

Director's Report



2nd Quarter
2006

"Promoting Community Justice in Belknap County so that children and families can live with dignity and respect."

LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD PEOPLE. FOUND SOME! HOW ABOUT YOU?

The Citizens Council welcomes [Sandra Webber](#) from Laconia and [Laurie Belanger](#) of Gilford, to the Council. Sandra works as substitute teacher in the Gilford school system where she participates on the Drug and Alcohol Task Force and she is active as a Deacon for the Laconia United Church of Christ. Laurie serves as a Student Assistance Counselor at Gilford High School. Laurie has served on the Youth Suicide Prevention Frameworks Committee of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill/NH of which she was named Educator of the Year.

Additionally, [Rick Keller](#) of Meredith has been named a Council Associate through the next few months. Rick brings a wealth of knowledge and private business experience to the Council and we look forward to him becoming a Council member later this fall. With the addition of these members, the Council continues to bring quality and caring to our work with children, families, and communities throughout Belknap County. Welcome aboard Sandy, Laurie and Rick. Thank you for your commitment to serve!

BELKNAP COUNTY JUVENILE COMMUNITY JUSTICE REPORT

Beginning on Tuesday, July 11, the first ever community report card on performance measures for Belknap County juvenile justice services was released to the public. This effort represents years of work by many people and is the culmination of year long effort led by Council member [Andre Paquette](#) and the Council's [Balanced and Restorative Justice Work Group](#) and providers of juvenile justice services. New Hampshire lacks an integrated juvenile justice information system that gives communities feedback on the performance and outcomes of juvenile services. In 2002, the [Belknap County Commission](#), with funding from the [Annette Schmitt Fund](#), created the Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families. This is the first and, to date, only Council of its kind in New Hampshire. The Council created various work groups that research and respond to issues under the rubric of Community Justice. To oversee Balanced and Restorative Justice, one of the guiding principles of Community Justice, the Council formed the [Juvenile Justice Advisory Council](#) and the Balanced and Restorative Justice Work Group. A separate [Data Committee](#) has been recently added to the array of special attention being paid to identification, collection, analysis and reporting of data pertinent to performance measures the Council seeks.

Future Report Cards will expand on topics and measures being addressed by the Council. Readers are referred to the Council's website www.bccj.org to view the Report Card. We want to take this opportunity to thank the many people who contributed to the year-long process that allowed us to make this report available to you. They are: *Balanced and Restorative Justice Work Group:* [Andre Paquette](#) (Chair), [Richard Moed](#), [Leo Sanfacon](#), [Gil Schohan](#), and [Peter Michaud](#). *Council Data Committee:* [Andre Paquette](#), [Rich Moed](#), [Jim Sawyer](#), [Carol Schonfeld](#), [Judge Bud Martin](#), [Jay Apicelli](#), [John Cook](#), and [Bill McGonagle](#). *Case Closing Technical Committee:* [Andre Paquette](#), [Jay Apicelli](#), [Tricia Burton](#), [Brian Loanes](#) and their respective staff who completed the case closing forms. *Writing and Pre-Production:* [Patti Moed](#) (Independent writer), [Audrey Garretson](#) (NHCTC/Laconia), [Tiffany Roy](#) (The Citizen), [Andre Paquette](#), [Judy Buswell](#) and [David Stamps](#). *Production and Distribution:* [John Howe](#), [Tony Limani](#) (The Citizen), The Daily Sun, and the [Salmon Press](#) family. Social capital is alive and well in Belknap County when considering the hundreds of hours and expertise contributed toward creating, not just this final product, but the entire process we now have to define and capture the data required to produce such a document. A very special thanks to both [Andre Paquette](#) and [Patti Moed](#) for their significant contributions in leading this effort.

In a nationally distributed e-mail, Doug Thomas of the [National Center for Juvenile Justice](#) had this to say about the report card: "I have attached the recently completed juvenile justice report card produced by Belknap County, NH. Belknap County was one of the participants in the second APRI Performance Measures workshops. While a joint effort involving many people, the Belknap County effort was led by the remarkable F. Andre Paquette. I encourage you to contact Andre and his colleagues in NH for advice and technical assistance." Thanks for promoting our work Doug!

STATE ADVISORY GROUP ON JUVENILE JUSTICE (SAG)

The Council is awaiting word from the SAG on its proposal to assist in further implementation of a countywide

[integrated juvenile justice data system](#). The \$84,000 grant would provide the Council consultation capacity to expand on such data projects as future Report Cards (above item), development of continued performance outcomes of providers in juvenile justice, substance abuse and other areas effecting children and families, and to use data in ways that help direct future decisions on investing public dollars in support of positive youth development. We will keep our readers posted on the status of this grant.

JUVENILE JUSTICE RESOURCE DIRECTORY...PROGRESS REPORT!

For the past several months, a directory highlighting services and contacts for youth involved in the juvenile justice system, has been in process. [Susan Sargent](#) has been working under contract with the [Youth Services Bureau](#) to compile information from a large variety of services providers throughout the county and state. When completed, this directory will be duplicated and distributed to each agency listed within and to school guidance officials, local libraries, the family and district court divisions, and others. Its easy-to-reference sections will serve as a resource for professionals and parents alike and help in making appropriate referrals while providing much needed information about how to maneuver the complex juvenile justice system. The directory is being made available through a Title V grant from the [Division of Juvenile Justice Services](#). The Council extends it thanks to the [Susan Sargent, Tricia Burton and Deb LaFlamme](#) of Youth Service Bureau, and to cooperating agencies who have contributed information on their respective programs. We hope the directory will make its appearance within the next couple of months.

NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS RIGHTS WEEK (4/24) MEDIA EVENT

An amazing amount of effort went into making the observance of the [National Crime Victims Rights Week](#) a complete success in Belknap County. From start to finish, the concept, planning and implementation was a totally collaborative effort – one that proved beyond doubt that synergy is a multiplier of resources. The Council's [Judy Buswell](#) is credited with the initial concept for acquiring a grant from the [Office of Victims of Crime](#) and for convening a massive planning group who lent their expertise and ingenuity to the many events that evolved over the week.

Respecting and responding to the needs of victims is paramount to restorative justice practices. In Belknap County, progress is being made in asserting the rights of victims but we are still only on the edge of what can and must be done. This week's comprehensive focus on victims spanned the issues of abuse, assault, theft, and many other real-life accounts of what citizens of our communities confront everyday. For detailed account of the activities performed during this week's event, contact the Council at 528-3185. The Council expresses its deepest thanks to all of the people who contributed so much to the success of this project. This event marks the beginning of many more efforts focusing on victims of juvenile crimes in Belknap County.

RESTITUTION FUND IS PAYING OFF

County juvenile service programs have been accessing the [Belknap County Restitution Fund](#) on behalf of victims of juvenile crimes. Introduced by Laconia City Prosecutor, [Jim Sawyer](#) and Laconia Police Department's Juvenile Prosecutor, [Tom Swett](#), members of the [Juvenile Justice Advisory Council](#) agreed to sponsor a Restitution Fund which may be accessed to expedite victim restitution when a juvenile offender cannot immediately pay for theft or damages of property. Youth offenders are held accountable to pay back the fund but harm done to the victim is more immediate than has been the case in the past. The most recent request was for \$450. The juvenile offender will be accountable for paying back the fund. The total turn-around time from date of application to remittance to the victim was 28 days. In past years, a victim could be kept waiting for over 18 months before receiving compensation for a crime. For more important and to make a donation to the Restitution Fund, contact the Council at 528-3185.

VICTIMS' RIGHTS BROCHURE

Another by-product of the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council and collaboration among our juvenile services providers, is the publication of a [Victim's Rights](#) brochure describing what one can expect to know once a crime is committed by a juvenile. These brochures have been broadly distributed to schools, social service agencies, the courts and law enforcement agencies throughout Belknap County and may be accessed by calling the Council at 528-3185 or visiting our website at [www.bccj.org](#) . Special thanks to [Lisa-Marie Sposta](#) for her layout and design of the brochure and to [Brian Loanes](#) (Belknap County Restorative Justice), [Tricia Burton](#) (Youth Services Bureau) and [Meagan Torsey](#) and [Jay Apicelli](#) (Division of Juvenile Justice Services) for their contributions to the text of the brochure.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE FORUMS STRESS COMMUNITY AWARENESS & VIGILANCE

Belknap County was the scene for several forums targeting substance use among our youth. On April 13th, a [Drug Awareness](#) forum was convened by [UpStream](#) at the [Pines Recreation Center](#) in Northfield. A large panel of local and state experts related various aspects of substance abuse in our area. Discussed were access to several types of

drugs, the impact of such drugs on users, the prevalence of drug use in combination with increased crime, the increasing appearance of Meth within our county's borders, and strategies used to combat the rising tide of illegal substance sales and use in Belknap County, and surrounding communities. A Meth forum was sponsored by a host of federal, state and local entities on May 23 at the [Belknap County Commissioners' Office](#). The [US Attorney's Office](#), [New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services](#), [Office of Alcohol and Drug Policy](#), and the [NH Attorney General's Office](#) were accompanied by [Lisa Remick](#) of the [DEA](#), [Belknap County Attorney Lauren Noether](#), [Executive Councilor Ray Burton](#) and others. The group presented an overview of the extent of the Meth problem in New Hampshire and Belknap County. They offered statewide strategies of the [NH Government Leaders Methamphetamine Task Force](#). (For a complete copy of the Statewide Strategies go to <http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/DHHS/ATODTREATMENT/LIBRARY/Program+Report-Plan/meth-strategy.htm>)

In preparation for future funding of prevention programs, the state is adopting practices set forth by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration ([SAMHSA](#)). Called [Strategic Prevention Frameworks \(SPF\)](#), the state has designated ten SPF regions, coupling Belknap and Carroll Counties into one region. These regions will collaborate in planning prevention strategies that address assessment, capacity, planning, implementation and evaluation of a comprehensive approach to addressing substance abuse and underage drinking. The first meeting of the two region was facilitated on May 19 by [Lisa Morris](#) and [Susan Laverack](#) of the [Lakes Region Partnership for Public Health](#), of which the Citizens Council is a member. The [Bureau of Prevention Services of the Division of Public Health](#) expects to conduct a Bidders' Conference in August to release the process by which pilot regions will be chosen to participate in the first round of funding under the new frameworks.

The Council was well represented at an April 19 [Listening Session](#) conducted by the [Endowment of Health](#). Once again, the issue of substance abuse was raised over and over as one that presents a grave danger to our youth and families in Belknap County. This forum was intended to provide the Endowment with information on pressing health issues in order that they set funding priorities for the coming year.

ADVOCACY AND LEADERSHIP INITIATIVES TARGET PARENTS AND YOUTH

The Citizens Council has been participating in developing a statewide initiative to raise the voices of youth and families in substance abuse policy and funding. To that end, the Council conducted a [survey](#) of the 53 [prevention coalitions](#) across the state to find out the status of parent support groups. With 26% of the coalitions responding, 64% indicated they were unaware of [parent support groups](#) existing in their area. Each of these respondents strongly felt that supports groups were essential for families to access information, peer support and other resources to help them deal with their children's substance abuse issues. All respondents felt a need for there to be a statewide voice and suggested that their coalition could play some coordinating function in support of the growth and development of parent support groups...if funding were made available. At this writing, a proposal is being prepared for submission to [SAMHSA](#) for developing a network of parent support groups across the state. The Council's [Prevention Work Group](#) is actively engaged in this effort and have had a couple of Council members ([Ruth Castonguay](#) and [Nancy Porosky](#)) receive training to become parent support group facilitators.

Other complementary advocacy efforts have come to our attention. [New Futures](#) is considering a couple of areas of the state to pilot a new [advocacy and policy leadership](#) program. Built on the model [Community Leadership Initiative](#), [New Futures](#) hopes to have these pilots completed something this fall. The Council, in collaboration with the [CoRe Coalition](#), has indicated its interest in becoming one of these two pilot sites.

The Council also announces [Parents As Leaders in Society 2006-07](#) series. Having held two successful parent leadership series, the Council continues to promote parents as leaders in this third consecutive series. Working closely with [UpStream](#) and the [UNH Belknap County Cooperative Extension office](#), the Council will wrap up its three-year commitment to establish this series as an annual offering to parents ready to assume leadership roles in their communities. Future PALS series will be conducted by [UpStream](#) and [UNH/Cooperative Extension Service](#), with a desire on the part of the University to bring such a series statewide through other county extension offices. Applications for this year's series may be obtained by visiting the Council's website at www.bccj.org and [UpStream](#) at www.lruw.org/upstream/. The application deadline is set for September 25th.

PARENTING FROM THE INSIDE OUT

A rather unique new program is emerging in collaboration with the [Lakes Region Facility](#) of the [Department of Corrections](#) and juvenile justice agencies within Belknap County. The purpose of the program, [Parenting...from the Inside Out](#), is to offer parents and at-risk youth an opportunity to meet with incarcerated fathers to discuss and share the challenges and strengths of parenting in today's world. The fathers involved have completed an 18-week course

on parenting in the [Family Connections Center](#) at the Lakes Region Facility in Laconia, and regularly attend parenting support groups. This program is being sponsored by the Family Connections Center at Lakes Region Facility, with the cooperation of [Jane Coplan](#), Warden, and [Kristina Toth](#) of the Family Connections Center, and Belknap County agencies serving youth and families: [Martha Douglass and Dawn Shimberg](#) - Youth Assistance Program (serving Northfield, Sanbornton and Tilton), [Trisha Burton](#) - Youth Services Bureau, and [Brian Loanes](#) - Belknap County Restorative Justice. [Mary Alice Warner](#), member of the [Belknap County Citizens Council](#) is coordinating referrals and inquiries about the program. Mary Alice can be contacted through the Citizens Council at 528-3185. A program brochure is being developed and will be made available, through participating agencies, in the near future.

ADOLESCENT TREATMENT INITIATIVE (ATI) – MUCH NEEDED YET UNDER-UTILIZED

Over a year ago, [New Futures](#) (www.new-futures.org) selected a local initiative to develop and implement a multi-agency collaborative providing early screening and quality, science-based assessment and treatment of substance abuse among adolescents. As a result of [Youth Risk Behavior Surveys](#) performed by several local school districts, we know full well that Belknap County ranks above state and national averages in several categories of alcohol and drug use and other high risk behavior ratings. Working with school districts, the initiative, overseen by [Child and Family Services of New Hampshire](#) (CFS/NH), has developed working agreements with all school districts within Belknap County. In its first year of implementation, this partnership, between CFS/NH, [Genesis Behavioral Health](#) and our schools, has refined its referral processes and continues to work on increasing the number of youth and families who access this much needed service. Like any new program, it will take a while for people to consciously remember that such a program now exists and for parents and youth to actively seek out treatment. Like any program that is identified as a need, it is incumbent on us all to promote these programs so we can get all youth who need treatment to the program as quickly as possible. If we don't use it, we'll lose it. Treatment is cost-effective and we know that it works. We are very fortunate to have the opportunity for Belknap County youth and we must now make it work. For further information and to make a referral, please contact [Jay Bachelder](#) at [Child and Family Services/NH](#) (524-5835).

The ATI is also working closely with [Dr. Rick Wilson](#) of [LRGH](#) to explore possibilities for incorporating screening processes into the physician office visits as another alternative to early screening for alcohol and drug use. We look forward to this relationship yielding positive results as we continue to perceive the rising substance use culture a primary threat to public health. We acknowledge the interest and support of [LRGH](#), [Dr. Wilson](#) and [Tom Clairmont](#) in their proactive engagement in this problem and hope to see our medical community assume a more participatory role in reversing the trend of substance use by adolescents.

ONCE UPON A TIME...THERE WAS A CONVOCATION - 07

Planning is well underway for the annual [Convocation on Children and Families](#), scheduled for January 23, 2007. The theme will center on [early literacy](#) and involve young writers working with story-teller elders. It promises to be an exciting, innovative event spanning the generations of our community, honoring our youth, valuing our elders and reminding us all of the wealth of talent, history and hope we have right here in Belknap County. Mark your calendars now. You won't want to miss this one!

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE ~ PROMOTING POLICY & PROTECTING LIVES

The [Belknap County Family Violence Prevention Council](#) is promoting training to area businesses in establishing and enforcing policies on domestic violence in the workplace. A number of Council members have received training and are now available to provide in-business presentations to employees and management on how to prevent violence and develop workplace policies to increase the safety of employees. This training is provided at no cost to businesses and may be scheduled by calling [Diane Lane](#) (524-4128), [Kathy Keller](#) (528-6511), or [Alan Robichaud](#) (528-318). Training sessions are tailored to accommodate lunch-time breaks, civic group meetings and after-worship services. Call for further information on bringing this important training to your business or organization.

WORDS TO LIVE BY

“Work to make a living; serve to make a life.”

Will Rogers

Respectfully,

Alan Robichaud

Executive Director