

*Elizabeth House  
Annual Report  
2013-2014*



Elizabeth House Annual Report 2013-2014.

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## *Message from the President and the Executive Director*

It is with pleasure that we present the annual report of Elizabeth House's activities for the 2013-14 year. Here we would like to highlight some of our major accomplishments, which of course are elaborated in the body of our report.

A banner accomplishment has been our Accreditation with exemplary standing, awarded by Accreditation Canada. This distinction was based on our organizational leadership, the quality of our services, and our commitment to excellence in every aspect of our operation.

A key focus has been our involvement in a strategic planning process for the period 2014 – 2017. This endeavour has involved consultations with staff and Board members, surveys of present and former clients, and a comprehensive survey of our stakeholders. Feedback has confirmed the need for our services, and an overall high level of satisfaction. Suggestions for future development have informed our Report and recommendations, which will be submitted to our Board of Directors for adoption in the fall of 2014.

We are particularly proud of how well we have managed in the face of decreased financial resources. We have seen an increase in our population of service users, generating increased operating expenses. Additionally, staff medical and maternity leaves have necessitated replacement costs; and our extra-cold winter raised our heating costs. These circumstances have occurred at a time of government budget cuts and a reduction in funds provided by the Elizabeth House Foundation. Despite these significant financial burdens, we have maintained our level of service to our clients.

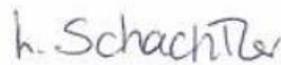
On a very positive note, Elizabeth House celebrated its 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a gala event held in April at Dawson College. Themed "Rock 'n Retro", the event featured a great band, a presentation on the role and history of the organization, and a former client and her daughter telling the story of what Elizabeth House meant to them. The event was well-attended by a wide array of staff, volunteers, partners and friends of the organization.

Of course, none of this could have been accomplished without the dedication and commitment of our management, staff teams, volunteers, and student interns from CEGEP and university programs. As well, we acknowledge the contributions of our donors, community partners, consultants and members of the Board of Directors. To all who help us to make a difference in the lives of the young mothers, fathers, and children we serve, our sincere thanks.



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Cerise Morris  
President



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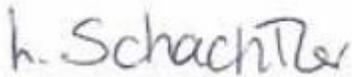
Linda Schachtler  
Executive Director

## *Declaration Regarding the Reliability of Data in this Annual Report*

As Executive Director of Elizabeth House, I have the responsibility to assure the reliability of the information contained in the annual report of activities as well as the integrity of the related controls.

The results and data in this report of activities for the fiscal year 2013-2014 accurately describe the mission, the mandate, the values and the strategic orientations of the organization; accurately describe the goals, the indicators, and the results obtained; and present correct and reliable financial and statistical data.

I certify that the data contained in this annual activity report is reliable, in other words is objective, accurate and verifiable. The same applies to the controls related to the data presented. The data and information accurately reflect the activities for the year ending March 31, 2014.



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Linda Schachtler  
Executive Director

## About Elizabeth House

Elizabeth House is a private rehabilitation centre that offers a continuum of intensive intervention and specialized support services to parents, particularly young mothers and mothers-to-be, experiencing serious difficulties in their parenting role. We work to optimize the emotional and physical development of our clients - the parents and their young children - and to foster the development of a permanent parenting plan for each child. Our approach to treatment is relationship based, focused on the strengths of the individual. We work with the parents in our residential, external and educational programs, in supported independent living settings and in the community. We serve the English speaking community of Québec.

## Our Vision, Mission and Values

*Our Vision* is a world where children are safe, secure and loved and where parents are supported and empowered so that they all have the opportunity to develop to their full potential.

*Our Mission* is to positively impact the lives of young children whose parents require intensive support and intervention to improve their capacity to parent.

*Our Values* - As an organization, Elizabeth House is committed to:

### *Integrity*

- in respect for all
- in embracing diversity
- in effective communication
- in our commitment to accountability and transparency
- in our ethical practices

### *Innovation*

- in responding to the evolving needs of young families and changes in society
- in developing and disseminating best practices
- in creating and evaluating new knowledge
- in embracing the reality of change

### *Excellence*

- in compassionate, professional care and service
- in safe and healthy environments
- in management and decision making
- in promoting teamwork and encouraging leadership
- in fostering a learning environment and the continuation of education
- in all our relationships.

### *Collaboration and Partnership*

- in working with young parents and their families throughout the rehabilitation process
- in supporting transitions of care and service
- in valuing our staff and their contributions
- in building knowledge and capabilities

**Approved by the Elizabeth House Board of Directors on May 5, 2008**

Elizabeth House is committed to a proactive and integrated approach to risk management, in particular to client safety, and to quality improvement that is rooted in the organization's strategic, operational and project-related objectives and practices.



## *Our Clients*

Elizabeth House serves a client population with multiple challenging and complex needs. Some clients require the services of Elizabeth House to help them transition to parenthood due to their young age and lack of independent living skills or experience.

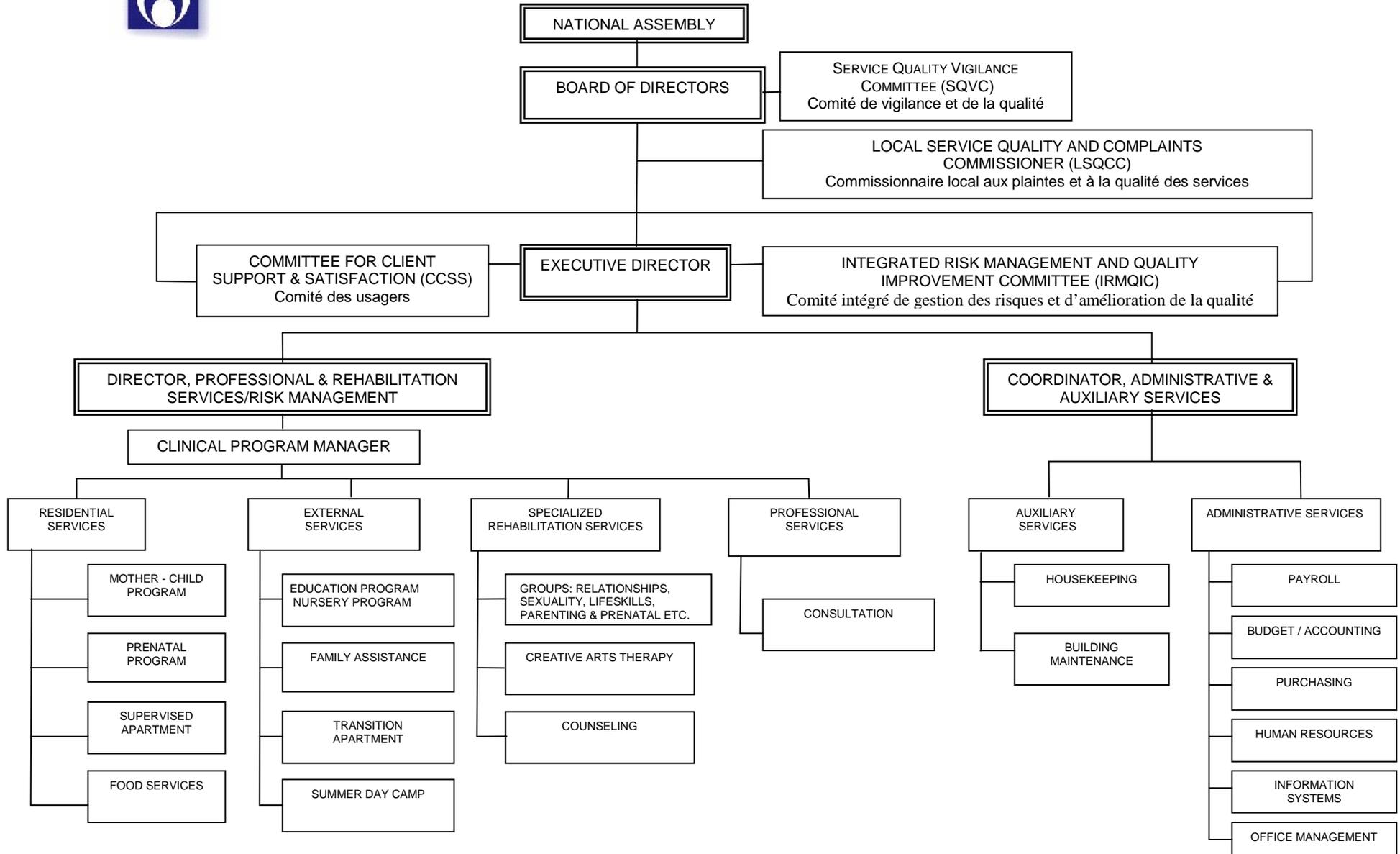
For some clients the transition to parenthood is difficult because of factors such as intellectual disability, learning difficulties, or mental health problems.

Some of our clients have had past experiences with Youth Protection or placement in foster and group homes; some continue to be involved with Youth Protection in their capacity as parents. Many of the clients we serve are likely to have experienced the following conditions or situations during their childhood or adult life:

- Separations from primary attachment figures and/or disruptions in care
- The absence of appropriately protective fathers or father figures
- Family disorganization/dysfunction
- Physical, sexual and/or psychological abuse
- Little or no consistent, useful guidance from significant adults
- Substance abuse
- Lack of or inadequate family support
- Social isolation
- Experiences with conjugal violence
- Mental health difficulties
- Oppositional thinking and behaviour
- Frequent moves and lack of stability in the community
- Lack of independent living skills
- Susceptibility to exploitation



## ELIZABETH HOUSE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE 2013-2014





## *Rehabilitation Services at Elizabeth House*

Elizabeth House is part of the Québec Health and Social Services network. It is a private rehabilitation centre offering specialized second-line intervention and support services to girls and women who are experiencing significant difficulties dealing with their pregnancies and to mothers and fathers who are experiencing significant difficulties in adjusting to their role as parents. Elizabeth House is the only resource of its kind mandated to serve the English-speaking population throughout Québec.

Elizabeth House works with the parents of children between the ages of 0-5. We primarily service the adolescent or young adult mother with a child under the age of two. We offer Residential Services as well as External Services (including the Education and Family Assistance Programs). Services are offered to fathers through External Services.

Core services in the rehabilitation programs emphasize the development of parenting and independent living skills. Educators use structured and purposeful activities as well as teachable moments in activities of daily living to help clients acquire and develop the skills they need. Specifically designed teaching modules and programs, therapeutic groups, and individual counseling are among the approaches used with clients in all programs.

### *What Rehabilitation Means in the Elizabeth House Context*

Rehabilitation Services at Elizabeth House occur in a multitude of settings ranging from the highly structured residential program, to a daily education program, and finally to a transitional living experience and/or support services in the community. It is through this continuum of services that we are best able to respond to clients' needs. An integrated treatment approach is used to identify and understand clients' multi-dimensional needs, such as taking into consideration their cultural backgrounds, value systems, etc., and the impact of societal and family systems on their needs. The concept of "psychosocial rehabilitation", which most closely approximates the type of rehabilitation offered at Elizabeth House, has been defined as;

“the process of facilitating an individual’s restoration to an optimal level of independent functioning in the community... psychosocial rehabilitation invariably encourages persons to participate actively with others in the attainment of mental health and social competence goals. The process emphasizes the wholeness and wellness of the individual .... and seeks a comprehensive approach to the provision of vocational, residential, social/recreational, educational and personal adjustment services”. (Cnaan et al, “Psychosocial Rehabilitation Journal, Vol 11, No. 4”, April 1988, pg. 61).

While rehabilitation implies a return to a more optimal state of functioning, this does not necessarily always apply at Elizabeth House. Many of our clients are first-time parents and are therefore not coming from a previous functioning base (as a parent). They require support and intervention to attain an adequate level of parenting. Thus, rehabilitation at Elizabeth House may be considered as a form of psychosocial rehabilitation perhaps without the emphasis on “restoration” but more an emphasis on the development, attainment and maintenance of the necessary skills and attributes required to be a “good enough” parent.

## *Case Management and Intervention Planning*

The primary goal of case management is to optimize client functioning. We continue to focus on the development and effective implementation of the intervention plan as an important case management tool. The intervention plan is developed in conjunction with the client and social worker and is written in plain language with the objectives, activities and timeframes clearly defined.

Within Residential Services and External Services' Family Assistance Program, the intervention plan includes a progress report which explains the client's progress and serves to define the next phase of work to be done via plan objectives. Weekly meetings with the case coordinator give the client support, guidance and feedback on her progress. The initial intervention plan for the Residential Mother-Child Program further includes the use of an observation tool to evaluate a client's parenting ability and progress.

This restructuring of clinical services in 2011-2012 further reinforced the integrated approach to clinical practice within the organization. Integrated clinical meetings, involving the Family Assistance worker and Education Program and Residential Services teams, allows for exchange of information and an opportunity for peer consultation. Shared cases are discussed during these meetings, as well as various clinical issues, policies and procedures.

## *The Role of Elizabeth House in Permanency Planning*

Permanency planning refers to a timely, goal-directed approach used by child protection agencies aimed at ensuring stability and continuity of care for children. It is based on attachment theory and the tenet that all children need to form secure attachments for optimal development. The primary goal is for children to remain in the care of their parents. However, when this is not possible or not deemed to be in a child's best interest, another permanent or long-term plan is established for the child.

The 2007 amendments to the Québec Youth Protection Act support the practice of permanency planning. There are now legal timeframes and corresponding policies applied by all the Departments of Youth Protection (DYPs) to try to ensure that permanent plans are made for children as early as possible in a child's life. The DYPs are now able to intervene in potential situations of risk to an infant based on the history of neglect by his/her parent with respect to a child born previously.

Parents of young children (age 0-5) who are followed under Youth Protection are given limited periods of time to correct the situation of risk to their child (the reason for the involvement of Youth Protection), and to demonstrate that they can provide their children with security and stability over time. They are requested to promptly take the necessary steps to improve their personal situations; at the same time there is a responsibility on the part of Health and Social Services to provide them the resources and necessary support.

For reasons related to the parents' history and/or the seriousness of the risk factors, some parents would not be permitted to maintain their child(ren) in their care if it were not for the intensive services that Elizabeth House provides. Residential Services programs, in particular, offer mothers an important opportunity to demonstrate that they can improve their parenting skills and stabilize their situations, while they are supported and supervised in their parenting role.

Elizabeth House has observed that in response to permanency planning and the changes in the law there has been a consistent demand for the Residential Services programs and a change in the nature of referrals made. There are more prenatal admissions of mothers-to-be who are known to Youth Protection, or who are trying to prevent the involvement of Youth Protection. With the exception of 2013-2014, more infants than toddlers or preschool age children have been admitted. This year 100% of the children admitted were followed under Youth Protection. The figure was 73% for 2012-2013 and 76% for 2011-2012.

In situations where a child is followed under Youth Protection, a strong collaboration is required to ensure that pertinent information is exchanged and that clients are well aware of the tasks or changes they are being asked to undertake. Members of our Clinical Team accompany clients to key meetings at the Youth Protection offices where they provide direct, transparent feedback regarding a client's progress. Their role is vital - they provide a neutral assessment of a parent's strengths, weaknesses and abilities and they help parents understand the decisions that are being made.

The main objective of our work to assist parents in learning to provide adequate care for their children cannot always be realized. When it is determined that a parent is not in a position to meet all their child(ren)'s needs, or where a parent determines for herself that she is not ready to parent full-time, the staff continues to play a role in evaluating the parent's ability to care for her child part-time, where applicable, and to support the parent, where possible, in influencing decisions that are made for her child.

Some mothers within the residential program have shown a great deal of courage by acknowledging their limitations and/or decision not to parent. They are commended for their maturity and sense of responsibility, and more often than not, respected and accepted by their parent peers. External support is provided to these mothers for a period of time while they reorganize their lives and set new goals - a different measure of success, but success nonetheless.

### *Rehabilitation Services Highlights 2013-2014*

Elizabeth House provided services to 155 clients through its residential and external programs.

Thirty-four (34) of these clients received services through two or more separate programs, concurrently or sequentially as they moved throughout the continuum of services, thus reducing the official statistics to 108 individual clients.

The above figure also includes incidental contacts, including consultations with professionals, and brief interventions to assist former and potential clients (30 in total).

## *Program Activities and Special Workshops for Clients*

Work in Residential Services and in the External Services' Education and Family Assistance programs has continued to focus on helping clients to cope with the many challenges they face, such as the adjustment to parenthood, lack of support, lack of financial resources, and conjugal violence. Regular group sessions were held on the topics of prenatal care, parenting, life skills development, relationships and sexuality.

### *Child Stimulation Group*

Clients within the Residential Mother-Child Program participate in child stimulation groups so they may learn how to interact and play with their child, according to their child's age and stage of development. The goal is to work with and through the parent to promote optimal child development. Parents are also encouraged to participate in child stimulation programs offered through the CSSSs and community organizations to continue and further maximize their child's development and to learn how to access and effectively use community resources.

### *The Ages and Stages Questionnaire*

The Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), published by Paul H. Brookes, is used in all programs. The questionnaire is a user-friendly tool which involves parents in the screening and monitoring of their child's development. The objective is to promote clients' interest in their child(ren)'s development, and to help them recognize the benefits of child stimulation.

Since the implementation of the ASQ, there has been an increased focus on children's individual needs. Parents, for the most part, have been receptive to using the tool. They have shown pride in their children's accomplishments and motivation to partake in additional activities to enhance their child's development. In some instances, the tool has assisted in the early identification of difficulties requiring expert consultation.

The increased focus on child development is consistent with the work done by our community partners in helping parents prepare their children for school, and identifying as early as possible, children who may require specialized services in order to develop to their full potential.

### *Special Groups and Education Sessions*

Guest speakers and student interns animated group sessions for clients on varied topics, such as; nutrition, child safety, budgeting, conjugal violence, gambling addiction, and legal rights related to child custody and access. The Local Service Quality and Complaints Commissioner (LSQCC) met with clients to discuss client rights and the client complaints procedure.

### *Story Time Workshop*

Two students from Concordia University and a librarian from the NDG Public Library Outreach Program conducted a ten-session Story Time Workshop this past winter in the residence. The animators taught clients how to incorporate puppets, nursery rhymes, mime and dance with storytelling. Clients were shown how to make puppets using old socks and were given a tour of the Benny Library in NDG.

## *Writers in the Community*

The residential program has continued to offer creative writing workshops through an agreement with the Québec Federation of Writers and the Centre for Literacy of Québec. The two workshops, given in the spring and fall, were met with ongoing enthusiasm by clients, as they realized their ability and creative talents, and benefited from having an outlet to deal with some of the complex emotions and issues they face. Residential clients read a selection of their work to their significant others and staff.

## *Activities in the Education Program*

Students in the Education Program participated in numerous educational and cultural activities at the school and through planned outings. Organized in conjunction with Women Aware, one of the outings was to Les Couloirs de la Violence Amoureuse, an interactive maze aimed at educating youth and reducing the progression of dating violence. Based on the 2011 film production of “Miss Representation”, the educational curriculum has been used to raise awareness about the negative portrayal of girls and women in the media and how this impacts on women’s position in society.

Students have continued to benefit from an art course given by a professor from the Montréal Museum of Fine Arts, both in-class and at the museum through guided tours. Photography and yoga classes have also been provided in conjunction with the English Montréal School Board (EMSB).

## *Action Plan on Reading in School*

For the ninth consecutive year, the Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sport has recognized people who have been effective in promoting reading to young people and helping them develop reading skills and the habit of reading. As part of this initiative, various prizes are offered at the regional and provincial level. The staff at Elizabeth High School participated in this project through a joint venture with a librarian from the EMSB. Literacy was promoted by showing students how to stimulate their children’s reading and language development through activities such as singing, sound and word games. A children’s lending library was created to encourage students to read to their children at home.

The EMSB and Elizabeth High School won the regional and provincial award for carrying out the most meaningful project with the most enduring impact. An award ceremony will be held in the month of May 2014 at the Grande Bibliothèque in the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ).

## *“Vous êtes ce que vous mangez” Cooking Course*

The Ministry of Education, Leisure, and Sport has continued to provide a cooking course to students, as part of the high school curriculum, to teach French as a second language and to promote healthy living skills. The course entitled “Vous êtes ce que vous mangez” (You Are What You Eat) began in late October 2013 and ran throughout the school year.

## *Summer Day Camp*

Summer Day Camp offers clients a unique opportunity to spend quality time with their children, taking part in child-oriented activities and benefiting from some teenage or adolescent time while children are cared for in the nursery. It provides much needed respite for young parents and demonstrates to them how it is possible to balance their needs and their children’s needs

through the planning of family-centered activities and through the friendships developed with other parents. For some parents it breaks the isolation they experience as single parents with limited support.

The program runs 2 full days a week for 6 weeks. One day is dedicated to parent/child activities and the other is dedicated to activities solely for the parents. The activities are supervised by the staff, while clients play a role in determining which activities they will take part in throughout the summer. The activities are budget-friendly and consistent with what clients could afford to do on their own. Among the goals of the program is to teach clients about their city and its surroundings and how to take advantage of the numerous free or low-cost public events and activities that are held during the summer period.

Last summer, 12 mothers and their children took part in the program compared to 9 in the previous year. As part of the parent/child activities, the parents participated in child-led play with their children based on the “Watch, Wait, and Wonder” therapeutic approach, aimed at strengthening parent/child attachment. Interactions between parent and child were filmed for teaching purposes. Parents benefited as they acquired a greater appreciation of their child(ren)’s needs and capabilities, and could observe their own strengths and weaknesses in how they related to them.

## *Program Development*

Program development has been and will continue to be a priority for Rehabilitation Services. Ongoing efforts are being made to standardize the teaching done at Elizabeth House related to parenting, prenatal care, nutrition, and child stimulation. Evidence-based tools, such as the ASQ, and programs, such as Terrific Toddlers, are used to ensure that services will have the most effective outcomes as demonstrated by practice and research. Work is being done to identify measurable and specific goals and objectives for Rehabilitation Services, including learning objectives for clients and criteria for measurement.

A Masters in Social Work student intern conducted a small survey to find out about the service needs of fathers, from the perspective of professionals and interveners who work with families with young children. The results of the survey indicate that there are very few services that are available exclusively to fathers in the west end of the city, and that outreach work is seen to be a pivotal step in identifying fathers who are vulnerable and in need of support to actively assume a parental role. The possibility of providing external services to fathers, in partnership with other organizations in the community, is actively being explored, with assistance from the Regroupement pour la Valorisation de la Paternité (RVP).

### *Terrific Toddlers*

A parenting skills group, based on the Terrific Toddler’s resource guide published by Alberta Health Services, is being implemented as part of the core curriculum. Groups were recently piloted at Elizabeth High School and at On Our Own (O3) with a favourable response. The next step will be to create a program, based on Terrific Toddlers, to be carried out at the school and in the residence. The material also lends itself well to individual teaching done with clients to address particular parenting issues.

### *Independent Living Workshop*

The Family Assistance educator and a Concordia student studying Adult Education worked together to create a series of workshops on independent living. The combination of the Concordia student's skills set in the area of course design and transfer of knowledge, combined with the educator's knowledge of the clientele and client needs proved to be valuable. The workshop is aimed at helping parents acquire life skills related to parenting and independence. It will be offered to all clients and will be launched in fall 2014.

### *Planning Your Pathway to Autonomy*

Elizabeth House uses a questionnaire called "Planning Your Pathway to Autonomy" (PAP) to help older adolescents and young adults evaluate their competencies, identify areas of weakness and set personal goals for themselves. The tool is being used by other rehabilitation service providers, including Batshaw Youth and Family Centres and Centre Jeunesse de Montréal, and has become the "common language" used to identify and address the needs of youth, particularly vulnerable youth who have limited family or social support.

## *Residential Services (Mother-Child and Prenatal Programs)*

These highly-structured programs offer residential care coupled with targeted intervention services to pregnant women and mothers of young children. Elizabeth House has space for up to 18 residents (comprised of mothers and their children). Clients requiring residential services are not able to live in the community for a variety of reasons. They need to develop the necessary skills and support systems that will enable them to parent and function successfully in the community. Residential placement provides them with the resources, the focus and the time they need to develop these skills.

The Prenatal Program helps mothers have healthy pregnancies and deliveries, and offers support to enable them to continue their education and to make plans for themselves and their baby after the birth. The Mother-Child Program teaches parents to develop healthy routines and patterns of care, both physical and emotional, for their child. The emphasis for both mother and child is on developing a secure attachment and bond. Emphasis is also placed on the parents feeling safe and secure, having a new and different experience as a parent, learning new skills, integrating these skills and preparing to live independently in the community. For infants, the emphasis is on feeling safe and secure, having their needs met in a healthy and predictable manner.

All clients receive support and intervention in learning how to manage the documents that need to be completed when one becomes a parent. They also have the opportunity to develop or improve their independent living skills such as managing finances, cooking, making appointments, articulating their needs and asking for help. A major focus is also placed on increasing the amount and availability of social and family support systems for these young parents.

Supervision, intervention, and support are offered 24/7 by trained educators. The program is open (not a locked unit); clients are encouraged to maintain connections to their communities; the amount of support and intervention offered is based on the client's individual needs.

### *Statistics and Trends in Residential Services Programs 2013-14:*

There continued to be a high demand for residential services in 2013-2014.

Services were received by 15 mothers and 13 children, as compared to 21 mothers and 22 children last year.

Although the number of clients admitted to the residence decreased, it should be noted that the average length of stay and the occupancy rate was significantly higher than last year.

The percentage of toddlers and preschool age children admitted to the residence (54%) was much higher than last year (28%).

#### Other statistics and trends:

- 60% of the mothers were under the age of 21 with the majority of them (47%) between the ages of 15 to 17 while the remainder (40%) were age 21 to 31
- 3 of the mothers (20%) were admitted for the second time.
- 6 of the 7 adolescent mothers (86%) were followed under Youth Protection.
- 13 mothers, the majority, were first-time mothers (87%), while 2 mothers had a second child in their care.
- 6 of the children (46%) were infants under twelve months of age, while 7 (54%) were toddlers or pre-school age.
- All of the children were followed under Youth Protection.
- French was the mother tongue of 13% of the mothers, compared to 28.5 % in the previous year.
- 11 of the 13 children had their father's name declared on their birth certificates. Eight of these children had some contact with their fathers, while 3 had regular, consistent contact and 2 had none.

<b>Distribution of Residential Clients by Age</b>						
	<b>0-5</b>	<b>15-17</b>	<b>18-20</b>	<b>21-25</b>	<b>26-31</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>2013-2014</b>	13	7	2	4	2	28
<b>2012-2013</b>	22	7	8	5	1	43

### *Intake Statistics for Residential Services Programs*

Referrals to the residential program decreased over the past year, as did the number of admissions. The clients who were referred tended to be a good fit for the program with respect to their needs and motivation level. The admission screening process and the public relations work that has been done may have contributed to this result. The residence operated at almost full capacity throughout the year. Clients were referred by the various Centre Jeunesses, with Batshaw Youth and Family Centres making the most referrals.

<b>Comparative Statistics: Client Intakes</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>
<b>Meetings:</b>		
Intake meetings	12	31
Intake meetings leading to residential admissions	7	16
<b>Clients in the Residential Program referred from:</b>		
Batshaw Youth and Family Services	9	10
Centre Jeunesse de la Montérégie	2	3
Centre Jeunesse de la Montérégie and Kahnawake Community Services (shared case)	1	1
Centre Jeunesse de Montréal	2	1
Centre Jeunesse de l'Outaouais	1	1
From the community (hospitals, CLSC's or community clinics)	0	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>21</b>

<b>Average Length of Stay - Days</b>	
2013-2014	130
2012-2013	87

<b>Distribution of Residential Clients by Law</b>		
	<b>LHSS</b>	<b>YPA</b>
2013-2014	9	19
2012-2013	23	20
LHSS = Act Respecting Health and Social Services YPA = Youth Protection Act		

<b>Occupancy Rate</b>			
	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
Occupancy Rate 2013-2014	68%	82%	63%
Occupancy Rate 2012-2013	41%	54%	42%
A = <i>jours présences</i> as per government regulations			
B = when client is either sleeping at EH or absent – but is still considered admitted – i.e. the bed is not available for other clients			
C = Theoretical occupancy is 9x 365 as opposed to 18x 365 (2071/3285=63%)			

## *Food Services*

Responsibility for the management of food services was shared by the Coordinator of Administrative and Auxiliary Services and the Clinical Program Manager.

Elizabeth House provides food for clients in its residential programs. Clients participate in menu planning, grocery shopping, meal preparation and cleanup. They are encouraged to prepare and share recipes from their cultural traditions.

Through education modules and through teachable moments during activities of daily living, the clinical staff also trains clients in the principles of healthy eating, and teaches the essentials related to hygiene, cleanliness and food handling and storage. (This education and training also forms part of the work done with external clients.) The clinical staff and residential clients share meals in the common dining room, providing opportunities for communication and positive supportive interaction, not only between staff and clients, but also between the clients.

Along with providing structure and routine, shared meals also have a positive impact on children's language acquisition and their socialization.

In 2013-14, clients took part in a six-week course on nutrition given in the summer at the Residence. Educators also used a garden project to teach clients how to grow and cook with fresh produce in season. A decision was made that every mother leaving Elizabeth House would receive a copy of the first Elizabeth House cookbook for young families.

Elizabeth House continues to be guided by its Food Policy which was developed in response to the Ministry of Health and Social Services plan calling for the promotion of healthy lifestyles and the prevention of problems linked to obesity (Plan d'action gouvernemental de promotion des saines habitudes de vie et de prévention des problèmes reliés au poids 2006-2012 ). The policy is based on the Ministerial document "Miser sur une saine alimentation: une question de qualité" as well as on the Canada Food Guide.

This past year, a fan vent hood motor was replaced; the dishwasher was repaired several times and has been scheduled for replacement.

Increased food costs this year can be attributed to a steadily high population. More clients stayed in the Residence on weekends due to their situations. There were many more active, growing young children versus babies and there were more visitors, volunteers and stagiaires.

In an ongoing effort to reduce costs and manage limited budgets, staff negotiated agreements with suppliers for price reductions, delivery and monthly billing. These and other cost cutting measures have resulted in a lower average cost per meal.

### **Meal Statistics**

- 17,726 meals were served to clients in 2013-2014.
- The average cost per meal was \$1.44.



<b>Food Services</b>		
	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>
Number of Meals	17,726	11,343
Food Costs	\$25,479	\$18,197
Cost per Meal	\$1.44	\$1.60

**Food Services Objectives for 2014-2015 include:**

- Continuing to expand procedures and training related to food handling and hygiene for staff and clients.
- Replacing the dishwasher and dining room tables.



## *External Services*

### *Semi-Supervised and Transitional Apartment Programs*

Elizabeth House runs two independent living programs named Path and Track for clients who require assistance to transition from our programs into community living. Two duplex apartments are situated in close proximity to the main residence. Each location can support a parent or a couple and their child(ren). The apartments are furnished and equipped with basic items.

The Path Program is for clients who are ready to transition from the structure of the residential program yet still require daily intervention and support to consolidate the gains or progress they have made. The Track Program is intended for any other Elizabeth House client (father, mother, or couple) who requires independent living support of a less intensive nature. Clients must demonstrate the capacity to ensure the safety and security of his/her child(ren) on their own. They must also have an income to support their living expenses.

The length of stay in a Path or Track apartment is generally up to six months. Path and Track clients are followed by an educator from Residential Services or External Services' Family Assistance Program. They are expected to abide by rules in relation to curfews, visitors, and respect of the physical living environment. Clients make a financial contribution for their stay at Path or Track, simulating a real-life housing situation. They are expected to participate in a savings program, setting aside funds that can be used for their eventual transition into their own dwelling or for their personal goals.

These programs benefited 2 mothers and 2 children, compared to 4 mothers and 4 children in 2012-2013. Both mothers successfully transitioned to apartments in the community.

### *Education and Nursery Programs*

Clients living in the residential program as well as those living in the community can participate in the Education and Nursery Programs.

The Education Program is run through a partnership with the English Montréal School Board (EMSB) and offers academic courses from Secondary I-V as well as individual counseling and specialized groups. Clients who meet the requirements for entrance into a youth sector school and who meet eligibility requirements for access to English education may attend this specialized high school. A modified curriculum is also offered to prepare some students for a vocational or skills-related program.

The emphasis in this program is on the young women continuing their education as they prepare for motherhood or develop their parenting skills. Clients benefit from individual intervention and the significant relationship they develop with the Elizabeth House educators, as well as from peer support. Specialized groups are offered by trained educators in preparing for parenting (for pregnant clients), enhancing parenting skills, relationships and sexuality, anger management, independent living skills, dealing with government organizations, learning about the dynamics of violence and control in relationships, and strengthening the client's ability to identify and address personal issues that have an impact on their lives and ultimately, their children.

Elizabeth House further supports mothers attending school by offering access to an onsite Nursery Program for infants 18 months and younger, and clinical intervention and support through an onsite educator. The staff in the Nursery Program not only care for the infants while the mothers attend school and groups, they also monitor and track child development and assist mothers with specific parenting issues and concerns. Fathers are given the opportunity to participate in certain events and activities, and to visit their child(ren) in the nursery, where deemed appropriate.

*Statistics and Trends in Education Programs in 2013-14*

Twenty-one (21) clients or students were registered in the Education Program in 2013-2014, compared 23 in the previous year.

Eighteen (18) children attended the nursery at various points during the school year, compared to 17 for the previous year.

The population in the nursery was low at times, throughout the year, due to some students having enrolled their children in community daycares, due to convenience (close to home), or due to their child’s age (over 18 months).

<b>Distribution of Clients in the Education Program By Age</b>					
Age	0-5	12-14	15-17	18+	Total
2013-2014	18	0	15	6	39
2012-2013	17	1	14	8	40

Other statistics and trends in the academic year:

- 15 of the 21 students (71%) were minors; of the 15 minors, 7 students (47%) were followed under Youth Protection.
- 9 of the 18 children (50%) were followed under Youth Protection, compared to 29% last year.
- 3 out of 21 students (14%) were returning students, compared to 22% last year.
- 16 out of 21 students (76%) had participated in other Elizabeth House programs, compared to 43.5% last year.
- 9 out of 21 students (43%) had resided at the residence throughout or at some point during the school year.
- 4 students attended school from out-of-region, including one student from Terrebonne and 3 from Chateauguay and Kahnawake.
- The majority of students resided with their parents and/or in a multi-generational household.

## *Family Assistance Program*

The Family Assistance Program clinical staff provide intervention and support services to young families living in the community who are experiencing difficulties. These difficulties are differentiated from those treated by first line services, such as Centres de santé et de services sociaux (CSSS) or community organizations, by the number of problems requiring intervention, the seriousness of the problems (based on an assessment of the potential repercussions or risk of non-intervention to the young child or to the unborn baby) and the lack of appropriate social or familial resources available to adequately support the young parent and child(ren).

Educators in the Family Assistance Program follow the parent's lead as much as possible, taking into account parental goals. This approach facilitates the parent being an active participant and fosters a sense of partnership between parents and the educator. Interventions are based on an integrated approach and address the hierarchy of the family's needs, taking into account the emotional well-being of the parents and child(ren). Program objectives also include developing and improving independent living and parenting skills.

The emphasis in this program is on clients applying and maintaining their skills and abilities as a parent. The focus can be on direct parenting skills as well as independent living skills and lifestyle issues. Elizabeth House educators support the physical, emotional, and cognitive development of young children and help parents to identify and connect with community resources, decrease their isolation and develop the skills to know when, where, and how to ask for the appropriate help needed, and to acknowledge that this is a strength, not a weakness.

In 2013-2014, the program ran with one full-time educator and a social services intern (stagiaire). The work continued to focus on the following areas: child discipline and routines, home organization, cleaning and child safety, accompaniment related to legal and welfare issues, domestic violence and controlling relationships, other relationship issues, finding affordable housing and daycare, and following through on medical and other critical appointments.



*Statistics and Trends in the Family Assistance Program in 2013-14:*

Twenty-eight (28) parents and 24 children received services through the Family Assistance Program as compared to 25 parents and 20 children in the previous year.

Four (4) of the parents were fathers; including a single father, and 3 fathers who resided with the mother at some point during the year.

The majority of families (21) consisted of female single parent households.

The average length of service ranged from 0-3 months to 15-18 months.

Other statistics and trends:

- 8 of 28 parents (29%) were of minor age, of which 3 were followed under Youth Protection.
- 3 of 28 parents (11%) had more than one child.
- 6 of the 24 children (25%) were followed under Youth Protection, compared with 55% in 2012-2013.
- 11 of 28 parents or 39% had participated in other Elizabeth House services reflecting our integrated approach and commitment to helping clients through the continuum of services.
- 6 of the 24 mothers (25%) had received residential services.

<b>Distribution of Clients in Family Assistance</b>			
	<b>Mothers</b>	<b>Fathers</b>	<b>Couples</b>
2013-2014	21	1	3
2012-2013	18	3	2

<b>Family Assistance: Average Length of Service</b>						
<b>Months</b>	<b>0-3</b>	<b>3-6</b>	<b>6-9</b>	<b>9-12</b>	<b>12-15</b>	<b>15-18</b>
2013-2014	6	1	1	3	0	2
2012-2013	7	5	1	0	0	0

## Objectives for Rehabilitation Services in 2014-2015

The main objective will be to carry on with the implementation of the Terrific Toddlers parenting group sessions and the Independent Living workshop. Other core programming that will be standardized includes the teaching of prenatal care, nutrition, and child stimulation.

Longer term objectives for Rehabilitation Services, currently in progress, are the following:

- Completing the work on evidence-based outcomes through staff evaluation of the outcome of their work, and mechanisms to evaluate client satisfaction and integration of knowledge;
- Defining competencies, activities and evaluation criteria;
- Developing a framework for the provision of services for fathers;
- Continuing to develop and implement aspects of the Client Safety Plan.
- Explore different programs to support Elizabeth House students such as Ma Place au Soleil and the DEAL (Distance Education for Adult Learners) program.



## *Student Internships (Stagiaires)*

Elizabeth House welcomes students from different disciplines to complete their internship (stage) requirements. These students play an integral role in the team as they apply their skills and knowledge to intervention planning, program development, client supervision and accompaniment. The students are also able to benefit from in-house training as well as an extensive orientation program.

This year we received fourteen students in our internship program within the Residential, Education and Family Assistance programs. There were seven students studying Special Care Counselling in their third year from Champlain College Saint-Lambert (1), Champlain College Lennoxville (1), Vanier College (2), and LaSalle College (3). There were three third-year students from the Dawson College Social Services Program, a third-year student from the Sexology Department at the Université du Québec à Montréal, two third-year students from the Concordia University Applied Human Sciences Program, and a Masters in Social Work student from McGill University.



## *Governance*

Board members of Elizabeth House are wholeheartedly committed to the mission and values of the organization, and to fulfilling governance responsibilities accordingly.

### *Board Responsibilities*

The Board of Directors is legally empowered to carry out the following responsibilities in its overall role of directing the affairs of Elizabeth House:

- Assure that the organization maintains accreditation status;
- Set priorities, approve strategic plans and policies;
- Appoint and oversee the activities of the Local Service Quality and Complaints Commissioner (LSQCC);
- Oversee the activities of board committees, including receiving reports and recommendations from the Service Quality and Vigilance Committee (SQVC), in order to promote users' rights, ensure promptness in processing users' complaints, and contribute to the effectiveness of services provided;
- Oversee the management of human, financial and information resources, and approve annual budgets, financial reports, audited statements, and clinical and administrative reports including accreditation;
- Appoint the Executive Director and auditor;
- Hold an annual general meeting.

### *Board of Directors 2013-2014*

Cerise Morris, President  
Howard Nadler, Vice-President  
Jane Bracewell, Secretary  
Claude David, Treasurer  
Cristina Birks  
Nooshin Maleki  
Sandra Sinclair  
Donna Varrica

Linda Schachtler, Executive Director, Member ex officio

### *Board Committees 2013-2014*

Executive Committee  
Nominations Committee  
Finance and Audit Committee  
Service Quality and Vigilance Committee (SQVC)  
Integrated Risk Management and Quality Improvement Committee (IRMQIC)  
Accreditation Committee  
Building Committee  
Clinical Program Committee/Program and Services Evaluation Committee  
Joint Standing Committee (English Montréal School Board and Elizabeth House)  
Public Relations/Communications Committee  
Strategic Planning Committee  
Education Fund Committee

## *Limitation of Responsibility of Board Members*

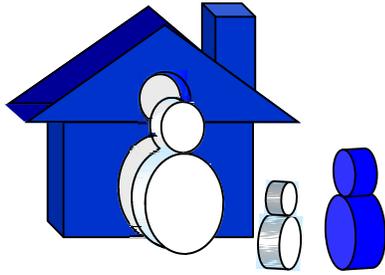
Board members are protected from any individual liability due to omission, negligence, or malfeasance of any other person associated with Elizabeth House, or related to loss, damage, or expenses of the Corporation.

## *Accomplishments 2013-2014*

The Board of Directors focused its efforts this year on making improvements to its functioning as it continued to assess its performance, using Accreditation Canada guidelines and standards.

Highlights include:

- Prepared for accreditation status review and fully met 98.7% of the standards related to governance;
- Finalized bylaws and adopted changes at a special general meeting;
- Provided leadership to the strategic planning process;
- Identified and planned an education and development session for Board members on evidence-based outcomes;
- Integrated in-camera sessions into Board meetings;
- Assessed and discussed its functioning as a Board based on the results of a Board Functioning Questionnaire distributed to Board members as well as the Accreditation Canada Survey Instrument related to sustainable governance and effective functioning of the board;
- Evaluated Board meeting effectiveness by identifying and formalizing mechanisms for feedback to individual Board members regarding their role and work on the Board.
- Board members continued to develop their roles on the Integrated Risk Management and Quality Improvement Committee and the Service Quality and Vigilance Committee;
- Formalized the functioning of the Executive Committee and held regular meetings throughout the year;
- Actively participated on the Board of Directors of the Elizabeth House Foundation and the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Planning Committee.
- Began the process to evaluate the Executive Director.



### **Objectives for 2014-2015**

- Formalize procedures related to aspects of governance; finalize job descriptions and responsibilities of Board members; describe and document the recruitment and nominations processes.
- Evaluate the Executive Director, the functioning of the Board, the Chair of the Board and the officers of the Corporation.
- Administer the Sustainable Governance Functioning Survey and the Board Functioning Questionnaire.
- Conduct an annual stakeholder survey to promote two-way communication.
- Continue to develop the fundraising capacity of Board members; develop links with the Elizabeth House Foundation.
- Continue to hold at least one Board development activity each year.
- Actively recruit new members and involve Board members and others in identifying and bringing in targeted expertise; articulate a strategy for recruitment.
- Hold orientation for new members.
- Continue to develop the role of Board members in relation to risk management and quality improvement on the IRMQIC and SQVC.
- Continue to oversee and participate in the strategic planning process; approve the new Strategic Plan by Fall 2014.
- Assess the needs of the Board members and work with staff to find an optimal format and frequency for the reporting of financial information to the Board.
- Together with the Executive Director and the Elizabeth House Foundation, clarify and define the relationship between the Elizabeth House Foundation, Elizabeth House and the Maison Transitionnelles O3.

## Accreditation

Elizabeth House was “Accredited with Exemplary Standing” in October 2013 meeting 97.23% of the 333 evaluation criteria. Accreditation Canada is an independent, not-for-profit organization that sets standards for quality and safety in health care and accredits health and social service organizations in Canada and around the world.

Elizabeth House underwent a rigorous evaluation process. External peer surveyors conducted an onsite survey where they assessed the organization’s leadership, governance, clinical programs and services against specific requirements. Components included; national standards of excellence, required safety practices for reducing potential harm; and questionnaires to assess the work environment, patient safety culture, governance functioning and client experience.

Results are included in the full accreditation report which can be found on the website at [www.maisonelizabethhouse.com](http://www.maisonelizabethhouse.com). The feedback provides a clear roadmap to improvement. Ongoing feedback, follow-up and improvement are a continued focus of the Elizabeth House leadership.

The Board and Management were guided by the Elizabeth House Improvement Plan (EHIP). The entire organization focused on completing the last assessments and improvements in the first half of 2013, prior to the onsite survey visit. Everyone committed and contributed to the successful outcome. Diligence and leadership on the part of management, the input and vigilance of the Board, and the feedback, cooperation and understanding on the part of the staff made this a proud collective success.

Objectives for the 2014-2015 year will be to continue the quality improvement journey and keep abreast of changing accreditation requirements with a view to the 2017 accreditation survey.



**NOTE:**

**Please see Part 2 of EH Annual Report 2013-2014 for pages 33 through 68.**





**Elizabeth House  
Annual Report 2013-2014**