

YIT PROGRAM PROGRESS REPORT

1. Grant Number: 03150 – C6009 – FY13 -- YIT
2. Grantee Name and Address: Northwestern Counseling and Support Services
107 Fisher Pond Road
St. Albans, VT 05478
3. Telephone Number: (802) 524-6554
4. Project Title: Implementation of the Franklin-Grand Isle Youth in Transition (YIT) Plan
5. Period of Performance from January 1, 2014 through June 30, 2014
6. Approved Project Period from July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2014
7. Author's Name and Telephone number: Ebony Nyoni 393-6571; Kayla Tatro 393-6570
8. Date of report: June 30, 2014
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, 2013 (due by January 31, 2014), and
2. One for the period from January 1 – June 30, 2014 (due by July 30, 2014).

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>Goals for strengthening the systems of care</p>	<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><u>4th Annual Leadership Summit at Jay Peak</u> January 23, 2014 represented our 4th annual regional conference. This year we hand pick 28 leaders from throughout the region to participate in a forum at the Jay Peak Resort. We set up information tables at various high schools to speak personally with youth about the summit. Guidance Directors helped facilitate the application process. Transportation has always been an issue for youth wanting to attend our events; this year we reserved a school bus to pick up youth from all but two of the regional high schools. This allowed the youth opportunity to get to know each other during the ride. Jay Peak Resort provided the group with discounted tickets to the Water Park, for after the meeting activities. During the meeting youth discussed themes occurring in their areas as well as defining leadership. The youth worked collaboratively to develop a vision for the youth council. Youth also participated in fun ice breakers to bond and learn more about each other. The group concluded with a discussion about bullying and harassment. The group participated in exercises that highlighted similarities and celebrated differences. One youth talked about her struggles as a single mom in high school. Another youth discussed his challenges with his grades. Some youth were excited to learn that they enjoyed the same alternative music genres. Others were happy to voice their concerns aloud. The following were quotes from youth regarding the experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “It was exciting meeting kids from other schools” • “I learned a lot!” • “It was fun!” • “Can we come back next year?!” <p><u>Montpelier Statehouse</u> On January 31, 2014 system of care partners as well as youth ambassadors traveled to Montpelier to join the Youth In Transition community to advocate for state support of the regions’ youth and young adults. During this time our team exhibited an information board of our program. Team members spoke with local representatives promoting greater support for Franklin/Grand Isle communities. Representative Mike McCarthy joined us for lunch to discuss the strides YIT has made in our system of care. The team included 2 youth ambassadors, 2 system of care employees, and one parent. The day was a success as much of the YIT community had a chance to have their voices heard.</p>
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Annual Valentine's Day Dance

The Valentine's Day Dance was successful in spite of a huge winter storm. The event hosted about 60 youth who were brave enough to venture out in several feet of snow. This year the event proved itself to be a Valentine staple as teens came out on a day that schools were cancelled because of severe weather conditions. Youth council members took ownership of the event by dividing themselves into committees. One committee organized decorations; and other committees managed the refreshment table, ticket table, and dance floor. Our partners included parents who provided transportation, and donated cupcakes, brownies and sodas. St. Albans City Parks and Recreation sponsored the decorations. Other partners included Cosmic Bakery, Mimmo's Italian Restaurant, and community volunteers. The purpose of the event was fulfilled as it provided a safe place for youth to celebrate in the community.

Homeless Care Packages

On March 11, 2014 NCSS YIT was chosen to receive a \$10,000 donation from Vermont State Employee Credit Union "We Care 2" Program. The YIT Coordinator went to Montpelier to accept the award. Of 49 organizations throughout the state, thousands of voters elected the Youth In Transition program as 1 of only 2 programs to win the funds. Not only did the event bring awareness to the plight of youth in our state, but it highlighted the problem of homelessness for young people in the Northwest region of Vermont. This donation will help homeless/at risk youth access the resources they need during the coldest days of the year. We hope to partner with many more businesses around the state for the purpose of hosting matching dollars.

Youth Safety Community Awareness Day (YSCAD)

On this special day that we reserve each year, we take time to reflect on the plight of youth in our region. Regardless of the youth's socio-economic status, many share similar needs for transitioning into adulthood. These themes came to life with our public media campaign that hosted system of care professionals and our region's youth ambassadors. One of our valued partners, Director of Public Access Television, Elizabeth Malone, interviewed our youth ambassadors. The program aired on March 20, 2014, with the potential for reaching over 5000 homes. Among the system of care professionals interviewed, were: Marya Brooks (TLP Coordinator), Dr. Fredrick Homes (retired pediatrician and champion of the Hungry Heart Film), and Patricia Brett (Director of DCF Juvenile Services).

Youth Fun Day!

Youth council members decided to make the St. Albans City Hall available for families who wanted to have a safe place to hang out and have fun on March 24, 2014. The process was interesting as the youth begin with a very complicated plan and simplified it as the event neared. It was fascinating watching the youth establish a plan that made sense with the resources available to them. The event hosted about 15 youth and 3 adults. One youth council member brought his grandfather and it was wonderful to see the two play basketball together. Two other youth (twins) brought their younger brother, and a father brought his daughter. The gym's wide open space gave families opportunity to spread out. Activities ranged from playing basketball, board games, and music, while others stood chuckling with their friends. The

food was partly sponsored by Eastern Dragon (local Chinese food restaurant).

Festival of Colors

The Festival of Colors event was a project that youth developed for the purpose of celebrating Mental Health Awareness Day. The event was held on May 10, 2014 at St. Albans Bay Park. The youth collaborated on a mini grant to promote the transition from darkness to light as a symbol of one's personal journey. The youth learned a great deal about "Holi" thanks to YIT partners like Jeetan. The event exposed them to cultural diversity, through the celebrating of an East Asian holiday. The large banner with its bright colors, brought attention to the day and to mental health awareness.

Leadership Academy

This year 6 Franklin/Grand Isle youth participated in the Leadership Academy held on May 14, 2014. During the Academy, youth mingled with youth from around the state while listening to the presentation of the Youth Build representatives. The event was hosted in Randolph by the State YIT team. The youth enjoyed participating in mini workshops and took a lot of tips to share with their local communities.

Annual Working With Youth Conference

This year, youth ambassadors co-facilitated a workshop at the Working With Youth Conference held on May 23, 2014. Prior to the workshop, the youth researched information, and rehearsed roles. In the process, they learned how to develop a workshop, engage the audience, and deliver information. The youth presented on entrepreneurship as an alternative for youth who are looking for employment. After the workshop, various participants thanked youth for their presence and leadership. Our youth represented the region and YIT well and provided a younger perspective on the job market.

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

This year parents and adults have been a part of every public event. Parents play a pivotal role in our programming and are always invited to attend events and help promote mental health wellness. This year we discovered more grandparents participating than previous years. Community members also participate in events, youth council meetings and are represented on the NCSS Board.

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

Required activity:

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

The NCSS Adolescent Services team prioritizes staying current with therapeutic best practices such as Transition to Independence Process (TIP) trainings. All new employees must become TIP knowledgeable. We are

fortunate to have Justin Philie as a local certified TIP trainer. Throughout the year this region's YIT team participates in a host of other workshops, and trainings geared toward innovative and scientific approaches supporting youth and young adults with special needs.

Every youth that engages in services undergoes an intake process that includes a diagnostic assessment, survey, and options for addressing short-term and long-term needs. Through assessment, an individualized plan is established to ensure the progress of clients' goals, and a "no youth is left behind" philosophy. YIT supports mental health wellbeing through alternative means. This year, a youth ambassador was unable to remain a part of the track team because neither he nor his parents could afford to buy him new track shoes. As a result, the youth began to lose confidence in his abilities. The YIT Coordinator saw this as a hindrance toward potential growth in other areas of his development. The YIT program sponsored the attainment of the track shoes necessary for the youth to join the team again at his high school. The family was very appreciative and shared with others the great assistance provided her son through the YIT program.

4: System of Care partners gain cultural & linguistic competence (CLC)....

In addition to the Cultural and Linguistic Competency trainings, the YIT Coordinator sits on the NCSS' Culture Competency Committee to ensure the presence of youth and young adult perspectives. The youth we serve are very diverse ranging from sexual orientation, race, cultural heritage, ability, and more. The agency aspires to reflect the diverse community to which it serves; this includes publications, social media, products and services.

5: Local communities (including young adults) change their perceptions of young adults and of mental health issues, reducing stigma....

YIT has paved the way for youth leadership through constant dialogue and visibility of youth perspectives. Before the YIT grant, many youth in the region found themselves without a public voice. Mostly seen and not heard, youth were depicted as trouble makers and menaces to society. Thanks to the YIT grant, youth now have the ability to proclaim their narrative, oppose to adult narratives of their plight. Since being established in the Franklin/Grand Isle area, Youth In Transition has help change the atmosphere for youth who seek mental health services:

- Community Activities - Several years of public events helped to draw in youth including new youth not already associated with NCSS. Many of the youth participating in YIT activities invite their peers to events such as the Annual Valentine's Day Dance. This very popular event promotes the normalcy of good mental health while having fun.
- Leadership Group - Youth invite friends to leadership meetings for support and fellowship. Many times youth invited by peers enjoy the projects and opportunities to speak out about issues to which they are passionate. Some friends choose to return and become group

	<p>members themselves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Media</u> - Our previous projects have introduced mental health in a way that's appealing to young people. Most youth find our services less intimidating based on their first experiences. Our friendly image is relayed through the website, public access television, newspaper articles, and community partnerships. <p>6: Effectiveness of the Vermont System of Care for young adults with SED is evaluated.....</p> <p>A tool that we continue to use with youth entering NCSS programming is the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL). The CBCL tool assists staff with assessing competencies as well as adaptive and maladaptive functioning. This assessment tools, in addition to face-to face meetings, help staff members to identify the barriers and strengths of each youth as they enter services. This tool is administered every 6 months to track client progress across children's programming and assists with analyzing client improvement and service effectiveness. In addition to the CBCL, individual plans of care, clinical notes and ongoing supervision help support and monitor the wellbeing and track growth towards youth's individual goals. These tools allow for a systemic model of checks and balances, keeping youth active participants with their treatment goals.</p> <p>7: The State supports and sustains regional services for young adults....</p> <p>The YIT state team remains our greatest support system as we endeavor to change the face of mental health care. The data made available by the evaluation team allows us to develop a comprehensive approach with intellectual mental health capital. It also gives us the opportunity to inform community partners of our successes as well as areas to be improved. The state teams' support of the regional coordinators comes rich with resources, such as technical assistance and accessibility. Matt Wolf visited the youth council recently and spoke to them about the youth voice movement throughout the state. Mini-grants offered by the state team, give youth a platform to showcase leadership skills and community support. The youth council has been able to implement their ideas using resources made available to them by state partners. They also learn about the grant writing and reporting process. Overall, the state team remains an important aspect of the continued success of the YIT Program in our region and through offering opportunities and trainings in areas such as the TIP model and Mental Health First Aid, the state team has helped support our delivery of services on a daily basis.</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</i></p>

intercepting them at critical intervention points with the juvenile and criminal justice systems....

Providing youth with mentorship, and structured events, places them in a position of safe exploration. Our full schedule of events and youth incentives, support youth to stay with our services. Youth participating in the YIT program for a longer period of time tend to have less interaction with the corrections system. During this period, only 5% of our youth had a run in with the law. Our intense wrap around services provide many options for youth to solve their problems and fulfill their immediate needs without resorting to unsafe means.

Preventative services, the focus of many of our YIT initiatives, increase accessibility to support services and pro-social activities making it less likely that youth will engage in deviant behavior. The Homeless Care Package Program will double as a point of contact to draw young people in who traditionally would not access services. An active youth council peer mediation program will provide fresh options that make sense for youth. A safe place to go after school or on the weekends also helps to decrease the number of youth victimized by peer and adult abuses. Preventative models to deter substance abuse amongst our young adult population have been proven effective. Consequently, youth and young adults participating in rehabilitation programs have a better chance at staying sober in a positive, safe, goal oriented environment.

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

Employment remains a difficult challenge for both youth and adults in the Franklin/Grand Isle area. However, a recent revitalization effort in St. Albans City promises hundreds of more jobs added to the community. Our region has multiple opportunities to support youth employment. Our close team model at NCSS promotes networking between YIT and the JOBS program. The programs work collaboratively to help youth obtain jobs in the community. Youth participating in YIT express a need for employment. Approximately 40% of the youth who engaged in the group were able to find employment for the summer. Many of the council members are still in school and tend to have little availability when it comes to employment hours during the school year. This summer 20% of the youth ambassadors achieved employment upon actively searching. Several youth ambassadors are attending a two week institute hosted by the Vermont State Transportation Division and Champlain College. During the duration of the Institute, the youth will explore the field of transportation in great depth. Successful completion of the institute may afford the youth apprenticeship opportunities throughout the year. The youth underwent a rigorous application process that required teacher recommendations, essays, and community references. As a result, 3 regional youth leaders were chosen amongst youth from throughout the country to participate in the program. The youth will receive special YIT stipends upon completion of the program as an incentive for undergoing this rigorous and relevant career exploration of our state's transportation industry. Alternatives such as this provide youth with access to people who will also provide support

	<p>related to employment needs and opportunities, building their personal and professional networks.</p>
	<p>3. Increased number young adults participating in (or who completed) educational programs....</p> <p>The NCSS YIT program has been successful in the area of education retention. The YIT Coordinator heavily promotes lifelong learning as a powerful tool to guarantee voice. As youth come to the program with diverse educational needs, they are exposed to alternatives to traditional education. The majority of youth participating in this year's youth group were full time students attending BFA St. Albans, BFA Fairfax, MVU, and Enosburg High School. Approximately 25% of the group attended one or more classes at the technical education center, and less than 5% attended a course at CCV. This past May, a young mom from the YIT community graduated high school at 21 years old. She and our team are very proud of her achievements.</p>
	<p>4. Increased number of young adults who have access to, and are using, a medical home....</p> <p>YIT partners with the state department of economic services to assist with applying for medical insurance, as well as other emergency supports needs. The Youth In Transition program has assisted youth and young adults with direct access to our region's system of care serving as a one-stop shop for service of their most basic needs. By design, youth entering programming are made aware of many possible supports. These services are in addition to other traditional and non-traditional systems established to assist with physical and mental wellbeing. The following are viable components of the medical home:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive Assessment Crisis Hotline Emergency Shelter Medical Insurance Assistance Planned Parenthood Walk-In Clinic/Urgent Care Mental Health and Substance Abuse Outpatient Counseling Juvenile Treatment Court Court Diversion/Juvenile Justice Social Development Groups STD Education/PREP Grant Case Management Services The Learning Together Program For Young Parents JOBS TLP YIT
	<p>5. Increased number of young adults living in safe and stable housing....</p>

NCSS Adolescent Services has a regular presence at the Shelter Review Committee meetings. This is a venue where housing agencies in Franklin/Grand Isle counties come together and review specific cases. It is facilitated by the Agency of Human Services Field Director and attended by Community Action/CVOEO, Samaritan House, Reach up, Economic Services, Department of Children and Families, Department of Corrections, Champlain Housing Trust, Pathways to Housing, and other specialists from housing programs including representatives from our mental health agency (NCSS). When youth are facing housing crisis, they can sign release forms allowing staff to discuss their case at this meeting in order to identify support services that are available to them.

The local justice system, Court Diversion, a dynamic Juvenile Treatment Court Program, and the implementation of more intense wrap around services, has contributed to an increase in safe living environments for young people participating in the program. Since the beginning, YIT has helped youth find creative solutions for safe and stable housing environments. While running away from home use to be the possible first option for many youth in crisis, the trend is starting to shift. As youth have more readily available access to our system of care, we are able to process potential alternatives. Couch surfing and motels stays are not as viable as working with the family to identify root causes for conflicts. For this reason, the YIT Coordinator maintains a close relationship with families of youth involved in program. While some situations call for separation, others call for assistance obtaining necessary resources for the youth to feel safe where they currently reside. This can mean recommending outpatient family therapy or supporting a family with applying for food or economic assistance. DCF, NCSS Transitional Living Program (TLP), The New Connections Hotline, Samaritan House, and Community Action, all serve as supports in our area to assist youth with supportive housing options.

6. Increased number of young adults who have caring & supportive relationships...

During group meetings, we do see conflicts arise. YIT uses these opportunities to present teachable moments to the group. This allows youth to begin to hold peers accountable for honoring the norms of the group. Youth learn how to channel their energy into positive outcomes for the group. The leadership group also tackles topics like bullying, harassment, diversity, mental health and associated stigmas, substance abuse, domestic violence, teen parenting, post-secondary endeavors, and more. These topics provide education and acceptance of where other might be coming from. As youth grow more comfortable with the group setting, they begin exhibiting more team like characteristics and are able to have productive discussion and be respectful of other's opinions, even if not in agreement.

7. Increase in young adults' strengths and protective factors....

Our strengths based approach is inviting and supportive and youth respond well in nonjudgmental environments. Our commitment to serving youth with integrity allows youth to explore areas of concern within the safe confines of

	<p>our youth services team. Youth know that confidentiality is at the forefront of our beliefs and that they can be honest with their needs. In the beginning of the year, youth are usually reluctant to share their thoughts with the group or facilitator but eventually they become more comfortable with sharing their skills.</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>The NCSS YIT Program sponsors a number of team building experiences including the annual Valentine Day Dance/Fundraiser, and Leadership Summit. The youth also sit on public panels intended to educate the public on their plight for the purpose of strengthening the system of care. This year youth ambassadors from the youth council helped facilitate a workshop at the Working with Youth Conference in Burlington, Vermont. The youth are currently working on developing a brand that will promote staying healthy and free of drugs. The youth council would also like to continue working on their public access television show intended to reach their peers in rural areas of the region. During the last several years, the youth councils have written for small grants to fund their community projects. The following were created as a result:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Care Cards</u>: Cards designed for youth, by youth, with the intent of encouraging peers during difficult times. 2. <u>Little Black Book</u>: A quick phone book for youth supports in the region. 3. <u>Festival of Colors</u>: A celebration which brought awareness to mental health wellness amongst young people. 4. <u>Homeless Care Package Project</u>: A concept developed by the youth council to deliver valuable care items to homeless, runaway, and other disadvantaged youth and young adults.
<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>The following are trainings that have been a result of the YIT Grant's support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Youth Safety Community Awareness Day</u>: A day intended to educate the community on safety issues specific to youth and young adults. • <u>CLC Training</u>: Regional training offered to NCSS Staff and community partners on Cultural and Linguistic Competency. • <u>Mental Health First Aid</u> – Five NCSS employees (including the YIT Coordinator) are registered at the national level as certified trainers. The new youth module is a public education program which introduces participants to the unique risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems in adolescents, and builds understanding of the

importance of early intervention. The model also teaches individuals how to help a youth presenting in crisis or experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge.

Organizational Change: 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....

Organizational changes at NCSS such as issuing employee laptops have enabled staff to engage youth in the community. NCSS is committed to providing support to consumers in their everyday environments in order to better serve families and reduce stigma. NCSS case managers provide transportation to youth on a daily basis. Agency vans are made available to accommodate getting groups of youth and young adults to the events, groups and places that are providing resources and support. Staff are equipped with technology including an electronic medical record and computerized signature pads to encourage development of treatment plans with youth and families during meetings in the community.

Community accessibility can come in many different forms. Having physical locations strategically placed in the center of communities removes hindrances that may be caused by transportation issues, fear, and stigma. Part of the de-stigmatization process happens when youth/young adults and families can access services that are delivered in environments that resemble their own. NCSS is creating opportunities for this to happen through increasing locations in the community that can meet the mental health needs of families such as:

- **St. Albans House:** The St. Albans House is a historical building that was recently repurposed to provide value to the community. The second floor showcases local businesses and the third floor luxury apartments. The ground floor will host selected programs for NCSS Children, Youth, and Families. The Adolescent Services Team and its programs plan to relocate to the St. Albans House location during the summer of 2014. These programs were identified to move as they are more geared toward a community based drop-in model. The space also comes equipped with a kitchen, two computers, and a comfy meeting space to make the space youth friendly.
- **Partnering with the New Generation Youth Resource Center:** Once a youth center becomes re-established in the community, it will serve as a bridge to helping youth and young adult's access short and long term needs. The Youth Center will implement 21st Century programming conducive to the needs of the next generation. This will allow our region to explore the opportunities of mental health delivery through the perspective of the youth. The center will serve as a referral for children, youth and family programs. The hope is to remove some of the mystique associated with "outpatient services." This has always

	<p>been an indirect benefit of the NCSS YIT program, but will occur on a larger scale. Additionally, the Center will allow for a collaborative partnership for new grant opportunities.</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....</p> <p>The NCSS YIT Program plans to look into forming a contractual relationship with the New Generation Youth Resource Center Board in order to continue to work towards the vision of a youth space in our community. This action will be based on new and current expectations to be determined by the state and NCSS. Currently, Ngyrc is a 501c3 recognized organization. The organization needs financial support to facilitate accessing a location in the downtown St. Albans City area for a youth space.</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>New members of the NCSS Adolescent Services Team participate in the Transition to Independence Process (TIP) Trainings. This year we have 3 new members of the Adolescence Services Team who are attending TIP trainings and will gain skill sets that will help guide their therapeutic approaches to youth and families. Justin Philie continues to provide support as a local certified TIP trainer. The NCSS Adolescent Services Team is called on a frequent basis to present to professionals and community; staff have presented trainings on topics such as youth leadership and substance abuse awareness. Leadership and peer outreach training for youth ambassadors provides visibility and education to the greater community with regards to mental health awareness.</p> <p><u>Mental Health First Aid</u> – Five NCSS employees (including the YIT Coordinator) are registered at the national level as certified trainers. The new youth module is a public education program which introduces participants to the unique risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems in adolescents, and builds understanding of the importance of early intervention. The model also teaches individuals how to help a youth presenting in crisis or experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge.</p>

2. Problems

Describe any deviations or departures from the original project plan including actual/anticipated slippage in task completion dates, and special problems encountered or

expected. Use this section to describe barriers to accomplishment, actions taken to overcome difficulties, and to advise DMH of any needs for assistance.

The goal of an identified youth space was achieved in November of 2012. Ironically, our community's dynamic revitalization plan has left us without a current physical center location. After rigorously searching for a new location, the region's YIT team identified an alternative prospect which entailed cohabitating and utilizing space at the United Way as well as the newly renovated St. Albans House. The vision for a standalone youth space remains and NCSS YIT plans to continue to look for ways to partner with the nonprofit New Generation Youth Resource Center to fulfill this vision. The unclear nature of the sustainability and type of funding for the YIT Grant influences plans to move forward in our region.

3. 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.

There has been no change in staffing since the last quarter. Ebony Nyoni remains the Youth In Transition Grant Coordinator for Franklin and Grand Isle Counties. Kathryn Spaulding has completed her volunteer-ship.

4. 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.

NCSS uses a variety of tools to market and advertise services and programming. NCSS marketing tools remain as follows:

[website](#)

[newsletter](#)

[facebook](#)

[twitter](#)

[YouTube](#)

The Youth In Transition Program in Frank/Grand Isle has remained consistently in the public eye. A list of publication materials are as follows:

Attachment	Publication Material
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A	Power Point highlighting recent achievements
B	Building Bridges Newsletter, Spring 2014 : See page 14: "Winner of \$10,000 Homeless Care Package Program"
C	Youth Safety Community Awareness Day (YSCAD) TV Program (On Disk)

5. Other Activities

Briefly describe other activities undertaken during the reporting period.

Weekly Youth Council Meetings

Weekly Council meetings were held at Mimmo's Restaurant, with an average of 16 – 23 youth during the fall and winter months, including 5 youth ambassadors. Mimmo's has been a strong partner, assisting in annual events like the regional conference. The restaurant allowed our large group access to the back of the restaurant, and sometimes the special events room, free of charge. During this time the YIT Coordinator facilitated meetings dividing the agenda into 3 main sections: updates, special topics, and planning. Special topics included substance abuse, social media, unemployment, bullying and harassment, mental health wellness, homelessness, and more. Throughout the year the council hosted a variety of speakers consisting of community partners, like Dr. Holmes and discussion of the Hungry Heart film as well as other system of care professionals. Youth enjoyed the social aspect of meeting at a pizza shop but desired more space to move around and do activities. This led to search for alternative meeting spaces including space sponsored by the United Way.

The Little Black Book Resource Guide

The resource guide was so popular that we ordered more copies to distribute. DCF, BFA St. Albans, and Missisquoi Valley Union High School all requested additional copies.

Website:

www.newgenerationvt.com had a soft launch this spring to showcase the enormous amount of creativity, and hard work toward developing an interactive site for youth and young adults. The site is managed by a New Generation Youth Resource Center Board member and youth ambassador. We hope to have the store up and running soon. The store is meant to help with sustainability of the website and location. Eventually the site will display the youth created lifestyle brand which has been a project of the youth counsel. This project included:

- Brand development
- Marketplace Analysis
- Research
- Creating prototype
- Building Image and Vision

Sustainability Efforts

Sustainability in concert with funding ensures preservation of the YIT vision and that a core group of people will continue to champion the ideas set forth by this grant. Ideally, the youth that are being trained under the youth voice movement will be the adult leaders of tomorrow, training others in the concepts of YIT culture. We continue to strive to find additional youth, community support and funding sources to ensure that youth voice and the YIT vision for the Franklin/Grand Isle communities remain strong.

6. Activities Planned for Next Reporting Period

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

The NCCS YIT Program, along with other Adolescent Services Programs will move to the new St. Albans House location over the summer months. The move will allow more access to services as the location is based right in the heart of the city of St. Albans. The space will also include a comfortable meeting room that the YIT Program can access for youth council meetings and other events.

Several youth ambassadors are attending a two week institute hosted by the Vermont State Transportation Division and Champlain College. During the duration of the Institute, the youth will explore the field of transportation. Successful completion of the institute may afford the youth apprenticeship opportunities throughout the year. The youth will receive special YIT stipends upon completion of the program as an incentive for undergoing this rigorous and relevant career exploration of our state's transportation industry.

NCSS YIT hopes to continue to partner with area collaborators around accessing a new youth center location which includes the following: (1) providing a safe place for youth and young adults to participate in positive and social and educational activities, and (2) create a movement where all youth regardless of race, ability, or socio-economic status, have a voice and full access to resources, and (3) offer economic solutions to a younger generation such as job training and entrepreneurial education opportunity, and (4) provide education to the general community geared toward total youth wellness. Youth Center Facility, for after school and weekend programming including (a) mentoring (b) extracurricular activities (c) youth volunteer corp. (d) community garden (e) youth entrepreneurship incubators (f) Arts (g) computer lab (h) informational workshops and certifications (i) exercise space and programming. A vision also remains for a resource bus, to reach youth in rural communities who are not able to access a physical youth center. This mobile unit would include: (a) distribute homeless care packages (b) orientation video (c) access to computers with internet (d) check-ins with volunteers and mental health professionals.

DMH only:

Date received: _____

Approved by: _____ *Date approved:* _____

Approved by: _____ *Date approved:* _____