

the **P**arents' Partner

A newsletter from The Family Center

We are Proud to Announce **OUR HIGHLIGHTS** for 2004

- ✧ The Family Center successfully transitioned directorship from Susan Knight to Liz Broderick.
- ✧ In July we secured a loan to purchase 44 & 46 Concord Street.
- ✧ The Family Center secured funding from Monadnock United Way and the Developmental Disabilities Council to add another Parent-Child Connections Program to accommodate the waiting list for this popular group.
- ✧ A project to include people with disabilities at the Center and in community activities (Under One Roof), directed by Andrea Gilbert, was awarded \$250,000 per year for 5 years from the federal Administration on Developmental Disabilities. The Family Center is fiscal agent and a primary partner in this project which will also help our parent and child educators become more knowledgeable about working with children who have disabilities and their families.
- ✧ Renovations are almost complete on the upstairs of 44 Concord Street. Our thanks to contributors of our Capital Campaign who helped make this possible. This space will be used for Monadnock Community Hospital, offering Health Education and Wellness and MAPS, offering private counseling services.
- ✧ Our annual board and staff retreat was held in December. Thanks to Jim Hassinger, our facilitator, for steering us toward clarifying the goals of The Family Center. Thus, the new mission of The Family Center is to *strengthen families and build community by providing a welcoming place to exchange information, access resources and engage in community activities.*

~Continued on page 2

FROM THE DIRECTOR ~

*Happy New Year from
The Family Center.
What a year this has been!*

I was asked recently how things are going at The Family Center. "Great," was my automatic response. Then I was asked how I was *feeling* about my role as Director of this evolving organization. I thought for a moment. What I realized..... "I feel alive. All of my senses are working in synch and I'm so excited and energized by all that I am doing." I love this work and feel so fortunate for this opportunity. This conversation prompted me to think more carefully on *why* things were great.

I'd like to take this opportunity to highlight the staff of The Family Center and share with you their attributes that help make this place so special. I feel thankful to work with such a talented group of people. Each brings something unique and special to The Family Center. We pull together well as a team and our successful work with families is a direct reflection of the individual characters.

We wouldn't be able to work with families if not for Jane LaRoche, our Finance Director. She successfully writes our funding proposals that support our programming. She is a great problem solver and can usually figure out how to fix *anything* that isn't working right.

Kelli Tourgee, a children's educator and home visitor, is so appropriate in her dealings with children and her conversations with parents that simply listening to her is enlightening.

~Continued on page 2



924-6306

FROM THE DIRECTOR CONTINUED ~

Carol Lunan, a parent educator and home visitor, brings her calm demeanor and vast experience. When families meet with Carol, her presence helps even the most chaotic households relax.

Mary Welch, a children's educator and program coordinator, brings a great sense of humor. She keeps everyone laughing, but is reassuring to families and has an innate sense of caring that families feel.

And Eliot Pelletier, affectionately called our "gentle giant," whom all the kids adore in the children's program. I'm glad he is here. And he is thoughtful. When he speaks, people listen.

I really enjoy our newest home visitor, Beth Bradford. She is engaging, professional and a real pleasure to be around. She's a "can-do" kind of person who gets her job done well.

And Nancy Bannon, a parent educator, is tireless in her quest to expand her parenting knowledge. She continues to question everything and keep us all on our toes.

Finally, Bonnie Harris. I would not be where I am today without her wisdom, passion and expertise. She believed in my possibilities and influenced my path.

Imagine the impact on children when parents and teachers believe in their possibilities.

So...there you have it. I feel blessed.

Best Wishes ~
Liz Broderick

Our Funders...making it possible to serve over 300 families per year!

- A. Erland and Hazel N. Goyette Memorial Fund
- The Amherst Junior Women's Club
- Cheshire County Incentive Funds
- Developmental Disabilities Council of New Hampshire
- The Endowment for Health
- The Gilbert Verney Foundation
- Family Support Council of Monadnock Developmental Services
- Federal Administration on Developmental Disabilities
- The Henry L. and Patricia J. Nielsen Fund of The Monadnock Community Foundation
- Hillsborough County Incentive Funds
- Individuals and Corporations
- Medicaid Reimbursement—Home Visiting
- Monadnock Community Foundation
- Monadnock United Way
- NH Children's Trust Fund
- NH Department of Health and Human Services: Bureau of Maternal and Child Health

HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED ~

THIS MEANS:

- ✧ The Family Center's parent education and family support programs are healthier than ever. They continue to evolve as family needs arise.
- ✧ The Family Center is committed to providing a place in which resources and activities are available to the greater community, and integrate those services so that they are easily accessible to anyone walking through our doors.
- ✧ We are committed to raising the necessary funds through our Capital Campaign, which has started up again after our United Way blackout period, to renovate the rest of 44 & 46 Concord Street by September 2005.



Light snow didn't stop workers from American Construction renovating the upstairs of 44 Concord Street.

TELEVISION OPPORTUNITY WITH WGBH PUBLIC TELEVISION

WGBH is going to film an 8-week *When Your Kids Push Your Buttons* class with Bonnie Harris. Bonnie needs a group of 8-10 **very** committed parents (singles and couples) who are willing to participate in this group while cameras are watching. Also needed are 2 families in the group willing to have a hidden camera in their home to capture before and after reactions and responses.

Learn what your buttons are, where they come from, why your children push them and how to defuse them so your responses are effective, your authority is regained, your old patterns are broken, and your children grow to pass on what you are proud to have taught them.

- When:** March, Mon. or Wed. evenings from 7:00-9:00 p.m.
- Where:** To be announced.
- Cost:** Free of charge but weekly commitment is essential.
- Benefit:** Your commitment will help thousands of families who might never join a parenting group.
- Interested?** Call The Family Center at 924-6306 or call Bonnie directly at 924-6639 or email bh@bonnieharris.com.

For Single Parents

~Eliot Pelletier

Being a parent is tough, as anyone who has had children can attest. Parents must juggle many different responsibilities, playing everything from chauffeur, to chef, to therapist. It's often hard enough sharing these duties between two parents. When parents are single and are raising children, life can get overwhelming if they don't have the proper support.

For the 6th year The Family Center has offered a special program exclusively for single parents. A small group of families meet together on Thursday nights at the Family Center in what has become a weekly ritual, maintaining a helpful network of support. Each week the parents meet together with a program facilitator, Carol Lunan, while their children of all ages take part in a fun and enriching play group downstairs. The program provides a free pizza dinner, saving parents from the kitchen for at least one night a week.

The single parents program's uniqueness stems from its open-ended nature. There is no set curriculum to the program, instead each week parents have the opportunity to share their experiences and concerns in an environment which comforts and nurtures as well as educates. Every week the group finds topics to discuss which apply to everyone, from where to go for resources, to helpful parenting tips. Single parents who are going through life changing and often difficult experiences can find a great opportunity to connect with others in similar situations.

Any parents who are interested in the Single Parents program should contact the Family Center at 924-6306.

OUR GRATITUDE

To Sarah Clark, board member to FACT and then to The Family Center, who has resigned after serving for 4 years. Sarah was an integral part of the merger of FACT and The Parent Guidance Center and helped guide The Family Center through its infancy. Thank you for all your efforts.

ANNUAL APPEAL

Many of you recently received our annual appeal letter to support Family Center programs. The support has been terrific and our thanks are again extended to those of you who have already responded to support our mission to strengthen families and build community.

Our goal is to raise \$10,000 to offset program costs by January 31. If you haven't already, please take a moment to fill out your appeal envelope and return it to The Family Center. Or call us, 924-6306, and we'll do it for you!

THE GIFT OF LAUGHTER

~Liz Broderick

My parenting highlight for 2004 occurred last November. Most would not say their highlight involved a root canal. Mine did... and I'll tell you why.

The Novocain administered for a root canal is significant and very long lasting. I was home and Kyle (14) and Aaron (12) had just gotten off the bus. I was feeling sorry for myself and uncomfortable, but appreciative, I suppose, that my facial paralysis was temporary. Regardless, I didn't feel I could even smile. I was standing at our kitchen counter and they came in for a snack. As I was perusing the mail and grimaced, they saw my expression...and started to point and laugh. My face completely distorted with the slightest attempt of any facial movement. Their laughter was so contagious and genuine that I started to chuckle, trying not to laugh as it would distort my face. Didn't help—my face became alive in a most uneven way. They laughed harder...and then I let go and allowed myself to really laugh, and then they laughed even harder. We'd look at each other and start all over again.

I honestly can't remember when I've shared such wonderful gut-wrenching, leg-crossing laughter with my children. I'm so thankful I was able to laugh at myself and experience this highlight. How different it would have all been had I embraced self pity and yelled at them for laughing at me...I would have missed this great gift.

A parent's story:

After attending Bonnie's *Managing Siblings* class, I approached my girls, 3-1/2 and 17 months differently. When I had extended family looking on, this was a challenge; it's so hard to parent when others are judging! This past Thanksgiving the older sister had clearly hurt the younger one who was crying. I focused on comforting the younger sibling. My older daughter blamed the cat for hurting her sister. Rather than denying the cat's role in the mishap, I told her that it was OK. No one was going to get in trouble and she could tell me anything. She continued to blame it on the cat. I let it go and acknowledged that her sister was hurting and what could we do to help her. She rubbed her sister's back. This was enough

My household is changing. Over time, without worrying about blame or involving me in solving their disputes, their relationship has improved. They play together more and are getting better at working things out without hurting each other. Yea!

Winter Programs

Winter Programs

~Safe Sitter~

THE FAMILY CENTER:

March 19, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

THE GRAPEVINE IN ANTRIM:

April 2, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Two Choices!

This babysitting course is offered in collaboration with Monadnock Pediatrics. Students **ages 11 to 13** learn basic first aid, positive discipline techniques and professional business skills. Space is limited. Call 924-6306 to register.

COST: \$32.00 (SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE)

Support Group
 for parents and caregivers
 who have family members or
 patients with disabilities

This group meets the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at The Family Center. Childcare is available.

For more information, call:
 Kathy: 924-2024 or
 Mary: 588-2596

New Program for

Mothers and Daughters!

MAKING THE CONNECTIONS: A DAY OF DISCOVERY FOR MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS

SATURDAY, MAY 21 INTO
SUNDAY, MAY 22

AT: SARGENT CENTER FOR OUTDOOR EDUCATION

For mothers and daughters ages 9 to 12, this relationship-building retreat will explore friendship, intimacy and values; discuss puberty, adolescence and responsible relationships; and share attitudes, feelings and dreams about being female. In this beautiful setting, sharing a day together in a relaxed environment gives mothers and daughters a unique opportunity to learn more about each other and enrich their relationship.

WE HAVE SPACE FOR 10 MOTHER-DAUGHTER PAIRS.

Call 924-6306

*for program costs, additional information
or to reserve your spot!*

In the Community Space!

Saturdays, starting January 8
for 6 weeks
10:00-11:00 a.m.

FAMILY DRUMMING

Sponsored by the Peterborough Recreation
Department and the Community Inclusion
Project of The Family Center

~ ~ ~

Ages 6 to adult

~For people of all ages and abilities~

Led by Lynn Reimer

Assisted by Toby LaRoche

Information, call Kathy Manre, 924-2024

\$30 per person for 6 weeks
\$90 maximum per family

Please call the Peterborough Recreation
about financial assistance, 924-8080

Tumble Tots

Music, movement and play for parents and children ages 18 months and up. This program, facilitated by Suzanne Dunavent-White, a Dance Movement Therapist, offers children of all physical abilities an opportunity to run, skip, hop, jump, or move around in wheelchairs. Lots of movement is the goal. Musical instruments, marching, and dancing are part of the fun.

Call 924-6306 for times and costs.

WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING ON CONCORD STREET?

FEATURED RESOURCE MAPS Counseling Services

MAPS Counseling Services (*professionally integrating psychotherapy and spirituality*) is delighted to be entering into a partnership with the Family Center of Greater Peterborough by opening office space in The Family Center's newly renovated building. Professionally integrating psychotherapy and spirituality to foster healing and emotional well-being, MAPS accepts most health insurance and uses a sliding fee scale for those without insurance. Although a Peterborough phone number will become available, MAPS can be contacted at its Keene office at 355-2244 or on its website, www.mapsNH.org.

At present Dr. Gary Wehrwein and Dr. John Van Ness will be seeing clients at the new office. Dr. Wehrwein will be in the office on Mondays, and Dr. Van Ness will be there on Thursdays. Plans are being made for additional therapists on the MAPS staff to see clients there on other days as well. Dr. Wehrwein and Dr. Van Ness are both Licensed Pastoral Psychotherapists. Dr. Wehrwein is a diplomate in the American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC) and serves as chaplain for Hospice in the Peterborough area as well as community counselor at Rivermead. He has been Clinical Director of MAPS since 1976. Dr. Van Ness is a fellow in the AAPC and has been a staff member at MAPS since 1985. He also teaches spirituality and psychotherapy at Antioch New England Graduate School in Keene and has led meditation groups and made presentations on spirituality and therapy. Both Dr. Wehrwein and Dr. Van Ness work with individuals and couples on a great variety of issues including marital and family issues, depression, bereavement, and anxiety.

With this new office in Peterborough, MAPS seeks to expand its service to the greater Peterborough area and looks forward to cooperation with the Family Center and others who share these facilities.

**Building Clean-Up
in the Community Space
Saturday, January 15**

9:00-4:00

**All are welcome and
encouraged to help.**

~Lunch will be served~

**Call 924-6306
for information**

Under One Roof Project

~Andrea Gilbert
Project Director

Lots has been happening in the upstairs Under One Roof Project Office.

- Four new staff have been hired.
 - Sohpia Rallis—Project Assistant
 - Billy Horton—Transition and Employment Bridge Builder
 - Molly Hajjar—Community Connections Bridge Builder
 - Mary Drew—Information and Referral Specialist
- Parent and Child Educators from The Family Center and The Grapevine have participated in staff development workshops presented by Rise....for Baby and Family to increase knowledge about working with children who have some atypical development. Topics include Sensory Integration Basics, Language Development and scheduled for January, Positive Behavioral Supports.
- The next few months will focus on orientation, training and setting up systems so that project staff can begin to serve people with developmental disabilities and their families as well as other community members. Training includes person-centered planning for bridge building, use of the ParTech Connection care coordination software and Asset-Based Community Development.

If you have any questions about our project, please call 924-2159.

NEED ASSISTANCE?

Resources Available:

- ☒ The Family Center, 924-6306
- ☒ Bonnie Harris, 924-6639
- ☒ MAPS Therapy Services, 355-2244
- ☒ MCH~ Health Education and Wellness 924-6306
- ☒ Monadnock Area Transitional Shelter, 924-5033
- ☒ Southern New Hampshire Services, fuel assistance 924-2243

Available In the Community Space:

- ☒ Monadnock Kempo Karate, 878-3731
- ☒ Senior Exercise: 547-2780
- ☒ WIC: 1-800-WIC-4321



Strengthening Families...
...BUILDING COMMUNITY

OF GREATER PETERBOROUGH

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email: thefamilycenter@
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Liz Broderick

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Carol Lunan
Eliot Pelletier
Kelli Tourgee
Mary Welch

VOLUNTEERS

Shirley Franchi
Jeannette Perron
Lynn Phillips
Nellie Robinson

All are invited to a ribbon-cutting ceremony

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 4:30 P.M.

To celebrate the completion of renovations of the
upstairs of 44 Concord Street at

The Family Center.

Monadnock Community Hospital &
MAPS Counseling Services
begin services in this building. Welcome!

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MUW

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Monadnock United Way