ years that all stakeholders worked extremely hard to realize so that Indigenous youth can attend school while in Montreal.

INDIGENOUS STAFF REPRESENTATION

- 3) Over a year ago, Batshaw Youth & Family Centres created two co-interventionist positions, specifically for Indigenous workers to better liaise with Indigenous communities and youth protection. The co-intervention strategy allows for the direct involvement of community organizations during the intervention process to help prevent youth from being removed from their home as much as possible. This model has proven to be successful with various communities in Montreal, in particular its black community.
 - Note: Although finding candidates to fill these positions has been extremely challenging, Makivik Corporation continues to be actively involved in helping to find appropriate personnel.

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY & TRAINING

- 4) An Indigenous training plan has been created by the Quebec government and is obligatory for all health workers (including social workers and other staff at youth protection). An English translation of the training was scheduled for release in October 2021 allowing Batshaw Youth & Family Centres' workers to take the training in their preferred language for maximum benefit. (To date has not been released – but still schedule for Fall 2021). All staff will be trained by May 2022.
- 5) Batshaw Youth & Family Centres and Université de Montréal are creating a training plan specifically for youth workers to ensure youth interventions are culturally sensitive and appropriate for First Nations & Inuit youth.

- 6) A culturally appropriate safety intervention plan (individual basis) was created 5+ years ago for all youth that come into Batshaw Youth & Family Centres. As such, when Indigenous children are placed with families that differ from the child's racial identity, the families are obligated (by contract) to expose children to culturally appropriate activities & media.
- 7) The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SHRCC) has awarded a research grant to Batshaw Youth & Family Centres in collaboration with McGill University to provide Inuit youth who come to Montreal with improved access to their local community in Nunavik via online activities & workshops.
- 8) A grant application has been submitted by Batshaw Youth & Family Centres to the Quebec government for increased culturally appropriate activities including the presence of elders for youth in care as well as translators to communicate with youth in their preferred language.
 - Note: Pending response from the Quebec government.
- 9) All written documentation at Batshaw Youth & Family Centres will continue to be reviewed to ensure it is culturally appropriate.
- 10) Batshaw Youth & Family Centres' group homes host sensitization workshops for youth and staff.
- 11) Presence of elders for cultural activities within Batshaw Youth & Family Centres' group homes and rehabilitation centres was on pause due to the ongoing pandemic but will be resumed this fall.
- 12) Batshaw Youth & Family Centres' social workers are each part of a particular cultural 'taskforce,' which is trained specifically for working with a certain community, notably the Indigenous community. These taskforces discuss the various interventions of a youth, falling into their expertise.

OTHER

- 13) Formally recognized as of July 8, 2021, its super-regional mandate enables Batshaw Youth & Family Centres to offer English services for English-speaking youth outside the Montreal region, such as Montérégie, Nunavut, and Cree, amongst other regions.
- 14) Batshaw Youth & Family Centres has leased a space to Inuit girls who come from Nunavik to Montreal in order to better provide support to these youth that are under care of Nunavik Youth protection.

OUR INDIGENOUS PARTNERS:

- Makivik Corporation
- Southern Quebec Inuit Association
- Native Women's Shelter of Montreal
- Rising Sun Day Care
- Native Friendship Centre
- Cree DYP
- Nunavik Government