



SOMERSET COUNTY LOCAL MANAGEMENT BOARD

EMPOWERING CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Issue 3
March 28, 2008

DIRECTOR'S CORNER:

Welcome to the third issue of our LMB newsletter. It is my hope that this has been an effective tool for communicating with you about current programs and services available to our community, as well as keeping our readers informed of upcoming events.

Social workers are certainly valued assets in our county as well as throughout the

nation. **March is National Social Work month** so let's celebrate the people who make such a difference in the lives of others. If you get the opportunity to talk with a social worker let's collectively thank them for the services they provide.

As the weather continues to get warmer, I am looking forward to some exciting events including a Parent

Summit that will be held May 17, 2008. The Somerset County LMB along with the Somerset County Department of Social Services is also sponsoring a series of workshops beginning March through June. Thank you for your continued support of the Somerset County LMB and I look forward to our continued collaboration.

Tracey Cottman, LCSW-C
Executive Director

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Week of the Young Child is April 13-19, 2008!

PARENT SUMMIT

On May 17, 2008, we will be holding the "Empowering Parents" Summit at Washington High School. The theme of the day will be T. E. A. M.: Together Everyone Accomplishes More.

This will be a day of information and fun that is offered free to the parents and guardians of Somerset County.

Throughout the day, each participant will have a chance to attend a total of

three workshops, choosing from the following list: Spoken Word, Conflict Resolution, Keeping Our Children Safe, Parenting With Purpose, Educational and Career Opportunities, Helping Your Child Succeed In School, Stress Reduction, It's All About You, Single Parenting, Financial Management, Teen Parenting, and Raising Sons, Raising Daughters.

In addition to the workshops, there will be an opening and closing speaker, breakfast and

lunch will be provided, Information booths will be available, and a DJ will be on hand during the lunch break for entertainment.

The event will be from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and we have daycare and transportation available if needed.

If you would like more information or would like to register to attend the summit, please call 410-623-2906.

We Hope To See You There!

Upcoming Events:

- Week of the Young Child
April 13-19, 2008
- Parent Summit
May 17, 2008
Washington High
- Boy's Summit
To Be Announced

NEW PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

We have been working with other agencies to host a number of Community Forums, which are focused on discussing the challenges of Somerset County.

The first forum was held on January 15, 2008 at UMES. As a result of this forum, the participants identified the following to be the top ten concerns regarding problems and challenges within our county: Poverty, Adult Support for Youth, Juvenile Delinquency,

Adolescent Drug Use, Child Abuse and Neglect, Drug Trafficking, Job Opportunities, Parental Involvement, Health Issues (both mental and physical), and Gang Activity.

The second forum was held on February 4, 2008, and was also at UMES. This forum focused on developing ideas to address the top concerns identified at the first meeting. The group provided many suggestions, including About Face programs,

mentoring, job shadowing, residential schools, and a community wide resource guide, to name a few.

If you would like to have input and participate in future forums, please contact the Somerset County Local Management Board to be included in the mailing list.



EVENT

In a joint effort between the Somerset County Local Management Board and the Somerset County Board of Education through the Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiative, the **"New Beginnings" Summit** was held on January 16, 2008 at the Intermediate School for the school's students.

The summit was similar in structure to the previous summits held in the county, with the exception that this summit was held during a normal school day. The event was provided during the period of transition to the new middle school located behind the Board of Education, to help engage the students as the necessary moving

preparations were taking place.

The "New Beginnings" Summit was a day geared toward providing education and empowerment for the youth. The youth participated in four workshops, focused on providing life skills, empowerment and education. The workshop themes included Effective Communication and Leadership, Conflict Management, Team Building, Spoken Word, Drug Free Living for Teens, and several others.

Additionally, each student was asked to fill out a survey at the end of each workshop session, and were provided with the

HIGHLIGHT

opportunity to provide comments. The feedback received was very positive, and the comments expressed the level of enjoyment and enlightenment the students received from the event. Comments such as "This is great, I would love to come again", and "Thanks" were seen throughout the surveys.

A report of the comments and survey results is available for review on our website at www.sclmb.org, under publications. Please feel free to review the comments and survey scores for each of the workshops presented.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

SEASONS 4 SUCCESS

Seasons 4 Success is a program designed to provide services and support for the Crisfield area 6th, 7th and 8th grade students with attendance and reading problems. The program started in December 2007, and we would like to take this time to highlight some of the successes this program has already experienced.

Vendors, staff and parents have continued to remark about the positive effects they have seen in the participants behavior, and some examples of these comments follow below.

The director of the Kumon Learning Center has remarked about the positive change in the behavior of the students who come the learning center since they

started attending in January. He remarked that he is pleased at how they "come in, take their seats and begin work immediately, without talking." In the beginning they were very talkative and disruptive to the other students who were in the learning center.

The van driver has observed that the kids who were at first very loud and disrespectful now act much better and even speak to him when they get in the van.

The bus driver also observed changes in behavior, as the students initially had been told to sit down and hold the noise down on the bus. His recent trips to the Kumon Learning Center have been excellent, and the students have been well behaved.

Finally, the parent of a student participating in the program contacted the program coordinator to express that she has seen a positive change in her son's behavior. He was constantly in trouble for talking back, and while that has not stopped completely, his mother says it is much better since he started attending the program.

As of February, three students have moved up a level on their Kumon work booklets, which equated to about 1/2 years of work according to Kumon.

If you would like more information about this program, please contact Darlene Taylor at 240-475-4638.

PEACEMAKERS

Peacemakers is a youth violence prevention/intervention program that targets students grades 6-8. We would like to take this time to highlight two success stories of students that this program has been working with.

This student has made such a turn around even in the last month. She used to focus on the negative and would want to retaliate too quickly when she felt threatened or mistreated. Now she has an attitude of "it is not worth the trouble, I'm not worried about those people, I don't care if they talk about me." This has taken a lot of effort on her part; she is now seeing that her goals in life are more important than the "small stuff." She is more

conscientious about her grades and she is trying to achieve higher grades by even staying after school for tutoring. Even at home, she is more responsible and respectful. I remember last year she would call her mother by her first name, but now she calls her Mom. That shows that this student is learning respect and putting into practice some of the good character traits that we try to instill at Peacemakers.

This student did not like to participate in discussions or even do many activities, but now he has become more outspoken and willing to do more of the activities that we have. He does well in his academics; he did need some skills on how not to be passive but more

assertive. We have seen him grow in the area of assertiveness. He will now voice his opinion and not accept others doing negative things. He was not willing to go on the field trip to Green Gate Farms at first, but he changed his mind and learned that it was a wonderful experience for him. The Peacemaker program tries to bring out the positive in all of our students and show them the value of making good choices.

If you would like more information about this program, please call Mount Hope AME Zion Church at 410-651-5711.

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Empowering Children, Youth and Families

We're on the Web!
www.sclmb.org

FUN AND GAMES

The 40 Developmental Assets are positive experiences, relationships, opportunities, and personal qualities that young people need to grow up healthy, caring and responsible. They are also the building blocks of healthy development that take a common sense approach to helping young people thrive. In each newsletter, we will be highlighting one of the 40 Developmental Assets by providing the definition and an activity that helps to build and develop that particular asset.*

In this newsletter we will be discussing ways to be more intentional about asset building with your family and community. The list of 40 developmental assets can be found at www.search-institute.org.

- **Post the list of 40 developmental assets on your refrigerator door.** Each day, do at least one asset-building thing for each family member.
- **Connect with other parents who are interested in asset building.** Form relationships in your neighborhood, on the job, through a congregation, or through a parent-education organization.
- **Regularly do things with your child,** including projects around the house, recreational activities, and service projects. Take turns planning activities to do together

as a family.

- **Eat at least one meal together** as a family every day.
- **Negotiate family rules and consequences** for breaking those rules.
- **Develop a family mission statement** that focuses on building assets. Then use it to help you make family decisions and set priorities.
- **Talk about your values and priorities,** and live in a way that is consistent with them.
- **Give your children lots of support and approval** while also challenging them to take responsibility and gain independence.
- **If you are parenting alone, look for other adult role models** of both genders who can be mentors for your children.
- **Nurture your own assets** by spending time with people who care about you and are supportive. You'll take better care of your children if you take care of yourself.
- **Think about the way you were parented** and how that affects your relationships with your children.
- **Don't let anyone in your family (including you) watch too much**

Mission:

To promote a safe, healthy and stable environment for all Somerset County children and families by achieving a comprehensive system of education, health, and human services through public and private interagency collaboration.

Vision:

Somerset County is a community in which the entire family feels safe, supported and involved; youth are active and involved; adults excel in the workforce; and people from all socioeconomic levels contribute to the community.

television. Find other interesting and meaningful activities for your children to do—some with you, some with their friends, some by themselves.

- **Recognize that children need more than just financial support.** They also need emotional and intellectual support.
- **Don't wait for problems to arise before taking with your children's teachers.**
- **Think of teenagers as adults in training.** Teach them something practical, such as how to change a tire on the car, prepare a meal, or create a monthly budget.
- **Be an asset builder** for other young people in your life.**

* Adapted from *Building Developmental Assets in School Communities*.

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