

PRESS RELEASE

Kent County LMB Releases Local Needs Assessment for Families and Children

July 24, 2008

The Local Management Board for Children's and Family Services of Kent County (LMB) is pleased to announce the completion of its comprehensive assessment of the needs of families and children in Kent County. Based on key informant interviews, youth focus groups, telephone surveys, community forums and detailed analysis of secondary data, the document provides a clear picture of the strengths and needs of children, youth, and families in our community.

The strengths identified in Kent County are: the size, close-knit and caring qualities of the community; the prevalence of agricultural and natural resources; and the programs initiated recently within the community to help address local needs. The challenges for families and children include: substance use and abuse among the youth; school performance issues such as testing, attendance and graduation rates; teen parenting; juvenile delinquency; and lack of recreational options for kids.

The Maryland Children's Cabinet and the Governor's Office for Children measure results for the well-being of children in eight key areas annually. Staff of Kent County LMB worked with the Center for Family and Community Life from Salisbury University to produce the 284 page long Needs Assessment that provides information in the same eight areas and is based exclusively on Kent County data and input from Kent County residents. The eight results areas are: Babies Born Healthy; Healthy Children; Children Enter School Ready to Learn; Children Successful in School; Children Completing School; Children Safe in Their Families and Communities; Stable and Economically Independent Families; and Communities that Support Family Life.

A hard copy is available for public use at the Chestertown branch of the Kent County Public Library. Copies may also be borrowed directly from the LMB. Electronic versions of the document can be emailed at no charge. Send an email to the LMB (cedwards@kentgov.org)

Residents interested in learning more about the LMB can contact the office by phone at 410 810 2673 or visit the web site at <http://www.kentcounty.com/lmb/index.htm>