

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Androscoggin Head Start hires Plourde as Executive Director**

**Lewiston, ME (December 15, 2011)** - Androscoggin Head Start and Child Care is pleased to announce the selection of Betsy Norcross Plourde as the new Executive Director. She will succeed Estelle Rubinstein, who is retiring at the end of December after serving as the Executive Director for more than 20 years.

Plourde has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Public Management and a Masters Degree in Social Work and is a Licensed Master Social Worker. She served from 1991-1995 as the Director of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Androscoggin County before joining Advocates for Children in Lewiston becoming AFC's Executive Director in 2000.

Plourde indicated that she is very excited to be joining Head Start, having worked with children and families throughout her career. Dr. Elaine Makas, Chair of the Board of Directors and Chair of the Executive Director Selection Committee noted that Androscoggin Head Start is equally enthusiastic about Betsy. Makas said, "The Board, the Policy Council, and the Staff all participated actively in this recruitment and selection process, and we were unanimous in our choice of Betsy as our new Executive Director. Her intelligence, her proven skills, her genuine concern for children and families as well as her familiarity with local resources made her the obvious choice."

In her new role, Plourde will oversee a staff of over 100 people at Head Start's ten sites throughout the county. She will be responsible for securing federal, state, and local funds to support Head Start's programs as well as developing and managing systems that assure the use of these funds to most effectively carry out the agency's mission. Plourde expressed her dedication to fulfilling these challenging goals: "Head Start's impact on children is significant. Through high quality care and education, Head Start helps today's children become the employees, leader, and parents of tomorrow."

Androscoggin Head Start and Child Care has provided quality early care and educational services to pregnant women, families, and children for over forty-five years. Program options include Full Day Head Start pre-kindergarten and child care, Half Day Head Start pre-kindergarten, Home Based, Infant and Toddler Early Head Start, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Services through these programs are provided annually to over four hundred children and families throughout Androscoggin County.

Applications for all programs are accepted at any time. Please call (207) 795-4040 ext. 325 for more information. Please visit our website at [www.androscogginheadstart.org](http://www.androscogginheadstart.org). Androscoggin Head Start and Child Care is funded in part by the United Way, State of Maine D.H.H.S., and Lewiston and Auburn Community Development Block Grants.



*Photo Attachment: Betsy Norcross Plourde, LMSW, Androscoggin Head Start and Child Care's recently hired Executive Director*

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