

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**COMMITTEE:** Prevention Work Group

**DATE:** Tuesday, May 26, 2009

**TIME BEGAN:** 9:11am **TIME ENDED:** 10:35 **FACILITATED BY:** Micheline Roy **SUMMARY BY:** Judy Buswell

**PRESENT:** Emily Clement, Dan Kusch, Micheline Roy, Laurie Belanger, Mary Alice Warner, Katy Shea, Deb Rosato,

**STAFF:** Alan Robichaud, Judy Buswell

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1. **Background** Thanks to Emily for hosting today's meeting in her home and to Emily and others for bringing fruit, beverages, and breakfast breads.

The Citizens Council is now seeking alternative paths and funding sources so that Council work can continue beyond December 31, 2009 when County funds expire. The Council Executive Committee is exploring several options: (1) identifying an appropriate 501-c3 partner that will act as a Fiscal Agent for Council funds (2) File for its own 501-c3 status; and (3) identifying appropriate funding sources. Without access to a 501-c3 status or an appropriate Fiscal Agent, the Council cannot accept grant funds. However, if the Council held its own 501-c3 status, it could potentially make the Council a competitor with other 501-c3 organizations that are now our partners. It is anticipated that much of these choices will be clearer once the Council has determined the path it will follow after December 31<sup>st</sup>. The Citizens Council has asked the workgroups it sponsors, including this Prevention Work Group to identify their needs and goals in Prevention and the resources required to reach these goals.

A rich discussion followed for the next hour or so where group members talked about an appropriate focus for prevention work in Belknap County. The group acknowledged: that "prevention" is a wide target; that many organizations connected with the Council are already working in specific arenas of prevention; and Council prevention efforts should complement these efforts.

Katy Shea referred to a recent seminar featuring Jay Connor: [www.thecollaboratory.us/collaboratorycs/index.html](http://www.thecollaboratory.us/collaboratorycs/index.html) that she attended this past week. For example, "from his work with leaders of diverse constituencies in communities across America, Jay has seen that in order to be effective, emerging community leaders must be comfortable at the intersection not only of organizations and cultures but also at the intersection of the nonprofit, business and governmental sectors." Katy notes parallels to today's discussion about helping to facilitate collaborative prevention efforts across a variety of organizations. The Focus Group project sponsored by the Citizens Council during 2008 within designated community sectors to discuss how specific community sectors can influence and support the hopes and dreams of youth in partnership with many school's efforts around personalized education is one good example of working across numerous intersections.

We must ask exactly what is the goal and strategy for the Prevention Work Group? Discussion points included:

- Could the Prevention Work Group take a 30,000 foot view and have a central clearinghouse function?
- Understanding that the Citizens Council "prevention efforts" inform and support the principles of Community Justice should help to specify what areas of prevention work the Council can pursue.
- Does the Belknap County Systems Integration Initiative now managed by the Citizens Council offer any opportunities for prevention work?
- As the Council is not a direct service provider, it has the advantage of being able to "step back" from a client focus, and perhaps more accurately assess needs and match resources to these needs. The Council along with the groups it supports may be one of just a few entities able to do this.
- This assessment process should include a profile of Prevention Work Group members to identify the gaps and overlaps in the networks represented by its members.

- How are we affecting change? Can we articulate these changes? What motivates our group?
- Could the Council and the Prevention Work Group take on a major role with public awareness of the Systems Integration Initiative model, helping to highlight how juvenile justice relates to all the points on the Web of Challenges: domestic violence, child abuse, substance abuse, and mental health issues? This more comprehensive view of prevention has the potential to bring in more funds and other resources.
- We must not lose sight of the need to begin early in a child’s life and the importance of working within family settings.
- Another resource cited in this discussion that supports “starting early” is the work of Geoffrey Canada who started a charter school in Harlem called the Harlem Children’s Zone <http://www.hcz.org/what-is-hcz/about-geoffrey-canada/53-about-geoffrey-canada>
- In discussing the “Follow The Child” project in the Laconia School District and other related personalized education programs in area schools, Laurie Belanger cited the Center for Prevention, Hate and Violence.: <http://www.preventinghate.org/> Based at the University of Maine in Farmington, this group is now working in the Gilford schools.
- While the work of the Prevention Work Group could be folded into LR United Way as a “Community Impact” group, the members of the Prevention Work Group prefer that their efforts be included within the context of the Citizens Council.

Dan Kusch noted that Belknap County needs “an entity that isn’t already talking about specific risk factors and targeted demographics” but one that can take a wider view of prevention, specifically around public awareness and support. He wonders if one focus for the Council workgroup might be to conduct broad educational/awareness events such as the Belknap County Convocation on Children and Families and the Schmitt UnSung Hero presentation. He suggests perhaps adding 3-4 other educational events, organizing them into “residency” formats. The featured guest would interact with a variety of community organizations ranging from schools, service clubs, nursing homes, churches etc over several days and then conclude with a presentation for the general public. Judy noted that this “residency format” works well with artists and allows direct interaction across the community, driving people to the culminating public event.

We would need to frame a longer-term process with outcomes for these events as one-time presentations are labeled “spray and pray”; research shows that one-time, un-connected efforts do not have a long-term impact.

While volunteers would be heavily involved, there still needs to be someone who is overseeing the process. The question then becomes: “How much time and resources does organizing these events require?”

**ACTION: Judy and Alan will prepare some sort of summary of how much and what type of administrative support would be needed to coordinate a comprehensive community event.**

2. **“Helping Kids To Hope” – Developing Youth Aspirations in Community Settings** Because of several pressing matters, the Laconia School District is not able to proceed with a presentation of the “Helping Kids to Hope” publication to an open School Board Meeting this school year. HKTH results from Focus Group discussions held within four community sectors during 2008 on the topic of promoting youth aspirations, hopes, and dreams in specific community settings. The goal has been to present this publication and its associated findings to the general public as soon as possible. In lieu of a presentation with the Laconia School Board, other strategies for immediate dissemination to the public include filming a panel discussion with some of the participants for LR Public Access TV and holding a media briefing. This launching of Helping Kids to Hope can be followed by an event in the fall that would include the school board.

**ACTION: Judy will contact Denise Beauchaine at LRPA TV re potential of filming a panel discussion for airing throughout the summer. Judy and Alan will organize some form of media briefing in tandem with the LRPATV program.**

**NEXT MEETING**  
**WHEN: TBA      WHERE: TBA**