

Sullivan County Issues Identification October 7, 2003

Group A

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

Group collated common topics to:

- Jobs for youth - [5 votes]
- Drug and alcohol - [5 votes]
- Preserve open land/environmental issues - [5 votes]
- Assistance for elderly - [2 votes]
- Quality of education in NH and funding it fairly - [2 votes]
- Educating adults regarding opportunities for their children life - [2 votes]
- Health care - [2 votes]
- Supporting local farms - [2 votes]
- People need info on different types of help available to meet their diverse needs - [1 vote]
- Community planning involvement - [1 vote]

Original topics:

- Drug and alcohol abuse treatment centers (implied the lack of is the drug problem) [5 votes]
- Difficulty of youth finding jobs (lack of incentives for employers to train on the job) [5 votes]
- Preserve open land. (Need to protect state land that is preserved. Mt. Sunapee expansion cited as an example. Expansion to benefit a private company from Georgia at expense of community owners.) [5 votes]
- Elderly - and money management for them [2 votes]
- Quality of education in NH & funding it fairly - (need to fund schools in a fair way - youth member) [2 votes]
- Educating adults regarding opportunities for their children - life skills educ., college educ. [2 votes]
- Financial information to adults to help pay for health care. [2 votes]
- Learn about and support local farmers. (If they do not, we will not have local farmers.) [2 votes]
- People need different types of help and need to know where to start to get help (where they can find resources for help with mental health, physical disabilities issues, etc.) [1 vote]
- Community planning – getting more local people involved. (Not just planning board, town profiles we did were good...have people who have been there for a long time, but population growth brings in people who do not have a lot of investment in the town.) [1 vote]
- Educating adults about the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse (apathy)(state and feds do a good job of sending message to youth not to do this, but when they see mom and dad doing this in the home, the message is for naught.)
- (Well-paying) jobs.
- Tax relief.
- Stable economy.
- Skills and workforce training – jobs.
- Large corporations push out small business.
- Teen pregnancy rate is high - programs targeting safety, abstinence. (Programs that voice that abstinence is a good and safe thing.)

- Educating adults about the importance of teaching their kids about life in general. (Happiness can be an internal response. If no one shows you the way, kids turn to the bottle, drugs and bad behavior; incumbent on adults to get involved with youth.)
- Educate employers about drug and alcohol abuse & get more treatment resources. (There are very few resources and we need to create more for them. Heyday was in the 80s but funding has now dried up.)
- Liability issues - "risk management" for small businesses. (Liability issues hold a lot of small businesses down, such as blueberry farmer who would hire a lot of young people if not for liability issues.)
- People don't know their neighbors. (Population growth has people who do not participate in community affairs and do not know who neighbors and community members are. People have a lot of stress in their life and do not participate in community).
- Big is not always better re: community growth. (Population increase is not necessarily a good thing for communities.)
- Get rid of TVs!
- Get rid of regulations forced on state government by the feds
- 10th amendment - Fed. Govt. too meddlesome. (10th Amendment is handcuffing states through commerce laws and threatening them with loss of federal funds.)
- Need to get youth more involved in community.
- Difficulties for teachers to get students prepared and fully ready to learn. (Almost impossible to teach now that there are so many federal rules and regulations.)
- Wetlands and environment being threatened. (In general they are being hurt by commercial entities; example of Jolly Roger track in Lempster degrading wetlands.)
- Entry level jobs for youth – high school students. (Difficult to find and youth turn to drugs and alcohol.)
- Aging population - services need to expand to meet needs.
- (Extension covers an awful lot of ground and) needs to promote more of what we are doing.

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

- Improve the way Cooperative Extension does its PR. Promote selves better and give better perception to public of what Cooperative Extension does, such as be in newspapers daily and let stakeholders help us do this. (We tell how to grow things, but we do not tell who we are). [5 votes]
- Help develop community leaders and good neighbors. Example: look at New Futures. (If community has an "old home days," include Extension.) [5 votes]
- Help facilitate grants (with community leaders - helping to get various groups at the table to act cooperatively to pursue grants together and not compete against each other.) [4 votes]
- Encourage parent and adult participation with youth. Look at successful program from other states. [3 votes]
- Address social capital issues - getting people more involved in their communities. (cited Robert Putnam's Bowling Alone. People do not understand the social capital that already exists in their own town.) [3 votes]
- Target at-risk youth who might not be drawn to 4-H. (Are there other programs that Extension could put together for youth who are already starting to get into trouble?) [3 votes]
- Low income housing. [1 vote]
- Expand programming for elderly - health care, money management and nutrition (concern about the numerous needs of elderly and lack of focused programs for them.) [1 vote]
- Serve as liaison to people with land re: selling land, preserving open space - (development rights and acquiring easements.) [1 vote]

- (Provide) programs like 4-H (but market it so people do not think it is only for farmers - we mostly do leadership and we need to promote this.) Promote better who it's open to - to address drug/ alcohol abuse. [1 vote]
- Youth do not know what there is to do in Sullivan County, they need to know.
- Mentors for non-violent criminal offenses - Sullivan Academy
- Keep pedaling
- Train service people who interact with those who have substance abuse issues - referral to services. (Police, fire, doctors, bartenders, hairdressers - people who interact with people - trained in drug and alcohol issues. These service people receive a lot of info from their clients who open up to them.)
- Clearinghouse for youth job opportunities. (Compile list of available jobs for youth in county and provide info on how to contact employers.)
- Maintain focus on economy while maintaining open space and "planned growth."
- Get a volunteer in every town who helps promote Extension.
- Extension should promote Sullivan County.
- Get factual information re: communities and regions (to agencies and people). Helpful in grant writing - do a piece of the grants.
- Continue to work closely with families. (We do this very well, it is critical and we should continue to make inroads.)
- Get youth (high school students) involved in education (educational activities) in towns.
- Better connect UNH faculty, research with Sullivan County needs.

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

- Use volunteers more effectively.
- Big Brother/Big Sister type of mentoring.
- Target schools and towns to get youth involved in community service and have FUN.
- Work on image of 4-H. (4-H should be seen as cool, not geeky.)
- Sponsor job fairs for youth.
- High school credit program for youth community service.
- Find ways of including "at risk" youth in organized youth groups.
- Better support for those who work/ volunteer with youth. (Community leaders need more support and more skills. A lot of leaders available, but tendency for these people to get burned out. With better support, new leaders would emerge.)
- Youth must be engaged in whatever we are trying to deliver to them. (It can be an amazing learning experience to sit down with youth and talk things out.)
- Distance education such as teleconferencing (Pic-tel) - embellish and enhance - it's valuable. (Do not know why it has not taken off as far as use goes.)
- Similar to DARE - a core group of peer mentors in each school (pressing message of abstinence of substances.)
- Use email to deliver info, training, education. Use email to target groups (new futures is an email tree - Gail and Nancy do a great job at this, anytime there is a meeting everyone related to this issue gets an email of the meeting.)
- Develop a youth-based email tree.
- Support by email people who are doing good work.
- Set a good example (for youth). Parents and other adults need to lead by example for their kids. (Need to target parents to show different lifestyles.)
- Project Climb example at Kearsarge. (At Kearsarge, kids go camping and hiking for a whole weekend and no drinking or drugs allowed.)
- Community Cable Access Television - tremendous opportunity - people do watch - Claremont, Newport, Grantham, Springfield VT and Windsor VT.

- Meet with editorial boards of local newspapers. Send newspapers electronic articles. (Let them know what we are doing to garner their support.)
- Consider emailing to farming community.

Group B

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

- Economic development - educated youth leaving. (Without economic development, we are not going to improve things for our county. Youth leave after education because we don't have good jobs for them.) [7 votes]
- Family farms are disappearing; agriculture is undervalued (it's not understood); development is taking land, save the soils. [5 votes]
- Money management skills for all people - prioritizing what they want to do with their lives. [5 votes]
- Quality of life - people need to slow down and re-evaluate – get involved in communities. [5 votes]
- Treatment of substance abuse - free or low-cost. (There is not enough treatment available.) [3 votes]
- Family supports to build families, (need) education and activity. [3 votes]
- Involve young people in meeting community needs. [3 votes]
- Towns need to market (positive) community strengths. [1 vote]
- Motivation for parents to be community-minded. Families need to increase community participation (and show their children the same.) [1 vote]
- Housing -appropriate development. [1 vote]
- Need de-tox in our hospitals. [1 vote]
- Job training after job loss - appropriate for experienced workers. (Job Market and job re-training needed - loss of manufacturing, people not old enough to retire are faced with trying to find work.) [1 vote]
- Drop out rates in school. (The current programs are so boring; they need to be improved.) [1 vote]
- Kids need places to go after school and weekends.
- Need for nutrition education. (People make bad eating decisions.)
- Education for youth about agriculture. (Opportunities in all schools)
- Public transportation needs to be expanded (people who leave jails have to walk 6 miles to get home.)
- How to plan, (for any number of groups) - technical assistance is needed.
- Family togetherness - including meals. (Families need to step back and determine quality of life.)
- Education about taxes and development is needed. (People don't want to hear about bringing new business into their towns.)
- More activities are needed for Seniors.
- Waste management; the county needs a recycling plan.
- Fostering the local economy.
- Jobs needed for high school kids (safety issues on farm are restrictive.)
- Health insurance (a cooperative health insurance covered by the county.)
- Dance clubs for teens every Saturday night would help to build community.

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

Local Economic Development

- Dance club for young people (keeps young people here) and brings other towns' kids in. [12 votes]
- Put on seminars related to economic development for communities. [5 votes]
- Resource Inventory to attract business. [1 vote]
- Needs assessment. [1 vote]
- Economic Development that has a local focus to try and keep young people in the community.
- Define sustainability.
- Determine readiness of community - quality of work force, what we can offer.
- Share what is unique about Sullivan County and what can we offer to others.
- Public Relations - Promotion of county assets - what this county offers (mountains, covered bridges.)
- Community profiles for more communities. (Focus on economic success will come out of this process.)

Money Management for All Ages:

- Develop education program for middle-schools - continue in high school (manage a savings account) [5 votes]
- Expand locations of money management program - (outside of Newport.) [1 vote]
- Offer money management in the workplace for employees.
- Work with human resource managers.
- Continue Sullivan Academy work.
- Educate parents in order to reach children.
- Hot line for money management, and consumer issues - best deal on phones, appliances, etc. (Want to keep it local.)
- Use local newspapers for money management topics.
- Weekly programs (how to decrease debt) - ongoing.
- Time management and money management for teens. How to save \$. [1 vote]
- College students in \$ degrees teach young people (costs for college and beyond)
- Tax preparation.

Quality of Life (people need to slow down and re-evaluate)

- Peer outreach type program for families. [10 votes]
- How quality of life relates to the environment. [8 votes]
- Define "quality of life"? What are we looking for? (From that process build a structure.) [7 votes]
- Advertise all the good things young people do (rather than just the bad things.) [4 votes]
- Community event of cleaning streets. Promote the "adopt a street" - make it a community event with food to attract people. [2 votes]
- Family nights –on Newport Common [1 vote]
- Activities should be offered at convenient times for families. [1 vote]
- Advertise more of the school activities for the whole community. [1 vote]
- Mentoring matching adults to teens. [1 vote]
- Continue to offer Community Profiles
- More family events in town - including family activity facilities
- Monthly family activity for community. (Peer outreach can do a monthly community night for families.)
- Centralize the directory of events and activities around the county.
- Celebrate the quality of life we have in Sullivan County.
- People need someone to talk to (every now and then, even adults) - adult support groups.

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

- Programs conducted in school that are repeated at different grade levels (i.e. Bullyproofing) - (Use a number of delivery methods to reach such as role-playing, skits, etc.)
- Bring education into community (not just in Newport) – don't expect person to come to us, be out in the community.
- Work with businesses to offer their places for classes.
- Workshops in the outdoors.
- Experiential, hands-on learning/see content in practice.
- Pasture walks are excellent opportunities for people to put things in practice.
- Group activities.
- Programs including games and fun activities, interactive - knowledge bowl.
- Model how to do it.
- "Hot-line" as a method.
- Peer outreach methods. Combine social with learning activities and food.
- Reach out to different types of people in the community especially those who are isolated or are lower socio-economic background.
- Deliver at work places. (People who you want to come to money management might attend at worksites.)
- Get the word out; be clear why group is meeting.
- Give incentives to get people to come.
- Start small; let it grow bigger - friends will tell friends.
- Students film courses for Community TV.