



Parent Support Services Newsletter

WINTER-SPRING 2010

MARY ELLEN TURPEL LAFOND, REPRESENTATIVE FOR CHILDREN and YOUTH, WINNER OF BILL McFARLAND AWARD, 2009

The Bill McFarland Award was established by BC Parents in Crisis Society in 1997. Over his 50 year career, Bill was instrumental in the development of progressive programs, policies and services for children and their families.

Bill McFarland was an advocate for children throughout his life and social work career. Among his achievements, Bill was a founder of the Alberta Foster Parents Association, the National Federation of Youth in Care Networks, and Parents in Crisis Society of BC. In addition, he was a member of the Berger Commission, a consultant to the Gove Inquiry, and was a recognized expert on the Young Offenders Act. Bill was appreciated by all who worked with him for his integrity, compassion and tireless efforts toward the care and welfare of all children. This award honours his memory and his tireless efforts for the care and welfare of all children. From 1998 to 2001 the award was presented to an individual or group to recognize significant contributions in the field of child abuse prevention. In celebration of the 35th anniversary of Parent Support Services Society of BC (PSS), we re-introduced this award in 2009 and sought nominations for:

- Outstanding devotion to the prevention of child abuse over a long period of time, and/or;
- Efforts related to a project which is making a lasting mark in the area of child welfare.

Mary Ellen's nominees (including several grandparents raising grandchildren) told us much about how very approachable and supportive she has been and how important the Representative's position and office is to their families and to the goal of protecting children in BC. They also commended the work of Mary Ellen's staff saying "all your staff, contacted by [them or their children], consistently provide kind and respectful service".

We were delighted to have Carol McFarland join us at our 35th Anniversary Open House, November 25th to help present this award to Mary Ellen. Our Members, Board of Directors, volunteers and staff hold the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth in the highest regard and certainly recognize the "tireless efforts" to prevent child abuse and bring attention to the harsh and unjust realities that face too many children and families in our province. We are sure Bill would be pleased with this year's presentation.



Carol McFarland and Cheryl Macdonald present the Bill McFarland award to Mary Ellen Turpel Lafond at the PSS open house ceremony in November 2009.

