



SHIELD OF ATHENA FAMILY SERVICES
ANNUAL REPORT OF ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES
2014-2015
April 1st 2014 to March 31st 2015

Greetings to all the friends of the Shield!

Again another wonderful year of work, services and activities designed to help women and children overcome the violence that they have lived in their families.

Our many projects and services have benefitted many vulnerable victims, helping those who have no support, are isolated and have few means to survive. Through our community outreach programs we reach out to so many that normally could not access such important information or have knowledge on the resources that could be available to them. Our "Never Ever" campaign, done in collaboration with three famous athletes, viewed on Global and previewed at all Guzzo theatres made thousands more aware of violence against women.

We are overwhelmingly happy however, that we made a concrete move towards establishing our second step resource to complete our network of services for women and children this year!

Thank you all for your invaluable support of our mission and our cause. Without you we could not be here. We would also like to thank the governments of Quebec and Canada for their support of our services and our vision.

Many thanks to our Board for their presence and volunteerism, even though they are all busy professionals and career people.

Finally, thank you, to all of our wonderful staff, our social workers, interpreters, child care workers and administrators that work in any of our three points of service, thank you for your caring and professional work.

Thank you all for your dedication.

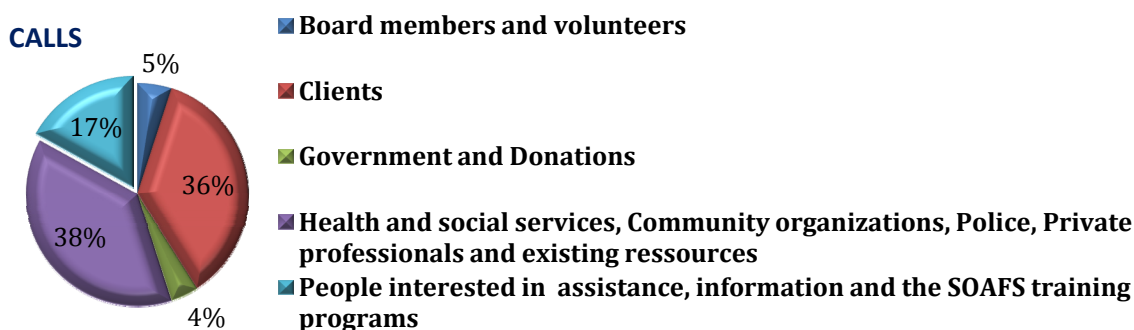
Melpa Kamateros
Ed, SOAFS

Chris Ann Nakis
President, 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 **25,073**, representing an increase of 35% from last year.

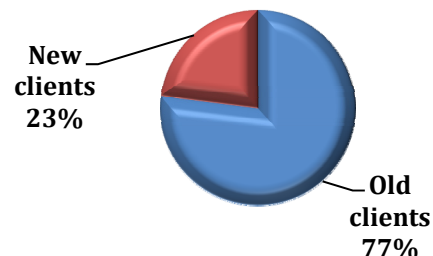
The following statistics are based on the 12,175 calls that were made out by our staff. Of these 5% were made to Board members and volunteers; 38% to the health and social services, community organizations, the police, private professionals, the existing resources; and for projects such as the HBV project. Calls to the media and others for information on the SOAFS training programs and activities accounted for another 17% of the calls. Requests by the government, and donations represented 4% of the total calls. Client related calls for advocacy, service and referrals accounted for 36 % of all calls.



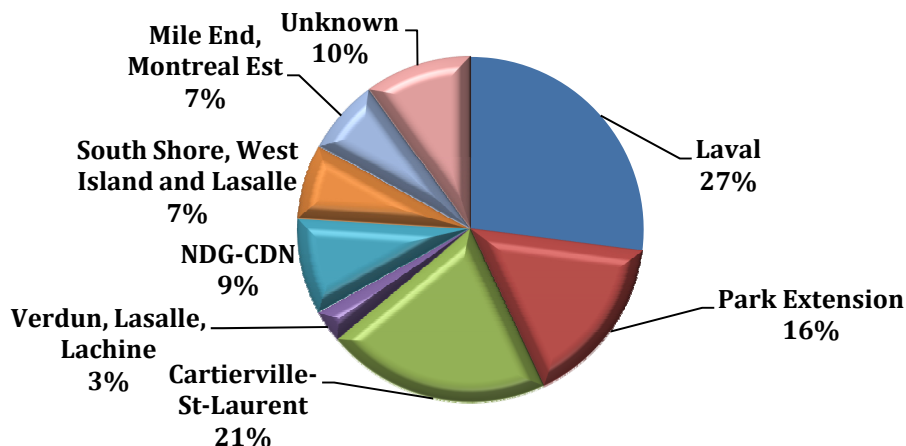
CLIENT CALLS

Some **1,944** calls, were made by clients who were interested in using our services. From these, **1,496** or **77%**, were made by old clients and **448**, or **23%**, from new ones.

27% of all known calls were from Laval clients, 63 % from Montreal, 10% unknown

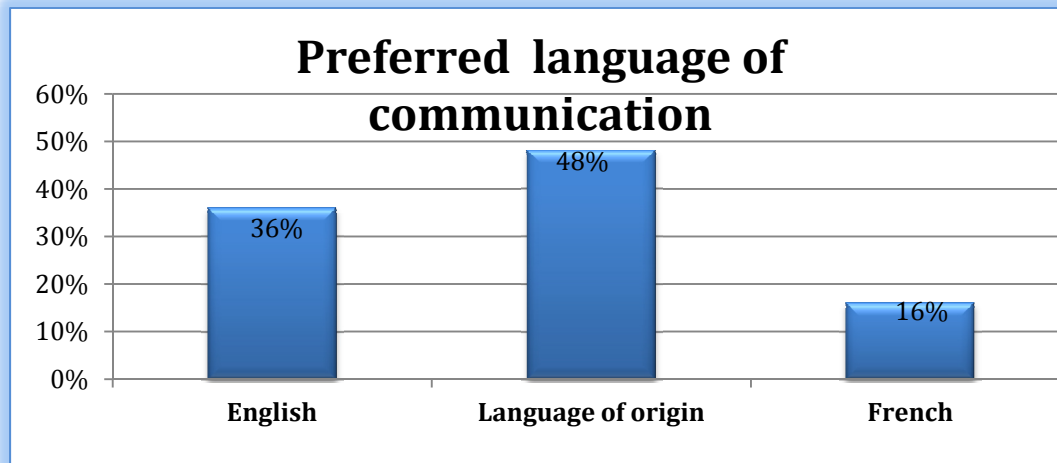


CLIENT CALLS DEMOGRAPHIC



Nature of calls- based on 1,944 client calls

86%, of the client calls were for conjugal violence. **36%** were in English **48%** were made in languages other than French or English; **16%** were in French.



Ages

52% were made by women between the ages of 30-49 ; another **12%** were received from women aged 50-59; **15%** from women over the age of 60 ; **13%** were between 18-29 and **8 %** were unknown.

USAGE OF OUR SERVICES - CLIENTS

This year we had a total of **748** clients both old and new, short and long term,.

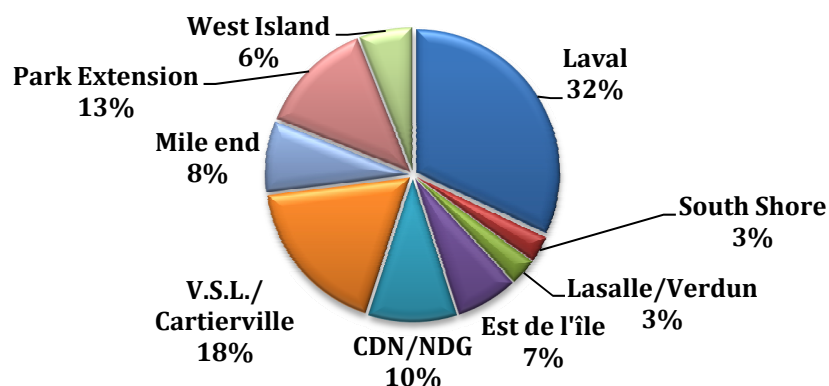
The following statistics and demographics are based **on 639 new cases**, long and short term, that used the services at either of our centers in Montreal and Laval.

Client Profile (based on 639 new cases)

Who uses our services? According to our statistics, **99%** are women. **54%** of the clients at the external centers were between the ages of 20-39; only **6%** of them were sixty and over. **58%** of them were making \$30,000 or less annually; **68%** of them lived in Montreal and **32%** in Laval. **97%** of them came from different ethnic backgrounds and **for 26%** their preferred language of communication was their mother tongue.

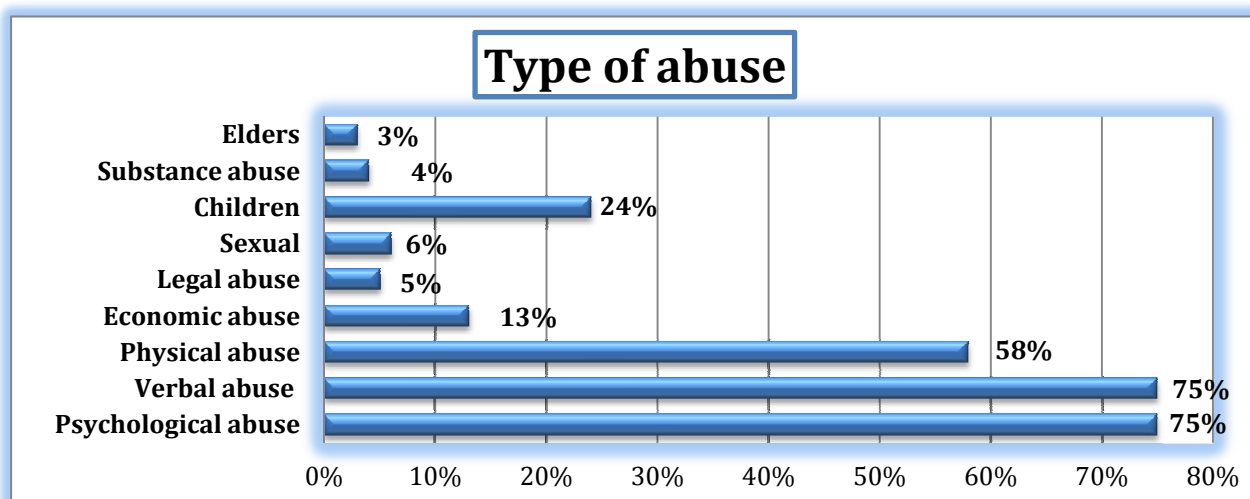
Areas clients come from (based on 639 new cases)

From **639** new people who tried to access our services, **68%** of these files were from Montreal and the surrounding suburbs. Nearly half **49%** came from multicultural areas such as Park Extension(**13%**), Ville St. Laurent (**18%**) , CDN (**10%**) and (**8%**) from Mile End). Laval accounted for **32%** of the client cases.



Type of Abuse (540 cases of conjugal violence)

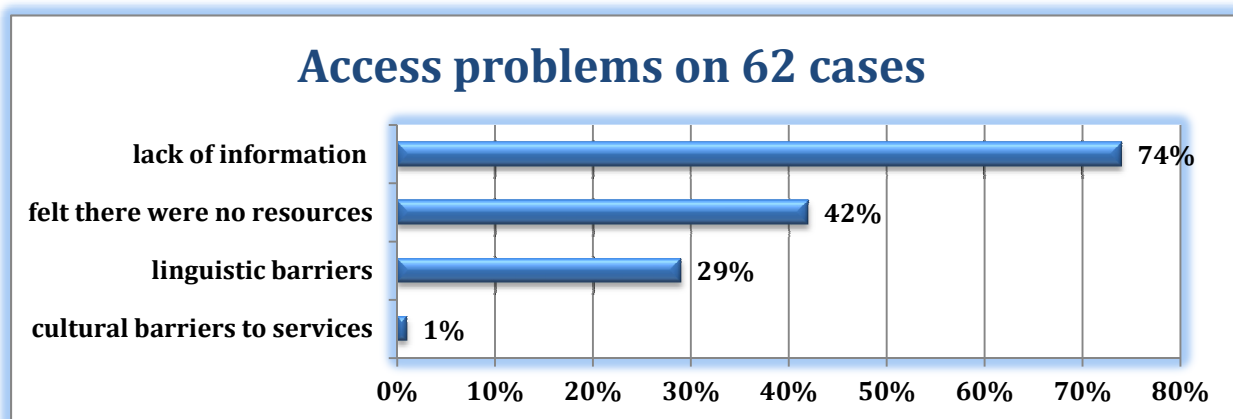
From the 639 new cases, 85% were victims of conjugal violence; of these, 75% were victims of verbal and psychological violence and 58% were living physical abuse. 15% were also victims of economic abuse. Please refer to the chart.



For 26% of our clients, their preferred language of communication was their mother tongue and 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, Bengali, English, Greek, Farsi, French, Russian, Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi and Spanish. In addition to this clientele, there were 146 children who had also been exposed to violence in the home.

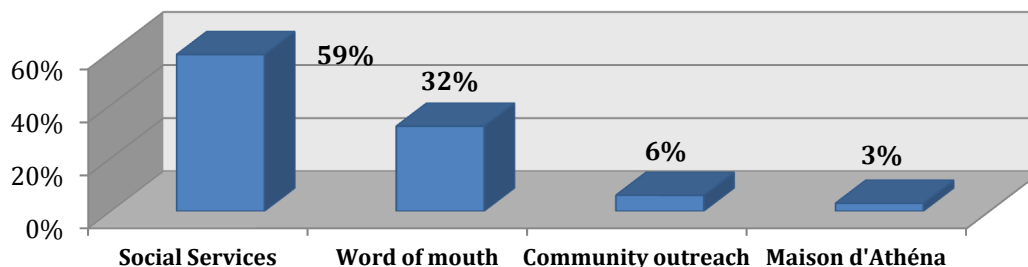
Other Types of problems (based on 639 new cases)

As indicated before, most of the clients came to us because they were victims of conjugal and or family violence. Of these 9% came to us because of access problems. The majority of them, or 74% complained of a lack of information; 29% cited the presence of linguistic barriers; and 42% said that there were no resources. Only 1% felt that they were impeded to accessing services by cultural barriers. 1% of cases come with referral and 5% with family issues. There is overlap in this area.



Source of Referrals

Nearly two thirds of our referrals , representing **59%**, of our client cases, came from the existing social services network and mainstream services. **32%** 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 **6%** came directly from the community outreach programs and **3%** 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 (195 cases)

There was an **increase of 8%** in this category. Out of 195 new and old long term cases that were treated this year, 91% of them dealt with conjugal violence (178cases); Youth problems accounted for 5% of the total cases, family cases accounted for only 1% and there were no access cases at all. Seventy one families headed by a single mother accounted for 36% of the cases. In this clientele there were 146 children that had been exposed to conjugal violence in the home and from these 13 children received services. **There were a total of 86 new long term files that were created during this period.** There were also **109 long term files** that were from previous periods due to the complexity of their cases and the need for specialized intervention, linguistic or other.

Ex Residents

11 ex residents presented themselves for services at the external centers. Of these, **45%** necessitated follow up services in languages other than English or French and comprised **6%** 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 195 long term files old and new

The most dramatic increases were in the number of art therapy sessions, from 2 to 54 this year. Legal clinics increased by **33%**; the other figures were more or less stable.

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 45% of the cases of the 195 long term files, spoke only the language of origins and needed intervention by social workers or Cultural Intermediary (CI) in that language. The languages were, Arabic, Bengali, Farsi and Tamil.

SERVICES GIVEN

TYPE	2014-2015
ACCOMPANIMENTS	128
LEGAL CLINICS	37
INDIVIDUAL	280
YOUTH	47
TELEPHONE	1,771
HOME VISITS	13
ADVOCACY	478
REFERRAL	48

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.

SPECIALIZED SERVICES

October-December 2014 - Montreal

English language support group for women victims of conjugal violence.

Six sessions, two hours each, 5 participants. Facilitated by Betty Petropoulos, tsp, Director of Social Services and Maria Papadopoulos, tsp, clinical supervisor.

February- March 2015

Greek language support group for women victims of conjugal violence.

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

There were 6 sessions and 4 participants. Facilitated by Betty Petropoulos and Maria Papadopoulos.

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 eight languages by our trained intermediaries: Arabic, Bengali, Farsi, Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Russian and Tamil. These services were given to the clients of the Shield of Athena and La Maison d'Athena.

April 1 st 2014 to March 31 st 2015	Clients	Last Period : 2013-2014	Increase/ Decrease
Women	61	51	20% Increase
Services			
Accompaniments	42	56	2 X increase
Telephone calls	353	172	
Consultations	73	170	56% Increase
Active listening/referral	295	115	
TOTAL	763	513	49% Increase in services

There were 61 women from ethnic communities who benefitted from the CI services during this statistical period representing an increase of **20%**. 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 five, or **45%** of the 11 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 total number of services increased by **49%** .

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

Women's activities - May 26, 2014



The Shield of Athena, had the pleasure of offering our clients the opportunity to have a fun and exciting makeover. This activity was made possible thanks to Vicky, a makeup artist working for Esth  e Lauder at Ogilvy's. The women had a wonderful time & got to bring home many wonderful beauty products graciously donated by Esth  e Lauder.

Christmas Activity - December 19, 2014 - Montreal offices

- **114 women and 87 children** got financial assistance and free clothing. 25 clients received the Gazette Christmas Fund cheques. 100 families received baskets, worth 250\$ each from the ***Hellenic Appeal Foundation***. Eight mothers and their children received 500\$ each from the ***Hellenic Golfers Association***.

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 14, 2015, Montreal offices

- **74 women and 51 children** benefitted with free clothing and the activity. Fifty (50) families received food baskets donated by the ***Hellenic Appeal***. Children received chocolates . Donors of this event are 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.

Table de Concertation en violence conjugale de Montréal
Table sur la violence conjugale et l'agression sexuelle de Laval
Table de concertation sur les agressions à caractère sexuelle de Montréal
Table de concertation sur la condition féminine de Laval
Table de concertation en violence conjugale Secteur Nord de Montréal
Regroupement de Francisation
Regroupement des maisons de l'île
Regroupement interculturel de Parc Extension
Comité femmes de Parc Extension
Comité vigile PDQ 33
COCRSI, Laval
AGIR (Laval)
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 **8 presentations** to educational, governmental and social service institutions.

DATE	COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION/INSTITUTION	FACILITATORS	TOPIC
May 17	Conference with members of Barbados Community	Polly Tsonis & Maud Pontel	Overview of Shield
June 5	Toronto conference-Migrant mother project	Melpa & Maud	Overview of Shield
June 13	Colloque des CALACS	Maud Pontel	SOAFS Sexual Assault project
September 8	McGill University ; Department of Social work	Melpa Kamateros	Shield Services
October 8	Maison des Parents	Polly Tsonis & Nadia Argueta	Overview of Shield
September 26	Students of Sherbrooke University	Maud Pontel Nanor Sinabian	Overview of Shield
March 2015	Dawson College International Women's Day	Melpa Kamateros	Austerity & Services
March 2015	L'Association Canadienne pour la Santé mentale	Maud Pontel Melpa K.	Ethnocultural training

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 meetings**. Finally, **35%** are with the Board and for fundraising and promotion administration matters.

Time spent by the Executive Director

*** Please note that this year there was an increase of 15% in the number of meetings, and the time spent increased by 80%**

Meetings	Number	% meeting	Time spent	% of time spent
Project & services development	79	40%	172h	23%

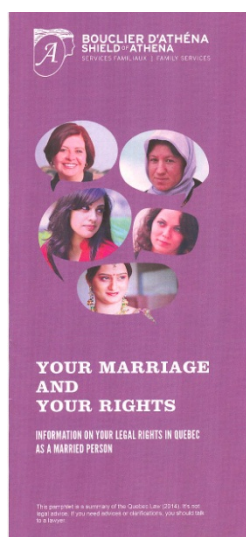
Board / fundraising/ Adm.	73	37%	325h	44%
Networking/ Visibility	48	23%	242h	33%
Total	200	100%	739h	100%

DATE	COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION/INSTITUTION		FACILITATORS
August, 2014	Minister of State, Canada, Lynne Yelych	Montreal	ED
November 2014	Minister of Foreign Affairs Roundtable Discussion on Harmful Practices	Montreal	ED
December, 2014	Minister of Justice Public Security, Stéphanie Valée	Montreal	ED & Coordinator
February, 2015	Minister of Public Security, roundtable discussion with CV partners	Montreal	ED & Coordinator
February , 2015	Ministre déléguée à la réadaptation, à la protection de la jeunesse et la santé publique, Lucie Charlebois	Montreal	ED & Coordinator

PROJECTS

1. STATUS OF WOMEN CANADA

" Prevention of honor based violence against women and girls: Training, information, detection and referral"



Over the past 3 years, the Shield has conducted a major outreach project that has reached over 400 women on the issue of conjugal and family violence, honor based violence and forced marriage. Through a team of outreach agents from six communities (Indo-Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, Muslim/Arab speaking communities and Afghan/Persian communities), more than sixty activities were organized during which the women were informed and equipped to identify high risk situations and direct potential victims to resources. They created an informal support network for victims and allow women in their community to better know their rights and how to protect themselves legally. Information tools have been produced and distributed within the different communities, one being a pamphlet entitled "Your marriage and your rights" It is **available in 7 languages**.

PRESENTATIONS ON HONOR BASED VIOLENCE (Status of Women Canada)

DATE	COMMUNITY INSTITUTION	ORGANIZATION/	FACILITATOR	TOPIC
April 23	Table de concertation d'agressions sexuelles		Maud Pontel	HBV
April 24	Conference on HBV		Maud Pontel	HBV
May 14	Oshawa-HBV		Maud Pontel	HBV
November 18	Université de Montreal		Maud Pontel	HBV & Shield Services
December 8	Université de Montreal		Maud Pontel	HBV & Shield services
December 11	Table de concertation de violence conjugale de Montréal		Maud Pontel	HBV
January 29	Department of Youth protection		Maud Pontel	HBV
February 26	Department of Justice in Ottawa		Maud Pontel	HBV & forced marriage
March 11	College Rosemont		Maud	HBV & Shield services

2. HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY OF MONTREAL

For a better understanding of the criminal and penal procedure regarding conjugal and family violence: Towards the Development of Strategy to Raise awareness for Activist Women's Groups

This project was designed to demystify the existing penal and legal procedure. In collaboration with CAVAC of Montreal, the Shield has trained its team of outreach agents on the criminal and penal procedure for conjugal and family violence so that they can transmit, in their mother tongue, information related to this issue to a special group of women who will, in their turn relay the information to others in their communities. Some activities providing legal information were also organized in collaboration with pro bono interns from the Law faculty of the *Université de Montréal*, and others, designed to demystify the process of the police procedure, with the SPVM. . All activities were conducted in the mother tongue of the women activists so as to encourage a better understanding of the subject matter. Languages used were : Arabic, Bengali, Farsi, Tamil and Urdu,

Achievements : 2014-2015

- **22 activities** (11 more than last year) in the language of origin, **Urdu, Bengali, Punjabi, Tamil, Farsi, Hindi and Arabic;**
- **The communities reached included: Sri Lankan, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Afghani, Iranian and Arab communities;**
- Approximately **150 women** have been exposed to the activities and information given;
- Development of a legal website on women's rights in Canada and Quebec entitled *Athena Legal Info, Quebec and Canadian law as my Shield* **available in 8 languages.**

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 official launch of the project took place on April 17, 2014 at City Hall of Laval.

We were very happy that Marc Demers, Mayor of Laval was able to join us on this special day.

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.

This year a proposal was deposited at the SHQ, regarding this project and a conditional offer was made for the purchase of a piece of land in Laval.

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:

- **21 sessions**
- **The languages that the sessions were given in were: French and English and Italian**
- **690 people** were reached through the sessions (219 more than last year)

This year we worked with 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.



March 29, 2015: St-George Orthodox Church



Montreal Alouettes Training session

On October 7, 2015, we also had a very unique opportunity to give an information session to the players of the **Montreal Alouettes team** with their coach, Tom Higgins.

PUBLIC CAMPAIGN 2014-2015

On February 3, 2015 : The Shield of Athena held a press conference at the Guzzo cinema, Marché central to launch its new PSA entitled ' Never Ever' .

A powerful message on violence against women was produced by the **Shield of Athena Family Services** in collaboration with the Montreal Alouettes, and three of our local role models from the world of sports: Bruno Heppell, Georges Laraque & Chris Nilan.

We are also very proud to announce that we had 2 major distribution partners for the Montreal area: Global Television and Guzzo Cinemas, courtesy of the staff at Global and to Mr. Vince Guzzo.



JAMAIS JAMAIS

Dites non à la violence faite aux femmes

NEVER EVER

Say no to violence against women



Press Conference, February 2015

WORKING WITH SCHOOLS

The Shield of Athena works closely with the educational system. This year, several members of the staff, gave **6 presentations** to students working on projects about family violence, community outreach and HBV. We were also very honored again this year that students from Lower Canada College and Heritage Regional High School did their Youth Philanthropy project (YPI) on our organization. These are the schools that we met with during the last year. We would like to acknowledge the great project done by the LCC students and we are very proud of the fact that they placed in the top 5 and received a donation of 1000\$ for the organisation.



HERITAGE REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL



LOWER CANADA COLLEGE

MEETINGS WITH SCHOOLS

DATE	SCHOOL	TOPIC
May 30	UQAM	HBV
June 10	UQAM-Elizabeth Harper	HBV
November 30	LCC-For YPI project	Overview of SOAFS services
November	Heritage regional high school-For YPI project	Overview of SOAFS services
March	UQAM	Overview of SOAFS services
March	UQAM	Overview of SOAFS services

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 **2 070**.

Some of the areas that the staff was trained in includes: honor based violence, intervention with victims of crime, budget and concertation. **Total: 203 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 Université de Montréal . **Total: 1 867 hours.**

	# of people	# of Hours
Interns	9	1630
Volunteer Training Sessions	9	27
Training of Summer Students	4	175
Training of Cultural Intermediaries	1	35
Trainings taken by staff	20	203
Total	43	2070

TRAINING TO PROFESSIONALS

Our organization was also asked to provide training to other social service organizations on HBV & conjugal violence.

These trainings were offered by Maud Pontel coordinator of the HBV Project.

- July 22, CLSC Montréal-Nord
- July 23, CLSC Ahuntsic
- Nov. 20, CLSC Montréal-Nord
- March 18, Association canadienne de santé mentale

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	50	50
Coordinator	Supervision of Cultural Intermediaries Supervision of UDM Law Students	800 28	400 28
Executive director	Supervision, staff, committees	264	88
Total		1842	914

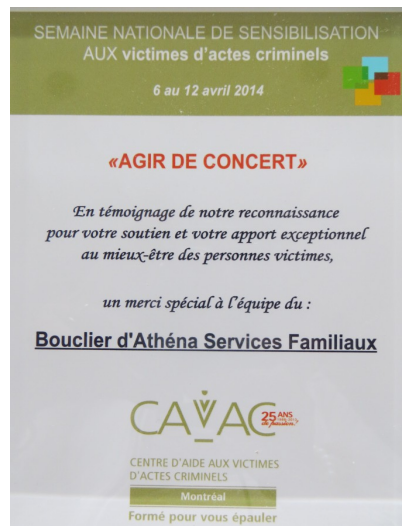
VOLUNTEER IMPLICATION

This year, the Shield of Athena had **197 volunteers**. The total volunteer time amounted to **6 253 h**.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING SESSION

A volunteer training session took place this year **on February 12, 2015**. The staff provided the **9** 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. The McGill Law Faculty stagiaire was present to explain the police & Legal procedure in cases of family violence.

ACHIEVEMENTS



April 18, 2014 : During the week dedicated to the victims of criminal acts, "Semaine nationale de sensibilisation" the Shield of Athena graciously accepted a special thanks from CAVAC in recognition of its support and contribution to the well being of victims.

May 9, 2014 : The Shield of Athena accepted from the Hellenic Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal, the "Deka Award" 2014 in the category of community services.



November 2014 - Special Recognition- SPVM: The Shield of Athena was very honored to receive a special recognition from the Montreal Police, PDQ 3, for the work we do with victims of conjugal violence, and the 2 day training on Honour Based Violence that we had provided.

Through this training, additional information and insight was given to the police officers who are now better equipped to deal with cases of honor based violence. We have collaborated with the Police of Montreal many times in the past and we look forward to many more projects in the future as they too are front line workers, with victims of family violence.

March 19, 2015 - Assemblée nationale du Québec : Chris Ann Nakis; President, Melpa Kamateros; Executive Director, Betty Petropoulos; Director of Social Services, Maria Papadopoulos; Clinical Supervisor & Siran Nahabedian; Social worker and Maria Kokkoris; co-ordinator of Athena's House at the National Assembly in Quebec City for a Special recognition given by Pierre Arcand; Member for Mont-Royal, Quebec Liberal Party, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Minister responsible for the Plan Nord, Minister responsible for the Côte-Nord region.



FUNDRAISING & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Membership Launch 2014-2015

On June 11, 2014, The Shield of Athena launched its annual membership campaign at the Baton Rouge, downtown Montreal. Event chairs, were Evan Kiouisis, CEO of Planete Mobile and Chris Nilan.



The evening's entertainment included music from Kimberly Bourgeois, as well as a hilarious performance from The Comedy Nest's, Darren Henwood.

Special celebration, November 2014

250 people gathered on Sunday November 30th at Le Windsor, to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Shield's Art Auction and the 10 year Anniversary of Athena's House, under the High Patronage of his Excellency Nicolas Sigalas; Consul General of Greece. Nadia Saputo was the Patron of the event and Chris Nilan was our special guest. The Shield of Athena's recognition award went to Maria Kokkoris, the Shelter's Coordinator and employee (17 years) for her dedication and invaluable work over the years. Long time volunteer Elvira Sigunis was also recognized for her dedication and long time support.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT



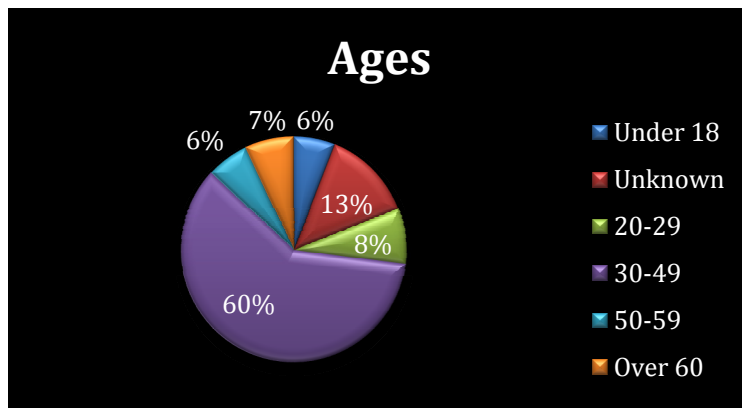
Marion Desnoyers, an independent art exhibit co-ordinator, held an art auction, by the name of BEHIND CLOSED DOORS. 22 artists participated in this event and proceeds from the art sales were given to the Shield.

EXTERNAL SERVICES - LAVAL

CLIENTS

In Laval we had a total of 239 cases, old and new, long and short term. This represents an increase of 41% from the last statistical period.

THE FOLLOWING ARE BASED ON 205 NEW CASES



Ages

- 60% Were between the ages of 30-49
- 8% were from 20-29
- 7% were 60 and over
- 6% were from 50-59
- 6% were under 18
- 13 % were unknown

Preferred Language of Communication

- 29% spoke English
- 40% spoke French
- 31% of these clients spoke neither English nor French

Ethnic Origin

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

Socioeconomic

- 13% of the clients were making less than 15,000\$ annually
- 52% made from 30-40,000
- 9% made from 40,000 up
- 26% were unknown

Sources of Referral

- 60% of the total referrals came from the CSSS, Youth protection, hospitals and the existing social services network
- 32% were **word of mouth** referrals from one client to another and within communities
- 7% were from the outreach or elsewhere
- 1% were ex residents of the shelter.

NATURE OF PROBLEMS – based on 205 new cases

Conjugal violence represented 80 % (164) of the new cases

- 60% of the cases presented physical violence
- 80% had psychological and verbal abuse;
- 16% of the cases presented economic problems also;
- 23% of cases there were children exposed to violence.
- 8% represented legal abuse
- 7% presented sexual abuse.
- 4% presented drug abuse
- 1% had elements of elder abuse

Please note that there is overlap in this category.

Access 7% (14 cases)

- 29% cited that there was a lack of information.
- 29% said that there were linguistic barriers
- 88% said that there no resources available;
- 29% spoke of cultural barriers

Please note that there is overlap in this category.

Family & Youth cases 13% (26 cases)

These issues accounted for **13%** of the new cases. Of these, **31%** dealt with lack of communication between parents and children.

GENERAL SERVICES

	2013-2014	2014-2015
Accompaniments	53	46
Telephone	800	771
Advocacy	101	90
Referrals	9	2
Individual	82	78
Family	20	6
Youth	40	38

In general, the services remained more or less stable after the tremendous increases experienced in the past years. Six children received 38 services by the special care counsellor and the social worker for children during this period.

SPECIALIZED SERVICES

Support groups for victims of conjugal violence, in Greek

February – March 2015: 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.

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, Russian and Tamil to shelter and external residents.

Long Term Cases- Laval- based on 47 cases

Out of **47** long term cases (new and old) who *used our* services during this statistical period, the breakdown is as follows:

- **87%** conjugal violence
- **9%** youth problems
- **0% access problems**
- **4% family problems**
- **40%** of our cases are mono parental families with single moms;

Please note that long term files increased by **21%** this year. This shows that the types of cases that we are receiving are more and more complicated and that 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, particularly those who need linguistic intervention, adding yet another complication for the clients and their children.

Services for Children Exposed to Conjugal Violence

- This year, out of 47 long term cases, there were **67** children who had witnessed violence in the home.
- Of these, 6 received 38 services. All received economic assistance during the two economic activities during the holiday season.

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, is presently composed of Chris Ann Nakis, Melpa Kamateros, Tatiana Londono and Barbara Vokral and it has 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. The City of Laval also supports the project.

This year the organization made a conditional offer on a piece of land in Laval and submitted a proposal to the SHQ for our Transition Home Project.



La Maison d'Athéna

Annual report 2014-2015

(April 1 2014 to March 31 2015)

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 63 women and 31 children**. We would like to note that as we were doing renovations inside and outside the house and did not accept new ones from early March until the end of this statistical period.

Ethnic origins and languages of communication:

52% of the women we accommodated this year at *La Maison d'Athéna* were not Canadian citizens. Of these **40%** were sponsored permanent residents, and **12%** were non-sponsored permanent resident, refugees, refugee claimants, with few having no immigration status at all. In all, **52%** of our clients were born outside of Canada and most presented multiple vulnerabilities regarding their economic situation, linguistic issues and isolation. Most of this clientele were women between the ages of 30-45

Status	Number
Canadian citizen	30
Sponsored permanent resident	5
Non-sponsored permanent resident	25
Refugee claimant	1
Refugees	1
No status	1
Total	63

Country of birth	Number
Canadian born	21
Born outside of Canada	42
Total	63

Duration of Stay:

The average stay at our shelter has increased from 31 to 33 days. This denotes that clients are staying longer as their cases are more complicated or, because linguistic isolation and other issues, no suitable resources for them or after their stay.

1. SPECIALIZED AND LINGUISTIC SERVICES AT THE SHELTER:

Of the number of women who we provided housing to, 45, or 73%, came from 27 different ethno-cultural communities.

Of these 45 women, **12 women (27%)** had severe linguistic barriers and difficulties in communicating in either French or English. The languages were the following: Arabic (3), , Farsi (2), Yugoslavian(1), Tamil (3), Mandarin(1), Burundi (1), Bengali (1).

The various languages spoken by the caseworkers at la *Maison d'Athéna* is a great asset that allows us to be of assistance to the vast majority of women at the shelter, regardless of their inability to communicate in English or French. It is also 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. The languages spoken this year on site included: Arabic, Armenian, Creole, Spanish, Greek, Farsi,, Italian, Portuguese, English and French. As well, our trained cultural interpreters, or **CI**, at the Montreal offices offered interpretation and support services such as accompaniment, in Arabic, Bengali, Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi, Tamil and Farsi. When there was a language not spoken in house by a member of our staff, we enlist the services of a translator from the *Banque d'interprètes* in order to communicate with the client. This year we used our **CI** on 92 occasions for individual consultations with clients who spoke: Tamil (3), Arabic (4), Farsi (2) and Bengali (1). We had to also use services from the "Banque d'interprètes" on 9 occasions, for clients who spoke (8) Mandarin, and (1)Yugoslavian.

Average age of our clients:

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

Ages	Number
13-17	1
18-25	11
26-30	8
31-35	18
36-40	3
41-50	13
51-60	8
61+	1
Total	63

It is interesting to note that this year, **41%** of the clients were between 31-35, representing an increase of **12%** from last year; the clientele between 41-50 accounted for **21%** of the clients, an increase of **11%** from last year.

Observation: Most of the women that presented linguistic difficulties were between the ages of 27-35 indicating that younger and younger women were in extremely vulnerable situations.

Children accommodated:

Ages	Number
Less than one year old	5
1-4	8
5-8	8
9-12	5
13-15	4
16-18	1
Total	31

Observation : A total of 10 children, or 32% of the children at the shelter last year, were with mothers who were sponsored, no status, refugees, or who presented linguistic difficulties.

The nature of the problems

Among the **63 women** we accommodated this year, in **89%** of the cases, they endured violence at the hands of their partners/ex-partners while 14% experienced violence at the hands of their family members. **There is overlap in this category as most presented multiple clienteles.**

We accommodated women who have lived through different types of violence. Most shelter residents or **89%** were victims of physical violence; **70%** of the women experienced economic and/or sexual violence; **100%** of them have also lived through psychological and/or verbal violence.

Of the 63 clients, **54 women** presented only CV, **7 women** presented with FV. Of the seven that presented with FV , four or **57%** also had HBV. Of these, three, or **75%** also presented the element of forced marriage or attempted forced marriage. Two out of the three were young women from the ages of 17 to mid 20's and one was in her 40's. 3 of the four presented the three issues of CV/FV/ HBV. Only one of the four presented linguistic difficulties and we had to use an interpreter for intervention in her language.

Of these four clients, one was referred to the shelter through the external offices from where she had been referred initially by the French courses.

Sources of referral

The women accommodated this year were referred to our shelter by various organizations and/or individuals. **41%** came from the SOS line, **21%** from other shelters, **13%** from CLSCs and hospitals and YP, **16%** from the police; 9% come from other sources

Source	Number
SOS Violence Conjugale	26
CLSC	5
Hospitals	2
Youth protection	1
Other shelters	13
Police	10
Community resources	3
Referred by BASF (external clients)	2
Self-referred	0
Other Professionals	0
Schools	1
Total	63

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.

2. SERVICES OFFERED AT THE SHELTER

- **Individual consultations** – This year, our case workers held 567 individual consultations compared to 542 for last year. 92, or **17%** of the total consultations were done in the language of origins.
- **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 **128** accompaniments. Out of this total, 74 were made in a language other than English or French. That means that **58%** accompaniments were done with either a CI or a social worker, with a hired interpreter from the bank. **Observation : approximately two thirds of all the accompaniments done at the shelter were in a language other than English or French.**
- **Telephone consultations** – The shelter staff dealt with **7762** calls this year. Of these, **3312, representing an increase of 3% from last year**, were consultations with victims of abuse who were residents, ex-residents and non-residents of the shelter. **Observation:** The slight increase in the number of telephone consultations to this

clientele, despite the decrease in the number of clients indicates the need for more linguistic intervention and support for the victims.

- **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 **6** legal clinics.
- **Art therapy** – Art Therapy is an emotionally supportive service offered to clients to foster their confidence around self-expression, both verbally and non-verbally using art materials. The art therapist facilitates a creative process for clients to work through traumatic experiences, regulate stress and anxiety, increase self-esteem and develop a practice of personal insight and reflection. Clients are also invited to attend art therapy groups which facilitates a sense of empathy, peer learning, normalizing stigmatized experiences and a sense of community. The sessions are facilitated by our professional Art Therapist and the length varies from 30 minutes to 2 hours. In total the Art Therapist conducted **105 individual art therapy sessions representing an increase of 75% from last year**; (85 with women and 20 with children) and **37 group art therapy sessions representing an increase of 177%** ; (24 adult groups, 13 family/mother-child dyads.) In total 45 women and 14 children participated in art therapy services. The presence of the art therapy program facilitates women and children who present with linguistic difficulties and who may have problems verbalizing any issues associated with the violence that they have lived and associated issues. **11% of women participating in these activities had linguistic issues as well and needed the services of the CI.**
- **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 **6** information sessions on conjugal violence and a total of **10** 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 (**63**) 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 cutlery, plates and glasses.

- ***Demystification of the social services network and the laws*** – This is ongoing and is considered a **specialized service**. Obviously the **27%** 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 **128** accompaniments conducted. This Element is interpreted into all of our services that are given, particularly when given in a language other than English or French.
- ***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, 11 clients or 17% of the residents, 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 (4); 17 participants
- b) Dentist (1); 6 participants
- c) Cabane a sucre (1); 7 participants
- d) Christmas Day Supper; (9 women & staff)

A total of 3 activities were organized and 23 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 in May 2014, on HBV in Oshawa, Ontario and with The Missing Children's Network in November 5th, 2014

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 children in adapting positive behaviors and coping strategies in the wake of trauma. **1** parenting group took place; **5** women participated.

Parenting consultations:

Objective. To offer mothers whose children have been exposed to violence, support and skills so as 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. **23** 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:

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. A total of **23** mother's and children participated

D) RESPITE ACTIVITIES:

In addition, respite services were provided to mothers, to offer them the opportunity to relax or to have the time to complete their activities. This was done by our summer student and offered 13 babysitting services. A total of 7 children participated.



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 social workers, review their medical history and their cultural and dietary needs that are then transmitted to our cook, Maria Gaitanis. For religious women coming from the Muslim community challal 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. The shelter staff and certain volunteers involve and supervise the women and children at times in certain activities, so as to create a warm environment for them.

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.

Maria Kokkoris

OVERVIEW OF STATISTICAL REPORT

April 1st 2014-March 31st 2015

People reached by our services & activities

ACTIVITIES & SERVICES	PEOPLE REACHED	QUANTITY
Clients External & Shelter	733	External: 639 Shelter: 94
Presentations: universities, social services	600	13 presentations
Economic Assistance	188 women & 138 children (External & shelter clients)	Easter activity Christmas activity
Volunteer	197	6253 hours
Employee & Volunteer Training	43	2070 hours
Workshops & Activities for projects	150 women	Honor based Violence project 22 Activities 7 languages 9 presentations
Media Programs	25000 * estimate	29 media appearances including: 98.5 FM, CJAD, The Gazette, TVA, Le journal de Montréal, RDS, CBC, Suburban
Community Outreach (info. Sessions)	690	21 sessions
Social Activities	700	2 SOAFS events/activities 1 community event

**28, 201 people were reached during this statistical period through
our services & activities**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2014-2015

Executive Committee:

President: Chris Ann Nakis
Secretary: Ismini Fistouris
Treasurer: Ben Martone,
Executive director and founding member of the Shield : Melpa Kamateros

Board members:

- Eramelinda Boquer
- Elizabeth Condax
- Tatiana Londono
- Litsa Pelonis
- Ana Isabel Rodrigues
- Barbara Vokral.

Coordination: Polly Tsonis

Administrative team: Valia Hatzithomas, Hasmik Manucharian, Ginette Surprenant

Social Services:

Betty Petropoulos tsp, Social Services Director; Maria Papadopoulos tsp, Clinical Supervisor; Nanor A. Sinabian tsp. External Services: Trisha Avolesan tsp, Vicky Zois, Case worker.

Athena's house:

Maria Kokkoris, Co-ordinator; Nadia Argueta, tsp; Evelyne Chéry, int; Yolette Chéry, int; Lindsay Clarke, Art therapist; Cyndi Masi, tsp and Child care specialist; Siran Nahabedian, tsp; Sabrina Sicondolfo, int.

Outreach department and interpretation services:

Maud Pontel, co-ordinator; Agnès Habis, Farah Malik Naz, Jeyamalar Premathasan, Sara Rad, Shabana Rifet, Rabia Sellaouti, Leeza Sultana.

Interns 2014-2015:

Madeline Lusk, McGill Social work; Jody-Ann Mulkler, Vanier, Special Care Counseling Program; Valérie Campanelli, Ariane Bigenwald, Lori Boyadjian (volunteer) , Law faculty of U de M; Marilyn Venney & Ema Quiroga, Pro bono from McGill.

Special Thanks:

Elvira Sigunis, weekly volunteer.