

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# **Maine Children's Cabinet**

## **ANNUAL REPORT UPDATE 2008/2009**

**“Working Together for  
Maine Children and Families”**

**Submitted by Lauren Sterling, Maine Governor's Children's Cabinet Staff**

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**MAINE  
GOVERNOR'S CHILDREN'S CABINET**

**History and Development:**

- Established in 1995 and formalized by an executive order by Governor Angus King in 1996
- Adopted BY THE Maine State Legislature in statute in 2000
- Legislative mandate expanded focus to include interagency coordination and pooling funds to maximize resources (Title 5: Chapter 439: CHILDREN'S CABINET HEADING: PL 1999, C. 785, §3).

**Children's Cabinet Mission:** To provide cross-agency coordination, and program and policy development with a common mission -- to measurably improve the well being of Maine's children, youth, and families through evidence-based practices and strength-based approaches to positive child and youth development.

**Vision:** Based upon the belief that *children's needs are best met within the context of relationships in the family and community*, our vision for children is focused in three parts:

*The value we place on children and youth...*

- **Children respected, safe and nurtured in their communities;**
- **Children succeeding in school and schools succeeding for children;** and
- **Youth prepared to enter the work force.**

*The value we place on families...*

- **Families having opportunities to work and play;**
- **Families recognizing the rewards and responsibilities of raising children;** and
- **Families living safe and healthy lives.**

*The value we place on communities...*

- **Communities capable of meeting the needs of children and families in all of their diversity;**
- **Communities creating collaborative partnerships;**
- **Communities promoting and modeling clear standards of behavior;** and
- **Communities keeping children and families at the heart of all decisions.**

**What We Do:** The Children's Cabinet adds **Public Value:**

1. Coordinates approaches to the delivery of services;
2. Establishes administrative priorities across departments/agencies/bureaus;
3. Distributes through its Senior Staff and the Regional Children's Cabinets, Pooled Flexible Funds to fill one-time family needs where there is no other eligibility-related service available to keep a child or teen safely in the home;
4. Leverages resources both human (staff) and financial, that maximizes funding by collaborative grants and best use of federal funding streams, as mandates allow.
5. Operationalize the Governor's commitment to creating better outcomes for children and youth in Maine.

**2008/2009 Membership**

**Karen M. Baldacci, *First Lady* - Chair**

**CABINET MEMBERS:**

Susan Gendron, *Commissioner, Dept. of Education*

Brenda Harvey, *Commissioner, Dept. of Health & Human Services*

Anne H. Jordan, *Commissioner, Dept. of Public Safety*

Martin Magnusson, *Commissioner, Dept. of Corrections*

Laura Fortman, *Commissioner, Dept. of Labor*

Patrick Ende, Karla Black, and Deb Friedman *Senior Policy Advisor, Governor's Office*

**CHILDREN'S CABINET EXECUTIVE STAFF:**

Jane Gilbert, *Labor*

Valerie Seaberg, *Education*

Denise Lord and Barry Stoodley, *Corrections*

Jim Beougher, *Health and Human Services*

Janet Richards, *Public Safety*

**SENIOR STAFF:**

Bobbi Johnson, Holly Stover, Ansley Newton, *Chairs, Regional Children's Cabinets*

Joan Smyrski, *DHHS/Children's Behavioral Health*

Mary Fran Gamage, *Labor*

Renna Hegg, *Corrections*

David Stockford, *Education*

Mary Lucia, *Public Safety*

Patti Woolley, *DHHS, Early Childhood*

Leslie Rozeff, *Institute for Public Sector Innovation – Muskie School*

Susan Savell, *Communities for Children and Youth*

Lauren Sterling, *Children’s Cabinet Staff*

Diane Maxwell, *Administrative Assistant*

### **Advisory and Workgroups:**

- Citizen and stakeholder advisory groups including a youth council serve in an advisory role (E.g. Task Force on Early Childhood, which evolved into the Children’s Growth Council in 2008, and the Shared Youth Vision Council)
  - Cabinet staff attend meetings regularly
  - Cabinet provides annual updates to the Legislative Youth Advisory Council on child and youth priorities upon their request

### **Senior and Executive Cabinet Staff:**

- Cabinet agency management staff are divided into an executive team and a senior team to manage the following tasks on an as-needed bases:
  - Review issues relating to local and regional stakeholders, policies that address systems gaps and emerging needs, and cross system policies to organize communication with commissioners
  - Serve as a resource and review needed action from the executive and cabinet meetings, provide research, develop recommendations for systems change for Cabinet consideration.

### **CITIZEN INPUT – LOCAL VOICE AND CITIZEN STAKEHOLDERS ARE ENGAGED IN CABINET PLANNING AND OVERSIGHT THROUGH KEY STAKEHOLDERS WHICH INCLUDE:**

- ◆ TASK FORCE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD – CHILDREN’S GROWTH COUNCIL
- ◆ SHARED YOUTH VISION COUNCIL
- ◆ COMMUNITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH (65 COALITIONS – HUNDREDS OF VOLUNTEERS),
- ◆ LEGISLATIVE YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL
- ◆ BEST PRACTICES IN BULLYING/HARASSMENT PREVENTION
- ◆ KEEPING MAINE’S CHILDREN CONNECTED
- ◆ MAINE YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM STEERING COMMITTEE

**LEVERAGED FUNDS:** IN 2008/2009, THE CHILDREN’S CABINET AGENCIES COLLECTIVE INVESTMENT FROM FEDERAL GRANTS AND RELATED AGENCY ADMINISTRATIVE FUNDING WAS **\$4,401,000** TOWARDS THE CROSS-SYSTEMS INITIATIVES AND **LEVERAGED \$13,187,990** AS A MINIMUM IN NEW AND ADDITIONAL FUNDING.

## **Children's Cabinet Cross-systems**

### **Annual Update for 2007-2008**

Since 2005, the Children's Cabinet established three priority categories through which to focus its cross-systems efforts and they include:

**Early Childhood** – To create coordinated and humane systems and policies at the state and local level that ensure quality early childhood services **to all young children**. Since 2003, the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau has provided the financial support to promote effective systems change through *Maine's Early Childhood Initiative*. The Initiative has served as the tool to focus years of research, dialogue and advocacy by the Governor's Children's Cabinet's Task Force on Early Childhood and its partners into a thoughtful, focused blueprint for how Maine can demonstrate the esteem in which we hold our children.

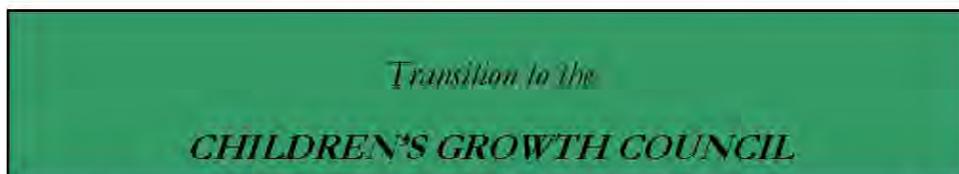
**Youth in Transition** – To expand, coordinate and strengthen *supports for youth ages 14-24*. The goal is to ensure that EVERY youth and young adult -- especially those with few assets and high risk factors such as substance abuse, mental health issues, academic failure, etc. -- is connected to a permanent home, family, and community. This goal will be met through collaborative wrap-a-round planning partnerships between the Children's Cabinet agencies, families, schools, and communities.

**Adverse Childhood Experiences and Resiliency (ACE/R)** – To provide services through the ACE lens means to connect early experiences to adult health outcomes. The Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) research shows a link between adverse experiences in childhood -- such as abuse, alcoholism in the family, mental illness, etc. -- to adverse health outcomes as the child becomes an adult. Children who grow up in traumatic and chaotic environments characterized by physical and emotional abuse, neglect, sexual violence, substance abuse, and severe mental and physical illness are much more likely to experience adult diseases at an earlier age and in more severe forms. Children who lose a parent, have a severe illness, or are affected by large scale traumatic events such as 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina are also more likely to have similar outcomes, including cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, obesity, and depression.

In understanding the research behind ACE, the Children's Cabinet seeks to foster resiliency and conditions that:

- 1) Prevent, to the extent possible, such trauma in childhood;
- 2) Minimize the impact of traumatic experiences and events; and
- 3) Strengthen the resiliency of children, families, and communities in dealing with trauma.

## PRIORITY: EARLY CHILDHOOD



The Children's Cabinet's Task Force on Early Childhood,

having worked as a broad-based early childhood systems change stakeholder group since 1998, made its successful transition in 2007/2008 to its new structure with a heightened purpose as the Children's Growth Council.

The Growth Council took over the reins from the Task Force in the fall of 2008 to begin implementing the *State Plan for Humane Early Childhood Systems for Maine*<sup>1</sup>

### **Maine Children's Growth Council Governance**

Specifically, the Task Force on Early Childhood has been replaced by the legislatively authorized entity, the Maine Children's Growth Council, with membership specified in statute to include a broad array of stakeholders, particularly parents and business and community leaders.

In this statute, Public Law 623, the Children's Growth Council is charged to adopt the ECCS plan as its guiding document to support the social and financial investment of Maine's young children. *Invest Early in Maine* now has a much broader audience, a much more directive purpose—and policy and program changes that result from implementing this work need the time and thoughtfulness of the Council members in a way that respects their varying levels of understanding and their varying levels of commitment.

At the March 9, 2009 Children's Growth Council meeting, the Maine ECI presented the letter from the Governor appointing the Council to be the State Early Childhood Advisory Council (as outlined in the Head Start Reauthorization Act).

### **Overview of the Maine Children's Growth Council**

- Established in statute April 2008 (PL Chapter 683) to develop, maintain and evaluate a plan for sustainable social and financial investment in the healthy development of Maine's youngest children and their families.
- Has drawn its membership where possible from the former Children's Cabinet's Task Force on Early Childhood and replaced the Task Force.
- Will continue to engage the Accountability Teams established by the Task Force, whose members will be voluntary and represent the broad early childhood field.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.maine.gov/cabinet/MAINEPLAN12D\\_000.pdf](http://www.maine.gov/cabinet/MAINEPLAN12D_000.pdf)

- Will embrace the *Invest Early* plan and continue its work towards systems change and programmatic improvements in the plan's five domains. The duties of the council include:
  1. Reviewing and addressing recommendations of legislative studies and advisory committees regarding young children and the Children's Cabinet.
  2. Adopting and updating a long-term plan for investment in the healthy development of young children that will achieve sustainable social and financial investment in the healthy development of young children and their families.
  3. Consulting and coordinating with members of the public, the Children's Cabinet, the Department of Education, the DHHS and advocates, community agencies and providers of early care and education and services to children and their families;
  4. Monitoring and evaluating progress in accomplishing the plan's vision, goals and performance indicators and best practice research; and
- Will report by January 15, 2010 and every two years thereafter to the Maine DHHS, the Governor, the Children's Cabinet and the Legislature on its activities and accomplishments and the long-term plan for investment in the healthy development of young children.
- Will have 27 members appointed by both houses of Maine Legislature and the Governor: two Senators, one from each party; two Representatives, one from each party; the Governor/ designee; and Attorney General/designee; three parents; representatives from (a) philanthropy, (b) public funding, (c) child abuse and neglect prevention, (d) postsecondary education, (e) law enforcement, (f) United Ways of Maine, (g) public health, (h) the ME Economic Growth Council, (i) ME labor organizations, (j) the Maine Chamber of Commerce, and three members from statewide children's organizations (child care/Head Start, advocacy, literacy, and medical); Business Roundtable on Early Childhood Investment and a member of the general public. Ex-officio members include the Commissioners and/or designees from the Department of Education and DHHS. Staffed by the ECI Director.

**The Governor's Business Roundtable on Early Childhood Investment (BRECI):**

Established in June 2008 by Governor Baldacci to work in conjunction with the Children's Growth Council on innovative business strategies to support early childhood, this impressive group of business leaders worked fast to accomplish its collective goals. Staffed by the Early Childhood Integration director with a grant from the National Governors Association, BRECI answered the Governor's charge by accomplishing the following tasks:

Tasks included but not limited to:

- 1) Identify and discuss necessary and pending policy changes at the local, state, or national level which would lead to improved economic conditions for Maine.
- 2) Examine, from a business perspective, possible strategies to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of Maine's early care and education industry. Propose "return

on investment” (ROI) strategies necessary to support early care and education specifically quality improvement and expansion proposals.

- 3) Identify costs including capital or other startup costs for investments in early childhood.
  - 4) Review successful approaches in other states and develop fundable and realistic priorities for investment in early childhood in Maine.
  - 5) Determine a variety of public-private partnerships to finance the development and management of early childhood systems, at the state and local levels.
  - 6) Work in conjunction with the Maine Council on Early Childhood (Children’s Growth Council) in the development of (a) innovative business strategies to support early childhood, (b) public private partnerships, and (c) the Business Plan for financing *Invest Early in Maine*.
  - 7) Develop and present to the Governor an Early Childhood Investment Plan, i.e., the Business Plan for financing “*Invest Early in Maine*.”
  - 8) Consult with the Children’s Cabinet regarding the expansion of high quality early childhood services leading to school readiness of all Maine children and in monitoring the ongoing implementation of the Business Plan—Maine’s Early Childhood Investment Plan.
- Appointed by Governor Baldacci, members of BRECI represent diverse types and sizes of Maine businesses, higher education, and policy expertise. In four intensive meetings throughout 2008, the Business Roundtable members assessed the current early childhood environment in Maine. They studied the documented and anecdotal evidence to support changes in existing policies and investments for Maine’s young children. They discussed implications for Maine businesses, employees, and the state economy.

The BRECI members conclude that:

Mainers need to focus more of our collective attention and resources on early childhood right now because a) it is the morally right thing to do; b) it is sound public policy (there is a return on social investment); and c) it is sound business policy (it will improve the workforce and our competitive edge).

By consensus, the BRECI has three priorities for immediate action that have been outlined in its report to Governor Baldacci. To further engage new partners, there will be a press event with the Governor announcing the findings of this report in Mid-March 2009.

**I. Public Private Partnerships:** a) Develop a network of public, private, and non-profit partnerships to create and sustain Maine’s comprehensive, early childhood system; and b) Establish a non-profit state-level entity that accepts public and private funding, conducts ongoing resource development, provides grant making and service purchase activities, maintains a consistent bipartisan focus, and holds accountable the myriad levels of Maine’s emergent early childhood system.

**II. Public Education and Parent Education:** Develop a statewide “Invest Early” campaign about Maine’s moral and fiscal responsibility and the value of investing in young children; and encourage public and private investments that support Maine parents and primary caregivers in learning and practicing healthy, effective child development.

**III. Early Childhood Workforce Development:** Promote public and private investments that will increase the number of qualified early childhood professionals; and that improve the training, education and quality of Maine’s early childhood professionals.



### EDUCARE Maine

In November 2007 at the Governor’s Economic Summit on Early Childhood, findings from Nobel-prize-winning economist James Heckman revealed that every dollar invested in quality early care and learning yields between \$7 and \$16 of returns. Omaha billionaire George Kaiser educated the conference business and chamber leaders, as well as policy-makers about the Educare model. Governor Baldacci and First Lady Karen Baldacci moved quickly to express interest.

Philanthropist Doris Buffett, a part-time Maine resident, was so impressed with the work Maine is doing to improve policies and systems for parents with young children that she committed **\$3 million as seed funds** towards Maine’s first Educare Center with an additional **\$1 million from the Bounce Learning Network**, the national Educare philanthropy partnership providing national leadership and oversight for Educare research and evaluation to support policy change. The Bill and Joan Alford foundation, a family foundation in Maine and Boston, has stepped up to Doris Buffett’s seed funding with a **\$2 million challenge to be matched by the final \$4 million** needed to build the facility. Governor John E. **Baldacci** recently announced that he **proposes investing \$2 million** towards the construction of the facility from the Federal Recovery Act state allocation. Once the facility is built, the operational program will be sustained through existing federal, state and local public school and Head Start funding streams as well as an endowment.

Educare is a unique partnership between state and local government and private investors, foundations, and philanthropists. Maine's Educare Center will join the eight completed centers nationally, all of which have gained support from investors such as Doris Buffett's Foundation, Buffet Early Childhood, the Gates Foundation, the Kaiser Family Foundation, and recently the Kellogg Foundation with its \$16 million challenge to build 4 more centers in the mid-west and Washington D.C. All centers are members of the national Bounce Learning Network that works on federal policy relating to expanding high-quality early education across the U.S.

Maine's first "pilot" center, *Educare Central Maine*, will be located in Waterville and built next to the George J. Mitchell Elementary School. The location and design of this 37,477 sq/ft facility will provide a seamless educational transition for the young learners and their parents. Once constructed, Educare Central Maine will serve between 185 and 200 of the area's highest-needs children in full-day, full-year care from the greater Waterville area eligible for Head Start and meeting the free and reduced lunch criteria of low-income. Young children with Autism and special needs will be integrated throughout the program.

### **Fast Facts:**

- Educare Maine's Capital Campaign is staffed by Children's Cabinet staff in partnership with a part-time professional development coordinator Ally Karter
- The role of staff/development is to oversee and coordinate various aspects of planning with the state leadership and local Educare Central Maine Governance Board and provide resource development from the state and private funders through grants and other activities
- In 2008/2009, state funds supporting statewide work: \$0, however, as of May 9, 2009, the \$2 million proposed from the Federal American Recovery Act had not yet been secured through the Legislative process
- The amount of funds leveraged as commitments by May 9, 2009: \$6,130,000 million (Cash on hand \$5,130,000 million) towards project goal of \$11 million total

***The goal of Educare Maine is to level the playing field for school-readiness to reduce unnecessary costs related to special education and ultimately, reduce the life-long cycle of poverty for families in Maine.***

### **Desired Outcome/s:**

When Educare Central Maine opens its door in September 2010 it will implement, evaluate and thus seek the following outcomes:

- 1) ***Children will enter Kindergarten meeting school-readiness measures*** by providing the highest, research-based quality development and education to children most in need so that they will be ready to take advantage of preschool and formal educational and life opportunities;

2) ***Family interactions and relationships between parents and children will be strengthened*** by helping parents learn how to promote their children's healthy development; and

3) ***Increase the quality and quantity of childcare professionals by serving as a state-of-the-art professional development and resource center*** for child care professionals across the state, as well as an onsite, teaching lab for students seeking an early childhood degree in Maine.

To stay informed about Educare Maine as the first project evolves go to: [www.maine.gov/cabinet](http://www.maine.gov/cabinet) or e-mail questions to: [Lauren.Sterling@maine.gov](mailto:Lauren.Sterling@maine.gov)

## PRIORITY: YOUTH IN TRANSITION

### Shared Youth Vision Council

***Maine's Shared Youth Vision Council*** will serve as the collaborative stakeholder body through which program efficiencies, improvements, coordination, communication, and collaboration among youth-serving agencies and providers at the state, regional, and local levels will take place.

In Governor Baldacci's letter of invitation to the Council membership he stated the following: "Through the Children's Cabinet's cross-systems work, we've come to better understand the harsh realities facing Maine's highest-need children and youth. For example, with improved measures assessing drop out rates we know that the number of youth who are not finishing high school and are not positively engaging in their community or in the workforce are unacceptable. These youth are our future citizens and a key component of Maine's economy and workforce. As a state, we need to significantly increase the number of youth who graduate from high school, feel positively connected to community, go to college, or are employed. We also need to improve the economic security of Maine families with children and youth, particularly those with high risk factors, as we know poverty impacts the mental, physical, and emotional health of our children and youth."

The charge of the SYV Council is to:

- ❑ Promote collaboration and improved communications among the various state agencies and community based partners.
- ❑ Lead the effort to explore and address issues confronting youth ages 9-24 in transitions during their K-12 experience and from school to college or the workforce.
- ❑ Guide the development and implementation of strategic plans.
- ❑ Review all child/youth population needs with priority given to those youth in transition, such as the planning of the Dropout Prevention Summit currently

scheduled for July 27, 2009 at the University of Maine at Orono. (Download Summit Brochure at: [www.maine.gov/cabinet/syv](http://www.maine.gov/cabinet/syv) )

### **Fast Facts:**

- The Council is staffed by a full-time C4CY Americorp VISTA, who is housed in kind at the Department of Labor and tri-chaired by volunteers:
  - Hon. Michael Brennan, M.A., LCSW, Policy Associate, Muskie School of Public Service
    - Emanuel Pariser, Alternative Educational Consultant and Researcher, and Co-Founder the Community School, Camden, Maine
    - Elizabeth Warn, Executive Vice President, TD Bank North
- The role of staff and tri-chairs is to coordinate and oversee meeting agendas and sub-committee efforts and provide updates and communications to the Children's Cabinet throughout the year
- 2008/2009 funding supporting the Council: \$4,000 cash match to federal Vista funding through Workforce Investment Act federal funds
- Funding leveraged or saved: \$35,000
- Membership: A broad representation from federal, state, non-profit youth organizations, parents, youth ...etc.
- Three Work Groups include:
  - Economic Security
  - Systems of Integration and Systems of Care
  - Preparation for Work and Education

### **Desired Outcome/s:**

- 90% of Maine students will graduate from K-12 system by 2016.

To see minutes to all meetings and sub-committees at: [www.maine.gov/cabinet/syv](http://www.maine.gov/cabinet/syv)

## **Communities for Children and Youth**

Communities for Children and Youth (C4CY) is a statewide initiative of the Maine Children's Cabinet designed to create a partnership between state government and local communities as they work on:

- The prevention of child abuse; youth substance abuse; juvenile delinquency; youth violence; school failure; and homelessness.

- The promotion of positive child and youth development.

Since 1997, 65 communities have joined and remained in the network, representing more than 326 municipalities and 70% of the state's population.

### **Fast Facts:**

- The C4CY Initiative is staffed by Susan Savell with a shared, part-time support staff
- The role of C4CY staff is to broker resources to support and strengthen local coalition goals in youth development and prevention
- In 2008-2009 program year state funds supporting statewide coalition-building and support work: \$32,000 (plus 2 salaries)
- The amount of funds and resources leveraged by grants and/or saved: \$4,222,000

### **C4CY's Desired Outcome/s:**

- Communities promote and model clear standards of behavior
- First-time non-violent juvenile offenders do not repeat offenses and stay out of the corrections or court systems
- Children/Youth are respected, safe and nurtured in their community
- Child/youth-serving organizations employ positive child/youth development strategies

### **Successful Activities in 2008/2009:**

#### **C4CY Diversion to Assets**

Communities for Children and Youth began working with the Maine Department of Corrections to develop several pilot “Diversion to Assets” programs in four regions of the state. The “**C4CY Diversion to Assets**” project is designed to develop significant community connections for these lower risk youth in communities whose populations are larger and more complex, and where the police departments and JCCO’s need help in identifying positive solutions other than arrest or detention.

This project intends to hold young people “accountable” in a different way, by assessing their strengths (their weaknesses have already been demonstrated by their illegal action) through the Search Institute’s Developmental Asset Profile, and connecting them to caring adults and peers who can help them develop their assets through local opportunities such as mentoring, after-school programs, restorative justice meetings, community service projects, evidence-based curriculums, or other community-based learning experiences. In this way, we hope to protect many young people from further involvement in the juvenile justice system, as well as promote the internal and external assets that will support their healthy development.

Some communities divert many more young people to natural community supports than others, preventing entrance into the complex juvenile justice system that often puts lower risk youth in greater danger of continuing criminologic behavior.

Diversion to assets is working with five largely urban communities in 2008: Biddeford, Lewiston, Augusta, Waterville and Bucksport. Each of these cities will identify and develop asset development resources unique to their communities, with one agency taking responsibility for organizing and coordinating the local team. This agency will identify one person who will serve as the Team leader; will take responsibility for the assessment, assigned activity and follow-through plan developed for each young person referred to the project; and will meet monthly with the C4CY Executive Director and the other Team Leaders to collaboratively monitor and evaluate the progress of the project. The “pilot” nature of this project will allow for creativity and variations in the local approaches to asset development, and will therefore be evaluated carefully by the University of New England.

### **C4CY College Community Mentoring Project**

With \$500,000 through a federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency grant, in October of 2008 C4CY began a new project partnering with and supporting seven colleges in Maine as they both expand and create new school-based mentoring programs for at-risk children and youth in their surrounding, disadvantaged communities.

Bowdoin College, the University of New England, the University of Maine at Orono, the University of Maine at Augusta, the University of Southern Maine in Portland, and the University of Southern Maine’s Lewiston-Auburn College in Lewiston will be partnering with their surrounding public schools and their most effective local community-based organizations, including Big Brothers Big Sisters, the York County Community Action Agency, the River Coalition, the Augusta Boys and Girls Club for Teens, and THRIVE (a trauma-informed system of care).

The mentoring model these colleges will be replicating has been developed by Colby College, *Colby Cares About Kids* a 1:1, school-based mentoring program that matches a well-trained and supported college student with a mentee for one to four years. Each college will recruit at least 25 new mentors each year for three years, serving 450 elementary, middle and early high school youth who have been referred by a guidance counselor or teacher.

The mentors will receive training in evidence-based mentoring practices, as well as positive youth development approaches and activities, and the unique needs of youth who are first time offenders, in order to help them increase their pro-social behavior, academic success and aspirations for higher education.

This College Community Mentoring Project will be developed over the next three years with funding from the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

## C4CY Assets - Getting To Outcomes for Maine

Alcohol and other drug use among youth is costly for communities. More research is needed about how to best support community based prevention programs and how community prevention expertise can inform the research process. The project will demonstrate and evaluate strategies to strengthen the prevention capacity of community organizations that can be used broadly across many types of programs. Funding for this project from the National Institute of Health/NIDA will total \$3,200,000 over the next five years.

In 2008 NIDA began to fund a 5-year collaboration of the RAND Corporation, Search Institute and its training division, Vision Training Associates, Communities for Children and Youth, and the University of Southern Maine to implement and assess the impact on prevention coalitions, the combination of two complimentary, community-based interventions:

- *Getting To Outcomes (GTO)*, which enhances community capacity to complete critical prevention tasks (e.g., evaluation), and
- *Developmental Assets*, which supports community mobilization and collaboration to promote positive youth development.

The purpose of the project is to investigate:

- How well is the Assets-GTO intervention delivered, how much is it used, and what coalitions think about it
- The extent to which the Assets-GTO approach enhances the prevention capacity (knowledge, attitudes, and skills) of individual coalition members and the quality of prevention performance; and
- Whether enhanced prevention capacity improves alcohol and drug outcomes among youth.

Twelve community-based prevention coalitions in Maine (part of Communities for Children and Youth) will participate. Six coalitions—determined at random—will receive manuals, training, and onsite technical assistance consisting of bi-weekly meetings between A-GTO 4 ME! and key coalition staff. The other six coalitions will continue practice as usual, but will receive an abbreviated version of the Assets-GTO intervention near the end of the project.

A Community Research Workgroup consisting of coalition representatives will review all aspects of the study and interim findings and facilitate dissemination on A-GTO 4 ME!

**Keeping Maine's Children Connected (KMCC)**

## **Mission**

To promote success for youth who experience disruption in their educational programs

## **Vision**

All youth have a team that supports them so they can continue and complete their educational programs, feel a sense of belonging to their communities, and experience fewer disruptions in their lives.

## **Core Values**

- Every youth is valued as an asset to the community.
- Each person in the youth's life takes and accepts responsibility to work with and be involved with the youth.

## **Fast Facts:**

- KMCC is staffed by Susan Lieberman, who is housed in the Department of Education
- The role of KMCC staff is to coordinate and organize annual regional school and facility liaison trainings and resource development
- In 2007-2008 program year state funds supporting statewide work: \$98,000
- The amount of funds and resources leveraged by grants and/or saved: \$260,000

## **KMCC Outcome/s:**

- Reached 194 KMCC Liaisons statewide representing school districts, regional state agencies, psychiatric hospitals, correctional facilities and residential group care provider agencies. All schools and sending facilities have trained single liaison contact
- Served 285 liaisons and regional representatives participated in the ongoing regional meetings statewide. Representatives include schools, state agencies, hospitals, correctional facilities, and residential group care providers.
- Engaged 20 youth actively participate in Get Connected Youth Group to advise on KMCC program and practices. Next year will expand to other areas in state.
- 1000 attended statewide regional trainings on topics related to youth who experience disruption in their educational program

## **Successful Activities in 2008/2009:**

**Awarded US DOE Grant to Integrate Schools and Mental Health Systems through Maine Department of Education:** Grant partners include NAMI, DHHS, DOC, DOL, school districts, crisis agencies, Spring Harbor Hospital, Oldham Innovative Research, parent organizations, community agencies families and youth.

The initiative is being piloted in southern Maine with the expectation to expand efforts statewide. The goal of the grant is to enhance, improve and develop collaborative efforts between school based systems and mental health services

### **Keeping Maine's Children Connected Get Connected Youth Advisory**

**Committee:** The first KMCC Youth Advisory Committee was established this year with the support of youth in Augusta. They chose the name the KMCC Get Connected Youth Advisory Committee. The meeting is co-facilitated by a youth leader with 20 different youth participating. They designed and developed material for KMCC which was then disseminated to the public as well as began plans for future projects that will support youth in schools and in the community.

### **Expanded KMCC Statewide Liaison Network to Include Group Care Providers:**

The statewide network has been expanded to include group care providers along with the existing liaisons from school districts, psychiatric hospitals, regional state agency offices and correctional facilities. The new liaisons have attended trainings and regional liaison meetings. Presently there are 194 Liaisons statewide. The regional trainings and regional meetings are a unique collaborative effort promoting ongoing exchange of information and resources among staff from schools, state agencies, community agencies, parent groups, psychiatric hospitals, juvenile correctional facilities, and group care providers.

**KMCC Honors Great People and Youth Who Inspire:** KMCC initiated awards to honor young adults whose great work and perseverance enabled them to stay focused on their education despite having had to leave and then return to their educational program due to homelessness, foster care placement, correctional facility placement, high mobility, and/or in-patient psychiatric care. KMCC also honored extraordinary individuals, groups and organizations who best exemplify the mission of KMCC to promote success for all youth. All awardees were honored at a ceremony at the Blaine House with the First Lady. Community awardees included Betsy Morrision, SMOACT; David Brenner, South Portland Schools; Kristen Carlson, Biddeford Schools; Jenna Bolduc, Spurwink's Juvenile Risk Reduction Program; Brianne Masselli, THRIVE; Jeff Keating, Mount View High School, Janie Small, DOL and all 5 GEAR Parent Coordinators. Two youth Chara LaFountain and Dan Koronczyk received monetary awards to be used toward their post secondary education thanks to support from Saco and Biddeford Savings and NAMI/Eli Lilly. Three other youth received honorary awards for their effort to persevere and inspire others.

### **Systems Gaps Identified:**

- Inconsistent Identification of educational and vocational status of all youth served through state agencies

- Alternatives for suspension and expulsion
- Inconsistent exchange of information and records between and among state agencies, families, psychiatric hospitals and school districts when youth transfer from one placement to another
- Inconsistent access to mental health services for youth who are not MaineCare eligible
- Transportation to get to mental health appointments for youth who are not MaineCare eligible

**Policy implications:**

- Policy to track educational and vocational status of youth served by DHHS, Child Welfare Services and Children’s Behavioral Health case management services; DOL, DOE and DOC.
- Statutory language for DHHS Division of Licensing to require contact between psychiatric clinical staff and the youth’s educational program after acquiring guardian permission
- Policy to require communication-sharing of pertinent information- between and among school districts, state agencies, psychiatric hospitals, and community agencies when youth transfer from one placement to another after acquiring guardian permission
- Oversight of the recommendations listed above

**“High Fidelity Community Wraparound”  
Wraparound Maine**

During the 122<sup>nd</sup> Legislature, the Health and Human Services Committee supported legislation

that approved the re-investment of funds saved by reducing residential care placements to ensure comprehensive wraparound services for Maine’s children and youth.

Wraparound Maine is a statewide initiative, serving multi-agency involved children and youth, ages 5-18, with serious emotional or behavioral disturbance who are either in residential care or at high risk of such placement. Wraparound is a process which develops and carries out plans for children, individuals and their families who have very complex needs. A Team facilitator works with the family to identify four to ten people who know the family best- a mix of natural supports and formal service providers. These

people form a team to work together to achieve the goals chosen by the family. The facilitator, trained in the Wraparound process, is responsible for keeping the team focused on the family's goals and the family works with the facilitator to ensure the plan is right for them.

### **Fast Facts:**

- Wraparound Maine is coordinated by Francis Ryan at DHHS
- The role of Wraparound Maine staff is to provide oversight to the funded regional collaboratives and their fiscal agents as well as reporting
- In 2008-2009 program year state funds supporting statewide work: \$4,000,000
- The amount of funds and resources saved by reducing youth in residential care: \$4,000,000 as initial early savings. Long-term savings is yet to be calculated

NOTE: The average monthly cost per child for Wraparound Maine = \$2,110 (with an average length of stay being 6 months.) The average monthly cost for a child to be placed in residential treatment = \$11,000 (with an average length of stay being 9 months). This translates to a **savings of roughly 86,000 per child** who remains in the community

As of February, 2009, 119 youth have been discharged from Wraparound Maine. Of those who started Wraparound Maine living in the community, 74% were still living in their community at discharge. Of those living in residential care at enrollment, 62% had transitioned to the community by the time of discharge while only 25% remained in residential care.

### **Wraparound Maine Outcome/s:**

- 200 families have participated in the Wraparound Process.
- 15% fewer youth in residential treatment (though involvement with Wraparound Maine)
- 9 sites- with services to youth and families Statewide
- Conducted a Maine Wraparound Symposium
- The initial six Wraparound Maine sites performed well against national standard in an examination of program fidelity for year one of implementation
- 3 Wraparound Maine Facilitators are available to support ongoing workforce development

### **Successful Activities in 2008/2009:**

- Wraparound Maine, with six sites launched in 2007, experienced a full year of active operation in 2008 and has supported approximately 200 families throughout the state.

- A comparison of living situations for youth at enrollment and discharge reveals 15% fewer youth involved in residential treatment with a concurrent increase in family and community placements.
- A Request for Proposals issued in the fall of 2008, supports expansion to three more areas of the state and statewide availability.
- In partnership with The University of Southern Maine, Wraparound Maine sponsored a Wraparound Symposium in April 2008, with a host of internationally known experts in Wraparound and Systems of Care. Dr. Gary M. Blau, Chief of the Child, Adolescent and Family Branch of the Center for Mental Health Services was the keynote speaker.
- An Examination of Program Fidelity, completed in December 2008 by the Wraparound Maine Evaluation Team at USM's Muskie School of Public Service indicates that Maine has performed well against national averages compiled by the National Wraparound Initiative (NWI). This study was based on completion of the Wraparound Fidelity Index, version 4 (WFI- 4), which is a structured interview designed to assess the extent to which the wraparound principles and core activities are implemented in service delivery, according to the model defined by the NWI. This is good news for Maine!
- We now have Three Fully Credentialed Wraparound Maine Trainers. This means that we are building capacity to sustain ongoing workforce development with Maine resources.

### **Systems Gaps Identified:**

- Implementation of Wraparound has been met with skepticism in various parts of our system (this has varied according to the community). Ongoing public education and continued work to engage community members is needed.
- Each Wraparound Maine site is overseen and supported by a Community Collaborative Board. These groups are intended to function as a “Community Mobilization Team”, actively addressing barriers brought forth by the Wraparound Teams. Each Community Mobilization Team has taken time to develop, working to integrate with the range of other existing and developing collaborative within their communities.
- Based on feedback from current Collaborative Boards, we have arranged for additional training and support to the new communities who are establishing their Mobilization Teams.

### **Policy Implications:**

Research conducted by Dr. VanDenBerg, along with others involved in the NWI clearly shows that Family Support Partner (FSP) involvement in the Wraparound Team is considered to be one of the most valued aspects of the process from the family perspective. While teams may currently use flex funds for Family Support Partners in Maine, we are not able to fully implement their use on a routine basis without an identified funding stream. Several other states have recently secured the means for FSP

billing through Medicaid. We are hopeful that we can find a way to do the same- or to find an alternative means to fully implement the FSP role in Maine in the coming year.

## **Best Practices in Bullying and Harassment Prevention (AKA) Creating Safe, Fair, Healthy and Responsive Schools**

### **Phase One: Research Best Practices**

In 2005, after the Governor's Executive Order charging the Children's Cabinet with the task of exploring contributing factors to teen suicide and self-harm, the Legislature and the Cabinet "Climate Workgroup" identified bullying and harassment as a contributing factor. An ad hoc group formed to research and implement a "Best Practice Guide in Bullying and Harassment Prevention" along with a sample school policy vetted and promoted through Maine School Management, and a website for free downloads at [www.maine.gov/bullyingprevention](http://www.maine.gov/bullyingprevention).

### **Phase Two: Engage Experts in the Field**

After three years of bringing training experts in the field of bullying and harassment, civil rights, gender aggression, research and evaluation together culminating in a pilot project supported with one-time funds through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers grant and Children's Cabinet, eight (8) Critical Elements were identified and proposed as the combined elements required for successful systems change at the local school level. The goal of this cross-systems work is to move away from a "bullying" reference and instead to the following:

### **A Cross-systems Approach to Effective Prevention**

#### **Critical Elements of a Recommended Approach to Create and Ensure Safe, Healthy, Fair, and Responsive Maine Schools**

Each school district should:

1. Conduct an initial assessment of policy (checklist), procedures, and student and staff perceptions of school climate, culture, and behavior.
2. Establish and support an internal school leadership team including the principal and high-level administrators as key advocates and participants.
3. Provide opportunities for involvement of parents and community.
4. Share and interpret assessment findings.
5. Develop a comprehensive school plan and choose training and technical assistance approaches based on issues identified through the assessment. The plan must include meaningful youth involvement.

6. Establish and implement procedures based on policies that assure safe, fair, responsive schools.
7. Provide ongoing training for all staff and the necessary technical assistance to support and institutionalize a sustained school-wide effort.
8. Conduct ongoing evaluation to assess progress, achievements, and to provide feedback for adjustments to the school plan.

Understanding that not only are there overlaps and duplication in the school staff training audiences required by various agency programs, but also that the eight Core Elements noted for bullying and harassment systems change hold true for many if not all of the prevention programs funded through out state and federally-funded programs such as substance abuse, suicide, and violence prevention. Most importantly, they **SHARE THE SAME DESIRED OUTCOME:**

***“ALL MAINE STUDENTS ATTEND SCHOOLS AND  
CAN LEARN FEELING THAT SCHOOLS ARE  
SAFE, HEALTHY, FAIR, AND RESPONSIVE”***

#### **Fast Facts:**

- The Best Practice in Bullying/Harassment Prevention is coordinated by Lauren Sterling, who is housed at the Department of Education where she also manages the Federal 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Program, and staffs the Children’s Cabinet
- The role of staff is to facilitate the coordination of and distribution of the Best Practice Critical Elements with state agency colleagues through existing partnerships and school structures
- In 2008-2009 program year state funds supporting statewide work: \$7,100
- The amount of funds and resources leveraged and/or saved: TBA

#### **Best Practices in Cross-systems Prevention Outcome/s:**

- Children’s Cabinet unanimously supported the staff’s recommendation to imbed the Best Practices in Cross-systems Prevention within the existing Coordinated School Health structure
- Cross-systems state program managers collaborated to design and co-present at training to include:
  - Assistant Attorney General Thomas Harnett – Civil Rights
  - Cheryl DiCara, DHHS/MCDC’s Maine Youth Suicide Prevention Program
  - Linda Phillips, DHHS/Office of Substance Abuse
  - Susan Savell, Children’s Cabinet’s C4CY/Asset Development
  - Jan Clarkin, Maine Children’s Trust/Child Abuse and Neglect
  - Lauren Sterling, Children’s Cabinet/Cross-systems prevention
  - Ansley Newton, DOE’s Student Assistant Teams/School Climate
- Hosted the first Coordinated School Health Cross-systems Prevention Training held April 7, 2009

### **Successful Activities in 2008/2009:**

Convened state agency program managers from the various departments to:

- Share program overview, purpose across state agency staff;
- Identify funding streams and allocations related to training or program supports in schools;
- Consider how to maximize training opportunities in a coordinated process;
- Begin exploring improved use of state/federal funds to better implement trainings and maximize expertise and resources;
- Establish a more equitable support and training system across Maine schools
- Explore shared evaluation;
- Identified common barriers to effective prevention systems in local schools;
- Identified improved systems change recommendations;
- Explored common, web-based student and staff survey tools and Policy Checklist;
- Made recommendations for implementation to the Children's Cabinet.

**Systems Gaps:** Although passed by the Maine Legislature in 2005, the Best Practice Policy and Approaches to reducing bullying and harassment received no funding allocation and therefore can not be mandated.

**Policy Implications:** As parents remove their children from school as a result of bullying and harassment that has not been effectively or appropriately addressed, schools are vulnerable to law-suits. More importantly, however, are the impacts to children and youth in terms of mental health treatment needs, self-harm, and school drop out, all of which are realities for those for whom bullying and harassment exists.

## **Maine Youth Suicide Prevention**

The Maine Youth Suicide Prevention Program (MYSPP) is coordinated by the Maine Injury Prevention Program in the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) in the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The Maine Youth Suicide Prevention Program has been in existence since 1998. The mission of the program is to:

- Increase statewide public awareness about youth suicide and youth suicide prevention;
- Reduce the incidence of suicidal behavior among Maine youth aged 10-24; and
- Improve youth access to appropriate prevention and intervention services.

## Fast Facts:

- The MYSPP is coordinated by Cheryl DiCara at the Maine CDC at DHHS
- The role of staff is to oversee and manage the youth suicide prevention plan, programs and reporting
- In 2008-2009 program year state funds supporting statewide work: \$200,000
- The amount of funds and resources saved or leveraged was: \$500,000

**MYSPP Program Outcome/s:** (NOTE: 100% of this work seeks to reduce the percentage of suicide attempts and completions as well as the number of youth and adults recognizing the signs of suicide and how to effectively intervene).

- 1,762 individuals trained
- Secured a new SAMHSA grant award
- Increased readiness to intervene among community members who attend Gatekeeper Training
- Youth who receive Lifelines Lessons will demonstrate increased knowledge about suicide and improved attitudes towards help-seeking for self and others.
- Youth who are at-risk of suicide will be identified, referred for help, and receive treatment
- There will be fewer suicide attempts among youth
- The five year rate of youth suicide will continue to go down

## Successful Activities in 2007/2008:

Data analyses showed a slight decline in the youth suicide rate and in-depth analysis of YRBS data revealed some useful information about Maine youth at risk. This information was used to update the surveillance report and several fact sheets and was incorporated into presentations and training programs.

The MYSPP website was updated to include some new downloadable resources and continued to attract a lot of attention. The main site received an average of 700 hits per month and the youth site received an average of 200 hits per month. The site also handled 117 information requests and 6 “suicide issues” via website request-form.

A total of 1,762 individuals attended 53 MYSPP training programs offered statewide. Counting those trained in 2008, the MYSPP has provided nearly 600 training programs since program inception preparing 4,565 adult gatekeepers, almost 600 youth, 165 teachers in teaching Lifelines student lessons, 92 school professionals in developing school administrative protocols and 860 advanced level annual training conference attendees.

The MYSPP plan was approved and disseminated to the Steering Committee and is available on the MYSPP website. The MYSPP Steering Committee was restructured to an Advisory Council and sub-committees were established.

The MYSPP was awarded in-kind services from the Time Warner Cares Program. A p.s.a. was created and aired 3,250 times in May and June at a value of \$149,500 in advertising time and production.

MYSPP formed a partnership with the new Veteran's Administration Suicide Prevention Coordinator.

### **National Highlights:**

Implementation and evaluation of the 2005-2008 SAMHSA and Enhanced Evaluation projects continued and we were fortunate to be one of only 6 of the 14 originally funded states to receive a continuation grant – equaling \$500,000/year from 2008-2011 to fund implementation of Lifelines in 11 additional high schools and to create referral networks in those school communities! An evaluation report on the first project is forthcoming.

LGBTQ suicide prevention resource materials were developed and disseminated in conjunction with the national Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC).

The MYSPP School Protocol Guidelines was designated a national best practice and added to the SPRC website.

The MYSPP Lifelines student lessons evaluation was entered into the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP) process for evaluation. MYSPP was approached by a national organization (Hazelden) to adapt the Maine Lifelines work into a package to be disseminated nationally.

Cheryl DiCara was honored as the recipient of the Alex Kelter Vision Award presented by the State and Territorial Injury Prevention Directors Association (STIPDA) at their Annual Meeting in April.

### **Systems Gaps Identified:**

We have identified gaps across multiple systems in the state in addressing youth suicide prevention services. Partnerships to develop systematic approaches to suicide prevention are needed with schools, substance abuse prevention programs, foster care, corrections, mental health crisis agencies and the Veteran's Administration,.

There continues to be a need to improve our understanding of suicide by expanding use of datasets that provide in-depth information useful to prevention. The Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey to be implemented in 2009 is expected to provide useful state and local level student data that will enhance our ability to conduct analyses of these factors, to fine tune prevention strategies. We are also planning to conduct more in-depth review of death certificate data to enhance understanding of youth suicidal behaviors in Maine.

### **Policy Implications:**

A number of policy related issues have been identified and are addressed within the MYSPP plan. The new SAMHSA project will advance many of the goals and objectives detailed in the plan.

Obtaining consistent representation from all Children’s Cabinet agencies and from key individuals outside of state government is essential to informing and guiding the MYSPP. The Steering Committee went through a strategic planning process to develop an improved structure that facilitates increased participation and broadens leadership in suicide prevention. One outcome of this is an Advisory Council (to replace the Steering Committee) which will meet twice annually in conjunction with an MYSPP event (National Suicide Prevention week in September and the annual Beyond the Basics conference in March/April).

A second outcome was the development of 5 active sub-committees: Young Adult Suicide Prevention; SAMHSA grant; Training; Data and Public Relations. Each is co-chaired by an MYSPP Team member and a partner.

We also plan to work with state CC agencies to integrate a sustainable suicide prevention component, and to establish partnerships within Maine’s new Public Health Districts.

As part of the new SAMHSA project, 11 more Maine high schools will implement the Lifelines Program to establish procedures, train staff, develop key partnerships and work with local referral resources to develop a community-wide approach to suicide prevention in their community.

In addition, through the new SAMHSA grant, the MYSPP will provide training to Child Welfare trainers so they are able include a suicide awareness session for all prospective DHHS foster & adoptive parents & kin providers and provide full day gatekeeper training for all CW case managers, new CW staff & CBH case workers.

**Regional Children’s Cabinet (RCCs)**  
**Highlights**

The three Regional Children’s Cabinets are regionally coordinated committees that are overseen by the Regional Children’s Cabinet staff, who add this task upon their full-time agency management positions. The regional collaboratives pull together various providers from across state and private agencies and systems to set goals that determine priorities and work to identified barriers to effective services.

Until the curtailment process, RCCs were funded (at the beginning of 2008) with “pooled flexible funding” (PFF). Criteria for Pooled Flex Funding consideration at Children’s Cabinet and RCC levels addresses the following **Gold Star** standards:

- The initiative is cross-systems.
- The initiative address an unmet need.
- There is a team approach to addressing the need.
- The initial support offers potential for sustainability.
- One can define the impact on a specific population without the PPF support.
- There is evidence that the initiative is or will improve services and systems process and function.
- Initiative facilitates collaboration on behalf of children and youth (builds relationships at local, regional or state level).

In addition, the following criteria should guide all decisions relating to the **Gold Star Standards**:

Cross-cutting systems initiatives should be:

- **Cross-cutting:** Must involve two or more agencies and other stakeholders;
- **Family/youth-guided:** Population served **MUST** be intricately involved in all phases of the planning, programming, evaluation;
- **Culturally competent:** All communications and interactions with youth and families **MUST** honor and be sensitive to individual and group culture, class, gender, orientation, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomics, etc.;
- **Strength-based:** Approaches to work **MUST** seek out and build upon the strengths or assets of population served, rather than deficits;
- **Data-driven:** Initiative support **MUST** be based on existing data (need) and/or has plan for identifying and executing indicators/measurable outcomes.

In addition, the PFF expenditures should:

- ✓ Identify systems gaps and/or barriers to effective services identified through regional work funded by PFF?
- ✓ Identify new and emerging issues that have policy implications and that direct the Cabinet towards solutions or change.

## Region I

### Fast Facts

- ▣ RCC I is chaired by Ansley Newton from the DOE's Student Assistant Teams
- ▣ The role of chair is to oversee and facilitate the coordination and communications among and between regional collaboratives and is liaison with Children's Cabinet staff for reporting
- ▣ In 2008-2009 program year state funds supporting statewide work: \$49,000
- ▣ The amount of funds and resources saved or leveraged was: \$10,140

## **Successful Activities in 2008/2009**

### **Empowering Youth to be Actively Involved in Planning their Future**

On December 9<sup>th</sup>, in collaboration with several other partners, the Southern Maine Advisory Council on Transition (SMACT) developed and delivered a one-day, youth-led middle school conference for youth with special needs in southern Maine. The Conference was entitled “Roll out the Red Carpet to Your Future” and was held from 8:30-1:30 at Keeley the Katerer’s in Portland.

The Conference was attended by 60 middle school students, 20 adult supporters representing 10 area school districts. Additionally, 12 trained Youth leaders completely planned and facilitated the day for the participating youth who attended. They facilitated a series of interactive activities that demonstrated to the participants the importance of self-advocating as well as awareness and active involvement in planning both their high school curriculum and their transition to life after high school.

#### **Outcomes:**

- 72 youth, including the participants and the youth leaders attended and 20 adults attended the conference
- Each youth participant created an action plan that they were encouraged to build upon and take back with them to use at their next planning meeting
- Vicariously through the youth participants, school personnel were presented with a model for how to work with youth in helping them to begin to plan for their future. Throughout the day, they were encouraged to use this model with other students back at their schools.
- A follow-up survey will be conducted in April for both the youth and adult participants to determine the long-term impact of attending the conference.

### **York County Collaborative Council**

#### **A Community Collaborative for Children and Families**

Southern Maine Parent Awareness hopes the collaborative will bring people together for the purpose of developing a coordinated network of natural and formal supports interacting with a common vision to keep children and families together safely and uniting a wide range of child and family services.

SMPA has met with organizations to discuss their interest and the value of a collaborative group. We have highlighted the need for a coordinated effort in identifying service gaps in the community as well as the mutual benefits of true collaboration. We have found it essential to develop a group of stakeholders to further the process of collaboration. Providers and agencies do not want to meet just to meet. Everyone is interested in using time productively. SMPA has identified and connected with several local collaboratives and organizations as stake holders for

an initial meeting of the York County Collaborative Council. Many of these potential attendees wear many hats and sit on several local and regional committees

### **Outcomes:**

Booklet- developed regional listing of all initiatives

1. categorized by city/town and topic/service area
2. revised bi-annually
3. distributed to the community

Integrating Initiatives Network – York County Initiatives

1. all initiatives invited to a facilitated networking meeting
2. network members identify areas of overlap/duplication and potential for collaboration
3. network members will define role of network
4. SMPA will invite/structure an initial leadership group

### **Cumberland County Collaborative**

District 2 has a committee that has been meeting since the Future Search conference. Eight or nine agencies are represented on that committee. They sponsored orientation sessions for agencies in Cumberland County to send their workers to learn about the spectrum of services for children and families. The Collaborative recently held our first meeting for providers in Cumberland County to discuss the service needs of our county and how to best meet the needs of families and are in process of building a group with representation from lots of different parts of the system and the community—health care, education, mental health, child care, child welfare, juvenile corrections, homeless services, parent support, etc.

**Desired Outcomes:** By the end of the three meetings partners will:

- Understand the role and needs of its many partners
- Honor what was learned in the previous meeting(s)
- Develop a specific mission for the collaborative derived from parents and parent data
- Increased awareness of the diversity of backgrounds and services among participants, including parents
- Readiness to determine the systemic themes where action could be taken by this collaborative
- New insights and understanding about the collective work of this group

### **Work to Stay in School Project**

The seed funding for the Work to Stay in School Project (WTSIS) enabled a collaborative to be established to provide supported employment programming to students in Bonny Eagle High School and the Hollis Learning Center (MSAD 6) who

had disciplinary records, attendance issues, were at risk of suspension, expulsion, not graduating with their class or dropping out.

### **Outcomes:**

- 80 % of the students entered unsubsidized employment
- Ninety-one percent of the 11 students who received paid work experiences returned to school

Note: Upon graduating from high school this student enrolled in the Workforce Investment Act Youth Services and participated in an On-the-Job Training. The training was for welding and the youth is currently employed earning \$13.50/hr working full-time. Another example of success is a student interested in the Early Childhood Education field completed a 12 week paid work experience with a local area daycare provider. Upon completion the student was hired by the employer and the position was retained for over a year.

### **Systems Gaps Identified**

- Different funding sources
- Different requirements under specific grants
- Confidentiality issues creating barriers to effective service supports
- Different Target Populations
- Specific reporting requirements of each agency
- Lack of support to move from collaboration to integration
- Different work schedules
- Moving from “this is the way we have always done it” to what’s in the best interest of children, youth and families
- Finding long term funding to support creative initiatives that do make a difference
- Little awareness sometimes of resources available
- Failure to connect with schools around student/family issues
- Lack of knowledge about supports that exist in all departments/private agencies

### **Policy Implications**

- Review all MOUs between departments for improved service delivery/coordination
- Utilize the National Shared Youth Vision Model to help focus in a few areas to support youth and families
- Bridge the communication gap around confidentiality so there is better communication between schools, departments and agencies
- A long term plan to help youth understand services available statewide

- Recommended one collaborative council in each of the counties instead of many small collaboratives
- Have a Personal Life Plan for all students with input from agencies involved with the family
- Support vocational aspirations and opportunities starting at age 14

## **Region II**

### **Fast Facts**

- ▣ RCC II is chaired by Holly Stover, DHHS
- ▣ The role of chair is to oversee and facilitate the coordination and communications among and between regional collaboratives and is liaison with Children's Cabinet staff for reporting
- ▣ In 2008-2009 program year state funds supporting statewide work: \$0
- ▣ The amount of funds and resources saved or leveraged was: \$ none calculated

### **Successful Activities for 2008/2009**

#### **Community Collaborative Boards**

During this reporting period, some members of the RCC have participated in the developing systems of care (Community Collaborative Boards) within Region II. The LCRC's were a foundation for the creation of this more formalized structure that focuses on the family as the center of engagement, and relies on the incredible strength of public/private partnerships. We have had presentations from 211 Maine, and are planning a community resource fair.

#### **Local Case Resolution Committees (LCRC)**

In Region II, we had relied heavily on the incredible creativity and strength of the volunteer based LCRC's. The lack of continued funding made it impossible for them to continue. Many of the members of the former LCRC's have joined the Community Collaborative Boards.

#### **Wraparound Maine**

Wraparound Maine, an initiative of DHHS/OCFS continues to be present in Sagadahoc, Waldo and Knox Counties and grants were recently awarded in Androscoggin and Kennebec Counties.

#### **Underage Drinking**

In Region II, we participated in a number of community meetings led by Attorney General, Steve Rowe and DHHS, Office of Substance Abuse where information was shared about the underage drinking problem we have here in Maine.

#### **Teen dating Violence**

Region II RCC worked with Family Crisis Services YAAPP to provide interactive presentations to area high schools to heighten awareness and reduce incidences of dating and teen violence.

### **Desired Outcomes:**

- Increased focus on the needs of children and families
- Child and family serving agencies have gained increased knowledge of and connection to the service delivery systems present in each of the counties in Region III
- Families' one time needs are met
- Children and youth are able to remain safely at home
- Decreased risk of youth going into out-of-home placement and more children returning home from residential placements
- Increased understanding of the impact of school disruption on youth and strategies for how to more effectively partner to serve at-risk children and youth
- Increased community focus on issues affecting early childhood

### **Systems Gaps Identified**

- Too many families with children are living in poverty
- Affordable housing is not available or accessible for all in need
- Food Security is real
- Adequate and/or affordable childcare is lacking
- Youth/Teen Dating Violence and stalking is an issue
- Computer Crimes against children exists
- Transportation is lacking
- Lack of coordinated transition from children's to adult systems of care

### **Policy Implications**

The people of Maine require a safety net of adequate services and the resources to pay for them. State agencies must stand closely together to ensure that no child or family falls between the cracks at any critical point on their journey.

Please note that the RCC in Region II is spending more time incorporating into the structure of the Wrap Around and Community Collaborative initiatives. We have very little reason to continue to meet as a separate or distinct entity.

## **Region III**

### **Fast Facts**

-  RCC I is chaired by Bobbi Johnson, DHHS

- The role of chair is to oversee and facilitate the coordination and communications among and between regional collaboratives and is liaison with Children's Cabinet staff for reporting
- In 2008-2009 program year state funds supporting statewide work: \$0
- The amount of funds and resources saved or leveraged was: \$10,050

## **Successful Activities for 2008/2009**

### **Building Community Collaborative Boards (CCB)**

Over the past year, many of the efforts of the RCC have been focused on building and supporting the development of systems of care (Community Collaborative Boards) within Region III. Our vision is to have a system of care structure present in each county which builds on the successes of the Local Case Resolution Committees and other initiatives already present in each county. Through this work we have built our private/public partnership, focused on the engagement of parents and youth as partners and increased the networks' knowledge of community resources, including 211 Maine.

### **Local Case Resolution Committees (LCRC)**

The Local Case Resolution Committees have demonstrated the ability to serve the needs of families through connections to and knowledge of community resources vs. providing monetary assistance. Their primary function has shifted to "barrier busting." Some assistance provided this fiscal year included: assistance with car repairs, rent and utilities, home modifications, home energy issues and outreach to community providers and families to educate about the assistance that can be provided through the LCRC. Committee membership has varied as the groups have redefined their mission of serving children and families with no financial support. For some, strong community supports were present making this a smooth transition, while for other more rural areas this was challenging. Other activities have included agency showcases and conference planning.

### **Wraparound Maine**

Wraparound Maine continues to be present in Aroostook and Penobscot Counties, with grants recently awarded in Washington and Hancock Counties. As agency staff has continued their credentialing process, there has been an enhanced use of Wraparound supports for families. In Aroostook County, the Community Collaborative Board has explored the development of a Time Bank, based on work currently taking place in the Lewiston-Auburn area. In Penobscot County, the CCB partnered with I Care Ministries of Millinocket and were awarded a Neighbors Helping Neighbors grant through the United Way to provide winterization and fuel assistance for families. Contributors to this grant were United Way (\$2500), GE (\$1000) and area Churches (\$6550). This is an example of a partnership between formal supports, the business community and natural supports for families. In Penobscot County, Wings for Children and Families also hosted a Parent Empowerment Institute presented by the Gear Parent Network, which

focused on parents providing support for other parents. This training was also held in Southern Maine. These parents will train other parents and serve as Wraparound Family Support Partners.

### **Other**

**Communities for Children and Youth:** A meeting was held with Susan Savell, United Way Representatives, City of Bangor and RCC members to further promote this initiative in Penobscot County.

211 Maine did a presentation to the CCB and joined as members of the CCB to maximize the use of this resource in our community.

**Keeping Maine's Children Connected:** A joint meeting was held with KMCC, the Friends of Youth Network and the CCB to increase information sharing and the ability to connect with and further promote collaboration with school personnel.

**Task Force on Early Childhood/Home Visiting:** As part of the CCB we have developed an Early Childhood workgroup led by Sheri Smith, Touch Points Coordinator and focused on increasing community education about early childhood issues, resources and prevention.

### **Desired Outcomes:**

- Increased focus on the needs of children and families
- Child and family serving agencies have gained increased knowledge of and connection to the service delivery systems present in each of the counties in Region III
- Families' one time needs are met
- Children and youth are able to remain safely at home
- Decreased risk of youth going into out-of-home placement and more children returning home from residential placements
- Increased understanding of the impact of school disruption on youth and strategies for how to more effectively partner to serve at-risk children and youth
- Increased community focus on issues affecting early childhood

### **Systems Gaps Identified**

- Lack of funding for non-traditional resources/supports
- Significant poverty issues for families (meeting basic needs)
- Heating supports
- Transportation needs
- Disconnects between child and adult MH systems
- Availability of mental health supports in rural areas of the county
- Affordable housing

- Affordable childcare
- Timely access to needed medical supports (e.g. a psychological assessment may take more than a year to schedule if the payment is through Maine Care)
- Response time of agencies for families in crisis

## Policy Implications

It is important to continue to build systems of care throughout the state which increase knowledge of the service delivery systems present in each community. It is critical that families in crisis encounter “no wrong door” in seeking assistance and support.

### Measuring What We Do

The Maine Governor’s Children’s Cabinet has identified and tracked trend data over the past six years relative to outcomes relating to children, youth, and families in Maine ([www.mainemarks.org](http://www.mainemarks.org)).

### Fast Facts

- Web and data design are staffed through Muskie School.
- The role of chair is to update data design to align with Cabinet work/priorities and data-collection from all related agency and data partners.
- In 2007-2008 program year state funds supporting statewide work: \$15,000
- The amount of funds and resources saved or leveraged was: \$0

**History:** The purpose of the *Maine Marks for Children, Families and Communities* is to develop and report on a set of indicators that government, citizens and interested groups can use to track the well-being of the state’s children, families and communities. These indicators are aligned with the vision and outcomes of the Governor’s Children’s Cabinet. The first edition of the Marks was released in February of 2001; the current 2008 online edition represents the most current available data, in most cases including data through 2007.

The Children’s Cabinet is committed to policies and programs that ensure every Maine child is:

- Safe
- Healthy
- Well-educated
- Productive

The following twelve outcomes have served in past years’ Maine Marks publications as an organizing system for grouping the **Maine Marks** indicators according to “broad” thematic content, as listed here:

### **Broad Maine Marks Outcomes**

1. *Children are respected, safe and nurtured in their communities.*
2. *Children are ready to enter school and schools are ready for children.*
3. *Children and youth succeed in school and schools succeed for children and youth*
4. *Youth succeed in higher education.*
5. *Youth are prepared to enter the work force.*
6. *Families have opportunities to work and play.*
7. *Families recognize the rewards and responsibilities of raising children.*
8. *Families live safe and healthy lives.*
9. *Communities are capable of meeting the needs of children and families in all of their diversity.*
10. *Communities create collaborative partnerships.*
11. *Communities promote and model clear standards of behavior.*
12. *Communities keep children and families at the heart of all decisions.*

The Children's Cabinet will continue to work towards these 12 broad outcomes.

## **Leaving a Legacy**

### **THE LEGACY PLAN**

The Governor's Children's Cabinet under the leadership of First Lady Karen Baldacci is committed to accomplishing the following ten (10) action items from which a shared legacy for children, youth and families will stand.

***Measure for Change #1: Business, government, foundations, and higher education commit to long-term investments in comprehensive, quality early childhood care and education targeted to high-risk populations by ensuring:***

- Quality rating system is available to all providers seeking to raise their program's quality rating/level
- Tax credits for parents and providers continue for those who commit to quality
- Child care resources managed through vouchers with family control are imbedded and working effectively
- Educare Maine's first center is up and running through an effective public/private partnership as well as a start-up endowment to support sustained quality program operations and publish a Educare Maine Replication Guide
- Effective process is institutionalized for systems improvements and investment through the Children's Growth Council and Business Round Table

***Measure for Change #2: Sustained integrated state, regional and local approaches help more youth in transition to become successful adults:***

- Work of Shared Youth Vision Council has strong leadership and continuity as well as early recommendations for improved policy

**Measure for Change #4: *Juvenile repeat offender rate reduced:***

- Youth before courts are represented by comprehensive team of state agencies and school staff
- Arrest is first flag; team in place for first court appearance
- Statute addresses data and privacy
- Structure for Circle of Support is in place – includes prosecutors, school liaisons, DHHS case workers, others

**Measure for Change #5: *Achieving permanency keeps children safe and thriving:***

- Residential Foster care stays continue to shrink
- Permanency achieved for all kids within 24 months in care

**Measure for Change #6: *We are on track to end childhood hunger in Maine***

**Measure for Change #7: *Data drives policy decisions:***

- Integrated data systems operational in FY '11
- State policies, investments, strategies evaluated over time

**Measure for Change #8: *Maine schools have effective and coordinated policy and staff training approaches to ensure Schools are safe, fair, healthy and responsive for all students***

**Measure for Change #9: *Principles of positive youth development are incorporated in Maine practices:***

- Maine framework for positive youth development established based on best practices
- Framework influences how data is gathered; Maine Integrated Health Survey includes positive youth development framework
- Assets approaches are highlighted in how findings are used
- Asset-building approaches integrated in approaches with kids in trouble; leading edge successes used to expand positive results
- Framework attracts national resources for community-based projects in Maine

**Measures for Change #10: *Principles of trauma-informed systems of care are incorporated in Maine practices:***

- Principles are clearly defined and communicated

- New initiatives are consistent with principles

**Measure for Change #11: *A strong, effective Children's Cabinet continues in new administration:***

- Children Cabinet Transition document with status of ongoing work and recommendations is prepared by December 2010
- A Case for Children's Cabinet citing research, benchmarks, examples from other states;  
Interview questions:
  - What have we learned about what's good for children and youth?
  - How can state government make a difference?
- Brief gubernatorial candidates on Children's Cabinet
- Provide briefing and encouragement to new Governor

In the next report, we will focus on where we are in meeting the Legacy Plan and provide insights into the major cross-systems leadership structure under the Children's Cabinet (added value) as part of what will be the Governor's Children's Cabinet Transition Report for the incoming administration.

**Maine Governor's Children's Cabinet**

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