

**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 January 1, 2014 through July 31, 2014
6. Approved Project Period from July 1, 2012 through September 29, 2014
7. Author's Name and Telephone number: Katrina Hollis, (802) 4425491 Ext. 503
8. Date of report: July 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>Teens for Change (T4C) continue to develop a strong Young Adult Advisory Board. Summer attendance numbers were low again this year, but it is anticipated that the number of youth will increase significantly once the 2014-2015 school year begins. The beginning of this report period, January 2014, gave the T4C youth the opportunity to utilize their developing leadership skills by advocating for funds for sustaining the UCS YIT, program in Montpelier to the legislature. Thirteen (13) youth, 3 adult mentors, and UCS staff all spent the day in the State House and were given the opportunity to address the legislatures and the House Appropriations Budget Committee about the importance of sustaining their regions programs. All those that attended from the Bennington region displayed a unified group by all wearing their T4C shirts and badges. Two youth and two staff members were also given the opportunity to testify about why the region should be given sustainable funding.</p> <p>In April 2014, T4C volunteered for the UCS sponsored annual Big Brother &amp; Big Sister fundraiser “Bowl for Kids’ Sake”. T4C members and staff served food, ran an ice cream bar, and were responsible for set up and clean up during and after the event.</p> <p>Mid April, T4C youth and staff members were invited to the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Transition Fair sponsored by the Bennington County Core Transition Team to host an informational booth. The booth was staffed by youth with the intention that the youth would draw in their peers seeking information.</p> <p>Also in mid-April, several T4C members participated in Global Youth Service Day and volunteered their time to help prepare the garden for the growing season at the Morgan Spring Community Garden at our local Recreation Center. Among the many that showed up to participate T4C youth group had over 12 YA’s participating. Other community groups only brought a few youth to contribute to the day.</p> <p>On May 3, 2014 The Town of Bennington hosted the 2nd Annual Youth Appreciation Day which has been put in proclamation that it is a annual event to honor the youth and their services to the community. YOP and Transitional Services staff hosted a tie-dye booth at the Youth Appreciation Day providing youth of all ages with the opportunity to participate.</p> <p>To conclude April, with funding provided through a VFFCMH Youth Initiative Grant, T4C hosted an Anti-bullying Dance at the local Fraternal organization of the Moose Lodge, Family Center. Steve Breakstone, Project Against Violent Encounters (PAVE) Youth Educator, chaperoned, provided informational packets and presented an anti-bullying segment to the youth during the dance. Youth that attended were also given the opportunity to assemble empowerment bracelets and orange, anti-bullying colored t-shirts to write words of encouragement to later be hung at the Burgess</p>
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	<p>Road Youth Center.</p> <p>In May, 15-20 T4C members participated in the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual UCS Green Up Day. UCS provided the youth with Green Up Day shirts, bags and rubber gloves to clean up their designated area.</p> <p>On May 14<sup>th</sup> a group of youth attended the YIT sponsored Leadership Academy in Randolph, Vermont. The Academy provided the youth a daylong event that assisted them with further developing their leadership skills as well as being introduced to the potential of becoming Vermont's first Y.O.U.T.H. M.O.V.E. Chapter.</p> <p>In June T4C collaborated with Dan Turcotte, a local professional graphic designer, to develop a logo for the T4C Bennington region. They were able to work side by side with Dan to know the process of developing and finalizing their project of their personalized logo.</p>
	<p>2: Family/adult allies support young adults....</p> <p>Family members and adult allies' participation and volunteering continued to increase for this reporting period. T4C has the advantage of being able to host more events and activities due to the large number of community and family allies that provide anything from food donations, transportation, supplies, or any item needed to be successful.</p> <p>The new collaboration with graphic designer, Dan Turcotte and his partner Cathy Wilkinson has provided the T4C youth a unique opportunity to explore their artistic side and also seek mentor guidance when needed. The youth have developed a strong relationship with this new ally.</p>
	<p>3: Workers use caring practices known to be helpful for young adults and families.</p> <p><b>Required activity:</b>  <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 has a strong presence in the community and is known for providing strong advocacy skills for their youth stated goals. YOP staff continues to utilize the T.I.P.S. Model for case management and received referrals from various community stakeholders, such as Vermont Department of Corrections, Community &amp; Restorative Justice, Sunrise Family Resource Center and Easter Seals to mention a few</p>
	<p>4: System of Care partners gain cultural &amp; linguistic competence (CLC)....</p> <p>YOP/ T4C collaborated with Mercedes Avila for returning to Bennington to engage new staff and young adults to the CLC training. Mercedes is scheduled to come on August 15, 2014.</p>
	<p>5: Local communities (including young adults) change their perceptions of young adults and of mental health issues, reducing stigma....</p> <p>During our local Global Youth Service Day Celebration of 2013, The Town of</p>

	<p>Bennington inducted in May 2014 that the last Saturday in April each year forward, will be considered ‘Youth Appreciation Day.’ Youth Appreciation Day offered young people and their families an event in the Bennington area with an afternoon of fun, food, and enjoyable activities. It showcased their talents, and interests, and allowed local officials a chance to voice support for young members of the community. It was all free of charge because of people and community organizations collaborating. YOP and other UCS staff volunteered their time for the event by providing a very well received tie dye making booth. John Shanahan, of the Better Bennington Corporation, collaboratively works with T4C by bartering with the youth to wash empty store front windows in exchange for a free booth at the annual downtown event, Mayfest. The booth reduced stigma and raised awareness on Mental Health. Jeremy Andrews a young adult leader in T4c interviewed with Cat-TV about what T4C is and why is a valued program for the youth in the community.</p> <p>The YA leaders also engage with state officials, town officers, and VT Legislature advocating for themselves and T4C programs. They had the opportunity to do this by attending meetings with the state legislator and testifying in the state house advocating for sustainable funding to continue T4C/YOP. While doing this they get an insight on government policy and procedure. They also get the feeling that they are empowered as a young adult because they are being heard.</p> <p>6: Effectiveness of the Vermont System of Care for young adults with SED is evaluated.....</p> <p>Bennington YOP continued to be active in the Vermont Study until site was notified that data collection was no longer to occur through this study.</p> <p>7: The State supports and sustains regional services for young adults....</p> <p>Young Adult Coordinator, Matt Wolff continues to engage with YOP/T4C staff to support our areas of challenges.</p> <p>T4C continues to network with regions to collaborate and support them when they run into difficulties. Recently T4C went to Plymouth State Park to attend Springfield Regions, “Day at the Park”. T4C worked alongside Springfield Region to support them in the development of their Youth Advisory Board.</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>YOP has a continued strong presence and collaboration with the local Vermont Department of Corrections, Community &amp; Restorative Justice, and Public Defenders Office. This ongoing collaboration has generated a strong support network for the young adults.</p> <p>YOP strives to advocate for first time offenders with deferred sentences.</p>

	<p>YOP works closely with VCRHYP staff to identify youth who need addition support with sustaining housing.</p>
	<p>2. Increased number of young adults who are employed.... YOP staff refers youth to The Bennington J.O.B.S Program and The Vermont Department of Labor (VDOL) if youth show an interest in obtaining employment skills.</p>
	<p>3. Increased number young adults participating in (or who completed) educational programs.... During this reporting period two young adults attended the Community High School of Vermont and four young adults attended the Tutorial Center. We are connected with four young adults attending alternative programs due to behavioral issues that are in need of more support. YOP also supports two young adults attending the Opportunities Program at Sunrise Family Resource Center. YOP also has a presence at Mount Anthony Middle School, Mount Anthony High School, PLUS Program and V-19. Some of the program’s within High school are alternative school placements.</p>
	<p>4. Increased number of young adults who have access to, and are using, a medical home.... YOP continues to support youth with connecting to The Bennington Free Clinic when they don’t have a primary care provider. YOP staff provides assistance in obtaining health insurance, dental assistance, therapeutic services, and state assistance through Economic Services or BROC.</p>
	<p>5. Increased number of young adults living in safe and stable housing.... YOP continues to support youth by referring to the UCS Transitional Living Program, advocating attending Life Skills, and outreaching to Economic Services and Bennington Rutland Opportunity Council (BROC) when needed. YOP has supported three (3) youth to stable family housing and two (2) into independent living. Supported one youth to connecting with Family Emergency Services (FES) for support with emergency housing. Youth were also encouraged to connect with The Bennington Coalition for the Homeless. YOP consistently supports connecting young adults with families, grandparents and all caregivers. (Natural Family Allies)</p>
	<p>6. Increased number of young adults who have caring &amp; supportive relationships....  YOP consistently connects youth with parents, grandparents, and other caring adults. UCS / YFS Division has increased its mission of using mentoring as a means of developing caring and supportive relationships amongst the young adults. Many young people are able to connect with community members through their fundraising efforts or events. Several young people have developed</p>

	<p>new relationships through this process and are starting to feel a better connection to their community.</p>
	<p>7. Increase in young adults’ strengths and protective factors....</p> <p>YOP and T4C continue to focus on increasing youth’s strengths and protective factors by providing participating youth with opportunities of being mentors or being mentored, organizing community events and serving as role models for other youth, volunteering.</p> <p>YOP continues to utilize Steve Breakstone, PAVE Youth Educator, and enroll youth in the UCS offered Personal Responsibility Education Program (P.R.E.P) when appropriate.</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>YOP receives referrals from the States Attorney’s office and Department of Probation &amp; Parole. During this reporting period 3 youth had court ordered drug and alcohol assessments that they completed with YOP supports.</p> <p>YOP staff supports youth through the process of completing court ordered assessments so it’s easier for youth to navigate.</p> <p>4 youth were connected to appropriate mental health services, which included individual therapy or substance abuse treatment.</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....</p> <p>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....</p> <p>Policy changes were made in order to hire young adult workers with no employment references or experience to offer them opportunities to gain experience and knowledge.</p> <p>YOP hired Matthew Marks as a Youth Outreach Workers and to assist with the development of T4C Advisory Board.</p> <p>Kiana Pierce, one of the original T4c members was hired to help develop an upcoming Youth Summit to be hosted UCS/YOP</p> <p><u>Partnership/Collaboration:</u> Organizations that entered into formal written</p>

	<p>inter/intra-organizational agreements (e.g., MOUs/MOAs) to improve mental health-related practices/activities that re consistent with the goals of the grant. Please enter the number of organizations and briefly describe the agreements.... None to report 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.... 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. All newly hired transition staff is required to attend Tips training to become certified.</p>

**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 hired Matthew Marks and Kiana Pierce as a Youth Outreach Workers  
**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 maintain their Facebook page which continues to thrive with currently more than 300 'likes'. The local newspaper and the UCS website promote events and activities performed by T4C to update the community through various social media networks. They also use flyers and ads to advertise their events and upcoming activities.

Mayfest interview from T4C can be found on T4C Facebook page or UCS website

## 5. Other Activities

Briefly describe other activities undertaken during the reporting period.  
YOP continued to provide other regions with input on how to grow their youth involvement.  
Examples of this work are as follows:

Connected with Lynne Klamm, AHS Field Director, for Rutland/Addison County and supported them with solutions to engage young adults getting involved with their Creative Workforce Solutions subcommittee.

Middlebury, Youth Advisor, Samara Coble, traveled to Bennington for insight on the youth engagement and connected with outreach worker Katrina Hollis. Samara visited our region seeking a better understanding of the role, how best to work with youth and how to encourage them to create community activities.

Our T4C participants are willing to continue to give their input and have young adults from other regions join in our community work.

## 6. Activities Planned for Next Reporting Period

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

July 16<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup>. 10 members from Bennington, Vermont will attend the Georgetown National Training Institute in Washington D.C. Included are the director of Youth & Family Services Lorna Mattern, YOP staff Katrina Hollis and Kiana Pierce, Transitional Services Manager, Jenn Pyne, 4 T4C members and two parents.

Continuous coordination with the T4C Youth Summit planning committee and YOW Kiana to plan and coordinate the first Bennington Youth Summit.

August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014 T4C will have a booth at the UCS Health and Safety Fair. The booth will consist of making empowerment bracelets and distribution of anti-depression kits.

October, 2014 T4C will attend Comstock Prison for an educational opportunity to participate in the youth assistance program at Great Meadows Correction Facility.

T4C is hosting an adventure group for young adults involved with UCS. These activities include: ropes course/zip lining at Timberquest at Magic Mountain, a Sip& Swirl session facilitated by Dan Turcotte a local graphic designer, hiking , camping and deep sea fishing.

T4C participates for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in the Annual UCS Barn Sale Fundraiser. T4C fundraises by setting up a refreshment booth for attendees to buy snacks and warm beverages.

T4C members will be attending a Peer Leadership Weekend in September, 2014, learning teambuilding skills, leadership development.



T4C will be volunteering at the 4th Annual Thanks for Giving Luncheon for community stakeholders.

T4C youth will be implementing a “WE Fit IN Program” working with UCS staff; this program will give youth tools for fun ways to explore exercising and wellness.

T4C group will be touring Cat TV; the group has some ideas for a local T4C show.

***DMH only:***

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

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