

Hillsborough County Gap Session October 15, 2003

Group A

What are the needs of NH residents, businesses and organizations and how important are they?

- Strengthening families - parenting, financial education. [4 votes]
- Growth in diversity – need to reduce language barriers, cultural barriers, and increase cross cultural training. [4 votes]
- Need healthcare insurance (cost and accessibility.) [3 votes]
- Need to increase electoral and individual participation early in the process. (People more engaged in the decision making process- get out to vote. Participation in local civic government, where individuals can really have a role early in the process.) Need preparation for future leadership roles -kids and adults. [3 votes]
- Nutrition and exercise/obesity – 1/50 people > 50 lbs. overweight. [3 votes]
- Family programs needed – (programs need to go across the socioeconomic board, not just “at risk” (population -- health, nutrition.) [2 votes].
- Issues that affect teens (and their future) – life skills and jobs. (Substance abuse issue, student assistance programs in every school.) [2 votes]
- Teen health – at risk teens – substance abuse [1 vote]
- Understanding free enterprise. [1 vote]
- Need mental health services. [1 vote]
- (Ways of creating connectedness in community) Looking at community as a system: need ways to connect parts and people; how do we create social capital? [1 vote]
- Services for elderly - outreach, day care, transportation. [1 vote]
- Transportation needs –youth and elderly. [1 vote]
- Job security and employment.
- Getting to work/commuting issues.
- Community planning and need for open space.
- Energy – proper use and conservation.
- Interrelationship of energy and transportation.
- Focus on families early, prenatal, new/young parents, (how to raise).
- Gap between those who have and those who have not.
- Need to think outside the box in our towns to find ways to support participation and create social capital to help people be involved. (Time management – hard to be parent, worker, getting involved in community.)
- Homeless services.
- Need to provide more affordable child care (training of providers).
- Improve quality of education and need after-school care.
- Need for (create awareness of) conflict resolution and mediation services (to help avoid litigation.)

- Ability to match people and jobs.

What should Extension do over the next two years and beyond to address these issues?

Strengthen families

- Back to basics – family programs, 4-H clubs, continue Extension backbone [4 votes]
- Educate children; educate families. [3 votes]
- (Parenting) programs for first-time mothers. [2 votes]
- Employment - workforce development skills and career development [2 votes]
- Look at traditional – but find new ways to reach today’s families [1 vote]
- Add more communications beyond toddlers – stages for all ages. “Cradle Crier” and “Toddler Tales” good, but need the older ages. [1 vote]
- Parent hot line (anywhere in the state, marketing the hotlines that are available.) [1 vote]
- Help provide information re: public policy. Help families know how to take action (for public issues, write letter to state board of education and other public policy issues.) [1 vote]
- List of resources – inventory - community agency clearing house. [1 vote]
- Increase ways to intermingle people and families of all backgrounds. (Life skills, open to everybody- learn to appreciate the backgrounds of others.)
- Immigrant families isolated – clash of culture/ children as adults.
- Help people understand the backgrounds and issues of others. (Kids often learn things first; kids are connected through schools, parents often isolated.)
- Parents losing power.
- Promote current Extension service (family programs)
- Communicate what is available.
- Conflict/ mediation services, training in schools – (resolutions, pre-litigation, train the trainer in schools)
- Promote value of strong families.

Growth in diversity & need to reduce isolation, etc.

- Have a way to collect data re: who is in our community and look for gaps - diversity census. (Determine who the community is and collect the data about who is here. They may not be counted - 4% diversity currently in NH - make meaning and understanding of data. [6 votes]
- Help people see the diversity that we have – its value and scope. [4 votes]
- Explain their reason for being here – create a better atmosphere. (Work with faith community or other agencies and bring those of different cultures together and have an understanding why they may have immigrated to here.) [1 vote]
- Find ways to reach adults themselves and through children. (Isolation of families, especially adults - work with kids.)

- Find out where audiences are and how (to reach them) – content and methodology.
- Get to know language interpreters from the community. (Work with the ethnic leadership to help create the bridge with other community leaders.)

What are the best ways for Extension to deliver educational programs and information?

- Web page – Keep up to date and user-friendly for a wide variety of audiences – key pieces in different languages – (work with students)
- UNHCE well kept secret.
- Supermarkets.
- UNH hockey game.
- Advertise:
 - Continue (exposure) on channel 9.
 - Newspapers – (expand the scope of newspaper articles – lots of local newspaper coverage.)
 - Build relationships.
 - Let press know about the expertise of the extension educators, who they can call for the expertise, get to know the editors
- Make sure you have resources. (We must be sure we have the resources to deliver the program if we market it.)
- Continue face to face meetings (helpful, community meetings.)
- Public access cable television.
- Hands on (learning.)
- Partnering with organizations (who have specific populations.)
- Target certain groups e.g. clinics, go to them. (Define who you want to reach and get there early on.)
- Go to the people rather than hope they come to us.
- Signage.

Group B

What are the needs of NH residents, businesses and organizations and how important are they?

Prominent Issues Facing NH Citizens

- Environmental Education: [6 votes]
 - School systems
 - Forestry
 - Agriculture
- Not enough emphasis put on vocational activities. Young people need to be encouraged in these fields. [4 votes]
- No place for teens to go. Not enough activities for teens. Not enough after-school programs. [4 votes]
- Extension needs to concentrate more on rural towns. [3 votes]
- Lack of accessible resources: [3 votes]
 - No grocery store in Manchester (downtown).
 - Low income families can't get children to/from childcare.
- Conflict between conservation committees and builders. [2 votes]
 - Need to remember that sometimes people sell property in order to survive financially.
- Obesity. [1 vote]
- Affordable housing. [1 vote]
- Forestry and agriculture land conversion. [1 vote]
- People in general need to know where food comes from. [1 vote]
- Lack of daycare [1 vote]
 - Adult
 - Child
- Uncontrolled/unmanaged growth. [1 vote]
- Control of taxation. [1 vote]
- Ways to help struggling farms. [1 vote]
- Cost of health care and prescription drugs.
- Lack of transportation.
 - Inner cities
 - Any mass transit
- Jobs
- Funding schools
- Participation – (Diversification.) Specification/town government- people moving to NH bring “their way.”
- New housing growth.
- Quality water.
- Protection of water system.
- High school drop-out rate.
- Changing demographics in whole county - faster rate in some areas.

- Youth in towns have more access to money because parents in affluent towns have more money (kids buying drugs.)
- Keep kids in activities. Nothing for kids to do.
- Language barriers: increased diversity in population – cooking.
- Need to know how to get into FFA - No FFA in (some) places.
- Too many homeless youth:
 - Not enough provisions for them.
 - City might/could share burden of half way houses.
 - Homeless shelters instead of leaving it all to cities.
- Financial Aid for needy. Distribution of financial aid for needy.
- Those just above poverty line without financial aid/insurance benefits
- Keeping rural NH rural:
 - Amenities
 - Development next to farmers (crowing roosters too noisy).
- Senior services in general.
- Protection of forest land. Burden on fire departments, etc.
- Everyone worries about Nashua and Manchester and not enough about (smaller) towns.

What should Extension do over the next two years and beyond to address these issues?

1. Environmental education

- Forestry and agriculture sustainability [4 votes]
 - Stewardship by the people – youth and adults
 - Educational process for UNHCE to fulfill
- Set up special programs for Agriculture through guidance counselors. [4 votes]
- Educate youth in schools to appreciate forestry, conservation, and agriculture - a life-long appreciation regarding conservation. [2 votes]
- Help educators in public school system as guest speaker [2 votes]
 - UNHCE - Lack of \$\$ for handouts, AV materials
 - ID of guest speakers. (Extension doesn't allow enough money to do this.)
- Should help schools build into their classes: [1 vote]
 - Agriculture
 - Dairy management
 - Forestry
- Those in Agriculture have access to people in Extension who are up to date and ready to work/available to work on farms. [1 vote]
- Stronger partnership with public schools, principals to make more knowledgeable of what we do and to market UNHCE services.

2. Emphasize vocational/career opportunities for youth

- 4-H & FFA - not demeaning fields; encourage kids in these areas i.e., plumbing, electrician. (Encourage responsibilities, it's a no-no today for kids to have to work; it's healthy for kids to learn responsibility.) [3 votes]

- Make kids aware of what they can get into after high school. [2 votes]
- UNHCE Needs to be more visible at activities i.e. Old Home Days.
- Benefits of what you can do for your community, of taking part in vocational activities & schooling.
- Talk to guidance counselors regarding promoting vocational activities.

3. Places/activities for youth

- After school activities - community service opportunities. [4 votes]
- Liaison between industry and the community. Link industry and schools [2 votes]
- New building at 4-H Youth Center.
- Place where kids/4-H clubs can meet.
- Train people in a craft to go into after school programs.
- Grant writing training.
- Lower grades have farm field trips.
- Work with Adult Education programs. Get Extension name out there. Offer programs at adult education to be used in after school programs.

What are the best ways for Extension to deliver educational programs and information?

- Talk to guidance counselors.
 - What we offer.
 - How to pass on to students.
- Develop a budget to effectively integrate education into classrooms to include:
 - Books
 - Handouts
 - AV materials
 - Lesson plans
 - List of identified guest speakers.
- Get school boards to add Agriculture class.
- Find retired farmers to assist farmers/small businesses.
- Where food comes from could be included in Nutrition classes.
- Through videos/NHPTV/Distance Learning.
- Knowledgeable person/presentation to spark interest in students.
- Field trips.
- Riverside Cleanup – eco system – community service.
- UNHCE foresters to Beaver Brook connection.

Group C

What are the needs of NH residents, businesses and organizations and how important are they?

- Regional coordination of existing service groups. [5 votes]
- Sustainability [4 votes]
- Working poor felt left out. Addressing the feeling of a lack of inclusion held by the working class poor. [3 votes]
- Volunteers needed –(finding more; role models for children) [3 votes]
- Individual self reliance, esteem and confidence. (Sense of personal responsibility. Teaching self-reliance, confidence and better sense of self.) [2 votes]
- Match population growth and resources. [2 votes]
- Youth need community service opportunities/ requirements. (Training or exposing youth to the concept of community service by providing opportunities/requirements.) [2 votes]
- Excellent leadership will motivate participation. Good leadership (getting people involved.) [2 votes]
- More people in communities can provide advice/ assistance. (Development of farmer to farmer type programs to expand the number of experts available to provide information to others in the community.) [1 vote]
- Clean water – how to measure? (Maintain water quality/use well – lead, arsenic, salt (in water issues – how much and what does it mean?) [1 vote]
- Adequate public transportation? [1 vote]
- Some basic courses in economics for youth and young adults [1 vote]
- After school child care/nurturing. [1 vote]
- More opportunities for youth experience in business. (Better relationships/ experiences between youth and businesses, getting involved with what they want to do. [1 vote]
- Consistent community support for families in need – Regional cooperation. [1 vote]
- Maximizing resources – efficiency (natural resources, people, etc.)
- Limited, focused participation/ commuters. (Utilizing limited participation capable volunteers (commuters) – use in short term, focused way.)
- Local food sustainability/security. (When The Cupboard Was Bare)
- Organizational funding
- Organizations need better ways to communicate to the public. (Organizations need to better communicate both what they have to offer and what their needs are.)
- Less regulation of business the better. (Lower regulations and taxes.)
- Improved nutrition for youth and adults
- More nutritional training.
- Health and wellness information.
- Personal responsibility.

- Mandatory in schools that kids volunteer.
- Community based thought processes.

What should Extension do over the next two years and beyond to address these issues?

1. Regional Coordination

- Create a directory or listing of what is available - keep it current and serve as information source and market it heavily (to get that information to those in need, a group least likely to access Extension.) [5 votes]
- Engage kids in clubs/volunteerism (to break the cycle of disinterest.) Work with school systems (to establish volunteerism opportunities.) [2 votes]
- Survey of who is doing what and needs (what is available for services, programs, etc in the communities within the county – regional coordination.)
- Extension serves as middleman between service providers and those in need of services.

2. Sustainability

- Education of consumers. [2 votes]
- Common definition of sustainability. [2 votes]
- Increase awareness of problem – research, conferences, publicity. [1 vote]
- Using arsenic as an example of a current problem:
 - How to determine levels.
 - Teaching what these levels mean.
 - Offering technical advice on what to do about unacceptable levels.

3. Disenfranchised Working Poor (and their lack of a feeling of inclusion)

- Use kids in 4-H to get parents, neighbors, et al involved in the community. [3 votes]
- 4-H involvement in schools – (use the schools to access disenfranchised families.) [1 vote]
- Using kids as the vehicle to take information home.

4. Other things Extension can do

- Market 4-H, Cooperative Extension, nutrition, natural resources. [8 votes]
- Help set up programs in schools to coordinate volunteers. [3 votes]
- Use computer learning, TV and other “new” methods. (Local access programming.)
- Distance learning opportunities.

What are the best ways for Extension to deliver educational programs and information?

- Information Line.
- Guest lecturers (speakers bureau) for schools, service organizations, etc.
- Marketing.
- Like Master Gardeners, use experts in various fields to volunteer in communities. (Expand master gardener concept to include commercial small scale agriculture and other business, community government public service - how to be a board member, selectman, etc., parenting, et al.)
- Connect people to Extension opportunities.
- With Community Profiles, also spend a week or longer to help the town – mobile unit – meet elected officials and community service groups. (Mobile Extension team – intensive focus on individual community.)
- (Community agricultural market/event that focuses community interest on natural resources within the community.)
- Partner with key group (highly visible community groups) in each town for better impact.
- Interactive displays (efforts – you need to get bodies into the communities, not static displays and bulletins.) Take a trailer/motor home on the road! Staff a mall booth weekends and evenings. (Use the mall as a prime locale for reaching citizens in general and youth in particular.)