

Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families

MEETING SUMMARY

Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families

DATE: Friday, February 15, 2008

TIME BEGAN: 8:00am

TIME ENDED: 10:00am

FACILITATED BY: Sarah Fox/Emily Clement

SUMMARY BY: Judy Buswell

PRESENT: Micheline Roy, Christie Corrigan, Rasim Gusinac, Emily Clement, Gil Schohan, Sarah Fox, Kate Miller, Sandy McLaughlin, Betty Anson, Laurie Belanger, Jim Pilliod, **GUESTS:** Deb Rosato, Amy Myers **STAFF:** Alan Robichaud, Judy Buswell

1. **Introductions & Amendments/Additions to the Agenda** Agenda altered to begin Ryan Barrieau's presentation around 8:30am when he arrives. No other amendments or additions requested.

2. **Director's Report** – *Alan Robichaud reporting (Written report is included at the end of these minutes)* Alan commented on several items in his report:

- **2008 Convocation** This event was a great success. More youth were involved than before with many outstanding presentations. This year's financial contributions from other organizations and agencies helped to defray some of the financial burden for the Council. However, as this event requires a huge amount of staff time to implement, the Council needs to be certain that the outcomes fit the Council's mission. A debriefing meeting with the Planning Team is scheduled for February 21st. Comments from Council members included:
 - The "Stone Soup Operetta" was outstanding. The teacher, Patty Smith, is very talented.
 - Any opportunity to showcase youth in a positive manner should be a Council priority
 - The youth greeters at the entry way did an excellent job and seemed to be very comfortable in that role.
 - The Pleasant Street presentation that included a second-grade student with the teacher was very well done.
- **Public Forums** A public forum/discussion with Belmont residents on how their community can best support optimal environment for children and youth is scheduled for March 4th, from 6:30-8pm in the Belmont Middle School Cafeteria. While the Council will be organizing forums and discussion opportunities around the County, each Forum will be tailored to specific community needs.

Emily Clement recently organized a productive discussion with members of the faith community on how to prioritize components of the Follow The Child initiative in non-school settings. Alan will facilitate a discussion with Jim Carroll, Jay Apicelli, and Jim Sawyer on the county's juvenile justice system that will air over LR Public Access TV. Other community forums will be organized and held elsewhere in the County during 2008.

- **Victims Rights Committee** The committee has received four returns of the Victim Satisfaction Survey that all providers should be distributing consistently to all victims of juvenile crime. The goal is to understand how best to improve outreach efforts to crime victims.
- **Legislative Initiative** HB 1370, allowing Belknap County providers of juvenile justice services to share information so they can better track recidivism, was heard by the House Child and Family Law Committee. Both Alan and Andre Paquette recently testified in support of this bill, sponsored by Belknap County Reps Alida Millham, Judie Reeve, Beth Arsenault, Jim Pilliod, and Senator Sgambati. The bill moved to a subcommittee that added an amendment stipulating that reports

generated by the case closing data must not include any information that could infringe upon the privacy rights of the juvenile. As the population of Belknap County is quite small and homogeneous, it could be easy to recognize the identity of those involved, even without using their names. The bill will return to the full committee for their recommendation and will then cross over to the Senate for a similar review process. Kevin Smith from the NH Division of Juvenile Justice Services is assisting in tracking the deliberations and providing testimony in favor of the bill for the Division of Juvenile Justice Services.

- **Policy Summit** Sarah Fox, Alan, and Andre Paquette met with Commissioner Toumpas and DHHS Division heads to discuss several initiatives in Belknap County and to explore potential state/local partnerships. They are receptive to participating in some type of “policy summit” here in Belknap County to discuss creating a system of care for children and families, inclusive of treatment and services, entry through aftercare. Alan anticipates hosting this summit sometime this spring and inviting a small and targeted group of key local, county, and state decision makers and stakeholders.

3. **Guest Speaker** Ryan Barrieau of the NH Child and Family Services Adolescent Treatment Initiative (ATI) was introduced by Council member, Laurie Belanger, as someone who has been “very helpful” in the Gilford Middle High School efforts on behalf of students handicapped by substance use.

The Adolescent Treatment Initiative is funded through a 5-year grant from New Futures with resources through a large bequest made to the NH Charitable Foundation. The Belknap County component of this ATI is in its 3rd year of funding. ATI provides appropriate teens with an initial consultation, thorough assessment, and ongoing treatment that includes families. A unique aspect of ATI is that they are “entirely portable”, meaning they “move to the kids, rather than expecting them to come to them”. They are able to meet youth and their families in school, home, and community settings.

ATI uses the G.A.I.N. assessment tool (Global Appraisal of Individual Needs) for referred youth which allows them to design more accurate and targeted treatment plans. The reliability and validity of the GAIN assessment tool is recognized nationally by insurance providers and by court systems.

The ATI approach to treatment includes the 14-session A.C.R.A. (Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach) program. Youth are coached to recognize their internal triggers for using substances. ATI explores a variety of contributing issues that lead kids to substance use/abuse. Kids learn communication skills and how to problem solve. Ten of the 14 sessions are directly with the youth; two are with the parents and two are with the entire family. The ATI Case Manager, Hilary Hartford, also works with the teens on developing supports within the community.

Referrals to the ATI program come from schools, service providers, the court system, and self-referrals. Initially, there was some understandable resistance from the court system because of their fear that ATI would not be a long-term resource. However, the newly-organized Drug Court is using ATI more frequently. ATI is able to offer shorter waiting times for services than other providers. This year they developed an MOU with the New Hampton School representing their first attempt with a private boarding school. They are building good relationships with the public schools and with community service providers. ATI was recently asked by County Attorney Jim Carroll to provide services to the older teen/young adult (ages 17-21), allowing them to avoid incarceration.

There are two components to the ATI Follow-Up process. (1) After a youth completes treatment, they are followed through Assertive Continuing Care, a program that helps youth with other contributing issues such as employment, home-related challenges, and other obstacles to their maintenance of treatment goals. (2) A research study is tracking if and how ATI services are successful. Youth are followed for a year after completing treatment; they are seen and re-assessed at 3, 6, and 12 months intervals.

As ATI is still considered a new program they are in the beginning stages of generating outcomes data in Belknap County. ATI is focused on modifying the definition of “success” to not just total abstinence from alcohol, but to a substantial change in behavior patterns, which then ultimately leads to a reduction in use.

Council member, Laurie Belanger, presented Ryan a Certificate of Appreciation from the Council to Ryan for his “outstanding work and success” with the ATI program, most specifically in school settings.

On a related note, Council members were urged to contact their local representatives to discuss the implications of HB 1178 that proposes an increase in the alcoholic content of flavored malt beverages.

Technical assistance for ATI comes from New Futures, the program funders; both Maria Gagnon and Joe Diamant are easily available for technical training and assistance.

4. Work Group Reports –

- ***Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ)*** *Gil Schohan reporting* BARJ will meet on Tuesday, Feb 19th to re-set goals for this workgroup. New members are welcomed.
- ***Prevention*** – *Micheline Roy reporting* Katy Shea from the Partners in Prevention, the new Belknap-Carroll County coalition, was the guest at the last Prevention workgroup meeting. Katy explained a bit of the background of this regionally-based prevention initiative. Partners in Prevention is the name of the coalition for Region C (Belknap and Carroll Counties) and is one of ten similar prevention oriented regions in the state organized by the NH Division of Public Health Services as an infrastructure for receiving prevention-oriented federal funds. This statewide initiative is based on the Strategic Prevention Framework, an innovative public health model involving grass-root community efforts in the assessment of public health issues, and targeted implementation of evidence-based strategies to address concerns. NH is one of 26 states funded in this manner by the federal Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP). As substance abuse has been identified as a top priority in NH, these federal dollars will be used here in NH to address substance abuse issues.
- ***Executive Committee*** – *Sarah Fox reporting*
Council Retreat Point persons designated to organize follow-up from each of the four break-out groups at the January retreat reported their progress.
 - Comprehensive System of Care – *Betty Anson* (with Laurie Belanger, Katie Brandt, and Micheline as other participants) They are now exploring what else is happening in the area and around the country. They would like to survey professionals about current efforts. This effort should dovetail with the similar systems development work now underway in the county’s juvenile justice system of care.
ACTION: Betty will meet with Alan to discuss how the two efforts can best work together. She will report on progress at next Council meeting.
 - The Council Is Alive and Well in 2010 – *Christie Corrigan* (with Andre Paquette and Dick Wallace as members) The Council must always be focused on member recruitment. They are reviewing the Council By-laws for any provisions that might be barriers to recruitment. They suggest a yearly newsletter on the Council and its activities that should accompany, or be a part of the Juvenile Justice Report Card. They want to resurrect the Member Development sub-committee and request additional leadership to carry the momentum for recruitment forward and to work in tandem with other Council initiatives.
ACTION: Christie and Council staff will determine how to work with ad-hoc Member Development committee. A progress report will be given at the next Council meeting.

- Better relationships between community and young people – *Sandy McLaughlin* (with Nancy Porosky) While not interested in developing yet “another program”, they would like to focus on small pilot groups, such as one classroom in one school where they could learn more about how to assist children and youth in feeling respected, valued, and a part of their community. They are interested in the pre-middle and middle school years, as this age is often when youth make life-altering choices. Suggestions include asking students to complete a survey that points to individual student interests and then matching these students with adults with similar interests. These connections could occur at selected points during the school day. The inter-generational programs now occurring in Laconia Elementary School, (and highlighted at the recent Belknap County Convocation on Children and Families) could provide a logical setting. Council members also suggested Project EXTRA for such a pilot study. Older teens can also fill this type of “mentor role” for children. It was also suggested that the Student Aspirations model, now underway in a variety of personalized education models in area schools, could provide a framework and rationale for such an initiative. Sandy and Nancy are interested “in starting small”.

ACTION: Sandy will discuss ideas further with Alan and will provide an update at next Council meeting.

- Media Group – *Emily Clement* (with Amy Hall and Sarah Fox) The Council’s message should be tailored to specifically targeted groups. Use fresh media outlets, such as My Space, Face Book, blogs etc. Council members could review the Council “calendar of activities” and then select activities “that speak to them”. Council members should feel empowered by these specific issues and certainly submit personal letters to the Editors of local print media or other alternative media outlets.

ACTION: The group will create some sort of list of activities organized by months for review at a future Council meeting.

5. **Approve Minutes of Council Retreat (January 18, 2008)** A motion to approve these minutes as written was made by Micheline Roy with a second offered by Laurie Belanger. Motion carried.

6. **Public Comment** No member of the general public attended this Council meeting.

7. **Other Business** Christie Corrigan said that the “Road To Resilience” conference that she and several other Council members attended on February 11th “was excellent”! Rasim Gusinac noted that ten refugees in the Laconia area are now out of work because of the current economic downturn. The Laconia Refugee Connections Committee is working with NH Department of Employment Security to find new employment for these people.

ACTION: Council members who know of any employment opportunities should contact Rasim.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

DATE: March 21, 2008 TIME: 8am-10am

LOCATION: River Level Conference Room, Busiel Mill, Laconia

Director's Report

Citizens Council Meeting

February 15, 2008

CATEGORY	TOPIC & SPONSOR	STATUS
Community Forums	Convocation - 2008	Save the date: January 22 nd and 23 rd . Will be held at the Expo Center again. Registered 231; fed 214. Community Commentary – Laconia Citizen
	Public Forums- Juvenile Justice	Planning to present information on Juvenile Justice programs in the midst of controversy over municipal funding. Belmont scheduled for 3-4-08 at 6:30 PM Belmont Middle School Cafeteria. LRPA-TV taping 2-19-08 (Jim Carroll, Jim Sawyer, Jay Apicelli)
	Faith Community Forum	Session held at Taylor Community on 2-7-08. Seven representatives attended. Great discussion and ideas for follow-up.
Initiatives	Victims Rights Committee	Developing a Victims' Satisfaction Survey. Assessing process and continued use.
	Legislative Initiative	HB1370 Heard in Committee 1-22-08; Sub-committee action 2-14-08 (Amended); Will "Exec" the Bill 2/21/08
	Policy Summit	To identify needs of children and families in Belknap County and plan future collaboration among state, county and local partners. Sarah, Andre and Alan met with Commissioner Toumpas and Division Directors Fenniman (DJJS) and Bishop (DCYF) on 2-7-08. Gained support for future partnerships.
Coalitions	Community Prevention Coalition (CPC)	Katy Shea (Evaluator) met with Prevention Work Group on 2-5-08
	Safe Schools Coalition (WRSD)	Shooting for Open Space Forum for April 12 at Lakes Region Community College. Preliminary planning session with youth representatives on 2-19-08.
	Program Integration Committee	Major changes occurring in this area. Two subgroups: Stakeholder Development and Model Design
	Community Assessment	Discussions continue with United Way and Lakes Region Partners for Public Health – Development of a comprehensive community assessment and plan.
Council Business	Council Recruitment and Community Outreach	Membership Committee to activate recruitment initiatives. Need to continue to keep the push on.
	Juvenile Justice related bills	HB-159: Inter-branch Criminal and Juvenile Justice Commission; HB584-FN: Age of Minority for purpose of juvenile proceedings from 17 to 18.
	CFY '08 Budget	County Convention Sub-committee held January 11, 2008 at 2:00 PM County Convention Public Hearing February 19, 2008 at 7:00 PM at County Complex
	Council Retreat	Summary and Evaluations have been sent to Committee members. Follow-up action by subcommittees needed.