

# **SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT CENTER (SNSC)**

## **2007-08 Annual Report**



### **Our Mission**

**To help families of children with special needs meet their unique challenges.**

**As a result of our services, families are more productive, more satisfied, have greater independence, and are better able to contribute to their communities.**

## 2008 Board of Directors

Pete Bleyler  
President

Susan Dame  
Vice-President

Jessy LaValley  
Secretary

Frank Klymn  
Treasurer

Laurie Emanuele  
Agnes Guay  
Barbara Mellert  
Richard Nordgren  
Julie Wellman

## SNSC Staff

Philip Eller  
Executive Director

Pam Blair  
Programs Coordinator

Leah Abrahamsen  
STAR Coordinator

Gina Serraino  
STAR Program Assistant

Nancy Tantillo  
Administrative Assistant

## Special Helpers

Lori Shipulski  
Bookkeeper

Ann Justice  
KOB Coordinator

Bill Lamb  
Newsletter Editor

## **Message from the President**

SNSC has just completed a very successful year. We've increased the number of families served, we've expanded our programs and services, and we've added the STAR program to our umbrella of services through merger. (You'll read more about these changes elsewhere in this annual report.)

The Board set several goals for the year just ended, and one was to increase SNSC's visibility in the Upper Valley and elsewhere in our service area. We finalized the design of our new logo and updated our web site, letterhead, and written materials to reflect the new look. I think our continuing use of the "umbrella" in our logo is significant, as I really believe that SNSC offers an umbrella of services for families with children with special needs. We joined both the Hanover and Lebanon Chambers of Commerce, and were able to get articles published in the *Valley News* and the *CV Spectator*.

Another of our goals for fiscal 2008 was to review all of our programs for effectiveness and to ensure that each furthers our mission. Last fall we appointed a Programs Committee to carry out this goal, and the committee responded with a series of specific recommendations. This coming fall we will use an outside consultant to conduct focus groups with our customers, and follow up with a written survey to all families served, as well as professionals who refer families to SNSC. We were awarded two grants this past spring to enable us to hire a consultant for this very important project.

A third goal was to expand our financial support from individuals and businesses. While I don't think we achieved a "10" on a scale of one to ten, we surpassed our goal for the annual giving campaign, and received in excess of \$35,000. This compares to annual giving campaign revenues of approximately \$28,000 in FY 2007 and \$12,000 in FY 2006. Philip Eller and I attended a six-month program on fundraising, sponsored by The New Hampshire Corporate Fund.

## **Message from the Executive Director**

It is for me a great professional and personal privilege to work with such a great organization as SNSC – great in terms of its mission and valuable services, great in terms of all the dedicated Board, committee members, and volunteers involved (they are the best I have encountered in my 42 years of work), great in terms of the people we work with –all the parents and family members, and great in terms of the staff. As we approach our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year, it is because of all these great people that we continue to "roll along" filling a unique niche in the social services network of the Upper Valley – the only support program for parents and families of children with ALL kinds of special needs. As you can see from the rest of this report, we continue to fulfill our mission of "helping families of children with special needs meet their unique challenges."

## **The Year's Highlights**

After several years of retrenchment, this year has seen a consolidation and some expansion of our programs and services. The Board enthusiastically approved moving Pam Blair from part-time to a full-time Programs Coordinator, especially to handle most of the Community Partners programs. This gave more regularity and expansion to the Happenings program in particular, as well as to relieve the Executive Director of some of the responsibilities in this program and the Sibshop program. Pam will increasingly pick up some work in the Educational Advocacy service as well.

This year saw SNSC bring another program under our "umbrella." As of July 1, 2008, STAR (Steps Toward Adult Responsibility) will become our sixth major program. STAR serves teenagers with chronic health conditions. SNSC had acted as the fiscal agent for STAR for several years and when its board was facing the decision, for several reasons, to cease operations, SNSC offered to consider taking on the program. After consultation and assistance from our volunteer lawyer, Jim Brown, both boards of directors voted to merge the STAR program into SNSC. We were fortunate to have June and July to provide orientation training by the two former STAR staff to the two new part-time staff hired to replace them. Leah Abrahamsen is the new STAR Coordinator and Gina Serraino the new Administrative Assistant. They both come with excellent and extensive professional skills and will be able to lead the 12 year old STAR program in its new home at SNSC and continue this special support program.

Staff members that remained the same in FY'08 include Philip Eller as Executive Director and Pam Blair as Programs Coordinator, and one part-time Administrative Assistant, Nancy Tantillo. Consultants are used in grant writing and as assistants in several of the programs.

We continue at the same location on Flynn Street in Lebanon where a volunteer, Dave Phillips, has upgraded our IT systems by hard-wiring all our computers to our DSL line. With a grant from the Lindsay Foundation we were able to purchase another Apple computer and high speed printer, and have built a comprehensive SNSC database that includes donors, client families, professionals, etc. This new database has greatly improved our efficiency of service delivery in a multitude of ways. Volunteer efforts resulted also in a new sign in front of the office, proudly displaying our new logo. Internally we rearranged some of the space to accommodate the two new part-time STAR staff people, and relocated the Nathan Hall Library to our more private and cozier back room.

## **Board Activities**

The Board of Directors, under the hard work and leadership of its president, Pete Bleyler, really "stepped up to the plate" and has given our small staff support in many areas of organization and development. The structure and the functioning of the Board and committees have been refined and are actively engaged in the planning and direction of SNSC. The Finance Committee has provided overall analysis and monitoring of the finances of SNSC and has been of great assistance to the Executive Director in this area of needed expertise. The Grants Committee, the Programs Committee, and the Special Events Committee provide thoughtful planning, support, and direction to the staff of SNSC. The Annual Giving Campaign (AGC) Committee,

under the leadership of Toni LaMonica, led the effort of increasing our donations from individuals and some businesses, and again this year exceeded the goal by raising \$35,812 for SNSC! – a critical 22 percent of our total budget (see report below).

The Board hosted a fund raiser/friend raiser wine-tasting event in October at the Officer home in Hanover that made some money and even more friends. Pete and Philip attended the Institute on Fund Raising, six days over six months, and got a lot of great ideas in this area that will prove most useful in future fund raising efforts.



*Wine Tasting Friend Raiser  
Held at the Trix and Chuck Officer home in Hanover  
Led by Dan King, Sommelier*

The June Annual Meeting was attended by 30 dedicated SNSC supporters, including board, committee, parents, and staff, and as one of the participants noted, “had a nice energy to it.” We said farewell to only one Board member, Jessy LaValley, who had provided excellent service as the secretary for several years. She will continue to chair our Programs Committee. With the addition of the STAR program and the increased role of the Board and its committees, the Board was expanded to 12 in number and four new members were added – two from the old STAR Board. We welcome David Harris, Dr. Ann Bracken, Kathy Westwood, and Kelly George to the '09 Board.

### **Programs Report**

Family Support Services – services primarily to parents and professionals

\* Information and Referral/Emotional Support/Special Needs Advocacy: This year over 194 (not unduplicated) parents, family members, and professionals from all over the Upper Valley received these services either by phone, email, or in person.

\* Educational Advocacy: 40 families received this invaluable assistance – on both sides of the river from Piermont/Bradford to Claremont/Windsor. 88 school meetings were attended with parents, and between 150 and 200 other contacts were made regarding these educational situations.

\* Quarterly Newsletter: This is sent to over 750 persons and organizations around the two states as edited by a dedicated volunteer, Bill Lamb.

\* Nathan Hall Library: New acquisitions have been added this year and the Library relocated

within our offices. As our holdings are listed on our website we got a loan request this year from an agency in Mississippi for one of our books!

\* Website: [www.sns-cuv.org](http://www.sns-cuv.org)

Community Partners – services primarily and directly to children, teens and young adults with special needs

\* *Happenings* (social and recreational activities for teens and young adults) These events are a monthly highlight in the lives of many of the participants. Events included bowling, pizza and bingo, a karaoke night, three dances (Halloween, Valentines, Spring Semi-Formal), and other activities attended by as many as 75 participants – the young people as well as their parents/care givers.

\* *Connections*: This includes a Big Siblings program for 11 children with special needs matched with a volunteer from Dartmouth College who spends time each week doing fun things with the child. Additionally, two children were matched with Medical Buddies, Dartmouth Medical School students who connect with the child and their family several times a month.

\* *Sibshops*: This is a monthly fun and learning time for children 7 to 12 years of age who have a sibling with a special need. Ten young people (often the overlooked child in a family that must put a lot of its attention on the child with a special need) attended one or more of these “times just for them” during the academic year.

\* *Girls’ Night Out*: This is a group of 8 or 9 young ladies involved in a monthly outing for supper and a movie, led by Robin Goodrich.

\* *Art Lab*: This is a wonderful new initiative this year as a collaboration of SNSC, AVA Gallery, and a parent who identified a need for her two 20 year old daughters for a creative, social, and educational experience. This parent, Sylvia Dow, made connections with the AVA Gallery that provided the art educator, space, and materials.

\* *Education Class*: This is another new initiative by Sylvia Dow that provides 8-week classes for young adults who want to continue their education. The first class of six students studied New England History at Lebanon College that helped in the planning of the class held in one of its class rooms. The first class ended with a field trip to Fort No. 4 in Charlestown.



*Happenings Semi-Formal Spring Dance*

Parent to Parent of NH – services mainly to parents and professionals

\* Contacts were made (by phone, email, website, national P2P listserv) with 110 parents and professionals in the last year, and 40 parent matches were made. Each match involved at least two or three other contacts to complete.

\* The website [www.P2PNH.org](http://www.P2PNH.org) continues to provide a connection to parents and professionals and includes many valuable links to other resources.

\* We continue to coordinate and train the other six P2P Coordinators located around New Hampshire. We also attend the annual Family Support Conference each May.

Respite Child Care Program – provides respite monies to parents needing to “take a break”

\* Twenty families that included 46 children received financial assistance to obtain 2090 hours of respite care this year. Usually the family secures their own provider, but occasionally we can refer a possible respite provider to them. Some parents contribute part of the respite cost; some families, but not all, have a child with a special need; some respite care is short term while others are longer. There is no income requirement for parents to receive financial or other respite assistance. This is a completely “prevention model” type of service.

Kids on the Block – 23 skits that focus on children with disabilities or other life skills topics relevant to young school aged children

\* Presentations were made to 14 different audiences totaling 1000 students and staff this year. Requests were way down this year (we think that schools are both too busy with excess testing and/or have more limited money for auxiliary learning experiences such as KOB), so a major effort next year will be to increase again the number of requests for KOB, through increased marketing and also fund raising/grant writing in order to make them completely free to schools all over the state of NH. We hope then to keep our seven very dedicated volunteer puppeteers much busier.



*KOB presenting to a school group*

**Financial Summary \* July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008**

**REVENUE**

<u>Local/State Contracts</u>	\$48,163
<u>Fund Raising and Special Events</u>	36,924
<u>Foundations</u>	25,195
<u>Upper Valley United Way</u>	14,990
<u>Program Income, etc.</u>	9,482
<b><u>Total Revenue</u></b>	<b><u>\$133,930</u></b>

**EXPENSES**

<u>Staff (Salaries/payroll expenses)</u>	\$79,140
<u>Professional Services/Contractors</u>	9,597
<u>Occupancy</u>	13,185
<u>Office Expenses/Staff Support</u>	18,096
<u>Program Expenses</u>	25,972
<u>Miscellaneous</u>	1,057
<b><u>Total Expenses</u></b>	<b><u>\$147,047</u></b>

**2008 Annual Giving Campaign**

**Pyramid of Giving**

**1 @ \$11,000**

**2 @ \$2,000 - \$9,999**

**5 @ \$1,000 - \$1,999**

**3 @ \$500 - \$999**

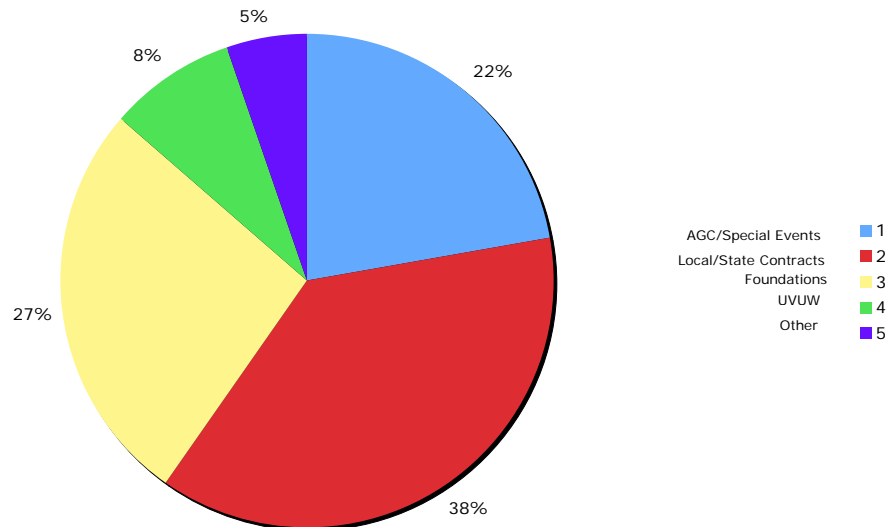
**18 @ \$200 - \$499**

**37 @ \$100 - \$199**

**93 @ \$10 - \$99**

**159 Contributors gave \$35,812**

**Budget 2008  
Income Sources**





*Past and Present SNSC Presidents: Toni & Pete  
June 2008 Annual Meeting*



*Retiring Board Member  
Jessy LaValley*

### **A Look Ahead to FY'09**

The year 2009 will be a time of celebration – our 30<sup>th</sup> year of serving families in the Upper Valley. Special events will be arranged and posted on our website and in our newsletters – so keep checking them. As we have done for these 30 years since 1979, we will continue to respond to needs identified by parents and also professional colleagues. This year we will undertake a major “getting in touch with our base” – a comprehensive evaluation of our present programs and identification of new or unmet needs. The Program Committee will be using money received in two grants at the end of last year to hire a consultant who will help design the questionnaire, lead several focus groups, and analyze the results. The Board will then use this information as it develops a strategic plan in the late winter. All this effort will give us good direction as we head into our next 30 years of service to families of children with special needs.

The Art Lab and the Education Class will be offered in the fall and the winter/spring. Workshops and support groups will be organized and facilitated. All our other programs will continue to serve families – both parents and the children themselves. Our Educational Advocacy and educational workshops will add some additional volunteers and perhaps some contracted consultants. The STAR program will emphasize the traditional teen and parent support activities, while we consider some new ones. We will be updating our websites and other public relations materials in order to raise the level of awareness about SNSC to families and professionals in the Upper Valley. Our KOB program will also engage in additional marketing endeavors in order to increase the requests for their unique presentations. P2PNH will also do more for marketing and parent awareness, and also perform an update of its extensive Supporting Parent Network.

We will continue to provide our umbrella support to two groups that don't have a nonprofit IRS status by acting as their fiscal agent: Parent Links, a Claremont area support group for parents of children with autism spectrum disorders, and the Early Childhood Mental Health Network, working on the development of a family resource center for the Lebanon area.

### **2009 Board of Directors**

Pete Bleyler, President  
Frank Klymn, Treasurer  
Kelly George  
Barbara Mellert

Susan Dame, Vice-President  
Ann Bracken, M.D.  
Agnes Guay  
Richard Nordgren, M.D.

Julie Wellman, Secretary  
Laurie Emanuele  
David Harris  
Kathy Westwood