

VFFCMH Youth in Transition Grant Report
January 1, 2010 to June 30, 2010

Youth in Transition Vision

Young adult in Vermont are empowered, healthy, valued, and engaged in their communities

Mission

Young adults, families/adult allies and community partners collaborate to develop a system of care to support transition to adulthood. The system builds upon the strengths of young adults and creates an array of specialized mental health and related services to meet their unique and changing needs. The system also fosters young adult leadership.

VFF YIT Staff

Cindy Marshall, Assistant Director VFFCMH & Lead Family Contact

Courtney Bridges, Social Marketing and Young Adult Coordinator

Vanessa Lang, Training and Technical Assistance and Young Adult Coordinator

Kathy Holsopple, Executive Director VFFCMH

Major Activities and Accomplishments

- Continued to engage and support two young adults to engage in their regional YIT team as they transition into Youth Outreach Workers for their local YIT team.
- Designed and implemented a statewide youth conference, the May 7th Young Adult Voice Movement Conference, with over two hundred young adults and support people in attendance from all over Vermont. The conference was comprised of eight workshops, including topics such as suicide prevention, culture competency, social marketing and community change, LGBTQTA discussion, expression through art and drama. We were also able to offer several hours of team building activities on a ropes course. Partnering with our cultural and linguistic coordinator made this conference probably the most diverse of any held in Vermont.

- Organized and held a sequence of trainings on May 19, 20, 21 for regional YIT teams. Teams were trained in Street Outreach Programming and the TIPs model with Dr. Rusty Clark. They were also able to be a part of numerous workshops at the statewide Youth Worker's Conference on May 21, several of which were sponsored by the YIT grant.
- Developed a training on "Partnering with Parents". Training was given at Lamoille Community Connections for Staff in the Children, Youth and Family Division May 2010. Training was also implemented at BEST Institute June 2010
- Began planning for a statewide summit to convene regional YIT teams for strategy sharing and informal training, to be held in September 2010.
- Represented the voice of the YIT grant on the following boards and groups: Suicide Prevention Grant Advisory, Child Trauma Grant Advisory, Diversion Enhancement Advisory, Working with Youth Conference Planning Advisory, Youth in Transition Leadership Committee, Juvenile Justice Jurisdiction Task Force.
- Created a plan to support five young people to join us at the Georgetown Training Institutes in July.

Problems / Challenges

- In many ways we have done and will continue to do outreach to involve more youth/young adults and their voice. While we have a core group of youth/young adults involved in this project, finding transition aged youth that are interested in this project has been a challenge. We continue to rethink strategies of how to engage, create and sustain partnerships with young people.
- Expectations for young people should be realistic to what they are interested in getting involved in. An example is: the idea of a youth advisory board, while perhaps an essential grant/adult idea does not seem to interest youth/young adults. Many youth/young adult's experiences with advisory groups have not been positive in the past and that doesn't make them want to try this avenue of advocacy.
- We have a need to be more clear around the title "Youth/Young Adult Coordinator." We have these positions at the state level and are still finessing

what the role, activities, functions, responsibilities, and related expectations should be within this grant. As regions are hiring young people to fill positions in their communities and giving these jobs similar titles, how does that affect expectations for state versus local roles, how do they interact, what should be the connections? Do job titles that are the same at local and state level have the same expectations or different ones, and how does that impact the level and type of support from the state coordinators? What should communication and support from state coordinators to local look like?

- We are still working on the concept of meaningfully including youth/young adults on our state team. Steps we have taken so far are to include: Training all VFFCMH staff, including the Young Adult Coordinators, on effective teaming. Then one of our young adult coordinators gave part of this same training to the state team. Follow up on how and what we can improve as individuals and as a team will come at a later meeting. We've also added in a time in the agenda for "fun" activities and food.

Significant Findings and Events

- Conferences and trainings described above comprise our most significant events for the last six months.
- As a result of the YAVM Conference, two regions have started to plan Youth Summits in the Fall 2010. (Rutland and St. Albans)

Dissemination Activities

Social Marketing Coordinator, Courtney Bridges

Other Activities

- Created training, Tokenism and the IEP Process, for a conference workshop.
 - Created training regarding youth and young adult involvement which was presented to young adults in the foster care system.
 - Trained in Mental Health First Aid, Vanessa Lang.
 - Children's Mental Health Awareness Day.
- Promotional materials were disseminated to state representatives as well as

placed in the Vermont Department of Mental Health.

-15 foot banner encouraging passers-by to 'Celebrate Children's Mental Health Week'.

- Courtney Bridges, Vanessa Lang, and Cindy Marshall traveled to all 12 regions of the state to promote the Young Adult Voice Movement Conference.
 - -This conference was also promoted at other young adult conferences/events.
- Facebook accounts for VFFCMH, The Young Adult Voice Movement Conference, and The Youth in Transition Grant.
- You Tube video invitation and post conference show have totaled over 400 views.

Activities Planned for Next Reporting Period

- Federal TA Site Visit
- Regional Summit 9/2010
- Family Conference Training, September 16, 2010 at Lake Morey
- Georgetown Training Institute, July 15-18 Washington DC
- Social marketing – moving forward with Social marketing plan which is being refined as new ideas and opportunities present themselves. We are planning a children's mental health week and day, and looking at national models of stigma reduction/elimination to decide what we ,may want to reproduce here in Vermont. We just heard about a youth/young adult initiated project focused on mental health awareness. This project can go several ways, but the 2 main focuses are to have youth create a product to give out to their community in some way or to plan an event/activity that promotes mental health wellness. Partnering with VFFCMH, we hope to try out this project in the next several months.