

The « Maison de la Famille »

Communication

by H el ene van den Steen (1)

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This communication is based on various activity reports (1998-2001) of the association.

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- Inter-cultural meetings in partnership with the “Maison des Enfants”
- Social accompaniment in partnership with the social service – Borough of Saint-Gilles
- Information, legal advices in partnership with the Borough of Saint-Gilles (proximity department) and the family planning of Saint-Gilles.
- Medical consulting
- Groups of mutual aid for children and adolescents, parents, grandparents suffering familial rupture, and this in partnership with the European Centre of Mediation – Saint-Gilles.
- Network acting against conjugal and familial violence in partnership with various departments in Saint-Gilles.
- Accompaniment of handicapped persons in partnership with Brussels Town and the Contact Centre (Brussels).

7. Meeting – Prevention – Education – Socialization.

- Nursery halt
- Sheltered garden
- Parallel activities : debates, gymnastic activities, “prenatal gymnastic”, “aqua-gym” instruction terms.
- Social and familial tourism in partnership with the Borough of Saint-Gilles.
- Reflection – meeting.

8. Conclusions

1. Historical account.

The « Maison de la Famille », non governmental and non lucrative association, opened in 1998 in a unfavourable neighbourhood of Brussels. This “Maison” was originated by various organizations the main preoccupation of which is the family, but also by the imperative concern of its promoters to create a convivial place ,working for chances equality of chances and people autonomy.

The association wants to answer either community type or individual familial questions. It clearly aims at providing a qualified service for families with or without children, in direct influence of French and London “Maisons de la Famille”. It is a place for speaking, thinking, acting where we intend “**to act truly and to speak openly**”.

Various activities are organized such as : social tourism, initiation to psychoanalysis, psycho-motricity, Reflection Meeting (in partnership with the Family Consultative Commission), speakers groups (in partnership with the European Centre of Mediation), law , medical, therapeutic consulting.... and familial mediation.

1998 allowed to show the way and to set up the objectives capable to succeed in a coherent familial policy. It also allowed to imagine an activity program for next years among which a familial mediation consulting, a Meeting-Place, speakers groups for children, parents, grandparents, legal , medical consulting...a “Sheltered-Garden” and various trainings such as by instance institutional intervention, systemic and ethno-psychological approaches, introduction to psychoanalysis (Freud, Jung...)psychoanalysis of the child, group therapy, familial mediation...)

Activities of consulting (mediation,, law, medicine...) started on February the 1rst, 1999. Thanks to the logistical aspects ,the collaboration with the European Centre of Mediation (asbl)as well as the professional conviction common to all the actors mobilized , that service has had the opportunity to be created and to grow up quickly.

The following notions were pointed out :

- Help to families on the approach of their rights (information, explanation of the concerned decisions, support with procedures use, help in getting responsible...).
- Intervention within a prevention dynamics (children are always concerned by our interventions).
- Need for a supportive and mobilizing work of parental responsibilities in children education...
- Pedagogy of mediation based on the responsibility assumed by everyone.
- Individualized case by case accompaniment reinforced by a contractual approach (protocol of agreement in mediation).
- Re-evaluation of citizenship notion.

Of course these principles had to be translated on a daily basis.

2. Settings

The flow chart hereafter is of some help to situate the various types of actions brought with families (children/parents). The set actions concern either directly welcome or familial or psychosocial accompaniment.

The various actions were progressively set up according to engagement capacities and building fitting up.

3. The team

Presently, the team is composed as follows : familial mediator (1), physician (1),lawmen (partnership), welcome person (1), secretary (1), psycho-motricity specialist (1),social assistants (partnership),psychologist-therapist (1), criminologist (1), nurse (1),maintenance people (1). Applications for subsidies and accounts are supervised by Anne Vanesse, President and Christian Stevens, Treasurer. An accountant is in charge of accounting.

4. Flow chart

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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COORDINATION / MANAGEMENT

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<i>Educative accompaniment</i>	<i>Multidiscipline accompaniment</i>	<i>Other actions</i>
- educational probationer for the "Sheltered Garden"	- lawman (partnership)	- 1 welcome assistant
- nurse (nursery halt)	- familial mediator	- 1 treasurer
- animator	- coordinator for the "Meeting Space"	- 1 accountant (external)
-	- social assistant (partnership)	
	- speakers group animator (unpaid) for children, parents, grandparents	
	- travel animator (unpaid)	
	- psychologist	
	- therapist	
	- trainee (external)	
	-	
	-	
	- 1 secretary	

5. Welcome and accompaniment of families.

- Setting up activities of mediation.

The mediation department at the “Maison de la Famille” and related activities (speakers groups for children, parents, grandparents , law department) opened on February the 1rst, 1999 after heavy building adaptations.

From February 1999 to the end of 2001, 976 interviews have been led by the “Mediation” department. They can be divided into 501 individual information, 475 joint meetings (mediations) and 535 supervised parent/child meetings in our “Meeting-Place”. The important number of the families approached does result of several factors :

- regular information among the professionals (ex : 283 interviews in 1999)
- mutual recognition by the partners, based on the acceptance of diversified professional competences
- adaptation and progressive coordination of the workers

The department opening required the setting various **tools** which have been modified by time. We created an identification form and a set of brochures...

- Welcome and information are essential.

Indeed, from the first contact with families, its important they know how they are considered , which are our specific answers and what is the place of their participation in answering their own demand.

This welcome time is perceived as accepting the other one as he is and getting trust from people sent to us or who knock at our door.

Welcome is therefore sensed as a empathy move towards the other.

First interviews give us the opportunity to apprehend how parents and children situate themselves inside the problematical environment which is the cause of accompanying this family. Among situations found in mediation , for instance : very often the child is said to be the cause (taking down, relationship problems...)

Conjugal conflicts are often severe and lots of parents do not relate what they are, what they do, what they say and their child behaviour.

On the occasion of this mediation approach, we measure the importance of the work to accomplish with the family (redefinition of the parts, life rules ...)

Agreements between parents

The whole reflections and agreements exchanged through mediation are included in an agreement protocol which can be presented to the court in order to be ratified.

This approach is recommended in highly conflicting family situations and mainly when mediations are led in parallel with restoring relationship between the non lodging parent and his child at a “Meeting-Place”.

This agreement will be the reflect of agreements between partners. Very often these agreements will be the thopic of a reflection or even of an experimentation.

5.1 Accompaniment in family mediation

Mediation is recognized as one of the essential answer to social problems (increase of divorces, family conflicts...) It develops in the fields of family, neighbourhood, school, companies, public services (administration, Post office...)

Mediation is able to welcome, to identify sufferings, disorder, violence.

It proposes a place where real and evolving communication becomes possible.

Through its action, people are now actors in discovering solutions and get educated as citizens capable of new relationships.

- **Interventions by the mediator at the “Maison de la Famille”.**

The work with families , as described hereafter , represents the mediator’s main activity. Of course this specific work cannot be carried on with families without :

- a study on files
ex : transcription of interviews, analysis of cases, preparations of meetings, writing up mediation agreements, etc
- a work of the multi-discipline team
ex : taking part to meetings of practice analysis , exchanges with other professionals (lawman, social worker, physician, psychomotricity specialist...)
- a work of collaboration
between mediators performing mediation interviews and those in charge of children and parents welcome when re-establishing relationship and bonds between the child and the non lodging parent (Meeting-Place). Often collaborations will be organized with referring professionals.

- **Preventive family mediation**

Family mediation covers every family concern.

Couple relations, but also relationships between parents and children, brothers and sisters and therefore the whole family environment (grandparents, spouses...)

In this context, mediation aims at :

- adjusting relationships between family members and facilitating a blocked exchange process (relational or communication difficulties, point of view divergences on educational methods...)
- reinforcing the existing parent/child bond
- re-focusing parents on their responsibilities and developing a common decision making (ex: joint application of parental authority) mainly in rupture situations.
- listening and recognizing the persons and especially the other one.

When initiated the family functioning and emotional context evaluation, the mediator concern is to help parents to discover and to develop their parental potentials, to value their respective parts, to reinforce the competence and confidence feelings in their own personal and mutual resources.

Quite often mediator has to set up a dialogue and a communication structure in which parents and children waits as well as needs may be expressed.

Mediator works also on relationships in the widened family (stepmother, stepfather, grandparents...)

The mediation settings is a place for the parents to find out new resources, to express themselves, to share their emotions, anxieties, wishes, projects...

This quite individual work or work between spouses could be completed last year by organising speakers groups for parents and grandparents.

They were organised in partnership with the “ Literacy Collective Group” association at Saint-Gilles. The activity is organized on demand.

- **Mediation related to divorce and separation**

In the context of “family in rupture situation” mediation enables the passage from conjugal state to parental co-responsiveness.

Parents are given the opportunity to find out together satisfying , equitable and long lasting agreements on subjects as children residence, child personal relationship with both his parents, the part played by each parent with the child, repartition of the educational responsibilities (parental authority), the financial ones (contribution to child expenses), patrimony distribution...

Thanks to mediation each partner can recognize, accept the couple needs, transformations, evolution.

Thus the mediator approach has a psychological dimension (reject feeling, insecurity, desire of revenge, search for autonomy, bonds feelings/properties/money) as well as a social and judicial reality (procedures situation, finances, residences...)

- **Organization of the interviews**

A series of **interviews (1 to 5)**is planned with spouses (with or without children). They can vary in length, generally **1h30**.

The mediation approach implies a **voluntary demand of assistance** by the persons, even when it has been suggest by the Court Attorney, the dispute partners have to agree.

Mediation is not well known yet and many information works , among professionals as well as among users, have to be initiated before a mediation will be organised. These works can take place individually with users and/or professionals. And of course they lead to organizing mediation sessions and concluding agreements between partners.

Mediator is under **professional secret**. He is bound to be multi-partial objective and to enable persons to define the modalities of their agreements with his help. Any conflicting family situation is considered even in case of **family violence**. Most of the situations met in the “Meeting-Place” at the “Maison de la Famille” are severely conflicting and subject to heavy tensions. Sometimes women are accomadated in welcome centres with their children. Every time the restoring of parent/child relationship has been organized in parallel with mediation. By mediation, words can express the suffered situations, the conflicts and answers to family difficulties far from violence.

Welcomes organized in the “Meeting-Place” have been reduced to **1 to 3 supervised meetings** in case of parallel actions. A partial agreement makes it possible to re-organize the parent/child relationship outside the “Meeting-Place”, but also to speak again about family problems and their amicable and common resolution.

We took part to the **parent/child contact restoring** (535 “Meeting-Space”) and of course we are working similarly for family tensions decline.

Short in workers, we cannot afford to develop this activity although the severity of tensions between persons getting separated and the need for appropriate accompaniment.

5.2 the “Meeting-Place”, a place to welcome and to accompany at the “Maison de la Famille” carried off the prize of criminality prevention.

The “Meeting-Place (M-P) aims at restoring , in a third “place” , the relationship between the non lodging parent and the child when compromised by heavy tensions or conjugal violence. It also the case of a child facing a loyalty conflict between both his separated parents and/or when sent to a welcome family or institution and that the family wants to maintain relations with the child.

The M-P is a place to welcome and to accompany personal relationship between the non lodging parent and his child in surroundings of well-being for this one. The M-P is thus a third and security place where the child meets his father, his mother, his grandparents, his extraction family... when relationships are compromised by severe tensions or violence.

At this place listening surroundings enable the child to preserve preferential bonds with his parent despite of difficulties, crisis situations or relations rupture. This exchange and expression place favours the necessary clarification and attenuation of conflicts.

Therefore, the M-P part cannot be reduced to the mere application of a “visit right”, its aims are larger. It presents a preventive objective in restoring family bonds and is underlined by ethical principles according which the child is considered as a legal subject – rights to express and right to maintain bonds with his parents and/or any person with personal relation rights on him.

-Setting up the Meeting-Place

Which audience ?

63 % of the cases are Belgian parents, fathers 51%, mothers 34% and other family members 15%.

Children are less than 12 years old in 95% of the situations.

Which demands ?

The demand is spontaneous - 29%. Families consult our services before any judicial decision, on advice of a social service, a friend(s)...

For 71% of the cases, demand results from a judicial, civil or protection decision.

Situations of violence with risk for the child are concerned -36% : 21% conjugal violence, 10% abuses or sexual abuse presumption, 5% risk of child rapture. In 47% we face uncharacteristic crisis and relations rupture situations. In 6% the parent suffers an addiction problem or has not any permanent residence; 5.5 % of the children live in a welcome family and the relationship with the extraction family is not easy; and in 5.5%

children live in different places and want to re-initiate relationship.

Intervention process

Our interventions at the M-S present various phases : separate meetings with parent(s) and child(ren) , actual meetings child/ non lodging parent, evaluation of these meetings and mediation interviews.

Separated interviews

Prior to any child/parent meeting, we interview individually each parents with the child. During that privileged opportunity, the child and parents may ask questions, share their anxieties and visualize the meeting place.

It is important for the child to be placed in secured environment , physically as well as psychologically. Therefore the child has to be introduced to the place before the first meeting and get some explanations about the reasons of his presence here. In fact a Canadian study proved that , according to the institutes in charge of this type of meetings, 75% children did not know why they had to come , this resulting into anxieties and confusion. The 25% previously informed children attended the meetings with serenity and expressed precise demands .

Thanks to the first interviews, the assistant may discover the family, define the demand context, speak about desire or not for conflict settling... By proposing mediation interviews in parallel at the M-P, we offer a place to be listened to in order to improve communication and solution research between parents for the child sake.

Meeting

Generally it starts by 2 hours and can be prolonged up to 4 hours. The child stays rarely a whole day with his parent in our centre. Then some walks can be planned.

Meanwhile the meeting, the patrician aims at:

- Facilitating contact and relationship
- Reassuring and listening to everybody wants and fears
- Re-initiating progressive meeting
- Giving time to (re)discover his child or parent and to win over him

Evaluation of meetings.

Following every meeting, each member communicate his experience , his impressions... So that meeting modalities can evolve and be redefined (suspension if child destabilisation by visits, prolonged periods of time, walks, more frequent visits, changes in schedules...). In parallel to the mediation process, these evaluations enable a new parental collaboration for child interest and well-being.

- Conclusions

When parental separation or conflict relationship, child often faces a loyalty conflict and suffers many pressures... We have to watch not to reproduce the situation in which the child is a mere instrument. There from the importance to find words for everyone experience and to overcome misunderstandings in order to (re)settle serene dialogue and responsibilities for the entire family sake .
Mediation can help acting so.

M-P are transitory departments. Their action is limited in time. In case no mediation process in parallel with the M-P, parents are left with the same anxieties, fears claims at the end of the M-P. From the lodging parent we hear “ it is the M-P or nothing. I do not want my child to be endangered.”. On the non lodging parent it is “how shall I ever manage to go on seeing my child ..?”.
The interest of combining visit space and the mediation process makes whole sense here.

The mediation action gives to everyone the opportunity to express himself and to receive answers to his questions. Mediator clarifies everybody waits and responsibilities. Thus partners get to distinguish their own experience within the conjugal relationship and are able to centre more accurately on their parental relationship. The child needs and desires can be listen to. Recognized as a person, the child is no longer a conflict stake.
Family mediation is able to welcome, to recognize sufferings, disorder, violence. It present a space where sincere and evaluating communication is promoted. The persons become actors of the solutions to be found and are structured therefore as responsible citizens capable of new relationships.

6. Psycho-medico-social accompaniment of families

- **Inter-cultural meetings in partnership with the “Maison des Enfants”.**

It concerns family meetings about projects. Here is the opportunity to share preferential time with the family, to recognize a skill, wealth to be valued thanks to speakers groups for parents/grandparents and exchanges between parents during various activities (family trips, sheltered garden...), highly coloured and flavoured family meals (Maghreb, Italy, Belgium...) during which identity and cultures are exchanged round the table.

It is also a “meeting” afternoon for exchanges between parents, grandparents on multiple aspects of education, of the understanding of the specific needs of a child at one or another age (cares, rules of life, limitations)

- **Social accompaniment in partnership with the social department – Borough of Saint-Gilles**

The social assistant attend project meetings and the “Reflection meeting”. The social work begun work on October 1999. The social worker (probationer) activity is part of the partnership with Borough of Saint-Gilles (social department). Some among its activities allowed to set up welcome modalities for urgent accommodation needs at the “ Maison des Solidarités” where the “Maison de la Famille” is located. This activity was completed by 2000.

The social assistant provides with individual interviews people who want to find answers to problems they suffer. Therefore the social assistant part and function are clarified and according to the questions, he will give people some information, re-orientate and/or accompany through various administrative steps (Public Welfare, financial aid, unemployment, regularization for people without documents...)

The first interview allows to initiate a social accompaniment or gives the opportunity to better orientate people to the required competent professionals. During team meetings complementary bonds are established.

- **Information, judicial advices in partnership with Borough of Saint-Gilles (proximity department) and the family planning of Saint-Gilles.**

It is mainly a personalized information about judicial questions allowing people a larger autonomy. This department aims at developing a justice notion closer to citizens thanks to preventive actions and law vulgarisation. Many files are simply concerned with family situations (urgent measures in case of separation, parental responsibility division, non payment of food allowances, acknowledgement of a child....).

The judicial department informs people on all the judicial action at disposal according the Law (separation, divorce, child protection...) and sends to the family mediation department those families who wants to settle family rupture or conflicts on an extra-judicial mode.

When difficulties in organizing the right to personal relationship between the child and the non lodging parent people will be orientated to the “Meeting-Place” at the “Maison de la Famille”.

- **Medical advice**

Parents who want their child to be examined or vaccinated... have the opportunity to consult the physician every Friday or by appointment.

The physician is also disposed to attend urgent cases for people in want or not allowed by any other care system. He also consults at home persons enable to move at their place.

All these activities are free of charge.

The physician takes part to discussions-debates set up with the parents attending the “Sheltered Garden” ex : allergy, vaccinations, infections... Topics are suggested by participants.

- **Groups of mutual help for children, adolescents, parents, grandparents suffering from family rupture and this in partnership with the European Centre for Mediation – St Gilles**

The European Centre for Mediation , rue Hôtel des Monnaies, 119 – 1060 Brussels, has organized from February 1999 groups of mutual help for children and adolescents faced to their parents separation. It is supported by the “Maison de la Famille”.

Indeed children and adolescents are concerned by the separation of their parents. Often they do not know whom to speak with about their difficulties, their sadness, their anger. Nevertheless, they have to adapt to the family rupture.

- **The objectives of the mutual aid groups are :**
- to offer a place to express oneself
- to escape loneliness (group)
- to show out and to explore suffered emotions
- to create dynamics of mutual aid and support
- to clarify lots of notions about divorce
- to identify everyone resources
- to consolidate the relationship of love with both parents
- to promote adaptation to a new family structure
- to develop the child blooming

Organizing 6 sessions (2h30 a session) for children and 3 sessions for parents. Groups are arranged according to demand.

- **System against conjugal and family violence in partnership with various departments in Saint-Gilles**

“The system” is a local setting composed of various actors such as : the borough social service, the department of proximity justice, day nurseries, nursery halts , the “youth department” policy, the Centre for Conjugal Violence Prevention, the “Maison de la Famille” (“Meeting –Place department and family mediation), Social Aid for Justiciables department , SOS Rapture... This working and reflection group has met from 24/04/01 on and has approached the problem of violence on women within the family and conjugal context.

The first approach of the system members is similar. Women under violence need a place to express what they suffered. Hidden behind a quest for practical , administrative or judicial information, we often discover a need to speak about violence they daily suffer by their partner.

The system actors are confronted with a crucial problem : how to propose a citizen answer to this kind of problem , both in the short term (urgent accommodation) and in the long term (accompaniment and problems solving).

• **Handicapped accompaniment in partnership with Brussels Town and the Contact Centre (Brussels)**

A consultation for handicapped integration has been created in helping them to find their own psychological and social place in society. The consultation (free of charge) achieved the full comprehension of handicapped people urgent needs (economical and social) and promoted thus a better integration.

Part played by the consulting adviser :

- to create positive surroundings and to enable initiating favourable relationship
- good knowledge of legislation
- knowledge of the customer environment (school, family ...)
- to help in evaluating relations to other people
- to take part in concretely meeting the personal choice
- to meet the different partners in order to give the specialist accurate information.

7. Meeting – Prevention-Education-Socialization

• **Nursery Halt**

Open since May 2000, the nursery halt is keeping growing. Faced with demand affluence, we extended schedules. Children are presently attended on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 8h15 to 14 hours. Children are taken care off according the parents personal needs. This time allows them to look for work, to attend trainings, to carry out administrative approaches, to consult physicians... or merely to take a breath thanks to some hours freedom.

The nursery halt activities

Everyday, little psycho-motricity circuits are organized and attended, with our help, by children with increasing complexity steps according to the age.

We listen to songs, cradle-songs and little mimic stories

Our little may also express themselves by means of drawings or paintings, modelling clay, games of construction. Toys adapted to their age are at their disposal (small bicycles, toboggan, dolls, cubes). We often encourage them to play together by small groups.

A performance for children in day-nurseries and inspired by Garcia Lorca pictures, popular little tales, has been organized at the “Maison de la Famille”. Directed by Charlotte Fallon, author, comedian, specialist in Child Theater , the play-actors moved in front of the amazed babies who maintained their attention for more than thirty minutes.

Our little boarders were given the opportunity to discover art with all their senses, their bodies, their emotions. Fascinated by real play-actors performing a real performance, they could admire daily gestures as eating, sleeping, suddenly sublimated by the world of Garcia Lorca.

Mothers want to educate their children as long as possible. Very few of them is working. They receive replacement incomes (unemployment, welfare, social aid). Whenever they want to find work, are actively looking for work or attending trainings, they wish to use our nursery halt. Lots of children attend the nursery halt to get socialized before joining school.

• The sheltered garden

The “Maison de la famille” in partnership with the « Maison des Enfants” opened its “Sheltered Garden” at the end of April 1999. This convivial place inspired by the “Green Houses” by Françoise Dolto, is at children disposal from 0 to 4 years old accompanied by a close parent (father, mother, grandparents, etc...) every Friday from 10 to 11.30 am.

It has been divided into three parts : a place dedicated to psycho-motricity with sensory modules, toboggan, a tent with tunnel, a bike place limited on one side by Ficus and on the other side by a red line to teach children the respect of instructions and finally a place with a large table for parents to discuss while having a coffee/tea and smaller tables surrounded by chairs full of toys.

Children meet there to choose the object of their games.

A team trained at listening takes turns with welcome people in cordial environment.

Accompanying parents and children (5 to 12/session) come from the neighbourhood, the “Resto du Coeur”, the “Maison des Enfants”. Many children are welcome. Their names are Anaïs, Cynthia, Esmeralda, Sandra, Igor, Alessia, Lisa, Manuel, Michèle, Jeremy, Barr, Kalid, Stéphane, Victoria, Elsy-Sam, Victorine, Justine, Karim, Amore, Amaury, Dany, Daniel, Medlissa, Fabio, Andres, Jennifer, Marie, Simon, Barbara, Marie, Tanguy, Salome, Manu...

Objectives

Preventive and educative aspect, mainly in cases of high urgency such as parents living alone with their children and faced with precarious economical situations.

Welcome place with aim to promote meeting, socialization, creation of bonds, exchanges of life stories that positively extend everybody experience.

To get out of loneliness. To prepare children and parents for school attendance.

Exchange and communication between professionals trained at listening and parents, to give answer to parents questioning and anxieties.

Therefore this place offer parents the opportunity to show their anxiety in front of professionals or of parents faced with similar problems with their own children. In most of the cases, they are mothers with a lonely child, deeply questioning themselves about their part to play, their ability to give love, to educate their child and this with the right limitation. Together with the professionals and other parents with educational sensitivity, they can break off and speak with confidence.

• **Parallel activities**

Various activities are organized with children such as : drawing, reading, building games, psycho-motricity with sensory modules.

In parallel, **debates** on practical and family problems are organized. They approached the following concerns : choice of a school adapted to the child sensitivity, open air playing grounds, feeding, enuresia, psycho-motive development, breast feeding, sleep, anger, choice of toys...

On Wednesday, a **gym activity** is proposed at the same time as the nursery halt. Mothers may enjoy the nursery halt service for their infants meanwhile taking care of themselves. This “light gym” activity is a gymnastic of maintenance with music. They get supple, work with their shoulders, abdominal and buttock muscles. The activity is really successful as it is also an opportunity to meet other participants.

Other activities are organized as” **prenatal gymnastic**” with prenatal consulting where are gathered mothers who recently came to Belgium, “**aqua-gym**” sessions at the V.Boin pool (Saint-Gilles) during school holidays (2x 4 days), etc...

• **Social and family tourism in partnership with the borough of Saint-Gilles**

Emanation of the Family Consultative Commission, the action has been taken over by the “Maison de la Famille from 1998. The objective is to discover at reasonable prices cities and regions with convivial and friendly humour. Several trips and stays are organized every year with this opening and dialogue spirit so that families in economical social precarious situations can visit adjacent regions and countries with their children.

These cultural and social highly diversified activities integrate handicapped persons and break off their loneliness. Some samples : Wesphalie, Rhénanie, Eifel, Aix-la-Chapelles, Cologne, Monshaw, The kent, Trèves, La Champagne, Paris, Euro Disney, Amsterdam, Oise, London...

• **Reflection – Meeting**

In collaboration with the Family Consultative Commission, monthly meeting on topics proposed by participants, were organized. 40 to 60 persons attend these meetings. They are teachers, social workers, infant nurses, nurses, family assistants, policemen, educators...

Multiple topics :

Ill treatment and elderly, street children, ethno-psychology, youth and authority, psychoanalysis contribution to social work, rupture-violence-bonds maintenance, ill feeling of the non accepted child at birth, writing and communication, Meeting with Françoise Dolto, adolescence perception, child birth and couple, post-natal clinical troubles, trauma and therapy, rupture of family bonds...rediscover parental relationship, mediation/Meeting-Place, educator/handicapped people meeting.

8. Conclusions

Within some pages, here are the activities of the “Maison de la Famille”.
Projects are not lacking. They are completed with information (stand) at neighbourhood activities ex : Christmas market, street entertainment, jumble sale..
Thanks to a dynamic team they can come to life in punctual collaboration with benevolent people and supported by many professionals.
Presently, information on family mediation is introduced in schools with the help of probationers trained to mediation (Project by Ancora Mathilde).