

EDUCATION OFFICER



Marie-José Jurkovich has recently joined External Affairs as the new Education Counsellor. With her husband, Marie-José has been on four postings abroad, one in Ottawa-Hull, and one in Montreal. During this ten-year period she has been exposed to four educational systems and eight schools. Consequently, she brings to the position a personal understanding of the educational problems faced by Foreign Service children.

My role as the Education Counsellor is to help parents understand the school system and select the school best suited to the needs of their child. A school must be one where the child can fit in as rapidly as possible and develop most fully his/her potential. To facilitate the best schooling choice, and to ensure continuity from one post-

ing to another, we intend to prepare student files. These will not be kept to measure the success or failure of the children academically, but to keep track of where they have been and where they are going. In this way, if you are in Tokyo but are leaving for Dakar, we can make effective suggestions about the best school for your child given his/her educational history.

At times, you will be returning to Ottawa-Hull, where your children may also have problems fitting into the Canadian system. For this reason, we also hope to develop a program to help students keep abreast of Canadian studies while they are abroad.

The office of the Education Counsellor is available for information, advice, and support. Perhaps you have had experiences with schools which could help other parents make better decisions about their children's education. Or you may be facing a dilemma and would like some advice. Whatever your concern, I would be pleased to assist. If you have topics on education that you would like to see covered in this column, write to me either in care of *Liaison*, or directly to the Posting

Services Centre. By using the services available, you can minimize the problems involved in your child's education.

DAYCARE: Where Are We Going?

Progress may not be speedy or very obvious yet, but the project to have a day care centre established in the Pearson Building is still active. The Parents Committee has been meeting regularly during the past year to plan, discuss and initiate the necessary steps. A needs assessment questionnaire distributed to all employees at home and abroad last spring demonstrated that there was sufficient interest for the committee to continue its work. Consultations have been held with departmental management and with the Day Care Program Consultant from the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services. Five possible sites in the building have been identified by an architect. The Department of Public Works has also been approached to secure its cooperation.

In its response to the *Report of the Special Committee on Child Care*, the government accepted the idea of establishing day care centres in federal buildings, although the detailed policy is still being developed by the Treasury Board Secretariat. Until a policy has been approved by Treasury Board and a decision about the site has been made, it will not be possible to estimate an opening date for the centre. The Parents Committee welcomes those interested in contributing to the project. Contact Angela Bogden at 992-9368.

CIDA: ON MULTICULTURALISM

As Canadian representatives abroad you might be interested to know more about what it is to be Canadian. The CIDA Cooperant Briefing Centre has been offering courses on Canadian identity as a pilot project. For people going abroad who would like more information please contact: Roman Mukerjee, Senior Policy Analyst, Multiculturalism Secretariat, (819)997-1605.