

Director's Report



3rd Quarter 2008

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

LEAVING A LEGACY

It is great sadness that we say goodbye to a friend, a community leader, and dedicated believer in the value of our youth. We dedicate this issue to [Dave Tryon](#), our 2006 [Annette P. Schmitt Unsung Hero Award](#). Dave was a relentless advocate for kids and his work within the Winnisquam Regional School District and throughout Belknap County will live on in his legacy. Within a week before his death, Dave left a final challenge to us all: "Don't let them forget the work we've started. Don't let them give up on our kids. They can't give up on our kids. They're worth everything we can give to them." I think the "them" is "us". Dave has left us a challenge. If we all believe in our kids the way Dave did, let's make sure his legacy lives on and do whatever it takes to continue the work he started! You will be missed, our friend.



CITIZENS COUNCIL AND NH DHHS STUDYING SERVICE COORDINATION OPPORTUNITIES

In the last Quarterly Report, we reported on a symposium hosted by the Citizens Council to explore potential for a service integration initiative in Belknap County. We are pleased to report that this initiative is now well underway. On September 22, the Council convened an organizational meeting of key policy and program officials to implement the initiative. Over the next several months, committees will perform in-depth reviews of resource inventories and assessments, data and information systems, legal and policy issues and other aspects of service availability to children, youth and families across the juvenile justice and child welfare spectrum. To assure that this initiative builds on previous work of the Citizens Council, we have assigned various functions associated with this initiative to existing Council work groups. Using a systems change framework provided by the [Child Welfare League of America](#) (CWLA) - found to be successful in a number of other states - we hopefully have constructed an inclusive process allowing access and input from policy makers all the way up to consumers of services. A key component of this work includes interviews with people who have received services from the various programs comprising the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. Members of the Council's Prevention Work Group will be actively involved in conducting anonymous phone interviews with individuals who are willing to inform our process of service coordination.

The Council has a pending technical assistance application with the [US Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention](#). We are awaiting approval some time in mid-October. If approved, we will be able to secure the continued services of [John Tuell](#) (CWLA). To date we have been fortunate to access John through other foundation resources available through the CWLA. We are grateful to John for his leadership in this effort to date.

Belknap County should be proud of the contributing to this initiative. As a small [Betty Anson](#) (Laconia) are Co-Chairing [Roy](#) (Laconia) is chairing our Prevention continues to lead the Professional Advisory systems affecting children, youth and lending their talents to each of these and Belknap County communities. To learn Citizens Council at 528-3185. We will meeting summaries to our website. (Photo: Council members Rich Moed and Betty Anson)



tremendous effort local citizens are example, [Richard Moed](#) (Gilford) and key committees of this project. [Micheline](#) Work Group while [Andre Paquette](#) Council in coordinating efforts across families. Many other Council members are other activities of the Council throughout more about this initiative, please call the soon be posting committee activities and

JUVENILE JUSTICE PROVIDERS FOR SUCCESSFUL YOUTH

We have reported over the years on the great efforts ongoing in Belknap County to enhance outcomes for our youth. Our network of providers continues to provide innovative ways to join resources among their agencies as well as within our communities. A few examples include the collaboration among [Youth Services Bureau](#), [Belknap County Restorative Justice](#),

and the [NH Division of Juvenile Probation and Parole](#) as representatives met with [Belknap County 4-H Coordinator Becky Levesque](#) to discuss referrals to the vast offering of volunteer supported activities. From computer science to photography and aeronautics, to agriculture and forestry, 4-H offers a multitude of life-long interests as well as a wide array of progressive leadership opportunities at the local, regional, state and national levels of their organization. The providers were willing to adapt their intake and referrals processes to include awareness and exposure to the 4-H youth development arena.

Also present for this discussion was [Hilary Hartford](#) of the Laconia Office of [Child and Family Services of New Hampshire](#). Hilary has been aggressively promoting the local [Incentive Bank](#), a project that solicits donations of gift certificates and other awards given to youth and families who successfully complete their contractual agreements with youth serving agencies or those who simply perform outstandingly in other programs and may not otherwise have a opportunity to experience a night out with the whole family or individual time with a single parent. Hilary has done a remarkable job acquiring donations over the past several

recent businesses and Bank is an idea and the for keeping Futures to



months and reports that the Bank has been exhausted of it resources due to many requests. She will be making future requests to local civic organizations, banks to rebuild the assets available to local youth and families. The Incentive generated from the [Drug Court](#) collaboration between [Reclaiming Futures NH](#) Citizens Council. Coordinator of Reclaiming Futures, [Ray Goodman](#) is credited this initiative active and bringing this group together. Ray has left Reclaiming accept a position with the UNH Foundation. We wish Ray the very best in his new position and thank him for his tireless efforts in bringing Reclaiming Futures to life in our community. (Photo: Ray Goodman, formerly of Reclaiming Futures New Hampshire)

DIVERSION CERTIFICATION AND FUNDING DILEMMA

Juvenile Justice Services are at-risk in Belknap County. Diversion type services - programs that cost the least and divert youth from going deeper into the juvenile justice system - are suffering from lack of financial support. Constricting economies, fluctuating referrals, and other demands on taxpayers are contributing to the rising concern of caring for our youth in our communities. While recent legislation ([HB2](#)) transfers funding responsibility to the state for some court-ordered youth services, diversion programs are left in a dilemma. Diversion services are generally not "court-ordered". They do not qualify for state reimbursement because they are not certified under rules governed but state statute. The Council along with others from around the state will be looking closely at this issue and future revenue steams to prevent our youth from entering the juvenile justice system where the burden on taxpayers will increase exponentially. Diversion level services report average costs to be \$2,500 to \$3,500/youth. In comparison, some court-ordered service costs can range from \$370/day (\$135,000/yr.) at the [Sununu Youth Services Center](#) to over a quarter of a million dollars for youth who are placed out for their community and families for longer periods of time. Regardless of the level of sanction, the taxpayer bears the burden.

In a recent Council survey, respondents' replied to several questions regarding preferences who should pay for what types of juvenile justice services. The Council received over 200 responses from Belknap County residents. Overwhelmingly, 94% of respondents favor the use of taxpayer dollars being applied to preventing youth being placed into the juvenile justice system. Look for a posting of the survey results to the Council's website in the near future.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Council remains committed to bringing juvenile justice awareness to the greater public. Recent forums were provided to the [Gilford Rotary Club](#) and the [Shaker Regional School Board](#). Approximately 75 individuals attended these sessions. Future presentations are being scheduled in Laconia, Alton, and Meredith. If your agency or organization would like a presentation, please contact the Citizens Council at 528-3185.

Council members [Micheline Roy](#) and [Ruth O'Hara](#) [Laconia Police Department's National Nite Out](#) event at Ruth were pleased to see the number of kids and families Council display and asked about the Council and other available in the region. We are indebted to our Council devote their personal and professional expertise to the Council. Their contributions constantly add meaning to Thanks Mich, Ruth and all our Council members! (left) and Ruth O'Hara (right).



recently participated in the Wyatt Park. Mich and who stopped by the community services members who continue to many activities of the the term Social Capital! (Photo: Micheline Roy

COMMUNITY PREVENTION COALITION

Under the guiding watch of the [Lakes Region Partnership for Public Health, Community Partners in Prevention's Strategic Prevention Frameworks](#) project has set the stage for strategic planning in Belknap and Carroll County. For the past several

months, project staff [Colleen McDermott](#), [Katy Shea](#) and [Colleen Drouin](#), along with several community volunteers, have conducted numerous interviews and focus groups, and collected and analyzed voluminous data from state and local agencies, that has provided the basis of our region's strategic plan. Key elements for this research will concentrate on contributing risk factors under the categories of underage drinking and young adult binge drinking across our two-county region. The Strategic Plan is scheduled for submission to the [Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health](#) by mid-October. We also wish to acknowledge the support of [Shannon Swett](#) and [Sarah Boucher](#) of the [Concord Substance Abuse Coalition](#) with assisting in the strategic planning process.

COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY INITIATIVES – US DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

On July 18th, Council Executive Director, Alan Robichaud had the opportunity to attend a [Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention \(CCJJDP\)](#) forum in Washington, DC. The purpose of the forum was to participate with professionals from across the country in setting new federal guidelines for awarding technical assistance for improving the lives of youth and families. Sixty participants, representing such agencies as the [US Department of Health and Human Services](#), the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change, and the [Harvard Family Research Project](#), discussed proposed guidelines in the areas of technical assistance, funding, evaluation, and federal partnerships. The purpose of these guidelines is to make the federal response to technical assistance requests from the field, more accessible and streamlined. We are grateful for the opportunity to have been a part of this level of planning and hope to see improvements in the process in the future.

OTHER LOCAL GOOD NEWS

The Council applauds the efforts of the [Belmont School Board](#) in addressing the community's alcohol and drug abuse issues. Life-long Belmont resident [Jen Gagnon](#) was recently hired as the part time [Student Assistance Program Coordinator](#) for Belmont Middle and High Schools. As a former school Guidance Counselor and Diversion Youth Counselor, Jen is well suited for this challenge. She also currently serves as the Chair of the Youth Services Bureau Board of Directors. Good luck Jen and congratulations to the School Board and Administration for committing resources to address this pervasive issue in today's society. You are to be commended!

Congratulations also go to former Council member and community activist, [Dick Wallace](#) (Alton). Dick is recipient of the first ever [New Futures Advocacy in Action](#) award to be presented at this year's annual Substance Abuse Conference on October 2. Once again Dick, your efforts are deservedly recognized by those who share your passion for prevention. Thank you for your continuous selfless actions on behalf of our youth and communities. We are all very proud of you!

LOOKING FOR OTHER UNSUNG HEROES

Once again, it's time to be thinking about recognizing our community heroes for all their good deeds. Be on the lookout for this year's nomination forms for the annual [Annette P. Schmitt Unsung Hero Award](#) to be presented to a deserving Belknap County resident at the [Convocation on Children and Families](#) in March of '09. Look for a website posting soon at www.bccj.org.

THOUGHT TO PONDER

"When Nike says, just do it, that's a message of empowerment. Why aren't the rest of us speaking to young people in a voice of inspiration?" Naomi Klein

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.