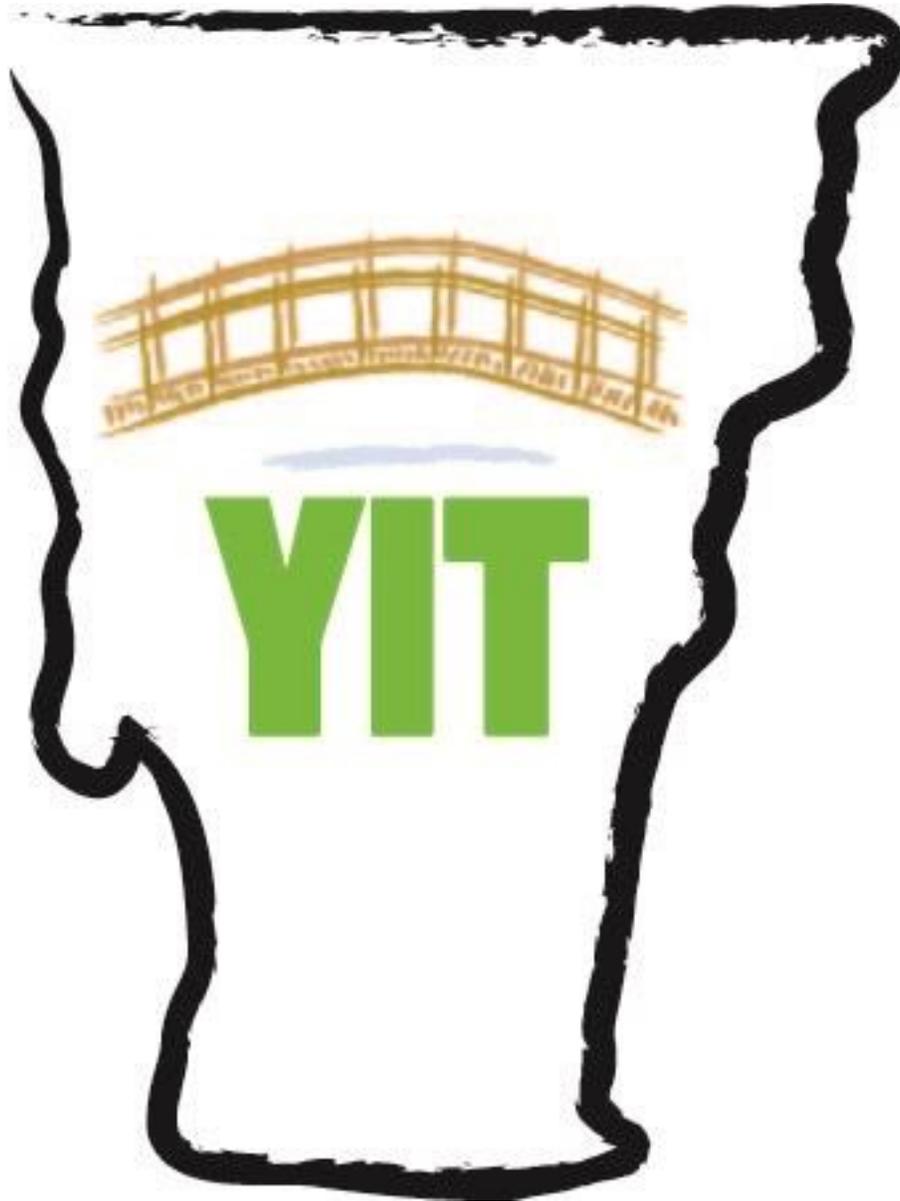


YOUTH IN TRANSITION (YIT) MANUAL



For more information, contact either:

- YIT Program Director Brenda Bean at BrendaJBean@comcast.net or 802-229-1310 (office) or 802-279-4935 (cell);
- YIT Young Adult Coordinator Matt Wolf at mwolf@vffcmh.org or 802-876-7021 (office) or 802-595-5159 (cell); or
- Charlie Biss, Director of the Child, Adolescent, and Family Unit (CAFU) for the Department of Mental Health (DMH) at Charlie.Biss@state.vt.us or 802-878-7999 (office) or 802-279-2671 (cell).

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The statewide YOUTH IN TRANSITION (YIT) program IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

How much did we do and how well did we do it?

A). YIT saves money and young lives: Conservative, under-estimated, savings from the first year alone after young people initiated services with YIT: \$908,603.¹ These savings are due to the positive outcomes (summary below) for the 500 young people aged 16-21 served annually through YIT since 2010.

15 FTE well-trained YIT workers provide individualized services using the evidence-supported Transition to Independence Process (TIP) for case management with young adults. TIP emphasizes:

- ***Respecting, listening to, and empowering young adults as the most important factors in achieving their good outcomes!***
- ***As one young adult said, these services and the workers who provide them help give young adults hope for their futures.***

The services teach life skills and connect young adults to the things they want and need to live successfully and independently – e.g., resources for housing, counseling, medical care, employment and education. The case managers continue to work with the young adults after these connections are made to coach them through the changes they are making to improve their lives. Many young adults feel that having such a case manager is vital to their making key decisions and changes.

One example of YIT services: Youth Services, Inc. of Southern Windham County provides intensively supported housing for young adults (and their children) for \$806 per month – e.g., **\$1,054 LESS PER MONTH** than the average cost of a General Assistance hotel voucher with minimal support services (\$1,860 per month).

B). YIT enlivens the human service system of care for youth and young adults: State and regional human service agencies and family and young adult leaders came together to design YIT and continue in partnership to monitor/improve those services and address the needs of this population, including via Integrated Family Services (IFS).

Is anyone better off?

Summary of 1 year longitudinal outcome data: YIT significantly reduces young adults':

- involvement with crime and the criminal justice system;
- depression, anxiety, and other mental health problems; and their
- use of prescription opiates and other illegal drugs.

YIT has increased their access to health care compared with other young people their age in Vermont.

As expected from enrollment in services to one year later, significantly more young people completed their high school education, entered college, and/or obtained employment. Unexpectedly, YIT helped those who dropped out of school find jobs at nearly the same rate as those with more education.

¹ Delaney, T.; Kamon, J.; & Suter, J. (2014). Estimated Short Term Cost Savings [and the other evaluation data]. VCHIP. UVM.

8 Broad Outcomes



Corrections
involvement



Mental health symptoms &
Substance use



Employment



Access to &
use of medical
home



Number of
young adults'
strengths



Education
completion
& continued
engagement



Number of
young adults
in safe &
stable housing



Number of
young adults
caring &
supportive
relationships

Vermont Youth in Transition Grant

Bridging the gaps for young adults in Vermont

Logic Model Summary



1). Young Adult Empowerment and Leadership (self-advocacy plus community organizing to promote mental health and reduce stigma toward young people)

Required Activity: “Operate in accordance with continuing input from key stakeholders (including youth and family members) within the regional systems of care.”

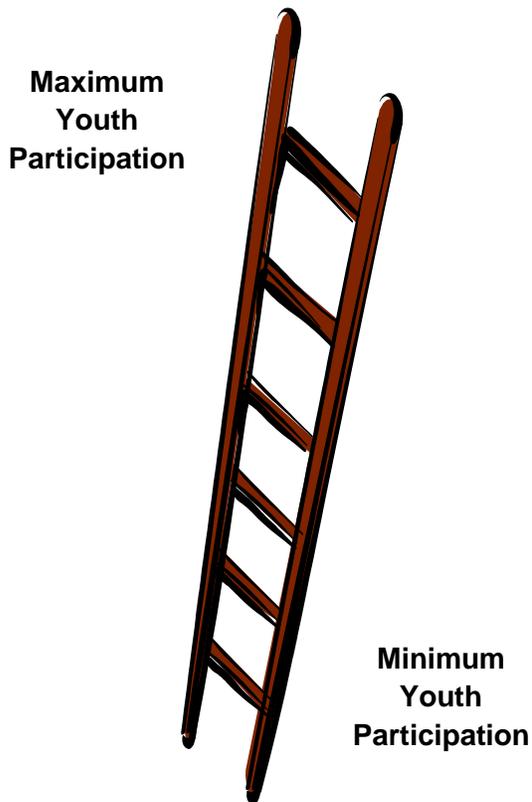
GUIDANCE



Youth Driven

Individual	<p>The youth sets vision and goals for treatment with input from team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The youth is aware of options and is able to utilize and apply knowledge of resources. • The youth is able to stand on his or her own and take responsibility for choices. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth are mentors and peer advocates for other youth. • Youth are giving presentations based on personal experiences and knowledge. • The youth is making the transition into adulthood.
Community	<p>Community partners listen to youth and make changes accordingly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people have a safe place to go and be heard. • There are multiple paid positions for youth in every decision-making group. • Youth form and facilitate youth groups in communities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth provide training in the community.
Policy	<p>Youth are calling meetings and setting agendas in policy making.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth hold trainings on policy making for youth and adults. • Youth inform the public about current policies and have a position platform. • Youth lead research to drive policy change.

Ladder of Young People's Participation



9. Youth Initiated and Directed
8. Youth Initiated, Shared Decisions with Adult
7. Youth and Adult Initiated and Directed
6. Adult Initiated, Shared Decisions with Youth
5. Consulted and Informed
4. Assigned and Informed
3. Tokenism
2. Decoration
1. Manipulation

Getting Youth Interested and Excited

- Safe Space
- Having their voice heard and valued
- A place to vent
- Empowerment
- Food
- Compensation

Effective Youth Participation

HAPPEN WHEN:

- It's the youth's group and empowered youth voice is woven throughout your system and your organization
- Youth are valued for their experience and expertise (not as the problem).
- Youth consumers are advocates and educators
- Youth members are on boards and committees
- Youth are decisions makers
- Youth on boards are treated the same as other members
- Youth are able to get to meetings (transportation and schedule)
- The group's efforts are sustainable
- Adults in the community are allies and support youth involvement
- Equal partnership and shared respect

You have the power to transform.....share it

- Youth don't have the ability to walk into a policy meeting and advocate for themselves - not without you
- Invite youth along with you to the meetings that youth are the topics of discussion.
- Advocate for youth rights
- Inform youth of their options and rights
- Model to others how to authentically engage youth within the work that you do!
- You are a change agent

"Youth are a major part of what forms the system of care so therefore we should and need to be included in decisions and meeting concerning anything with the system of care. Our voices can be very powerful if we are heard by the right people. I believe very strongly that youth can make a humungous difference if we're given the chance. So let us!"

-Sara Oram, Youth

Youth and Young Adult Voice and Choice

Youth in Transition (YIT) aims to strengthen the existing system of care for transition-aged youth. The key decision-makers believe that the most important strategy for doing so is to build the influence of youth voice and choice within that system of care. Thus, YIT's first goal for strengthening the system of care is "Young Adult (YA) leadership is developed in Vermont". Every program which receives funding through YIT contributes to the accomplishment of this goal through the following required activity: Operate in accordance with continuing input from key stakeholders (including youth and family members) within the regional systems of care.

There are many ways to obtain continuing input from key stakeholders (including youth and family members); some are more effective than others. Research about best practices for building the influence of youth voice and choice indicates that, with adult support (rather than manipulation or tokenism), young people can achieve equity with adults in their contributions to decisions and actions (refer to the Ladder of Youth Voice via the hotlink in this footnote)².

Providing this kind of adult support is not easy. According to the 2011 *Integrating "Youth Guided" and "Cultural and Linguistic Competence" Values Into Systems of Care*³, the work is likely to involve changes in governance and organizational infrastructure, services and supports, planning and continuous quality improvement, collaboration, communication, and workforce development, at least.

However, for their positive development, young people must have access to young adult-empowering environments⁴. These environments enable young adults to:

- a. Feel a sense of belonging in a community
- b. Learn and master skills and tasks
- c. Feel invested in the outcomes of their lives
- d. Give back to the community
- e. Utilize their expertise from their personal experiences to create change
- f. Have a voice and choice in their life planning
- g. Feel empowered to be involved in creating system-wide change
- h. Build relationships and partnerships
- i. Encourage and cultivate young adult voice, ownership, and access
- j. Focus on their needs, including culture-specific needs.

Young people experience benefits⁵ from these kinds of environments:

- a. Understand the community in a different way
- b. Make friends
- c. Have a support group of people who "get them"
- d. Create a positive change in their community

² <http://www.freechild.org/ladder.htm>

³ Reid, R. (2011). *Integrating "Youth Guided" and "Cultural and Linguistic Competence" Values Into Systems of Care*. Washington, DC: Technical Assistance Partnership for Child and Family Mental Health. Available at <http://www.tapartnership.org>

⁴ Matarese, M., McGinnis, L., & Mora, M. (2006). Youth involvement in systems of care: A guide to empowerment. Retrieved from http://www.tapartnership.org/docs/Youth_Involvement.pdf

⁵ Matarese, M., McGinnis, L., & Mora, M. (2006). Youth involvement in systems of care: A guide to empowerment. Retrieved from http://www.tapartnership.org/docs/Youth_Involvement.pdf

- e. Develop new skills and knowledge
- f. Reframe their personal identities as leaders and change agents
- g. See themselves reflected from peers and family members in a positive light
- h. Develop confidence and strengthen their sense of pride, identity, and self-esteem
- i. Create a better system that will help themselves and others
- j. Have their voice heard and utilized.

There are also benefits for families, other adults, organizations, planners and policy-makers, and the community. YIT expects that one benefit will be a system of care transformed to better meet the needs of youth and young adults.

Strategies for Young Adult Involvement in State Boards/Councils

The following strategies have come from my experiences with being invited to a variety of state board and council meetings in order to guide them in getting “youth voice” to their tables. I sat in on these groups’ meetings and assessed them for their general meeting culture and overall “youth friendliness.” These strategies developed from my assessment of and conversations with, these groups in meeting their particular needs.

1. When the culture of the group’s meetings are suitable to young adult involvement. Having a young adult become a member of the group can be functional if; that young adult is passionately interested and invested in the subject of the group’s mission/purpose, and if the young adult is familiar (or can make a connection) with a member of the group. Sometimes they may want to have another young adult, or a supportive adult of their selection, attend the first couple meetings with them if they do not know any members of the group in advance. As their comfort with the group grows, the need for this support person may dwindle and end. This seems to work best when a member of the group brings a young adult they have a relationship with to the meeting, so there is always that support even when it is no longer needed.
2. When the culture of the group’s meetings are somewhat agreeable to young adult involvement, and the group is strongly invested in young adult involvement, but meeting lengths and discussion procedures are not always “youth friendly;” I have made the suggestion that a small group (3-5) of young adults be brought into the group’s meeting for the first half hour/45 minutes of the meeting, and the last half hour/45 minutes of the meeting. The first section of time would be where the young adults confer with the larger group about the goals and needs for the meeting. The young adults would take on assignments, or tasks that required their input, ask clarifying questions, and provide input to the overall goal. This group of young adults would then spend the bulk of meeting time working on their input and information in their own room and in their own way, working toward achieving the task goal they had taken on. The last half hour/45 minutes of the larger group’s meeting, when the young adults returned to the larger group, would be where they could report out on the work they had done, answer any questions from the group, and provide clarifying information into their input to the larger group.
3. In another instance, when young adult presence and input was not necessarily needed, or a good use of their time to be in every meeting, we used the opportunity to provide young adults from around the entire state with the goals/mission of the group, and then asked the young adults, from their perspective, what should this group know about the “reality” of the subject of their mission/goals. The survey, once completed & compiled, was presented to the adult group as a “menu” of subject matters that the group could select from. As these matters met their agenda needs, a panel of young adults would attend the meeting particular to that subject matter to inform the group about the topic specifically. Pre-arranged questions or more specifics could be sort out in advance of the meeting.

4. In areas where the Youth In Transition (YIT) Program has strong and well-functioning young adult advisory boards, an ombudsman or delegate procedure has been used, when the culture of the adult group's meeting is not practical for young adult membership or consistent attendance. In this situation, two or three (they like having each other for support) young adults from the advisory board would attend the adult group's meeting to convey the advisory board's standpoint or input on the adult group's mission/goals/specific need. After participating in the adult group's meeting, these "delegates" would return to their young adult advisory board and report to the larger group on the work and content of the adult group's meeting, and gain further feedback from the young adult advisory board on the subject. This type of process can be repeated with either consistent or varying young adults from the advisory board depending on the interests, needs and preferences of the individual young adults involved; the subject matter of the adult group's meetings moving forward could also help determine which young adults would be most interested in participating in future meetings.

The Philadelphia Foundation Youth Engagement Assessment Tool	
<i>1=do not provide opportunities 2=provide opportunities for few 3=provide opportunities for most in this area.</i>	
<i>Are there opportunities in your organization...</i>	
	<i>Rate 1-3</i>
For youth and adults to do activities together?	
For informal time for youth and adults to build relationships with each other?	
For youth to participate in recruiting other youth to join the organization?	
For youth to participate in community outreach (with families, communities)?	
For youth to design projects?	
For youth to lead projects?	
For youth to participate in program review and planning for improvement?	
For youth to participate in decision making about the design and use of physical space?	
For youth to participate in hiring training and evaluating staff?	
For youth to participate on governing bodies (boards, advisory panels)?	
For youth to fill staff positions?	
For youth to do community service?	
For youth to participate in political events?	
For youth to express their opinions to public officials?	
For youth to identify when something unfair is happening in the community?	
For youth to take action to fix problems in the community?	
For youth to develop connections with others who care about similar issues?	

1=not working in this area; 2=starting to work; 3=some progress; 4=highly successful

Training and mentoring opportunities for youth and youth workers...

Rate 1-4

Training for adults on understanding youth	
Training for adults in working with and/or engaging youth	
Training for youth on presenting to groups	
Skills training for youth on topics such as team building, presentation skills, facilitating meetings	
Staff support youth participation in meetings	
Regular contact between youth members and adult leaders.	
Staff mentor youth and make sure they attend meetings have the support they need and become well-oriented to the organization.	

1=not working in this area; 2=starting to work; 3=some progress; 4=highly successful

Structure, policies and practice

Rate 1-4

Youth have access to the resources needed to participate in the groups work	
Expenses are paid for in advanced rather than reimbursed.	
Meetings are scheduled for times when youth are available	
Meetings are short and action oriented	
Youth are given the opportunity to speak on every issue, not just programmatic	

PLANS FOR REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF YOUNG ADULT EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP

ADDISON

Substance abuse services, housing support, employment support, and mental health support have all been identified as priorities by both the YIT staff and young adults in Addison County. A goal is to empower young adults to increase their knowledge of services and resources and to increase their access to care. Because of this the following activities are offered and organized with help from the young people in our community.

- *Moth style events for young adults to present a story in an open mic style presentation or recording.*
- *“½ step” program for youth who are curious about recovering from substance use. Similar to a harm reduction model, this program would discuss the challenges and benefits of reducing substance use. Bringing youth out of their substance use routines and discussing substance use in a non-judgmental way will help bring this population out of their shell and into therapy or treatment in the future. Eventually these youth could teach other youth the importance of taking similar steps.*
- *7 Challenges - similar to the above ½ step program. This is an evidence based harm reduction program. YIT staff and other area clinicians are taking the initiative to be trained in this model.*
- *Mentorship program with local businesses showing youth what people do in jobs and the benefits of working and sticking with a job. Youth learn what certifications or types of experience are beneficial to the types of work which interest them.*
- *Life skills group with high school juniors and seniors utilizing the skills of guidance counselors and addressing transition issues not otherwise covered in school. This will be replicated in as many schools as possible.*
- *Group work with the School Based Clinicians to focus on mindfulness techniques for middle school aged girls and boys.*
- *Get A Job Program, which teaches youth about the importance of getting and keeping a job. It is organized and implemented with the assistance of two teens.*
- *Girls’ Escape – A young adult women’s group that explores transitional issues. This weekly group is co-facilitated by CSAC staff and a young adult.*
- *A young men’s group similar to the Girls’ Escape.*
- *A Morning Activity Group that is working on promoting teen social, emotional and physical wellbeing.*

Also, YIT staff work with teen centers, school-based clinicians and other school staff to engage youth and support their voice in further development and implementation of services. This leads to:

- Youth leadership at substance abuse groups.
- Youth participation for planning, attending or presenting at conferences.
- Young adult participation in artistic endeavors exploring transitional issues. This might be through the Vermont Coalition of Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs (VCRHYPs) or the Folklife Center.
- Paid Peer Leadership to bring youth together to encourage partnership with the previously listed activities.

25% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

BENNINGTON

The success of the Bennington YIT [which includes Teens for Change (T4C) and the Youth Outreach Program] program is rooted in the belief that all youth need to be empowered and can be (or are) leaders in their community. This is particularly evident in the T4C mission: To build a positive youth culture in Bennington County by building meaningful relationships, courage, and confidence. The strategies by which that mission is put into practice are to foster connections to the community, volunteerism, mentoring, and leadership.

Foster Connections to the Community: *The Bennington Youth Risk Behavior Survey data over the past several years shows that less than 50% of youth feel they matter to people or feel connected to their community. Therefore, the YIT Youth Outreach and T4C programs specifically offer participants opportunities (such as hosting an informational booth at the annual May Fest) to feel connected to their community and that they matter to the people in the community.*

Volunteerism: *Volunteering is about giving, contributing, and helping other individuals and the community at large. It is working with others to make a meaningful contribution to a better community. T4C promotes volunteering among the youth to help them gain experience, acquire new skills, meet new people, and decrease stigma in their community. The participants also volunteer because it just makes them feel good to give back to their community, help a friend or promote a worthwhile activity.*

Mentoring: *Young people are encouraged to mentor youth who are younger than they are or who are new to T4C as a way to help them feel welcome. Since YIT is part of the United Counseling Services (UCS) Youth and Family Services Division, the young people in the program have ample opportunity to mentor younger children being supported by UCS, including through its therapeutic summer camp for children aged 12 and under.*

Leadership: T4C believes that youth are not our leaders of tomorrow; they are our leaders of today. With that belief comes great commitment to teaching young people how to lead, helping them practice their leadership skills, and supporting them as they grow and learn.

The Bennington YIT program will take additional steps to build young adult empowerment and leadership as follows:

- a). T4C will remain open and available to any youth and young adult in the community. There are several young people in the group who are not clients or associated with UCS in any way other than being a member of T4C.
- b). Increase involvement with the Northshire, perhaps hiring a young person as a Youth Outreach Worker to create a new Teens for Change group (T4C2) to serve that area (Manchester).
- c). Increase young people's involvement with local government and town leadership, aiming for one or more youth or young adults to become members of a civic group within Bennington.
- d). Create a targeted campaign to increase public awareness of the positive level of involvement in and service to the community by youth and young adults. T4C members might interview other youth in Bennington about how they feel about their community, school, etc. and air the interviews on public access cable television.

30% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

CALEDONIA

- YIT will continue developing a Young Adult Leadership Program to support young adults in developing the skills to become effective leaders within their communities.
- YIT will continue involving youth in maintenance of a youth council, in part to advise NEKYS about program activities and growth and in part to plan and carry out events like youth summits and other youth initiatives.
- Youth-driven "Pregnant to Parent" group requested by youth will be developed.
- Interested youth will be invited to attend and participate in community meetings and other community volunteer opportunities or committees (such as with system of care partner agencies).

35% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

CHITTENDEN

YIT staff will encourage and endorse self-advocacy skills through all their contacts with clients or other youth and young adults.

YIT will continue to build groups and group capacity for healthy pro-social activities by young adults.

- *Increase participation in Diversity Rocks!, a multi-cultural group which functions with a youth-driven model, though there are adult advisors available to offer input and support*

when requested by the young adults. Diversity Rocks may apply to become a local chapter of Youth M.O.V.E National.

- *Create more opportunities for young adults to participate in pro-social activities in rural areas, such as the independent living skills group now held weekly with Milton and Colchester students.*
- *Collaborate with other youth-serving agencies, particularly Spectrum, to foster young adult voice and participation.*

YIT will continue to work with young adults to increase their awareness of the importance of mental health and reducing the stigma associated with both being young and/or mentally or emotionally ill.

- *Regularly encourage local participants to participate in Text, Talk, Act - a texting program focused on reducing stigma and increasing openness in talking about mental health.*

YIT will continue to promote, market, and use its ImpactVt.org website across the region. The website is a mapped resource guide which uses Google Maps to show locations of resources and information about each, with links to other websites. There is an Educate Yourself section offering a variety of "how-to's" for young adults to help with independent living and ways to access services. The website now has a mobile application, too. YIT will continue to add resources and articles to the ImpactVt.org website, partly by recruiting young adults to add/update content. As one method of recruitment, YIT holds focus groups and presentations in high schools and in Spectrum's Drop-In Center to get young adult input and involvement in the ImpactVT.org website.

20% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

FRANKLIN-GRAND ISLE

YIT generally supports the youth groups of Northwest Vermont to promote mental health and reduce stigma by producing public events geared toward bringing awareness to the entire youth and young adult population. School districts, community agencies, and the Department for Children and Families (DCF) participate by referring youth to these public events and – along with parents – supporting youth participation through a variety of individual services and supports.

The public events are planned by the New Generation Youth Council, through which YIT most directly fosters young adult empowerment and leadership. With support from the YIT Coordinator,

Council representatives meet once or twice per week to plan events – including Public Access Television shows – to promote mental wellness and positive lifestyles in the region. The Council holds an annual leadership summit for young people to identify their concerns, solutions, and goals for the coming year as well as to develop leadership skills through team-building exercises. The Council’s leaders (Youth Ambassadors), in turn, reach out to youth who gather in teen centers and libraries throughout the region.....More venues are still needed for young adult activities.

25% of the time of staff paid with YIT funds will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

LAMOILLE

Continue “no wrong door” entry into system of care to help the population of youth and young adults recognize their strengths and how to build on them. For example, the groups “Get Your Stuff Together” (GYST, for young men) and GYST PYNC (for young women) were originally conceived to help the YIT population “accept life on life’s terms”. They were not necessarily to address any particular problem; they are for any problem. These and similar groups help young people overcome the obstacles they are facing and let them know they are not alone.

These groups and programs were developed with the idea that they would eventually be handed over to community partners (including schools) for ongoing maintenance so YIT staff can create new groups/programs as needed; YIT staff will continue this approach with the help of a Peer Outreach Worker.

25% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

ORANGE-NO. WINDSOR

Youth empowerment is provided within the complete array of services provided by the Transition-Aged Youth (TAY) program of the Clara Martin Center (CMC), of which YIT is a part, along with JOBS and other adolescent services. The CMC has a strong history of developing young adult leadership. The entire TAY program was developed with the Resiliency Model as a key cornerstone of its programming. In addition, the CMC TAY Program has completed the trainings necessary to earn the distinction of being certified as a Transition to Independence Process (TIP)-Informed Program. The CMC is always trying to support youth to become strong leaders, if not as dedicated youth leaders, then as leaders of their own futures.

Examples of TAY /YIT young adult empowerment and leadership activities include the youth and young adult groups in White River Junction called Youth Community Rising (YCR) and New Horizons, where young people have been supported in developing programming where their voices are heard. With the design and delivery of two successful Youth Summits and the creation of a PSA video aimed at de-stigmatizing mental health, young adults have had the opportunity to educate their communities while providing great outreach.

The community partner Listen Community Services, Inc. (especially its White River Junction Teen Center) has played a large role in supporting these activities, helping to

ensure success. The CMC will encourage more involvement from other community partners like schools to plan the timing of future events and identify ways in which students can be involved. Schools could allow students who participate in the planning and execution of events to count those hours toward their community service requirements. Schools could also integrate events into their classroom curricula, like field trips.

The CMC will establish more youth advisory groups that will meet locally as well as regionally to identify the needs of the communities and ways to address those issues. Thus, there will be youth advisory groups not only in White River Junction but in Bradford and Randolph. The Bradford youth advisory group could be a collaborative effort with the Bradford Teen Association.

The youth advisory groups will meet monthly at a minimum and more frequently as needed. They will be represented at the YIT Steering Committee Meetings, and YIT Steering Committee members will attend some youth advisory group meetings. In this way, ideas and planning about upcoming events will be shared and community participation strengthened.

20% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

ORLEANS-NO. ESSEX – Not funded beyond State FY2015.

RUTLAND – Not funded beyond State FY2015.

SO. WINDHAM

YIT focuses on using a strengths-based, empowering approach to working with young adults in each interaction. Beyond these consistent practices, young adults are also given frequent opportunities to be agents of change and to discover and develop their leadership skills and qualities. For example: youth attended the State House YIT Advocacy Day and spoke with State officials about the importance of sustaining the YIT program and the ways in which they were empowered to reach their goals. With support from YIT staff, young adults have been involved in letter-writing campaigns and interviews by local media to support programs they believe in, and in focus groups with local candidates regarding their perspectives.

Young adults (including those who once utilized YIT services) are on the hiring committee at Youth Services and are employed with the agency as Peer Outreach Workers. Also, several youth-driven initiatives have been implemented with support from Youth Services, Inc. and other system of care (SOC) partners. Youth Services has helped young people develop a thriving Young Moms Group, annual clothing drives, a dance to raise awareness about childhood hunger, and planning and implementing events at the weekly Youth Drop-In Night. Other SOC partners have helped organize for/with young people health groups to boost self-esteem and wellness, community service activities and a groups and events to build life skills in the areas of employment, budgeting, communication, transportation and pro-social, substance-free recreation.

Though Youth Services, Inc. and the other SOC partners have many other ideas for Young Adult Empowerment and Leadership, because of the focus of this region's YIT

program, those ideas will be accomplished with funds apart from this sub-grant. Youth Services will send out weekly communication about opportunities for young adults.

1 % of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

SO. WINDSOR-NO. WINDHAM

1). Young Adult Empowerment and Leadership (self-advocacy plus community organizing to promote mental health and reduce stigma toward young people) - **Required Activity:** "Operate in accordance with continuing input from key stakeholders (including youth and family members) within the regional systems of care."

YIT and its System of Care (SOC) partners encourage youth and young adult involvement in the Springfield Area YIT group known as Voices For Change. Youth involved in foster care or residential placement are supported through NFI (Northeastern Family Institute) and WCYS (Windsor County Youth Services) to participate in the Voices For Change group.

With adult guidance, this group meets on a weekly basis to focus youth on their ability to make choices and be empowered through creative action in their community – e.g. being social in a safe and substance-free way, doing community service, being a part of raising funds to sustain safe and sober activities. Voices For Change members also make contact with legislators and other community stakeholders to promote youth empowerment, leadership and prevention.

The Voices For Change group plans to sponsor one or more dances at the local community center. The community center is currently underutilized by teens, and regular use by Voices For Change could help to reduce community stigma toward young people.

A Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) class was offered during the summer of 2014 and will be offered again in 2015. Youth gave very positive feedback about this class.

Another activity in which Voices For Change will participate during FY2015 is a facilitated "Dialogue Night". Diverse members of the Springfield community (HCRS staff, young adults, parents, members of the substance abuse prevention coalition, the housing coalition, teachers/school board members, probation and police officers, local businesses, restorative justice, Turning Point, Voc Rehab, DOL, NFI, WCYS, etc.) will be invited by HCRS and the substance abuse prevention coalition to gather together to discuss barriers to successful transition to adulthood. Topics to be discussed will include substance use, gang violence, and lack of housing and employment options.

Voices For Change will be encouraged to participate and take leadership roles in the meetings associated with the Dialogue Night, including on a planning team and in subsequent work-groups. YIT and SOC partners will support young adults to participate in the Dialogue Night and its associated meetings.

15% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

WASHINGTON – Not funded beyond State FY2015.

2). Peer Outreach and Support (*young adult advocates plus advocates for young adults*)

Required Activity: “Outreach to young adults who are out-of-school through, at a minimum teen centers, recovery centers, homeless youth programs, and by intercepting them at critical intervention points with the juvenile and criminal justice systems.”

GUIDANCE

Young Adult Peer Worker Stages/Employment Functions Vermont Youth In Transition (YIT) Program

- A. **Stages for Becoming Young Adult Peer Workers:** YouthMOVE National cites a spectrum for the development of advocacy & leadership in young adults - from Youth Advocate to Advocate for Youth.
- *Self-Advocate:* This spectrum starts with young adults growing and developing as advocates for themselves and their needs in the system of care, learning to appropriately share their own stories to advocate for their own needs & goals.
 - *Youth Advocate:* As young adults grow and develop these self-advocacy skills, they start to move into the next noted phase on this spectrum – e.g., learning to advocate for a population. At this point, their advocacy and story-telling transcend serving their own personal needs and move into advocating for the needs of the populations of which they are members. For example: young adults in their schools, neighborhoods, or ethnic groups; peers with similar lived experiences (foster care, mental health diagnoses, etc.).
 - *Advocate for Youth:* The next phase on the spectrum has to do with young adults’ aging. While they developed as self-advocates and became peer (or population) advocates, time passed. At some point they were no longer in the age range of “young adult” and could no longer be considered “Youth Advocates” because they were no longer youth. At this point their advocacy for young people is no longer as a “peer”. However, they can be very effective “Advocates for Youth,” skillful in guiding other young people through the advocacy “journey.” They can be supportive of others learning to share their stories and advocate for their peers.

Within this range, everyone starts with an initial set of experiences and skills, and then becomes more advanced. This growth is referred to as “initial” & “advanced” below.

B. **Employment Functions of YIT Workers:**

1. **Young Adult Leadership and Empowerment :**

- *Initial Level:* Promotes, markets & co-facilitates the community activism/advisory board work of the region.
 - Recruits new members during street outreach efforts.
 - Helps to run the meetings, keep meetings “on task,” and encourage group participants in taking ownership of the meetings & processes; models engagement.
 - Involving the group’s youth when possible, facilitates relationships with community partners and businesses.
 - Helps to market the group’s meetings and events in the community.

- *Advanced Level:* Takes more of a leadership and organizational role in the community activism/advisory board work of the region.
 - May set the agenda, organize, and help young people to run the meetings.
 - Initiates contact & builds partnership agreements with community providers & businesses.
 - May help young people monitor their group's progress toward meeting goals and fulfilling strategic plans and action steps.

2. Peer Outreach and Support:

PEER OUTREACH

- *Initial Level:* Spends time in the community connecting with local youth.
 - Is a point of contact for community youth to access the regional advisory board activities.
 - Refers community youth to YIT Peer Support and Case Management services.
- *Advanced Level:* Does more “targeted” community outreach to “disconnected” youth, meeting them wherever they are.
 - Serves as point of contact for disengaged youth in need of services & supports, to build relationships and bridges to the services they need.
 - Connects disengaged youth with positive peer group opportunities.

PEER SUPPORT

- *Initial Level:* Helps peers build their social (and other) skills.
 - Becomes more personally integrated into the local service system.
 - Gains a broader awareness of the services in the community (and the specific workers in those positions) in order to make direct referrals to various services for local youth.
 - May attend some transition team meetings.
- *Advanced Level:* As a service referral and connection resource, may have more regularly-scheduled time at local schools, teen centers, etc.
 - More directly builds working relationships and teaming with local service providers.

3. Case Management: *Advanced Level:*

- Takes a Case Manager role in working with local youth; carries a case load.
 - Works directly with clients to identify goals and follow through with their plans.
 - Attends treatment team meetings as an integral member of the team.
 - Does direct service with, and service coordination for, clients.
 - May provide transportation and facilitate follow-through of clients with their therapeutic or community provider relationships.
 - Forms and maintains working relationships with local service providers.
 - Is a member of the local transition team, participating regularly in meetings.
- Mentors *Youth Advocates*.
 - Has regular support and planning meetings with *Youth Advocates*.
 - Mentors and guides their facilitation of the youth advisory boards.
- Helps to implement efforts of the local transition team or other community partners.

- May lead or co-facilitate local skills groups or trainings: how to get a job, how to get into college, youth leadership workshops, etc.
- May lead or co-facilitate local focus groups, advocacy or activism efforts at the community or even statewide levels.

YIT Employment Functions can be carried out by people paid by stipends or regular part-time or full-time jobs.

Peer Worker Orientation & Training Key Points

The following information was given by existing Peer Workers in the YIT Grant statewide regarding what is needed to help a new Peer Worker acclimate to their new position, professional environment and prepare them for success in their work.

A. HIRING CONSIDERATIONS:

- ❖ A young adult being considered for a Peer Worker position needs some kind of past job experience (even just McDonald's) so they know about what it is like to hold a job; arrive on time, maintain general professional behavior, work with supervisors, etc.
- ❖ It is also very helpful if the Peer Worker is from the area that they will be working in so they already know of the unseen or unknown corners of the town that only youth know about. They may also know of or have relationships with some of the agencies or businesses in the area as well.

B. INITIAL TRAINING:

- ❖ **Professional Boundaries:** This should be sure to very clearly include the concept of not giving out personal phone numbers or personal information and how, there should absolutely not be any personal relationships with the peers being served. What to do and what not to do in your interactions with the peers being served should be very clear as well. While a Peer Worker's life experiences can help them in working with peers effectively, being told how to properly apply this experience appropriately, and not give out personal information in their interactions with peers is key. Training on mandated reporting & confidentiality (HIPPA) is very important, but training on how to effectively disclose that to the peers to ensure their comfort is equally as important (based on young adults' experiences with gossip in life and school, it is critical, and difficult, to ensure an understanding of and comfort with these concepts). It is also very important to ensure that the Peer Workers understand what they are qualified to do in their work and when they need to make referrals to service providers to help the peer with the more intense (possibly clinical) concerns that arise.
- ❖ **Personal Presentation:** It is very important to give new Peer Workers some guidance around how to act around the peers they will be serving and also emphasizing the value of informal meetings and peer level respect/understanding. Knowledge of how to approach peers confidently, (body language, posture, dress, etc) even in intimidating situations, but also present as accessible to the peer, is critical to the work. A social skills & awareness training related to outreach work and how to reach out to people in general is very important, but also needs to include concepts around connecting with all youth for outreach; not just those within a given Peer Worker's social group, social class, clique, or sphere of interests. Peer Workers need to be equipped to transcend these age appropriate social conventions. It is also important for Peer Workers to have these peer related skills in combination with training around how to help translate/mediate between the peers and adults/service providers they will be helping the peers to work with. Similarly, these workers also benefit from training about being respectful, and sensitive, to

the cultural differences that exist in their communities. This helps to build alliances and respect within the community in general.

- ❖ **Shadowing:** Learning by observing an experienced worker is extremely valuable to new Peer Workers. It helps them get involved with the peers they will be serving and also helps them to connect with the agencies they will be working with and the community in general (learning resources). This is also a subtle way to support some of the professional boundaries training the Peer Worker will have received. Being visually associated with an experienced worker lends credibility to the promise of confidentiality and the Peer Worker's knowledge of services and support.
- ❖ **General considerations:**
 - Given the type of work Peer Workers will be expected to do, knowledge of how to protect themselves will be very important. Being taught to be aware of the potential dangers a worker could run into in the field will be important. Things like knowing what a meth lab smells like, or what people look like when they're high or drunk and then knowing how to handle themselves safely and appropriately in such situations.
 - New Peer Workers will also need ongoing guidance and support around building confidence in discussing difficult subjects like drugs, sex, family issues, dating or domestic violence, etc. This will help them to be more effective Outreach Workers, but will also support them personally in the possible emotional struggles they may run into when supporting a peer on such subjects.
 - Similarly to any professional, Peer Workers benefit from ongoing training opportunities. It helps to expand their knowledge, re-energize themselves for the work, and help them to grow more as a professional. Sometimes the knowledge gained from experience in the field, helps prepare people to be better, more attuned, students in future training opportunities.
- ❖ Many of the concepts referred to in these key points (personal presentation, boundaries, shadowing, etc.) are part of Street Outreach training given by Jim Bolis of the Empire State Coalition. This training was brought to VT in May, 2010 by VCRHYP; the YIT workers were invited to attend.

C. AGENCY ORIENTATION & SUPPORT:

- ❖ It is very important for the adults within a given agency to be "ready" to work with, and support, a young adult both professionally and personally.
 - A new Peer Worker is more likely to be successful in the long run if his/her agency/supervisor does not expect too much all at once, especially at first. It will be important to give the new worker time, understanding and support to build up to being able to juggle multiple tasks and manage the high stress situations they often find themselves in doing this work. At the same time, it is beneficial to start working on a professional development plan with the new worker as early on as possible; potentially using this as a tool for thoughtfully adding to the worker's list of responsibilities over time.
 - Successful orientations have included:
 - An explanation of the grant and the Peer Worker position itself.

- The needs, expectations and accomplishments of the program so far.
 - A clear outline of who the supervisors are, what the supervision routines are, and how to access support & information relevant to the job and the experiences a worker may have in the position.
 - A policy manual that outlines some of the most basic expectations of any employee within the given agency.
 - Walking through the position in detail with clear explanations of daily expectations, paperwork requirements, tasks that need to be completed & staff that can be supportive in those efforts.
 - Within the clear expectations of what “needs” to be done for the position, there should also be acknowledgement of the less predictable & routine aspects of the work. Encourage new Peer Workers to be creative in their work and utilize other staff and supervisors’ thoughts & opinions to find new and possibly more effective ways to get the work done.
- Elements of successful support of Peer Workers have included:
- An office with several supervisors and staff who are very supportive of each other and look out for one another both personally & professionally. (A place where anyone would pull you aside to ask about things and if you need someone to talk to based on a change in your overall presentation that day.)
 - Mutually respectful and supportive inter-office relationships where honesty is most important and everyone is valued & knows where they stand within the agency.
 - A direct supervisor who is easy to approach, a very hard worker, and passionate about the work.
 - A clear structure outlined from the beginning about whom the Peer Worker can talk to regarding possible issues with any staff member; also over time helping them identify an “extra outlet” - someone with whom they feel comfortable discussing more sensitive issues.
 - New Peer Workers are also going to need support with balancing their work & home lives, and learning how not to “take work home with you.” Having someone to check in with about this subject before it becomes an issue would help to make for a more open conversation when concerns do start to surface.

PLANS FOR REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF PEER OUTREACH AND SUPPORT

ADDISON

YIT staff access young people through group activities (such as those listed above in the Young Adult Empowerment and Leadership section). They perform outreach to out-of-school youth through connections with teen centers, Parent Child Center and school-based and other CSAC clinicians. School-based clinicians and guidance counselors often refer youth to the YIT Youth Advocate in order to access wrap-around services when needs are apparent.

YIT staff are readily available for appointments with individual youth who need transitional assistance. They invite individuals to meet one-on-one with them; this works especially well when the youth would like a CSAC connection while on the waitlist for an available clinician. YIT staff also refer young people to other local providers from whom they might benefit.

25% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

BENNINGTON

T4C youth and YIT staff have been active in the community hosting events as a way to outreach to young people and the community as well as to use the events as intervention and prevention points. Facebook has been a way to connect and outreach to young people and partners and try to “bring them in”.

YIT staff outreach to a variety of community partners including but not limited to Turning Point and area schools. YIT is connected with the Mental Health and Substance Abuse system of care and able to link youth with support services at critical points in their recovery. Also, as part of UCS’ transition services team (JOBS, TLP and YDP), YIT participates in the long tradition of UCS collaborating with adult and juvenile justice systems within the community.

The YIT staff connect with the Public Defender’s Office, Department of Corrections (including Probation and Parole and the Community High School), Center for Restorative Justice (serving on its Reparative Board), and attend Monday court arraignments as a way to intercept young people at this critical point. YIT staff also attend the DCF Juvenile Justice Preliminary Board meeting which staffs young people coming into the juvenile justice system.

The philosophy of YIT staff is “we can help with that” as a way of connecting with young people and continuing to grow collaborative relationships. YIT has such a notably successful track record with helping young people complete their deferred sentences and avoid any additional charges that it is seeking a formal memorandum of understanding with the Court and Department of Corrections to make referral to YIT automatic for young people who are given deferred sentences.

30% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

CALEDONIA-SO. ESSEX

- *YIT staff will be available during NEKYS' open Living Room [teen center] hours to increase access for youth. Continue weekly events there to involve youth in activities that promote life skills.*
- *Encourage referrals by peers.*
- *Create printed material that can be given to youth.*
- *Reach out to community schools – including in outlying towns - to enable youth to self-refer and increase referrals from teachers and guidance counselors including Lyndon State College and Community College of Vermont.*
- *Send an informative email to all community agencies (DOC, DCF [Family Services, Economic Services], Northeast Kingdom Human Services, Northeast Kingdom Community Action, Department of Labor, JOBS program, Northeast Kingdom Learning Services, Department of Health, Voc Rehab, Diversion, etc.) to describe the YIT program, offer a presentation, and welcome referrals.*
 - *Present at SOC agency's staff meetings to more fully inform all workers of YIT and encourage referrals.*
- *Involve interested youth in all aspects of program development and community outreach, including development of informative flyers about YIT and participating in community events. Youth will be encouraged to share stories they choose which relate to their experiences.*
- *Conduct street outreach.*

10% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

CHITTENDEN

YIT staff will encourage and endorse self-advocacy skills through all their contacts with clients or other youth and young adults.

YIT will continue to build groups and group capacity for healthy pro-social activities by young adults.

- *Increase participation in Diversity Rocks!, a multi-cultural group which functions with a youth-driven model, though there are adult advisors available to offer input and support*

when requested by the young adults. Diversity Rocks may apply to become a local chapter of Youth M.O.V.E National.

- *Create more opportunities for young adults to participate in pro-social activities in rural areas, such as the independent living skills group now held weekly with Milton and Colchester students.*

- Collaborate with other youth-serving agencies, particularly Spectrum, to foster young adult voice and participation.

YIT will continue to work with young adults to increase their awareness of the importance of mental health and reducing the stigma associated with both being young and/or mentally or emotionally ill.

- Regularly encourage local participate in Text, Talk, Act - a texting program focused on reducing stigma and increasing openness in talking about mental health.

YIT will continue to promote, market, and use its ImpactVt.org website across the region. The website is a mapped resource guide which uses Google Maps to show locations of resources and information about each, with links to other websites. There is an Educate Yourself section offering a variety of “how-to’s” for young adults to help with independent living and ways to access services. The website now has a mobile application, too. YIT will continue to add resources and articles to the ImpactVt.org website, partly by recruiting young adults to add/update content. As one method of recruitment, YIT holds focus groups and presentations in high schools and in Spectrum’s Drop-In Center to get young adult input and involvement in the ImpactVT.org website.

30% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

FRANKLIN-GRAND ISLE

The YIT Coordinator and New Generation Council’s Youth Ambassadors conduct workshops about resources available for young people and help to lead support groups. They prepare and provide emergency care packages (including information, toiletries, and vouchers) for homeless youth [a priority identified by the young people, who then applied for and secured funding specifically for serving this special population]. The Council also does street outreach with peers. In the future, Youth Ambassadors will do more to reach out to the youth support organizations in the Islands, rural communities with Native Americans, and to Northwest Medical Center emergency room services.

15% of the time of staff paid with YIT funds will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

LAMOILLE

YIT staff attend Court weekly to intercept young people involved with the criminal justice system to offer help navigating that system, including with services and supports.

In addition to seeking referrals from system of care partners of youth needing YIT services, YIT staff seek referrals of youth leaders who might be interested in doing peer navigation.

The GYST programs offer peer-to-peer support, with youth stepping up as leaders as well as recruiting and reaching out to friends and other peers whom they think could benefit from YIT services or groups.

GYST mentors with experience will be invited to serve as mentors for the new regional Seven Challenges substance abuse treatment program.

25% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

ORANGE-NO. WINDSOR

In the history of TAY/YIT, CMC's peer services have taken many different shapes, "morphing" several times as a result of staffing changes and/or issues. The current plan is for a part-time Peer Specialist to support the youth advisory boards, provide outreach and education at key events, and offer supportive services to young adults as appropriate. Though all YIT staff will help with youth empowerment, leadership, and peer outreach and support, the CMC is considering a partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) to provide extra oversight and training for peer workers.

The CMC will also continue to partner with The Junction and the Bradford Teen Association to provide and/or join structured activities and events to conduct YIT outreach. In the past this approach was very successful, such as when the CMC partnered with The Junction to provide a substance abuse education group at the teen center. This helped many young adults understand and connect with the services available.

The CMC will explore the use of social media and its relevance to working with young adults and make changes to CMC technology policies as necessary.

30% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

ORLEANS-NO. ESSEX – Not funded beyond State FY2015.

RUTLAND – Not funded beyond State FY2015.

SO. WINDHAM

YIT personnel join Peer Outreach Workers and other Youth Services staff and Boys and Girls Club and other system of care allies to help plan and implement programs at a weekly Drop-In Night in Brattleboro open to all youth aged 15-22. These partners are committed to finding ways to provide childcare and transportation to make this weekly event and other opportunities more accessible to more young people.

1 % of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

SO. WINDSOR-NO. WINDHAM

HCRS plus NFI and WCYS collaborate to reach out to students in high school and/or Vermont Adult Learning to become involved with YIT services and activities, including Voices For Change. YIT staff work closely with the guidance departments at the high schools to identify and support students who are at risk of dropping out or who have dropped out. YIT staff are also in regular contact with probation/parole and Valley Court

Diversion to assist youth who have legal problems to meet their diversion or court requirements. These young people are typically referred to mental health or substance abuse treatment and are followed through YIT or JOBS case management.

5% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

WASHINGTON – Not funded beyond State FY2015

3). Case Management (*TIP-informed, building on or linked with JOBS Programs*)

Required Activity: “Provide cross-system case management and individualized service plan development, ensuring that young adults are engaged in planning for their own futures.”

GUIDANCE

RADICAL Way of Working with Youth⁶

1. **RELATIONSHIPS:**
Engage young people through relationship development.
2. **ALIGNMENT:**
Align services and supports with the young person’s strengths & goals.
3. **DATA-DRIVEN:**
Maintain an outcome focus at the young person, program, and community levels.
4. **INVOLVEMENT:**
Involve young people, parents, & community partners (practice, program & community levels).
5. **CHOICES:**
Develop personal choice and social responsibility with young people.
6. **ASSISTANCE:**
Identify supports for the young person. (parents, family members, key players, etc.).
7. **LIVELIHOOD:**
Enhance competencies to achieve greater self-sufficiency and confidence.

⁶ Adapted by Laura Flint, Certified TIP Locally-Based Trainer for Vermont, from TIP Model Guidelines. TIP is the Transition to Independence Process model of Dr. Hewitt (Rusty) Clark. YIT Case Managers received TIP training starting in 2010.

PLANS FOR REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF CASE MANAGEMENT

ADDISON

Case management is done in partnership with Integrated Family Services (IFS). All the System of Care (SOC) partners regularly refer youth and young adults to transitional case management services. Implementing effective transitions is one of the “top ten” strategies for IFS to improve outcomes.

CSAC case management is TIP-informed both within and outside of the YIT program. The YIT Youth Advocate is housed with JOBS, Therapeutic Support Workers, and clinical case managers at CSAC. This builds a solid teaming approach for YIT, including with:

- *CSAC Substance Abuse Clinician, who provides case management and counseling to youth who suffer from addiction.*
- *CSAC Outreach Clinician, who provides case management and counseling to youth who are in transition.*
- *JOBS Case Managers, who assist youth eligible for JOBS services.*

While the above CSAC staff are paid under IFS (not YIT), they work collaboratively with the YIT Youth Advocate. They refer clients to each other and support each other's clients when available. They share weekly supervision, including consultation about clients.

25% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

BENNINGTON

YIT staff use their TIP training and the UCS individualized service planning process (including the Electronic Medical Record) to engage young people in reflecting on their lives and planning for their futures.

As part of the transition services team at UCS, YIT staff are able to quickly and easily connect young people to JOBS or the Transitional Living Program (TLP) when needed. They also have access to all offerings through the UCS Youth and Family Services Division. For instance, if a young person or family with whom YIT is working need some extra help, they may access respite services for additional one-on-one support or participate in client wellness programs like Trauma-Informed Yoga or life-skills classes.

The transition services team at UCS (including YIT) plans to expand its collaborative relationships to include:

- *Co-facilitation of classes/groups with the Center for Restorative Justice (CRJ).*
- *Primary Care Physicians as another avenue for supporting youth and their relationship with a medical home.*

- *Parents, perhaps through some kind of parent support or parent book club (Parents 4 Change!) to discuss teen issues.*

20% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

CALEDONIA-SO. ESSEX

Youth who go to the Living Room for support with independent living skills (like learning to access transportation and/or create their own budgets) may also receive youth-driven case management.

- *YIT staff are TIP- informed.*
- *YIT staff support youth in obtaining health insurance and connecting with a primary care physician.*
- *YIT makes other referrals to JOBS program, Dept. of Labor, Voc. Rehab, Family Services, Probation and Parole, Community Connections, Economic Services, WIC, NKLS, NKHS, NKHS substance abuse programs, Community Partners, etc.*

45% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

CHITTENDEN

YIT is integrated with the Chittenden JOBS Program, a certified TIP-informed site where all staff have been trained in the Transition to Independence Program (TIP) Model. JOBS pre-existed YIT as a comprehensive case management collaborative between the HowardCenter, Spectrum, and the State (VR, DMH, DOC, and DCF).

The HowardCenter’s mental health infrastructure and procedures are used to document all case management activities. The case management and associated services and support are to help young adults connect to pro-social activities and develop healthy coping skills in order to live successfully and independently. Referrals come from active outreach. YIT adds capacity to serve/support clients and achieve/track positive outcomes with young adults in rural plus multi-cultural (especially New American) parts of Chittenden County.

Spectrum’s Shelter and transitional housing programs are helpful to many YIT/JOBS clients. The Chittenden JOBS Program (with YIT) will continue to explore with Spectrum and other community partners how to develop more supportive housing options for young adults.

40% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

FRANKLIN-GRAND ISLE

The YIT Coordinator accepts referrals of young people from system of care partners. Referrals result in meeting with the youth/young adult, assessment, and – as needed and as the young person agrees - treatment. All young people enrolled through YIT in mental health and related services will be assisted in a manner consistent with the evidence-supported Transition to Independence Process (TIP) model of strengths

discovery, futures planning, use of rationales, in-vivo learning, etc. The YIT Coordinator also makes referrals of young people to system of care partners. Referrals are “warm hand-offs” between partners who have accurate knowledge of each other’s services, goals, and resources. This requires timely sharing within the system of care.

50% of the time of staff paid with YIT funds will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

LAMOILLE

YIT staff provide individual case management and substance abuse services for youth of transition age. The staff ensure all clients have a medical “home” with a Primary Care Provider, and they make appropriate referrals to help young people achieve their goals related to recovery, education, employment, etc.

25% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

ORANGE-NO. WINDSOR

The CMC, being a designated mental health agency, has a long history of providing strengths-based case management services. The CMC Child and Family Program (which encompasses TAY and YIT) operates with a team approach. This means that no one staff person is burdened with providing all services to the clients on his/her caseload. A young adult client can get the support he/she needs when it is needed, not just when the YIT Peer Navigator is available. Each staff person pitches in where appropriate and possible. The YIT Peer Navigator may support a client in completing all documentation necessary to obtain health insurance, while the JOBS clinician may support the same young adult in getting to a medical appointment. Because of this integrated approach, there are fewer road blocks to a young person’s success.

While YIT does outreach and youth empowerment and leadership activities region-wide, its ability to provide case management and other clinical service is quite limited for clients in the White River Junction (Hartford) area, where the designated mental health center is not the CMC but is – instead - Health Care and Rehabilitation Services (HCRS) of Southeastern Vermont. This difference between the Agency of Human Services (AHS) district for YIT funding and the mental health catchment areas puts an added burden on the CMC to link young adults with individualized services. To address this, the CMC will hold coordination meetings with HCRS to support young adults being able to access services there.

40% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

ORLEANS-NO. ESSEX – Not funded beyond State FY2015

RUTLAND – Not funded beyond State FY2015

SO. WINDHAM

The strong local SOC builds awareness within both providers and clients of resources and options available to help young adults and promotes “warm hand-offs” in relevant referral processes. Service providers work together with Youth Services and young people to balance confidentiality and coordination, making it possible to create individualized service plans that do not conflict and which empower the youth and young adults to achieve their goals.

Youth Services supports its staff to reduce effects of secondary trauma and to focus on strengths, hope and resiliency. This includes maintaining a reasonably-sized caseload, which allows staff to go “above and beyond” to meet and care for clients “where they’re at” both physically and developmentally, even outside of normal business hours if necessary. YIT staff are devoted to overseeing the Youth Shelter program and to providing intensive, strength-based case management for an estimated 15 people per year (including youth, young adults and their children).

YIT encourages educational achievement and promotes overall wellness and recovery. Staff consistently fill gaps in services such as by offering sexual health and hygiene items and recreational, pro-social and fun activities at the weekly Youth Drop-In Nights, forming the Young Moms’ Group, and - most significantly – by expanding the Youth Shelter Program.

From its inception in January 2011 through June 2014, the Youth Shelter Program served 60 unduplicated individuals (41 young adults and 19 children under the age of 3) with good outcomes. For example: for the young adults discharged from January to June, 2014: 100% had health insurance; 88% had a source of income: and 100% moved on to secure housing.

The average monthly cost of \$806 for serving young people in the Youth Shelter Program compares very favorably to the monthly cost of a General Assistance Hotel Voucher program (\$1,860), which offers clients minimal support. The Youth Shelter Program, instead, offers young people intensive support and life skill-building opportunities.

97% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

SO. WINDSOR-NO. WINDHAM

HCRS provides a comprehensive system of mental health and substance abuse outreach, screening, assessment, treatment and peer support for youth aged 16 through 21. This includes functional, vocational and skill-building support in the community.

The YIT clinician completes the intake process for all YIT and JOBS clients through HCRS. Youth who are served by the diversion board or juvenile probation are at times referred to the YIT clinician for intake if there is a need for mental health services or employment.

Minor youth and their parents are informed of Voices For Change group’s activity and purpose during the engagement and intake process. YIT and JOBS staff work together

daily and often collaborate with each other and with a young person to produce his/her individual treatment plan in accordance with the Transition to Independence Process (TIP). Youth are encouraged and supported by these case managers to be a part of decision-making about their goals and activities and services.

Cross-system services are used when appropriate and needed. For example: some YIT money has been used to benefit youth in the WCYS homeless shelter and NFI. Also, funds have been used for HCRS clients to cover independent living skills classes and such educational and employment expenses as for driving (including driving permits), cooking, wellness, plus safe and sober activities and transportation expenses.

70% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

WASHINGTON – Not funded beyond State FY2015

4). Regional Interagency Intake or Case Review Committee (of YIT, YDP, VCRHYP, VR, JOBS, Diversion, and similar programs - reporting to YIT Steering Committee and/or LIT)

Required Activity: “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.”

GUIDANCE

No one worker or program or agency can address all of the issues facing a young person of transition age. A **SYSTEM OF CARE (SOC)** is needed.

YIT staff use a strength-based, youth-driven approach, with a focus on out-of-school/at-risk youth or those who are under-employed or not engaged in other programs.

- The intention of the program is to fill in the system “cracks” so youth do not go unserved due to eligibility reasons.
- To learn where the “cracks” are in the system, YIT staff learn/support what is already there.

YIT Case Managers convene all of the transition service providers for monthly meetings to:

- share resources
- brainstorm problem-solving
- strengthen collaborations
- strengthen the local SOC in general, and
- Provide meaningful services to their youth & young adults.

Transition providers must know ‘everything about everything’ in both the children’s and adult systems. They learn this in part by developing relationships with each other and meeting together regularly. Some of the workers likely to be transition providers and the areas of their expertise are shown on the SOC map on the next page.

Mapping the System of Care for Vermont's Transition Aged Youth

		The Medical Field		Economic Services		Dept. of Family Services		Vocational Rehabilitation		The University System & Agency of Education	
General Life Domains											
		Physical				Mental				Research & Developmental	
		Medical concerns	DS – Physical			Therapy	Recovery	Peer Support	Youth Leadership	Data	Reporting
		Chronic Illness	insurance			Group Counseling		Advisory Boards		QA	Best Practice
		Preventive Health				Mental Wellness		Permanency		Education/Knowledge	
Mixed Domains											
				Dietary/Nutritional Info		Life skills		Housing & Homelessness			
				Medications & Monitoring		Interpersonal interactions		Employment & Training			
				General Self Care/Wellness		Professionalism & Boundaries		Social Media & Communications			
Transition Programs		Parent Child Centers & the Learn Together Program									
						The Youth In Transition (YIT) Grant					
						The Youth Development Program (YDP)					
						The JOBS Program					

June 2013

PLANS FOR REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF REGIONAL INTERAGENCY INTAKE OR CASE REVIEW COMMITTEE

ADDISON

Addison County has a long history and thus a strong foundation – with multiple levels - of collaboration among its System of Care (SOC) partners.

- A. *The Local Interagency Team (LIT)'s role is to identify gaps in services and create more resources to meet the needs of the community, especially for at-risk youth. The philosophy and goal of the LIT service providers [the directors of the Vermont State Department for Children and Families (DCF), CSAC and the Addison County Parent Child Center (PCC)] is to build and maintain a system of care that is seamless in its delivery. Any young adult can come into any agency and without too much effort and run-around be assured of getting connected to the supports and services needed. In other words, there is no wrong door for entry to services. The LIT team ensures that identified youth and young adults are linked to appropriate services and provides oversight to service delivery and strategic planning.*

- B. *The YIT Steering Committee is comprised of direct service providers from CSAC's Outreach and JOBS programs, the Parent Child Center, and DCF's Youth Development Program (YDP) who meet twice monthly to explore service and resource needs and brainstorm effective service delivery systems for young adults. The YIT Steering Committee collaborates on projects and activities, problem-solves caseloads, and engages in clinical discussion. This multidisciplinary teaming brings diversity of strengths and resources to the team and allows for identification of themes and gaps in services that emerge from the direct service work. Many of the ideas come directly out of the teaming we do with young adults who utilize our services. In discussions with young adults, we explore service gaps and areas of need and what would be the most interesting, creative and beneficial ways to engage youth in these activities and services.*

- C. *Increased coordination between LIT and the YIT Steering Committee: Through monthly newsletters and periodic attendance at LIT meetings, YIT staff are able to keep the flow of information between YIT and LIT fluid and current. The YIT Youth Advocate is the YIT representative at the LIT meetings, and LIT representatives attend YIT Steering Committee meetings to help with ongoing long range strategic planning and priority-setting for new services and resources for transitional age youth and young adults.*

25% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

BENNINGTON

The Youth and Family Service Division offers a one-stop shop (with intake system) for any youth or young adult needing one or more of several transition services managed by UCS. The Division does not include transition services available through the schools

and could be more integrated with DCF. The Local Interagency Team (LIT) is recommending creation of a broader intake and referral team (similar to CIS) for youth of transition age. YIT will fully participate with the rest of the UCS transition services team in changing the intake process as part of moving forward with this AHS Integrated Family Services (IFS) vision.

20% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

CALEDONIA-SO. ESSEX

- *NEKYS houses various programs that allow for seamless referral from one program to another within the agency and in the community.*
 - *NEKYS provides clinical oversight for case review.*
 - *Space provided at NEKYS for youth to meet with a substance abuse provider from NKHS (local Designated Agency for mental health), allowing for ease of transportation as well as a relaxed atmosphere for relationship building.*
 - *Schedule team meetings to encourage open dialog with all team members to address youth's identified needs/interests*
 - *Include partner agencies in our meetings to develop coordinated strategies to support youth*
- *There are multiple community collaborations which promote referrals of youth including our local Continuum of Care, Community Partners, Community Health Team, and LIT.*
 - *Increase community partner involvement by NEKYS attending community meetings.*
 - *Schedule regular meetings with SOC partners to discuss gaps in service and brainstorm solutions.*
 - *Regular reporting out to LIT on a quarterly basis.*
 - *Present information about YIT during a Bench Bar Meeting at the Caledonia Court House in hopes it will reduce risk of negative outcomes for any court-involved youth.*
- *Attend state and local meetings with interested youth and open for discussion any identified gaps in service.*

10% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

CHITTENDEN

Chittenden Local Interagency Team (LIT) recommends that the YIT Leadership group be reconvened with some additional members. Neither the LIT nor its ACCESS team feel they should be the governing/leadership body for the regional YIT sustainability plan.

Re-assess and recruit members for Chittenden YIT Leadership Team, revitalize it and resume regular meetings. Continue YIT staff involvement with - and have youth present at - the YIT Leadership Team.

Continue JOBS/YIT Facilitation of Transition Age Advisory Team Meeting (TAAT) monthly meeting, which regional partners attend for case consultation.

10% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

FRANKLIN-GRAND ISLE

The YIT Coordinator will participate in monthly LIT meetings to share resources and review challenging case scenarios. Through this participation plus sharing of YIT updates via the Subrecipient's newsletter, the YIT Coordinator will increase system of care knowledge about YIT and gain awareness of other resources. This will increase the opportunities and solutions for young people in the region and their families.

10% of the time of staff paid with YIT funds will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

LAMOILLE

YIT staff will continue to encourage strong inter-agency/system of care partnerships and awareness, in part by consistently holding monthly Care Team meetings. Young adults will be represented at those meetings by peer leaders.

25% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

ORANGE-NO. WINDSOR

The CMC fully supports collaboration to build and sustain a system of care (SOC) specifically for the young adult population. Despite fluctuations in YIT Steering Committee attendance, its members are invested in supporting young adults in the region. To date, the Committee has primarily identified areas of need for the community and explored potential options to fill those needs.

The YIT Steering Committee could also help with system navigation and problem-solving to identify supports and services for individuals with whom the SOC providers are working. This would not only connect young adults with the most appropriate services, it would also streamline service delivery and minimize duplication of services.

To that end, the CMC will hold a monthly referral meeting as a means for community partners (HCRS and other YIT Steering Committee members and SOC providers) to make formal referrals to each other to facilitate young adults getting connected to the services they need. Once per month, community partners will have the opportunity to bring referrals for services. With signed releases of information, referral sources can discuss specific situations and problem-solve difficulties. The CMC will also explore the functionality of having "walk in" type referral meetings where a provider could bring a young person whom they would like to connect with services and - having previously arranged this with the relevant community partners – begin an intake process for the particular services or make service eligibility determinations right in the room. This could facilitate the young person meeting new providers and cut down on phone tag and scheduling difficulties.

The CMC will strongly encourage SOC providers to invite the Peer Navigator (sometimes with the Peer Specialist) to present information about YIT services in any applicable meetings/forums. Particular attention will be focused on reaching out to Diversion, the Department of Corrections (DOC), and the Department for Children and Families (DCF) so young people in the criminal and juvenile justice systems can be linked with YIT services and supports.

10% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

ORLEANS-NO. ESSEX – Not funded beyond State FY2015

RUTLAND – Not funded beyond State FY2015

SO. WINDHAM

Monthly meetings are facilitated by YIT staff and well attended by a wide variety of providers within the SOC serving youth of transition age. This allows for more personal connections between providers, better-wrap around services for young people and development of new ideas, initiatives and collaborations.

YIT will continue to collaborate and proactively plan activities and programs as a SOC; create a calendar of events and activities and publicize it regularly and widely; and extend invitations to YIT-related activities and opportunities to staff, partners, and clients.

1% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

SO. WINDSOR-NO. WINDHAM

The YIT program is well connected to the Local Interagency Team (LIT) and participates in a bi-weekly meeting of providers who serve transition-aged youth (JOBS and other HCRS staff, the DCF Youth Development Program, WCYS, high school personnel, VT Adult Learning, etc.). These meetings keep collaboration strong among SOC partners and ease the referral process for young people needing mental health and substance abuse treatment. The YIT program also works closely with the local prevention coalition and Community Health Team to more systemically address substance abuse.

10% of the time of staff funded by YIT will be devoted to carrying out this strategy and set of activities.

WASHINGTON – Not funded beyond State FY2015

REGIONAL YOUTH IN TRANSITION (YIT) STRATEGIES AS PLANNED - % FTES

<i>Regions</i>	<i>Young Adult Empowerment and Leadership</i>	<i>Peer Outreach and Support</i>	<i>Case Management</i>	<i>Regional Interagency Intake or Case Review Committee</i>	<i>Total % FTEs</i>	<i>Total # FTEs</i>
Addison	25%	25%	25%	25%	100%	1
Bennington	30%	30%	20%	20%	100%	2+
Caledonia	35%	10%	45%	10%	100%	1
Chittenden	20%	30%	40%	10%	100%	2.5+
Franklin-Gl	25%	15%	50%	10%	100%	1
Lamoille	25%	25%	25%	25%	100%	1
Orange	20%	30%	40%	10%	100%	1
Orleans						N/A
Rutland						N/A
So. Windham	1%	1%	97%	1%	100%	1
So. Windsor	15%	5%	70%	10%	100%	1.25
Washington						N/A
Average % FTE	21.78%	19.00%	45.78%	13.44%	100%	11.75+