

YIT PROGRAM PROGRESS REPORT

1. Grant Number: 03150 - 7049
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, 2012 through June 30, 2012
6. Approved Project Period from January 1, 2012 through June 30, 2012
7. Author's Name and Telephone number: Ebony Nyoni 393-6571; Kayla Tatro 393-6570
8. Date of report: June 13, 2012
9. Comments (if any):

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

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>The New Generation Youth Advisory Board meets weekly on Tuesdays between the hours of 3:00 PM and 5:00 PM. During school months the group fluctuates between 18-25 youth, and 9-15 during the summer months. The meeting location varied between Mimo’s Italian restaurant, and the Voltage Clubhouse, both in St. Albans City. The New Generation Youth Group was established in August of 2011. Transportation was provided to youth who participated in the group including youth from the Islands, Berkshire, Swanton, St. Albans, Georgia and more. Throughout the year youth participated in a number of activities representing their core beliefs, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Public Awareness- New Generation spoke on several youth panels aimed at making the public aware of their plight as youth in transition. Many of the youth speaking on the panels discovered for the first time that they were able to share their stories in front of small and large groups of people. Some youth reported feeling “lighter” after sharing experiences. Youth also reported the experience being the first time that “adults really cared about what we had to say.” Such opportunities included the Working with Youth conference in Burlington and Youth Safety Awareness Day in St. Albans. ○ Peer Advising/Leadership Training- The New Generation Youth Group exhibited peer leadership during weekly meetings. Youth debated important issues, as well as advocated for each other. New Generation also participated in statewide opportunities to encourage youth in other regions. For example, Franklin/Grand Isle youth drove to Bradford Vermont as a resource for the Youth Board starting up in that area. One youth also participated in assisting leadership training in Chittenden County with the Diversity Rocks! Youth group. ○ Youth Leaders participated in community surveys regarding the implementation of a youth center in St. Albans. ○ Youth Leadership Team promoted a positive image by hosting community dances and poetry slam events that were substance and violence free zones. ○ Youth Leaders also exhibited leadership through their own individual projects such as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing music lessons to peers. 2. Speaking to high school students about the dangers of addiction and suicide prevention. 3. Offering community peeks into their lives through interviews,
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	<p style="text-align: center;">editing, and production of a public TV show.</p> <p>2: Family/adult allies support young adults....</p> <p>At least 14 committed parents consistently support Youth In Transition efforts in Franklin/Grand Isle. Support includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chaperone support (Valentine’s Day Dance and other events) ○ Assistance with transportation during the weekly meetings. ○ Participation in the research study. ○ Providing permission for youth to attend public events. ○ Providing encouragement to youth to continue to attend weekly meetings. <hr/> <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>As of July 10, 2012, the adolescent services team completed the final training before becoming Transition to Independence Process (TIPS) informed. This certification allows us to continue orchestrating with confidence, the full TIPS model amongst the youth who participate in our system of care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strength-Discovery and Needs – Many youth come to the system of care with many strikes against them. Some have failed out of school, involved in the correctional system, or homeless and usually don’t see a way out. This is a time when we are able to highlight positive aspects of the youth’s life as well as great attributes that youth or family members may possess. The youth worker will assist the youth in establishing teams that will help them reach the goals outlined on their Individual Plan of Care (IPC). As resources and key people are identified, youth begin to slowly feel more ownership of the process. Some for the first time in their lives feels in control of their future. One youth who was recently expelled from his guardian’s home did not know what he was going to do. He was staying at a friend’s house and felt all alone. The YIT Coordinator received a referral from the DCF caseworker and began working with the strengths that the youth exhibited and the resources that were identified as still being available. When a transition meeting was held, the YIT coordinator began with all the positive things that the youth had going for him and continued with goals for the immediate future. Upon listening to all the positive things being said about the youth the youth smiled and exclaimed “that’s me!” ○ Futures Planning- Youth from all walks of life entering the system don’t always know where their headed. Such programs as Jump On Board for Success (JOBS), Transitional Living Program (TLP), and Youth In Transition (YIT), help youth develop the tools they need to be successful in their journey towards adulthood.
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	<p>Seventeen year olds tend to be the most difficult age to serve because they are at most one year from approaching eighteen. On numerous occasions, the seventeen year old youth is estranged from their guardians and/or parents. This can be difficult because youth still need permission from an adult before they can make a decision which can end up feeling powerless on the end of the youth. Our team uses Futures' Planning Framework to assist the youth in their current situation while empowering them to set short and long term goals intended to keep them safe. One youth decided that she did not want to go to a transition home without her partner but wanted to pay friends to stay at their place. Throughout this time the youth consistently met with a TLP caseworker to assist her with future alternatives and planning towards the attainment of her own place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social Problem Solving (SODAS)-High school graduation can be difficult for the youth population we serve. Less than 30% continue on to traditional post secondary education endeavors. Of the ones who qualify 70% choose to stay in their community because of high tuition fees. Youth In Transition provides youth with nontraditional options for youth in our counties. SODAS are used to get youth encouraged about their futures. SODAS allow youth transitioning out of high school the opportunity to lay out all the options. One young adult in particular was not being successful in job placements. The YIT Coordinator assisted the youth through the process and the youth was able to rule out possibilities that did not compliment their lifestyles. Job Corp, Employment, Technical training, Work experiences, and Community College, are amongst a few of the options that youth identify as being viable goals.
	<p>4: System of Care partners gain cultural & linguistic competence (CLC)....</p> <p>System of care partners include Department of Human Services, Department of Children and Families, Department of Health, United Way, Franklin and Grand Isle Caring Communities, TD Bank, Cosmic Bakery, Mimmos, Voltage Soccer Team, Mousetrap Pediatrics, Chow Bella, City of St. Albans, St. Albans Messenger, Channel 15, Local Businesses, Community Justice Center, Franklin Grand Isle Counties' Supervisory Unions, Community Partners, St. Albans Police, and many others. NCSS is committed to offering multiple CLC trainings to employees and other community partners taking part in the system of care. Mercedes Avila graciously came to NCSS in May 2011 to host two CLC trainings, one for NCSS staff and one for YIT community partners. In addition the YIT coordinator and other NCSS staff remain in contact with representatives from the Abenaki counsel as a way to stay connected to this community.</p>
	<p>5: Local communities (including young adults) change their perceptions of young adults and of mental health issues, reducing stigma....</p>

	<p>NCSS offer youth the opportunity to meet on site individually or as a group for special meetings or trainings. Youth become familiar with the environment and begin to change their perceptions about mental health institutions. During this time youth share space with people of all ages and abilities as the common theme is good mental health and well being. Several youth participating in services have successfully gained employment at the agency.</p> <p>Mimmo's Italian Restaurant is a business located in Downtown St. Albans. For many months they have accommodated our large and sometimes noisy youth group in their establishment. They have provided us with a venue that allows youth easy access to YIT services. During this time youth invited friends to participate and understand the importance of mental health treatment.</p> <p>The Voltage Clubhouse has afforded youth the opportunity to meet in a safe environment complete with pool tables, exercise equipment, kitchen, flat screen television, Wi-Fi, and more. This attractive space drew in youth who would not ordinarily participate in a meeting facilitated by a mental health worker. The Voltage Clubhouse was also the host of New Generation's Poetry Slam Event, where youth came together to sing, voice, or play instruments, but overall to voice their opinions.</p> <p>The Franklin County Farmer's Market gave more visibility to our youth and allowed the community to see them in a different light. The youth developed products to sell for the purpose of raising money for the youth center, while fostering more community partners. Some of the items sold include the Care Cards which were developed previously.</p> <p>Participation in Channel 15 Public Access Television allows the youth to showcase their talents while bringing viewers into their world. On the program youth discuss issues related to their mental health such as Depression, Self-Mutilation, Addiction, and Abuse. Youth also produce fun topics that appeal to a broader youth population like Sports, Music, Youth Culture, Public Events, and Activities.</p> <p>Public Charities such as Greyhound Rescue, Franklin County ASPCA and the Burlington Marathon, have been touched by the New Generation's compassion and willingness to give back to their local charities. This level of activity encourages community members to feel comfortable with this transition aged population.</p> <p>6: Effectiveness of the Vermont System of Care for young adults with SED is evaluated.....</p> <p>Internal measures such as 90 day progress reviews and six month follow-ups help us gauge the progress and needs for each youth who comes through our doors. Treatment Team Meetings which may include but are not limited to youth, family members, community supports and system of care providers are used to determine whether individual goals are being met and the right</p>
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	<p>services are being accessed. In addition through participation in meetings, panels, and focus group, youth in our area have been given a voice to express their needs and views of current services. The UVM evaluation team has also been instrumental in obtaining valuable information that can later be used to inform us on our system of care's effectiveness as well as opportunities for improvement.</p>
	<p>7: The State supports and sustains regional services for young adults....</p> <p>The state team has served as a wonderful resource and advocate for regional youth systems of care. The Franklin/Grand Isle region has collaborated successfully with the state team through this last period. Matt Wolfe provided technical support towards our youth center efforts. Matt referred Karina Ware and participated in a Public access program ("NCSS Here for You") that highlighted regional and statewide Youth In Transition efforts. Courtney Bridges recently met with the YIT Coordinator to advise our region on social media and the safe use of technology to make YIT more accessible to the youth living in the outermost areas of the region. Courtney is preparing a future workshop that will train agency Directors on safe and secure ways to use social media while adhering to HIPPA regulations. Cindy assisted in providing clear directions for the youth who recently won the youth of the quarter award. Jody and Jessie met with our youth throughout a course of several weeks to prepare for a presentation at the Working with Youth Conference. Brenda keeps us informed on issues pertaining to the greater mission. Finally, by offering opportunities to be trained in the TIPS model, 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 intercepting them at critical intervention points with the juvenile and criminal justice systems....</i></p> <p>The quarterly YIT/ Juvenile Justice Meeting provides opportunity for service providers to be educated, informed, and united on best practices and alternative solutions for youth transitioning out of systems of care such as Corrections, DCF, Adolescent Services, Secondary Education, and Pediatric care. YIT Partners with a number of currently system of care partners such as the Juvenile Treatment Court, Community Justice Center, Vermont Adult Learning, Jump On Board for Success (JOBS), Transitional Living Program (TLP) which all help to decrease the number of youth participating in the correction system. Such preventative programs as the YIT Leadership group, JOBS, and substance abuse rehabilitative treatment services are designed to help keep youth and young adults out of the Correction's system by helping</p>

	<p>them obtain the resources they need to transition into adulthood successfully.</p>
<p>2. Increased number of young adults who are employed....</p> <p>Through our division's design, we are able to work closely with the JOBS program helping youth get jobs. In addition, youth have been referred to other employment services including VocRehab, Vermont DOL, and the small business bureau. Employment is promoted as a part of transition work while participating in the YIT system of care. Most YIT youth referred to JOBS obtain employment.</p>	
<p>3. Increased number young adults participating in (or who completed) educational programs....</p> <p>This past spring, YIT was happy to celebrate the high school graduation of 10 youth that were recently a part of YIT in our region. Two youth are going to college in New York State, three will join the Vermont State college system, and two are actively seeking employment. A transition ceremony to celebrate the successes of these and other youth is scheduled for August.</p>	
<p>4. Increased number of young adults who have access to, and are using, a medical home....</p> <p>Youth and young adults continue to access a medical home practice, our community partners include physicians treating youth for addiction, and providing counseling and supporting youth to participate in support groups related to mental health well being. The YIT coordinator continues to refer and or accompany youth to medical appointments. Approximately 50% of youth enrolled in YIT have been referred or are participating in outpatient services.</p>	
<p>5. Increased number of young adults living in safe and stable housing....</p> <p>Homeless youth involved with YIT are assisted in finding safe homes as part of transition planning. One youth found out she was pregnant as the family was being forced out of their homes. The YIT coordinator assisted this youth with alternatives and solutions. Other youth participating in YIT receive family counseling to work out problems and remain within home.</p>	
<p>6. Increased number of young adults who have caring & supportive relationships....</p> <p>The Youth Leadership group is successful because of the family like environment that is produced as a result of trust, intimacy, reliability, and friendship. Some young adults participating in the program said that they never had peers that they could truly consider friends until after they joined the leadership group. In addition, YIT encourages parent and family participation as a way to build and develop relationships.</p>	
<p>7. Increase in young adults' strengths and protective factors....</p>	

	<p>Youth Workers develop strong relationships with their clients which help clients to experience being in a healthy relationship where trust, respect, accountability, and commitment can occur. YIT is informed by TIPS which includes a strengths-based philosophy. In the day-to-day interactions with Youth, staff work to acknowledge and build upon youth strengths to assist with transition. Transitional plans are developed based on youth strengths and goals are developed according to youth input.</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>A broad net is cast out to accommodate youth who would not ordinarily look to a mental health organization to help them with their needs. Many youth join YIT to participate in Advisory Board activities and through relationship identify opportunities to obtain additional supports for issues such as Depression, Cutting, Addiction, etc.</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>Members of the NCSS Adolescent Services teams have participated in the TIPS Training and are active in the process of earning TIPS informed status. Justin Philie, a member of Adolescent Services is in the process of becoming a local trainer which will allow the Franklin/Grand Isle communities to continue to be informed about this model.</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>NCSS has been non-traditional in reaching the community through some of the following methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monthly “NCSS Here For You” TV show on Public Access TV ○ Public Fundraising events ○ Quarterly Newsletter ○ Advertising on Vehicles providing transportation ○ Social Media and Semi interactive website <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>Many organizations have partnered with the YIT Program to support events as the Regional Franklin/Grand Isle YIT conference. Topics affecting youth's mental health are the main focus of these events. Community Partners that have collaborated with YIT include: Mousetrap Pediatrics, Caring Communities, Community College of Vermont, Vermont Works for Women, Outright Vermont, area high schools and school districts, Department of Corrections, City Council members, Senator Leahy's office, DCF, St. Albans Police Department, Community Justice, Department of health, business partners and more.</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>TIPS is becoming recognized as an effective evidence-based practice in which other community organizations are beginning to put into practice.</p> <p>NCSS also hosts a number of evidenced-based support groups for youth designed to provide treatment services for youth with mental health and/or drug addiction issues. Some of these curriculums include DBT and Seeking Safety.</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.

Currently Youth In Transition is looking for more solutions to assist youth in getting to youth events. GMTA has been invited to be a part of the Advisory Board as we continue to look into solutions for youth transportation needs in our region.

Currently there is a lack of temporary and permanent housing for youth in our community. Some youth are forced to find shelter outside their region if they are under the age of 18 years old. We are looking for collaborative solutions such as rooms and studio apartments in the same space as a future youth center.

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 is still the Youth In Transition Grant Coordinator for Franklin and Grand Isle Counties.

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.

The most recent publications include:

- Advertisement for the January Episode of “NCSS: Here For You” which was broadcast on our local public access television channel about the YIT Regional Conference. A copy of the Broadcast is also included (Attachment A)
- Advertisement for the February Episode of “NCSS: Here For You” which was broadcast on our local public access television channel about Care Card Project (Attachment B)
- Valentine’s Day Dance Poster (Attachment C)
- A copy of a newspaper article in the St. Albans Messenger advertising Youth Safety Awareness Day (Attachment D)
- Youth Safety Awareness Day Poster (Attachment E)
- A copy of a newspaper article in the St. Albans Messenger on the topic of a youth panel held as part of Youth Safety Awareness Day. (Attachment F)
- Poetry Slam Poster (Attachment G)

5. Other Activities

Briefly describe other activities undertaken during the reporting period.

- The YIT Coordinator continues to enroll youth in the UVM Study.
- The YIT Advisory Board continues to meet and develop strategy for implementing a youth center in the Franklin County community. A potential location has been identified.
- The YIT Coordinator was awarded a scholarship to attend the National Systems of Care Conference
- The YIT Coordinator is participating in the development of a statewide youth training devoted to the leadership and development of minority youth.
- The YIT Coordinator is involved in collaborative efforts to establish a movie project in the Franklin/Grand Isle community head up by Dr. Fred Holmes (Mousetrap Pediatrics). This movie is intended to shine a light on the quiet prescription drug epidemic affecting the lives of so many youth.
- The YIT Coordinator is rigorously researching active funding sources to strengthen resources for youth who have transportation needs, homeless, unemployed, and in desperate need of mentorship, and support.

6. Activities Planned for Next Reporting Period

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

The Youth In Transition Annual Transition Ceremony – This event was established to celebrate youth’s successful transition out of our system of care. This year we have invited the recently elected Mayor Liz Gamache to speak at our small ceremony. Youth will be given gifts and well wishes as they move onward to bigger and greater endeavors, taking with them the tools needed for continued success.

New Space in the community – YIT will move into a shared space with other community partners for the purpose of being more readily assessable to the youth in the downtown community of St. Albans. This will allow the opportunity to facilitate more groups.

New Generation variety TV show – Program sponsored by channel 15, public access TV. The show will air such topics as mental health among youth, music, sports, and culture.

Franklin/ Grand Isle Counties’ Regional Youth In Transition Conference – This annual event is an opportunity for youth throughout the region to learn about resources, network with other youth, participate in youth panels and discussions, discover new solutions for problems affecting youth.

Poetry Slams – Chow Bella’s restaurant has requested to partner with New Generation youth group to host poetry slams at their establishment. Youth will read, sing, scream, recite and play their stories as part of the youth voice movement.

DMH only:

Date received: _____

Approved by: _____

Date approved: _____

Approved by: _____

Date approved: _____