



FORMERLY WASHINGTON COUNTY  
YOUTH SERVICE BUREAU

652 Granger Rd, Suite 2,  
Barre, VT 05641

802-229-9151  
[elevateyouthvt.org](http://elevateyouthvt.org)

## 2021-22 ANNUAL REPORT

### ELEVATING OUR NAME

During 2022 the Washington County Youth Service Bureau embraced the season of change that we were all moving through. Nothing substantial changed about our services — in fact, the need for them only grew as the tail end of the pandemic continued to impact family stress, increase homelessness, and challenge youth well-being and mental health. The thing that changed was our sense of who we are and what our work means to the community. We had been the Youth Service Bureau for almost 50 years. That name harkened back to the organization’s founding, to a time when Youth Service Bureaus were cropping up nationwide as a cultural movement to define organized, professional youth services.

Over the years, the meaning of words changed and the word “Bureau” no longer carried professional organization; rather it conveyed the cold indifference of “bureaucracy” to many who heard it. **As we helped youth through heroic struggles to find direction during unprecedented times, we decided it was time to change our name to honor their uplifting journeys.** To find a new name we drew inspiration from the mountains that surround us and from a sense that the youth we serve are working toward bigger, more expansive horizons. In this year we leaned fully into our moment of change and found ourselves renewed and energized in our work. I am excited to tell you, **we are Elevate Youth Services.**

KREIG PINKHAM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

he / him / his



FORMERLY  
WASHINGTON  
COUNTY  
YOUTH SERVICE  
BUREAU

## 2021-22 ANNUAL REPORT

*Helping Vermont’s youth navigate the challenges of adolescence and the path to adulthood*

“Suddenly having a whole community supporting you is amazing! The Youth Service Bureau helped me have the structure I needed in my life. I might not be here today without them.”

If you met Genesis today, you’d know her as a happy, well-adjusted young person living and working as a part of our community. To know her now you wouldn’t imagine her past or that just a few short years ago, her outlook on life was pointed in a very different direction.

Gen’s early childhood started in the Midwest. It was chaotic and unpredictable — her family moved around a lot. After her parents split up and the resulting separation from her father, she was taken in by an aunt for a while and eventually found her way back with her mother in rural Vermont. She struggled with learning differences, felt isolated in her new school setting, making friends and finding her place in her new community.

Genesis was introduced to the Bureau when she was 14 after tagging along with a friend to our Teen Center. There she began to make new friends, to find a place where she felt she belonged and discovered the caring and unwavering support of our agency staff. She was introduced to new activities and opportunities that helped her to learn new skills and was able to delve deeply into her natural talent for creative expression.



Above, Genesis. Below right, her original art.

“They were nice and kind and never judging and it was a very kindred spirit kind of place where you could always come in quietly and be welcomed. It’s where I learned how to do creative arts.”

Gen didn’t grow up with a stable family support system, and therefore relied on the supportive environments of school and the teen



see Genesis, page 2

# Youth are better off because of your support.

You help youth build a strong foundation of skills, behaviors and attitudes to help them face life's challenges and to expand and embrace life's possibilities.

Here is a sample of key indicators of well-being for **all youth who exited our intensive direct service programs last year** — programs that help youth with housing, counseling, exiting foster care, and returning to the community after incarceration.

## POSITIVE IDENTITY

**91%** of youth feel they have control over their life, are optimistic about their personal future or have a positive sense of self-worth.

## SOCIAL COMPETENCY

**91%** of youth demonstrate the skills to interact effectively with others, to make difficult decisions or to cope with new situations.

## RESILIENCY

**79%** of youth learned new methods of problem-solving and/or coping with challenges.

## ENGAGEMENT

**92%** of youth have connection to activities, hobbies or connections to a larger community.

## COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPMENT

**94%** of youth demonstrate skills, knowledge and growth mindset related to their personal development.

## SUPPORT

**91%** of youth have a supportive and stable connection with an adult.

## POSITIVE VALUES

**93%** of youth can identify their own values, what is important to them or take personal responsibility.

Genesis, continued from page 1

center to learn important life skills and to get many day-to-day needs met. Just as Gen was finding her place here, her situation unexpectedly changed when she was unable to remain at home due to another family relocation and downsizing. With little notice, Gen found herself homeless and sleeping in the local cemetery. Gen did not have the skills necessary or the financial or emotional foundation required to be on her own.

**“I was in a bad situation and was hopeless. Maybe I would have made it through, I don't know. I would have lost my belongings and my cat. I was stuck with few opportunities.”**

Gen knew exactly where to turn for support during this time of overwhelming uncertainty. The Bureau helped her to get an apartment, to find her first job and to learn the essential life skills required for successful independent living. Most importantly, the Bureau gave Gen the supportive encouragement and guidance to help her envision a positive future, to establish realistic goals and to ensure any barriers to achieving her goals were addressed.

**“When I was homeless, it was a dark time. I had already been abandoned so many times, but with the Youth Service Bureau I wasn't alone. They helped me to keep going – to fight for what I want to do. When I got my place and my job I knew where I was going to go next.”**

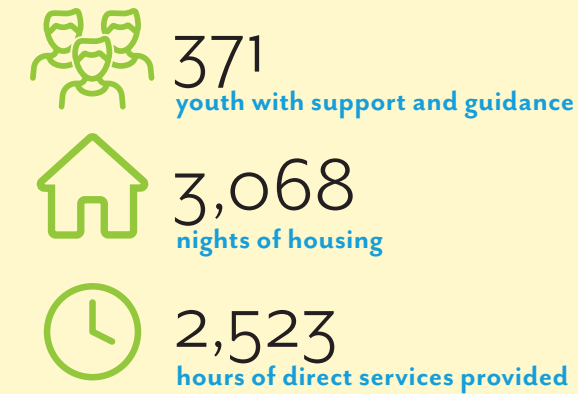
Thanks to your generosity Genesis has been able to create a life for herself. With the caring support of WCYSB staff, Gen worked hard toward her goals and feels successful in her life.

### An update from Peter

You met Peter, a local youth in need, in our end-of-year appeal letter, and your response to his story was wonderful. Peter is now in his second year at college and is absolutely thriving! He is currently double majoring in Psychology and Criminal Justice and currently carries a 3.262 GPA. Way to go Peter!

## YOUR IMPACT IN WASHINGTON COUNTY

Last year you helped us provide:

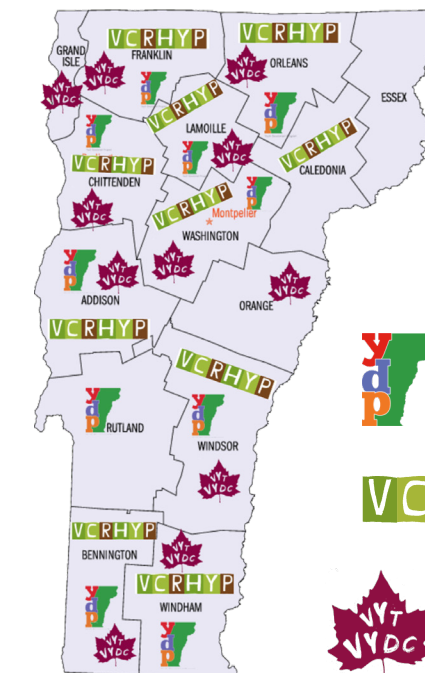


Of the **270+** youth who received intensive services:

- 35%** were homeless or at risk of being homeless
- 75%** were involved with foster care or other aspects of Vermont's Department for Children and Families
- 77%** were low income

## YOUR IMPACT STATEWIDE

Last year you touched the lives of **47,520 youth** across Vermont and ensured a statewide safety net for youth through our four coalitions with other service providers.



**45 youth service agencies** received essential resources, leadership and assistance.

**65 AmeriCorps and Vista members** were placed at **33 agencies**.



**Youth Development Program**  
(for youth who are or have been in foster care)



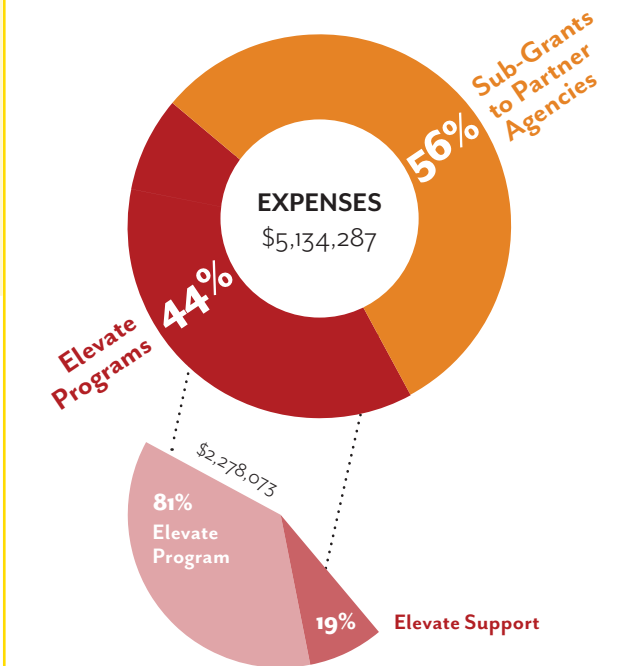
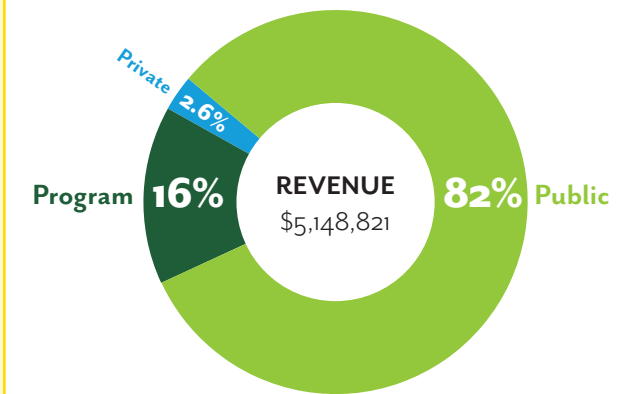
**Vermont Coalition of Runaway and Homeless Youth**



**Vermont Youth Development Corps**  
(AmeriCorps State Program) and  
**Vermont Youth Tomorrow**  
(AmeriCorps VISTA Program)

## FINANCIAL REPORT

unaudited | July 1, 2021–June 30, 2022



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