

Director's Report



1st Quarter
2008

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

COUNCIL SPONSORED LEGISLATION PASSES HOUSE

On March 3, 2008, [House Bill 1370](#), an act establishing a pilot program for an integrated juvenile justice information sharing system in Belknap County, passed the House of Representatives. This bill will allow identified programs in Belknap County to begin tracking youth in the juvenile justice system to see if programs were successful in reducing future recidivism across programs. Although this narrowly opens the door to tracking youth over time, it is the beginning of developing firm measures of whether programs succeed in deterring repeat entry into the deeper end of juvenile justice services. From court diversion, to court-diverted, to court-involved, the costs increase sharply once the youth enters the court system. In quoting from the House Record of February 29, 2008, Rep. Edith A. Hogan for Children and Family Law stated: *"The committee is very impressed with what Belknap County has done in instituting restorative justice in the juvenile system. The committee is in full support of this pilot program to study its effect on recidivism."* On a committee vote of 15-0, HB1370 was sent to the House as ought to pass with amendment. In addition to the members of the [Children and Family Law Committee](#), the Council wishes to thank the following Belknap County delegates for their sponsorship of the bill – [Rep. Alida Millham](#) (primary sponsor), [Rep. Judy Reeve](#), [Rep. Beth Arsenault](#) and [Rep. Jim Pilliod](#) as well as [Senator Kathy Sgambati](#). We will now await assignment to a Senate Committee and begin testimony again.

COUNTY & COUNCIL BUDGET

The Council's 2008 fiscal year budget was given added scrutiny this year as the County Convention scheduled a second public hearing. After lengthy discussion, Convention members adopted the county budget on March 4th. There were no major changes to this year's Council budget as we have fought hard to keep operating expenses as low as possible and will continue to seek other funding partners wherever possible in conducting the activities of the Council. We are appreciative of [County Commissioners](#) and the [Convention](#) members in their thoughtful review and ultimate approval of our budget.

COMMUNITY SENSE MAKES COMMON SENSE ~ CONVOCATION SUCCEEDS AGAIN!

The annual convocation on children and families was another major success! On January 22, approximately 300 people participated, in one form or another, in the festivities of agency exhibits, scavenger hunt, Lakes Region school projects, demonstrations and skits, or simply enjoyed a nice dinner served up by the Canoe restaurant while watching former Council member, [Leo Sanfacon](#) receive the 2008 [Annette P. Schmitt Award](#) presented by former District Court [Judge Willard Martin](#). Prior to his presentation, Judge Martin was honored with a handcrafted, quilted wall hanging presented by the [Boys & Girls Club of the Lakes Region](#), for his 30+ years of service, to the children and families of Belknap County. Congratulations to both Leo and Judge Martin for their outstanding commitment to our youth and community! Well earned, gentlemen! This year's Convocation co-sponsors numbered 17 businesses and organizations with additional revenues amounting to \$1,760 making the 2008 Convocation the most cost-effective in the past five years. Special thanks go to our student emcees for doing another superb job of coordinating the evening's hectic schedule. We appreciate [Mae Baker](#), [Jeremiah Dadian](#), [Samantha Hannan](#), [Angie Joyce](#), [Jim LaBrie](#) and [Samantha MacDonald](#) for their outstanding efforts! (Pictured are Judge Martin, Leo Sanfacon and Mae Baker). See profile on page 4.



REACHING OUT...ENRICHING UNDERSTANDING

The Council continues to contribute to the communities' understanding of challenges and needs of children and youth as well as providing awareness of new ventures that enhance and strengthen families' capacities to rise above adversity. Reaching out to all sectors of the community with information about resources, how the system works, and what communities and individuals can do to help have long been an important part of the Council's work. To that end, some of our outreach efforts this past quarter have included the following:

- 1/16/08 *Leadership Lakes Region* – Co-presented a session on [Early Childhood Education](#) and [Born Learning](#) with [Deb Rosato](#) and [Karen Welford](#) of [Community Partners for Children](#) and [Lakes Region Community Services](#), respectively. This year's class consists of 17 local business and industry leaders.
- 2/5/08 *Police Standards and Training* – Served on panel presenting to approximately 30 juvenile law enforcement officers on community juvenile justice.
- 2/7/08 *Student Aspirations Focus Group* – Conducted a focus group for seven representatives of the local faith community to understand and examine means to involve youth in assets available through our many faith-based services. This session was organized by [Appalachian Mountain Teen Project's Dan Kusch](#) and facilitated by Council member [Emily Clement](#) who was singularly responsible for engaging the participation of faith community members. Results of this forum will be shared with those who attended, members of local churches and synagogue and local schools so that we can create more pro-social opportunities for area youth.
- 2/11/08 *Road to Resilience* - Co-sponsored in conjunction with [Child and Family Services of New Hampshire](#). Two sessions were held in Laconia. A day session for professionals was attended by 194 people while the evening session for parents and other community people was attended by approximately 40 others.
- 2/19/08 *Youth Breakfast Meeting* at LHS – Working with the [Belknap County CoRe Coalition](#) and the [Winnisquam Regional School District](#), the Council is interested in knowing what's on the minds of our youth. A breakfast gathering was held to ask a group of 8 youth from surrounding school districts if they felt convening a youth forum would be beneficial in getting feedback from youth throughout Belknap County. While we were originally thinking of conducting an Open Space Forum, our conversation with these folks convinced us to change the format and add a fun activity to the end of the forum. It has been decided that a forum of 1 ½ hours will be held at the [Laconia Community Center](#) on Saturday, April 19 at 5:00 PM followed by a Battle of the Bands at 7:00 PM.
- 2/28/08 *LRPA Taping* – Hosted a panel of local experts on juvenile justice including [Belknap County Attorney \(Jim Carroll\)](#), [Laconia City Prosecutor \(Jim Sawyer\)](#) and [District Office Supervisor for Juvenile Probation and Parole \(Jay Apicelli\)](#). This network broadcasts to seven communities throughout Belknap County.
- 3/3/08 *County Incentive Fund Panel* – Presented to members of the Belknap County Incentives Fund Panel on planning toward the development of a unified juvenile justice system in Belknap County.
- 3/4/08 *Belmont Youth Conversation* – In partnership with the [Belmont Parks & Recreation Committee](#), the [Belmont Middle School PTO](#), and the others, Council member [Amy Hall](#), along with a local planning committee, hosted a conversation on issues that effect our youth. Issues were raised in several areas and sectors such as parents and neighbors, law enforcement, schools, and social service agencies were identified as being partners in developing solutions to issues. A follow-up session will be facilitated by local residents. Of the 44 people attending the forum, 20 people (45%) volunteered to participate in follow-up discussions.
- 3/4/08 *Gilford Safe Schools Committee* – The Council was asked to participate in a discussion with the [Gilford School Department](#) and the [Gilford Police Department](#) regarding efforts to provide safe school environments. Issues that prevent coordination and collaboration among agencies (e.g. confidentiality, liability, budgetary restraints) were discussed. The Council will be more than happy to assist in these efforts however we can and we applaud the Gilford community for being proactive in keeping students safe. This is a true example of community agencies working together for the greater good.
- 3/6/08 Met with [Brian Miller](#), [District Executive of the Boy Scouts of America](#) to discuss ways to collaborate on behalf of Belknap County youth.
- 3/14/08 *Volunteer training for Partners in Prevention* – As a member of the [Lakes Region Partnership for Public Health](#), the Council is active in the [Partners for Prevention \(PIP\)](#) initiative that centers on underage drinking and binge drinking in youth and adults. As part of a statewide strategic planning process, the PIP is conducting training for citizen volunteers to conduct interviews with local people to elicit citizen perception of the degree to which these problems exist in their communities. Council member [Micheline Roy](#) was among the 6 people to receive the training. If you would like to participate in this important initiative, please call [Colleen McDermott](#) at 528-2145. (Pictured is [Katy Shay](#), Evaluator for the Partners in Prevention initiative in Belknap and Carroll Counties)



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CHIEF MIKE MOYER ATTENDS JJAC

On January 25, [Chief Mike Moyer](#) of the [Laconia Police Department](#), attended the [Juvenile Justice Advisory Council](#) meeting and shared his vision of where the department is going. For the most part, Chief Moyer indicated that many of the initiatives set in motion by his predecessor, Tom Oetinger, would continue under his leadership. [Community Policing](#) is a major theme

running through the Chief's goals for the future. However, in a short period of time, we have learned how humble our new Chief is. Along with the [Belknap County Sheriff's Department](#), the Laconia Police Department is spearheading a [Methadone Task Force](#) to curb the use and risk of death experienced in the recent past by eight Lakes Region residents. We consider this to be a most significant accomplishment and initiative in the local fight against drug abuse and one that will not only help to reduce the use of methadone in Belknap County but will save lives! We thank [Chief Moyer](#) and [Sheriff Craig Wiggin](#) for their leadership in this venture. To view an article and video clip on the task force, go to the following WMUR web link: <http://www.wmur.com/news/15370628/detail.html>.

ADOLESCENT TREATMENT INITIATIVE GAINS GROUND – TARGETS SUBSTANCE ABUSE

For the past three years, the [Adolescent Treatment Initiative \(ATI\)](#) funded by New Futures and the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, has been making great strides in combating alcohol and drug abuse among our youth. Provided by [Hampshire](#), the ATI program is aptly [Hartford](#). Referrals are coming in from providers, the courts, and parents alike. They are responsive, doing a great job. They are responsive, They take the service to the youth and community. A major barrier to families is the lack of transportation or time to get the case of ATI, the program goes to them.



great strides in combating alcohol and [Child and Family Services of New Hampshire](#) provided by [Ryan Barrieau](#) and [Hilary](#) surrounding school districts, service From all reports, Ryan and Hilary are professional and importantly...portable. families at school, in the home, and the and youth receiving the services they need to where services are often provided. In

(Laurie Belanger of the Citizens Council presenting a Certificate of Appreciation to Ryan Barrieau of the Adolescent Treatment initiative)

UNIFIED JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Not-for-profit programs have been hit hard in recent town budgeting cycles. With increased costs of fuel, food, road repairs and the like, many local communities made tough decisions to reduce funds to many local agencies in the recent budgeting process. This has caused great concern that programs that reach out to families and youth may not be in service in the near future. Programs such as the [Youth Services Bureau](#) and the [Youth Assistance Program](#) provide deterrence from court-ordered services and keep youth out of the juvenile justice system by reducing risky behaviors. These programs connect youth to positive community experiences and hold youth accountable for delinquent actions. Agencies report that average costs of these programs run between \$2,500 and \$3,500 per youth, per year while some court-ordered placements can cost the taxpayer upwards of \$150,000 per youth per year and more.

The Citizens Council is working with all interested parties to redesign how juvenile justice services are provided in Belknap County. The aim is to: rethink how juvenile services are constructed; identify what essential elements comprise the system; build in accountabilities and performance measures; and develop community support to assure that youth and families interacting with juvenile justice receive prompt, quality, and cost-effective services.

The Council invites local citizens to join this effort and participate in planning for the future. Unless we want to see more of our youth sent away from their homes, schools and communities, at a much higher cost to taxpayers, we must understand and invest in prevention and early intervention. Failure to do so will result in losses far greater than costs for services. If you wish to learn more and to become involved, please call the Council at 528-3185.

INITIATING A MODEL FOR CHANGE

Despite the numerous threats to services, cost shifting and devolution from the federal, to state, to county and local governments, there is need to perform quality, evidence-based services in juvenile justice so that our youth and their families can live with dignity and respect. In the midst of challenging fiscal environments the Council has been meeting with various stakeholder groups to see if, in fact there may be new ways to collaborate to meet local needs. If resources are not going to increase to provide more services, then we need to work better together to get more from the resources we do have. The Council is working with local groups to conduct community forums and ask taxpayers what they want to see by way of juvenile justice services. We are refocusing discussions of the [Juvenile Justice Advisory Council](#) toward preventing youth

from entering the system and improving outcomes for those that do. We are analyzing data from local programs to determine outcomes and we are reporting the results of that work through report cards to the community and publications on such topics as child maltreatment. We view this effort as an opportunity to form new partnerships with various levels of state government. Our Council members are researching what other states have done to improve outcomes for youth caught up in the dual jurisdictions of child welfare and juvenile justice. We are reaching out to national organizations to gain support for the kind of change we need to see in New Hampshire and here in Belknap County. Our work has led us to conversations with the [MacArthur Foundation](#), the [Child Welfare League of America](#), the [New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services \(DHHS\)](#) and its various subdivisions, moving us toward defining new working relationships for the future. Based on the findings of a report soon to be released by the Council entitled *Perspectives on Child Maltreatment, CHINS and Delinquency in Belknap County*, we are negotiating plans to conduct a policy summit sometime within the next few months, which will set a direction for future collaboration and resource utilization. The Council wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of [Commissioner Nick Toumpas](#) of the [DHHS](#), and [Directors Bill Fenniman \(Division of Juvenile Justice Services\)](#), [Maggie Bishop \(Division of Children Youth and Families\)](#) and [Nancy Rollins \(Division of Community Based Care Services\)](#) for their interest and consideration in discussing systems reform efforts in Belknap County. Special thanks are also extended to [John Tuell](#) of the [Child Welfare League of America](#) for his recent visit and consultation with the Council. We consider this effort to be the key priority for the Council in the months ahead and will continue to keep our readers up to date with any progress made in this area. Once again, the Council invites the participation of interested parties as this initiative moves forward.

PROFILE OF 2008 ANNETTE P. SCHMITT UNSUND HERO RECIPIENT ~ LEO SANFACON



Congratulations Leo!

Leo Sanfacon served in the United States Air Force and attended the University of New Hampshire and Tufts University where he majored in Dentistry. Leo practiced Dentistry in Laconia for 37 years before his retirement in 1998.

Since then his has given his time freely to many youth serving programs including:

- Belknap Juvenile Justice Initiative
- Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families
- Laconia Youth Services Bureau – Diversion and Teen Court Programs
- Belknap County Restorative Justice Program
- Boys & Girls Club of the Lakes Region

Other Community involvement has included serving on the following:

- Lakes Region Leadership
- Lakes Region Business Group
- Laconia-Weirs Beach Chamber of Commerce
- Belknap County Economic Development Council and several other organizations that benefits children, families and his community.

THOUGHT TO PONDER

“Development, it turns out, occurs through this process of progressively more complex exchange between a child and somebody else—especially somebody who's crazy about that child.”

Urie Bronfenbrenner

Respectfully,

Alan Robichaud

Executive Director

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.