

Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families

MEETING SUMMARY

COMMITTEE: Citizens Council

DATE: Friday, September 13, 2002

TIME BEGAN: 8:05am **TIME ENDED:** 10:07am **FACILITATED BY:** Gil Schohan **SUMMARY BY:** Judy Buswell

PRESENT: Peter Michaud, Leo Sanfacon, Mark Condodemetraky, Sheila Weeks, Rob Rovella, Sue Smith, Kevin Washburn, Dick Wallace, Linda Brewer, Mary Alice Warner, Evelyn Auger, Jim Carroll, John Irwin **STAFF:** Alan Robichaud, Judy Buswell **GUESTS:** Judge Willard Martin **EXCUSED:** Alida Millham, Cathy Apfel, Andre Paquette, Jim Pilliod **ABSENT:** Wes Colby

1. **Call to Order and Introductions etc:** Welcome to Julie Lyche from Deschutes County, Oregon. All present introduced themselves to Julie.
2. **Approval of Minutes – August 9th:** Motion made by Sue Smith; second by Sheila Weeks. Passed by voice vote.
3. **Discussion with Julie:** Julie started her career in juvenile justice as a JPPO. She also worked as a substance abuse counselor in a locked facility for boys and then for other youth. These experiences motivated her to move into the prevention field and for the past 3 ½ years, she has been the Prevention Coordinator for the Deschutes Commission on Children and Families. In the context of working with the Deschutes CYF, she shared the following information:
 - As Deschutes is the only County Commission in Oregon that has a lay board, there was some resistance from other counties and with Deschutes providers. They are often called the “State of Deschutes”. Relationships are improved, but will always be a challenge to keep these stable.
 - Their PAC plays a critical role in informing the Commission members and in relationship building.
 - Creating their Community Plan took a long time.
 - As part of the discussion topics at their Community Forums they asked two questions of their audience: (1) If our emphasis is to be on prevention, at what age should we start? (2) If we want to prevent juvenile crime, what three strategies should we use? The answers to these questions gave “a nice road map for their focus”.
 - Deschutes had guest speakers (luminaries in the field of substance abuse and juvenile justice i.e. Peter Greenwood and the head of the Oregon Division of Drug and Alcohol Program) to introduce the topic of prevention at their forums. These experts lent legitimacy to the process. We need an “expert” present to define what the issues are and to set the groundwork for the discussion.
 - Deschutes CYF decided that the “umbrella” for their focus, programs, and activities is “preventing juvenile crime”. They are not focusing on adult crime, elder issues, transportation problems, or childhood immunizations etc, but refer people to those other entities that do focus on these areas. This “umbrella” of focus still includes responsibility for a number of other problem areas: teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, school dropouts, parenting education etc.

- As the definition of “prevention” is vague, Deschutes felt it was necessary to develop its own definition and parameters. “Prevention” in Deschutes (1) begins with activities and programs for all children, such as utilizing research-based curriculum in schools (*Universal*); (2) introduces activities etc for the higher risk population, or those who have a number of risk factors in place, but no evidenced behaviors (*Selective*); and (3) continues with programs and activities for targeted specific individuals, those who have exhibited some risk behaviors (*Indicated*). At this point, if laws have been broken, assessments can be done, but then the youth are referred for “treatment” and their responsibility for “prevention” ends.
- Deschutes combines two current prevention philosophies: (1) 40 Developmental Assets <http://www.search-institute.org/> and (2) Resiliency Development with identifying Risk and Protective Factors http://www.preventionscience.com/prev_sci/prev_sci.html. They use the Development Assets model to survey youth in schools
- It is very important that Belknap Citizens Council be clear in their definition of prevention and at what point prevention ends, before forums begin. This definition is shared at the community forums.
- Deschutes issued invitations to key leaders of their communities (governments, business, politics, education, faith etc) as well as to the general community
- “How do you get people to attend the forums?” Julie said: “Food helps! But making those personal connections is imperative. Take the time to personally invite people.” It also works to co-sponsor these forums with other appropriate organizations, such as PTO’s etc. Of course, the usual use of the media is important (press releases, feature stories, radio PSA’s etc.)
- Deschutes distributed a short survey at the end of each forum for the audience to complete. This survey was just a list of priority areas (most of which we can anticipate ahead of these forums) and we asked our audience to prioritize what they feel should be addressed first. This activity provides focus for what, how, and when the Council can address these problems. This survey also helps to reduce discussion around areas outside the domain of the Council. Picking a focus leads to better marketing (social marketing).
- Some people do not like this “forum/discussion” process and want to start immediately with activity. They will need to understand why planning is important.
- We should begin early to collect data. Data informs outcomes, and being able to demonstrate and articulate outcomes is critical.
- Engage lead folks in each community to help with planning these forums and with all Council activities. The Council cannot do this job alone. Don’t forget to engage the faith community.
- The approach to these community forums should be “We know your community is different than many others in this area. That is why we are here – to learn from you what is important and needed in your community.”
- The forums need a strong facilitator.
- The Council cannot achieve their goals unless other people are also involved in our activities.
- Deschutes needed several years of internal planning before they held their forums. (It was pointed out that as the Deschutes Commission, and all others in Oregon, were mandated by state law, they could take that extra time. However, our Council exists through a special proclamation from the County Delegation

and in order for funding to be tax-based, we feel a need to quickly demonstrate our worth.

- We should establish our own “evaluation criteria” such as the number of new collaborations developed through Council resources, the amount of grant dollars we helped bring into County by working with other agencies and organizations, and by measuring public awareness of issues affecting children and families and public understanding of what is needed to resolve these issues etc. This information can be generated through some type of “Community Report”.
- Julie used a marketing strategy that identified what it cost to house one juvenile in the State Youth Center (\$48,500/year). This figure was equated to the number of parenting classes that could be held for this sum, the number of substance abuse treatment sessions, etc. This information was incorporated into a PR/education message for the public.
- The Deschutes PAC was organized before their forums began. PAC members were involved in planning these forums.
- We should be sure to use all the information we glean from the forum to “map” all needs in the community. We need to acknowledge who else might be working on specific issues and we need to be strategic in determining our priorities. Julie said, “It is a tough job to figure all this out.”
- If our Council ever becomes “a funding entity” as is Deschutes, we can anticipate specific benefits and specific problems associated with distributing funds through a competitive process. Benefits include the additional strength and leverage that is associated by granting funds, making it somewhat easier to establish and work on specific priorities. However, some agencies that have relied on grant funds to sustain them, will not understand, nor be happy that their activities now fall outside specific Council priorities and will not receive funds from Council.
- OUTCOMES: It is important to use and promote “research-based” prevention programs. Do not waste time on strategies that have not been proven to deliver results.
- “Research-based/science-based” programs include parent education, mentoring, home visits by professionals to at-risk families who have children, 0 to 2 years. More information available from “Blueprints”
<http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/> and “Communities That Care”.
<http://www.preventionscience.com/ctc/CTC.html>
- We must plan to report back to the communities. This does not need to be formal or fancy. A letter to those who participated in community forums, explaining the direction the Council has taken due to their input, is important. We must recognize all input, even if we cannot take on these areas immediately.
- Be careful with workload; know that staff can manage the workload without burnout due to many long work weeks needed to accomplish goals.
- HANDOUTS: Julie distributed handouts (1) Community Planning (2) Benefits Seen in Deschutes and (3) “Lessons Learned”. (Attached to these minutes.) She reviewed these handouts.
- Julie said that while Scott Johnson (Executive Director of Deschutes CYF) is her supervisor, Prevention Programming is completely managed by her, not Scott.
- Deschutes County has a lobbyist.
- Deschutes operates from the “Community Youth Investment” statute that returns to Deschutes the money it would cost to house their youth at the state youth detention facility (about \$600,000.) with the understanding that Deschutes will handle these kids locally at a reduced cost. The excess from these funds is used

to fund prevention activities. Currently they use about 25% -30% (\$200,000.) of the \$600,000.on prevention. The message should be “not to save money, but to use it more efficiently, by using resources to prevent the problem, not just to treat”. Their mantra is “If you’re going to be tough, then let’s be productive!”

- COMMENTS from Council members:
 - a) The “prevention” concept is hard to sell to legislators and the public, as the results are usually not visible for at least 5 years. It is hard to think “long term” when there are immediate financial crises looming.
 - b) Most people, who do not know much about the juvenile justice system, think that all is well, especially when they have no direct experience with the system. Their belief is, “If it ain’t broke, then don’t fix it!” We need to tell people that much of the system is broken and not working effectively.
 - c) Our community forums must go with “the challenge and opportunity of working with a new generation”.
 - d) We cannot be all things to all people, i.e. grantwriting, creating linkages, developing and managing community projects etc.

ACTION NEEDED:

- **Julie will send to staff:**
 - **Copies of all handouts**
 - **A sample tape of PSA’s they have used**
 - **Chart on Deschutes Scope of Prevention**
 - **Definition of Prevention from the Institute of Medicine**
 - **Community Prevention & Family Events glossy poster**