

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

Director's Report #11 ... 08/03/02 – 08-16/02

Looking Back ~

Outreach

The *Community Justice Series* at the Community Technical College continues to move forward. All presenters have been confirmed and a mini press conference was held at the college on Thursday, August 15 with College President Karen Grosz and Council Chair Gil Schohan. President Grosz indicated that this series presents a new way of thinking about reaching out to the public for training and education and she looks forward to its success.

Continued involvement with the *New Hampshire Rural Development Council* has brought forward discussions about using the Community College arena for developing community leadership initiatives which would be helpful in identifying and supporting opportunities for members of communities to become active participants in local volunteer efforts. This notion of course feeds the work of the Citizens Council and builds towards an important sustainability component of the Model Community grant, “Building Inclusive Communities through Civic Engagement” which the Council collaborated in developing with the Lakes Region Community Services Council and several other organizations in the county.

The Executive Director attended a *Gubernatorial Candidates' Forum on Higher Education* at the NH Institute of Politics at St. Anselm's College. While all candidates spoke of the importance of higher education and recognized the need to support the Community Technical College System, the University System and the private college system in New Hampshire, they are cognizant of the barrier of the unresolved education funding issue under the Claremont decision. We can easily recognize the continued detriment this unsolved issue has on kids who are educationally challenged. A resolution to this long-standing issue remains critical to their future. It is said that the New Hampshire University System has the second highest in-state tuition rate for state university systems in the country. The NH Community Technical College system has the highest in-state tuition rate of community colleges in the country.

Foster Care for teens is a critical issue and one that, unless dealt, with will continue to see some adolescents being targeted for inappropriate placements. Jay Apicelli and his probation and parole officers express concern for a number of youth who need a safe, nurturing living environment but for lack thereof find themselves leaning toward and put into institutional services. A meeting was held with Jay and Terry Hypse to determine strategies for developing foster care for teens in Belknap County. (See Foster Care forum in Looking Ahead section below).

Another approach to keeping kids at home (at least in county), was discussed among Bob Champlin, Superintendent of *SAU 30*, Jay Apicelli and myself. A commitment has been made that the school and the Juvenile Probation and Parole Office will do, “whatever it takes” to prevent outside placement. Bob Champlin is extremely willing to look at all possibilities for bringing school resources to bear on educating kids in their home districts. This “can do” attitude and educational leadership will go far in serving our children. Congratulations Bob and Jay!

Continuing to address educational needs of local students, Council staff met with Deb Guyer and Jim McCollum of Laconia High School, Jay Apicelli, DJJS and Judge Willard Martin to discuss delays in referrals to the court for students who are suspended from school for such offenses as use or sale of drugs. Jim McCollum has indicated there is a time gap between suspensions and when students appear in court and that this time lag is a further detriment to the students' education and acquisition of services. Judge Martin indicated that he will speed up the arraignments for these students and the group will explore additional options of supports such as reinitiating grant proposals for a School Resource Officer as well as

other strategies. This issue will be brought before the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee. Chief Oetinger has been asked to attend to lend his perspective on this issue.

The Council convened a session for local providers to meet Riley Regan, recently appointed Director of the *Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Prevention and Recovery (DADAPR)*. Riley is looking at ways to decentralize services of his office and move resources closer to recipients. Currently the Division has about 80 contracts with outside vendors. He would like to see a more coordinated system of perhaps 10 county level contracts where he can devolve programmatic and administrative authority to a more local level of control. He sees a need to coordinate services through the District Offices of the Department of Health & Human Services. He spoke of the need to reach out and focus on addiction and developing outpatient programs in conjunction with local community hospitals.

Riley has worked in a number of states over his career including Maryland, New Jersey and Illinois. His experiences have been varied and, due to the high percentage of drug use by those who have been incarcerated, Commissioner Phil Stanley has asked Riley to write a plan for treatment for the Department of Corrections. He went on to state that prisons are full of people for whom judges have no community-based programs to which to refer..

Riley is hoping to find/develop a Medicaid benefit to offset costs for operating community services. He indicated that there is no administrative resource with which to conduct community planning and that it is his hope to find a way to send funds to the counties to develop local plans. Riley will be asking County Commissioners to establish Advisory Councils and he wants the Division to get out of the contracting business. He wants there to be a community plan.

Rep. Bill Johnson asked Riley's thoughts on how he felt about income from liquor sales and whether he felt a greater percentage of profit should be used to fund programs? Ten percent of state general fund revenues come from liquor sales. Ten percent of the users consume over 66% of the alcohol. Riley would like to see a dedicated tax attached to liquor sales such that when prices go up, sales and consumption go down.

Riley went on to say that New Hampshire needs to change its attitude toward alcohol and there is a growing need for housing for individuals to remain close to family and employment while they receive treatment. Rufus Chaffee of DADAPR, remarked that "we need to look at the social context in which the use of drugs festers and grows. The greatest cause of addiction is use."

The *Nathan Brody Chemical Dependency Program* was visited and Director Sue Caldon explained that the program has existed since 1986 when it began as an Inpatient Substance Abuse Program. In 1990 the trend changed to outpatient services but the program maintained an admission policy dependent on clinical need. Currently the program operates an Intensive Outpatient program that consists of education classes and counseling/therapy classes. Participants attend 30 to 40 sessions over a 4 month period. The program costs about \$4500 and while Cigna and Blue Choice do provide coverage for their insured clients, there is a sliding fee scale for those who are uninsured. HealthLink is also available for those requiring services. Many times in the past, the hospital has been forced to write off debt due to participants' inability to pay. The average age of participants is about 30 with men making up about 65-70% of the case load. Women have greater difficulty getting to the program due to responsibilities at home, for children, and lack of transportation. Sue Caldon reinforced Riley Regan's comment on the need for housing to keep people in the community during and following treatment. Transportation is a big need as well. The program sees about 50 people a year with about 70% completing the course.

A Press Conference for the JOLT program was conducted at the Belknap County Sheriff's Office on August 9. Speaking on the Juvenile Offender Locator Team (JOLT) program were Jay Apicelli, Juvenile Probation and Parole Supervisor; Belknap County Sheriff Dan Collis; and Laconia Police Chief, Tom Oetinger. The local media did a great job covering the story. Thanks go to Jay, Dan and Tom and especially Judy Buswell who wrote the grant for funding from the Division of Juvenile Justice Services.

Training

Council staff attended a presentation on *Asset Based Community Development* at the St. James Church sponsored by Lakes Region Community Services Council (LRCSC). This is part of a series of forums conducted by the LRCSC to promote hospitality to all members of the community by focusing on strengths and assets versus deficits and needs. Thanks to LRCSC for making these sessions open to the community.

Administrative

All of the Council's committees were active during this reporting period. As the Council prepares for its *community planning process*, we have enlisted the assistance of the UNH Cooperative Extension Service, through Judy Bush and other of her university colleagues who will help to develop the model and the process by which we proceed with eleven community forums between mid-October and mid-November. Stay tuned for more information on this item!

The Council reviewed its accomplishments to date in terms of activities performed under the auspices of the charge given it by the County Commissioners and other activities performed for purposes of building a foundation of support for the future. (See attachment: *Tracking Council Accountabilities*)

The *Council budget* was reviewed and balanced against what the Schmitt Fund had contributed for the first half of the year. Because the Council was not officially authorized as a County Department until April 1, the Schmitt Fund was billed for expenses for the first three months of activities. Nancy Cook worked with the staff and the representatives of the Schmitt Fund to reconcile expenses and project remaining year funds needed from the Schmitt Fund. The Council thanks Nancy, Kathy Calvin and Joe Adrignola for their fine assistance in examining and approving our spending patterns.

The *Restorative Justice Advisory Committee* met on August 9 and reviewed progress of the first year of operation. Brian Loanes reported that 27 youth were served in year one. The contract projected that 25 would be served. A total of 81 different community service sites were utilized for a total of 605 community service hours. Eight hundred and seventy-seven hours of volunteer time was recorded including a couple of interns from the Community Technical College who helped out during the early stages of development. Brian reported that there had been no referrals from Gilford, Sanbornton or New Hampton in year one and contact will be made to determine the needs of those communities in the future.

Looking Ahead ~

A training session will be conducted on September 25th at the County Complex in Laconia entitled: *Restorative Panels: Conflict Resolution Training*. For more information on this training, please contact Brian Loanes directly at 527-5454.

The Council will host *foster care* providers, along with representatives of the Division of Children, Youth and Families, at a meeting on August 22 for purposes of exploring the development of foster care homes for adolescents. Jay Apicelli and Terry Hypse of the Laconia District Office of Health and Human Services will present the need and process for developing homes for teens. Five foster care providers have indicated they will attend: Easter Seal, Casey Family Services, NFI, Child and Family Services of NH and Lutherans Community Services of Northern New England.

Thought to Ponder ~

In tribute to the hot days of summer...

“Never kick a cow chip on a hot day!” ~ Will Rogers

Respectfully,

Alan

TRACKING COUNCIL ACCOUNTABILITIES

	COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES	INITIATIVE	COLLABORATIONS	STATUS
1.	Public Information: Education/Broad Citizen Involvement	<p>a. Web site design</p> <p>b. Evolving Community Justice</p> <p>c. Courthouse Exploratory Comm.</p>	<p>a. David Stamps, numerous site links</p> <p>b. Community Technical College, The Citizen, District Court Justices, DJJS and DADAPR Directors, Belknap County service providers, citizen volunteers, youth and families.</p> <p>c. Laconia District Court, NH Admin. Office of Courts, City of Laconia, Rist-Frost Associates, Lavallee/Brensinger, Main Street Program, and service providers.</p>	<p>a. In development</p> <p>b. Sept.4 thru December 11, 2002</p> <p>c. Council continues to facilitate group meetings and under sanction of the Laconia Mayor's Office.</p>
2.	Recipient of funds for services and supports	<p>a. Juvenile Offender Locator Team</p> <p>b. Restorative Justice</p>	<p>a. DJJS – Laconia Office, Belknap County Sheriff's Dept., Laconia Police Department.</p> <p>b. Belknap County Restorative Justice Program, Belknap County Sheriff's Dept., Advisory Committee member, citizen volunteers.</p>	<p>a. Project funded 1st year; 2nd year pending.</p> <p>b. In 2nd year of operation</p>
3.	Advocacy and Collaboration	<p>a. Mediation Program</p> <p>b. Mentor Program</p> <p>c. Reclaiming Futures (RWJF)</p> <p>d. Reentry Grant (US DOJ)</p> <p>e. Model Community Grant (NH Dept. of Health & Human Services)</p>	<p>a. Youth Services Bureau, Restorative Justice Program, former mediators form Belknap County.</p> <p>b. Parents and Children Together (PACT)</p> <p>c. NH District Court System, New Futures, Nashua Youth Center, PACT/Teen Center.</p> <p>d. NH Dept of Corrections, NH Dept. Health & Human Services, area Superintendents, multiple other partners.</p> <p>e. LR Community Services Council, United Way, ServiceLink, Genesis, Laconia Human Relations Committee, NH</p>	<p>a. Start-up plan has been formulated by Youth Services Bureau and Mediators committed.</p> <p>b. Grant pending</p> <p>c. One year planning grant received by NH District Court System w/contract to PACT.</p> <p>d. Project has been funded; awaiting implementation in Belknap County.</p> <p>e. Application pending</p>

			Community Technical College, Main Street Program	
4.	Develop & Implement County-wide Plan	<p>a. Juvenile Integrated Information System.</p> <p>b. Community Planning Forums</p> <p>c. Council Strategic Plan</p>	<p>a. Schools, Horizons, Laconia District Court, NH Dept. H&HS, NH Dept of Corrections, Adult Juvenile Probation and Parole, Belknap County Human Services, Belknap County Police Chiefs Assoc., NH DJJS, NH Dept. of Safety, Diversion Programs, Restorative Justice Program, Genesis.</p> <p>b. Eleven communities' citizens and organizations, Council members, elected officials, UNH Cooperative Extension, et. al.</p> <p>c. Citizens Council</p>	<p>a. Council facilitation – Ongoing</p> <p>b. <u>Priority</u> development needed October – Mid-November</p> <p>c. <u>Priority</u> development needed</p>
5.	Promote Well-Being of Children and Families	<p>a. Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC)</p> <p>b. Professional Providers Advisory Committee (PPAC)</p> <p>c. NH Child Advocacy Network affiliation (NH CAN)</p>	<p>a. Various provider participants (Refer to Attached list)</p> <p>b. Various providers (Refer to attached list)</p> <p>c. Network of over 150 organizations</p>	<p>a. In-process of expanding</p> <p>b. Pending discussion with Council Executive Committee</p> <p>c. Recommendation of the Leg. & Adv. Committee</p>