

Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families

MEETING SUMMARY

Belknap County Citizens Council on Children and Families

DATE: Friday, September 21, 2007

TIME BEGAN: 8:05am **TIME ENDED:** 10:00am **FACILITATED BY:** Sarah Fox **SUMMARY BY:** Judy Buswell

PRESENT: Micheline Roy, Nancy Porosky, Amy Hall, Rich Moed, Christie Corrigan, Rasim Gusinac, Emily Clement, Betty Anson, Sue Smith, Gil Schohan, Sarah Fox, Mary Alice Warner, Katie Brandt **COUNCIL ASSOCIATES:** Andre Paquette, Alida Millham, Dick Wallace, Jim Pilliod **STAFF:** Judy Buswell, Alan Robichaud

1. **Welcome and Introductions:** Welcome extended to Council Associates
2. **Additions/Amendments to the Agenda** No amendments or additions to the Agenda
3. **Council Recruitment Activity** - *Sarah Fox* Recruiting Council members is an ongoing challenge. A small committee met earlier this summer to develop a process for this recruitment. Betty Anson, a member of this committee, suggested that this process should be tied in some way to the founding document, The Proclamation, by asking: What would not have been done if the Council were not present? What has worked? The Executive Committee will collate and distill this information into “elevator speeches” that can be used in conversations with others and with potential Council members. Statements will also be prepared that outline the benefits of Council membership to businesses and employees.

Council members were then divided into three groups, each group led by a member of the Council Executive Committee and each group assigned a strategy described in the Proclamation: Comprehensive Planning, Advocacy & Collaboration, and Stewardship.. Forty minutes was devoted to this group activity. (A summary of these break-out group discussions is available in a separate document.)

4. **General Reports and Comments**

- ***Laconia Multicultural Market Day*** – *Rasim Gusinac* This year’s event on September 8th designed to highlight the numerous cultures now in the Lakes Region through cuisine, crafts, and the performing arts, was “very successful with excellent feedback from many people”. Judy Buswell, Council staff, was an active member of the Planning Committee.
- ***New Jobs*** Amy Hall has a new job as the Director of Development for the Granite State Dairy Commission. Sarah Fox is now working with the NH Court System. In this role she will have access to judges.
- ***Parent Support Group*** – *Nancy Porosky* This fledgling group, now one year old, has ongoing recruitment challenges. While several changes in the format and venue have been made, it is still very difficult to attract parents. There is current discussion on developing a statewide parent support program (F.A.S.T.E.R) that will have a uniform name and consistent activities. However, this statewide program will focus only on issues around substance use. Nancy would like the platform for her group to be broader and inclusive of other challenges that parents face. Nancy will be talking with judges, asking them to recommend this group to court-involved parents.

A lengthy discussion included the following:

- Nancy will continue the networking with JJAC members. This appears to be a good source.
- Families with abuse and neglect issues could be appropriate candidates for the program.

- There is concern that if attendance is court-ordered the program could be stigmatized which might discourage other parents from attending. The goal would not be to order parents to attend, but to suggest they attend.
 - If court-involved parents attend, there should be clear outcome expectations from the judge for both the parents and group leaders.
 - Both the Youth Services Bureau and the Youth Assistance Program in Tilton should be informed about this program and be ready to refer appropriate parents.
 - Perhaps this group should have a stronger education focus? CYA in Alton has an education focus and is getting 15-30 parents at a time for their events.
- ACTION: Andre Paquette will send Youth Services Bureau contact information to Nancy.**
- ***NH Children's Trust Fund Annual Event*** – *Katie Brandt* NHCTF is observing its 20th anniversary at the Grappone Center on October 18th. Two individuals will be honored from Belknap County for their service to children and families: Bud Martin and Dawn McCartney of Barnstead. The Council has bought a table for 10 and honorees Bud Martin and his family will sit at the Council table. There are several spaces still available for Council members to attend. Amy Hall is the “point person” for developing and hosting the Council display, a program component from 5:30-6:30pm.
- ACTION: Council members interested in attending this dinner and activity should contact Council staff asap.**
- ***Parenting from the Inside Out*** – *Mary Alice Warner* “Parenting...from the Inside Out” offers youth living in Belknap County and their parents an opportunity to meet with incarcerated fathers to discuss and share the challenges and strengths of parenting in today’s world. The inmate fathers have completed an 18-hour course that prepares them to participate. According to Mary Alice, this program could be very effective, but they do not have referrals. The LR Facility staff is very busy, making it difficult for them to help in promoting this program. Mary Alice plans to make the rounds again to potential referral sources.

5. Work Group Reports –

- ***Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ)*** *Gil Schohan reporting* A BARJ committee is planning a one day seminar on October 18th for school crisis teams on managing juvenile victims of crime. Strategies for promoting dignity and respect for all involved will be discussed. The seminar will be held at Woodside, Taylor Community. Dr. Paul DeMinico, Superintendent of the Gilford School District, will introduce the day. The seminar will be facilitated by Chris Gribbons. Fifty to sixty members of school crisis teams from around the county are expected to attend.
- ***Prevention*** – *Micheline Roy reporting* This workgroup is helping to plan Focus Groups with members of defined community sectors to discuss how each sector promotes the eight Aspirations, the core component of the *Follow The Child* program now underway in the Laconia schools and other schools in the county. The Council’s goal is to work with the schools by facilitating partnerships in the community that will consciously support the *Follow the Child* initiative. The Prevention Workgroup is also collaborating with the UpStream Professional Development workgroup as they would like to offer professional development training for the community around the eight aspirations. The Appalachian Mountain Teen Project has been contracted by the Citizens Council to design the format of, and conduct these Focus Groups that are scheduled for late fall. AMTP Assistant Director, Dan Kusch, who is also a member of the Prevention Work Group, and hopefully, some youth will attend the next Prevention Work Group meeting on October 2nd.

Micheline said that at their last meeting Deb Rosato, a member of the Prevention Workgroup and the coordinator of early learning programs in the Lakes Region through the Lakes Region Community Services Council, shared impressions of the recent discussion on early learning initiatives that she had with business leaders. The Council sponsored this luncheon meeting with business leaders.

The annual CoRe Fall Festival in Meredith, a day of family activities, is scheduled for September 22nd. Jen Vincent has been appointed the new Director of the CoRe Coalition.

- **Executive Committee** – *Christie Corrigan* This committee will continue developing Council member recruitment strategies. Today’s discussion is one step in this process. Council Associates contribute a valuable perspective in this planning.

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

- **Policy Summit** The Council’s Data Committee will incorporate data on Child Abuse and Neglect provided by Carol Schonfeld into a “white paper” that focuses on the high costs of caring for youth outside the County. This information will then be shared in some manner in the late fall/early winter with targeted stakeholders in Belknap County and the State of New Hampshire.
- **Community Prevention Coalition.** The newly formed coalition in Belknap and Carroll Counties, an infrastructure for planning and delivery of federal grant-funded prevention services, will soon hire a full-time Coordinator. The bi-county coalition also hopes to partner with the Concord Coalition to hire a professional evaluator.
- **AMTP Focus Groups and Early Learning Initiatives** was discussed in the Prevention Work Group report.
- **Program Integration** A small committee that includes JJAC Chair, Andre Paquette; City Prosecutor Jim Sawyer; Lee Duncan, YSB Board member; and others is now discussing options for some merging of programs between Youth Services Bureau and the Belknap County Restorative Justice Program. Several scenarios and their respective budgets are now being prepared for the Commissioners. There are no expectations that this collaboration will save money but rather to more effectively incorporate Restorative Justice programs into the continuum of sanctions for juvenile offenders. Such a merger could also strengthen other components such as Community Service, Victims’ Services, and the like. There are many challenges in developing appropriate scenarios for a potential merger because of differing funding streams, accountabilities, and organizational governance structures.

It should be understood that the proposed shifting of funding responsibilities between the state and county (House Bill 2) does not impact the funding of either of these two county juvenile programs. This integration workgroup expects they will be able to offer a proposal to the County Commissioners in October.

- **Reclaiming Futures** The Reclaiming Futures Community Development Fellowship has prepared a written monograph, as have three other RF Fellowships. Alan is a member of this national workgroup. Judge Martin, who is a member of the RF Judicial Fellowship, will be hosting a conference for judges to introduce a national curriculum, developed by the Judicial Fellowship.
- **Council Member Recruitment** (*discussed above*)
- **Council Budget Suspense** is due to County Administrator Nancy Cook. This budget will be reviewed as in previous years, with final approval in February or March of 2008. The only proposed change in the Council’s 2008 proposed budget provides for the addition of a 2-person healthcare plan.

7. **Approve Minutes of August 17, 2007 meeting of the Citizens Council** A motion to approve these minutes as written was made by Emily Clement with a second offered by Rich Moed. Motion carried.

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

<u>NEXT COUNCIL MEETING</u>	
DATE: October 19, 2007	TIME: 8am-10am
LOCATION: River Level Conference Room, Busiel Mill, Laconia	

Director's Report

Citizens Council Meeting

September 21, 2007

CATEGORY	TOPIC & SPONSOR	STATUS
Community Forums	Convocation - 2008	Save the date: January 22 nd and 24 th .
Initiatives	Victims Rights Committee	Developing a Victims' Satisfaction Survey. Currently going through a committee vetting process. Seminar scheduled for October 18 th .
	Legislative Initiative	Legislative committee to meet on September 12. (Juvenile case tracking)
	UpStream Professional Development Session	Juvenile Justice Services in Belknap County – October 3, 2007 Woodside at Taylor Community
	School Crisis Team Workshop	Victim Rights Committee – Day-long series focused on safety and victim's response in schools – October 18, 2007
	Policy Summit	To identify needs of children and families in Belknap County and plan future collaboration among state, county and local partners. Discussion paper in progress.
Coalitions	Community Prevention Coalition (CPC)	Awaiting contract approval by Governor and Council (APPROVED: 8/22/07). Now interviewing for Coalition Coordinator and Evaluator.
	Follow the Child	A. Appalachian Mountain Teen Project agreement underway to conduct focus group discussions with various community sectors. B. Held business leaders Luncheon on 8/22/07. Follow-up proceeding in conjunction with Deb Rosato. Belknap County Early Learning Council
	Safe Schools Coalition (WRSD)	Open Space Forum being planned for October 13th.
	Program Integration Committee	Youth Services Bureau and Restorative Justice examining potential consolidation scenarios. Process is continuing. Will take to County Commissioners hopefully in October.
	Community Assessment	Discussions continue with United Way and Lakes Region Partners for Public Health – Development of a comprehensive community assessment and plan
	Reclaiming Futures	Community Fellowship Monograph at www.reclaimingfutures.org
Council Business	Council Recruitment and Community Outreach	Membership Committee to activate recruitment initiatives. Prospective application expected soon. (Kate Miller: Currently resides in Meredith but plans to relocate to Laconia)
	Chapter 263 – Funding for youth services	Monitoring Commission progress on legislation. Ongoing to June 30, 2008
	CFY '08 Budget	Budget Suspence due to Nancy Cook 9/21/07. Delivered 7/17/07.