

Director's Report



3rd Quarter 2007

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

SEEKING UNSUNG HEROES

It's that time of year when the Citizens Council is in search of Belknap County nominees for the distinguished [Annette P. Schmitt *Unsung Hero Award*](#). Each year, many of our community members who dedicate their time performing exceptional deeds in the shadow of the public's eye, are nominated by their peers for this award. It recognizes those individuals who give so freely of themselves to others with no expectation of recompense or recognition. These people are the weavers and tailors of our social fabric. They are the curators of our neighborhoods and the depositors of social capital. They are our friends, our neighbors, our family members and servant leaders throughout our community. This is a time to celebrate their outstanding service to others and we invite you to nominate your candidate for this award. To obtain the nomination criteria and form for the Annette P. Schmitt Award, please visit the Council website at www.bccj.org.

PREVENTION PIPELINE

CoRe...at the Center of Prevention ~ [Jena Vincent](#) has lost no time in grabbing the reins of the CoRe Coalition. Recently promoted to Director of the CoRe Coalition, Jena has made numerous inroads to many of the school districts and agencies in Belknap County. Leveraging local resources with matching grant dollars, many new initiatives have begun or are in the pipeline. The CoRe Executive Committee has revised its by-laws and job descriptions so now, onward with a redefined mission and goals that will provide great collaborative opportunities for schools, communities and other agencies. The CoRe Board will be reconstituted through the appointment of new members as the year unfolds. For further information about membership on the Board or how to become a prevention advocate against alcohol and other drugs, contact CoRe at 279-5305 or core@interlakes.org. We would like to acknowledge former Council member [Dick Wallace](#) (Alton) for continuing his active leadership involvement by becoming a CoRe Board member and we thank the [CoRe Board](#) for their work in helping to assure healthy lifestyles for our children and families. CoRe is a vital part of the Council's overall prevention network.

Community Prevention Coalition of Belknap and Carroll Counties (CPC-BC) ~ The Governor and Executive Council approved the Lakes Region Partnership for Public Health contract at their meeting on August 22, 2007. With this announcement, the CPC-BC Oversight Board is proceeding to hire a full time Coordinator and half-time Evaluator to implement the strategic plan. This grant ushers in a new era of funding and coordination among the two-county region for purposes of developing community responses to consumption and use of alcohol by youth and young adults. A grant through the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) of the US Department of Health and Human Services will provide the resources necessary to develop the infrastructure required by the state as well as provide for beginning implementation projects defined through the planning process. For more information on this project, contact [Lisa Morris](#) at 528-6945.

Belknap County Incentives Bank Gets New Boost! ~ Part of the rehabilitation process is being acknowledged and reinforced for a job well done. When juvenile offenders commit to participating in programs that hold them accountable to their victims, their families and their community, they should be rewarded for their success. The [Incentives Bank](#) is a project under the auspices of the [Citizens Council](#), [Reclaiming Futures](#) and [Child and Family Services of New Hampshire](#). The bank seeks out rewards such as gift certificates, movie passes and other items from local businesses. These items are deposited into the Incentives Bank and are available to youth who successfully complete their contracts of community service, restitution, victim empathy, and the like. Items sought for use by the Incentives Bank include things that present opportunities for youth and their family members to share in positive social experiences that they might otherwise not be able to perform together. Special recognition goes out to [Hilary Hartford](#), Case Manager of the [Adolescent Treatment Initiative](#), for her enthusiastic and energetic leadership in eliciting business contributions to the Incentives Bank. This project requires endless contacts and follow-up with local businesses. But, in recognizing the benefits to our youth, what better investment can be made? To find out more about how to contribute to the Incentives Bank, contact Hilary at 518-4352.

Turbulent Teens, a Parent to Parent Support Network ~ Turbulent Teens reminds parents that it convenes biweekly at the Boys and Girls Club of the Lakes Region. Conducted by Council member [Nancy Porosky](#) (Gilmanton) and [Carol Murtaugh](#) (Alton) Turbulent Teens is an affiliate of the statewide [FASTER \(Families Advocating for Substance Treatment, Education and Recovery\)](#) initiative whose mission is to advocate for treatment services for adolescent substance abusers and their families. Families don't have to struggle through the turbulent years alone. Meetings are free and open to all who seek peer-to-peer support from others who have, according to Nancy, "been there, done that!" For more information on Turbulent Teens and FASTER, contact the Council at 528-3185.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT...A MEANS TO AN END!

Community Sector Focus Groups ~ The Council's [Prevention Work Group](#) works closely with the [Upstream Advisory Team](#) and [Professional Development Committee](#) to continue promoting student aspirations throughout the community. Spawn by our involvement with the [Laconia School District's Follow-The-Child](#) initiative, the Prevention Work Group is leading the development of reaching out to various community sectors to see how the public's role can play a more active part in promoting youth competencies alongside the school's initiative. To assist in this capacity, the Council has developed a service agreement with the [Appalachian Mountain Teen Project](#) (AMTP) to develop and conduct a series of focus groups with specific sectors of the community. These focus groups will help to define how community members perceive their role and contributions in complementing student aspirations. We wish to thank [Dan Kusch](#) and [Donna San Antonio](#) of the AMTP, and [Micheline Roy](#) (Laconia) for their leadership in this initiative. To find out more and to become involved in this initiative, please contact the Council at 528-3185.

Early Childhood Learning Connects to Economic Leadership ~ As a member of the [Belknap County Early Learning Council](#), the Citizens Council hosted a recent luncheon presentation to local business and economic development leaders in the area. [Deb Rosato](#) ([Community Partners for Children](#)) and Alan Robichaud (Citizens Council) presented information on the link between early childhood learning and future economic success. Additionally, Deb provided information regarding new initiatives targeting community education and school and business involvement in early childhood education such as [Success By 6](#), [Born Learning](#) and the [School Readiness Indicator project](#). Attendees were asked for ideas on how best to engage members of their respective groups and were contacted following the luncheon with specific requests to reach out to families and children through their organizations. The Citizens Council views the work of the Early Learning Council as key to its own prevention efforts and will remain actively supportive of these initiatives. We thank the following people for contributing to this important discussion and framing our future engagement with the business sector: [John Malm](#) ([Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce](#)), [Michael Seymour](#) ([Franklin Chamber of Commerce](#)), [Jennifer Boulanger](#) ([Belknap County Economic Development Council](#)), [Don Morrissey](#) ([Leadership Lakes Region](#)), [Mark Edelstein](#) ([New Hampshire Community Technical College](#)), [Jack Terrill](#) ([Lakes Region United Way](#)) and [Christine Santaniello](#), [Karen Welford](#) and [Jeff Keith](#) ([Lakes Region Community Services Council](#)).

On September 19, [Christine Santaniello](#) and Alan Robichaud updated the [Belknap County Commissioners](#) on the work of the [Belknap County Early Learning Council](#). In 2001, the County Commissioners designated the Belknap County Early Learning Council to take the lead in developing community initiatives in support of young children and families. Since that time, multiple initiatives have paved the path to today's community initiatives while leveraging \$1.3M in matching resources from numerous public and private sector partners.

Multicultural Market Day ~ The Citizens Council once again participated in the planning and coordination of the annual [Multicultural Market Day](#) celebration. Planning this amazing day usually starts the day after it's over and the [City of Laconia Human Relations Committee](#) is to be commended for bringing such an outstanding array of entertainment, cuisine, costume and class to our area. No other single event brings so many family-filled hours of fun and excitement with such diversity and style. We are very proud to support this annual event as it provides many of our youth and their families with opportunities to experience the uniqueness of our community. We wish to thank Council member [Rasim Gusinac](#) and our own [Judy Buswell](#) for their many hours of service in support of this year's event. Hope to see you all again next year!

JUVENILE RESTORATIVE JUSTICE ~ INVESTMENTS THAT MAKE SENSE!

The Council expresses its deepest appreciation for the continued difficult work performed each day by our network of providers and volunteers. With budget season upon us again, we hope that municipal, county and state funders continue to recognize the importance of this work and how success is measured in both human as well as financial savings to all citizens of Belknap County. We are indebted to those who serve on the front lines with children, youth and families and thank them for their vigilance and dedication to keeping our communities safe by restoring our youth. Cooperation remains strong among the provider network with the [Juvenile Justice Advisory Council](#) (JJAC) continuing to serve as a central coordinating body providing resources, connections and support to all involved. JJAC continues to invite key state and county officials to share their perspectives on prevention, intervention and treatment with regard to juvenile justice.

During this past quarter JJAC welcomed [William Fenniman, Jr., Director of the NH Division of Juvenile Justice Services](#); [Richard Grenier, Superintendent of the Belknap County House of Corrections](#); and [Belknap County Sheriff, Craig Wiggin](#). We appreciate the collaboration we receive from these individuals and their agencies on behalf of our youth. The Council wishes to thank Council Associate, [Andre Paquette](#) for his continued leadership in facilitating JJAC. Many initiatives have been spawned during his tenure.

HB2 – Implications for Future Youth Services Funding ~ District 4 [Senator Kathleen Sgambati](#) attended the July Citizens Council meeting to discuss the intent of certain provisions of [House Bill 2](#). While the intent of the legislation is to primarily change the responsibility of billing for youth services, there is general concern that services not now paid for under the county/state funding formula will be construed to ultimately be the state's funding responsibility. Providers and the Council are concerned that such a perception may encourage municipalities to cut critical funding from their budgets in the upcoming funding cycle. We will be working on multiple fronts to inform the voters that our entry level services are the most cost-effective and first level of defense for keeping our youth out of the most restrictive and costly juvenile justice system. One youth placed at the [Youth Services Center](#) in Manchester will cost taxpayers over \$133,000 a year (based on a per diem of (\$366.00)). The Council looks forward to working with Senator Sgambati and our other elected officials to support our critical provider base. Prevention and early intervention are the soundest investment we can make.

Community Report Card on Deck ~ This year's report to the community is being compiled and will hopefully be distributed by the end of October. Based on 2006 case closing data supplied by our primary juvenile justice providers, this report will examine comparisons of key performance measures being tracked in Belknap County. Coupled with last years' data, the use of the case closing process allows us to establish a baseline against which to observe trends, create responses and make adjustments to how we construct an integrated response to juveniles in Belknap County.

Council Receives Continuation Funding for Data Development ~ The State Advisory Group for Juvenile Justice has approved the Council for \$31,378 to continue its data development project including the implementation and refinement of a automated case closing and reporting component. Receipt of this year's grant will allow the continued engagement of the [Halter, McDonald, Meyer Consulting](#) group of Plymouth who have been instrumental in the design and development of the software database being utilized by our providers. This project has captured the interest of the [NH DJJS](#) and may well serve as a replication process for other regions of the state. We want to recognize [Pam Sullivan](#), [Bill McGonagle](#) and [Director Fenniman](#), along with the entire [State Advisory Group](#), for their interest and support of this project.

Legislation Requested ~ Through the efforts of [Rep. Alida Millham](#), former Citizens Council member and Chair, a request was made to Legislative Services for the drafting of a piece of legislation to allow specified juvenile justice services in Belknap County to share information among programs. What is being requested is the ability of programs serving pre-court, court-diverted and court-involved youth to share certain information on youth in order to plan and implement services at each stage of the juvenile justice process. In order to better serve youth and more accurately assess recidivism, this limited access legislation is being considered initially as a pilot in Belknap County to see if the intent can obtain the desired results. Stay tuned.

Child Maltreatment, CHINS and Juvenile Delinquency in Belknap County ~ The Council's [Data Committee](#) has been engaged in the review of county data pertaining to various petitions brought before the court. Cost comparisons, implications for placement, and the need of alternative services in less restrictive settings are areas in need of further collaboration among state, county and local officials. The Council will be releasing a report reviewing the correlation of these and other factors, in the days ahead. It is intended to have such a report serve as the basis of open discussion among policymakers and program administrators to inform future planning efforts for youth in Belknap County.

Reclaiming Futures Releases National Monographs ~ Belknap County, through the Citizens Council and it's partners, has actively participated in the [Robert Wood Johnson Reclaiming Futures](#) project for the last six years. Reclaiming Futures is a national initiative that addresses the complexities of youth who are caught up in substance abuse and juvenile justice issues. While the State of New Hampshire served as one of ten pilot sites under the foundation grant, Belknap County was one of the original two sites within the states when the project was first conceived. The [Honorable Judge "Bud" Martin](#) and Citizens Council Director, Alan Robichaud have represented the county on the [Judicial and Community Fellowships](#), respectively. In so doing, they have been active in the development of the monographs subsequently published by the foundation and currently posted on the Reclaiming Futures website. For a full viewing and downloading copies of these and other monographs by the justice and treatment fellowships on which New Hampshire was also well represented, please visit www.reclaimingfutures.com.

As this quarterly report is being prepared, the New Hampshire Reclaiming Futures office is coordinating a judicial training session utilizing a national curriculum developed by the [Judicial Fellowship](#). Being held on October 2 and 3 in Meredith, New Hampshire, several judges who have participated in the Reclaiming Futures initiative around the country as well as several New Hampshire Family Division justices will pilot test this curriculum. We would like to thank [Judges Bud Martin and Thomas Bamberger](#) (Nashua District Court) for their outstanding leadership and contributions to the advancement of this national training module.

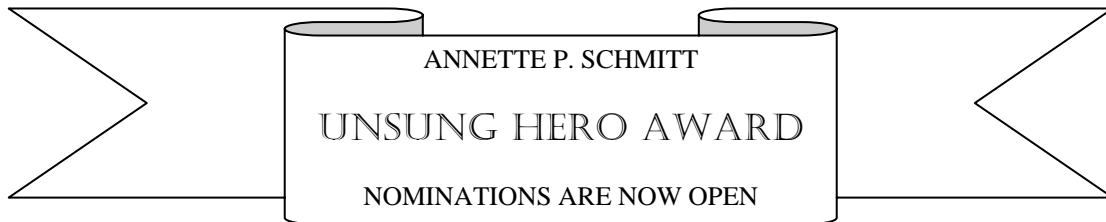
Finally, as the [Southeastern Kentucky Reclaiming Futures](#) site is expanding its pilot to other regions of the state, a contingent of New Hampshire Reclaiming Futures affiliates were invited to share their experiences with the potential expansion sites. [Ray Goodman, Director, NH Reclaiming Futures; Ray Bilodeau, project liaison with the Administrative Office of the Court; Rich Sarette, Justice Fellow and Berlin area Juvenile Probation and Parole Supervisor; and Alan Robichaud, Community Fellow and Council Director](#), represented the New Hampshire initiative to our prospective new partners.

Thought to Ponder

“The opportunity for any adult in the life of a child is not exhausted in the teaching of math, geography, syntax, history...It also requires...involvement in and dedication to overcoming social injustice.”

Paulo Freire

Respectfully,
Alan Robichaud
Executive Director



[Wendy French, 2007 Unsung Hero being presented her award by the Honorable Judge Willard Martin.](#)

For more information on the activities, events and initiatives of the Citizens Council, or to apply to become a member of the Citizens Council, please visit our website at www.bccj.org or call us at 528-3185.