

## YIT PROGRAM PROGRESS REPORT

1. Grant Number: C-YIT-FY12-UCS
2. Grantee Name and Address: United Counseling Service,  
100 Ledge Hill Dr, Bennington, VT 05201
3. Telephone Number: (802) 442-5491
4. Project Title: Youth Outreach Program
5. Period of Performance from January 1, 2013 through June 30, 2013
6. Approved Project Period from July 1 2012 through June 30, 2013
7. Author's Name and Telephone number: Jennifer E. Pyne & Katrina Hollis  
(802)442-5491
8. Date of report: June 30, 2013
9. Comments (if any):

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The federal Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) primarily focus 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.

### **Two Program Progress Reports must be submitted for this sub-grant:**

1. One for the time period from July 1 – December 31, 2012 (due by January 31, 2013)
2. One for the time period from January 1 – June 30, 2013 (due by July 30, 2013) .

### **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.

The Youth Outreach Program (YOP) has connected with at least 53 youth in almost 3 years from the ages of 16-21 who are experiencing serious emotional disturbance. The goal is to direct and support Bennington's young adults to be productive in the community and free from incarceration. The Youth Outreach Program staff actively seeks out connections within the community to help identify youth who need a positive connection.

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|  | <p>1: Young adult (YOUTH) leadership is developed in VT.</p> <p><b>Required activity:</b><br/><i>Operate in accordance with continuing input from key stakeholders (including youth and family members) within the regional systems of care...</i></p> <p>Teens for Change, (T4C) continues to meet weekly addressing on going issues in the community and have had a steady attendance of youth each week. Roughly, 57 youth have participated in the T4C Advisory Board since its inception. During the Summer month many of the youth have other opportunities or responsibilities and the attendance lessens to roughly 10 youth a week.</p> <p>The beginning of this report period, January 2013, began with T4C participating in "I Have A Dream", a local community service day to honor Martin Luther King Jr. Youth assisted with painting and cleaning at a local homeless shelter.</p> <p>In February 2013, two (2) T4C youth were hosted by a local bakery, Crazy Russian Girls, to perform their first 'live gig' of their band, A Cry From Hell. The youth were supported by T4C members and community members, The Crazy Russian Girls Bakery are very supportive of the youth who donate their time to the community.</p> <p>April 2013 began with five T4C youth volunteering for their second year to assist with all aspects of hosting the UCS sponsored Annual Bowl For Kids Sake Event at our local bowling alley. Youth spent the day cooking, cleaning, selling raffle tickets and mentoring other youth. These 5 youth dedicated their time all day to ensure that all of the participants of this event enjoyed their time all the while raising money for a great community support.</p> <p>Later in April, to enhance our outreach efforts, T4C collaborated with the local high school and participated in the annual Transition Fair by providing an information booth and participating in a local radio segment at WBTV - 1370 AM. The local radio station has become a bimonthly means for informing the community of the current and future happenings of T4C. It is the intent of T4C Peer Outreach Worker, Katrina, to have the youth take a more active role in this part of community outreach and possibly have youth interview one another to promote events and T4C.</p> <p>To finish up April, T4C youth had the opportunity to participate in the Global</p> |
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Youth Service Day by cleaning up various outdoor community areas. This event was extremely successful for the town of Bennington. The youth who participate were able to witness the induction of the local charter to declare the last Saturday of April as Youth Appreciation Day.

In May 2013, 10 T4C youth and four staff members participated in the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual UCS Green Up Day. The youth have taken on an active role of promoting the importance of volunteering their time as well as investing themselves in their community.

Toward the end of May, five T4C youth and three staff members hosted an informational booth in Bennington's Annual Mayfest event. Five youth spent the day handing out flyers, Children's Mental Health Matters green ribbons and other promotional material promoting Mental Health Awareness Month. The following weekend 11 youth and four staff members attended the Young Adult Voice Movement Conference in Burlington, Vermont. Staff and youth attended the Friday evening gathering with entertainer, Mr. Mike Veny, for great music, food, dancing, and the photo booth. On Saturday, youth and staff attended the informational sessions of their choice. This year, Jordan Thompson and Courtney Bridges were presenters and shared their very personal stories and triumphs of educating themselves about their own mental health issues. This session allowed for these two individuals to speak out about their own personal barriers, stigmatizations, and overcoming the overall negativity behind mental health.

Katrina Hollis continues to travel to other regions to assist with the development of Youth Advisory Boards. Toward the end of May, Katrina traveled with ten youth to the Barre YIT Site to participate in Leadership 101 training. Youth were presented with individualized characteristic leadership information and used Self Assessment tools to rate themselves and share with others about their leadership qualities. Youth used this time to build upon their leadership skills as well as the two Boards sharing their ideas and accomplishments as Youth Advisory Boards. It was discovered during this training the importance of T4C's role in giving back to the community and other regions believe it would be beneficial for all sites to work toward this goal.

On June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013, T4C hosted a trip to Comstock Prison and the youth were able to speak to a panel of incarcerated youth. The intent of this trip is to have youth be able to identify how their decision making early in life can affect the rest of their lives.

T4C worked diligently for 5 months collaborating with AmeriCorps Vista Members to produce the Youth Photo Voice Project and had a well attended debut on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013. This project allowed the youth to explore their community and to seek out what they, as youth, saw as positive and negative within their own community. The youth chose photos that were beyond the expectations of any of the adult coordinators involved in this project and the photos continue to be on display until August, 2013. Two youth, Dolores and Wayne exhibited their hidden talent for a 'photographer's eye', as their photographs lead many viewers to engage in ongoing discussions of the

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|  | <p>overall exhibit.</p> <p>Ryan Tobin, Peer Mentor for the T4C group, has continued to volunteer his time each week to assist Katrina Hollis with her Advisory Group, as well as attending some State meetings to be the 'voice' of the local youth he mentors.</p> <p>Jordan Thompson, T4C youth and a peer YIT Grant Executive Board Member, has been participating in the YIT Board Grant Application Process for other regions. Katrina Hollis supported Jordan with his role. Jordan's responsibilities included reading all mini grants from eleven different regions across Vermont and reviewing each grant to ensure that the applications met the requirements for approval.</p> <p>The Specialized Children's Services Division at UCS is now officially Youth and Family Services and were able to move into a brand new facility located near its central office. To celebrate these exciting changes, UCS held an Open House once they were settled in and three T4C youth acted as tour guides to those who attended the Open House.</p> |
|  | <p>2: Family/adult allies support young adults...</p> <p>Involvement from parents and adult allies has steadily increased and more parents have been active in assisting with transportation.</p> <p>Adult allies have increased through various community collaborations. T4C has volunteers from the community to chaperone events including volunteers from the Vermont Department of Corrections, Youth Development Program, Center for Restorative Justice, Family Outreach Program, and a Southern Vermont Storm football player. Volunteers have helped make events safe and successful.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|  | <p>3: Workers use caring practices known to be helpful for young adults and families.</p> <p><b>Required activity:</b><br/> <i>Provide cross-system case management and individualized service plan development, ensuring that young adults are engaged in planning for their own futures....</i></p> <p>YOP continues to engage young adults in all essential community support programs that will best assist youth with achieving their voiced goals in conjunction with utilizing the T.I.P.S. Model.</p> <p>Ongoing referral supports consists of Economic Services, Youth development Program, Vocational Rehabilitation, Vermont Department of Labor, local dentists and PCPs.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|  | <p>4: System of Care partners gains cultural &amp; linguistic competence (CLC)....</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

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|                                                                   | <p>YOP is looking to reengage Mercedes to expand on training more T4C youth. UCS continues to enhance and develop a diversity plan.</p> <p>5: Local communities (including young adults) change their perceptions of young adults and of mental health issues, reducing stigma....</p> <p>In May 2013, T4C developed a 'Reducing the Stigma of Mental Health' informational booth for the local Mayfest event. This annual event draws thousands of people to the Bennington Community. The youth handed out information on mental health, shared their personal stories, and gave away Green Ribbons.</p> <p>The research that T4C conducted for the Youth Photo Voice Project allowed the group the opportunity to visit their local Department of Health and meet with the District Director. During this visit, the group engaged in conversation with the District Director about incorporating healthy activities within their own lifestyles and their overall community.</p> <p>6: Effectiveness of the Vermont System of Care for young adults with SED is evaluated....</p> <p>Katrina Hollis utilizes the Vermont Common Study, Vermont Study and National Study as the essential tool at intake and through services for engaging youth in the process and to continue to gather information to improve the system of care.</p> <p>7: The State supports and sustains regional services for young adults....</p> <p>T4C has built a network across the state with support to all regions. YOP continues to have support from our State Coordinator, Matt Wolf and Courtney Bridges leads the way for any of our social networking needs.</p> <p>The State continues to support Katrina Hollis, as the YIT Statewide Technical Assistance Resource. Katrina has ongoing involvement with the 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><br/> <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>YOP continues to have a positive relationship with Department of Corrections,</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

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|  | <p>we will continue to advocate for new referrals, advocating for first time youthful offenders whom have been given a deferred sentence. YOP will continue to increase its presence at the Probation and Parole Office court systems, and supporting youth with their transitions within the court and correctional systems.</p> <p>Katrina Hollis has reengaged with our local Community and Restorative Justice Center to support and connect with youth whom are 1<sup>st</sup> time offenders. YOP has had a positive collaboration with the Public Defender’s Office. This has proved to be a valuable resource to the court but more importantly to the young people involved who need support services.</p> <p>YOP attended an Offender Re-Entry meeting facilitated by Phillip Fernandez to advocate the support services that are available to any youth who may be relocated to the Bennington community.</p> |
|  | <p>2. Increased number of young adults who are employed....</p> <p>YOP youth who express an interest in pursuing employment are referred to the Bennington J.O.B.S. Program, Vermont Department of Labor, and Vocational Rehabilitation. Youth can also access the local Business Account Manager via Creative Workforce Solutions.</p> <p>Seventeen Youth were assisted in improving their job readiness skills this reporting period.</p> <p>Three YOP/T4C youth will be participating in a six week, Summer Youth Employment Program offered by the Bennington J.O.B.S Program and the Vermont Department of Labor at Lake Paran.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|  | <p>3. Increased number young adults participating in (or who completed) educational programs....</p> <p>During this reporting period four youth attended Community High School of Vermont, and three youth attended the Tutorial Center. We have three that will graduate Community High School within the next reporting period with a high school diploma. YOP continues to go to Community High School of Vermont weekly; supporting youth to complete their high school requirements.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|  | <p>4. Increased number of young adults who have access to, and are using, a medical home....</p> <p>YOP supports youth in finding PCP’s or dentists in Bennington County when possible. For this review period it has been extremely difficult for youth to obtain the proper care as there are no local physicians or dentists taking state aided health insurance plans or new patients. In some cases, youth are being assisted by YOP to travel to New York or Massachusetts to receive these services.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

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|  | <p>YOP continues to provide assistance and support with obtaining health insurance through any available health services in the community and collaborates with Economic Services or the local Free Health Clinic when needed.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|  | <p>5. Increased number of young adults living in safe and stable housing....</p> <p>All YOP youth have the opportunity to engage in the Transitional Living Program at UCS. Youth who are experiencing homelessness and 'couch surfing' continues to be a county wide issue. YOP Peer Outreach Worker has taken an active role in attending the Teen Housing Committee and is networking with various community agencies to continue to address this issue.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|  | <p>6. Increased number of young adults who have caring &amp; supportive relationships....</p> <p>YOP continues to connect youth to natural supports that have been identified by the youth.</p> <p>YOP Youth Outreach Worker, Katrina Hollis was extremely successful reuniting one youth, Billy Jean, back to her mother that resides in another state. This encouraging relationship pursued for the youth has given her the motivation to continue to pursue her goals..</p> <p>T4C has increased its awareness of the importance of healthy relationships through offering educational and mentoring opportunities. Steve Breakstone, local Project Against Violent Encounters (PAVE) Youth Educator, attended two group sessions'. These sessions offer insight on different forms of violence that can occur in relationships, personal boundaries, personal choices and different types of healthy vs. unhealthy relationships.</p> <p>YOP youth continue to have access to the Personal Responsibility Education Program (P.R.E.P.) offered a few times a year at the agency.</p> |
|  | <p>7. Increase in young adults' strengths and protective factors....</p> <p>All UCS transitional programs believe in engaging youth to services that will best meet their needs and to community supports identified by the youth. YOP/T4C has increased their youth interactions by means of using mentoring between various youth and other UCS programs. Most of the T4C members act as mentors to younger youth and have gained much skill &amp; feeling of self worth thru this experience.</p> <p>Two youth gained increased leadership skills by attending two state meetings to be the 'voice' of their region.</p> <p>Four youth assisted Youth Outreach Worker by traveling to Manchester,</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

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|                                                                                | <p>Vermont to provide outreach and information about T4C and its leadership opportunities.</p> <p>8. Improved mental health for young adults.<br/> <b>Required activity:</b><br/> <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>YOP received three referrals from the Department of Corrections during this reporting and four youth who had court ordered drug and alcohol assessments to complete. YOP directed and supported the youth with this process so that it was not so overwhelming. All youth are assessed at intake to assist with having their needs met. The youth get connected regarding substance abuse issues, mental health needs, and any other need that is identified as result of the assessments. YOP has connected several young people with a history of complex trauma to appropriate mental health services. These services may include individual therapy or groups that are offered within the division. It is also hoped that if the young adult needs therapy or substance abuse treatment in the future, he or she will connect to the right people.</p>                                                      |
| <p><b>System of Care Infrastructure Indicators</b><br/>(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....<br/> None to report for this review period.</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....<br/> None to report at this time.</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 is consistent with the goals of the grant. Please enter the number of organizations and briefly describe the agreements....<br/> UCS/YOP did not enter into any formal MOU's/MOAs for this review period. However, the YIT services board has been collaborating throughout the year to develop housing options in the community.</p> <p><u>Types/Targets of Practice:</u> Programs/organizations/communities that implemented evidence-based mental health-related practices/activities as a</p> |

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|  | <p>result of the grant. Please enter the number of programs/organizations/communities and briefly describe the evidence-based practices....</p> <p>As previously mentioned YOP staff is certified and use the T.I.P.S. Model and offer the P.R.E.P classes throughout the year.</p> |
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**8. 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.

Nothing to report at this time.

**9. 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 Coordinator, Tom Campbell made the decision to retire from the agency after several years of service. The Coordinator position remains open at the time of this report.

Youth Outreach Worker, Katrina Hollis increased her responsibilities in the Intake Process, community advocacy, and completing the Common Study per the grant agreement.

**10. 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 continues to use Facebook as their primary means for outreach, networking, and state event reporting, with an average of one new 'like' per week and over 100 'friends' at the time of this report. YOP and T4C events and accomplishments are also added to the UCS Facebook

and website as well. We also use the Facebook page as a way to get information out to youth by sharing “advocacy tip of the day”

As previously mentioned, YOP/T4C promotes their events and programming opportunities via the local radio station, and also the UCS web page, UCS Facebook page, and have been in the local newspaper, the Bennington Banner several times.

Katrina collaborated with the Social Media Coordinator, Courtney Bridges, to link the T4C Facebook page with the State Level YIT Grant Facebook page to further promote all current and upcoming events.

## 5. Other Activities

Briefly describe other activities undertaken during the reporting period.

Teens for Change continues to be a foundation for all Bennington young adults, we’re seeing a steady increase of new members. Bringing a lot of new talent and great ideas.

## 6. Activities Planned for Next Reporting Period

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

If given the opportunity to receive extra funding, YOP/T4C will begin the process of creating the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Youth Leadership Summit in Bennington, Vermont. It is the intent to provide Bennington youth with a daylong event to engage in various youth driven leadership activities using the format of the YAVMC and to be completed by September 2014.

The format for the Summit will be developed by the T4C youth using the ‘How to Hold a Youth Summit Planning Guide’, published by the Search Institute. Desired outcomes the summit will include, but not limited to: community resources, the importance of ‘youth voice’ in their community, leadership development, mentoring, and other identified areas by the youth using random surveys developed, distributed, and collected by the T4C youth.

Proposed Budget: Estimate based on 100 youth participants & staffing

|                                                    |                         |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Promotional Materials                              | \$ 500.00               |
| Summit Day Material                                | \$ 3,000.00             |
| Food (lunch, snacks, drinks for staff & attendees) | \$ 1,000.00             |
| Stipends for mentor leaders for the day            | \$200.00                |
| Guest speaker identified by the youth              | \$300.00 - \$500.00     |
| End of Summit day activity                         | \$1,000.00              |
|                                                    |                         |
| Estimated total                                    | \$6,500.00 - \$6,700.00 |

T4C will continue to 'give back' by way of conducting community outreach and volunteer projects to various community members and business owners as a way of thanking them for their ongoing support of donations that have a direct impact on the success of all the T4C events.

YOP and T4C will continue to promote and utilize peer mentoring as a means to keep youth engaged and feel supported. Several T4C members will be mentors to children participating in Camp Be a Kid, run by the Youth & Family Service's staff.

YOP and T4C youth will create a community Halloween Event, and volunteer for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Thanks 4 Giving UCS sponsored community stakeholder dinner.

YOP and T4C will host a Fall car wash fund raiser with money going towards substance free events.

The YOP and T4C will connect with the local radio station four times this year to inform the community about upcoming community events and promote the good work of the T4C group.

T4C will promote its Facebook page and reach 200 likes in the next reporting period.

The T4C group and YOP will create an art display to be either a traveling exhibit or to be displayed at UCS using the Youth Photo Voice Project photos.

The YOP and T4C group will assist with a Cooking Class, potentially the Learning Kitchen curriculum and teach youth how to shop economically and cook healthy meals.

The Bennington YOP/T4C site has discussed having Mercedes Avila, CLC trainer, return in the Fall for a training due to a large number of new T4C members.

YOP/T4C will be doing more outreach to our local recovery center, Turning Point, to provide outreach to more young people and make sure they have the information needed to help in recovery and stabilization.

**DMH only:**

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date approved: \_\_\_\_\_