

The Family Resource Center at Gorham

**Annual Report
July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2007**



Strengthening Families.....

Building Communities.....



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September 17, 2007

Dear Friends

The Family Resource Center is celebrating its 10th year as an incorporated non-profit. In ten years the Center has grown from an organization with a budget of \$35,000 and a part time Director into an organization with 50 full and part time staff members and a budget of over one million dollars.

As the Center has grown in size and reach, we have developed a clearer understanding of how the decline of the paper industry, the loss of good paying jobs and the exodus of young families combine to create a diminished sense of community and a feeling of hopelessness about the future for our communities. This social and economic uncertainty has had a significant impact on the lives of the children, youth and families of the area and The Family Resource Center board and staff have redefined the Center's priorities to address these changing needs.

In 1997 the Family Resource Center focused all its resources and energy on programs for youth and support programs for families with young children. Our first programs included an after school program for middle school students in Gorham and home visiting and support programs for families with infants and toddlers. These programs continue to be an important part of how the Center supports the community today. It became clear, however, in 2001 when the mills closed, that there was also a need for programs that would strategically address some of the specific challenges facing these communities.

In 2004 the Family Resource Center received a large multi year grant from the NH Dept. of Education to create afterschool programs for students in grades 1-8 in Berlin. The Berlin Schools had been identified as "schools in need of improvement" by No Child Left Behind. In 2005 the Resource Center, in partnership with the Androscoggin Valley Economic Recovery Corporation, the Community Technical College and area employers created JOBPro to provide entry level workers with life and technical skills to improve their ability to find and keep a job.

More recently, the Center has added financial information and literacy programs that teach children and families how to manage and save their money, a youth suicide prevention program designed to address the fact that Coos County has the highest rate of youth suicide in the State and an employee support program that links low wage workers with public benefits.

The success of the Family Resource Center over the last 10 years is directly related to the organization's ability to strategically assess community issues, to create collaborations and shared resources and to develop clear plans that address the identified needs. The Family Resource Center does not just provide programs, it also provides community leadership and hope for a new future for the children, youth and families of Coos County.

Catherine P. McDowell

Executive Director





Mission Statement

The Family Resource Center at Gorham

Will encourage all community members as individuals, and as members of groups and organizations to come together to share information, to learn about resources, to build communication and to move toward collaborative solutions regarding issues affecting both their individual quality of life and the quality of life of the community as a whole.



Highlights

Of

2007

For

The

Family

Resource

Center



Grant from JC Penney

The Family Resource Center @ Gorham has received a grant from the JC Penney Foundation for \$25,000 to provide scholarships to students in the afterschool program who may drop out of the program due to economic hardship. Along with the scholarship money, the grant also provides \$50.00 gift cards for 50 participating students to buy their "back to school" clothes.

Presidents' Community Partner Award

On April 17, 2007 the New Hampshire Community Technical College-Berlin awarded the Family Resource Center the Presidents' Community Partner Award in honor of the Center's service and commitment to the communities of New Hampshire.

Funding from the Tillotson Foundation

The Family Resource Center was one of only two organizations (out of 18 funded) to receive a multi-year grant in the first round of the newly created Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund. In March, the Louise and Neil Tillotson Foundation awarded the Family Resource Center @ Gorham, and its partners-Weeks Medical Center, Northern Human Services, Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital and Child and Family Services \$100,000 a year for the next three years to develop a comprehensive system for family support services in Coos County.

This effort is designed to look at what is currently available for families in Coos County, what the needs are, what systems are working in other areas and what we will need to measurably improve outcomes for children 0-5 and their families. Our goal is to strengthen and improve the current system-not create new programs. The partners have hired the Carsey Institute at UNH to look at indicators, best practice and evaluation for this project.

Award Winning Video for FRC

The Family Resource Center @ Gorham was selected from over 50 applications by **Heartwood Media** of Manchester to receive a free DVD promoting the Center and its work with children, youth and families in the community. The DVD received a bronze medal from the national "Telly Awards" in the human services video category for 2007. Call the Center at 466-5190 if you would like to receive a copy of the DVD.

The Ford Foundation and the Families and Work Institute selects the Family Resource Center as one of 10 programs nationwide to create a pilot project for employers and low wage workers

The Family Resource Center's proposal to the Families and Work Institute was selected from over 80 applicants nation-wide as one of only 10 to implement the "Supporting Work Project". The project is part of a Ford Foundation initiative to increase employer involvement in providing publicly funded work supports to low wage workers. The Resource Center received \$100,000 for 15 months to work with employers in Coos County to increase the number of lower wage employees who enroll in public support programs such as the Child Health Insurance Program (S-CHIP), Childcare scholarships and the Earned Income Tax Credit. These programs will enable workers to better support themselves and their families and allow them to stabilize their economic position by helping them to keep more of the dollars that they earn.



Highlights

Of

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Participation FY 07

270 students participated in Project Youth in 2006-2007

- Brown 48 students
- Bartlett 50 students
- Hillside 61 students
- Berlin Jr. High 41 students
- Gorham Middle School 57 students
- Summer Programs 13 students

Average expense per child
\$1,435.00/student/year

Activities

- Homework assistance
- Computers, science, math, literacy and arts enrichment
- Physical activity
- Family literacy/arts evenings
- Snacks and transportation

Outcomes

- **36%** of students improved by at least ½ a grade in math
- **43%** of students improved by at least ½ a grade in language arts

Project Youth

Project Youth provides homework assistance, enrichment activities that connect to school curriculum, physical activities, arts and technology to all students enrolled in the afterschool programs. The programs run from 2:30-5:00 M-F, are located in the schools and use school day teachers to help with homework and some of the enrichment activities. All students receive a healthy snack and most are provided transportation home at the end of the program. Project Youth works closely with the Arts Alliance of Northern NH to provide arts experiences through the ArtLinks program.

Program Goals:

1. Raise academic achievement for participating students
2. Improve social and community connections for students
3. Offer real life skills that will help students and their families practice healthy life styles, make positive choices and see broader opportunities

Eligibility any student in 1st-8th grade at Brown, Bartlett, Hillside, Berlin Junior High or Gorham Middle High School

Fees The programs operate on a sliding fee scale



Project Youth Afterschool Programs Selected as "Best Practice" in Homework Help for Students Nation-Wide

In February 2007 a program review team from *National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning* from Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) observed the afterschool homework programs in Berlin. The team selected the Berlin program as one of 10 programs throughout the country that demonstrate promising practices in the approach to homework help time, use of resources and connection to afterschool research. A camera crew from WGBH in Boston came to Berlin in March and filmed individual interviews with teachers, students, parents and afterschool staff as well as the homework program itself. This video was edited and placed into a web-based afterschool "toolkit" that is accessible on line and available for professional development in the field of afterschool programming. Visit the website www.sedl.org/afterschool/toolkits to see the video.

This year the Junior High afterschool students adopted the residents of Coos County Nursing Home. Several of the students had relatives at the home and they wanted to build a relationship with these senior citizens. The students visited the nursing home several times during the year to play bingo and other games with the residents. In addition, during time at the afterschool program, the students designed and sewed 72 lap quilts which they presented to the residents in May during National Nursing Home Week.

Surveys of the parents of after school students indicated that:

- **92%** felt their child had improved in homework completion
- **63%** felt their child had a better grasp of their school work
- **61%** felt their child was more confident in school

Surveys of teachers of after school students indicated that:

- **81%** of teachers surveyed felt the students improved in homework completion
- **70%** of teachers believe that afterschool students feel connected and have good peer relationships



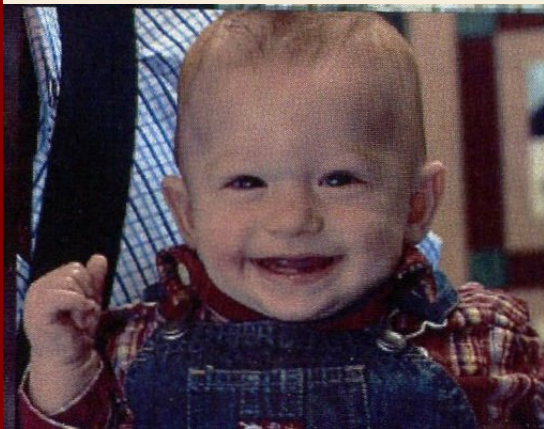


Participation 2007

- **68** Families enrolled in the Family Partnership Program
- **46** Families received community support referrals
- **18** Children received preventive childcare services

Activities

- **Operation School Supplies**-281 children in need received a new backpack and school supplies
- **Coats for Community**-Over 300 children and adults received donated coats, boots, hats and ski pants
- **Toddler Time**-Twelve adults and about 20 children participated in the weekly Toddler Time program that focuses on socialization and development for toddlers and information sharing for their parents
- **First Books**-All families enrolled in the family partnership program receive a new, age appropriate book for the children in the family. The books are made possible through a NH Public TV project that promotes literacy and quality time for families.



Family Partnership Program

Family Partnership provides prevention, early intervention and crisis services to families who may be at risk of abuse or neglect or who just need some extra support. The program is voluntary and families receive support from a home visitor for parenting skills, home management, financial planning, finding childcare and connection to other community resources.

Program Goals:

1. Promote and support positive emotional and social health and development for all families and their children
2. Provide tools and resources to manage family stressors such as health, financial and behavioral challenges
3. Provide families with the support, the skills and the community connections to prevent child abuse and neglect

Eligibility

Open to all families with children 1-18 who are looking for support and information to improve parenting skills, family life and outcomes for their children.

No fee

Outcomes

- 96%** of enrolled families have had no new incidence of abuse or neglect during the year
- 99%** of the families in the program have health and dental insurance for children in the family
- 18** children received preventative daycare services
- 100%** of the families enrolled received information on the Earned Income Tax Credit
- 15** families reported issues of domestic violence and received resources and support
- 99%** of those families reported no new incidence of domestic violence

Healthy Connections

Healthy Connections has specially trained home visitors and nurses who meet with Medicaid eligible pregnant women in their homes. The program provides health and parenting information, support for smoking cessation, information on how to have a healthy pregnancy, screening for maternal depression and access to family planning information and contraception. Once the baby is born the home visitors will provide the family with information on feeding, bathing, child development, developmental screening, immunizations and connections to established medical care for well baby visits.

Program Goals:

1. Promote healthy pregnancy and birth outcomes
2. Promote a safe and nurturing environment for children so they can grow into healthy, educated and productive citizens

Eligibility:

Medicaid eligible pregnant women and their infants up to one year of age

No Fee

“Before I had my son I was nervous and had my doubts, but my home visitor has helped me see that things are going pretty well. I have been reassured that I am doing things right and that I have the right idea about where I am going. She actually did a test that showed he is doing well for a 2 month old.”



Participation 2007

- **40** Families received home visits in 2007
- **21** New families were enrolled this year
- **14** Babies were born in 2007 in this program

Activities

- Average of 25 home visits each month
- Referrals for WIC, family planning, mental health, financial counseling and affordable housing

Outcomes

- **97%** of women in the program received a formal screening for post-partum depression
- **96%** of children in the program received a formal developmental screening
- **75%** of women exiting the program were using birth control
- **90%** of parents in the program retained custody of their child





Participation 2007

Child Health Support

- 10 Families
- 22 Total number of children served
- 240 Supervised visits
- 12,000 Miles traveled by the case worker to transport children in this program

Activities

- Parent observation
- Court reports and testimony

Outcomes

- 3 Cases taken to court
- 1 Family had parental rights terminated by the court



Family Intervention Program

- 23 Referrals

Activities/Outcomes

- 7 clients were assessed and found to have documented barriers
- 1 client was assessed and found to have documented family violence
- 1 client was assessed for crisis intervention

Child Health Support

Child Health Support provides a trained worker to transport children who have been removed from their birth parent by the court from the foster home to a supervised visit with the birth parent. The worker will provide parenting information, observations and support to the birth parent, support for the children and communication with the foster family. The worker works closely with the DCYF case worker and the courts.

Program Goals:

1. Encourage appropriate family reunification by providing transportation and supervised visits with birth parents for children who have been court ordered to be removed from the home

Eligibility:

Children who have been removed from their homes by the court

No Fee

Family Intervention Program

The Family Intervention Program is designed to provide assessment and intervention services for families who face multiple and significant barriers in their ability to engage in work or work preparation activities. Home visitors provide connection to community resources and a step by step plan for transition.

Program Goals:

1. Provide supports so that clients can move successfully from Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) into the workforce.

Eligibility:

Clients referred by the NHEP Employment Counselor Specialist

No Fees

Substance Abuse Prevention

Substance Abuse Prevention focuses on awareness and prevention of drug, alcohol and tobacco addiction through community education campaigns, workshops and learning opportunities and leadership skills for schools, students and parents. Programs offered included the 12 week research based **Dare to be You** program for families with children ages 2-8 years and the 7 week research based **Strengthening Families** program that works with teens and parents together. Both programs build parenting and communication skills that help parents become aware of how their parenting can help even young children and young teens be prepared to avoid drug and alcohol abuse as they grow up.

Program Goal:

1. Prevent/reduce substance abuse in Coos County for youth and families through education, family skills workshops and teen leadership activities.

Eligibility:

Any family, youth or individual looking for information, support and prevention strategies for substance abuse prevention.

No Fee

All participants who complete the courses receive a small monetary award and a certificate of completion.



Participation 2007

- **285** Community members participated in prevention workshops and training
- **10** Families and 15 children graduated from Dare to be You-Bridge to School Program
- **5** Families and 7 youth graduated from Strengthening Families

Activities:

- **3000** Red Ribbons given out to all Berlin and Gorham School Aged youth to mark their commitment to stay away from drugs and alcohol
- **Project Monitor** created partnerships between police and community parents to stop underage drinking parties
- **Health-a-Rama** created a day long workshop for all 8th graders in the Androscoggin Valley that focused on the dangers of alcohol and tobacco use, the challenges of transitioning to high school, the need for healthy eating and exercise and ways to build and maintain a positive self esteem

Outcomes:

- **53%** of families committed to conducting family meetings after the Strengthening Families training
- **46%** of the parents reported that they now wait until they “cool off” before dealing with problems with their children
- **75%** of parents report that they do a better job explaining reasons for the rules they make to their teens

Parent after completing the Dare to be You Program – “I feel like I have another friend now. I trust the staff!”





Activities/Outcomes

- 26 people were trained as master trainers who can now teach Suicide Prevention
- 37 high school students were trained in the basics of Suicide Prevention
- 376 Community members were trained in Suicide Prevention

Professional groups trained include:

- The Clergy Association
- Teachers and Administrators of SAU #3 and SAU #20
- Police Departments in Berlin and Gorham
- Physicians, nurses and staff at the Androscoggin Valley Hospital
- Staff of Northern Human Services (Mental Health)
- Human Service Providers
- EMS personnel

Suicide Prevention

The Frameworks Youth Suicide Prevention

program focuses on how to reduce youth suicide by training and creating resource connections for a broadly representative group of community professionals, individuals, parents and youth.

Program Goal:

1. To train a broadly representative group of community members, professionals, school personnel, parents and youth in how to respond to youth suicide threats, attempts and completions
2. To help communities identify and connect community resources that can prevent and respond to youth suicide threats when required

Eligibility:

All community members

No Fee

All trainings in the Frameworks curriculum are **FREE**

Coos County has the highest youth suicide rate in the state per thousand. The goal of the Frameworks Youth Suicide Prevention Project is to help communities and community members become increasingly competent at responding to suicidal thoughts, attempts and completions that affect vulnerable youth in order to reduce the number and rate of youth suicides.

Workforce Development

Workforce Development-JOBPro is an occupational and life skills program developed in collaboration with the NH Community College, NH WORKS, The Androscoggin Valley Economic Recovery Corporation (AVER) and area business and industry leaders to address a deficit in training and job readiness that prevents individuals from qualifying for entry level positions. This program is funded by Jane's Trust and Citizens Bank.

Program Goal:

1. Improve basic technical and life management skills for underemployed and unemployed workers so that they can find and keep career oriented employment

Eligibility:

Unemployed and underemployed workers

No Fee



Participation 2007

- 45 participants enrolled and attended at least one class since the project began in 2005
- 25 participants completed the program as of December 2006
- 74% were not employed when they joined the program
- 46% said they lacked job skill
- 38% said their lack of education prevented them from getting a job

Outcomes:

- 71% of those who completed the program are now employed
- 55% said the program had helped them get a job
- 91% they used what they learned in the program on the job

“The thing I liked most about JOBPro is the variety of skills it taught in such a short time such as, customer service skills, resumes, computer skills, math skills. Another strong aspect of the program was after graduating you were not left hanging the Coordinator carried through with helping you find a job that suits you.”





Participation 2007

- **10** Active members in the Financial Literacy Coalition
- **480** students at Brown, Bartlett and the Ed Fenn Schools participated in a performance by *Sammy the Rabbit* which focused on building reading and saving money.
- **26** Direct service providers attended a workshop on how to help their clients with budgeting, goal setting, debt management, credit reports, etc.

Activities/Outcomes

- *Sammy the Rabbit* performance supported by area banks and schools
- Jumpstart Conference to demonstrate a computer simulated game for financial planning for High School students
- Financial Literacy Training for Direct Service providers

The Sammy the Rabbit program has made a big impact on my grandchildren. During our summer vacation we sat down and read Sammy the Rabbit Let's Make It A Habit with all of my grandchildren. Since the older of the grandchildren had gone through the Sammy the Rabbit presentation, she understood the concepts involved in the program and encouraged her younger cousins to save some of the monies I give them. At the end of our 2 week vacation, the children had saved half of each amount of the money that they normally would have spent on junk at the store. They really got the message the book and presentation send out.

Financial Literacy

Citizens Bank has committed funding to develop a community based program that will provide financial information and budgeting strategies for low-income families. The program will help connect families to financial institutions to encourage asset building. The program will also provide programs to schools to introduce money management at an early age.

The Financial Literacy Coalition also sponsors a Volunteer Income Tax program (VITA) that allows low income families to file for free on line with assistance from trained volunteers. This program also encourages participants to apply for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and other tax subsidies for which they may be eligible.

Program Goals:

1. Develop a community based Financial Literacy Coalition to promote financial literacy for all families and youth in the community
2. Train direct service providers to provide financial information to their clients including Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA), information on the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Individual Development Account (IDA) to build financial stability for low income families
3. Work with schools to introduce money management concepts starting in the elementary schools

Eligibility

All community members

No Fee



New Programs for 2008 Beginning July 2007

Healthy Connections PLUS

Healthy Connections PLUS provides families with information and support to access medical care, the Healthy Kids Insurance program (S-CHIP), parenting support and information and appropriate community resources. This is a short term support program to insure that children are connected to a medical provider and are receiving recommended age appropriate visits.

Program Goals:

1. Insure that all families have an identified physician and that children have access to timely, recommended medical care
2. Insure that all families have access to appropriate community resources and parenting information

Eligibility

Families with children aged 0-18 who are at or below 400% of the poverty level

No Fee

Employee Support Program

Employee Support Program is part of a Ford Foundation initiative to increase employer involvement in providing publicly funded work supports to low wage workers. The Resource Center received \$100,000 for 15 months to work with employers in Coos County to increase the number of lower wage employees who enroll in public support programs such as the Child Health Insurance Program (S-CHIP), Childcare scholarships and the Earned Income Tax Credit. These programs will enable workers to better support themselves and their families and allow them to stabilize their economic position by helping them to keep more of the dollars that they earn.

Eligibility

All middle and low wage earners

No Fee



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Gina Belanger

Financial Literacy Coordinator

Judy Woodward

Accountant

Ron Fini

Office Manager

Marie Demers



**STATEMENT OF
FINANCIAL POSITION
June 30, 2006 and 2005**

ASSETS	2006	2005
Cash and cash equivalents	\$289,450	\$177,528
Investments	19,532	47,061
Grants receivable	43,488	90,708
Accounts receivable	2,658	3,577
Prepaid items	7,309	3,094
Property and Equipment	11,432	13,321
	\$373,869	\$335,289
 LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Liabilities:		
Accounts payable	\$598	\$2,238
Agency deposits	19,532	18,862
Refundable advances	192,269	202,744
	\$212,399	\$223,844
Net assets:		
Unrestricted:		
Net investment in property/equipment	\$11,432	\$13,321
Designated for long-term bldg. maintenance	2,027	2,312
Unrestricted (deficit)	110,313	95,812
Permanently restricted- <i>Endowment</i>	37,698	-
	<u>\$161,470</u>	<u>\$111,445</u>
	<u>\$373,869</u>	<u>\$335,289</u>

FUNDING SOURCES FY 07

Project Youth

NH Department of Education/21st Century Learning Centers
United Way of Northern NH
NH State Council on the Arts/Art Links

Healthy Connections

State of NH, Office of Family and Community Health
Medicaid

Family Support Programs

State of NH, Division of Children, Youth and Families
NH Children's Trust Fund
State of NH, Office of Family and Community Health
Medicaid
Towns of Gorham, Randolph, Shelburne

Prevention Programs

Drug Free Communities
Coos County Incentive Funds
Linden Foundation

Workforce Development-JOBPro

Jane's Trust
Workforce Opportunity Council
Citizens Bank

Financial Literacy

Citizens Bank
NH Cooperative Extension
Tillotson



