



**SHIELD OF ATHENA FAMILY SERVICES
ANNUAL REPORT OF ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES
2013-2014
April 1st to March 31st 2014**

Dear friends,

Another year of monumental work, and effort has once again passed at the organization. We would like to thank our wonderful staff for their hard work and dedication to the cause of violence against women.

We have developed, in this near quarter of a century of our existence, as a primary service provider for victims of conjugal and family violence here in Quebec. Close to 60% of our clients are referred to us by the existing network of health and social services in this province. In addition to the leading role that we play in the field of prevention, primarily in our community outreach and public awareness programs, we have also developed a multitude of multilingual and specialized intervention services that cater to many vulnerable clientele. Primarily to women who have been victims and to their children who have been exposed to this type of violence.

Fortunately, the organization is not alone in the provision of these services and in completing its mission and vision. We are supported by our Board that provides the proper framework for us to work in. Together we will address all the issues that are important in the work that we do; for the women, the children and the communities.

This year is important as it marks the 10 year existence of our shelter, Athena's House. Close to one thousand women and children have been serviced at our shelter over this period of time. Our shelter has saved the lives of many and helped them to break the cycle of violence. Over these past 10 years we have also realized that our network, although wonderful, is incomplete. We need another important resource, our Transition Home for women and children who leave our shelter.

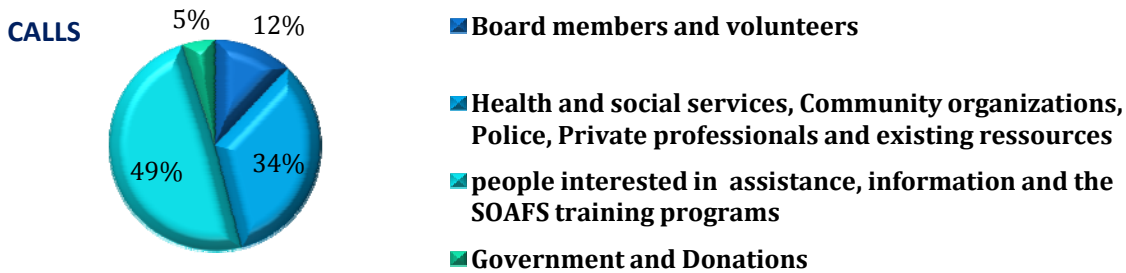
We need your help to achieve this monumental task and to complete our wonderful project!. Together we can do it!

Melpa Kamateros
Ed, SOAFS

Chris Ann Nakis
President-Interim, SOAFS

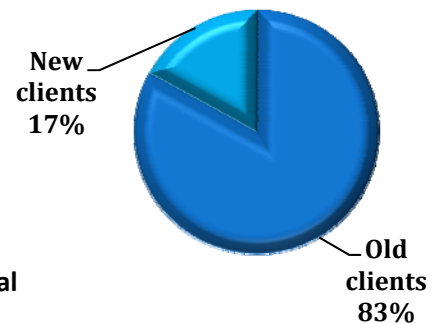
Calls received by our services for the last statistical period:

The total number of calls made and received at the Montreal and Laval offices last year were **18,593**. Of these **12%** were made by Board members and volunteers and **34%** by the health and social services, community organizations, the police, private professionals, and the existing resources. Calls by people, schools and others interested in assistance, information and the SOAFS training programs and activities accounted for another **49%** of the calls. Requests by the government, and donations represented **5% of the total calls**

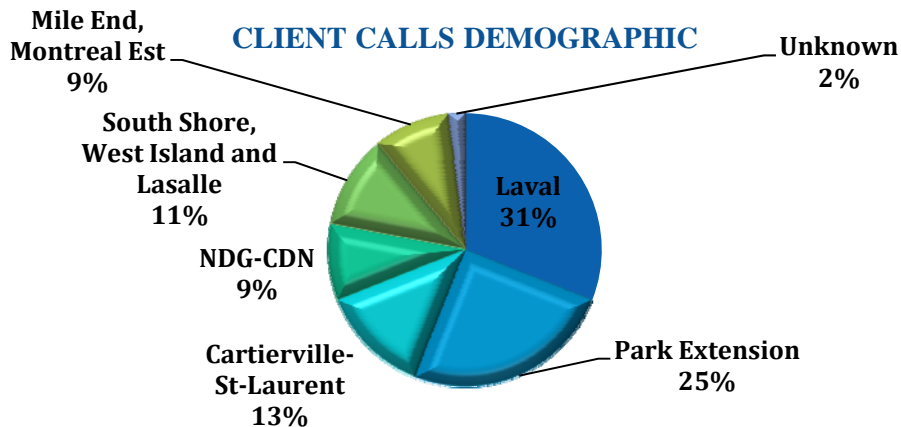


Client calls

Some **1,831** calls, were made by clients who were interested in using our services. From these, **1,517 or 83%**, were made by old clients and **314, 17%**, from new ones.

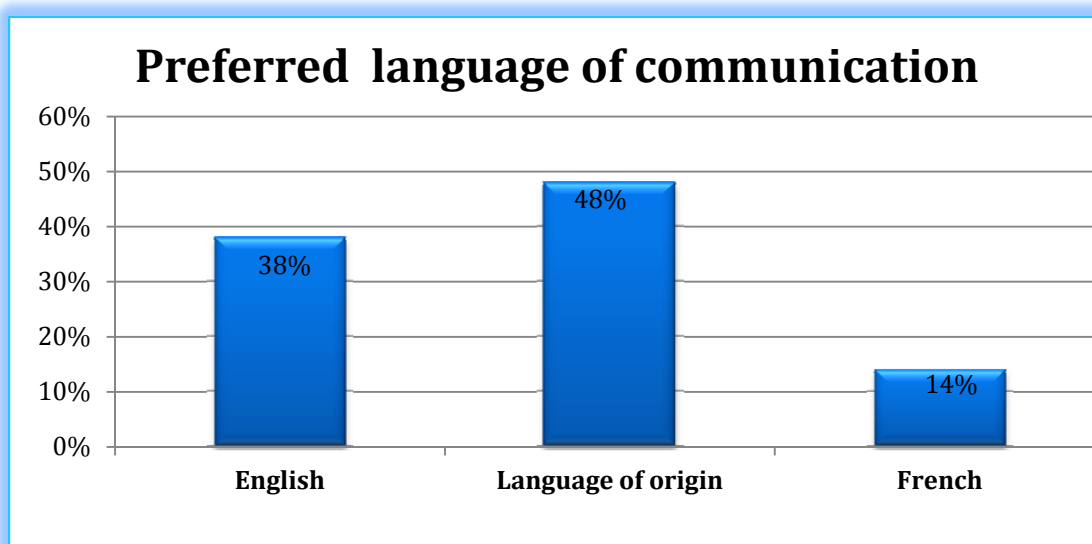


29% of all known calls were from Laval clients, 71% from Montreal



Nature of calls- based on 1,831 client calls

91% of the client calls were for conjugal violence. **38%** were in English **48%** were made in languages other than French or English; **14%** were in French.



Ages

47% were made by women between the ages of 30-49 ; another **16%** were received from women aged 50-59; **15%** from women over the age of 60 ; **17%** were between 18-29 and **5%** were unknown.

USAGE OF OUR SERVICES - CLIENTS

This year we had a total of **763** clients both old and new, short and long term, representing an increase of **35%** from last year.

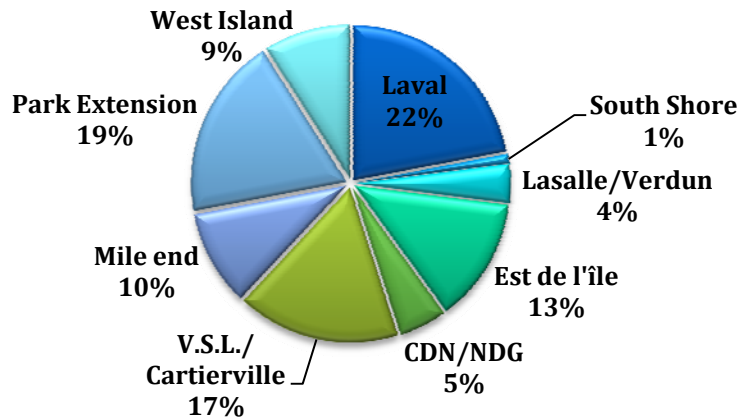
The following statistics and demographics are based on **678 new cases**, long and short term, that used the services at either of our centers in Montreal and Laval.

Client Profile (based on 678 new cases)

Who uses our services? According to our statistics, **99%** are women. **59%** of the clients at the external centers were between the ages of 20-39. **66%** of them were making less than \$30,000 annually; **78%** of them lived in Montreal and **22%** in Laval. **98%** of them came from different ethnic backgrounds and for **32%** their preferred language of communication was their mother tongue.

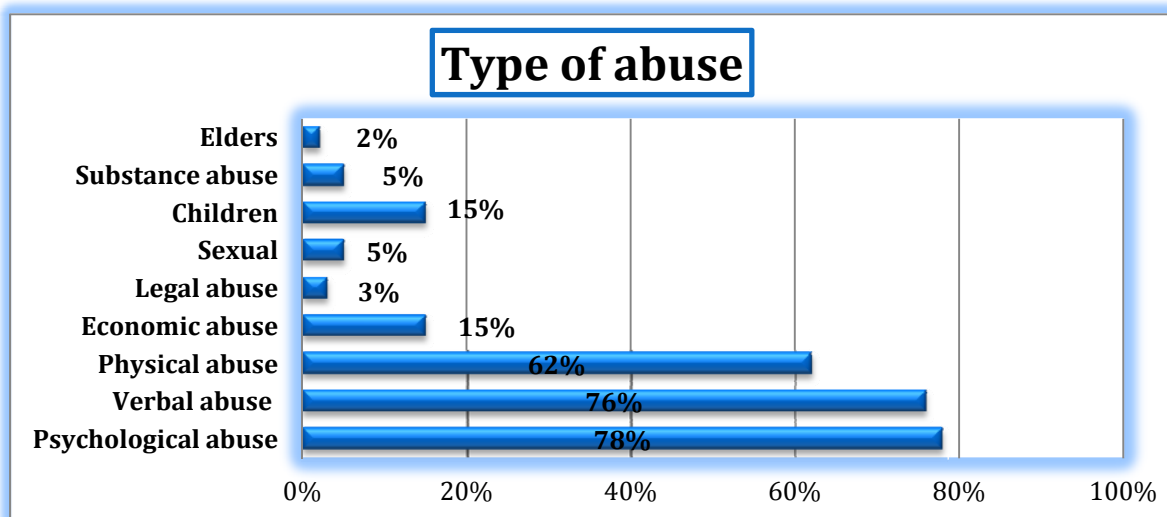
Areas clients come from (based on 678 new cases)

From **678** new people who tried to access our services, **78%** of these files were from Montreal and the surrounding suburbs. Over half (**51%**) came from multicultural areas such as Park Extension(**19%**), Ville St. Laurent and CDN (**22%**) and (**10%**) from Mile End). Laval accounted for **22%** of the client cases.



Type of Abuse (554 cases of conjugal violence)

From the **678** new cases, **82%** were victims of conjugal violence; of these, **78%** were victims of verbal and psychological violence and **62%** were living physical abuse. **15%** were also victims of economic abuse. Please refer to the chart.

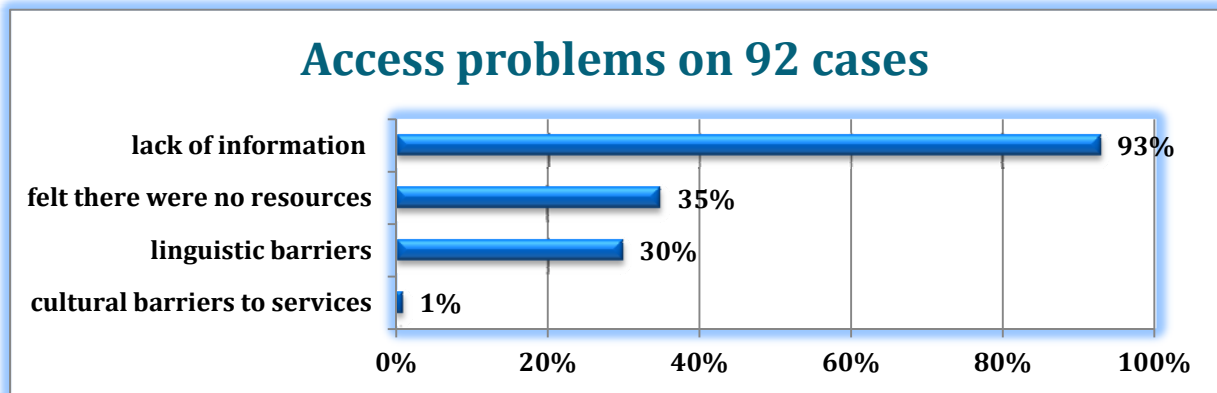


For over a third or **32%** of our clients, their preferred language of communication was their mother tongue, they received linguistically specialized services by our staff at the external centers of Montreal and Laval. Languages that our case workers and social workers used in the intervention were: Arabic,

Armenian, Cantonese, English ,Greek, Farsi, French, Mandarin, Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi, Bengali and Spanish. In addition to this clientele, there were **171 children** who had also been exposed to violence in the home

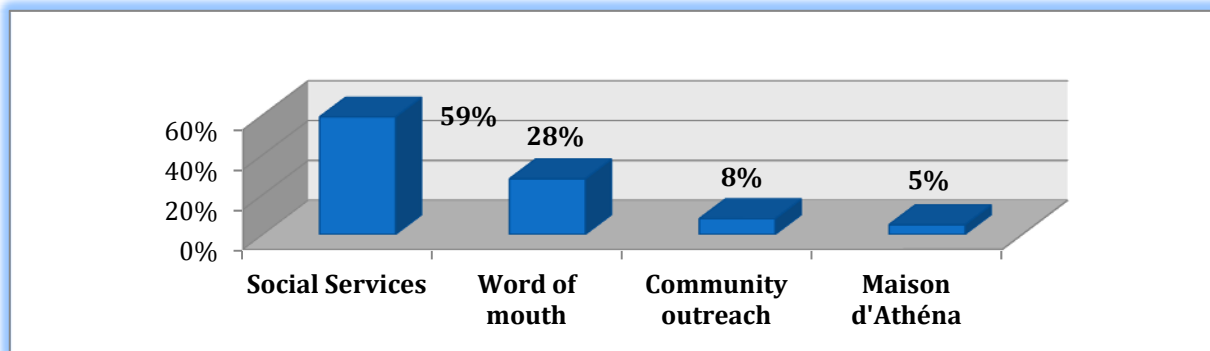
Other Types of problems (based on 678 new cases)

As indicated before, most of the clients came to us because they were victims of conjugal and or family violence. Of these **14%** came to us because of access problems. There was an increase from last year in the number of cases by **19%**. The majority of them, or **93%** complained of a lack of information; **30%** cited the presence of linguistic barriers and **35%** said that there were no resources. Only **1%** felt that **they were impeded to accessing services** by cultural barriers.



Source of Referrals

Again this year, over half, **59%**, of our referrals came from the existing social services network and mainstream services. **28%** came directly from word of mouth, within the communities, and by other clients. We believe that most of the latter clients are a result of other clients who have been satisfied with the services and /or may have heard of the existence of our organization and of people who speak in their language of origins. Another **8%** came directly from the community outreach programs and **5%** were referred for follow up by the Maison d'Athéna after their stay at the shelter.



CLIENTS

Short term and Long term files, new and old (181 cases)

Out of 181 new and old long term cases that were treated this year, **90%** of them dealt with conjugal violence (163 cases); Youth problems accounted for **8%** of the total cases, family and access issues accounted for **1%** each(2). Sixty families headed by a single mother accounted for 65% of the cases. In this clientele there were 171 children that had been exposed to conjugal violence in the home and from these 14 children received 62 services. **45%** of the long term files there were mono parental families headed by a single mom.

Ex Residents

18 ex residents presented themselves for services at the external centers. Of these, half necessitated follow up services in languages other than English or French and comprised **10%** of the long term cases at the centers. Ex shelter clients are receiving a continuum of services once they pass through our network and that the availability of linguistically attuned services provided more options for success.

Services given- based on 181 long term files old and new

In terms of services this year we have had a significant of **24%** increase in the long term files as indicated from 145 to 181. The most dramatic increases were in the number of home visits and legal clinics by **46%**; accompaniments by **38%** and a **33%** increase in the number of individual consultations. Telephone consultations increased by **12%**.

Family consultations and youth consultations have tripled in numbers from last year. This is due to interventions done with an elder abuse case, more consultations with moms and children and specialized consultations done with a handicapped female victim and her parent who are in a caregiver role.

On the other hand, the number of referrals and advocacy have decreased by **13%** in the latter and **45%** in the former; referrals have been practically halved, indicating that more linguistic intervention is provided at all different levels of our services. The decrease in advocacy means that more of this is integrated into the actual services that are given in the different languages that we provide through our Ci and our social workers.

Please note that 35% of the cases of the 181 long term files, spoke only the language of origins and needed intervention by social workers or Cultural Intermediary (CI) in that language.

TYPE	2012-2013	2013-2014	INCREASE
ACCOMPANIMENTS	102	141	38%
LEGAL CLINICS	23	28	13%
FAMILY	7	29	314% (3X)
YOUTH	13	62	317% (3X)
TELEPHONE	1,934	2,157	12%
HOME VISITS	13	19	46%
ADVOCACY	766	672	-13%
REFERRAL	91	50	-45%

All services given are adapted to the specific linguistic and cultural needs of the clients by the caseworkers and staff on the Shield of Athena at either the Montreal or Laval offices.

Please note that in the case of decreases in the number of referrals and advocacy services, the interpretation is that more services are provided internally and the advocacy has been assumed by the CI.

SPECIALIZED SERVICES

October-December 2013 - Montreal

English language support group for women victims of conjugal violence.

Six sessions, two hours each, 4 participants. Facilitated by Betty Petropoulos, tsp, Director of Social Services and Maria Papadopoulos, tsp, clinical supervisor.

Laval - Support groups for victims of conjugal violence, in Greek

November- December 2013: Greek language support group for victims of conjugal violence was given in Laval. There were 6 sessions and 4 participants. Facilitated by Betty Petropoulos and Maria Papadopoulos.

February-March 2014 - Montreal

Arabic language support group for women victims of conjugal violence.

Seven sessions, two hours each, 5 participants.

Facilitated by Nanor Sinabian, tsp

Parenting Group:

There were **6 sessions** that were given to 2 mothers and their children who were victims of conjugal violence. Facilitated by Sabrina Siccondolfo, child educator at La Maison d'Athéna.

USE OF THE CULTURAL INTERMEDIARIES (CI)

FOR WOMEN VICTIMS OF CONJUGAL VIOLENCE WHO SPEAK ONLY IN THEIR LANGUAGE OF ORIGINS

In addition to the presence of our multilingual social workers, and case workers we have a service in place that provides linguistic access to women victims of conjugal and or family violence. They also participate in the community outreach programs when doing sessions in communities where there are language issues.

The Cultural Intermediary Service is designed to help women victims of conjugal and/ or family violence coming from ethno cultural communities better access the existing services. The cultural Intermediaries speak a third language and come from different ethnic backgrounds.

All of the CIs receive an ongoing training on conjugal and/or family violence. Their mandate is to accompany abused women with their social workers during consultations so as to provide the necessary cultural and linguistic interpretations for intervention. The whole process is therefore less intimidating for the women and they have the opportunity to develop confidence with both their caseworker and the CI. The women victims also feel less isolated because a person of the same cultural background and origin is accompanying them in all the different steps needed to progress to a life without violence. The CIs accompany the women everywhere; police, municipal court, welfare....etc.

Although most of the services given are done with SW's, the CIs also work with women at the external services and with the ex residents of Athena's House. They assure a permanent telephone access for many hours a week so as to respond to requests for assistance by people who phone in and cannot speak French or English. They are also in charge of translating the different outreach and public awareness tools produced by the Shield and participating when required at the outreach sessions.

This year, interpretation and translation services were given in nine languages by our trained intermediaries: Arabic, Bengali, Farsi, Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Russian, Tamil and Yugoslavian. These services were given to the clients of the Shield of Athena and La Maison d'Athena. In all they provided:

Use of Cultural Intermediaries

April 1st to March 31st 2013	# Clients 2012-2013	# Clients 2013-2014	Increase/ Decrease
Women	26	51	96% increase
Services			
Accompaniments	23	56	143.5% increase
Telephone calls	168	172	2%

Consultations	49	170	247%
Active listening/referral		115	
TOTAL	240	513	114% Increase in services

There were 51 women from ethnic communities who benefitted from the CI services during this statistical period. They include ex residents and external clients that passed through our shelter and centres. They include both long term and short term clients.

It is important to note that the CI were used for nine , or **50%** of the 18 cases that were referred to the external services for follow up after their stay by the Maison d’Athena. At the centers they were also used with many cases that were referred to us directly from communities , the health and social services and private professionals.

Use of Service: We have to note that the use of this service had gone up by **60%** from last year by December 2013; we add the totals from January to March 2014 the use of the service had increased by **114%** from last year’s totals.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

Christmas Activity - December 16, 2013 - Montreal offices

- **100 women and 87 children** got financial assistance and free clothing. 25 clients received the Gazette Christmas Fund cheques. 100 clients also received baskets, worth 250\$ each from the Hellenic Appeal Foundation.

This is our largest activity for clients during the year and is coordinated by Betty Petropoulos , tsp, Director of social services and Maria Papadopoulos, tsp, Clinical Supervisor. Donors for this event are: Suzy Shier, the Hellenic Appeal, the Montreal Gazette and many others.

Easter Activity – April 19, 2013, Montreal offices

- **80 women and 57 children** benefitted with free clothing and the activity. Fifty four (54) families received food baskets donated by the Hellenic Appeal. Chocolates and sweets for the clients and their children. Donors for this event are Suzy Shier and the Hellenic Appeal. **Coordinated by Betty Petropoulos , tsp, Director of social services and Maria Papadopoulos,**

NETWORKING

The organization is a member of many regional and local tables and committees on conjugal and family violence as well as Regional health and social services committees.

AGIR (<i>Laval</i>)
COCRSI, Laval
Table de concertation sur la condition féminine de Laval
Table sur la violence conjugale et l'agression sexuelle de Laval
Table de Concertation en violence conjugale de Montréal
Table de concertation sur les agressions à caractère sexuelle de Montréal
Table de concertation en violence conjugale Secteur Nord de Montréal
Regroupement de Francisation - MICC
Regroupement des maisons de l'île
Regroupement interculturel de Parc Extension
Comité femmes de Parc Extension
Comité vigile PDQ 33
La Table de concertation des organismes au service des personnes réfugiées et immigrantes (TCRI)

The SOAFS is well represented at regional Tables in Montreal and Laval where it has taken an active role in the development of policies and strategies on conjugal violence particularly in the area of providing services for vulnerable clientele such as women and children coming from ethnic minorities in Quebec. Meetings on various committees listed above have been presided by OUR ED, Melpa Kamateros, Maud Pontel, SOAFS Outreach Coordinator, Maria Kokkoris, Shelter Coordinator: La Maison d'Athéna, Betty Petropoulos tsp, Director of Social Services.

PRESENTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

The Shield of Athena regularly presents on its various multilingual and specialized services. This past year, the organization's staff members gave **17 presentations** (12 more than last year) to educational, governmental and social service institutions.



Conference on elder abuse with the participation of Maria Kokkoris co-ordinator at la Maison d'Athéna and Polly Tsonis, general co-ordinator.

The Executive Director is seen to spend the majority of her time, **43%**, in meetings on Services and Project Development . Networking , representation , presentations and outreach and other efforts regarding the promotion of the visibility of the organization, represent **22%** of the time spent on meetings. Finally, **35%** are with the Board and for fundraising and promotion administration matters.

Time spent by the Executive Director

Meeting	Number	Time spent	% of time spent	% meeting
Project & services development	88	176h	43%	51%
Board / fundraising/ Adm.	42	144h	35%	24%
Networking/ Visibility	44	91h	22%	25%
Total	174	411h	100%	100%

The Executive Director presented at the following:

DATE	ORGANIZATION/INSTITUTION	Number of people
April 25. 2013	Roundtable Discussion on Honor Based Violence	40
September , 2013	Journée de prévention de la violence intra familiale" Ville de Montréal"	150
October 18, 2013	"Celebrating the 40 years of the legal Information Clinic at McGill"	100
October , 31	Presentation at McGill School of Social Work	35
February	Roundtable Meeting with James Christopher, Minister of Immigration	20
March 04	Brief made to the House of Commons on : "Immigration, Sponsorship and women victims of conjugal and family violence in precarious situations"	100

PROJECTS

BLUEPRINT : Development of Second Step Services for Victims of Conjugal and Family Violence Summary on our two year project with Status of Women Canada .Completed December 2013.

In December of 2013 we completed a 24 month project that intended to provide a model of services and activities that are adapted to the specific needs of women victims coming from ethno-cultural communities that are ex residents of emergency shelters. This project was funded by Status of women Canada.

A series of 22 integration and self-sufficiency services and workshops were developed for ex residents of shelters. They dealt with a variety of issues that are normally not covered during their stay at the shelter such as self presentation, nutrition, how to create an email address etc. The participants were recruited from a number of shelters and second stage resources such as , la Maison d'Athéna, Passerelle, Halte-Femmes, Flora Tristan, and others.

The advisory committee was also initially composed of *Generation Emploi*, an employment agency, *Service Coté Cour*, a legal information agency working in the courts , and the *CSSS Parc Extension*, that were also very interested in the development programs. Educational partners who participated in this project were the *Laurier Macdonald School Board* . Various professionals were also involved in the sessions..

Purpose of Project

The purpose of this project and the model that we developed was to help women, in their transition from being victims of conjugal and /or family violence into a situation of integration into the host society. This is particularly difficult for women coming from immigrant and ethno cultural communities as they are faced with many issues that may impede their progress, of a linguistic , cultural or other nature. These women may also have little support from their family or communities

A major problem for women who leave the shelter and their children is the fact that they may not have family, community or other support. In this way there is little evolution of themselves and or their situation. A further consequence of this are the limitations that their children may experience as witnesses of family violence who need special attention. It is therefore very important that their mothers who are also victims retain contact with the support services given as part of the proposed model. In terms of women who experience specific barriers, such as language, culture or others, it is a way that they can remain in contact with the services and activities that they need. Maintaining this contact and follow up may present a decrease in the need to return to abusive relationships.

According to the information that we have gathered in the second year of the project where we have actively applied the model, we believe that our proposal of establishing a referral system between the shelter and the external offices for ex residents will result in more women participating in the follow up services and activities after their stay at a shelter. The availability of these activities, from the information that we have gathered, impacts,(a) on the one hand their isolation and on the other,(b) helps them to better integrate into the host society and may also(c) prevent them from going back to an abusive relationship.

The project had two components:

The trained personnel who linked up the clients with the existing health and social services and who, in collaboration with the social workers provided linguistic and support follow up:

The Community Workers were trained by the social workers on the issue of family violence and accompanied the ex residents that needed specific linguistic assistance throughout the project.

The workshops:

The workshops were held in languages other than English or French and acted as a link between the culture of the woman and the host society. We decided that the best way to assure that the participants who could not understand would obtain the same information was to ask the Community Workers to also accompany them during the activities so as to make sure they could follow the information that was discussed and so as to include them in the interactive aspect of the workshops. Since this was done in this manner, we have seen an interesting and very positive evolution in clients, ex residents whom did not have many options open to them in terms of either community or other support. The fact that the community workers assisted them in the workshops facilitated their feelings of self worth and broke the isolation that they felt both with the other participants and those who were giving the workshops

The final evaluation of the project was completed by Julia Krane, of McGill University. ***Please refer to enclosed annex 2.***

Status of Women Canada Project on Honour Based Violence(In progress)

This three year project:” *Contributing to the prevention of honour based crimes for women and young girls by training informing and screening at risk communities*” is funded by the Woman’s Program at the Status of Women Canada. Its principal goal is to allow for a wider knowledge, primarily by women coming from ethno cultural communities of the laws and their rights in Canadian and Quebec societies. Its goal is also to prevent the occurrence of honour based violence.

The project provides for the training of community outreach agents, from the following communities: South Asian , Arab and Afghani. Their goal will be to (1) inform their respective communities on the issues of honour based violence (2) identify risk factors and (3) screen for potential victims so that they can be referred to the appropriate resources. In order to bring to light the issue of such violence on women and young girls and to also create a zero tolerance in communities regarding this type of abuse, a media strategy will also be elaborated so as to provide both general and specific information on the issue of honour based violence. Existing legislation regarding crimes against the person and violence against women in Canada will also be examined.

Achievements : 2013-2014

- Recruitment and training of **three** community outreach agents for the Iranian & Arabic speaking communities;
- **11 activities** in the language of origin, **Urdu, Bengali, Punjabi, Tamil and Farsi;**

- **The communities reached included: Sri Lankan, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Sikh, and Afghani**
- Approximately **150 women** have been exposed to the activities and information given;
- Definition of the term ‘honour based violence’ in collaboration with the Advisory Committee of the Project that includes, representatives from the SPVM, Youth Protection, BATSHAW, two school boards and a doctoral student in Criminology, Madeline Lamboley, l’Université de Montréal.
- On March 17, The Shield of Athena presented to the Comité de Revision de la Loi de Protection de la Jeunesse regarding honor based violence
- Development of a legal website on women’s rights in Canada and Quebec

PRESENTATIONS HBV PROJECT (*Maud Pontel*)

April 22	Les victimes au nom de l’honneur : nous avons tous un rôle à jouer, Conférence at Université de Montréal
September 18	Presentation to SPVM- Section Nord
November 14	Violence base sur l’honneur : Sensibilisation-identification-action SPVM (In collaboration with Siran Nahabedian)
January 28	Presentation to Table de concertation en violence conjugale secteur Nord de Montréal
February 7	Rencontre “Violence base sur l’honneur”, Femmes du Monde à Côte-Des-Neiges

NEW SERVICE-LAVAL

Adaptation of an emergency intervention in conjugal violence cases that takes into account the ethno cultural diversity of Laval. We would like to note that the multilingual pamphlets available in 10 languages were produced within the context of this project in the month of March 2014.

This project has received financing by the Ministry of Culture, Communication and the Status of Women Quebec and has also been included for financial support of initiatives promoted by the Equality between Women and Men partnership, specifically the measure for the respect of integrity of women and their security in all aspects of their lives.

Within the context of this project the SOAFS has as its mandate, to develop a system of systematic referral and follow up to women who present cultural and linguistic barriers regarding emergency intervention in conjugal violence in Laval.

Within the context of this project as well, multilingual information and public awareness tools have been developed with the collaboration of many partners in Laval of which some are the City of Laval, the shelters (Le Prélude, La Maison de Lina et l’Esther), social aid services and the police of Laval. Within the same pilot project the cultural intermediaries have already received a specific training so as to be able to participate at the initial meetings of the clients and the social workers from different Laval shelters. This project is designed so as to provide these women victims of conjugal and or family violence with more options available to them in their present abusive situation. The launch of the project was scheduled for April 17, 2014. *Please refer to enclosed annex 5.*

NEW PROJECT

Transition Home in Laval

From 2010, the Shield of Athena Family Services has engaged funds for the purchase and development of a Transition Home, a Second Step resource for women and children victims and exposed to conjugal and or family violence after their stay in a shelter.

The committee has been actively looking for properties and land in the Laval area and has met with municipal representatives on several instances.

The project has received the approval of three shelters and has been explained to the Agence of Health and Social Services of Laval. The technical assistance team that has been working with the SOAFS, is Réseau 2000.

MULTILINGUAL COMMUNITY OUTREACH DEPARTMENT

In 1994, The Shield of Athena developed a pilot community outreach project for the Greek community that was culturally & linguistically attuned to the community's needs. The success of this pilot project has led to the establishment of a community outreach department through which information about family violence, the laws and the police procedure is transmitted to ethnic communities in their language of origins. This is done through made-to-measure information sessions and through extensive work with its community partners and the ethnic media.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH SESSIONS

The 2 coordinators, Polly Tsonis and Maud Pontel worked with several community groups and organizations this past year to organize information sessions on conjugal and family violence.

Information Sessions on conjugal and family violence:

- **22 sessions**
- **The languages that the sessions were given in were: French and English, Greek & Punjabi**
- **471 people** were reached through the sessions

This year we worked with social insertion groups, a school for young mothers, organizations assisting the integration of immigrant communities and in particular, schools offering French language courses to new immigrants. Most of the sessions consisted of a very culturally diverse clientele. Some of these included: Accueil aux Immigrants de L'Est de Montréal, The Women's Y, Petites Mains, and Collège Bois de Boulogne. (Please refer to annex 4).



**Outreach at
Filia Association du troisième âge
January 20, 2014. Park Extension**

WORKING WITH SCHOOLS

The Shield of Athena works closely with the educational system. This year, several members of the staff, gave **14 presentations** to students working on projects about family violence and community outreach. We were also very honored this year that several students chose to do their Youth Philanthropy project (YPI) on our organization. These are the schools that we met with during the last year.

SCHOOL	TOPIC
College Ahuntsic	Overview of SOAFS services
The Study	YPI
Université de Sherbrooke	Overview of SOAFS services
UQAM	Overview of SOAFS services
Université de Montréal	Overview of SOAFS services
Université de Montréal (école de service sociale)	SOAFS Services
Queen of Angels	YPI
Selwyn School for Boys	YPI
Miss Edgar & Miss Cramps	YPI
Trafalgar School for girls	YPI
Sacred Heart	YPI



Selwyn School for Boys



Trafalgar School for girls

EMPLOYEE AND VOLUNTEER TRAINING

The total number of hours spent on training volunteers, interns and employees about the organization's specialized and intervention services is **3390**.

Some of the areas that the staff was trained in includes: honor based violence, children exposed to violence, fundraising strategies, sexual abuse and sponsorship related issues . **Total: 88 hours**

The staff was also involved in the training of the volunteers, cultural intermediaries and the summer job students and interns from, McGill, Concordia, Dawson and Vanier. One intern also came from a university in France. **Total: 3 302 hours**

	# of people	# of Hours
Interns	6	2570
Volunteer Training Sessions	49	137
Training of Summer Students	5	175
Training of Cultural Intermediaries	4	420
Trainings taken by staff	11	88
Total	75	3 390



Volunteer Training Sessions

TEAM SUPERVISION

Staff member	Team supervision	# of hours	# of meetings
Clinical supervisors	Supervision of shelter resident cases	700	50
Clinical supervisors	Supervision of cases at external offices	60	60
Co-ordinator	Supervision of Cultural Intermediaries	300	100
Executive director	Supervision, staff, committees	264	88
Total		1 324	298

VOLUNTEER IMPLICATION

This year, the Shield of Athena had **188 volunteers**. The total volunteer time amounted to **6 218**.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING SESSION

Three volunteer training sessions took place this year. The first 2 took place **on February 20 and 21, 2014**. The staff provided the **25** volunteers with a) information regarding the organization's services, b) a greater understanding of family/conjugal violence and c) an overview of a volunteer's role. Volunteers cannot replace the social workers and must always respect the confidentiality of the clients that they may come in contact with. **Police officers** from **PDQ 33 and PDQ 27** were present to explain the police procedure in cases of family violence. The third session was given on June 11, 2013 to 24 interns from L'Oréal Canada who chose the Shield of Athena as the organization they would give back to for their Annual Citizenship Day.

ACHIEVEMENTS

On April 10, 2014, in honor of **National Victims of Crime Awareness Week**, The department of justice, chose and visited the Shield of Athena to experience a day in the life of our organization and how we help victims of family violence, particularly those coming from ethno-cultural communities that face additional barriers in accessing help. **To view the photo essay that was done on the Shield of Athena please go to the following link.** <http://www.semainedesvictimes.gc.ca/experience-stories/essai-essay/athena.html>



FUNDRAISING & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Membership Launch 2013-2014

On June 5, 2013, The Shield of Athena launched its annual membership campaign at the Baton Rouge, downtown Montreal.

Event chairs, were Sophie Grégoire Trudeau and Chris Nilan. The evening's entertainment included a terrific show from La Troupe Folklorique Grecque 'Syrtaki', as well as a hilarious performance from The Comedy Nest's, Stéphane Bourgeault.



Chris Nilan, Chair



Annual Art Auction, November 2013

400 people gathered on Sunday November 11th, at the Bonsecours Market in Old Montreal for **The Shield of Athena's 19th^t annual Art Auction**, under the High Patronage of His Excellency **Orestis Kafopoulos; Consul General of Greece**. **Evan Kiouis, Founder and CEO of Planète Mobile** was the Patron of the event and Chris Nilan was our special guest. The Shield of Athena's Recognition Award went to Mr. John Gouzopoulos, long standing supporter, volunteer and participating artist in our Annual Art Auction.



Community Support

We were very happy to have had the support of L'Aquaffure Salon, Trafalgar School, The Study and Dawson College. They all held a fundraising event and raised funds for the Shield of Athenas services for victims of family violence.



Dawson College Fundraising event in honor of International Women's Day. Proceeds were donated to the Shield of Athena.

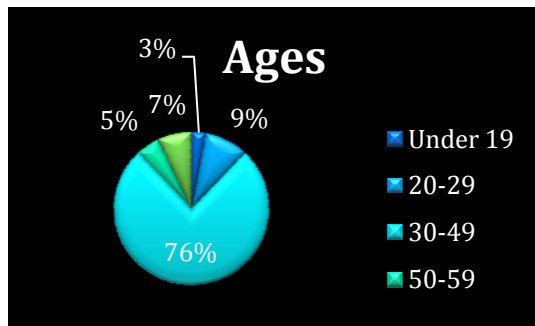
March 10, 2014

EXTERNAL SERVICES - LAVAL

CLIENTS

In Laval we had a total of 170 cases, old and new, long and short term.

THE FOLLOWING ARE BASED ON 148 NEW CASES



Ages

- 76% Were between the ages of 30-49
- 9% were from 20-29
- 5% were from 50-59
- 7% were 60 and over
- 3% were under 18

Preferred Language of Communication

- 38% spoke English
- 34% spoke French
- 28% of these clients spoke neither English nor French

Ethnic Origin

- 99% were from different ethnic communities
- 1% were of English origin

Socioeconomic

- 45% of the clients were making up to 30,00 annually
- 51% made from 30-40,000
- 4% made from 40,000 up

Sources of Referral

- 55% of the total referrals came from the CSSS, Youth protection, hospitals and the existing social services network
- 37% were **word of mouth** referrals from one client to another and within communities
- 5% were from the outreach or elsewhere
- 3% were ex residents of the shelter.

NATURE OF PROBLEMS (there is an overlap)

Conjugal violence 80 %

- 69% of the cases presented physical violence
- 88% had psychological and verbal abuse;
- 19% of the cases presented economic problems also;
- 24% of cases there were children exposed to violence.
- 1% presented sexual abuse.
- 10% presented drug abuse
- 1% had elements of elder abuse

Access 17%

- 72% cited that there was a lack of information.
- 36% said that there were linguistic barriers
- 48% said that there no resources available;
- 1% spoke of cultural barriers

Family & Youth cases 3%

These issues accounted for only 3% of the cases. Of these, 100% dealt with lack of communication between parents and children.

GENERAL SERVICES

	2012-2013	2013-2014	increase
Accompaniments	51	53	4%
Telephone	740	800	8%
Advocacy	297	101	<i>Decrease</i>
Referrals	27	9	<i>Decrease</i>
Individual	62	82	32%
Family	4	20	4X increase
Youth	0	40	Not existant last year

In general, there were areas that showed tremendous increases. This may indicate that shows that the types of cases that we are dealing with are more and more complicated and the clients need more and more reinforcement and support by the social workers. In addition to this, there is more demand for the social workers and the cultural intermediaries to accompany the clients to the various places they have to go. Eight children received 40 services by the special care counsellor and the social worker for children during this period.

SPECIALIZED SERVICES

Support groups for victims of conjugal violence

November – December 2013: Greek language support group for victims of conjugal violence was given in Laval. There were 6 sessions and 4 participants. Facilitated by Betty Petropoulos and Maria Papadopoulos. (Please refer to page 25)

Linguistic Services given at the Laval offices

In the last statistical period intervention was done in languages other than French or English. These other languages included, Arabic, Armenian, Farsi, Greek and Spanish. Services were also provided through the CI in Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi and Tamil to shelter residents. Three women were also serviced through the Laval pilot project in collaboration with the City of Laval and the three shelters. The languages used were Arabic, Punjabi and Russian. A total of nine services were rendered by our CI to residents of Maison de Lina and Maison L'Esther.

Long Term Cases- Laval- based on 39 cases

Out of **39** long term cases (new and old) who *used our* services during this statistical period, the breakdown is as follows:

- **79%** conjugal violence
- **15%** youth problems
- **3% access problems**
- **3% family problems**
- **51%** of our cases are mono parental families with single moms;

Services for Children Exposed to Conjugal Violence

- This year, out of 39 long term cases, there were **46 children that had witnessed violence**
- In the home. Of these, **8 received 40 services.**

NEW SERVICE - LAVAL

This project entails an adaptation of an emergency intervention in conjugal violence cases that takes into account the ethno cultural diversity of Laval.

This project has received financing by the Ministry of Culture, Communication and the Status of Women Quebec and has also been included for financial support of initiatives promoted by the Equality between Women and Men partnership, specifically the measure for the respect of integrity of women and their security in all aspects of their lives.

Within the context of this project the SOAFS has as its mandate, to develop a system of systematic referral and follow up to women who present cultural and linguistic barriers regarding emergency intervention in conjugal violence in Laval. ***It is important to note that, three women were also serviced through the Laval pilot project in collaboration with the City of Laval and the three shelters.***

Within the context of this project as well, multilingual information and public awareness tools have been developed with the collaboration of many partners in Laval of which some are the City of Laval, the shelters (Le Prélude, La Maison de Lina et l'Esther), social aid services and the police of Laval. Within the same pilot project the cultural intermediaries have already received a specific training so as to be able to participate at the initial meetings of the clients and the social workers from different Laval shelters. This project is designed so as to provide these women victims of conjugal and or family violence with more options available to them in their present abusive situation.

The launch of the project was scheduled for April 17, 2014. Please refer to enclosed annex 4.

NEW PROJECT- IN PROGRESS

Transition Home in Laval

From 2010, the Shield of Athena Family Services has engaged funds for the purchase and development of a Transition Home, a Second Step resource for women and children victims and exposed to conjugal and or family violence after their stay in a shelter.

The committee, composed of Eleni Bakopanos, Melpa Kamateros, Chris Ann Nakis, Helen Tyros, Hasmig Belleli and Soulla Telides have been actively looking for properties and land in the Laval area.

The project has received the approval of three shelters and has been explained to the Agence of Health and Social Services of Laval. The technical assistance team that has been working with the SOAFS, is Réseau 2000.



La Maison d'Athéna

Annual report 2013-2014 (April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014)

This year, our shelter was open for 365 days, twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. During the 365 days of regular operation, we housed 72 women and 31 children for a total of 103 people.

Ethnic origins and languages of communication:

43% of the women we accommodated this year at *La Maison d'Athéna* were not Canadian citizens. They were sponsored and non-sponsored permanent resident, refugees, refugee claimants, with few having no immigration status at all. **In all, 43% of our clients were born outside of Canada.**

Status	Number
Canadian citizen	40
Sponsored permanent resident	6
Non-sponsored permanent resident	22
Refugee claimant	0
Refugees	0
No status	4
Total	72

Country of birth	Number
Canadian born	27
Born outside of Canada	45
Total	72

Of the number of women to whom we provided housing to, 44 came from 23 different ethno-cultural communities.

Of these 44 women, 11 women (**25%**) had severe linguistic barriers and difficulties in communicating in either French or English. The languages they spoke are the following: Arabic (3), , Spanish (1), Farsi (1), Serbian (1), Tamil (3), Urdu (1) Somalian (1) The various languages spoken by the caseworkers at *La Maison d'Athéna* was a great asset that allowed us to be of assistance to the vast majority of these women regardless of their inability to communicate in English or French. These languages on site included: Arabic, Armenian, Creole, Spanish, Greek, Farsi, Dari, Italian, English and French. As well, our trained cultural interpreters at the Montreal office spoke, Bengali, Dari, Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi, Tamil and Turkish. Since most of the languages were covered It is important to note however, that even if the client

possessed an adequate knowledge of French or English, it was always much easier for the women to express themselves in their language of origin. If there was a language not spoken in house by a member of our staff, we enlisted the services of a translator in order to communicate with the client. These translators were mainly our trained cultural interpreters or from the “Banque d’interprètes” on 3 occasions (Tamil (2), Bengali (1)).

Average age of our clients:

The ages of the women who stayed at the shelter this year are as follows:

Ages	Number	%
13-17	0	
18-25	22	31%
26-30	8	11%
31-35	13	18%
36-40	13	18%
41-50	7	10%
51-60	5	7%
61+	4	5%
Total	72	

Children accommodated:

Ages	Number	%
Less than one year old	7	24
1-4	8	25
5-8	11	36
9-12	5	15
13-15	0	
16-18	0	
Total	31	

The nature of the problems

Among the 72 women we accommodated this year, **83%** endured violence at the hands of their partners/ex-partners while **15%** experienced violence at the hands of their family members.

Conjugal violence	59	82%
Family violence	11	15%
HBV	2	3%
Total	72	100%

We accommodated women who have lived through different types of violence. Most shelter residents of this year **88%** were victims of physical violence; **57%** experienced economic and/or sexual violence; **100%** have also lived through psychological and/or verbal violence.

Sources of referral

The women accommodated this year were referred to our shelter by various organizations and/or individuals. **43%** came from the SOS line, **19%** from other shelters, **7%** from CLSCs and hospitals, **14%** from the police. The rest, **17%** were referred by community organizations or schools.

Source	Number
SOS Violence Conjugale	31
CLSC	4
Hospitals	1
Youth protection	1
Other shelters	14
Police	10
Community resources	5
Referred by BASF (external clients)	1
Self-referred	0
Other professionals	2
Schools	3
Total	72

Observations

The women who used our services were only minimally aware of their rights and of the resources available to them. As per the shelter workers' observations, women were likely to be unaware of their legal status, unaware of the fact that conjugal violence is a criminal offence in Canada, their legal rights here in Canada as per the social isolation they experienced at the hands of their partner. This situation puts women at a disadvantage, particularly those women who come from ethno-cultural communities.

Services offered at the shelter

Individual consultations – This year, our case workers held **542 individual consultations** compared to 506 for last year.

Accompaniments – Our case workers offer a service for clients who need accompaniment to their external appointments such as: court, legal aid, welfare employment programs, etc. This year, our case workers carried out 162 accompaniments. **Out of the 162 accompaniments reported, 106 of them were done in a language other than English and French.** Of the 106 accompaniments, 9 were done through the interpreter's bank. That means that 97 accompaniments were done with either a cultural interpreter or a primary worker, and 9 with a hired interpreter from the bank, a total of 106 accompaniments with language barriers.

OBSERVATION: 64% of the accompaniments were done in a language other than English or French.

Telephone consultations – The shelter staff dealt with **7814 calls** this year. Of these, 3203 were consultations

with victims of abuse who were residents, ex-residents and non-residents of the shelter.

Legal information consultations – Each client is given the opportunity to consult with a student from the McGill University Law Faculty. The law students are not at liberty to give legal advice; they can only share legal information regarding the client's rights. If the clients choose to exercise their rights, we refer them either to legal aid, or to a lawyer. This year, our law student had 14 legal clinics.

Art therapy – Art therapy is an accessible form of communication for all women and children, especially those who have experienced trauma and are unable to express their experience with words alone, or who do not speak English or French. The sessions are facilitated by our professional Art Therapist and the length varies from 30 minutes to 2 hours, depending on their format. **In total, the art therapist conducted 60 individual art sessions (48 sessions with women, 12 sessions with children), and 17 group art sessions (7 adult groups and 10 family/mother-child dyad groups) and 13 children's group/sibling dyad.** In total 14 different women and 8 different children participated in art therapy services. *This decrease can be explained by the fact that we did not have an Art Therapist from April 12 2013-November 2014. These numbers are based on a 4 month period. November 9, 2013-March 31, 2014.)*

Info activities – We offer information activities on the different aspects of conjugal violence, as well as other pertinent topics, such as stress-management or immigration and integration to Canada. The duration for a typical session is of 1 hour. These activities allow residents to speak about their experiences, while also demystifying the existing social service network and the laws. Multilingual videotapes, produced by the *Shield of Athena*, on the police procedures and existing resources, are used as well during these educational activities. **There were a total of 15 information sessions on conjugal violence and a total of 21 different women benefitted from these sessions.**

Economic assistance – It can happen that our clients arrive at the shelter with little or no personal belongings. We therefore offer them economic assistance which can consist of second-hand and new clothing. Each client (72) who resided at the shelter received a welcome package including toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, deodorant, etc.), in addition to the above clothing. Furthermore, at their departure from the shelter, women were offered essential household items, such as cutleries, plates and glasses.

Demystification of the social services network and the laws – This is ongoing and is considered a specialized service. Obviously the 25% of our clientele who had severe language issues benefited from this service since the information was given to them in their language of origins. Women coming from ethnic communities are doubly vulnerable because most of them present severe linguistic and or cultural blocks that may impede them from knowing basic issues regarding their rights and accessing the health and social services network.

Advocacy – This is ongoing and integrated into most of the services that are given such as in the accompaniments, consultations with the government and elsewhere. Again, this is necessary due to the presence of linguistic and cultural blocks that impede access to the services. **There were a total of 162 accompaniments conducted.**

Follow up services – Once a client is ready to leave, their needs are assessed and they are given information regarding the external services for follow up for themselves and their children. This may be a follow up of a series of consultations, support, economic or legal services. **This year, 18 clients, upon departure from the shelter, received external services at one or either of our centers (Montreal and/or Laval).**

ACTIVITIES FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN:

This year, La Maison d'Athéna conducted activities such as:

- a) Movie Night (1); 5 participants
- b) Hockey Nights (3); 6 participants
- c) Spa Day at Salon I Style (hair and waxing) (1) 8 participants
- d) Valentine's Day Photo Shoot (1); 7 participants
- e) Bowling (1); 7 participants
- f) Dentist (1); 6 participants
- g) BBQ at shelter (1); 5 participants

A total of 9 activities were organized and 44 women and children participated. The objective of these activities was to strengthen group cohesion and to stimulate client's creativity and self-esteem.

Trainings:

Shelter workers participated in 2 trainings such as CRI-VIFF "Enfants exposés à la Violence conjugale" and Honour Based Violence Conference given by Université de Montreal.

ACTIVITIES & SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR MOTHERS AT THE SHELTER

A) MOTHERS:

Parenting group:

Objective. To connect mothers who have survived experiences of conjugal violence and who are now looking for support and techniques on parenting after a child's exposure to violence. The group looks at what a child's experience of violence is and how mothers can support their child(ren) in adapting positive behaviors and coping strategies in the wake of trauma. 1 parenting group took place; 6 women participated.

Parenting consultations:

Objective. To offer mothers whose children have been exposed to violence support and skills to help their children adapt to the changes in their lives. The individual consultations assess the specific needs of each mother and personalized programming is created to cater to those needs. 37 parenting consultations took place.

B) Children:

Youth consultations:

Objective. To meet children on an individual basis and offer them a safe space to express their emotions, their concerns and their experiences with family/conjugal violence. These sessions are tailored to meet the specific needs of each child as all children are impacted by violence differently. 17 youth consultations took place.

C) Families

Family consultations: Mothers and their children

Objective. To bring mothers and children together to promote family healing. Exposure to violence damages the interpersonal relationships within a family and affects the family's stability. As with parenting and youth consultations, family sessions are created specifically to meet each family's needs. 8 family consultations took place.

D) Respite activities:

In addition to the above, respite services were provided to mothers, so as to offer them the opportunity to relax or to have the time to complete their activities.



FOOD SERVICES

At the Maison d'Athéna we try and provide the resident with as much comfort in the surroundings as possible. The easiest way to make people feel at ease is by providing them with food that is familiar to them and part of their culture. Every time new residents come to the shelter our Cook, Maria Gaitanis, reviews their medical history and their cultural and dietary needs. For religious women coming from the Muslim community halal meat is provided; for women coming from the South Asian communities or others where there is large scale vegetarianism, more such meals are planned. The menus are adapted so as to reflect the cultural, religious and medical realities of the clients and their children. In general, the Canadian Food Guide is applied so as to also try and teach good eating practices for the residents and the children.

Eating together with the clients also provides the staff with insights on their lives in another setting and promotes bonding with their children. Including the residents in certain aspects of food production also promotes feelings of bonding and belonging.

The fact that we have a cook is necessary for all these reasons and so as to promote the necessary level of hygiene that is needed during a community setting such as the one that exists at the shelter.

OVERVIEW OF STATISTICAL REPORT

April 1st 2013-March 31st 2014

People reached by our services & activities

ACTIVITIES & SERVICES	PEOPLE REACHED	QUANTITY
Clients External & Shelter	866	External: 763 Shelter: 103
Presentations: universities, social services	750	17 presentations
Economic Assistance	180 women & 144 children (External & shelter clients)	Easter activity Christmas activity
Volunteer	188	6 218 hours
Employee & Volunteer Training	75	3 390 hours
Workshops & Activities for projects	150 women	Honor based Violence project 11 Activities 5 languages
Media Programs	15 000 * estimate	19 media appearances (including: CBC, Metro, Global, La Presse & Greek and Arabic media)
Community Outreach (info. Sessions)	471	22 sessions
Social Activities	700	2 SOAFS events/activities 4 community events

**18, 524 people were reached during this statistical period through
our services & activities**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2013-2014

Executive Committee: Eleni Bakopanos, president; Helen Tyros, Vice President; Caroline Savic, Secretary; Ben Martone, treasurer; Melpa Kamateros, Executive director and founding member of the Shield.

Board members: Chris Ann Nakis, Emeritus chairperson of Athena's House and Phase II Committee; Hasmig Belleli, Dr. Banafcheh Hejazi, Me. Linda Julien, Sofia Tseretzoulis, Barbara Vokral.

Administrative team: Polly Tsonis, Co-ordinator; Valia Hatzithomas, Ginette Surprenant, Mariam Javed, stagiaire.

Social Services: Betty Petropoulos tsp, Social Services Director; Maria Papadopoulou tsp, Clinical Supervisor; Nanor A. Sinabian tsp, External Services, Vicky Zois, stagiaire.

Athena's house: Maria Kokkoris, Co-ordinator; Nadia Argueta, tsp; Nicole Bissonette int.; Evelyne Chéry, int; Yolette Chéry, int; Lindsay Clarke, Art therapist; Cyndi Masi, Child care specialist; Siran Nahabedian, tsp; Sabrina Sicondolfo, int.

Outreach department : Maud Pontel, co-ordinator; Agnès Habis, Farah Malik Naz, Jeyamalar Premathasan, Shabana Rifet, Rabia Sellaouti, Leeza Sultana, Sofia Weiss.

Stagiaires: Leiba Feldman, McGill legal clinic, Law faculty; Effie Keramanos, 3rd year Dawson college Social Services; Lucile Maincent, Social Services School, Rennes, France; Nicol Mitchell, McGill Social Work; Christina Toufexis, Vanier college.

Special Thanks: Elvira Sigunis, weekly volunteer.

ANNEX 1

PRESENTATIONS

DATE	ORGANIZATION/INSTITUTION	TOPIC
April 22	Université de Montréal	Honor Based Violence
April 25. 2013	Roundtable Discussion	Honor Based Violence
September , 2013	Ville de Montréal	Journée de prévention de la violence intra familiale
September 9	Centre jeunesse	SOAFS Services
September 12	McGill Faculty of Medecine	Intervention
September 18	Service de Police de la Ville de Montréal- secteur Nord	Honor Based Violence
October 18	McGill School of Law	SOAFS Legal clinic
October 31	McGill School of Social Work	SOAFS Services
November 13	Police de Laval	SOAFS Services
November 14	Service de Police de la Ville de Montréal	Honor Based Violence
February 6	Dawson College	SOAFS services & Intimate Partner Violence
February 7	Femmes du Monde	Honor Based Violence
February	James Christopher, Minister of Immigration	Roundtable Meeting
March 4	Brief made to the House of Commons	Immigration, Sponsorship and women victims of conjugal and family violence in precarious situations
March 7	Femmes du Monde	SOAFS Services & family violence
March 21	Filia Association troisième âge	SOAFS Services & Elder Abuse
March 17	Comité de Révision de la Loi de Protection de la Jeunesse	Honor Based Violence

ANNEX 2

FINAL EVALUATION OF THE BLUEPRINT PROJECT :ACCESSING SECOND STAGE SERVICES FOR WOMEN WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED ABUSE

The ability of the participants to protect themselves , to pursue personal objectives and to live without violence

When we look at Julia Krane's report, entitled " **Accessing Second Stage Services: Insights From ethnocultural Women Experiencing Conjugal Violence - An Evaluation**" that pertained to an analysis of the data collected throughout the two year project and refers to the changes that took place with the clients from the time that they left the shelter; and when we also look at their participation in the various activities and services that were produced within the context of this project, we become aware of their transition towards more autonomy and to a life without violence. It is very important to underline that this transition could not have been possible if the information were not provided in the languages of origins for women victims who speak neither English or French or whose knowledge of these languages was minimal. These results are particularly evident in the Krane document, in the sections pertaining to the women's increased abilities to conduct their own affairs in banking, transportation, or renting their own premises. This move towards greater autonomy, a recurrent theme in the data analysis also allows the women the possibility of being able to fend for themselves, not rely on the abusive spouse and eventually transition to a life without violence. Insofar as personal objectives are concerned we did find out, mostly through the activities and workshops given, that this information would unfortunately have been very limited for these women had it not been available in their language of origins. Their participation in these activities greatly enhanced their understanding of issues such as nutrition, self presentation and other themes that they could normally not access elsewhere.

This project was almost exclusively for women who were ex residents of shelters. As such we targeted shelters and second stage resources in Montreal who in turn referred women to us after their stay, particularly for the workshops. Their needs, as they saw them, were tabulated in the *needs questionnaire*, one of the tools that were developed and that were distributed to the participants prior to the activities. In this way, the activities that were given reflected their desires at that specific moment in time, right after their stay at a shelter. Through the analysis of the GBQ and the additional data that was gathered in the activities and throughout the project, we were also able to discern differences in perceptions between groups. What was important for Canadian born women as opposed to women who were not born here and particularly women who had little linguistic access was well indicated. This information as tabulated in Julia Krane's document will be transmitted to the service providers so that they too can see, firstly what the specific needs of women that leave the shelter are and secondly; to also view the differences that can exist between women born here and others who are not and who are also compromised in that they cannot speak the language, do not have a family or community support system and who subsequently have very few options for action open to them.

Developing a model for service delivery that would efficiently respond to the need of women victims who would like to transition to a life without violence.

The model that we developed involved the development of second stage services and a model of referral that replied to the needs of women victims of conjugal violence after their stay at a shelter. It was a model that specifically responded to problems of immigrant women who were doubly vulnerable to abuse as they presented linguistic and cultural issues; issues of sponsorship and immigration, lack of community and other support that reinforced their social isolation and economic dependency. Through the system of referral and follow up done after the shelter stay and through the presence of trained community workers and cultural intermediaries, the clients were not left in a situation of silence and isolation and were supported in their transition to a life without violence.

The model also allowed for marginalized women to access workshops not only on violence but on other matters that they deemed important to their autonomy and development and that were not normally accessible to them. Some examples were the self presentation sessions that greatly impacted their self esteem. It also allowed them to better comprehend the society that they were living in, from simple matters such as showing them how to use the public transportation system.

This model allowed for these marginalized clientele to also participate with women who did not have linguistic issues and promoted an interaction between both thus enhancing the latter clientele's integration into Canadian society.

Indicators that were used.

Three sets of questionnaires, the GBQ, the needs assessment and the progress questionnaire were developed with researchers from McGill university. This data was translated into English and sent at the end of the project for compilation and analysis

The questionnaires were completed either on an individual basis or in groups before and after the activities. They were collected weekly by the coordinator of the project, in conjunction with the social workers or multilingual cultural intermediaries.

As indicated in our initial evaluation plan, the completion of the questionnaires would enable us to make a comparison of the clients who had been in Canada up to five years and members of longer standing ethno cultural communities. An analysis was also made between women who were born here and born outside of Canada, and between those who spoke French and/or English and those who spoke in another mother tongue.

Success of Implementation of Model

The model was implemented exactly as previewed. The workers were trained, a consultation process was done with an advisory committee and the shelters and various second step resources were informed. A

model was subsequently developed and the activities and services were adjusted to the specific needs of the clients who were using them.

The first year was spent towards developing the evaluation tools as explained previously, including (a) a very comprehensive GBQ form and other questionnaires that were needed so as to (b) gauge the needs of ex residents or women who were leaving the shelter and (c) review their satisfaction with the sessions after they had participated in them. The intake forms used to register the demand and type of services, other supporting documentation and planning the content of the sessions were also done in the first year. An advisory committee comprised of several shelters, second stage resources and other community partners, also met for their input and for referrals to the program. The year before was also spent in finding the right people to train as cultural intermediaries who would work in collaboration with a supervising social worker and the ex residents in their various areas of need.

In all, there were 20 sessions that were planned, coordinated and implemented by the coordinator of the project during this period. She also did a lot of networking with existing emergency shelter resources, and matched the participants to both services and activities.

Types of specialized support services that were developed within the context of this project were, interventions, accompaniments and telephone consultations. What we observed is that it was the ex residents who benefitted the most and who had returned for these services were the most linguistically challenged, had little academic training and not too much of a support system.

Results

For the people working on the project, the results were clearly evident in the changes in the women as reported in Julia Krane's report and by the staff. The qualitative information provided by the women along with their perceptions on the laws, notions of equality showed their development and movement towards autonomy at that particular point in time. There was, an "*evolution*" in the clients that took place.

The referral system model worked very well and assured the continuity of services, so necessary for women in their transition period after conjugal violence.

Finally, in light of the different barriers that the women had, particularly linguistic and other, such information could not have been accessed elsewhere and many women were very thankful for the opportunity to come to the workshops and obtain options that previously had not been available to them

To what extent did your Blueprint project meet the needs of women in your community?

According to the staff who were involved in the project, primarily the cultural intermediaries and the social workers, all of the above specialized support services that were available through the blueprint project provided invaluable assistance to the women who used them. Firstly, most of the time the services were in the language of origins; secondly they provided access to services that the women could not normally find on their own and lastly; they linked up the women to the world outside. For many, it was the first time they paid bills or rented an apartment by themselves. Also, being at a shelter meant that the conjugal violence and associated issues, such as criminal, immigration, custody, and mental health questions, were being tended to by the workers. This may have created a dependency for many

women, particularly those coming from vulnerable clienteles, with no other support and few language and other skills. They needed services and activities that promoted more knowledge of the outside world so as to eventually make them more autonomous. This was very effectively done throughout this project.

The staff who were in weekly contact with the clients, remarked on the "evolution" of their clients, from being scared, lonely and sad to being confident, breaking their isolation and happy. In particular the workshops were seen to :

Increase self esteem

- By helping them present for a job
- Acquiring tips on self improvement, make up and appearance
- Providing economic assistance through the distribution of free clothes, accessories and toiletries

Decrease the fear of the unknown and society

- By informing them on matters that we take for granted; showing them how to create an email address; budgeting and nutrition
- Providing them with tools for change leading to autonomy

Break their isolation

- Through promoting the creation of informal support networks; many of the women became friends and communicated with each other after the sessions passed
- By giving them the opportunity to share with other women from similar situations
- By getting rid of the shame

The fact that the Cultural Intermediaries provided linguistic access to the women was the main reason for the successful results of the program. Once the women understood what was said, they could then ask questions and become part of an interactive activity.

Limitations of the project

The principal limitation was the growing demand for more sessions regarding employment that we could not provide within the context of this current project but quite possibly point out to the need for this in a subsequent program. Other limitations were not being able to provide these services and activities on an ongoing basis chiefly because of financial reasons. The processing of the GBQ was also very time consuming as it had to be done in several languages, then retranslated into English for data entry.

To what extent has the model/promising practice adopted for your Blueprint project been effective?

(a) Provision of Specialized Services to vulnerable clientele:

If we look at the qualitative comments provided by the clients mentioned in the documents that were provided, we see that these services were of particular help to women who displayed multiple vulnerabilities associated with the presence of conjugal violence. In fact it was those women who needed the services most who gravitated towards using them.

There was also great interest shown by the other shelters, the CSSS and members of the advisory group regarding the existence of these services.

(b) Provision of continuum of linguistically and culturally sensitive support services: training of specialized staff

Regarding the clientele that we are working with, mostly women from ethnocultural and immigrant communities it is very clear that linguistic access to services is a major factor in using second stage services. Along with the demand for specialized support services, the presence of linguistic access is also a factor that assures a *continuum of services* for themselves and their children as well as for *referrals* to the appropriate mainstream resources. We have developed a model where the referral is done through the Social workers at the shelter to the Coordinator or CI at the external offices where a needs analysis is done by the clients themselves and from where activities, referrals and support services are given according to these needs.

(c) Enhancing integration into the host society: model of referral

According to the information that we gathered in the second year of the project where we have actively applied the model, we have seen that this proposal of establishing a referral system between the shelter and the external offices for ex residents has resulted in more women participating and benefitting in the follow up services and activities after their stay at a shelter. The availability of these services and activities, primarily from the qualitative information that we have gathered, on the one hand positively impacts their isolation and on the other, helps them to better integrate into the host society.

(d) Reduction of the risk of returning to an abusive relationship: transition to a situation of non violence

A major problem for women and their children who leave the shelter is the fact that they may not have family, community or other support. In this way there is little evolution of themselves and or their situation. A further consequence of this are the limitations that their children may experience as witnesses of family violence who need special attention. It is therefore very important that their mothers who are also victims retain contact with the support services given as part of the proposed model. In terms of women who experience specific barriers, such as language, culture or other, or who may not have family or community support, it is a way that they can remain in contact for the services and activities that they need. As well, maintaining this contact and follow up may present a decrease in the need to return to abusive relationships.

How have partnerships contributed to the success of your Blueprint project?

A series of 20 integration and self-sufficiency services and workshops were developed. They dealt with a variety of issues that are normally not covered during their stay at the shelter such as self presentation, nutrition, how to create an email address etc. The participants were recruited from a number of shelters and second stage resources such as , la Maison d'Athéna, Passerelle, Halte-Femmes, Flora Tristan, and others.

The advisory committee was also composed of *Generation Emploi*, an employment agency, *Service Coté Cour*, a legal information agency working in the courts , and the *CSSS Parc Extension*, that were also very interested in the development programs. Educational partners who participated in this project were the *Laurier Macdonald School Board* . Various professionals were also involved in the sessions. Without their involvement the project would have been very difficult to complete.

What lessons learned have emerged that can be used to improve the efficiency and economy of your Blueprint project?

1. *There is a great need to do these type of projects for vulnerable clientele; they cannot do this by themselves due to linguistic and other constraints as listed previously;*
2. *Existing services and community partners should be involved;*
3. *There has to be a follow up of the effectiveness of these type of programs and what happens now that we have to continue them;*
4. *There has to be a continuation of these projects and others that the women need so as to transition to a life without violence;*
5. *Personal contact through workers is more effective than the production of written material for certain clientele*

How effective were your practices in sharing project results?

We have collected data regarding the participants, their different backgrounds and their needs within the context of this project. As such we have tangible and qualitative information that indicate not only a positive reaction for the activities and services that were offered but also for more information, particularly in the realm of employment. We intend to transfer the information and lessons gained through our project and of the constraints that immigrant women face when leaving the shelters, to mainstream service providers, shelters and elsewhere. We firmly believe that women victims of conjugal violence who are doubly vulnerable in terms of accessing services benefitted the most with the model that was developed and that these services resulted in the development of a greater autonomy for all of the participants.

Summary-Final comments

In our 24 month project we tried to respond to specific needs of women coming from ethno cultural communities who were victims of family and conjugal violence. These needs were linguistic and cultural and many times involved the lack of a support system and the isolation of these women from society.

The purpose of the activities and specialized support services that we developed was to enable these women to receive information that they could use in both a personal and public way. This information was given in the language of origins and through the continuous presence of trained Community workers and Cultural Intermediaries. The linguistically specialized support services of accompaniment and telephone contacts allowed for a continuous follow up of these women that was not possible otherwise. The sessions dispensed information that was otherwise not easily accessible to women as well, on various themes such as computer, employability, stress management, nutrition, budgeting and self presentation. Both the activities and the services were designed to increase the autonomy of these women after they left the shelter. Overall, if we were to discern some of the results and outcomes of this project we can come to the following conclusions:

- Where there are linguistic barriers, information and services are more effective if given in the language of origins;
- There is a need for such services and activities for vulnerable clientele that are socially isolated because of a lack of community and family support;
- That these activities helped promote feelings of self worth, heightened autonomy for the participants

Melpa Kamateros

Executive Director, *Shield of Athena Family Services*

ANNEX 3

Adaptation de l'intervention d'urgence en violence conjugale sur le territoire lavallois

Favoriser une meilleure collaboration des services d'urgence existants pour améliorer l'accessibilité des femmes présentant des barrières culturelles et linguistiques

Brève présentation de la problématique Les femmes immigrantes et issues des communautés ethnoculturelles victimes de violence conjugale ou familiale vivent une réalité complexe particulièrement lorsque vient le temps de trouver des ressources d'aide adaptées à leur réalité. Les barrières linguistiques et culturelles sont souvent les premiers obstacles auxquels elles sont confrontées lorsqu'elles doivent interagir avec les services de police, les services sociaux et les organismes communautaires qui leur viennent en aide. Dès les premiers temps de l'intervention socio-judiciaire et psychosociale ces femmes pour la grande majorité d'entre elles ne comprennent pas ce qui leur arrive et sont très intimidées par le processus : Pourquoi l'intervention policière? Qu'est-ce que la violence conjugale? Que va-t-il arriver à leur conjoint et à leurs enfants? Où les emmène-t-on? Qu'est-ce qu'une maison d'hébergement? Quels sont les services qui peuvent leur venir en aide?

Objectif du projet Développer un système de référence et de suivi systématique des femmes présentant des barrières culturelles et linguistiques dans le cadre de l'intervention d'urgence en violence conjugale et familiale à Laval. Ce projet novateur permettra aux ressources de première ligne de pouvoir intervenir en collaboration avec les services du BASF auprès des femmes présentant des barrières culturelles et linguistiques dans les premières 72 heures suivant l'intervention policière et d'assurer la continuité dans les services offerts.

- 1) Opérationnalisation. Lors de l'intervention policière; un livret d'information en langue maternelle: Ce livret expliquera brièvement les points suivants : pourquoi l'intervention policière, le rôle de la police et les différentes options qui s'offrent à la victime.
- 2) Arrivée à la maison d'hébergement; un message d'accueil en langue maternelle : Ce message enregistré en 12 langues permettra aux femmes de mieux comprendre le fonctionnement de la maison d'hébergement.
- 3) Rencontres avec une intermédiaire culturelle du BASF : de 3 à 5 rencontres pour faciliter la compréhension entre les victimes et les intervenantes des maisons d'hébergement. Les intermédiaires culturelles du BASF ont toutes reçu une formation en violence conjugale et familiale.
- 4) Suivi CAVAC / BASF : Si les femmes n'ont pas été en maison d'hébergement et qu'elles ont signé une autorisation pour que le CAVAC les contactent, elles seront mises en relation avec le Bouclier d'Athéna pour une évaluation de leurs besoins.

Ce projet financé par le Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine dans le cadre de l'entente « Égalité entre les femmes et les hommes » est le résultat d'une fructueuse collaboration entre le Bouclier d'Athéna, les 3 maisons d'hébergement de Laval : Le Prélude, La Maison L'Esther, La Maison de Lina, le service de la vie communautaire, de la culture et des communications de la Ville de Laval, la Division Urgence sociale – Ville de Laval, le Service de police de Laval et le CAVAC de Laval.

Maud Pontel, Outreach co-ordinator. BASF

ANNEX 4

COMMUNITY OUTREACH SESSIONS/ CONJUGAL VIOLENCE

DATE	COMMUNITY/ORGANIZATION	# OF PEOPLE	Language
April 4	Hébergeur de Parc Extension	10	French
April 17	YWCA	12	French
May 8	YWCA	12	English
June 7	Bois de Boulogne	40	French
June 14	Bois de Boulogne	25	French
June 20	Carrefour Jeunesse Emploi Cote des Neiges	12	French/English
July 7	Sikh Gurdu Arat temple	50	Punjabi
September 5	Hébergeur de Parc Extension	10	French
October 2	Bois de Boulogne	40	French
October 4	Bois de Boulogne	20	French
October 23	YWCA	12	English
October 30	YWCA	13	French
October 30	Service d'Entraide Passerelle	10	French
November 8	La Maison D'Haiti	10	French
January 20	Filia	35	Greek
January 21	Bois de Boulogne	35	French
January 23	Association du Troisième Âge Filia	30	Greek
January 30	Centre Jeunesse NDG	8	English
February 7	Petites – Mains	25	French
February 12	Elizabeth House	10	English
March 11	YWCA	10	English
March 26	Accueil aux Immigrants de L'Est de Montréal	42	French

Annex 5

MEETING BETWEEN SHIELD OF ATHENA STAFF AND COLLABORATORS ON HBV AND OTHER PROJECTS

Date	TOPIC	Collaborator	Shield staff member	HRS
April 18	Honor Based Violence conference	Universite de montreal	Maud & Melpa	2
May 1	HBV	SPVM, DYP, Batshaw, schools, UDM	Maud & Melpa	3
June 25	HBV	SPVM, DYP, Batshaw, schools, UDM	Maud & Melpa	3
October 29	Laval Project	Police of Laval	Maud	2
November 1	<u>Prep for presentation</u>	<u>PDQ 33</u>	Maud	1
November 5	HBV	TCRI & CSAI	Maud & Melpa	3
November 12	HBV	SPVM, Batshaw, 2 ecoles	Melpa	3
November 13	SPVM	SPVM	Melpa	2
November 18	HBV	DPJ	Maud	2
January 20	HBV	Police, Batshaw, DYP, School	Maud	3
January 23	Laval project	Shelters And city of laval	Maud	2
February 18	HBV	TCRI CSAI	Maud	2
February 27	Laval project	Shelters & city of laval	Maud & Melpa	2
March 17	HBV	Police, Batshaw, DYP, School	Maud	3
March 27	Legal website	Pro bono students	Maud	2