

## YIT PROGRAM PROGRESS REPORT

1. Grant Number:
2. Grantee Name and Address: United Counseling Service  
PO Box 588  
Bennington, VT 05201
3. Telephone Number: 442-5491
4. Project Title: Youth Outreach Program
5. Period of Performance from January 2011 through June 30, 2011
6. Approved Project Period from through
7. Author's Name and Telephone number: Lorna Mattern, 442-5491
8. Date of report: July 20, 2011
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.

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

1. one for the time period from July 1 – December 31, 2011 (due by January 31, 2012), and
2. one for the period from January 1 – June 30, 2012 (due by July 30, 2012).

### **Report Contents**

<b>1. Major Activities and Accomplishments During this Period</b>
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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.]***

The Youth Outreach Program (YOP) has connected with at least 18 youth 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.

<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></p> <p><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) is our advisory group that is youth led and meets weekly to discuss issues in the community to be addressed and plan positive youth activities. There are typically 10 to 12 participants each week and the number continues to grow. The young people planned most of the activities described in this report.</p> <p>T4C participants attended a town meeting hosted by Bernie Sanders who was discussing how we can rebuild the middle class and prevent devastating cuts in federal programs that benefit our working families. T4C also attended a forum hosted by the Southshire Partnership for a Healthy Community regarding the use of medical marijuana. Guests at the meeting included Bennington Chief Doucette and Senator Dick Sears, The discussion centered on concerns as a young adult movement re: the pros and cons of the issue of medical marijuana. T4C actively participated and asked questions that helped them understand the purpose of medical marijuana. The goal of participating in the meetings was to help the young people learn about leadership, community, and Civil responsibility.</p> <p>Young Adult Voice Movement Conference was held on May 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. The Bennington contingent consisted of Katrina and 4 youth. Katrina had the honor of being presented with the first ever Young Adult Leadership Award presented by the state YIT team. Katrina was truly honored by the award. The young adults from Bennington were so proud of their “leader”.</p> <hr/> <p>2: Family/adult allies support young adults....</p> <p>We honored the “volunteer of the year” which was awarded to Ana S. a parent of a teen who is an active member of T4C. Ana has volunteered to help at every event in the last year, from the end of summer bash, to the holiday party, to the winter bash; we can always rely on Ana. She and her daughter also kicked off the UCS staff recognition luncheon this year as well.</p> <p>Outreach to the Southshire Partnership for a Healthy Community has resulted in a significant collaboration with YOP. Southshire has become an ally of Youth Outreach and the young people it serves. Several opportunities were</p>
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	<p>made available through this collaboration.</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>The Youth Outreach Program staff, along with JOBS and Transitional Living Program staff participated in the TIPS model training in June. The TIPS Model informed case management supports provided ensures that the youth actively participate in planning their future.</p> <p>Case management services are provided to young people to help them get connected with on-going support service and to introduce them to the wide range of supports available in the community. Staff have strong relationships with a wide variety of service providers as well as community members in general.</p>
	<p>4: System of Care partners gain cultural &amp; linguistic competence (CLC)....</p>
	<p>5: Local communities (including young adults) change their perceptions of young adults and of mental health issues, reducing stigma....</p> <p>T4C planned and hosted its first community recognition luncheon. The luncheon recognized all the business that donated to our events this past year. There were 41 businesses that were recognized for their generosity. Not all were able to attend, but those that did were honored with a plaque as a special thanks for their donations. As a surprise to the T4C group we gave all the T4C youth a plaque for all their hard work and dedication. The Teens for Change participants personally delivered the plaques to the businesses that were not able to attend the luncheon. The local businesses were really impressed. Many stated that they could not ever remember being honored by a youth group for their donating gifts or money to an event. The next time you wander around Bennington, pay close attention to the businesses you enter, you will most likely see the plaques hung up on the walls.</p> <p>T4C worked with the Southshire Partnership for a Healthy Community and engaged in a “Sticker Shock” Campaign. The T4C group went to local stores who sold alcohol and put stickers on alcoholic beverages which stated the offense for serving minors alcohol. The T4C group learned to pass this information to other teens in the community regarding people buying alcohol for underage youth.</p> <p>This February the T4C group hosted a Winter Bash at the Moose Lodge. There was a D.J., food, prizes, and X Box Kinect. Aarons Rental donated a 52 inch T.V. so the young people could play the X Box Kinect and others could cheer them on. There were more than 50 community youth at the</p>

	<p>event. There were many new faces at the event and a fairly diverse group of young people. One particular attendee that seems to stick out in everyone's mind was a young adult who was in a wheel chair who danced the night away. The heartwarming part of this was that several youth engaged with her and danced with her throughout the event. The total cost of the event cost less than \$300.00 due to the on-going generosity of our local businesses. Businesses donated food, drinks, prizes, and the Moose Lodge donated their space and staff for clean up.</p>
	<p>6: Effectiveness of the Vermont System of Care for young adults with SED is evaluated.....UCS and the YOP are active participants in the Vermont Study.</p>
	<p>7: The State supports and sustains regional services for young adults....</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).  <b>Required activity:</b>  <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 has made significant connections with Probation and Parole who often refer first time offenders and those on deferred sentences. It is often difficult for young people to successfully complete deferred sentences without on-going supports. YOP has worked with several young people who have been able to successfully complete deferred sentences. One youth has completed his sentence in May and his charge will be erased off of his record, and another youth completes his deferred in 2 weeks. The third youth completed her deferred sentence during this review period. YOP staff is tracking numbers of referrals coming in on deferred who have successfully completed requirements and then want to compare that to the state average as a way to measure effectiveness of YOP. One of the goals of the program is to increase the success rate of young people completing their deferred sentencing requirements.</p> <p>On-going outreach to Turning Point, the local recovery center, continues to be an important way to engage young people struggling with recovery issues. Staff is aware of staff turnover within programs and makes an effort to connect with new leadership such as the new director at Turning Point.</p>

	<p>Increased number of young adults who are employed.... Employment opportunities were made possible through a connection with the Department of Labor and the Bennington JOBS Program at UCS. One particular situation of note is the collaboration between YOP, JOBS, and Vt Green to create support and funding for a young man to start a lawn care business. The funds were used to purchase lawn care equipment, insurance, business cards, clothing, and advertising. Landscaping had been an interest for him and there were no job opportunities so he worked with his YOP staff to connect with JOBS and Green who supported him in developing his own business. The young man felt he was heard by his workers and supported to take a risk on an opportunity.</p> <p>In June, 2010, the Youth Outreach Worker, Katrina Hollis worked with the local parent child center (Sunrise) and the Department of Labor to develop a summer work program which was funded through Summer Youth Employment Funds. This year, the funds were not available but Katrina worked with the local parent child center (Sunrise) and the Department of Labor to continue the summer work program. The intent of the work program is to provide young people with the opportunity to learn about their community and develop leadership and jobs skills. Five young women are participating in the summer work experience which includes visiting local resources and based on those visits, identify a gap or issue in the community, facilitate a focus group and plan an activity to address the gap identified through the resource visits and focus group. We will be able to report on the program in the next reporting period.</p> <p>2. Increased number young adults participating in (or who completed) educational programs....  YOP helps young people connect with the Tutorial Center and the Community High School of Vermont and as a result 1 participant earned his GED and became the first in his family to obtain his high school diploma. The transition programs staff (YOP, JOBS, and TLP) hosted a graduation party for him and his family and it was a great success. The young man was worried that his family would not show to the party since they did not value his diploma and due to on-going family issues. He was rather pleased to see that more than 30 people came to help him celebrate. Another youth is scheduled to receive his diploma by the end of the summer.</p> <p>4. Increased number of young adults who have access to, and are using, a medical home....  YOP provides assistance with obtaining health insurance and supports through Economic Services and helps make health care connections. This has proved rather challenging as the PCP options in our area are limited</p> <p>5. Increased number of young adults living in safe and stable housing.... The Youth Service Council worked on its primary goal of focusing its energy on</p>
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	<p>safe and affordable housing options and issues for pregnant and parenting young women. Several meetings of the YSC were held with additional members from the housing community in order to explore options for housing. Folks who attended the meeting included Field Services, Regional Affordable Housing, Merchants Bank President, and Bennington Housing Authority. Several members volunteered to look into suggestions that were made and to report back to the group. Some of the follow up includes visiting other programs around the state that have successful programming for this population of youth.</p> <p>In addition to these efforts, the transition services through UCS are all connected and youth who are experiencing housing issues are seamlessly referred to the Transitional Living Program.</p>
	<p>6. Increased number of young adults who have caring &amp; supportive relationships....</p> <p>It is difficult to choose examples and activities that were created as a way to increase caring and supportive relationships as most of the activities are created with this in mind. Young people in the program have had the opportunity to develop positive relationships with peers, some for the first time in their lives. One particular young man who was living on his own and felt very much alone was excited to share with the group that he now had 10 contacts in his phone! Old friends have reconnected and new friendships have been made. They have been able to have consistent relationships and contact with positive adults many who do not work for the agency rather those who are community members.</p>
	<p>7. Increase in young adults' strengths and protective factors...</p> <p>The T4C group went on a peer leadership retreat that was fully funded by the Southshire Partnership for a Healthy Community. The retreat was held at the Sargent Center in Hancock, New Hampshire. There were 17 young people and 3 chaperones who attended. Justin, a long time T4C member participated as an intern chaperone. The group had an event planning contest and each group won a \$100.00 to be used towards their next event. The participants at the leadership retreat learned team building skills through adventure based programming such as high and low ropes courses. The team learned to rely on each other and came away from the experience with a special closeness and respect for each other.</p>
	<p>8. Improved mental health for young adults.</p> <p><b>Required activity:</b></p> <p><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>Staying involved with the YOP is an important factor in young people's success. Justin Dickinson wanted to state why the YOP was so important in</p>

	<p>his life and wanted us to share his accomplishments with everyone:</p> <p><i>My name is Justin Dickinson. I'm 19 years old, on probation for things I did when I was 17 and I'm a recovering drug/alcohol addict. I was connected to the YOP when I was 18 years old. I got connected through Family Emergency Services at UCS and met Tom soup Campbell. I had a great connection with Tom from the start. He assisted me to get to all my appointments and connected me to other services, such as Vocational Rehabilitation, Dept.of Labor and other great resources that could help me. Being connected to the YOP with their support I was able to complete a residential alcohol and drug rehab program. Even after all that I also received my G.E.D. with the YOP support. I now help run the "Teens for Change group with Katrina Hollis and co-facilitate the summer "Youth Outreach Program" with Katrina collaborating with the Sunrise Family Resource Center a local parent child center. I have become a great support for other youth in the community and people around me every day. All this could not have been possible without the help from the YOP workers. They showed me that anything is possible if you put your mind to it and there is always going to be someone there when you need help. The help will always be there as long as you do your part too. One last thing that I would like to say: This is a great program that is run by great people and I would recommend anyone that needs help to the YOP.</i></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><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><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.... The Youth Service Council continues to meet regularly to discuss transition age youth issues in the community. The meetings have been well attended by local partners who include Sunrise, CRJ, DOL, and Voc Rehab. For the second year, we entered into an informal partnership with Sunrise to offer the Community Action Work experience again this summer.</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</p>

	<p>practices.... The transition program staff participated in the 2 day TIPS model training offered in June this year. The 6 staff that were trained learned a lot from the 2 days and it helped reinforce their current practice of engagement of transition age youth. The training also reminded staff of the importance of youth involvement in “adult” organizations and groups. As a result, we will work to increase the Youth Service Council membership to include 50% young adults in the coming year.</p>
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**3. 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.

Connecting young people to PCP has been a significant issue. In recent months, a young man was working to find a PCP and he had to call more than 10 medical offices before he finally found a PCP in New York who would take him on as a new patient. He is fortunate that he has transportation to access out of state recourses. These situations are not unusual. The Bennington Banner recently reported the lack of available PCP’s as a significant problem for local folks. It will be difficult for Bennington YOP to bend the curve on emergency use and increase access to a medical home when there are few, if any PCP’s available to take new patients.

**4. 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.

Justin Dickinson Youth Outreach Program participant has been working this summer in a WIA placement with the YOP. Justin is co-facilitating the summer work experience with Katrina through a placement with DOL. Justin works approximately 20 hours a week and has become an important member of the YOP team. We are hoping that Justin can continue working with UCS in some capacity after the WIA funds end. Justin has had experience with working with children through the TLP program. Justin provided daycare for parents participating in TLP classes.

**5. 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.

The Youth Outreach Worker and Coordinator have worked with the local radio station to promote the program and events.

We continue to inform the Bennington Banner of events such as the business appreciation luncheon, but they have not followed up well. A picture did appear in the Banner of T4C youth washing windows for the area businesses who have donated but that was due to Tom Campbell, YOP coordinator literally going up to the Banner office to tell them there were “kids outside doing good things in their community and you might want to come and take a picture”. We will need to explore other print media that can be accessed.

The program uses the UCS Face book page to promote activities and inform the community of some of the exciting things happening. A T4C face book page will be developed in the next review period as a way of expanding dissemination efforts. We have used flyers and ads in the paper to attract young people to events, but find that Face book is the most effective media.

The T4C crew staffed a booth at Bennington’s annual Mayfest. T4C raffled off a family 4-pack season passes to Six Flags Amusement Pack as a way to raise awareness of the group and raise funds for future events.

T4C and transition program staff participated in the annual Transition Fair at the High School this April 5, 2011. The Fair helped the young people and staff outreach to students who may need access to services and supports. Students at the “Transition Fair” stated they had friends who were on the edge of getting kicked out of school and would pass the information along to them.

## **5. Other Activities**

Briefly describe other activities undertaken during the reporting period.

YOP staff and T4C participants have been asked by other regions to provide input on how to “grow” their youth involvement. One team of staff and young people joined the Bennington crew for an afternoon and they all seemed to have a great time. Bennington T4C would love to continue to connect with other young people around the state.

We continue to provide Trac phones to those young people who are not able to be reached or do not have a stable living environment. The ability to be able to provide access to communication has allowed the young people to stay connected with service and to be able to get connected with other supports and actively look for employment.

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

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

The Youth Outreach Summer work program will be wrapping up at the end of the summer. The young people participating will be reporting out on their experiences this summer, what they learned and how it affected them. They will also report out their findings of their focus group and the gap(s) that were identified and their recommendations on how to fill the gap. Last year's group identified a lack of substance free activities for youth and so they planned and hosted an "end of summer bash" at a local park. The summer work crew will report out their findings at an August 11<sup>th</sup> Sunrise Picnic.

T4C is going to create a Face book page with Courtney Bridges this August 2011 Courtney will be working with youth and staff to develop a T4C Face book page and identify ways to use it to promote youth voice in the community. The youth are looking forward to building this and use it as a way to connect with more youth and to help the adults in the community understand what they are all about.

The next event will be held sometime in September. The T4C will use the \$300.00 won at the Peer Leadership Retreat to plan and host a community youth event. The young people are looking to host an open Mic night. They have been in contact with Mic Criminals who performed at the Young Adult Voice Movement Conference and who are willing and excited to come to Bennington for a show. The group is still in the exploring stage, but this is what we are expecting will be the next event.

T4C is "giving back" to our community businesses this summer. The youth are washing windows of the local business that donated money and food to our T4C events this past year. The businesses have been incredibly surprised and grateful for the "give back". The young people feel good about their volunteerism and they were equally as surprised and grateful when the businesses would give them drinks, ice cream, or pizza (depending on the business) as a thank you for their hard work. The next planned "give back" is a car wash at the local Sheriff's Departments and Police Departments. The youth will wash patrol cars and connect with law enforcement in a positive way. This may be one of the few positive experiences the youth have with law enforcement. The young people have reported getting a lot out of this experience. They have talked about how it feels to give back to their community and to feel as if they are appreciated by those who seem to scoff at them in the past. They are learning good citizenship and knowing what it feels like to be a part of one's community. This process has given them a sense of belonging and self worth.

**DMH only:**

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

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

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

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

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