

**CHITTENDEN COUNTY**

**YOUTH IN TRANSITION REGIONAL PLAN**

**11/30/09**

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## **I. Chittenden County’s vision for its system of care for transition-aged young people:**

To expand access and engagement of services and supports for Chittenden County young adults (ages 16 to 21) who are experiencing severe emotional disturbance (as defined by Act 264), which will enhance their self-sufficiency and successes as they enter adulthood.

Key components to successfully expanding access to services and supports for young adults and their families in Chittenden County will include more fully involving young people and their families in the implementation of Chittenden County’s YIT Regional Plan. The plan includes a strategic expansion of key community services, improved system of care collaboration, and greater access to services and supports in and beyond the immediate Burlington area. Specific YIT outcomes and strategies were identified and prioritized by the extensive strategic planning process completed in Chittenden County over a 3-month period, and it was recognized that access to services was a major obstacle, experienced by young adults, parents and caregivers, and providers alike. Though there are some gaps in services and supports, an overwhelming concern is not solely the lack of services but the confusing nature of the system of care and difficulty in understanding and accessing community services.

We believe that in Chittenden County many of the programs and services available to transition-aged young adults with emotional or behavioral challenges currently reflect many of the values embodied by the TIP System. When asked to share what works, a local community educator wrote “Programs that offer flexibility and numerous options seem to be working... [they] define their programs by offering youth-centered opportunities that give young people power and responsibility. Focusing on the developmental needs of teenagers, such as positive risk-taking, social networking, money management, goal-setting, etc, instead of on community expectation, has helped youth grow and find their role.”

We also acknowledge that there is much room for growth in developing a more fully operational TIP system. In developing and implementing each outcome and strategy, the following TIP guidelines will continue to focus and direct our work:

1. Person-centered planning is driven by the young person’s interests, strengths, and cultural and familial values.
2. Services and supports must be tailored for each youth individually and must encompass all transition domains.
3. Services and supports need to be coordinated to provide continuity from the young person’s perspective.
4. A safety net of support is provided by the young person’s team.
5. Achieving greater independence requires the enhancement of the young person’s competencies.
6. The TIP System must be outcome driven.

(TIP System Guidelines taken from “Transition to Adulthood: A Resource for Assisting Young People with Emotional or Behavioral Difficulties” by Hewitt B. Clark and Maryann Davis).

**II. Description of the Chittenden County services already in place for behavioral health treatment for Youth in Transition (aged 16-21, inclusive, and their families) with severe emotional disturbance, especially those who are out-of-school:**

Please refer to Appendix A - the Chittenden County Services Chart for a comprehensive look at area services.

**III. Statement of remaining unmet needs (gap between the regional vision and the current situation/services)**

In looking at unmet needs in our community, we gathered some pertinent data to assist in deepening our understanding of both the quality and quantity of issues facing Chittenden County's young people, families and service providers. This is a snapshot from some of the key agencies working with transition-age young adults and is by no means a comprehensive look at the data collected throughout our county.

***Chittenden County Family Services Division: A point-in-time look at the numbers (10/30/09) of young adults over the age of 16:***

CC (Child Custody)	30	(24% of all in this category statewide)
DC (Delinquent in Custody)	42	(24% of all in this category statewide)
UC (Unmanageable in Custody)	6	(9% of all in this category statewide)
Total	78	(21% of all youth in custody statewide)
Total statewide	371	

***Vermont Family Network: A query of their data base for calls re: youth between 16 to 21 (1/1/08 to 9/1/09) – by subject:***

Transition – 157 calls  
Suspension – 47 calls  
Substance abuse – 229 calls  
Truancy/dropout – 26 calls  
Juv. Justice – 40 calls  
Mental health related – 181 calls  
Housing – 42 calls  
DCF custody – 93 calls

***Spectrum Youth and Family Services: Numbers of young people served in various programs:***

*Shelter:* FY '09 = 119

Of note, Spectrum's shelter turned away 120 young people.

**(See Appendix D – Burlington Free Press article on youth homelessness)**

*Youth Development Program (YDP):* Spectrum has the contract with DCF to provide transitional services to transition-age young adults in the DCF system (and those that were in the system).

**TOTAL YDP youth served 10/1/08 – 9/30/09 = 193**

*Substance Abuse Counseling Program:*

Total young people served = 355 10/1/08 – 9/30/09

*JOBS (A collaboration between HowardCenter and Spectrum):*

Total number of clients served: 54 (10/1/08 – 9/30/09)

Of those 54:

Employed: 63%

Employed 90 days or more: 24%

Involvement in DCF (past or present): 44%

Involvement with corrections (past or present): 24%

**HowardCenter: Numbers of young people served in various programs:**

Agency-wide = 1,145 open clients between the ages 16 to 21 (counted on 11/12/09).

*First Call:* Received 454 calls during FY '09 from 16 to 21 year olds (each person counted once regardless of how many calls they made).

*The average drop-out rate for Chittenden County high schools = 2.47%.*

Several themes emerged from the stakeholder needs assessment process undertaken over the summer months. **(Please refer to Appendix B - Chittenden County Community Stakeholder Planning Process Report, for a more complete analysis).** In organizing and understanding the themes, it made sense to categorize them, recognizing that they are all connected and impact one another. These issues create unmet needs, affect the community's ability to meet needs, and to build the capacity on the local level to develop, strengthen and provide comprehensive, coordinated and accessible services and supports to young adults and their families.

Chittenden County's vision strives to be realistic and achievable given the many needs, challenges and concerns raised by community stakeholders and reflected by the themes below. It is paramount that the system of care be accessible, available and understandable to young people, their families, and to providers. Chittenden County has many services to offer, and has made important strides in creating effective partnerships among service providers. Though our collaborative circles have increased and widened, we must create more room at these tables for young adults, parents, and for community providers and members. These collaborative teams are working parallel to one another, and we need to join together, to creatively problem-solve on a systems level, as well as looking at individual needs and challenges. The outcomes and strategies identified in our Regional Plan **(see Appendix E)**, were ultimately chosen with the belief that they can address and positively change some of the core issues and needs related to our current system of care for transition-aged young people. The outcomes and strategies address some of the key systems issues, program gaps, and community issues impacting our County. The following are the themes that emerged from the community stakeholder feedback gathered and analyzed over the summer:

**Systems Issues:**

- Level funding; funding cuts; funding that "compartmentalizes" the work and makes it impossible to serve the "whole" person or family.
- Lack of collaboration
- Lack of communication
- Privacy and confidentiality rules that make it impossible for parents to be involved; providers to talk with each other; make collaboration difficult at best
- The system of care is complex, confusing, and mired in bureaucracy and keeping people "out"
- Eligibility criteria, procedures, protocols, that are complicated, confusing, and seem focused on making people ineligible
- Youth who are 16 and in need of services/DCF custody – how to support them without juvenile justice involvement if it's not necessary
- No central place to go to find out about services and how to access services

**Program issues**

- Adult services that are not designed with transition-aged young people in mind
- Lack of funds, staffing, resources which make people ineligible, wait, confused, and frustrated

- Support, education and counseling for family members is sorely lacking. Engaging with the family in whatever ways make sense is not built into most programs working with this age group, esp. if they are homeless or over 18.
- Follow-up/after care services are lacking

Gaps in services:

- Continue to struggle with providing effective outreach, recreational, counseling and social service support to refugee and immigrant families and youth.
- Lack of opportunities for young people in communities outside Burlington: recreation, employment, housing, health, etc.

Community issues:

- Poverty
- Isolation
- Public transportation- not affordable or accessible county-wide
- Lack of affordable and accessible housing; need housing continuum for transition-aged youth
- Lack of jobs – job skills training, job coaching, career building, etc.
- Capacity to work effectively with immigrant and refugee youth and families
- Racism
- Homophobia

#### **IV. Desired outcomes and possible indicators:**

It was decided on March 2<sup>nd</sup> at an ACCESS Team meeting that the YIT Steering Committee, formed as a sub-committee of the Chittenden County ACCESS Team, would lead the YIT grant strategic planning efforts, as well as oversee all aspects of the YIT planning process for the County. In Chittenden County the ACCESS Team has been charged by the LIT to deal with policy and systems issues. The two teams have a close and collaborative relationship. The YIT Steering Committee met for the first time on April 17. After writing a job description and developing a budget for the planning funds, a hiring process was undertaken and in mid-June a YIT Facilitator was hired to coordinate and carry out the community stakeholder feedback process, which was completed in early fall. A young person was also hired in mid-July to be the Young Adult Facilitator, and work alongside the YIT Facilitator in organizing and gathering stakeholder feedback, especially the youth perspective. Several incarnations of the results of the stakeholder feedback were created, and outcomes and strategies began to emerge from the analysis of the community feedback and needs assessment. The YIT Steering Committee members worked to organize and prioritize outcomes and strategies; the larger Access Team also participated in a session to discuss and prioritize the outcomes and strategies. A survey was developed and disseminated via Survey Monkey to community stakeholders asking them to rate by importance the outcomes and 7 prioritized strategies. **(See Appendix C - Survey and Results)**

The following is the result of these efforts and lists the final three outcomes and their related 7 strategies: **(Please refer to Appendix E).**

##### **Outcome I: To improve the life skills of Chittenden County transition-age young adults, with a special focus on employment.**

1. Strategy: Increase the capacity of the JOBS (Jump On Board for Success) Program, so more JOBS staff can be hired and more young adults can be served. (This strategy also relates to Outcome III).

**Outcome II: To improve knowledge of, access to, and collaboration among, community resources: for young adults, parents/caregivers, and providers.**

2. Strategy: Develop an On-line Resource Center that is user friendly and accessible to people regardless of their ability to access transportation, to assist parents, young adults ages 16 to 21 years old, caregivers/parents, and community service providers to find out what existing community services and resources are available and how to access them.
3. Strategy: Improve collaboration with existing housing and housing support programs to increase housing options for transition-age young adults.
4. Strategy: Provide leadership to the Chittenden County YIT Regional Plan.
5. Strategy: Young Adult Navigator positions will be created to provide assistance to young adults ages 16 to 21, within the target population, to secure information and connect to existing community services and resources, to ensure an informed and successful transition to adulthood.
6. Strategy: A Parent Navigator position will be created to provide assistance to parents/caregivers of transition-age young adults within the target population, to secure information and connect to existing community resources and services to receive support for themselves and to ensure their child's informed and successful transition to adulthood.

**Outcome III: To improve and expand service delivery and service coordination for youth and families.**

7. Strategy: All young people, ages 15 and older, who meet the criteria for a Coordinated Services Plan, will have a Transition Plan.

**V. Description of priority services/strategies, including interagency agreements and methods for responsiveness to youth and families, public outreach, training for implementation, etc.**

**See Appendix E.**

**VI. Management structure, fiscal agent, and contact people (for administration and evaluation of the grant)**

The HowardCenter will act as the fiscal agent for Chittenden County's YIT grant. The contact person for grant administration will be Catherine Simonson, Director of Howardcenter's Child, Youth and Family Services. The grant evaluation liaison will be Betsy Cain, Assistant Director of HowardCenter's Child, Youth and Family Services.

The YIT Leadership team will provide the oversight and management of the YIT grant. Management of specific personnel hired with grant funds will be determined based on the hiring organization for each position. For example, the new JOBS Case Managers hired with YIT grant

funds will fall under the existing JOBS management structure and the JOBS Coordinator will provide direct supervision of these new staff. The Parent Educator will be an employee of the Vermont Family Network (VFN), and will be directly supervised by VFN supervisory staff. It is yet to be determined which organizations will hire and supervise the 2 Young Adult Navigators. This decision will determine how and who manages these new positions. The YIT Steering Committee will make this decision.

## VII. Project budget summary:

### PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY

Line Items	Total Program Costs	Federal Grant Funds Requested	Regional Contributions	Source of Regional Funds
Salaries (specify # and Type FTEs)				
Strategy Parent Navigator (.50 FTE)	16,575	16,575		
Young Adult Navigator (.80 FTE)	19,968	19,968		
JOBS Clinicians (1.67 FTE)	55,882	44,389	11,493	VR/JOBS
Fringe Benefits	26,111	22,176	3,935	VR/JOBS
Consultants	16,718	15,718	1,000	HC In-Kind
In-state travel	5,920	5,920		
Peer Stipends	3,000	3,000		
Space costs, including heat and utilities	2,505	2,505		
Phone	1,531	1,531		
Training/Professional Development	4,468	3,854	614	HC In-Kind
Office supplies, materials, postage	4,034	4,034		
Indirect	18,805	16,954	1,851	VR/JOBS
<b>Total</b>	<b>175,518</b>	<b>156,625</b>	<b>18,893</b>	



## **Detail of Expenses:**

### **Salaries**

Salary figures reflect .50 FTE Strategy Parent Navigator, .80 FTE Young Adult Navigators (2 individuals at .40 FTE each), .17 FTE JOBS Coordinators, and 1.5 FTE JOBS Clinicians. Paid hours reflect 1.0 FTE as equivalent to 1,950 annual hours.

### **Fringe Benefits**

The figure for Fringe Benefits reflects the anticipated costs for benefit eligible positions and includes FICA, Worker's Comp, Unemployment, Health, Life, 401K, and Disability.

### **Consultants**

The figure reflects costs for website development, an Evaluation Liaison, as well as Translation and Interpreter Services. Year Two we anticipate contracting for youth driven google map application through New England Network.

### **Travel**

The figure reflects mileage reimbursement. Staff time related to travel is included in salaries.

### **Peer Stipends**

The figure reflects costs for stipends to encourage youth participation in the navigation strategies as well as participation in the regional training for young adults, parents and providers.

### **Training/Professional Development**

The figure reflects costs for regional trainings focused on the outcomes identified in this regional plan.

### **Office Supplies, Material, Postage**

The figure reflects costs for operating supplies, materials and equipment.

### **Regional Contributions**

\$17,280 from Chittenden County VR/JOBS funding. This amount reflects weekly direct service provided by one of the clinicians to JOBS clients that will be funded via that contract.

\$1,614 from HowardCenter in-kind donation.

# APPENDIX

## Appendix A: Chart of Services

### Chittenden County Services for Transition-Aged Young Adults (16-21 years of age)

EXISTING SERVICES	Employment	Education/ Training	Free from Incarceration	Caring Relationships/ Community Connection	Health	Housing & Basic Needs	Care Coordination
Alcoholics Anonymous				•			
Alternative Programs w/in Public Schools		•					
Association of Africans Living in Vermont				•			
Birthright					•		
Casey Family Services						•	
Casey Family Services Companions				•			
Casey Family Services Learn to Work	•						
Casey Family Services Life Skills Group	•			•			
Casey Family Services Parent Support Groups				•			
Casey GLAF (Gay, Lesbian, Adoptive Family Group)				•			
CASH Coalition (free tax preparation, debt reduction)		•					
Centerpoint		•			•		

<b>EXISTING SERVICES</b>	<b>Employment</b>	<b>Education/ Training</b>	<b>Free from Incarceration</b>	<b>Caring Relationships/ Community Connection</b>	<b>Health</b>	<b>Housing &amp; Basic Needs</b>	<b>Care Coordination</b>
Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity	•					•	
Chittenden County Truancy Project		•					
Community College of Vermont		•					
Community Health Center					•		
Community High School		•	•				
Community Justice Centers			•				
Community Reparative Boards			•				
Community Support & Supervision (street checkers)			•				
Connecting Cultures					•		
COTS						•	
Department of Children & Families		•				•	•
Dept. of Labor	•						
Faith-Based Communities				•			
First Call HowardCenter					•		
Fletcher Allen Health Care					•		
Food Shelf						•	

<b>EXISTING SERVICES</b>	<b>Employment</b>	<b>Education/ Training</b>	<b>Free from Incarceration</b>	<b>Caring Relationships/ Community Connection</b>	<b>Health</b>	<b>Housing &amp; Basic Needs</b>	<b>Care Coordination</b>
Horizons		•					
Housing Authorities						•	
HowardCenter Burlington Police Dept. Partnership			•				
HowardCenter Spectrum Pre-Adjudication Program			•				
HowardCenter Act 1/Bridge					•		
HowardCenter Child, Youth & Family Services					•	•	•
HowardCenter Mental Health Court			•				•
HowardCenter Safe Recovery					•		
Imani				•			
Independent Schools (Centerpoint, Garvin)		•					
India Cultural Club of Vermont				•			
Islamic Society of Vermont				•			
Japan-American Society of VT				•			
JOBS	•				•		•
JUMP						•	

<b>EXISTING SERVICES</b>	<b>Employment</b>	<b>Education/ Training</b>	<b>Free from Incarceration</b>	<b>Caring Relationships/ Community Connection</b>	<b>Health</b>	<b>Housing &amp; Basic Needs</b>	<b>Care Coordination</b>
Linking Learning to Life	•						
Lund		•			•	•	•
Maple Leaf Farm					•		
Mercy Connections	•	•	•	•		•	•
Milton Family Center				•			•
Northeastern Family Institute					•	•	•
Northern Lights						•	
Northland Job Corp	•	•				•	
On-Top		•					
Outright Vermont				•	•		
Planned Parenthood					•		
Police Youth Officers			•				
Private Providers					•		
Reach-up	•						
Resource	•						
RU12				•			

<b>EXISTING SERVICES</b>	<b>Employment</b>	<b>Education/ Training</b>	<b>Free from Incarceration</b>	<b>Caring Relationships/ Community Connection</b>	<b>Health</b>	<b>Housing &amp; Basic Needs</b>	<b>Care Coordination</b>
Safe Harbor Clinic					•		
Safe Space				•		•	
Salvation Army						•	
Somali-Bantu Community Association				•			
Spectrum Drop-in Employment	•					•	
Spectrum Clinic					•		
Spectrum Counseling					•		
Spectrum SRO Shelter Co-op						•	•
Spectrum Youth Development		•				•	•
Student Resource Officers			•				
Supportive Employment Program in Public Schools	•						
Teen Centers				•			
Tibetan Association of Vermont				•			
Transitional Services		•	•				•
Vermont Adult Learning	•	•					
Vermont Cares					•		

<b>EXISTING SERVICES</b>	<b>Employment</b>	<b>Education/ Training</b>	<b>Free from Incarceration</b>	<b>Caring Relationships/ Community Connection</b>	<b>Health</b>	<b>Housing &amp; Basic Needs</b>	<b>Care Coordination</b>
Vermont Children's Aid							•
Vermont Family Network		•		•			
Vermont Legal Aid			•				
Vermont Student Assistance		•					
Vermont Technical College		•					
Vermont Youth Conservation Corps	•	•					
Visiting Nurse Association					•		•
Vocational Rehabilitation	•						
VT Refugee Resettlement Program	•			•			•
VT Works for Women	•						
Women Helping Battered Women						•	•
Women's Rape Crisis Center (24 hour hotline)					•		
Youth Build	•	•					

## Appendix B:

### Report: Chittenden County Community Stakeholder Planning Process for Youth in Transition (YIT) Grant

(Written by Karen Bielawski-Branch, YIT Facilitator and Annie Wohland, Young Adult Facilitator)

- I. Stakeholders: outreach efforts and contact
- II. Feedback: Summary of what works and what does not
- III. Themes: common threads
- IV. Suggestions: from stakeholders
- V. Top Priorities and Recommendations

#### I. Stakeholders:

- ✓ Karen met with Mark Redmond and Betsy Cain on 6/16, where they gave her a stakeholder contact list, brainstormed by the Access team.
- ✓ Karen began organizing and tracking down contact information for all of the stakeholders on the list, as well as adding to the list.
- ✓ Karen wrote a memo and sent it out to many of the stakeholders on June 29<sup>th</sup>, and began following up via email and phone to those who received the memo.
- ✓ Karen met with Vanessa and Courtney to learn more about their roles.
- ✓ Karen began working on focus group/interview questions for providers, parents, and youth.
- ✓ Karen read A LOT of information Betsy emailed me about what other regions were doing and other information from Brenda Bean.
- ✓ Karen attended the July 9 Sequential Intercept Model training; Chittenden County planning group met in afternoon for brainstorming session.
- ✓ Karen began scheduling meetings with stakeholders.
- ✓ Karen met with Mercedes to talk about our roles and how we could collaborate in Chittenden county.
- ✓ Karen met with and hired Annie Wohland, Youth Facilitator.
- ✓ Stakeholder meetings and phone calls began in earnest on 7/2/09.
- ✓ Emails, phone calls to contact and schedule meetings; doing in-person interviews, phone interviews, focus groups, tracking and organizing stakeholder outreach and contact progress up until mid-September.
- ✓ 9/17 - Sent memo via email to list of educators, school personnel and administrators asking for feedback on YIT planning process.
- ✓ 10/26 – Results in from Stakeholder survey sent via Survey Monkey to rate 7 prioritized strategies.

#### II. Feedback: A summary of what is working/what are the strengths:

##### YOUNG PEOPLE:

**According to the young people interviewed (total youth = 33; 9 youth were under 18; 24 youth 18 and over – youth interviewed from Lund Family Center, Spectrum, Centerpoint, Community High School)**

The positive feedback we received as to what is helpful about services included the following:

- they were listened to
- felt respected
- got help with filling out forms, job applications, getting on Medicaid, getting medication and medical care, food, clothing, bus passes, help with taxes, Chafee funds, Food Stamps, etc.
- Being able to take art classes
- Help going to school; getting into school; going to the Centerpoint school; taking college classes
- Help getting hooked up to counseling
- Help getting into Youthbuild
- Help getting a mentor to go hunting and fishing with
- Felt connected to the staff person



- Helping to have a plan and goals
- Staff are honest, friendly
- Helped get a new green card
- Providing a safe place to sleep and work on goals
- Helping with resumes and job skills and job search
- Helping gain independent living skills
- Having clear expectations and challenging me
- Staff is helpful and supportive
- Staff was available and accessible
- Being part of a group with other people “who are going through some of the same things...”
- Case managers and staff that know about different services and what is available
- Incentive programs i.e. Spectrum’s SRO because after a year of living there you can get a Section 8 Voucher and Spectrum’s job training class, which when you complete it you get \$125 for work clothes
- Having a place to live
- Helping me “to stay clean”
- Having good food
- Help in getting connected to other community services

**PARENTS:**

**According to parents interviewed: (total parents = 6 mothers with children between 16 and 22 receiving services):**

What works/is helpful?

- Having a parent support group to meet, talk with, and share ideas with other parents
- Once child was finally found eligible for Howard services, parent is very relieved and knows child will get what she needs.
- NFI – communication with parents and all of the services to child
- Centerpoint – providing all of the services to child and parent support group
- Vt. Family Network – help in advocating with school and services, support and education
- HowardCenter/UVM’s SUCCEED program – a place for 22 y.o. to live and try college classes

**PROVIDERS:**

**According to providers: (total providers = 50 + 18(from Chittenden County planning group at July 9 Seq. Intercept. Model Training) Grand total = 68 providers**

In talking about what works/what’s helpful,

One educator wrote “Existing community services for those who qualify for adult services with developmental disabilities/autism with referrals funneled through Howard Developmental Disability branch work. They work because there is state support for funding. This population is more visible and dependent. It represents only a small amount of students who are on IEP’s who graduate.”

Another educator wrote “Programs that offer flexibility and numerous options seem to be working. Spectrum, Teen Parent Ed, Youth Build, etc, define their programs by offering youth-centered opportunities that give young people power and responsibility. Focusing on the developmental needs of teenagers, such as positive risk-taking, social networking, money management, goal-setting, etc, instead of on community expectation, has helped youth grow and find their role.”

When asked what works about teams, this provider stated “Teams that are strength-based, preventative, and we can focus on progress, praise, and positive reinforcement and problem-solving.”

### **Positive qualities and characteristics of strong services that providers identified:**

- Team meetings
- Interagency collaborations and partnerships
- CORE Transition Teams
- Programs that span the 16 to 22 year age range, and laws/regulations that have changed to allow youth to be served past 18.
- Programs that are also doing family work
- Programs and services that are developed specifically with adolescents and young adults in mind
- Strength-based and youth-focused, also family-focused
- No waiting lists; ability to respond to the “opportunity for change”
- Clear transition planning
- Work with these young people as “our” young people, not just one agency’s problem to solve.

### **Things that are not working/not helpful: summary from youth and parents feedback**

- Confusing and complicated “system” to navigate
- Not youth-centered
- Not family-centered
- No independent living skill-building in all programs that work with youth
- No central clearinghouse of referral and resource information
- Funding fragments services
- Services not designed with young people in mind
- Services make youth come to them
- Need to get services to communities outside of Burlington
- Parent support/family support/sibling support sorely lacking
- Discharge young person with no plan
- Too many case workers/staff turn - over/inconsistency in approach and messages of each worker
- Lack of communication – with staff and youth, staff with other community providers, staff with parents
- Program expectations not flexible
- Eligibility criteria too narrow

### **III. Themes:**

#### Systems Issues:

- Level funding; funding cuts; funding that “compartmentalizes” the work and makes it impossible to serve the “whole” person or family.
- Lack of collaboration
- Lack of communication
- Privacy and confidentiality rules that make it impossible for parents to be involved; providers to talk with each other; make collaboration difficult at best
- The system of care is complex, confusing, and mired in bureaucracy and keeping people “out”
- Eligibility criteria, procedures, protocols, that are complicated, confusing, and seem focused on making people ineligible
- Youth who are 16 and in need of services/DCF custody – how to support them without juvenile justice involvement if its not necessary
- No central place to go to find out about services and how to access services

#### Program issues

- Adult services that are not designed with transition-aged young people in mind
- Lack of funds, staffing, resources which make people ineligible, wait, confused, and frustrated

- Support, education and counseling for family members is sorely lacking. Engaging with the family in whatever ways make sense is not built into most programs working with this age group, esp. if they are homeless or over 18.
- Follow-up/after care services are lacking

Gaps in services:

- Continue to struggle with providing effective outreach, recreational, counseling and social service support to refugee and immigrant families and youth.
- Lack of opportunities for young people in communities outside Burlington: recreation, employment, housing, health, etc.

Community issues:

- Poverty
- Isolation
- Public transportation- not affordable or accessible county-wide
- Lack of affordable and accessible housing; need housing continuum for transition-aged youth
- Lack of jobs – job skills training, job coaching, career building, etc.
- Capacity to work effectively with immigrant and refugee youth and families
- Racism
- Homophobia

**IV. Suggestions: (from all stakeholders)**

- Create “resource centers” in outlying centers, i.e. teen centers, MFCC
- Cross-training in youth culture, positive youth development (including GALs, police, teen center staff, agency staff, court staff, judges, etc.)
- Advanced training in working with refugee populations/illegal immigrant issues/trauma issues
- Cross-training in Independent Living Skill development
- Training in working with foster/adoptive/kin families
- Create staff sharing programs/co-locate staff from several agencies in outlying locations
- Create a job-training consortium to create a fuller continuum of educational/vocational opportunities, including an apprenticeship program
- Create a housing continuum and a task force to work on it
- Create a “Westview House” type center for young people
- Bring back the transition-aged mental health CM team, with a shared team from several MH agencies, not just Howard
- Expand First Call to be able to work with young adults up to 22 (at least)
- Create mentoring program for this age group
- Need DETER for young men
- Expand DETER and Treatment Court to work with transition-aged youth
- Drug Court currently sees 18 transition-aged youth a year, could easily increase (esp. 20 to 22 year olds) with more staffing (according to Bob Wolford).
- More E-bed options, esp. for 18 to 22
- Make the JOBS program available to people that don’t have any insurance or create a program, similar to the JOBS program, available to people that don’t have any insurance.
- Improved communication between the Burlington Court, Probation Officers and offenders.
- Should have a Social Worker for the Department of Corrections.

- Many problems with different things that the Burlington Court court-mandates people to fulfill for their Probation because often times they conflict with each other. For example, people sometimes are required to attend the Community High School from Monday-Friday from about 8am-2pm, to work on obtaining their GED, but they are also court-ordered to do other things during that 8am-2pm time.
- Create home visiting service (like Healthy Babies, Kids and Families)
- Develop a coordinated transition-aged system, like Chittenden County's BBF early childhood system (use this as a model).

**Additional suggestions/Ideas from young people and parents: (some may overlap)**

- More human services organizations in Chittenden County should provide more activities and vouchers for activities.
- More volunteering opportunities for young people.
- Improve the Section 8 Housing Waitlist, by shortening it, so it doesn't take 2-3 years to receive a Section 8 voucher.
- Improved CCTA transportation, especially beyond the CCTA bus system.
- Improve Spectrum Drop-In Center by providing structured supervision and hiring more staff.
- Spectrum's Free Clinic, which provides free medical services, should be open more than three times each week.
- DCF should hire more Social Workers.
- Children in the State of Vermont's DCF custody should work with fewer Social Workers and foster parents and children should have more communication with Social Workers.
- Improve easier accessibility and financial resources to provide housing.
- Improve easier accessibility and financial resources to attend college.
- Insufficient resources to send children to daycare.
- Need jobs.
- Have more community-based programs for children and young people above 18 that provide structured supervision where they can hang out and eat.
- Drivers Ed. For non-school youth
- If some of the grant money will be used to create new programs and/or add to services, make sure they can maintain themselves even when the grant money runs out.
- Use some of the grant money to help with infrastructure needs, such energy efficiency upgrades to buildings so that some money will be freed up after the grant money runs out in the future. That extra money can be used towards that organization's services, etc.
- Provide financial help, such as a grant, for young people to get a car from Good News Garage.
- Provide financial help, such as a grant, for young people to help pay for their apartment's security deposit and first month's rent, monthly rent and utilities.
- Provide financial help, such as a grant, for young people to help pay for college.
- Taxi vouchers.
- Clothing vouchers.
- Increase the number of mentors for young people for different human services organizations in Chittenden County and decrease the time it takes to receive mentors.
- Use the grant money to help with infrastructure needs, such energy efficiency upgrades to buildings so that some money will be freed up after the grant money runs out in the future. That extra money can be used towards that organization's services, etc.
- Hire Autism-related and other special needs foster parents, respite providers and mentors.
- Improve and/or create appropriate schools and group homes tailored to young people with special needs.
- Improve and increase the Garvin School's behavioral and academic expectations.

- Create and improve therapeutic social options for young people with special needs where there's a greater academic focus, especially from 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade and college. Focus evenly on behavioral and academic focus, so young people can attend and complete high school and college work independently.
- Create a boarding school where young people live at and receive education for young people with Autism.
- Improve eligibility for Howard Developmental Services to make it easier for young people to receive services. Provide more eligibility options because most young people can't receive developmental services, unless they receive a Medicaid waiver and are about to be hospitalized.
- Improve eligibility for Developmental Services job training services. Developmental Services should offer job training services to young people with Autism and less severe disabilities instead of usually only to people with very severe disabilities. Job training services for young people with Autism and less severe disabilities should provide an adult to accompany them to their job and then to slowly fade away.
- Create a training program for college students with special needs, such as recommendations and a network forum for employees at different colleges to help students with special needs. Conduct a survey for how many people with Autism attend college and create services tailored to people with Autism. Follow SUCCEED's model, which is a house with six or more students that attend college, but instead of taking full-time classes, they only take part-time classes.
- Create a half-way house/group home living situation for young people with Autism and multiple diagnoses because group settings aren't realistic and don't suffice.

**Examples of “out-of-the box” efforts happening in Chittenden County:**

- Juvenile Justice Panel run by Andy Strauss
- Truancy Project and referrals to Centerpoint
- Transition Age Advisory Team
- VAL goes to MFCC
- Lund at MFCC to provide SA services
- Spectrum at King St.
- Neighborkeepers in Milton
- Economic Svcs. at MFCC
- Mercy Connections and Bob Wolford at Howard – starting a mentoring program for women coming out of corrections
- Judge Joseph project – refer from the bench into substance abuse programs, like Spectrum, Howard.
- UVM's Connecting Cultures – successful refugee outreach and counseling services, hoping to add social work services in the Fall
- First Call has a contract for tele-interpreters 24/7
- Comcast provides stipends to youth thru' Spectrum/DCF's YDP program
- SomaliBantu Assoc. – trains and pays youth to be translators; has Reparative Program that trains 12 guides (trained by the UN) to do family intervention work – they have a 100% success rate

**V. Top Priorities Identified and Recommendations:**

**Employment:**

- Increase JOBS program, with more flexible funding
- Increase capacity for broader continuum of job training opportunities, like volunteering, apprenticeships, job training sites at local businesses, schools, social service agencies, etc. (look at Learning Together model PCCs use).
- Increase job-readiness training classes offered at more locations throughout Chittenden County, like Teen Centers, MFCC, faith-based centers, refugee community centers
- Create task force to focus on increasing community capacity to train and employ young people

**Post-Secondary Education and Training:**

- Fund and provide Drivers Ed. Classes for youth not in school, again looking at locations throughout the County
- Improve collaboration between existing educational/vocational programs like Lund's, VAL, Youthbuild, CCV, SUCCEED, and JOBS with the other services involved with the youth/family – increase teaming to bring more clarity of roles, function, expectations, barriers, communication, case management, etc.
- Provide training and opportunities to youth for increased leadership – i.e. Public Speaking class, opportunities to give feedback formally and informally to programs, being on an advisory board, partnering with a staff person to do program development, being part of hiring processes, volunteering, etc.

#### **Free From Incarceration:**

- Develop a mental health court for youth
- For youth who are 16 and up, and are in need of residential and support services, these remain available (where appropriate), esp. for youth in the juvenile justice system.
- Develop case management support for youth involved with Community Justice Center, reparative boards, and restorative justice programs
- Develop linkages with Juvenile Justice Panel, Transition Age Advisory Team, Access Team, etc.

#### **Caring Relationships:**

- Family Support - Build up and build in counseling, education and support services to parents, siblings, care givers, etc.
- Develop “resource center” options to assist parents, youth, providers, and other community providers to find out about services and how to access them in less complex ways (phone, internet, community and teen centers, agencies, schools, faith communities, a written guide, etc.)
- Create “Navigator” positions or functions for youth, parents – train youth and parents as peer navigators
- Too many services “swirling” around a family – identify lead agency and team members with family/youth at center
- Need to clarify roles and functions of community teams and panels i.e Access, Act 264 Teams (Coordinated Services Plans), LIT, SIT, CORE Transition Teams, Juvenile Justice Panel. Create easy-to use guide (in different languages).

#### **Health:**

- More services for youth with borderline IQ not eligible for services i.e. job development, job skill development, job coaching, independent living skill development, community and resource access skill development, case management, etc.
- Case management services for youth/young adults who have major mental health issues, but are not eligible for CRT
- Look at current mental health funding to find creative ways to provide mental health counseling to youth in more agencies, like Spectrum, and in more locations
- Increase and improve education to youth, providers and parents about medical insurance and Medicaid and work to remove the barriers to applying for and getting Medicaid
- Work with state officials to develop an IOP for YIT with psychiatric issues, maybe in Chittenden County

#### **Housing:**

- Assess current housing options available to YIT and create housing continuum plan
- COTS’ “Ready to Rent” curriculum comes recommended but costs money – Buy curriculum and use in skill-building classes throughout the county.
- Improve collaboration with existing housing and housing support programs, esp. looking at needs of YIT.

- Transitional planning MUST be included in ALL programs, at an earlier start date, and not seen as a “specialty” that only certain programs or staff are responsible for – ALL youth need a transition plan, regardless of where they are “coming from”. Continue working with residential facilities to discharge youth with a housing plan in place.

## Stakeholder Questions:

### YIT QUESTIONS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE:

**Demographics:** Facilitator should figure out best way to get this information

- Gender: M F Transgender (youth self-identifies)
  - Age: Under 16 16 to 18 18 to 21 Over 21
  - Current living situation?
  - Race/ethnicity (How do they identify themselves?)
- Where would you like to be in the next year?
    - What/who is helping you get there?
    - What is getting in your way?
  - Have you been able to get help with your basic needs: food, housing, health care, transportation, education, work, child care?
  - Are you aware of the services in the community and, if so, what was helpful about them?
  - How could the services have been better/more helpful to you?
  - What is missing in the community to help you?
  - How were you involved in determining the kind of services you received?
  - If you did not get that help from services, what do you need now to support your success in continuing your education or training, at work, in the community, and personally?
  - If there was money to support any kind of service or program to help young people in continuing your education or training, at work, in the community, and personally, how should that money be spent? What should be created or expanded?
  - What are ways that young people like yourself could be involved in helping to make services better in this community? If there were more opportunities for youth to be involved, would you want to become involved? How would you like to learn about these opportunities?

### YIT QUESTIONS FOR PROVIDERS:

- In thinking about the existing community services, what seems to be working/why are they working?
- How could existing partnerships be strengthened?
- What new partnerships could be created to better meet the needs of YIT and their families?
- What are the gaps/unmet needs as you see them?
- If you could decide what the best use of these funds would be, describe it?
- What are ways for youth to be involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and programs for youth in transition?

7. What are ways for the youth's support network including families to be involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and programs for youth in transition?
8. What do you think are the top 3 priorities for working with transition-aged youth in Chittenden County?

## **YIT QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS/CARE GIVERS:**

1. What was helpful about the services you and/or your child received?
2. How could the services have been better?
3. What other services would have been helpful?
4. How were you involved in determining the kind of services your child/family member received?
5. What do you think your child needs now to support their success in continuing their education or training, at work, in the community, and personally?
6. What support would be helpful for you?
7. How do you think the YIT funds should be used in Chittenden County to support any kind of service or program to help young people in continuing their education or training, at work, in the community, and personally? Are there existing programs and services that you think should be supported with these funds?
8. Is there anything else you would like us to know about the past or current services involved with your family?

## **Stakeholder Contact List:**

### **Meetings/Interviews/focus groups held: In-person (IP), Phone (P) or Email (E):**

Vanessa and Courtney: (IP)

Mercedes Avila: (IP)

Gina D'Ambrosio: (IP) she will be contacting VR, LLL, DOL, VSAC, WIB, Transition-aged team

Barbara Pafume from ADAP (IP)

Attended Seq. Intercept. Trng/afternoon planning session with many from Chitt. Cty (see list)

Phone meeting w/ Kim Coe – LFC will do 2-3 focus groups with their clients

Met with Melissa Smith from the SomaliBantu Assoc. w/ Mercedes (IP)

JOBS Conference call

Karen Vastine w/ Community Justice Ctr. (IP)

Annie Ramniceanu from Spectrum (IP)

Annie Wohland, who will work with me as the youth co-facilitator (IP)

Paul Landerl from HowardCenter (IP)

Community HS w/ Annie – teachers and students focus group (IP)

Ellen Vaut and Ann ? from VTFN (IP) – they will contact parents to answer questions via email or phone or interview



Mitch Barron from Centerpoint with Annie (IP) – 3 focus groups scheduled

Meeting of Regional Coordinators of community coalitions w/ Barb Pafume (IP)

Youth focus group @ Centerpoint with Annie

Cindy Mills and Frank ? from VAL (IP)

Amanda Churchill (YDP) @ Spectrum with Annie (IP)

Maggie Reilly from Casey Family Services (IP)

Youth interview at Centerpoint with Annie (IP)

Youth focus group @ Spectrum Shelter with Annie (IP)

Youth focus group @ Spectrum SRO with Annie (IP)

Andy Twite from Court Diversion (IP)

Cyrus Patton, Shelter and SRO Program Coordinator from Spectrum (P)

Met with Gina re: the Transition-age Advisory Team focus group (IP)

Robin Pesci from First Call (IP)

Tim Wile from So. Burl. Schools (E)

Karen Fondacaro, Director of Behavior Therapy and Psychotherapy Center and Connecting Cultures from UVM w/ Mercedes (IP)

Bob Wolford, Offender Services from HowardCenter (IP)

Brett Chornyak and Beth ?(Teen Services Coordinator) from Milton Family Community Center (IP)

Danielle Bragg from NFI/Shelburne House (P)

Kris Hoffman from Lund (E)

Pam Gowland from VR (E)

Eric Johnson from VR (E)

Erin McGuire (E) - agreed to send out YIT grant info and questions to all Spec. Ed. Directors

Parent focus group @ Centerpoint with Annie (IP)

Attended TA Webinar @ Howard with Betsy and Jane

Kurt McGlinnis and Linda Carey, Essex PD (IP)

Interview with VT. Family Network parent (IP)

Vicki Smith and 2 staff from King St. Youth Center, with Annie (IP)

Youth focus Group at Spectrum Co-op (IP)

Andy Strauss from State's Atty. Office (IP)

Brian Cina from Transitional Services for Youth and Families (IP)

Martha Maksym from United Way (IP)

Mariah Sanderson, Burlington Regional Coordinator (P)

Heather Newcomb, case manager from Youthbuild (E)

Cynthia Henward, Substance Abuse Program Coord. From Lund (E)

Kathy Kort, Transition Specialist, South Burlington H.S. (E)

**Mercedes met with** (and shared the notes with me) Naya Pyskacek, Behavioral Health Coordinator from Community Health Center

**Gina facilitated** the Transition-age Advisory Team focus group (in attendance: Jane Helmstetter, Mark Schroeder, Eliza Pillard, Kathy Costello, Nicole Grubman, Vanessa Lang, Ellen Vaut, Heather Harrington, Paul Landerl, Beth Relyea, Amanda Churchill, Marissa Adamo)

**Kris Hoffman from Lund facilitated** a youth focus group with 7 Lund students (Emailed me the results)

**Email and phone contacts made/unsuccessful in setting up phone/in-person/email interviews:**

Phone interview scheduled with Chris Ness, ED of Outright (after several email and phone messages) – tried to reach him for 20 minutes, he was not answering phone and phone message system was full – I gave up.

Imani – left phone messages, no response

Tom Fraga (So. Burl. PD) – left phone message - on extensive vacation – not due back until mid-Sept.

Sally Borden – emails back and forth – she is willing to meet after vacation, second week in September

Judge Crucetti – left phone messages, no response

Matt Young – phone and email messages, on vacation, tried to connect via phone downtown, no luck

2 emails to Brooke Hadwen, Social Worker at BPD, no response

Emails to 2 VT Family Network parents – no response

Phone tag with a DCF foster parent – no luck connecting

Emails with Leisa Pollander from Sara Holbrook to talk via phone – no response

Emails to Boys and Girls Club – no response

Emails to Toki at VNA – no response

Worked with Mercedes to set up Bosnian and Somali youth focus groups – she could not get responses or folks couldn't do it until October

## Appendix C:

### Survey and Results

#### Community Stakeholder Survey: Rating top 7 strategies

The Youth in Transition (YIT) Steering Committee for Chittenden County embarked upon an extensive community stakeholder needs assessment process this summer (from mid-June until mid-September, 2009). This process included inviting many community providers, young people and their families, educators and other community members to provide feedback about Chittenden County's current services, programs, and system of care, supporting young people ages 16 to 21, with mental health issues and other life challenges.

The YIT Steering Committee has been working to synthesize the large quantity of information received through this needs assessment process, identify themes, develop and prioritize outcomes and strategies, and create the regional plan for Chittenden County to be presented for review to the state YIT Operations Team. The regional plan must be submitted, reviewed and accepted by November 15, 2009.

In the continued spirit of inviting community participation, this brief survey has been created. Seven strategies have been identified and this survey asks you to rate each strategy in order of importance, from your perspective. Many ideas, suggestions and gaps were identified and many themes emerged, as well as strategies, to address community gaps and needs. Recognizing that this grant does not provide the funds to address every concern and gap, the YIT Steering Committee has narrowed down to 3 main outcomes and 7 specific strategies to focus on.

We are including the Outcomes so you can understand the context of each strategy. Also, the strategies have not yet been "fleshed out" as far as specific implementation details or budget estimates. That will come once the decisions are made in finalizing the outcomes and strategies.

Please rate each strategy: 1 through 7 (You are ONLY rating strategies, NOT Outcomes).

1 = most important

7 = least important

**Total Started Survey: 61**

**Total Completed Survey: 59 (96.7%)**

1. Please take a few minutes to read the proposed strategies below. Which of these [Create Chart](#) [Download](#) strategies do you feel are the most important when it comes to serving transition-age youth in our community? Please rate each strategy 1 through 7 1 = most important 7 = least important

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Rating Average	Response Count
Strategy: Increase the capacity of the JOBS (Jump On Board for Success) Program, looking at funding and eligibility, so more youth can be served, and more JOBS staff can be hired.	8.0% (4)	20.0% (10)	14.0% (7)	16.0% (8)	18.0% (9)	12.0% (6)	12.0% (6)	4.00	50
Strategy: Develop "resource center" options that are user-friendly and easy to access to assist parents, young people, community providers and members to find out about services and how to access them. A "resource center" might be located in an agency, might be on the internet, on facebook, in a teen center, community center, etc. People should be able to access a "resource center" in many ways, regardless of their ability to access transportation.	19.1% (9)	12.8% (6)	12.8% (6)	17.0% (8)	14.9% (7)	12.8% (6)	10.6% (5)	3.77	47
Strategy: Improve collaboration with existing housing and housing support programs to increase housing options for transition-age youth.	18.8% (9)	14.6% (7)	22.9% (11)	14.6% (7)	4.2% (2)	10.4% (5)	14.6% (7)	3.60	48
Strategy: Increase role and scope of the Transition-age Youth Advisory Team to be able to focus on systems issues, as well as individual youth.	1.9% (1)	7.7% (4)	7.7% (4)	13.5% (7)	32.7% (17)	23.1% (12)	13.5% (7)	4.90	52
Strategy: Create "navigator" positions or functions to assist young people, parents/caregivers in accessing and moving through a complicated and confusing system of care. Train youth, parents and providers to be navigators.	11.8% (6)	17.6% (9)	17.6% (9)	21.6% (11)	13.7% (7)	7.8% (4)	9.8% (5)	3.71	51

Strategy: Increase capacity to provide case management support for youth involved with alternative justice programs; for youth with major mental health issues, not currently eligible for CRT; and for youth with borderline IQ's not eligible for Developmental Services.	20.8% (11)	20.8% (11)	17.0% (9)	9.4% (5)	7.5% (4)	20.8% (11)	3.8% (2)	3.40	53
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Strategy: Develop county-wide agreement that every 16 year-old eligible for a coordinated service plan, will have a Transition Plan. Develop a consistent Transition Plan template (look at existing models).	24.6% (14)	10.5% (6)	12.3% (7)	10.5% (6)	7.0% (4)	10.5% (6)	24.6% (14)	3.95	57
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answered question 60

skipped question 1

1. I am a...

[Create Chart](#)   [Download](#)

	Response Percent	Response Count
Parent <input type="checkbox"/>	3.3%	2
<b>Service Provider</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>60.0%</b>	<b>36</b>
Educator <input type="checkbox"/>	18.3%	11
Young person <input type="checkbox"/>	3.3%	2
Other (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/>	15.0%	9

Hide replies

1. advocate

---

2. kinship legal guardian

---

3. Parent, Educator, AND Prevention Coordinator

---

4. supervisor

---

5. School administrator

---

6. funder

---

7. Special Educator

---

8. advocate

---

9. Prosecutor

## Appendix D:

### Burlington Free Press article on youth homelessness

#### Homeless youths on the rise



RYAN MERCER, Free Press

Star Nite, 19, says she doesn't consider herself homeless, but nonetheless, is currently living at Spectrum Youth and Family Services in Burlington and is looking for work. But with the economy making even minimum-wage positions scarce, finding employment has been difficult.

Spectrum's 13-bed emergency youth shelter has filled up before, but not like this, say staff; not like in this long, hard year.

In the past year, the organization has housed 119 16- to 22-year olds in its temporary shelter on Pearl Street in Burlington. In that same time, staff turned away 120 more — almost twice as many as the year before.

Mark Redmond, director of Spectrum Youth and Family Services, attributes the bump in homeless youth seeking shelter to the downturn in the economy. Redmond said he expects homelessness to increase as the recession continues and parents lose jobs.

Spectrum's challenges illustrate a national crisis. A New York Times story published last month cited the number of contacts with runaways made by federally financed outreach programs: 761,000 in 2008, up from 550,000 in 2002.

The National Runaway Switchboard, a hotline for runaway and homeless youth, reported Oct. 28 a 200 percent increase since 2006 in the number of calls from youth as old as 21 who cited the economy as one of the reasons calling.

"These older youth may have been able to get by in the past, but with the scarcity of jobs, it's possible they are turning

to crisis lines like NRS, for help surviving,” Maureen Blaha, NRS’s executive director said in a prepared statement. The Switchboard says it does not try to find missing kids, but instead tries to help them find food, shelter, medical assistance and counseling.

Spectrum has been offering those services to at-risk and homeless youth since 1970, helping to get kids “back on track.” Residents of Spectrum shelter receive counseling, medical attention, an educational advocate and an employment advisor. Some move out to live on their own, and others move into Spectrum’s Single Room Occupancy residence — subsidized housing with nine private and a few communal rooms. Residents at the SRO have to pay rent.

Two residents living at the Spectrum shelter said last week that the country’s high employment made an already difficult task, finding a job, even harder.

Since arriving at the shelter earlier this fall, roommates Jess Ford, 18, and Star Nites, 19, have found work at a telemarketing company in Burlington. Ford and Nites said they competed against college graduates for other entry-level jobs. Ford compared job hunting to shopping on Black Friday.

In the shelter, residents have 90 days to get a job, “unless there are confounding reasons why they can’t,” said Byronne Johnson, Spectrum’s director of residential services. Sometimes the job consists of volunteering at Spectrum, so the kids can at least get some job experience, Johnson said.

“Those entry-level positions now are few and far between,” Johnson said.

Nearly all of the kids in Spectrum’s ranks have abused alcohol or drugs, or have a mental health disorder, such as depression, anxiety or personality disorders, Johnson said.

Ford and Nites said they don’t consider themselves homeless or runaways — though they live in the shelter and left their homes.

“I would call Spectrum my home,” Ford said.

Ford said she grew up in a Vermont home where drug use was prevalent. At 15, Ford was arrested twice for using drugs, spent time in social programs and “slept in some pretty messed up homes.”

Ford said she left her mom in Swanton and came to Burlington to find a job. She also found Spectrum.

Nites said she left a similar situation in Michigan at the age of 12. She moved to Vermont’s Northeast Kingdom four years later to live with a pen pal. She said she moved to Essex Junction, left the state, bounced around the country and returned to Vermont in October.

At the shelter, Ford said she has learned how to budget money and fill out job applications. Nite said she already knew how to do that.

“It’s just a place you can go to get your life together,” Ford said.

In the winter, Spectrum offers tents, sleeping bags and blankets to homeless youth they have to turn away. Staff keep a waitlist of those kids, so they can eventually get in.

The National Runaway Switchboard received 142 crisis-related calls from Vermont in 2008 — up from 108 a year earlier — the second fewest of any state in the nation. By comparison, youth in California called the hotline 16,909 times.

Still, the pressure on Spectrum is pronounced, Redmond said. Just as major cities such as New York, Chicago and San Francisco are magnets for runaways, homeless youth flock to Burlington because of the active city life.

“This is the downtown for the state,” Redmond said. “This is where they come.”

*Contact Matt Ryan at 651-4849 or [mryan@bfp.burlingtonfreepress.com](mailto:mryan@bfp.burlingtonfreepress.com).*



## Appendix E:

### Chittenden County YIT Action Plans

<b>Chittenden County Youth in Transition Regional Plan – ACTION PLAN</b>			
Outcome I: To improve the life skills of Chittenden County transition-age young adults with a special focus on employment			
Strategy 1: Increase the capacity of the JOBS (Jump on Board for Success) Program, so more JOBS staff can be hired and more young adults can be served			
Indicators of Success Population Indicators: # and % of young adults who have (1) Access to health care, i.e. obtain health insurance, access a PCP, obtain Mental Health and Substance Abuse treatment (2) Support around education, i.e. complete high school and receive high school diploma, reenter school, enter post-secondary (3) Employment, i.e. career and job exploration, job search support, job retention support, job development support (4) Housing, i.e. access safe and stable housing (5) Caring relationships, i.e. create relationships with adults who nurture positive youth development Program Performance Indicators: Increasing access to rural young adults, young adults involved in the juvenile justice system and young adults from multicultural groups			
Evidence Based Practice(s) Utilized: JOBS Program			
<b>Action Step:</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Who's Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Hire one additional FTE JOBS staff member to the present 3.5 FTE	<i>New Money:</i> \$53,965	JOBS Coordinator will hire, train and supervise both the new full-time JOBS worker and the new .5 worker	March 2010
2. The new JOBS worker will focus on serving (a) young adults in rural communities (i.e. Milton, Hinesburg, etc) in an effort to strengthen our outreach there; (b) young adults involved in juvenile justice programs; (c) young		YIT Leadership Team ACCESS Committee JOBS Coordinator	March 2010 and ongoing

<p>adults who are from multicultural populations such as Somali Bantu, Bosnian, etc</p> <p>3. Hire an additional .5FTE JOBS worker in order to pick up the caseload for the JOBS Coordinator as well as increase overall caseload capacity</p> <p>4. JOBS Coordinator becomes responsible for outreach to referral sources, i.e. community centers, other nonprofit organizations, schools, teen centers, Association of Americans Living in Vermont, Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program and over-all program development</p> <p>5. Address the unmet case management needs identified as a key priority through the expansion of outreach to rural areas, the juvenile justice population and multicultural groups</p>	<p><i>New Money: \$9,703</i></p> <p><i>New money: \$11,675</i></p>	<p>JOBS Coordinator</p> <p>YIT Leadership Team JOBS Coordinator</p> <p>JOBS Coordinator JOBS Case managers YIT Leadership Team</p>	<p>March 2010</p> <p>May 2010</p> <p>March 2010 and ongoing</p>
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<p>6. Increase capacity to provide JOBS case management services to young adults with major mental health issues who are not eligible for CRT and to young adults with borderline IQ who are not eligible for Developmental Services.</p>		<p>JOBS Coordinator JOBS Case managers YIT Leadership Team</p>	<p>January 2011 and ongoing</p>
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**Chittenden County Youth in Transition Regional Plan – ACTION PLAN**

Outcome II: To improve the knowledge of, access to and collaboration among, community resources for young adults, caregivers/parents and community service providers

Strategy 2: Develop an Online Resource Center that is user friendly and accessible to people regardless of their ability to access transportation, to assist young adults ages 16 years old to 21 years old; caregivers/parents and community service providers, to find out what existing community services and resources are available and how to access them

**Indicators of Success:**

Population Indicators: # and % of young adults ages 16 years old to 21 years old, caregivers/parents and community service providers will be able to successfully access and obtain information from the Online Resource Center.

Program Performance Indicators: We will work collaboratively with the UVM Evaluation Team to identify Program Performance Indicators

**Practice Model(s): TIP System**

Action Step	Resources	Who's Responsible	Timeline
1. Identify existing community services and resources	YIT Leadership Team	YIT Leadership Team	April 2010 and ongoing
2. Identify constituents and stakeholders to participate with the web organization and structure	YIT Leadership Team	YIT Leadership Team	April 2010

3. Organize website structure by holding focus groups to solicit feedback from constituents and stakeholders	YIT Leadership Team	YIT Leadership Team	April 2010
4. Contract and work with the Center for Technology in Essex to create and maintain the Online Resource Center	Center for Technology in Essex <i>New money: \$8,000</i>	YIT Leadership Team	January 2011 and ongoing

<p>5. Consult with an attorney to discuss any legal aspects, including disclaimers, pertaining to the Online Resource Center and the Facebook fan page for the Online Resource Center</p>	<p>Attorney who specializes in online legal matters</p> <p><i>In-kind</i></p>	<p>Betsy Cain</p>	<p>January 2011 and ongoing</p>
<p>6. Create and maintain a Facebook fan page for the Online Resource Center</p>	<p>Annie Wohland</p> <p><i>New money:</i> \$0</p>	<p>Young Adult Navigators</p>	<p>July 2011 and ongoing</p>
<p>7. Explore partnering with the New England Network for Child, Youth and Family</p>	<p><i>New money in year 2:</i> \$6,000</p>	<p>YIT Leadership Team Young Adult Navigators</p>	<p>January 2012</p>
<p>Services to be a 2<sup>nd</sup> pilot site for their youth-driven Google map site project.</p>			

**Chittenden County Youth in Transition Regional Plan – ACTION PLAN**

Outcome II: To improve the knowledge of, access to and collaboration among community resources for young adults, caregivers/parents and community service providers

Strategy 3: Improve collaboration with existing housing and housing support programs to increase housing options for transition-age young adults

**Indicators of Success**

Population Indicators: # and % of homeless young adults and # and % increase in the number of supportive housing units for transition-age young adults.

Program Performance Indicators: We will work collaboratively with the UVM Evaluation Team to identify Program Performance Indicators

**Practice Model(s): TIP System**

Action Step:	Resources	Who's Responsible	Timeline
1. Investigate the shelter-plus-care project (Pathways) coming to Chittenden County and see if we are able to reserve X slots for transition-age young adults	<i>New Money:</i> \$0  <i>Existing Funding Available:</i> Continuum of Care Team in Chittenden County	AHS Field Services Director  YIT Steering Committee	Year I - January 2010
2. Collaborate with the Burlington Housing Authority to have their staff run the ready-to-rent curriculum with transition-age young adults	<i>New Money:</i> \$0  <i>Existing Funding Available:</i> Burlington Housing Authority	YIT Leadership Team	Pilot - June 2010  Implement - June 2011
3. Strategize a county-wide plan to pursue either foundation or federal funds for new supportive housing.	<i>New Money:</i> \$0  <i>Existing Funding Available:</i> Partner Agencies and Organizations	YIT Leadership Team	June 2012

<b>Chittenden County Youth in Transition Regional Plan – ACTION PLAN</b>			
Outcome II: To improve the knowledge of, access to and collaboration among community resources for young adults, caregivers/parents and community service providers			
Strategy 4: Provide leadership to the Chittenden County YIT Regional Plan			
Indicators of Success			
Population Indicators: # and % of membership of YIT Leadership Team that will be representative of the diversity within the target population.			
Program Performance Indicators: We will work collaboratively with the UVM Evaluation Team to identify Program Performance Indicators			
Practice Model(s): TIP System			
Action Step	Resources	Who's Responsible	Timeline
1. Transition the YIT Steering Committee for the planning process to become the YIT Leadership Team	YIT Steering Committee ACCESS Transition Age Advisory Team <i>New money:</i> \$0	YIT Steering Committee ACCESS	April 2010
2. Expand the young adult role for the YIT Leadership Team	YIT Leadership Team Young Adult Navigators	YIT Leadership Team	July 2010

3. Develop strategies to ensure coordination with related community teams	YIT Leadership Team; ACCESS and LIT Transition Age Advisory Team Kidsafe AHS Leadership Team	YIT Leadership Team	January 2011
4. Increase the diversity of representation for the YIT Leadership Team	YIT Leadership Team ACCESS Transition Advisory Team Young Adult Navigators Parent Navigator YIT Cultural and Linguistic Coordinator	YIT Leadership Team	January 2012

**Chittenden County Youth in Transition Regional Plan – ACTION PLAN**

Outcome II: To improve the knowledge of, access to and collaboration among community resources for young adults, caregivers/parents and community service providers

Strategy 5: 2 Young Adult Navigator positions will be created to provide assistance to young adults ages 16 years old to 21, within the target population, to secure information and connect to existing community services and resources, to ensure an informed and successful transition to adulthood

**Indicators of Success**

**Population Indicators:**

# and % of young adults who are able to successfully report and demonstrate an increase in their knowledge of and access to existing community services and resources through the assistance of the Young Adult Navigators by the end of year II

# and % of young adults who are able to successfully secure information and connect to existing community services and resources through the assistance of the Young Adult Navigators by the end of year II

We will work collaboratively with the UVM Evaluation Team to identify indicators to measure the impact of outreach from the Young Adult Navigators.

**Program Performance Indicators:** We will work collaboratively with the UVM Evaluation Team to identify Program Performance Indicators

**Practice Model(s): TIP System**

Action Step	Resources	Who's Responsible	Timeline
1. Create a job description, including qualities; skill sets and need for cultural competency	YIT Leadership Team Host agency leadership	YIT Leadership Team Host agency leadership	April 2010
2. Identify existing community services and resources	YIT Leadership Team Online Resource Center 2-1-1	YIT Leadership Team	April 2010

3. Hire 2 Young adult Navigators	YIT Leadership Team Host agency  <i>New money: \$36,783</i>	YIT Leadership Team Host agency	April 2010
4. Develop leadership training for young adults and create young adult advisory groups	YIT Leadership Team Host agency	YIT Leadership Team Young Adult Navigators Host agency	April 2010 and ongoing
5. Partner with the Parent Navigator to provide support and information to caregivers/parents of transition-age young adults within the target population	YIT Leadership Team Parent Navigator Host agency	YIT Leadership Team Host agency	April 2010 and ongoing
6. Assist with the maintenance of the Online Resource Center	YIT Leadership Team Parent Navigator	Young Adult Navigators	April 2010 and ongoing
7. Participate in the YIT Steering Committee meetings	YIT Leadership Team	Young Adult Navigators	Life of the YIT grant

**Chittenden County Youth in Transition Regional Plan – ACTION PLAN**

Outcome II: To improve knowledge of, access to and collaboration among community resources for young adults, caregivers/parents and community service providers

Strategy 6: 1 Parent Navigator position will be created to provide assistance to caregivers/parents of transition-age young adults within the target population, to secure information and connect to existing community resources and services to receive support for themselves and to ensure their child's informed and successful transition to adulthood

**Indicators of Success**

Population Indicators: : # and % of caregivers/parents who are able to successfully report and demonstrate an increase in their knowledge of and access to existing community services and resources through the assistance of the Parent Navigator.  
# and % of caregivers/parents who are able to successfully secure information and connect to existing community services and resources through the assistance of the Parent Navigator.

We will work collaboratively with the UVM Evaluation Team to identify indicators to measure the impact of outreach from the Parent Navigator.

Program Performance Indicators: We will work collaboratively with the UVM Evaluation Team to identify Program Performance Indicators

**Practice Model(s): TIP System**

Action Step	Resources	Who's Responsible	Timeline
1. Create a job description, including qualities; skill sets and need for cultural competency	YIT Leadership Team Vermont Family Network	YIT Leadership Team Vermont Family Network	April 2010
2. Identify existing community services and resources	YIT Leadership Team Online Resource Center 2-1-1	YIT Leadership Team	April 2010 and ongoing

3. Hire 1 Parent Navigator, who is a caregiver/parent of one or more transition-age young adult within the target population	YIT Leadership Team Vermont Family Network  <i>New money: \$26,579</i>	YIT Leadership Team Vermont Family Network	April 2010
4. Develop leadership training for caregivers/parents and create caregiver/parent advisory groups	YIT Leadership Team Vermont Family Network	Vermont Family Network Parent Navigator	April 2010 and ongoing
5. Partner with the Young Adult Navigators to provide support and information to young adults within the target population	YIT Leadership Team Young Adult Navigators Vermont Family Network	Parent Navigator Vermont Family Network	April 2010 and ongoing



6. Assist with the maintenance of the Online Resource Center	YIT Leadership Team Young Adult Navigators	Parent Navigator	April 2010 and ongoing
7. Participate in the YIT Steering Committee meetings	YIT Leadership Team	Parent Navigator	Life of the YIT grant

<b>Chittenden County Youth in Transition Regional Plan – ACTION PLAN</b>			
Outcome III: To improve and expand service delivery and service coordination for young adults and their families			
Strategy 7: All young adults ages 15 years and older, who meet the criteria for a Coordinated Services Plan, will have a Transition Plan			
Indicators of Success: Population Indicators: 95% of young adults ages 15 years and older will have a Transition Plan. Program Performance Indicators: We will collaborate with the UVM Evaluation Team to identify Program Performance Indicators			
Practice Model(s): Legislative Practice: Act 264 and the TIP System			
<b>Action Step</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Who's Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Identify the transition plan that best meets the needs of young adults within the target population	Ansell- Casey Life Skills Assessment Youth Transition Plan Worksheet Self-Sufficiency Matrix Vermont IEP Process Plan TIP System with focus on the Transition Domains	YIT Leadership Team	July 2010
2. Training for all Act 264 partners, which include Mental Health, DCF, Education, Young Adults and Caregivers/Parents	Act 264 Partnership Group SIT Young Adult Navigators Department of Mental Health State YIT Operations Team	YIT Leadership Team Act 264 Partnership Group ACCESS	July 2010 and ongoing

3. Soliciting feedback from the Act 264 partnership group regarding the implementation	Act 264 Partnership Group	ACCESS LIT	Annually
4. Quality assurance in Act 264 training to include the Transition Plan	Act 264 Partnership Group	YIT Leadership Team ACCESS	Life of the YIT grant