

## YIT PROGRAM PROGRESS REPORT - Biannual

1. Grant Number: 03150-C6006-FY13-YIT
2. Subrecipient Name and Address: **United Counseling Service of Bennington County**, PO Box 588, 100 Ledge Hill Drive, Bennington, VT 05201
3. Telephone Number: (802) 442-5491
4. Project Title: Youth Outreach Program
5. Period of Performance from July 31, 2013 through January 31, 2014
6. Approved Project Period from July 1, 2012 through September 29, 2014
7. Author's Name and Telephone number: Katrina Hollis (802) 442-5491
8. Date of report: January 31, 2014
9. Comments (if any):

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The federal Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) primarily focuses on demonstrating accountability and achieving meaningful outcomes for all federally funded programs. Please make sure to include information on the outcomes of your project activities and the impact of your project on improving the lives of Youth in Transition and their families in the Program Progress Reports submitted.

**For each State fiscal year, two Program Progress Reports must be submitted. Specify whether for FY2013 \_\_\_\_ or FY2014 \_\_\_\_:**

1. one for the time period from July 1 – December 31 (due by January 31), and
2. one for the period from January 1 – June 30 (due by July 31).

**A report is also due by October 31, 2014 for the first quarter of FY2015.**

### **Report Contents**

#### **1. Major Activities and Accomplishments During this Period**

Report both quantifiable and non-quantifiable accomplishments for the General Expectations and Regional Goals listed in Attachment A (see pages 3-5 of the grant award):

- Quantifiable accomplishments include numbers of youth/families served, people trained, support groups established, etc.
- Non-quantifiable accomplishments should be listed in chronological order. Describe any draft/final products in this section.

Please report major activities and accomplishments for the following goals, outcomes, and indicators as relevant for the sub-grant. [This section of the report may be entered directly into the table below.]

<p><b>Goals for strengthening the systems of care</b></p>	<p>1: Young adult (YA) leadership is developed in VT.</p> <p><b>Required activity:</b>  <i>Operate in accordance with continuing input from key stakeholders (including youth and family members) within the regional systems of care....</i></p> <p>Roughly twenty young adults attend Teens for Change (T4C) each week. T4C continues to grow and has approximately 50 members. We are excited to report that we now have young adult members from another area high school, Arlington, for the first time in the group’s history. This new membership has sparked an increased interest in YA leadership in the northern part of Bennington County as well. T4C is engaging new young adults every week.</p> <p>T4C young adults collaborated with the Bennington Teen Task Force, supporting the development phase of a youth center in Bennington. Partners involved in this process are the Transitional Living Program, Alliance for a Healthy Community Transformation, Bo Vuckovik owner of Voltage/ Bennington Sports Center and local churches. Young adults contributed by answering questions and concerns the planning team had, around what the youth thoughts were on how they see a future Teen Center. Giving the Teens for Change youth a voice in the planning. At this time it was one time venture for Teens for Change.</p> <p>The Photo Voice Project is an innovative technique using video and photographs to tell a story and send a message. T4C received a grant which allowed them to participate in the project and provided young adults a creative way to document the landscape of their communities, as reported in the previous progress report. The photos are now on permanent display in the conference room at the UCS Youth and Family Services Center.</p> <p>August 18<sup>th</sup> 2013 T4C and Youth Outreach Worker Ryan Tobin marched in the Bennington Battle Day Parade. The teens wore their T4C shirts, handed out candy and carried their T4C banner. The young adults were applauded for their efforts throughout the parade.</p> <p>T4C participated once again in the UCS Barn Sale in Manchester, VT. T4C young adults hosted a concession stand, which served hot cider, cider donuts, coffee, and other items. The Barn sale committee matched the T4C funds generated and earned a total of \$600.00.</p> <p>On October 28<sup>th</sup>, T4C held a fundraiser night at the local MC Donald’s Restaurant. The Southern Vermont Storm Football team supported the T4C fundraiser by helping out during the coin drive and taking photos with youth</p>
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and fans who attended the event. The Vermont Storm helped make it a memorable night. T4C raised almost \$400.00.

UCS and YOP/T4C held another successful Thanks for Giving Luncheon this year. The Thanks for Giving lunch is held as a way to thank community partners who work with youth and their community. There were four T4C volunteers who, along with other transition age young adults, helped cook, serve food, and clean-up. The event would not have been as successful without their help.

Jordan Thompson, T4C youth and Peer YIT Grant Executive Board member continues his work in participating on the YIT Board Grant application process. Jordan really enjoys his participation in this process. It has helped him feel good about his contribution to the state.

## 2: Family/adult allies support young adults....

T4C has seen a growth in community volunteers from Vermont Department of Corrections, Youth Development Program, Center for Restorative Justice, Family Outreach Program, Southern Vermont Storm Football team, and Pave. Family members and community volunteers continued to enhance and promote T4C's safe and successful events.

## 3: Workers use caring practices known to be helpful for young adults and families.

### **Required activity:**

*Provide cross-system case management and individualized service plan development, ensuring that young adults are engaged in planning for their own futures....*

The Youth Outreach Program continues to advocate with the Vermont Department of Labor (VTDOL) Bennington J.O.B.S., and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) to provide cross system case management opportunities in working toward the goals of the young adult. YOP continues to collaborate with Center for Restorative Justice (CRJ), Community High School of Vermont, Sunrise Family Resource center, and Youth Development Program.

Using the future planning with T.I.P.S. model we support YA to engage with services and supports beyond our services. YOP has also collaborated with Adult service providers, such as Developmental Service's to support clients as they age out of YOP services.

	<p>4: System of Care partners gains cultural &amp; linguistic competence (CLC)....</p> <p>YOP and T4C have reconnected with Mercedes Avila to come to Bennington again to provide training to new T4C members and Children’s services staff. Mercedes reported back to Bennington YOP site that a June or August training is planned.</p> <hr/> <p>5: Local communities (including young adults) change their perceptions of young adults and of mental health issues, reducing stigma....</p> <p>T4C members continue to develop and offer events to change community perceptions of young adult and mental health. The young adults have done this by ongoing building of relationships. T4C continue to prioritize community givebacks as a goal and a way to reduce stigma. They have done this through volunteering at local events such as the Big Brother Big Sister Bowl-a-thon, washing window of local businesses, volunteering for Green Up day activities, and Christmas Caroling at Bennington Health and Rehab, among others. T4C are expanding their community activities for the coming reporting period.</p> <p>Other amazing activities T4C participated in included: collaborating with UCS Developmental Services to support adults with disabilities during their winter dance. T4C members served food and drinks during the dance. Eventually, they all kicked off their shoes and joined in the festivities as well and joined the Better Bennington Corporation to support the downtown businesses in clean-up efforts in the community.</p> <hr/> <p>6: Effectiveness of the Vermont System of Care for young adults with SED is evaluated.....</p> <p>UCS and the YOP program are active participants in the Vermont Study.</p> <hr/> <p>7: The State supports and sustains regional services for young adults....</p> <p>The State Operations team continues to be a valued support to our local work. Katrina Hollis continues her role as the YIT Statewide Technical Assistance Resource and is involved with twelve regional programs.</p>
<p><b>Desired outcomes for young adults of transition-age</b></p>	<p>1. Decreased number of young adults involved in the corrections system (including an increase in the number who are free of incarceration).</p> <p><b>Required activity:</b></p> <p><i>Reach out to young adults with SED who are out-of-school at least through teen centers, recovery centers, homeless youth programs, and by intercepting them at critical intervention points with the juvenile and criminal justice systems....</i></p> <p>The Youth Outreach Program continues to make significant connections with Probation and Parole, who refer first time offenders and young adults carrying deferred sentences.</p>

	<p>For this reporting period, a young man was sighted for underage drinking, and disorderly conduct on a police officer, received a six month deferred sentence as a first time offender. YOP services has supported client with continue to access supports and community connections to Bennington J.O.B.S. Program, Transitional Living Program, Community High School of Vermont, and other appropriate services. YOP currently has 4 young adults working towards successful completion of their deferred sentences. Through the life of the grant, 10 out of 15 young people on deferred sentences completed their sentences successfully.</p>
	<p>2. Increased number of young adults who are employed....</p> <p>Young adults successfully participated in a six week Summer Youth Employment Program and the Vermont Department of Labor at Lake Paran. The young adults were able to learn basic employment skills and team work while receiving the help they needed to succeed. YOP supports youth to employment networks through Bennington J.O.B.S. Program, Vermont Department of Labor, and Vocational Rehabilitation.</p> <p>(Number of successful youth employed during reporting period?)</p>
	<p>3. Increased number young adults participating in (or who completed) educational programs....</p> <p>YOP currently has seven active young adults participating to earn high school completion during this reporting period. One youth graduated from Community High School of VT, also receiving his Serve Safe Certificate, while working towards a successful completion of his Deferred Sentence. YOP also supported the successful transition of a client to Developmental Services; this client was able to reconnect back into the high school, to work towards his adult diploma.</p>
	<p>4. Increased number of young adults who have access to, and are using, a medical home....</p> <p>YOP assist young adults with accessing health insurance and supports through Economic Service's. YOP connects youth to Bennington Free Clinic, local Dentist, and Supports young pregnant women with transportation and support in accessing health care.</p> <p>Youth Outreach Program has experienced an increase in working with parenting young adults in transition who are not currently active in high school. A shortage of primary care physicians in the area continues to be a problem for young adults connecting the medical services. YOP successfully connected eight young adults to a medical home.</p>

	<p>5. Increased number of young adults living in safe and stable housing....</p> <p>YOP supported two young women with transportation and outreach to successfully complete Transitional Living Program (TLP). These two young ladies were not living in safe and secure housing, both also struggle to either stay in school or reengage. One young lady was able to successfully move into her own apartment, and continued to engage to services, while the other young lady successfully had her baby and is living at home with her mom, she to is active with services.</p> <p>YOP Outreach worker continues to attend the YIT steering committee which is focusing entirely on housing for young adults. The group is working to join other housing groups to see if we can work together on creating a sustainable and supportive housing options for young adults, many who are parenting.</p>
	<p>Increased number of young adults who have caring &amp; supportive relationships....</p> <p>T4C continues to strive for long lasting community connection and partners. T4C Young Adult Advisory Board is well known throughout the Bennington County.</p> <p>The Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) was offered by the Youth and Family Services Division and many T4C members attended. The program helps young people learn about and create healthy relationships. The Youth Outreach Program continues to be the gateway for YA to connect to all supports, family allies, school, and community partners.</p>
	<p>6. Increase in young adults' strengths and protective factors....</p> <p>T4C and Youth Outreach has connected with more than 130 young adults, creating opportunities to mentor, give back opportunities, and connect with their community. Opportunities like these help increase self esteem and self worth, feelings of accomplishment, and connection to their own community, among other things. Youth involvement such as this takes young adult leadership to the highest levels.</p> <p>One great example of a young adult who has come to shine in Bennington is Ryan Tobin who was one of the first ever YA'S to be involved in T4C, Ryan now works part time as a youth outreach worker and helping staff T4C.</p> <p>YOP continues to support young adults in the justice system, giving young adult's the tools necessary to navigate through the system positively. Bennington young adults involved in these programs are respected by professionals in the system.</p>

	<p>8. Improved mental health for young adults.</p> <p><b>Required activity:</b>  <i>Improve access to mental health services for the young adults most at risk for poor outcomes and use the power of the courts to increase their likelihood of use of those services....</i></p> <p>Katrina Hollis has a regular presence in the juvenile court system. YOP receives ongoing referrals from Department of Corrections and Community High School of Vermont as a direct result of Katrina’s outreach activities.</p> <p>YOP successfully transitioned two young adults using the Future Planning Model practiced through TIPS. One of these young adults was dealing with serious mental health issues. This young man was successfully transitioned to CRT services at UCS as he was aging out of the YOP services and would need on-going mental health supports.</p> <p>Another young man who dropped out of high school four years ago who is diagnosed with a serious learning disability and Asperger’s, was successfully transitioned to DS services at UCS. Together, the programs helped the young man connect with services as well as reconnect with an educational program to help him reach his goal of earning his high school diploma.</p> <p>YOP supported one client with connecting back to her family, after couch surfing for several months, during the time of couch surfing connected client to all available services.</p> <p>Many of the youth we work with do not tend to engage with mental health service due to stigma, disconnection to community, lack of access to services, criminal justice or substance abuse issues. YOP is connected directly with the children’s mental health programs which provides the YA’s with instant access to services and a connection with the clinicians who see the YA’s regularly. This provides a crack in the door for which many YA’s walk through if mental health services are needed.</p>
<p><b>System of Care Infrastructure Indicators</b> (for federal TRAC):</p>	<p><u>Workforce Development:</u> Organizations or communities implementing mental health-related training programs as a result of the grant. Please enter the number of organizations or communities and briefly describe the training programs....  <i>None to report at this time.</i></p> <p><u>Organizational Change:</u> Organizational changes made to support improvement of mental health-related practices/activities that are consistent with the goals of the grant. Please enter the number of changes and briefly describe them....</p>

	<p>UCS hired Ryan Tobin to support Katrina Hollis with T4C and the YOP programs. Ryan comes as one of the first member of the advisory board (T4C).</p>
	<p><u>Partnership/Collaboration:</u> Organizations that entered into formal written inter/intra-organizational agreements (e.g., MOUs/MOAs) to improve mental health-related practices/activities that are consistent with the goals of the grant. Please enter the number of organizations and briefly describe the agreements.... None at this time.</p>
	<p><u>Types/Targets of Practice:</u> Programs/organizations/communities that implemented evidence-based mental health-related practices/activities as a result of the grant. Please enter the number of programs/organizations/communities and briefly describe the evidence-based practices.... YOP continues to use the T.I.P.S. Model that we are certified with as our evidences based targets for best results. Sunrise Family Resource Center offered all their staff the T.I.P.S. Training and those staff who were new within the transition services programs attended the training. UCS has again offered another class of PREP.</p>

**7. Problems**

Describe any deviations or departures from the original project plan including actual/anticipated slippage in task completion dates, and special problems encountered or expected. Use this section to describe barriers to accomplishment, actions taken to overcome difficulties, and to advise DMH of any needs for assistance.

The biggest issue the program has had to deal with is funding and the questionable future of the YOP and T4C. Although the staff and YA's have been and will continue to be actively involved with advocating with the state and local government, it is anxiety producing. On the positive side of this, the actions the YA's are encouraged and supported to take have empowered them in such amazing ways. They feel even stronger that their voices make a difference. They look forward to hearing how they have made a difference.

**8. Significant Findings and Events**

For special notice to Principal Investigator, State Outreach Team for Youth in Transition, Federal Project Officer, etc. This should include any changes in staffing, including of persons, time spent, and/or responsibilities. Attach resumes and qualifications of new staff.



During this reporting period YOP/T4C hired Ryan Tobin who has aged out of services but continued to be connected with T4C as a mentor. Ryan was hired as a part time Youth Outreach Worker. Ryan will be working directly with T4C. Ryan was one of the first member's involved in T4C.

## **9. Dissemination Activities**

Briefly describe project related inquiries and information dissemination activities carried out over the reporting period. Itemize and include a copy of any newspaper, newsletter, and magazine articles or other published materials considered relevant to project activities, or used for project information or public relations purposes.

T4C continue to use social media as a tool to post updates, pictures, and events to Young adults and the community. T4C Facebook currently has 244 likes, during last reporting period we only had 100 likes. UCS uploads T4C/YOP events and news to their website and UCS Facebook page. Teens for Change Youth Outreach worker Ryan Tobin reconnected with local Radio station to continue ongoing promotion of Teens for Change. There are often articles and/or photos in local papers informing the community of the good works of T4C and the YA's.

## **5. Other Activities**

Briefly describe other activities undertaken during the reporting period.

YOP staff continues involvement with all YIT regions in Vermont. Bennington YOP and T4C continue to provide input on how to sustain youth involvement. Katrina Hollis plays an active role supporting all regions with young adult growth, leadership, and creating and sustaining programs.

YOP/T4C has started planning to start the process of creating a Youth Summit in Bennington Vermont.

## **6. Activities Planned for Next Reporting Period**

Briefly describe the project activities planned for the next reporting period.

T4C will continue to promote their Facebook page. Our page is currently at 244 likes, our goal for this next reporting period is 400 likes.

T4C/YOP will reengage with Comstock Prison to plan a trip to visit the faculty. This trip will benefit youth dealing with behavior issues, the Youth Assistance Program at Great Meadows has had a huge impact on our youth to change negative behaviors.

T4C is currently working on applying for the VFFCHM Grants, to create a dance with the theme of Anti Bullying and bullying prevention. T4C will have a keynote speaker to kick off the event. Many of the youth know him as he was involved with helping the youth put on a skit this last summer on bullying. The dance event is planned for April at Bennington's Family Moose Lodge. The Moose continues to be a great supporter of T4C and the effort of the YA's to create positive and substance free activities.

YOP/T4C will staff a table at the Mount Anthony High School Transitional Fair again this year with Bennington JOBS program and Transitional Living Program. There a youth volunteers who will attend to help answer student questions and to promote the program.

T4C will participate for their fourth year with Bowl for Kids' Sake. Supporting all involved, serving food, cleaning the space, and taking care of the hard working volunteer's for the day!

T4C will once again participate in Bennington Annual Mayfest. The theme of the booth to be determined by the T4C members.

T4C has been discussing hosting a youth summit in the fall. They will create a planning committee to plan for Bennington's first Youth Summit, by end of 2014.

T4C will successfully connect with Mercedes for CCL training for all new T4C members, and UCS children's staff.

YOP/T4C will participate in Youth Appreciation Day!

T4C/YOP will plan a spring, summer overnight camping trip.

YOP/T4C will continue to work on sustainability plans for programs once the grant ends.

**DMH only:**

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_ Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date approved: \_\_\_\_\_