

## YIT PROGRAM PROGRESS REPORT

1. Grant Number: C-YIT-FY12-YS
2. Grantee Name and Address: **Youth Services, Inc.** 32 Walnut Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301
3. Telephone Number: (802) 257-0361
4. Project Title: YIT Housing Project--Brattleboro
5. Period of Performance from July 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011
6. Approved Project Period from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012
7. Author's Name and Telephone Number: Alysa Vallender & Danielle Southwell  
(802) 257-0361
8. Date of report: January 24, 2012
9. Comments (if any):

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The federal Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) primarily focuses on demonstrating accountability and achieving meaningful outcomes for all federally funded programs. Please make sure to include information on the outcomes of your project activities and the impact of your project on improving the lives of Youth in Transition and their families in the Program Progress Reports submitted.

### **Two Program Progress Reports must be submitted for this sub-grant:**

1. one for the time period from July 1 – December 31, 2011 (due by January 31, 2012), and
2. one for the period from January 1 – June 30, 2012 (due by July 31, 2012).

### **Report Contents**

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

Report both quantifiable and non-quantifiable accomplishments for the General Expectations and Regional Goals listed in Attachment A (see pages 3-5 of the grant award):

- Quantifiable accomplishments include numbers of youth/families served, people trained, support groups established, etc.
- Non-quantifiable accomplishments should be listed in chronological order. Describe any draft/final products in this section.

**Please report major activities and accomplishments for the following goals, outcomes, and indicators as relevant for the sub-grant. [This section of the report may be entered directly into the table below.]**

<p><b>Goals for strengthening the systems of care</b></p>	<p>1: Young adult (YA) leadership is developed in VT.</p> <p><b>Required activity:</b>  <i>Operate in accordance with continuing input from key stakeholders (including youth and family members) within the regional systems of care....</i></p> <p>In the fall of 2011, Youth Services redesigned their Peer Outreach Worker model. Our Peer Outreach Workers currently consist of 8 Youth Services clients across two communities (Brattleboro and Bellows Falls) who are ready for a leadership role and work opportunity. Youth Services partnered with Voc Rehab to pay Peer Outreach Workers a stipend for their work experience. The Brattleboro Peer Outreach team shops for, cooks, and serves weekly dinners for young adults at “Drop In” which is hosted at the Boys &amp; Girls Club every Tuesday evening. Peer Outreach Workers are encouraged to help design programming for “Drop In”.</p> <p>In both communities, Peer Outreach Workers also do street outreach in the community during the warmer months to bring awareness about services in the community. Peer Outreach Workers talk to other young adults about services in the community and help them to gain access to those services. Additionally, Peer Outreach Workers talk to local businesses to request donations for events that are being organized by their teams in the community for young adults.</p> <p>Clients, Peer Outreach Workers, and other community youth are encouraged to participate in state-wide events, conferences, and on committees. They are also asked for input on services and resources. During this reporting period, several youth provided input on re-designing the asset assessment used by the VT Coalition on Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs (VCRHYP). Two youth will be attending a state-wide Best Practices meeting hosted by VCRHYP to continue this planning in January.</p> <p>Youth Services’ Big Brothers/Big Sisters also began a Peer Mentor Program at Brattleboro Union High School to match high school students with a peer with a disability. This program has been largely designed and implemented by a couple of high school student leaders.</p> <p>Several other leadership opportunities are planned for the next reporting period, including Windham County youth attendance at a state-wide Symposium addressing bullying, participation in planning the next Young Adult Voice Movement Conference, attendance at the Children and Family Council for Prevention Programs, as well as the VCRHYP Best Practices meeting mentioned above.</p>
	<p>2: Family/adult allies support young adults....</p> <p>During the intake process, Youth Services case managers help young adults identify their support system through genograms and sociograms. The support system can include family, friends, co-workers, school supports, significant others, individuals in the community, etc. Furthermore, case managers examine with the young adults how their support system has been helpful in the past and how they can be helpful in their current situation. Case managers help young adults utilize their support systems when needed by</p>

	<p>inviting support systems to team meetings or inviting them to regular weekly meetings. With client consent, case managers will also speak with family and other adult allies to help foster a deeper understanding and clearer communication between family, adult allies, and the young adult.</p>
	<p>3: Workers use caring practices known to be helpful for young adults and families.</p> <p><b>Required activity:</b>  <i>Provide cross-system case management and individualized service plan development, ensuring that young adults are engaged in planning for their own futures....</i></p> <p>Case managers focus on creating a positive relationship with young adults in order to build trust from the beginning. This is done by setting up weekly meetings to create a consistent presence in the young adults' lives. Through regular contact, young adults begin to understand that their case manager is someone that they can rely on for support. A variety of TIP strategies are used in our approach including strengths- based focus, In-vivo teaching, support in identifying and evaluating options. TIP System guidelines are at the foundation of our services.</p> <p>Young adults are engaged in their service plan from the initial intake. Youth Services utilizes the Plan of Care to help young adults identify their goals. The following questions also help the young adults explore their goals further:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Strengths of yours that will help you accomplish this goal”</li> <li>• “Steps you need to take to accomplish this goal”</li> <li>• “How will you know when you are making progress”</li> <li>• “Strengths or assets you are building”</li> <li>• “Potential barriers to your progress and plans to address these barriers”</li> </ul> <p>Each young adult reexamines their Plan of Care at a minimum of every six months in order to make changes, update goals, and reflect on their progress. Case Managers are able to take clients out to lunch occasionally to celebrate their successes and achievements.</p> <p>Cross-system case management most frequently occurs with agencies such as Health Care Rehabilitation Services, Voc Rehab, Reach Up, Early Education Services, and Children Integrated Services. Team meetings for young adults can occur at anytime and can be called by any team member including the young adult. Additionally, Youth Services hosts Provider Meetings on a monthly basis in order to update other team members on young adults' progress or to trouble shoot challenges in the young adults' lives, utilizing the case-based review process taught in the TIP model.</p>
	<p>4: System of Care partners gain cultural &amp; linguistic competence (CLC)....</p> <p>In July of 2011, Youth Services staff participated in a CLC training.</p>
	<p>5: Local communities (including young adults) change their perceptions of young adults and of mental health issues, reducing stigma....</p> <p>Our local system of care works diligently to change negative perceptions</p>

among the community towards young adults and mental health issues. This is achieved in a variety of ways-through interactions with local employers, business owners and landlords, by advocacy at local meetings and events, by participation on local committees, and through one-on-one interactions with community members. Our system of care is also highly encouraging of teaching youth skills to communicate more effectively, strengthen their interpersonal skills and develop conflict resolution skills.

Youth Services has done a lot of work to bring awareness of housing needs among young adults in our community. We have continued to run our pilot program with Windham Windsor Housing Trust (WWHT) to house four young adults in a Single Room Occupancy (SRO) building. This pilot program has been a work in progress, but has created the awareness that there is a need by young adults in our community to have housing with supports. Common problems young adults are faced with when applying for housing are prior landlord references and credit checks. This pilot program allows young adults to gain housing with references from Youth Services case managers and other local area service providers. The YIT Housing Coordinator has run weekly house meetings at the SRO building in order to support the young adults in living on their own (many for the first times in their lives). Additionally, each client has an individual case manager that helps them with their goals and to continue to care for their mental health needs. The YIT Housing Coordinator attends biweekly meetings with WWHT to support the pilot program. During these meetings liaisons discuss the waiting list, move ins, move outs, and any challenges or outstanding bills occurring with clients of Youth Services. All these supports have created a positive relationship among young adults, Youth Services, and WWHT for this pilot program.

A second collaboration that has brought awareness to the needs of young adults in our community is the partnership with Morningside Shelter to house Youth Services clients in an apartment on Morningside Shelter's property. Often times the homeless shelter is full and people that are homeless have to call on a daily basis for weeks or months to get access to the homeless shelter. Young adults have a hard time getting into the homeless shelter because of this process and end up couch surfing for a long time until their options run out. Youth Services now has access to place clients into a two bedroom apartment as shelter space. This has opened access to the homeless shelter in our community for more young adults. Additionally, Youth Services and Morningside Shelter applied for a Community Impact grant through United Way to expand shelter space by renting another apartment in the community that young adults will have access to for short term housing.

A third way the perceptions of young adults are being changed in our community is through the partnership with a local inn, Meadowlark Inn. The owners of Meadowlark Inn approached Youth Services after reading an article about homeless youth in our community. The owners were interested in helping in some way during the slower months of their business. The owners offered to rent rooms to young adults in the community in need of emergency housing for \$15 a night for up to two weeks. Youth Services is preparing to utilize this great resource.

Lastly, the work done by Peer Outreach Workers in the community help to change the perceptions of young adults with mental health issues in the

	<p>community. Peer Outreach Workers interface often with various community members for their work.</p> <p>6: Effectiveness of the Vermont System of Care for young adults with SED is evaluated.....</p> <p>Assistant Director of Youth Development attends weekly Coordination of Care Meetings locally. This helps to bring awareness to the need of young adults in our community that are homeless. During these meetings Youth Services is able to network with Agency of Human Services Field Director and other key community partners. These meetings have helped several young adults receive VT Rental Subsidy Grants in order to afford housing. Additionally Youth Services staff attends regular state-wide meetings for VCRHYP, including those for Basic Center, Transitional Living, and Street Outreach Programs, as well as the VCRHYP Best Practices Committee, as well as Shelter Plus Care meetings (to house individuals with persistent mental illness).</p> <p>Youth Services, HCRS, Otter Creek Associates and Voc Rehab are also strong partners in working to provide effective services to this population locally.</p> <p>7: The State supports and sustains regional services for young adults....</p> <p>During this reporting period, 4 young adults have been housed through the Pathways to Housing voucher administered by the Brattleboro Housing Authority, 1 has been housed through a Shelter Plus Care voucher (also administered by the Brattleboro Housing Authority), and 3 households have received a VT State Rental Subsidy grant. Several applications have also been submitted for young adults/families for the Family Unification Program.</p> <p>In addition, Youth Services Basic Center &amp; Transitional Living Programs are supported by State Medicaid funding.</p>
<p><b>Desired outcomes for young adults of transition-age</b></p>	<p>1. Decreased number of young adults involved in the corrections system (including an increase in the number who are free of incarceration).</p> <p><b>Required activity:</b>  <i>Reach out to young adults with SED who are out-of-school at least through teen centers, recovery centers, homeless youth programs, and by intercepting them at critical intervention points with the juvenile and criminal justice systems....</i></p> <p>Youth Services continues to run a weekly free meal (“Drop In”) at the Boys &amp; Girls Club, with weekly attendance averaging between 25-40 youth ages 16-21. Many of the young adults that attend are already accessing services through Youth Services either through our homeless youth programs and/or Peer Outreach Program. The out of school youth who are accessing services usually have a goal to go back to school. Youth Services case managers help the young adults fulfill this goal by either connecting them to Vermont Adult Learning, Community High School, or the local high school. Youth Services works closely with the Community High School and local probation officers to identify youth who are in need of case management services. If clients are currently involved in the juvenile or criminal justice systems, then case managers support them through diversion, meeting with their probation</p>

	<p>officers, attending court with them or helping them identify community service opportunities, gaining and maintaining both housing and employment, and accessing mental health and other services.</p>
	<p>2. Increased number of young adults who are employed....</p> <p>Case managers support young adults with their employment goals through job search, application process, resume writing, interviewing techniques, and transportation to local businesses to apply for jobs. The YIT Oversight Committee discussed ways to gather job postings in one location for young adults to access. Voc Rehab spearheaded this initiative and designed the "Job Line" that gets e-mailed to system of care providers each week. Providers then review the job listings with clients to help young adults seek employment.</p> <p>Additionally, VtGREEN, Department of Labor, and UVM Extension Center collaborated this summer to employ 7 young adults at the UVM farm in town. Young adults learned how to grown vegetables, care for chickens, cook healthy recipes, and sell products at the local farmers market. All young adults enrolled were involved in the system of care either through Youth Services, Voc Rehab, DOL, JOBS at HCRS, or DCF's Youth Development Program.</p> <p>The new model for our Peer/Street Outreach Program is also providing a work placement opportunity for youth to gain employment skills and a positive reference for gaining and maintain future employment.</p>
	<p>3. Increased number young adults participating in (or who completed) educational programs....</p> <p>Case Managers regularly help young adults to enroll in Vermont Adult Learning or Community High School to complete their high school diplomas or to earn their GEDs. For clients attending public high school, local system of care providers are often important part of support teams and meetings for planning. Once clients have completed their high school education, case managers move to helping young adults explore secondary education. This can include connecting with VSAC, applying for financial aid and grants or scholarships, touring colleges, and applying to colleges. Often, clients are interested in taking a couple classes at Community College of Vermont while they work to take care of their living expenses.</p>
	<p>4. Increased number of young adults who have access to, and are using, a medical home....</p> <p>One of the first things that case managers do with clients is to help them sign up for health insurance. Once health insurance comes through, case managers help clients identify a primary care physician, complete new patient paperwork, and set up an appointment.</p>
	<p>5. Increased number of young adults living in safe and stable housing....</p> <p>One of the biggest goals for young adults that case managers work with is finding stable housing. Case managers help young adults apply for housing vouchers, complete a budget to assess affordability of housing options, complete housing searches, view apartments, and coordinate with landlords.</p>

	<p>We have several collaborations that we are working on as mentioned above. During this reporting period, we have moved 1 more young adult for a total of 4 young adults in the Cobblestone collaboration with WWHT. Many of those young adults will complete their 1 year lease in next couple of months. Additionally, we have housed 6 young adults and their 4 children in the Morningside/Youth Services Shelter Collaboration. Youth Services provided housing subsidies for independent living to 17 young adults in the TLP program. Youth Services provided 1,781 bed nights to young adults in this reporting period (that does not include the children or partners when applicable of the youth served).</p> <p>6. Increased number of young adults who have caring &amp; supportive relationships....</p> <p>Case Managers and young adults complete a Plan of Care at a minimum of six months with young adults. During this time, young adults are able to evaluate and add to the support system they have in their lives. Case Managers work with young adults to build and improve relationships with natural supports, service providers, and community members through skill building on communication and conflict resolution and through advocacy. Additionally, case managers become a supportive caring adult in the lives of the young adults.</p> <p>7. Increase in young adults' strengths and protective factors....</p> <p>Youth Services case manager utilize a strengths-based approach to working with young adults.</p> <p>8. Improved mental health for young adults.</p> <p><b>Required activity:</b>  <i>Improve access to mental health services for the young adults most at risk for poor outcomes and use the power of the courts to increase their likelihood of use of those services....</i></p> <p>Youth Services case managers help young adults access therapy and psychiatry if it a goal of the young adult. Youth Services invites many local therapists to Clinical meetings to discuss the therapist's approach and techniques. This allows case managers to make appropriate recommendations to young adults when helping them find a therapist. Additionally, Youth Services meets monthly with a local psychiatrist to become more educated on medications and mental health diagnoses. Psychiatrist is helpful in giving young adults quick access to care.</p>
<p><b>System of Care Infrastructure Indicators</b> (for federal TRAC):</p>	<p><u>Workforce Development:</u> Organizations or communities implementing mental health-related training programs as a result of the grant. Please enter the number of organizations or communities and briefly describe the training programs....</p> <p><u>Organizational Change:</u> Organizational changes made to support improvement of mental health-related practices/activities that are consistent with the goals of the grant. Please enter the number of changes and briefly describe them....</p> <p><u>Partnership/Collaboration:</u> Organizations that entered into formal written</p>

	<p>inter/intra-organizational agreements (e.g., MOUs/MOAs) to improve mental health-related practices/activities that are consistent with the goals of the grant. Please enter the number of organizations and briefly describe the agreements....</p> <p>Current MOUs with the Brattleboro Housing Authority for the Pathways to Housing and Shelter Plus Care Programs are enclosed, along with MOUs with the Meadowlark Inn and Morningside Shelter.</p>
	<p><u>Types/Targets of Practice:</u> Programs/organizations/communities that implemented evidence-based mental health-related practices/activities as a result of the grant. Please enter the number of programs/organizations/communities and briefly describe the evidence-based practices....</p> <p>The TIP model is used by both Youth Services and the HCRS JOBS Program.</p>

**2. Problems**

Describe any deviations or departures from the original project plan including actual/anticipated slippage in task completion dates, and special problems encountered or expected. Use this section to describe barriers to accomplishment, actions taken to overcome difficulties, and to advise DMH of any needs for assistance.

St. Michael's Catholic Church has begun a Capital Campaign to raise money for the potential collaboration with Youth Services and Brattleboro Affordable Housing (BAH). One problem that has arisen is the lack of housing vouchers through BAH. St. Michael's is pursuing housing vouchers through Vermont State Housing at this point. The current tenants (Brattleboro Music Center) are still occupying the building space to be utilized by this collaboration.

The pilot program with the Windham & Windsor Housing Trust is stable and functioning successfully. Plans to expand are currently on hold as the Housing Trust has experienced a high staff turnover during this period.

**3. Significant Findings and Events**

For special notice to Principal Investigator, State Outreach Team for Youth in Transition, Federal Project Officer, etc. This should include any changes in staffing, including of persons, time spent, and/or responsibilities. Attach resumes and qualifications of new staff.

In September 2011 Youth Services hired a new Therapeutic Case Manager, Jill Wagner. In November 2011 Youth Development Director, Kari Fletcher, relocated and Youth Services hired Bianca Barry (former Assistant Director of Youth Development) as the new Youth Development Director. In November 2011, Youth Services hired Michelle Sacco as a Therapeutic Case Manager to replace Bianca's vacancy in Bellows Falls. In December 2011, David Brown was appointed as Interim Executive Director of Youth Services.

**4. Dissemination Activities**

Briefly describe project related inquiries and information dissemination activities carried out over the reporting period. Itemize and include a copy of any newspaper, newsletter, and magazine articles or other published materials considered relevant to project activities, or used for project information or public relations purposes.

Press releases for activities happening at Youth Services are attached.

**5. Other Activities**

Briefly describe other activities undertaken during the reporting period.

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

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

Youth Services will enter into an MOU with Meadowlark Inn to house young adults for emergency purposes for up to 2 weeks (signed in January 2012 and attached). Youth Services and Morningside will begin work on the new collaboration through the Community Impact United Way grant to expand shelter space for young adults. Youth Services will continue conversations with St. Michael's Church about potential collaborations. Youth leadership activities described under the "Young Adult Leadership" section is also planned.

**DMH only:**  
*Date received:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Approved by:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date approved:* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_