

**YIT Grant Report**

**MONTH/YEAR VFFCMH January-June 2014**

**Vermont Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health (VFFCMH)**

**Cindy Marshall, Lead Family Contact (LFC)**

**Matt Wolf, Young Adult Coordinator (YAC)**

<p><b>Goals for strengthening the systems of care</b></p>	<p><b>1: Young adult (YA) leadership is developed in VT.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>Mental Health Transformation Grant (MHTG) for Peer Support Programming across VT</u> YAC has been able to support some of the YIT Grant’s peer workers to participate in trainings offered by the Transformation Grant’s programming. YAC continues to advocate for YIT Peer Workers to be included in the “definition” of Peer Workforce across the state of VT and is supporting Transformation Grant staff to attend YIT trainings. YAC is also a member of the MHTG’s Statewide Advisory Council, attending monthly planning meetings, and has met with two MHTG Peer Support Program sites regarding young adult leadership and engaging the population in general in those specific programs. YAC has also presented a training on engaging young adults to staff of these two programs and of the Vermont peer movement in general. Twenty two people attended this “Lighting the Fire” training in Washington.</li><li>• Young Adult Initiative Mini-Grant RFPs through VFFCMH and WEST-We Eliminate Stigma Together. YAC supported 7 regions to apply and report out in a timely manner. YAC continues to provide technical assistance and brainstorming support to regions throughout their grant planning, implementation and reporting processes. YAC has facilitated the grant proposal approval committee which consists of at least 50% young adults. Regions participating Brattleboro, Bennington, Hartford, Middlebury, St Albans, St Johnsbury, and Springfield. Projects included: A Youth Summit, a Storefront advertising the youth group and children’s mental health information, a weekly drop in center for youth staffed by youth peer workers, an anti-bullying dance, creation of a public service announcement about youth substance use and abuse, a “Get a Job” program for youth who do not qualify for other employment related programs, an evening of sharing by a young adult who has struggled with mental illness and found a unique path to wellness and recovery, a</li></ul>
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celebration of Holi, an Asian holiday symbolizing moving to light from darkness- this was used as a platform to share information about mental health and recovery.

- The quarterly Young Adult Leadership Award program had regions nominate local young adults as emerging leaders for recognition. The remaining five winners of the past year were invited to the Georgetown Institutes Conference in July 2014.
- YAC continues to support all of the peer workers statewide in their work toward their goals for their region & position. YAC attended monthly meetings (at their request) with the peer workers in the Barre, Hartford, Middlebury & Springfield Regions, as well as, transition team meetings in Morrisville and Springfield.

- YAC has worked with all regions supporting their individual needs this quarter:

**BURLINGTON:** Assisted regional staff in their work to support and maintain a refugee youth group that started meets regularly with 50 youth attending. The group works to support each other and address broader issues related to the entire refugee/immigrant population in Burlington, and meets twice a month. YAC has consistently advocated for the specific needs of this population.

**BENNINGTON:** YAC is supporting a peer leader to be a statewide technical assistance resource for all of the YIT Programs. Also assisting the connection with regions that are interested in her knowledge and support. Peer Leader has had contact with all 12 of the regional programs, as well as, participating in some of the YIT Operations Team's annual site visits to the regions.

**HARTFORD:** YAC continued to meet with Junction Teen Center & YIT staff in White River Junction to further develop their youth leadership group, community connections efforts and guide them in their efforts to reduce the stigma associated with the program and the youth it serves.

**MIDDLEBURY:** YAC continues to meet with the new Middlebury YIT Staff member on a monthly basis, to help orient her to the local system of care, brainstorm & execute her plans for the region's YIT program and work toward developing young adult leaders & a youth advisory board for the region.

**RUTLAND:** YAC had two orientation and planning meetings with the

	<p>new YIT staff member for the Rutland regional program to help get the program running efficiently again. YAC continues to check in with the Rutland program to ensure their current needs are being met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YAC continues participating in the Governor’s appointed Children &amp; Family Council of Prevention Programming (CFCPP) and encouraged youth from across the state to apply to become members of the council and exert their influence on a statewide level.</li> <li>• Continued the development list of what each of the 12 regional programs “are best at” so we formally support the regional programs in training and supporting each other. We are encouraging the regions to include youth as co-facilitators and trainers in these efforts to further build youth leadership in all of the regional programs.</li> <li>• YAC actively participated in the planning and execution of a YIT Legislative Day held on January 31<sup>st</sup> that resulted in the continuation of the YIT Grant’s work with state funding. This result can be credited in part to the multitude of young adult leaders from around the state who attended the day and educated their legislators about the value of their empowerment through the YIT program.</li> <li>• YAC is attending the Suicide Prevention Coalition statewide meetings and is working with this group to integrate youth into both the state level team and the regional suicide prevention efforts this group is leading. The Suicide Prevention Coalition has a concrete plan to integrate youth from all of the 12 regions of the state in leadership development, community organizing and community education efforts around suicide prevention for the coming year.</li> <li>• YAC has joined the Integrated Recovery Network, led by VAMHAR, and its efforts to bring the mental health and recovery communities together in collaboration. As a part of this effort YAC has designed a youth engagement &amp; empowerment workshop to include in the menu of trainings being offered by VAMHAR for the benefit and continued growth of Vermont’s peer workforce statewide.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>2: Family/adult allies support young adults....</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The LFC and YAC worked with YIT staff, and their families on the empowerment of both the youth and their adult allies. These two also continue their work together unifying the various peer movements into one, cohesive and mutually supportive peer movement including; family-to-family, youth, adult mental health, and the recovery community.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since “Peer Support Work” is the latest topic of interest both statewide and nationally, we continue to advocate for the definition of “peer” to include transition aged youth and family-to-family supports.</li> <li>• Both the LFC &amp; YAC are members of the advisory body for VT’s new BRSS-TACS grant that is seeking to solidify funding to support all peer services, while also advocating for the movement within state government.</li> <li>• Nationally, the Certified Parent Support Provider Program has gone through some leadership changes. The VFFCMH states these changes were positive for the program and the National Federation, and were based in a private personnel issue. New members of the Commission have been announced. Three VFFCMH employees, including the LFC are currently up for Certification Renewal. VFFCMH is weighing the options. One option is to establish a Vermont State Certification. The VFFCMH is hoping to collaborate with other peers in VT to move towards this end.</li> <li>• VFFCMH has provided- <i>Surviving and Thriving in the Mental Health Maze</i> in Springfield and Bennington this Reporting. Staff also provided trainings on Mental Health First Aid, YAC Facilitated these; <i>Next Generation Youth, How VT legislative advocacy works, and the Bridge to Adulthood.</i></li> <li>• VFFCMH Trainings in <i>Development: Family Driven Care &amp; Helping your Child Transition to Adulthood.</i> VFFCMH is in the final stage of development of our first online workshop. We are eager to launch it prior to the end of the summer. This online workshop is interactive and the target audience is parents of transition -age youth. It gives tips to parents in what is normal adolescent behavior and what behaviors are out of the range, and how to get assistance with challenging behavior.</li> <li>• LFC is working with IFS Implementation Team advocating for Family to Family and Young Adult Peer supports to be included as Vermont moves forward with Integrated Family Services. VFFCMH is also looking for funding resources to support Peer Support Providers across the state. VFFCMH has received two grants for regional support in Addison and Chittenden Counties.</li> </ul> <p><b>3: Workers use caring practices known to be helpful for young adults and families.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YAC is a member of the TIP Implementation Team which developed out</li> </ul>
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of the statewide TIP training in June 2011 and works with the group to determine how to move forward to implement the TIP model in Vermont statewide. In working toward this group's goals, YAC has become one of a team of seven Vermont service providers who have become certified as TIP Trainers and have begun another training series in the St. Johnsbury Region, with a statewide training for the JOBS Program scheduled to begin in the next quarter. YAC continues to participate in the Implementation Team's conversations about planning and implementing the TIP model statewide across a larger group of professional disciplines in order to develop a common language, culture and practice for Vermont's youth in transition. They continue to reach out to regional agencies & organizations to plan to bring this training to other areas in a way that is designed to fit their needs/availability. This implementation team has developed, submitted and received approval for, a training plan for the coming year from their National TIP Training supervisors.

- YAC has continued to support the distribution and use of a Bullying Documentary created by Castleton State College students to bring awareness to our communities about the dangers of bullying. YAC supported two YIT advisory boards in viewing this resource.
- YAC is a member of the State level Transition Council that seeks to oversee the services and progress of Vermont's transition aged youth population statewide. YAC is also a member of the Workforce Development & Training Sub Committee of this group that is looking to address the training needs for ALL supporters of this population statewide.

**4: System of Care partners gains cultural & linguistic competence**

- The team continues to promote Mercedes Avila's CLC training throughout the state, encouraging regions to utilize the training opportunity, helping them connect with Mercedes for scheduling, and promoting the importance of culturally competent programming across Vermont.
- YAC assists regional staff in their work to support and maintain a refugee youth group which meets twice a month with approximately 50 youth in attendance each time. YAC has consistently advocated for the specific needs of this population. He has worked to support the coordinator of the group to connect with potential funding sources and resource information specific to minority and immigrant populations in Vermont.

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

- YAC works with regional Youth Advisory Boards, and the Youth Initiative Mini-Grants through VFFCMH. These grant opportunities are focused on ending stigma, promoting activism and community action with the young adults across the state emphasizing how these types of activities will change a community's perception of its youth. Seven regions were awarded this quarter.
- VFFCMH led the move to celebrate children's mental health week May 4-11. The LFC "manned" a resource table on Church Street where several hundred people stopped by for information and to chat. May was also Mental Health Awareness Month.

**6: Effectiveness of the Vermont System of Care for young adults with SED**

- YAC continued his regular participation in:
  1. Children & Family Council of Prevention Programming (CFCPP) meetings monthly.
  2. ACT 264 Board
  3. The Mental Health Transformation Grant Advisory Council
  4. The Advisory Council for the new VAMHAR Training Grant: Integrated Recovery Network
  5. BRSS-TACS grant.
  6. Youth Development Program statewide network
  7. Vermont Department of Health Division of Drug & Alcohol Abuse Youth Treatment Enhancement Program Steering Committee.
  8. VT Suicide Prevention Coalition in support of the operation of VT's new Suicide Prevention Grant
  9. YAC attended meetings of the state level systems team for transition aged youth in Vermont; the Transition Council, and also attends the Workforce Development Sub-committee of this group.

**7: The State supports and sustains regional services for young adults....**

<b>Desired outcomes for young adults of transition-age</b>	<b>1. Decreased number of young adults involved in the corrections</b>
	<b>2. Increased number of young adults who are employed....</b>
	<b>3. Increased number young adults participating in (or who completed) educational programs....</b>
	<b>4. Increased number of young adults who have access to, and are using, a medical home....</b>
	<b>5. Increased number of young adults living in safe and stable housing....</b>
	<b>6. Increased number of young adults who have caring &amp; supportive relationships...</b>
	<b>7. Increase in young adults' strengths and protective factors....</b>
	<b>8. Improved mental health for young adults.</b>
<b>System of Care Infrastructure Indicators</b>  (for federal TRAC):	<p><b>Workforce Development</b> The interagency professional development plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YAC is working with all of the service system and community connections to locate funding streams to increase the peer support workforce in the state of Vermont and support those positions to provide workers with a livable wage.</li> <li>• YAC is working with the Vermont state TIP Implementation Team to support the certification of Vermont as a TIP-Informed site with its own team of TIP Trainers. Matt is becoming certified as a trainer.</li> <li>• YAC is promoting the development of the 12 regional Young Adult Advisory Boards, assisting them to grow and become an advisory team for local &amp; state system of care. As a part of this effort Matt is working to create a statewide "Executive" Board, with representation from each of the 12 regional boards, to serve as a state-level entity for youth voice in the Vermont System of Care.</li> <li>• YAC &amp; LFC were two of several YIT Operations Team members who attended the National Mental Health Policy &amp; Research Conference in Tampa FL. to present the work &amp; outcomes of the YIT grant on another National stage.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Organizational Change:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A loss to the YIT Leadership Team and to the VFFCMH was the resignation of Courtney Bridges the Social Marketing and Communications Manager- She left her position to join the Vermont State Lottery Marketing Team. Her talents and bubbly personality are surely missed by all. VFFCMH has a sub contract with her to continue small tasks until the remainder of the YIT</li> </ul>

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	<p>grant. The subcontract is expected to end September 30<sup>th</sup>. At this time the VFFCMH is developing a Social Media and Marketing plan and dispersing her work to other staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YAC attended a How to Work with Your Legislator training and created a document that gives guidelines to the regional programs on how they can educate their legislators in support of sustaining the work of the YIT grant. He designed tools for the regional programs to use to describe their programs and services and is working with the AHS Secretary’s Office to develop a presentation of the design of the system of care for youth in transition, with the understanding that this design is a model that can be used and replicated in their statewide Integrated Family Services (IFS) efforts. All of these tools and efforts came together for use during the YIT Legislative Day on January 31<sup>st</sup> in our work with our legislation to sustain the YIT program statewide.</li> <li>• YAC &amp; LFC are working in all of the service systems and community meetings involved in to help promote the concept of peer support services as a formal part of the Vermont System of Care. We are ensuring that the definition of “peer” involve transition age youth, family-to-family supports, and the adult mental health &amp; recovery populations, in this advocacy effort. Pooling informational resources from all three of these groups into a statewide co-op database of resources and support is being considered as part of this effort as well.</li> <li>• YAC is supporting the development of all 12 of the regional Young Adult Advisory Boards, working to help them grow to a point where they can advise both the local &amp; state system of care. As a part of this effort they have developed a statewide “Executive” Board, with representation from each of the 12 regional boards, to serve as a state-level entity for youth voice in the Vermont System of Care. Several of these boards and youth leaders came together for the first ever Vermont Youth Leadership Academy on May 14th. This academy was designed to strengthen the group leadership throughout the state and also had presentations from members of Youth MOVE National around . VT is considering this Executive Board or regional boards develop into a Vermont chapter of Youth MOVE National.</li> </ul> <p>VFFCMH held a Board and Staff Retreat with guest facilitators from the National Technical Assistance Team. The focus was Board Development</p>
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	<p>and updating our Strategic Plan. One result of this day was the sharing of national resources to create updated Executive Director and Staff Annual Performance Reviews. The VFFCMH Board of Directors is working to refine goals for the next year.</p>
	<p><b>Partnership/Collaboration:</b></p> <p>YAC attends the following statewide meetings of service providers and service recipients in order to learn from and influence/inform the Vermont state system of care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Children &amp; Family Council of Prevention Programming (CFCPP) &amp; the youth voice &amp; minority youth sub-committees associated with that.</li> <li>• The Governor’s Appointed ACT 264 Advisory Board.</li> <li>• The YIT Grant’s state Operations Team.</li> <li>• The TIP Implementation &amp; Training Team</li> <li>• The Diversion Enhancement Assessment Plan (DEAP) Advisory Committee.</li> <li>• The Integrated Recovery Network Steering Committee</li> <li>• MHTG Statewide Advisory Council and Sustainability Sub-committee.</li> <li>• The Suicide Prevention Coalition/grant advisory board.</li> </ul> <p>YAC has formed formal, project specific, working relationships with the following service programs in Vermont:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The MH Transformation Grant for Peer Support Programming in VT (Dept. of Mental Health)</li> </ul> <p>LFC attends the following statewide meetings representing the Family Voice in the Vermont state system of care: SIT, CRC, IFS Implantation, AOE Special Educational Monitoring, ACT 264 Advisory Board, Hi End Systems of Care, and supports the local LIT parent Reps.</p>
	<p><b>Types/Targets of Practice:</b></p>

**1. Major Activities and Accomplishments During this Period**

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- 1<sup>st</sup> Vermont Young Adult Leadership Academy was successful as National Youth MOVE came to share ideas on how their regional groups could become a Vermont Youth MOVE chapter. Two of our largest groups were very interested- Diversity Rocks and Bennington Teens for Change- although there are identity and name change concerns by both groups. Due to both groups successes, large membership, and formal structures in place for future growth leadership, both groups were invited to Georgetown Institute in July. This was a way to invest in our most successful youth leaders.
- The success of the YIT Day at the statehouse in January was a direct result of excellent planning and Young Adults sharing their stories. Over 65 young adults came to the Statehouse to share their story of how YIT has changed their lives.

## **2. Problems**

- The resignation of Courtney Bridges has reduced the social media focus and efforts over the last reporting period. Her creativity & teamwork has been missed.
  - There is not enough funding for peer support work in Vermont. A couple of districts have asked for assistance with funding to increase their peer support workforce or their current workers' time in the field. The YIT Grant staff have been unable to help these programs with funding, but were able to use the request from the Bennington Program to create the contract agreement with their (very exceptional) peer worker, to provide technical assistance to all of the YIT programs statewide.
  - Regions that have supported young peer workers, are uncertain of the future funding and not sure how to support the movement and development of the peer staff as the grant is coming to an end. State funding has been secured, but no contracts are yet available to let regions know what they can do after the grant ends Sept 30.
  - We have learned from experience that the peer work force struggles when housed within the mental health agency, where lived experience is not valued as much as education to support those who receive services.

## **3. Significant Findings and Events**

- Peer Supports and the Peer Movement is gaining momentum in Vermont, we are moving closer to having peers supports as part of the Vermont System of Care. Many Peer Support organizations are having conversations together. Since "Peer Support Work" is the latest topic of interest both statewide and nationally, we continue to advocate for the definition of "peer" to include transition aged youth and family-to-family supports. Vermont is hoping to create a stakeholder group to talk direct how Vermont proceeds with peer supports and look at Medicaid as a sustainable resource for the Movement.

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- The resignation of Melissa Bailey as lead for Integrated Family Services Initiative has stalled the momentum. IFS implementation seems to have become a political issue rather than a way to improve outcomes for Vermont Families. Her successor has not been named yet.

#### 4. Dissemination activities

- Youth in Transition Facebook
  - 417 Friends
  - 6 sub-groups
- VFFCMH Facebook (Switched to a public page)
  - 642 followers
- Twitter
  - 322 followers
- VFFCMH Newsletters- 998 recipients per issue.
- This grant period was very busy for the VFFCMH traveling resource table. Over 500 brochures and branded items were dispersed at various conferences and venues statewide.

#### Children’s Mental Health Day 2104 Dissemination Report

75 kids colored stamps	15 Green CMH Awareness Ribbons
14 blow up balloons white with green ribbon	58 Lollipops (green and white circles)
25 idance VFF Tshirts	67 Awareness Mints with white box
45 VFF water bottles	10 VFF Brochure
36 VFF Coffee mugs	10 YIT Brochure
34 white and green awareness pens	<u>10 VFF Bumper sticker</u>
39 Assorted colored Mardis Gras beads necklace	<b>449 Items Total</b>
11 Green Colored Mardis Gras beads necklace	

#### 5. Other Activities

#### 6. Activities Planned for Next Reporting Period

- Final Reporting Period July 1<sup>st</sup> – September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
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- Georgetown Institutes - Gaylord Res<sup>ort</sup>, MD Team Pre<sup>sc</sup>entation, 5 Young Adult Leadership Award Winners invited, Young Adult Leaders from Diversity Rock and Bennington Teens for Change were also invited.
- Final Fall Sharing Day TBD
- Supporting regions to reevaluate their program and plan for the sustained funding from the DMH. Asking regions to focus on these 4 elements in their programing. 1. TIP informed Case Management 2. Regional Transition Teams 3. Fostering Peer Support 4. Young Adult Empowerment and Leadership
- Attending/Presenting at the VAMHAR Peer Leadership Institute September 2014

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