

How are the CHILDREN?

A newsletter of the
New Hampshire
Children's Trust Fund,
reporting on our efforts
in "keeping children safe
and families strong"
in New Hampshire.

FALL 2001

The name of our newsletter, **How Are the Children?**, is a reference to an African tradition, where a visitor to a new village inquires about the status of the children. The NHCTF promotes the idea that the well-being of children is the standard by which every community should be measured.

From the Chair:



Our mission, "Keeping children safe and families strong" has new meaning after the events of September 11, 2001. Our nation has experienced an unprecedented tragedy *and* challenge. Everyone at the New Hampshire Children's Trust Fund – like all Americans – has been exploring the ramifications of this event: for the children

and families we serve as an organization, *and* personally.

Thanks to your generosity over the years, and the commitment of our community partners, we have helped to create *many* 'safe places' (family resource centers) throughout New Hampshire for children, parents, and other concerned community members to come together and explore a range of issues. We are extraordinarily proud of the work that New Hampshire's network of family resource centers has done over the past two months to assist children, parents, and other adults understand what *has* happened, and *is* happening in our nation. At no other time in recent memory has this forum for discussion – and dissemination of information – been more important!

How do we respond? While support for national relief efforts is important, I also encourage you to support local organizations that are responding to the wide range of emotional and social issues that terrorist actions – and the American military response – present for New Hampshire's children and families. Child abuse and neglect may be 'over-shadowed' by current events, but this issue has *not* gone away. In fact, our concerns as an organization have only been heightened.

And the work goes on... This past June, the NHCTF awarded \$166,760 to twenty-one organizations that are addressing the critical needs of children and families in our local communities. These grants (see page 2) support a wide range of community-based services and projects that continually promise to help us fulfill our mission.

Our path is "quantified." On page 4 we share with you the highlights of a recent study that demonstrates the effectiveness of family support programs in reducing juvenile delinquency and improving school performance. We feel this study has important ramifications for the 17 family resource centers here in New Hampshire.

Throughout the approaching season of *many* holidays, I hope you, too, will find new ways to help the children in your lives feel safe, and members of your family feel strong and connected. I sincerely believe that it is these small and personal actions of generosity and love that keep America strong, and ready to meet any challenge ahead.

Sincerely,

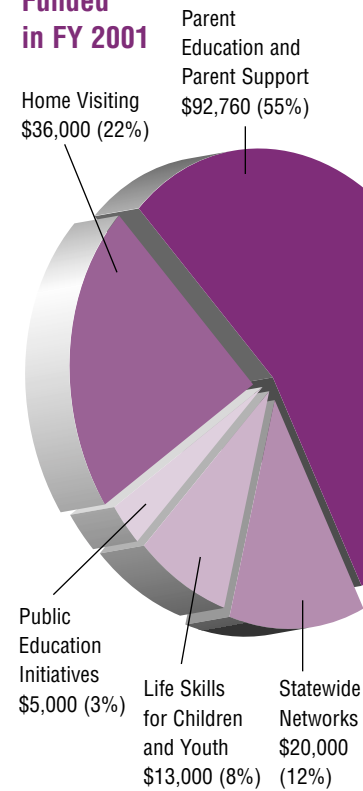


Lucy Fowlkes Breed

Chair, New Hampshire Children's Trust Fund

2001 GRANTS

Programs Funded in FY 2001



PARENT EDUCATION AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Children's Place & Parent Education Center

Concord \$8,000
This grant award supports two 10-week educational programs for parents who are at risk of child abuse or neglect. The grant allows parents with few resources to attend by providing transportation and child-care.

Concord Heights Neighborhood and Family Center

Concord \$7,600
This grant award will help the Concord Heights Neighborhood and Family Center coordinate weekly parent support groups for single, first-time, and teen parents. The grant also funds essential skill-building activities for all parents including personal counseling, friendly home visits, monthly "family night out" events, and a lending/resource library.

Families First of the Greater Seacoast

Portsmouth \$4,000
This grant will help Families First to conduct a 20-week evening support program for families living in homeless shelters (or other transitional housing). The program aims to reduce stress and promote family unity through a regular family meal, educational activities for children, and support for parents.

The Grapevine

Antrim \$8,000
This grant helps support the operation of this essential community-based family resource center offering parent education programs for young families, support and guidance to new mothers, home-based support (when needed), access to support for essential services,

and information and referral resources.

HUB Family Resource Center

Dover \$8,000
This grant will help expand and invigorate the very successful *Family Well-being Project* currently operating out of the Dover Housing Authority. The program provides weekly parenting education and support for families.

Nashua Adult Learning Center

Nashua \$8,000
This grant award will help expand the *Parent Exchange Program* at the NALC. The Parent Exchange Program works to strengthen family systems, and builds on the Center's other programs.

Nashua Youth Council

Nashua \$6,660
This grant will assist approximately 100 families in the Nashua area who are currently 'at risk.' The program offers a series of educational and support (individual and group) experiences and allows this program to be offered in English and Spanish.

Riverbend Parent Child Centers

Concord \$8,000
This grant will help this community-based organization continue to offer weekly parent support and education groups that are held in Penacook, Pittsfield, Franklin, Hillsboro and Concord.

Rochester Parent Child Center

Rochester \$8,000
This grant helps create and support parent-child play groups in a setting where both child and parent learning can take place. The grant also supports regular weekly educational programming for young families.

Salem Family Resources

Salem \$8,000
This grant will help Salem Family Resources expand its programming in several areas, including Parent/Child Play groups, support groups for parents with children with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, family events, and the parenting resource library.

Upper Room Family Resource Center

Derry \$2,500
This grant will help continue the support and educational activities of this organization for teenage parents.

VNA of VT/NH Fatherhood Network

Haonver \$4,000
This grant to the VNA will support and expand a program designed to actively engage fathers in the lives of their children.

White Mountain Community Health Center

Conway \$8,000
This grant will help the White Mountain Community Health Center develop a comprehensive home visiting program for young families, with the aim of preventing child abuse and neglect.

YWCA Parent Night Workshops

Manchester \$4,000
This grant will help the YWCA continue a successful monthly parent education workshop series, which includes education about teen health, sexuality, and pregnancy prevention.

HOME VISITING PROGRAMS

Family Connections of Southern NH

Londonderry \$8,000
This grant supports and expands a pilot program that provides supportive home visits to young families where children may be at risk. The

program provides parental educational services, peer support, and mentoring for young parents.

Good Beginnings of Sullivan County

Claremont \$8,000
This grant will help to continue an effective program that is especially designed for teenage parents. The program provides information about child development realities, and the effective child rearing practices related to them. The program includes support for young parents who need child care help in order to continue or complete their education.

Good Beginnings of the Upper Valley

Hanover \$4,000
This grant will enable Good Beginnings of the Upper Valley to provide flexible, in-home support (when needed) to families experiencing critical and challenging transitions.

Family Resource Center of Gorham

Gorham \$8,000
This grant supports the continuation of a ground-breaking program that matches trained mentors with parents of newborns and families with young children for support. Mentors will also help to link families with health-related services and educational opportunities in the local community.

VNA of Southern Carroll County - Good Beginnings Program

Wolfeboro \$8,000
This grant will help the VNA of Southern Carroll County provide in-home services for mothers with newborns (up to three months) by a professional nurse. The program also provides families with ongoing supportive visits.

PUBLIC EDUCATION INITIATIVES

Concord School District

Statewide \$5,000
This grant helped to produce a parent-friendly brochure that presents useful information about positive parenting strategies. The project has been a collaboration between the Concord School District, the New Hampshire Association of School Psychologists, and the New Hampshire Children's Trust Fund.

Appalachian Mountain Teen Project

Statewide \$5,000
This grant supports a program helping over-stressed families develop healthy relationships and strong communication skills through canoeing, mountain climbing and camping adventures.

Teen Task Force of Upper Connecticut Valley

Upper Valley \$8,000
To expand a program designed to reduce teen pregnancy in Coos County. See page 5 for more details.

SUPPORT FOR STATEWIDE NETWORKS

Network New Hampshire

Statewide \$20,000
Network New Hampshire is a statewide coalition of community-based family resource and support programs that aims to improve the quality of programming and advance the family support movement in New Hampshire. The grant will assist with long-range planning and operations.

Schools, psychologists, and NHCTF partner on project to help parents

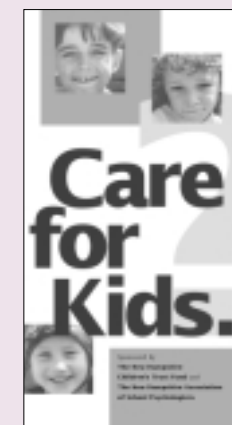
The New Hampshire Association of School Psychologists, the Concord School District, and the NHCTF recently collaborated on a project to assist parents and other adults, to build their skills in caring for children.

Collaboration between public and private sectors works! "We need something that we can give to parents that is clear, contains accurate information and will be used," said Jane Plamondon, school psychologist for the Concord School District.

The NHCTF gathered and reviewed information from effective state and regional organizations across the country and compiled them into one "user-friendly" brochure. The members of the New Hampshire Association of School Psychologists will distribute the brochures across the state.

Important information for caregivers.

This informational brochure lists resources for parents and is packed with tips on how



to help children feel good about themselves. It includes alternatives to "lashing out" either verbally or physically, and contains ideas on how to promote healthy decisions and behaviors in children.

There is also important information about how to offer help to parents who are in the midst of a difficult or abusive interaction with a child in a public place. It offers advice like sympathizing with parent - diverting the angry attention away from the child - and saying something positive like, "It's a lot of work to shop with a toddler. You have my admiration!"

Positive response from around the state. The response from professionals who work in the field of family support and parent education has been extremely positive.

Diane D'Amato, Health Services Manager for the Tri County Head Start Program, told us that she has incorporated the brochure into the curriculum used by the program's Home Visitors in the three northern counties of New Hampshire.

"The brochure is great," said one first-time mom from the Manchester area. "It takes the most important information about how to relate to your child and puts it in one, easy-to-use guide...Every parent should have this!"

If you would like a free copy of *Care for Kids* for yourself, a childcare provider, or parent you know, call the NHCTF office at 224-1279 to request a copy.

New Study Shows Family Support Programming Works!

The family support movement in New Hampshire – and across the country – got excellent news recently. Results of the Child-Parent Centers Study were published in the May 9, 2001 *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

The report concluded that family support activities and services as well as parent involvement in the classroom, have significant benefits in reducing crime and delinquency and in promoting school success.

The seventeen-year long study, conducted by Arthur Reynolds, Ph.D., from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is the longest and most comprehensive study in the field to date. “The only interventions that have shown the ability to reduce delinquency are programs that have a strong family support component,” concludes Reynolds.

The Study. The study followed more than 1,500 low-income children from the Chicago area who participated in the Chicago Parent-Child Center Program for nearly seventeen years. The research also followed a cohort or comparison group of more than 500 children who did not participate in any family support or early-learning programs. The study measured the rates of high school completion and school drop out by age 20, juvenile arrests for violent and nonviolent offenses, grade retention and special education placement by age 18 years.

Implications for NH. There are seventeen Family Resource Centers in New Hampshire that provide the types of family support services described in the Reynolds study. Only a handful however, are designed specifically to help parents move beyond their own negative school

experiences, and learn to become engaged in their children’s learning – at home and in the classroom.

Essential services outlined in the study include comprehensive education programs, family support services, health services and half-day pre-school at ages 3-4 years, and half-or full-day kindergarten, and school age services in elementary schools linked to family resource centers.

Family resource centers in Franklin, Salem, Claremont, and Concord work from very similar models as those outlined in the study. The Concord Heights Neighborhood Family Resource Center, housed at the Dame School, was one of the first centers in New Hampshire that developed programming which combined family support with parent involvement in the classroom. While there is no long-term study planned for the program site, administrators anticipate similar outcomes for their participating families.

The implications for public policy. Reynolds claims that the findings from this study are significant for public policy and program design for every community in the country.

“By investing in family support, we not only promote the success and health of the young people participating, but also save communities four dollars in remediation costs for every dollar spent on prevention oriented supports for families,”

“By investing in family support, we not only promote the success and health of the young people participating, but also save communities \$4.00 in remediation costs for every \$1.00 spent on prevention oriented supports for families.”

— Arthur Reynolds, Ph.D.
University of Wisconsin – Madison



Dr. Robert Chamberlin, pictured here (center) with colleagues and friends at a recent conference, is a retired pediatrician and long-time advocate of prevention strategies in New Hampshire. When asked for his reaction to the Reynolds study, he said: “The study confirms what we have known for a long time...that family support is an integral part of a family’s development and a community’s ultimate success.”

says Reynolds. “We haven’t had this level of long-term scientific evidence for public programs until now,” explains Reynolds. “These are really significant, life-altering outcomes for young people, with major implications for society.”

For more information. If you would like to learn more about the family support movement or if you want to locate the Family Resource Center in your area, call the NHCTF at 224-1279.

For more information on the Parent-Child Centers Study by Dr. Reynolds or similar successful models, visit these web sites:

www.jama.ama-assn.org For the complete study conducted by Reynolds. “*Long-term Effects of an Early Childhood Intervention on Educational Achievement and Juvenile Arrest.*”

www.waisman.wisc.edu/cl/ Information released on the Chicago Longitudinal Study

www.yales.edu.bushcenter/21c/ Information on Schools of the 21st Century at the Yale Bush Center

www.senate.gov Use Bill Search to find the text of the Child Opportunity Zone Family Center Act of 2001 (S371), introduced by Senator Jack Reed

www.lab.brown.edu/public/pubs/sl/coz-sls.pdf For a report on the Rhode Island COZI Family Centers

Teen pregnancy rates drop in North Country

Program breaks cycle of poverty and abuse

One of the best approaches to preventing child abuse and neglect is to prevent pregnancy among teens who are often unprepared – educationally, financially, and emotionally – to adequately care for a newborn. The NHCTF is pleased to highlight a program we have been supporting since its inception. Francine Bigney, coordinator of the program, shares the history and impact of the work of the Teen Task Force below.

In 1994, the Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital Community Needs Assessment reported the highest teenage pregnancy rate in the state (27/1000). The Teen Task Force has not only been creative in responding to the alarmingly high rates of teen pregnancy in the Upper Connecticut Valley area, but has been highly effective in reducing the rates of teen pregnancy – and subsequent rates of children born into poverty and abuse (8.4/1000).

How it started. The Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital (UCVH) Teen Task Force originated in October, 1993 in response to a letter of concern from a local physician over the high rate of teenage pregnancy and the associated risks.

A team was assembled by the UCVH Coordinator of Community Health, and included school teachers and administration, guidance counselors, mental health professionals, family planning educators, a youth minister and a local physician.

From the very first meeting, the team focused on eighth grade students, as this is traditionally a time of transition and change. Across the state and region it seemed there were effective secondary prevention programs in place, but a gap in primary prevention initiatives.

The team knew that teen pregnancy feeds directly into the cycle of high risk births, substance abuse, school drop out levels, lower education lev-

els, unemployment, lower wages, child abuse and neglect. So, it was clear that specific attention needed to be given to primary prevention initiatives, thus interrupting the cycle of related societal outcomes.

UCVH Community Needs Assessment.

The resolve of the team was fostered by the publication of the first *UCVH Community Needs Assessment* in 1994, which reported that the teenage pregnancy rate was the highest in the state – 27/1000 births to female teens ages 15-17.

In the Spring of 1994, the Teen Task Force held its first “*Crossroads: Changes and Choices, A North Country Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Conference.*”

A Conference as ‘Rite of Passage.’

This conference has become a highly anticipated rite of passage into the eighth grade for the past eight years. The Conference is held at the beautiful Balsams Grand Resort. The Balsams donates the facility, and subsidizes the food costs in support of the program.

Boys and girls from 8 area schools are bussed to the Balsams for an intensive day beginning with a keynote address, followed by interactive workshops.

Follow-up is Important. The conference is followed up the next year with the *Freshman Follow Up Program* and by the *PACT* program (Parents and Children Together).

The *PACT* program, designed by Sandy Lovell of Planned Parenthood, relies heavily upon school nurses to offer a puberty/anatomy curriculum in the classroom.

The classroom program is followed by an evening program which brings parents and children together in a safe environment to explore sexuality



The Crossroads: Changes and Choices, A North Country Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Conference has become a ‘rite of passage’ for hundreds of Upper Connecticut Valley teens.

issues and values.

Evaluation Shows Positive

Outcomes. Each program contains a formal evaluation component to measure short- and mid-term outcomes. Pre- and post-tests are administered, as are evaluations to measure program effectiveness.

For the past 4 years, the Community Health Institute has partnered with the Teen Task Force to do a formal assessment of the “*Crossroads: Pregnancy Prevention Conference*” based upon the workshop objectives. Each year the students are asked whether or not the conference will/will not affect their decision whether or not to engage in sexual intercourse and on the average (1998-2001), 78% agree that it will.

The most recent *UCVH 1999 Community Needs Assessment* reports that the community has seen a sharp decrease in the rate of teenage pregnancy from the previously reported 27/1000 in 1994, to 8.4/1000 in 1999.

Community Partners. Many partners make this program successful, and the Teen Task Force wishes to express its appreciation to all of its partners for their commitment to this important mission. With the practical in-kind and financial support of the Balsams Resort, the Northern New Hampshire Foundation, the New Hampshire Department of Education, and the New Hampshire Children’s Trust Fund, we are creating positive futures for our children.



NEW HAMPSHIRE *Children's Trust Fund*

The New Hampshire Children's Trust Fund (NHCTF) was created in 1986 by legislative statute RSA 169-C:39 to build a permanent endowment to support programs in New Hampshire that prevent child abuse and neglect.

In 1988, the State of New Hampshire allocated \$500,000 in public funds to match the same amount of privately raised dollars. The income generated from this growing endowment is dispersed annually to organizations that work to strengthen and support families. Since its inception, the NHCTF has awarded \$1,342,638 to community-based organizations statewide.

In addition to grantmaking, the NHCTF works to raise awareness about the causes of child abuse and the means by which it can be prevented through public awareness campaigns and informational forums. Finally, the NHCTF works to advance the family support movement and insure the highest quality of services to families through a statewide leadership coalition called *Network New Hampshire*.

How to get involved. If you are interested in learning more about the work of the New Hampshire Children's Trust Fund or want to explore your charitable giving options, please call Lisa Brennan, Executive Director, at (603) 224-1279.

For information about applying for a grant. Contact Kara Popkin, Administrative Assistant, at (603) 224-1279.

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Remember these dates!

November 20, 2001: Network New Hampshire statewide meeting, Riverbend Parent Child Center, Concord (9:30 AM – 12:30 PM)

February 25, 2002: Child Abuse Prevention and Family Support Grant Applications mailed.

March 13, 2002: Workshop for Grant Applicants, location to be announced (9:00 AM – 11:30 AM)

April 30, 2002: Child Abuse Prevention and Family Support Grant Application deadline (applications must be received at the NHCTF office by 5:00 PM)

May 8, 2002: Smith Award for Excellence in Service to Families Application mailed

July 10, 2002: Smith Award Application deadline (applications must be received at the NHCTF office by 5:00 PM)

June 10, 2002: Grantmaking day at the NHCTF.

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How Are the Children? is a publication of the New Hampshire Children's Trust Fund, and is mailed free of charge to supporters and friends. Please contact us if you know someone who would like to be on our mailing list.

Design and Production:
Paxton Communications, Concord, NH