



**BELKNAP COUNTY
CITIZENS COUNCIL ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

*“Helping Belknap County be a safe community where
children and families can live with dignity and respect.”*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Community Forums Scheduled Throughout Belknap County

LACONIA: Community Forums, designed to capture the comments of Belknap County residents on the status of family life in the Lakes Region, are scheduled for eight of the eleven communities in Belknap County in the month of November. Sponsored through resources of the Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families, a recently created County Department, these meetings will be facilitated by professional staff from UNH Cooperative Extension, an agency trained and experienced in organizing and interpreting the outcomes of intergenerational community dialogue.

“These forums are the first step in the Council’s planning process,” says Alan Robichaud, Executive Director of the Citizens Council. “We’ve been asked by the County Commissioners to develop a comprehensive plan with priorities around what is best for kids and families in our County. In order for us to do our job, we want to talk with as many folks as possible, including youngsters and on up to their grandparents!”

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Each of the six forums scheduled begins at 6:30pm with a light supper, networking, and in some cases performances by community youth and comments from community leaders. Forum dates scheduled are: for Belmont residents, Thursday, Nov 7 at Belmont High School; for Tilton and Sanbornton residents, Thursday, Nov 14 at Hamilton Hall at the Tilton School; for Meredith and Center Harbor residents, Monday, Nov 18, Interlakes High School; for Alton residents, Tuesday, Nov 19 at Alton Central School; for Laconia residents, Thursday, Nov 21, at Pleasant St School; and for Gilford residents, Monday, Nov 25, site to be announced. Forums for Barnstead, Gilmanton, and New Hampton will be held in early 2003.

Each of the six Forums is being organized by community members and, adds Robichaud, “While the basic schedule is the same, all Forums will reflect the unique flavor of each community. We will be asking attendees to discuss specific topics, as they relate to ‘Community Justice’, a concept that serves as the umbrella for our Council.”

The Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families is composed of 21 volunteer citizens from throughout the county. Their mandate, given to them by the County Commissioners in January 2002, is to develop planning, advocacy, and networking strategies, along with the necessary resources so that children and families in Belknap County may live safely with dignity and respect.

For information about these Community Forums, visit www.bccj.org or call 528-3185.