

Addison County Youth in Transition Program

The Counseling Service of Addison County is pleased to announce the hiring of Joshua Schupp-Star to serve as the Youth in Transition (YIT) Coordinator for Addison County. Josh brings previous experience in working with runaway, homeless, and otherwise disenfranchised youth via street outreach, drop-in center, and shelter engagement strategies.

The principal goal of this regions YIT project is to improve the system of care for young adults in Addison County through collaborative efforts between all agencies currently serving transition aged youth. While Addison County prides itself on a number of key indicators of successful outcomes for youth, there a few service gaps which the regional YIT grant hopes to address. A number of these gaps revolve around the changes in services available to youth once they turn 18. Chief amongst these are housing, health care, and mental health treatment. These gaps were identified through a planning committee for grant implantation as well as focus groups conducted with youth currently receiving services.

One of the first objectives of the Addison County YIT project will be to put together a Youth Services Council consisting of representatives from all agencies serving transition aged youth. A previous manifestation of this Youth Services Council was responsible for the creation of Addison County's three Teen Centers (Bristol hub, Middlebury Teen Center, and the Vergennes Boys and Girls club). The focus of this council will be working to communicate best practices, provide peer supervision and coordinated support

for challenging trends amongst youth in transition, and work to create new strategies for ensuring successful outcomes.

Secondly, Josh will be working to put together a youth council staffed by and for transition aged youth. This council will work alongside the Youth Services Council to disseminate youth guided best practices throughout the community as well as act as a decision making body for further program implementation. In Addison County there are already a number of youth councils that exist in various forms. These will likely be tapped to nominate members to participate in countywide meetings. The YIT team will also be hiring a peer support worker to work alongside Josh and the various councils to help youth navigate the system and make a successful transition to adulthood.

So far Josh has been working with county agencies, schools, and drop-in centers to identify youth most in need of additional support. Through this outreach effort the Youth in Transition team has already begun identifying and providing services to youth in Addison County. These services have included hygiene, housing assistance, family mediation, social skills training, employment searches, and supportive counseling.

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