

Director's Report



3rd Quarter
2006

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

HIGHLIGHTS

This Quarterly Report will take a slightly different approach than previous ones. While it will brief the reader in initiatives of the Citizens Council, we will also feature the terrific contributions of Council members acting in their various capacities to strengthen our communities for children and families. We would also remind our readers that we continue to welcome participation by individuals who wish to make a difference in the lives of families and children throughout Belknap County. Whether serving on a committee, a task force, or the Council itself, we welcome your inquiry and ideas on how to improve our communities.

DEDICATION

We dedicate this edition to our former County Commissioner, Gordon Bartlett, who supported the Council's work in an attempt to improve the lives of children so that they might have a more prosperous future. We appreciate Gordon's many years of public service and his constant drive to make life a little better each day for those who needed a helping hand. We thank his family for sharing him with us for so many years. Public service does not always come without personal sacrifice.

SEEING A NEED...FULFILLING A ROLE.

In alphabetical order by community, we are proud to list the many contributions Council members make to their individual communities and Belknap County as a whole.

Alton ~ [Dick Wallace](#), a retired college professor and current businessman, has initiated *the Community Youth Activities* organization, has conducted the annual *Alton Information Exchange*, has provided leadership to the *Alton Vision Team*, and has been the impetus for the recent *Prime For Life* prevention education program offered to all *Prospect Mountain High School* Freshmen. Dick serves as a member of the Council's Community Development Work Group and Executive Committee and puts to great use the resources he has come to learn about through his involvement.

Belmont ~ [Jim Pilliod](#) and [Emily Clement](#) represent Belmont and bring many diverse talents to the Council. Jim continues to serve in the NH State Legislature keeping watchful eyes on issues and laws that impact children and families. Jim has been a Council member since its inception and a County Convention member, has served as a strong advocate for the Council's work bringing a perspective from the health field to our table. Emily is one of our newer members who is currently working on the development of a Council broadcast series hopefully to be aired on Public Access TV in the months ahead. Emily serves as the Christian Education Director for the United Church of Christ in Laconia and through this has a close working relationship to the youth of our community. Jim and Emily both serve on the Council's Prevention Work Group.

Center Harbor ~ [Mary Alice Warner](#), has served our Council since its inception. A former Family Counselor, Mary Alice volunteers many hours at the Department of Corrections, Lakes Region Facility. Also a member of the Prevention Work Group, Mary Alice has directed her passion and talent of helping families to the implementation of a unique program we call *Parenting From the Inside Out*. This initiative is a partnership between the Lakes Region Facility and our pre-court and court-diverted programs in Belknap County where families and their youth, through referral from other agencies, spend up to three facilitated sessions with inmates who have completed a structured family support course.

Gilford ~ [Sue Smith](#), [Rich Moed](#), [Rasim Gusinac](#) and [Laurie Belanger](#) represent the Town of Gilford. Sue is completing her second term as Chair of the Council. As a healthcare professional and administrator at the Taylor Community, Sue brings a wealth of organizational and administrative talent to the table. Sue has made inroads to individuals and organizations within her own community to assure that Council resources are brought to bear on local issues. Rich Moed recently moved to Gilford from Connecticut. As an independent businessman, Rich comes from a career in hospital administration with a wealth of knowledge in the fields of healthcare, mental health and substance abuse, many of the issues concerning today's youth and families. Rich serves on the Council's Balanced and Restorative Justice Work Group. When he's not working, Rasim spends a great deal of this waking hours serving as an interpreter for refugees newly arrived in the Lakes Region. Rasim speaks many different languages and has become a life-line for many families arriving in New Hampshire through the Lutherans Social Services

Refugee Resettlement program. Rasim is active with the Laconia Human Relations Committee. Laurie has jumped right in since recently joining the Council. She is working through the Balanced and Restorative Justice Work Group to help develop appropriate responses to victims of juvenile crimes. A counselor for the Gilford School System, Laurie's understanding of issues concerning today's youth, brings a much needed dimension to our discussions.

Gilmanton ~ [Nancy Porosky](#) is a business woman who, as a single parent understands the need to reach out in support of other parents. Also a member of the Prevention Work Group, Nancy recently completed training in the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill parent support model and has begun *the Turbulent Teens: Parents Helping Parents* support group. While the group primarily aims to serve parents from Alton, Barnstead, Gilford and Gilmanton, all parents wishing to access such a group are most welcomed.

Laconia ~ [Ruth Castonguay](#), [Micheline Roy](#), and [Sandra Webber](#) serve the Council from Laconia. Ruth Castonguay Chairs the Prevention Work Group and serves as a member of the Executive Committee. Ruth has many wonderful skills of bringing people together from diverse backgrounds and has been instrumental in many of the Council's efforts to reach out to the recovery community. Ruth has been instrumental in reorganizing a local *Friends of Recovery* Chapter in Belknap County. She has served on the Board for *the NH Task Force on Women and Recovery* and she has been instrumental in seeing that necessary support services are in place throughout the county for people in recovery. Sandra Webber is one of our more recent members to the Council and also serves on the Prevention Work Group. Having worked in various school districts in New Hampshire and Massachusetts, Sandra brings an understanding of the needs of students outside the classroom. Micheline Roy, also a new member of the Council, is primary caregiver to her Mom. This important role we find is becoming more and more a necessity in our society. While Micheline is to be commended for this valuable contribution, she also serves the Council in ways that help meet its needs. Micheline recently completed an updated contact list of the many civic organizations in Belknap County. Working from her home while serving as caregiver, Mich conducted numerous phone interviews to give our provider network a complete and up-to-date list with which they can now make contact for public awareness, fundraising, and similar activities. Mich will also be serving as our goodwill outreach person by sending out thank you notes and letters recognizing positive personal and community accomplishments throughout the county.

New Hampton ~ [Christie Corrigan](#), an independent business woman, is our representative from New Hampton and has worked to bridge Council initiatives to a community whose youth participate in educational programs in another county (Grafton). This brings unique challenges to the Council as we assure that all our initiatives are equally accessible to all of our communities. Christie serves as Chair of the Community Development Work Group and is a member of the Executive Committee. Beyond being a community ambassador among her neighbors, Christie has become a Mentor through the *Friends Program* and serves on reparative panels for the *Belknap County Restorative Justice Program*.

Sanbornton ~ [Sarah Fox](#) works as a Program Consultant for the *NH Department of Education* and has a keen interest and understanding of Special Education law and programs. Sarah serves on the Community Development Work Group is coordinating the Council's Public Access TV project with Emily Clement. She has also been the Council's liaison to *Youth Venture*, a program that provides leadership opportunities for our youth.

Tilton ~ [Kevin Washburn](#) has been a member since the Council began. Serving as a Sargent within the State Prison system, Kevin also serves on the Community Development Work Group of the Council. Being an active community member, Kevin serves on the School Board of the *Winnisquam Regional School District* and is a member of its *Safe Schools Coalition*. Kevin is watchful of ways the community, school and law enforcement can partner to foster positive youth development.

MAKING THE DIFFERENCE

There are many ways to serve. Once a Council member's term expires, our by-laws say they must step down for at least a year's absence before reapplying. This is done for a couple of reasons. One is to acknowledge and respect the time given by dedicated community volunteers and give them a chance to reassess their contributions to the Council and community. The other is to assure that we allow opportunities for others to engage in the environmental changes needed to fulfill the Council's mission. However, once becoming a member, people may wish to continue their involvement and in many cases, their continued contributions are necessary to keep initiatives moving forward. Hence we have created a category of membership called *Council Associates* that allows for interested Council members to continue serving after their membership expires. We wish to acknowledge those individuals who have continued in a capacity as Council Associate.

[Andre Paquette](#), [Gil Schohan](#), [Peter Michaud](#), [Alida Millham](#), and [Leo Sanfacon](#) all serve in various capacities to continue Council initiatives begun during their tenure. Andre Paquette serves as Chair of the Balanced and Restorative Justice Work as well as Chairs the *Juvenile Justice Advisory Council*. He also serves as a member of the *Council Data Committee* and was the driving force behind [the Report Card on Community Justice](#) released in July of this year. Gil Schohan continues to serve on the Balance and Restorative Justice Work Group, the *Juvenile Justice*

Advisory Council, and chairs the *Council's Victims' Rights* initiative. Leo Sanfacon continues to serve on the *Juvenile Justice Advisory Council* and has become engaged in promoting *Restorative Justice* throughout Belknap and now Grafton Counties. Leo continues to also serve on the Council's Balanced and Restorative Justice Work Group. Peter Michaud provides critical advice and support to the *Council's Victims' Rights* initiatives. Alida Millham attend the *Juvenile Justice Advisory Council* and advises the Council on of legislative and public policy matters germane to the work of the Council.

We thank each and every one of our Council Members and Associates for their valuable contributions, commitment and genuine interests in promoting Community Justice. And we welcome others to join this expanding league of remarkable individuals who believe that:

When passion and commitment meet interests and need...miracles can happen!

PARENTS AS LEADERS IN SOCIETY (PALS)

In an attempt to recruit families for the 3rd annual PALS series, we regret that we were unable to get enough people to register in order to run the series. The coordinating committee will consider some of the barriers we understand prohibit parents from making the commitment to attend full Saturday sessions and look at possibilities to integral components of the series into a curriculum, for credit, through the *NH Community Technical College*. Also, some of the series sessions will continue to be provided as separate stand-alone training sessions for parents and professionals. Announcements of these opportunities will be forthcoming. We would like to thank the families who did apply for this year's series and recognize the efforts of the coordinating committee and our presenters to provide this valuable resource. Coordinating Committee members include [Kathy Calvin](#) (PALS 05), [Nancy Porosky](#) (PALS 06), [Judi Taggart](#) (Upstream/United Way) and [Susan Cagle](#) (UNH Cooperative Extension).

COUNCIL AWARDED DATA DEVELOPMENT GRANT

The *State Advisory Group on Juvenile Justice* (SAG) has awarded the Citizens Council a grant to develop and expand its data collection, analysis and program evaluation capacities among juvenile justice providers throughout Belknap County. Over the next year, the *Council Data Committee* and providers will work with a consultant to improve performance outcomes on key reporting indicators. This will inform future reports to the community on the effectiveness of the juvenile justice system.

THANK YOU RENEE!

With much regret but tremendous thanks, we bid goodbye to [Renee Rockwell](#) who spearheaded the *CoRe Coalition*, the Belknap County-wide alcohol, tobacco and other drug prevention coalition that grew from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey in 2001 at Inter-Lakes School District. Renee worked diligently to develop collaboration across community, law enforcement and school boundaries to protect our youth from the devastating impact of alcohol and other drugs. We wish her well in her new endeavors and thank [Shannon Swett](#) for bringing her leadership and coordination skills in taking over the reins from Renee. The County is fortunate to have had both of these women looking over our prevention priorities.

ADOLESCENT TREATMENT INITIATIVE GETS BOOST FROM PRIME FOR LIFE

Now that *Prime For Life*, an educational, harm reduction program geared to adolescent risk behaviors, has begun in some regions of the county, we have noticed an increase in referrals for alcohol and drug assessments. The *Adolescent Treatment Initiative*, a school-based referral model that uses evidence-based screening, assessment and treatment services for intervening with identified youth, has seen an increase in referrals since PFL has been introduced in Belknap County. Evidence from *many Youth Risk Behavior Surveys* performed by county school districts, show high levels of alcohol, marijuana and other drug use along with high-risk sexual behaviors and, in some cases, youth taking weapons to schools. While it is difficult to develop and sustain a comprehensive system of care for ATOD issues, the collaboration shown by various parties across the county are showing early signs of success. These initiatives have been made possible through the willingness of people to work through differences and across systems. With combined funding from such sources as *Reclaiming Futures*, the *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation*, the *New Hampshire Charitable Foundation*, the *Annette Schmitt Fund*, the *Belknap County Incentive Fund*, the *County General Fund*, local community contributions, the *Lakes Region United Way* and many others. The necessity for such overall collaboration among community providers and foundations will be even greater as we continue to see the federal government reduce appropriations that support prevention, intervention and treatment of necessary services. The Citizens Council calls upon all members and sectors of the community to meet these challenges on behalf of our children and families.

UNDERAGE DRINKING SERIES DVD RELEASE

The six session series on *Underage Drinking* in Belknap County has been reproduced on DVD and will soon find its way to county schools and public libraries. Working through the *Center for Civic Engagement* and the *CoRe*

Coalition, school districts throughout the county hosted community forums on the topics of Scope of the Problem, Impact of Education, Societal Pressures, Public Safety, Medical and Health Aspects and Potential Solutions to the underage drinking problem in Belknap County. The intent of this distribution is for families, schools and providers to access these DVD's for discussion groups, instructional sessions and general community awareness of a growing problem among our youth. Families, professionals and members of the general public can ask for these DVD's through their local middle and high schools and public libraries.

PUBLIC POLICY AND FUNDING ATOD ISSUES MUST COME...F.A.S.T.E.R!

A statewide coalition of youth and families, concerned for the lack of funding and public policy that supports prevention and treatment for alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, has emerged to bring awareness to the public and elected officials, for the need for funding services and family support. *Families Advocating for Substance Treatment, Education and Recovery (FASTER)* has begun to develop parent support and other advocacy initiatives around the state. New Hampshire youth use of alcohol ranks within the top nine states in the nation and among the top ten with youth needing but lacking access to treatment services. Meanwhile, NH ranks 51st in the nation in use of Tobacco Settlement money for prevention initiatives and the Governor's Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment has never been fully funded according to legislation permitting use of certain profits on the sale of alcohol in this state. It's time that this changes.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Community Leadership Initiative: Underage Drinking Problems
Thursday, November 9, 2006
4:00 PM to 8:00 PM
New Hampshire Community Technical College ~ Laconia

Teen Institute Open Space Forum ~ School Dropouts
Saturday, December 2, 2006
All Day – Time Approximate: 8:30 Am to 4:00 PM
New Hampshire Community Technical College ~ Laconia

Convocation on Children and Families
Tuesday, January 23, 2007
3:30 PM to 7:30 PM
The Conference Center at Opechee Inn and spa (formerly the Winnepesaukee Expo Center)

WORDS TO LIVE BY:

“Cautious, careful people, always casting about to preserve their reputation and social standing, never can bring about a reform.”
Susan B. Anthony

Respectfully,
Alan Robichaud
Executive Director

For more information on the activities, events and initiatives of the Citizens Council, visit our website at www.bccj.org