

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, 2012 through June 30, 2012
6. Approved Project Period from January 1, 2012 through June 30, 2012
7. Author's Name and Telephone number: Tom Campbell and Katrina Hollis, (802) 447-8270
8. Date of report: July 31, 2012
9. Comments (if any):

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, 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

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 46 youth in almost 2 ½ 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.

	<p>1: Young adult (YA) leadership is developed in VT.</p> <p>Required activity: <i>Operate in accordance with continuing input from key stakeholders (including youth and family members) within the regional systems of care....</i></p> <p>Bennington’s Young Adult Advisory Board known as “Teens for Change”, (T4C), continues to meet weekly to discuss issues in the community to be addressed and plan positive youth activities. There are typically 18 youth who attend per week and currently 45 YA are participants’ in the T4C group.</p> <p>During this reporting period, T4C worked diligently to create more events for young adults in our community. The first event T4C hosted was a fundraiser at McDonalds on February 13, 2012. The fundraising event was filled with activities and fun including face painting, a coin drop, and a bake sale. All the baked items were made and donated by family allies. The youth who participated in the fundraiser were able to “work” at McDonalds for the night. The young people staffed the register, the drive up window and made food as part of the experience. The event helped continue teaching the youth how to raise funds on their own, connect with the community, and help break down barriers between at-risk youth and the community.</p> <p>“Teens for Change” has created a group that comes together to create events which are free to community youth. The fund raiser allowed the youth to plan their second successful community dance. The dance event on February 23, 2012, was held at the Moose Family Center and included a DJ, food and drinks and many give away prizes. T4C were able to create a free, substance free event for more than 65 youth for under \$300.00 due to their hard work in obtaining donations from area businesses. Most importantly, they walk away with some of their best memories and a sense of accomplishment.</p> <p>Teens for Change assisted with the Vermont Coalition of Runaway and Homeless Youth Program, (VCRHYP), High-Low Project. The project is a set of pictures with visual and voice autobiographies of Vermont teens that have faced various life hardships and barriers. The project photographer, Ned Castle, collaborated with youth living in difficult circumstances across Vermont to re-enact and photograph their own choice of a high and low moment from their lives. The High Low project was displayed in Bennington in February this year. Katrina Hollis, Youth Outreach Worker, created opportunities for the T4C group to see the exhibit and facilitated discussions about it and gave support to those who needed it. Donations of toiletry items for homeless youth were gladly accepted at the exhibit, and the T4C youth put together toiletry bags for any youth who may need it.</p>
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T4C attended the Vermont Council on Rural Development, Bennington Community Visit, on March 15, 2012. The purpose of the forum was to join our neighbors, stakeholders, businesses and youth to discuss the community wide vision for Bennington. The forum was to be the first step in the process of building priorities and addressing critically important challenges before the community. The T4C group attended the session that was directed for youth. at this forum to build a Bennington Community Center, improve the deteriorating Recreation Center, build a Bennington Skate Park, Develop a Bennington Vision Statement, develop a positive town image, collaborate to address poverty & build a poverty working group, make downtown Bennington a destination, and build a new Bennington Town Green. The youth were able to observe the process as well as to participate in it. The youth were disappointed that there were very few youth in attendance other than themselves.

Four members of the T4C group and one YOP participant attended the annual Youth in Transition state team visit. The purpose of the state team visit is to evaluate the YIT grant implementation and give/get feedback. The youth leadership present at the visit allowed the state to hear from our young adults firsthand about all the great events they have conducted, services they have received and the vast amount of community service that the T4C group has performed.

T4C applied for and was awarded a Stewarts holiday grant. The \$300.00 grant award will be used to help support the next substance free event to be planned by T4C.

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

We continue to rely on family/adult allies to chaperone events and they continue to come through for the youth.

T4C has seen a steady increase in participation over the past 6 months and transportation to and from group had become a significant problem. Transportation to and from the group has become less of a issue due to dedicated parents of T4C participants who now volunteer almost every week to transport youth. Other examples of adult allies support young adults are: Family and adult allies baked cookies, cakes, and brownies to sell at the McDonald's fundraiser and they helped staff the tables and supervise activities.

An adult ally in the community who plays for the Southern Vermont Storm Football team, which is a not for profit semi pro team, consistently attends and chaperones events such as the Moose dance in February.

At a recent event a parent ally took charge of our 50/50 raffle to help us

	<p>continue to raise funds (and friends) for ongoing T4C events.</p> <p>These are just a few examples of how our adult allies are engaging to support our area youth.</p>
	<p>3: Workers use caring practices known to be helpful for young adults and families.</p> <p>Required activity: <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 advocated with the Vermont Department of Labor (VTDOL), Bennington JOBS, and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) to provide a variety of cross system opportunities depending upon the goal of the youth. YOP continues to collaborate with Sunrise Family Resource Center and Center For Restorative Justice (CRJ). YOP continues to work together to assist young adults in completing their Probation Reparative Board contract successfully and Diversion Board contracts derived by CRJ. The collaboration helps bring youth into the system of care and decreases the possibility of getting entrenched in the adult probation system. Many youth have been able to successfully complete requirements and not move deeper into the justice system.</p> <p>All young adults are offered case management and assistance in developing and reaching their short term and long term goals. The JOBS and Transitional Living Programs are housed in the same building with YOP and T4C to continue to offer a seamless transition. We have found that bringing the programs together under one roof and one manager has allowed for an efficient and effective system of care for transition age youth.</p>
	<p>4: System of Care partners gains cultural & linguistic competence (CLC)....</p> <p>Mercedes Avila, Cultural Linguistic Competency Coordinator came to UCS in December 2011 and presented the Cultural and Linguistic Competency training on 4 different occasions. All staff from the Children’s Services Division attended the training.</p> <p>UCS asked Mercedes for help in enhancing its Diversity Program. Mercedes has been consulting with Human Resources over the past 6 months and there is a plan to continue working with her in the coming months. It is of particular interest that Mercedes pointed out that the Bridges out of Poverty training that UCS has been providing to all staff has come under fire in recent years. We look forward to continuing to explore recommendations in the next review period.</p>
	<p>5: Local communities (including young adults) change their perceptions of young adults and of mental health issues, reducing stigma....</p>

	<p>In the Summer of 2011, T4C began to 'give back' by means of community service by offering to wash the windows of the local businesses that have donated to our T4C events. Performing this community service, our youth and businesses built stronger relationships and lead to the representative from the Better Bennington Corporation, John Shannahan, offering the T4C a free booth in this year's May Fest (it usually cost \$150.00).</p> <p>This is the 3rd year T4C hosted a booth at May Fest. May Fest is a great way to show the community how wonderful the youth and young adults are and what they are capable of. The T4C group had 4 raffles and earned money for events. The items raffled off were mostly from donations to the T4C group. The raffles included car wash supplies, barbeque supplies, fishing gear and school supplies. T4C informed the community about the services available to transition youth and the positive events and volunteering in their community. The money earned from the raffles will go towards substance free events.</p> <p>The youth elected to continue to give back this summer by washing windows again. They also decided to disinfect the town's playground equipment as well.</p>
	<p>6: Effectiveness of the Vermont System of Care for young adults with SED is evaluated....</p> <p>UCS and YOP are active participants in the Vermont Common Study, Vermont Study and the National Study. YOP is dedicated to helping young adults fill out forms and complete the follow up forms for the Common Study. As of May 2012, Tom Campbell has helped to enroll 34 YA in the Vermont Common Study, 13 YA in the Vermont Study and 13 YA in the National Study. YOP wants services and supports for the young adults and their families to improve.</p>
	<p>7: The State supports and sustains regional services for young adults....</p> <p>YOP and T4C meet with Matt Wolff, Young Adult Coordinator and Courtney Bridges for social networking for YA as needed. Matt and Courtney are both willing to meet and are helpful to the local YIT. The T4C group was recently recognized at the Young Adult Voice Movement Conference for winning a statewide contest and received \$100.00 for their efforts in posting the most pictures on the YIT facebook page.</p>
<p>Desired outcomes for young adults of transition-age</p>	<p>1. Decreased number of young adults involved in the corrections system (including an increase in the number who are free of incarceration). Required activity: <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</i></p>

justice systems....

YOP continues to make a strong connection with the Department of Probation and Parole. Referrals continue to be forwarded to YOP for first time offenders and YA with deferred sentences. Many young adults working with YOP completed their deferred sentences successfully. One goal for YOP is to work with more YA on deferred sentences to increase over-all completion rates. In addition to the successful completions of deferred sentences, 2 YA completed their probation conditions with the support of YOP and other adult allies. We will continue to strive to increase the number of youth who complete their conditions successfully in order to not get further entrenched in the probation and parole system

Tom Campbell, coordinator, continues to be a member of CRJ Diversion Board as another way to support and connect with YA who are 1st time offenders.

YOP is receiving referrals for what is called “probation call ins”. YOP connects with YA that are “calling in” with updates on conditions, which are sometimes court ordered, to their probation officer. Some of the YA are 1st time offenders and YOP can speed up the process with the YA by explaining how important it is to complete conditions as soon as possible and not put these on the back burner. When conditions are not completed by the date set in court it can result in an extension of the probation period end date.

YOP has increased its collaboration with the Public Defender’s Office as a source for youth referrals. YOP is present in the adult criminal court and intercepts YA that want to engage in the YOP at time of court. This has proved to be a valuable resource to the court but more importantly to the young people involved. YOP is starting to have a regular presence in Juvenile Court as well.

2. Increased number of young adults who are employed....

The YOP coordinator almost always makes a referral to the Bennington JOBS Program and Vermont Department of Labor once a young person expresses interest in employment. Several young people have been assisted in improving their job readiness skills.

In June, 2012 the Bennington JOBS staff collaborated with the Vermont Department of Labor and the Workforce Investment Act (W.I.A.) to develop a summer work program. Young adult participants were referred from Department of Corrections, Mount Anthony Union High School, Youth Outreach Program and Teens for Change.

The plan involves leading a group of 10 youth to work at Lake Paran a local community not for profit park, as maintenance, grounds, cleaning, and concessions crew. Young people are to learn basic work skills and

	<p>responsibilities. At the end of the 8 week Work Investment Act work program the young adults will have self-confidence, get closer to self-reliance and feel good about their accomplishments. We will report out on this in next progress report.</p> <p>The Summer Youth Employment Program, Community Action which is a collaboration with Sunrise Family Resource Center, DOL, UCS will have 5 YA participants this year. The Leadership Skill Building work experience is to identify community resources to explore, develop questions, set up an experience with the community resource and then write about it. Based on their experience, they develop a community action plan to fill a gap in service and then share that action plan with community. One young woman who participated in the Community Action Work experience last year will be a co-facilitator of the group. Details of the SYEP will be included in the next progress report.</p>
	<p>3. Increased number young adults participating in (or who completed) educational programs....</p> <p>During this reporting period 4 YA engaged in post secondary education, three YA attended the Community High School of Vermont, and one YA is at the Tutorial Center. We are currently connecting with 2 YA at the High School who were not attending school regularly prior to connecting with YOP. The YOP supports the YA so that their chances of receiving a high school diploma are increased. YOP goes to the Community High School of Vermont on weekly basis as a way to connect with and encourage the youth to continue attending.</p> <p>Many young people from YOP and T4C attended this year's Young Adult Voice Movement Conference. The young people enjoyed attending the conference and different workshops and trainings. They reported that they learned a lot and many were pleasantly surprised that they enjoyed educational programs.</p>
	<p>4. Increased number of young adults who have access to, and are using, a medical home....</p> <p>YOP has connected YA with the Bennington Free Clinic when they do not have a PCP at intake. These youth no longer use the Emergency Room when they need medical care. It is very challenging for YA to find a PCP in our area as many of the PCP's in Bennington County are not currently taking Medicaid or VHAP. The Bennington Free Clinic is often the best option for many young people.</p> <p>YOP provides assistance with obtaining health insurance through Economic Services.</p>
	<p>5. Increased number of young adults living in safe and stable housing....</p> <p>Many YOP participants are referred to the Transitional Living Program (TLP).</p>

	<p>TLP works on budgeting skills, apartment hunting, community resources and basic life skills. TLP can also provide financial assistance to those that are in need and can provide supports for up to 18 months after a youth has transitioned into independence. One YOP participant made a strong connection with TLP and the Bennington JOBS program and was able to buy his own trailer because of skills learned with both programs. During this period YOP collaborated with Family Emergency Services (FES) to support 2 YA with temporary housing. One of those young adults is now in stable housing in his own apartment.</p>
	<p>6. Increased number of young adults who have caring & supportive relationships....</p> <p>YOP consistently connects young adults with parents, grandparents, and other caring adults. Many young people are able to connect with community members through their fund raising efforts or events. Several young people have developed new relationships through this process and are starting to feel a better connection to their community.</p> <p>YA connect with peers through the variety of groups and classes that are offered through TLP, JOBS, and other programs. For instance, several T4C participants were involved in a cooking class this March 2012 and developed their own cookbook. The cookbook will be for sale and the proceeds will be used to offer another cooking class. Cooking class participants developed supportive relationships throughout the class and continue now.</p> <p>UCS offered PREP (Personal Responsibility Education) which teaches young people about healthy and supportive relationships. There were 14 youth between 15 and 19 years old who attended the 10 week class.</p> <p>The T4C group is all about making connections and learning about and being in caring and supportive relationships. There are about 45 members of the T4C group and that has steadily increased from its inception.</p>
	<p>7. Increase in young adults' strengths and protective factors....</p> <p>Everything T4C does is connected to increasing strengths and protective factors. Young people in T4C have acted as mentors, organized fundraisers; serve as leaders, and role models. They have been directly affected by their positive actions by seeing events that are successfully attended by 60 or more youth, they have witnessed their community coming together for youth either through volunteering or donating, and they have experienced the power of a mentoring relationship.</p> <p>During this reporting period T4C and YOP participated in a 10 week group, PREP, a federally funded program to teach about abstinence, contraception, pregnancy prevention, STD/STI's & healthy relationships. PREP is an evidence based program.</p>

	<p>The T4C group volunteered at the Bowl for Kids Sake for Big Brother Big Sister fundraiser for UCS in April. T4C members served food and supported and directed people throughout the event. They also cleaned up between waves of bowlers and stayed to the end of the event to help clean the bowling lanes. More than 10 T4C participants rotated throughout the day to cover the entire 9 hour event.</p> <p>On May 3, 2012 The T4C group participated in our annual Green Up Day to support keeping our community clean. T4C group did an excellent job with picking up garbage and filling up many bags to bring to the dump. They also made the front page of the paper again!</p> <p>8. Improved mental health for young adults. Required activity: <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 Department of Probation and during this reporting period 3 YA had court ordered drug and alcohol assessments to complete. YOP directed and supported the YA with this process so that it was not so overwhelming. The youth get connected regarding substance abuse issues and then it often leads to ongoing counseling for mental health related issues. 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. 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>System of Care Infrastructure Indicators (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>Katrina Hollis and Linda Dean-Farrar, Director of Sunrise Family Resource Center co-facilitated a workshop at the annual Parent Child Center conference about the Spectrum of Attitudes. Designed by William Lofquist in the early 1980s and is the foundation for much of Vermont's prevention and community development work.</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>A youth will be added to the Pregnancy Prevention Coalition as a result of the SYEP collaboration with Sunrise. We will report out on the progress in the next report.</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 is consistent with the goals of the grant. Please enter the number of organizations and briefly describe the agreements....</p> <p>The YIT Committee is solely focusing their work on local teen and young adult housing, particularly for young parents. Regular members of the committee include the Bennington Collation for the Homeless, Center for Restorative Justice, Youth Development Program, Sunrise Family Resource Center, Vermont Department of Health, Department of Children & Families, Children's Integrated Services, and United Counseling Service. Although the Committee has not entered into formal MOU's we are working in that direction to partner in a formal manner to provide housing to young people.</p> <p>The YOW is co-facilitating the Summer Youth Employment Program which is a formal collaboration with the local Parent Child Center. Katrina Hollis co-facilitates the group through her YIT position in collaboration with the Youth Development Program staff.</p> <p>The Youth Outreach Worker is an active member of the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Task Force and collaborates with Youth Development Program, Department of Health, and Sunrise Family Resource Center. The task force educates young adults about the risks, responsibilities, and overall life transitions that occur when deciding to have children and works to reduce teen pregnancy and second pregnancies.</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....</p> <p>YOP, Bennington JOBS, and TLP all attended the Transition to Independence Processes Model (TIPS) training. The first training allowed for the programs to learn the skills of using the evidence based practice when engaging with YA. The first training allowed program staff to be TIPS Informed. In July 2012, all of the programs are returning to a final training to become TIPS 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.

No significant changes occurred during the reporting period.

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.

The T4C group has a facebook page to promote activities and inform the community of the new events that are coming up. T4C events are also promoted on the UCS website and Facebook page. The YOP and T4C group continues to promote activities with flyers and ads in the newspaper and the Penny Saver Press. The local newspaper is made aware of all of the activities or events that are planned by T4C. Sometimes it makes the paper and sometimes it doesn't. Our T4C facebook page averages at least 1 like a week and 80 active members on the Face Book page. Like us on facebook!

The T4C group participated in the Transition Fair at MAUHS. The purpose of our attendance at the Transition Fair was to educate YA at the high school about the transition services at UCS. The T4C group worked in shifts to engage with the YA at the fair and offer referral forms for program they might want to engage with. Some of the MAUHS students were referred by their teachers to YOP.

The Youth Outreach Coordinator and Teens for Change Leader continue to work with the local radio station to promote the programs at UCS and up and coming events.

5. Other Activities

Briefly describe other activities undertaken during the reporting period.

YOP staff and T4C participants are still providing other regions input on how to grow their youth involvement. During this reporting period T4C Youth Outreach Worker, Katrina Hollis, collaborated with a few regions at the Working with Youth Conference. The purpose was to share information regarding the T4C Advisory Board. Our T4C

participants are willing to continue to give their input and have YA from other regions join in on our community work.

6. Activities Planned for Next Reporting Period

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

T4C is planning another fundraising night, most likely with a local pizza place. The goal is to raise funds and friends and encourage YA to create change within the community. The funds that are raised will help T4C create additional substance free events for youth in their community. T4C will continue to host fundraisers throughout the next reporting period.

YOP and T4C plan on going to Comstock Prison once again as a way to educate YA about the harsh realities of prison life. This is not a scared straight program. There is an inmate panel that consists of those around the ages of the youth who are serving time for a variety of reasons including violent crimes as a result of chronic substance abuse.

In the next reporting period, T4C will wash windows in the community of store owners and businesses and help out with cleaning area playgrounds, such as Willow Park.

T4C plans on creating and hosting a substance free Halloween dance and costume party event in October 2012 at the Moose Family Lodge. The event will be free, as usual, with food, entertainment, and prizes.

The UCS Health, Wellness, and Safety Fair will be held on July 19th and several T4C members will attend the agency wide event. There are approximately 45 booths that provide information ranging from fire safety to healthy eating with free massage, reiki, and acupuncture as well as yoga and tai chi demonstrations.

Cultural and Linguistic Competence training is planned for 8/3/12 with Mercedes Avila. The target audience is T4C members.

T4C members will act as mentors to the Developmentally Delayed adults who are attending camp at the One World Conservation Center.

We will report out on the SYEP collaboration with Sunrise and YDP as well as the JOBS SYEP at Lake Paran.

Katrina will attend the Leadership Conference in Orlando, FL in July.

T4C will volunteer at a UCS fundraiser in September. They will set-up, clean-up, and act as porters for guests of the fundraiser. They are also thinking of having a booth to sell cider donuts and coffee in order to raise funds for T4C.

We are planning on taking the T4C group to a Vermont Storm Football game at the end of the summer or fall. It is a way to thank one of our adult allies who has volunteered many hours as a chaperone by cheering him on at the game!

DMH only:

Date received: _____

Approved by: _____

Date approved: _____

Approved by: _____

Date approved: _____