

# YOUTH SERVICE BUREAU

## 2020-21 Annual Report

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

Thanks to you, *Ashley* is proud of who she's become.

At age 20, Ashley's energy, maturity, and positive outlook belie the trauma and instability of her childhood. Having lived in foster homes first as a young child and later as a teenager, Ashley didn't have the stability and parental guidance that help youth build a solid foundation for life. But she isn't letting that hold her back. Today, Ashley has a job, is finishing up her LNA (nursing assistant license), is about to be married and move into her own home, and will soon welcome a baby into the world.

**"My life has kind of picked itself up and said 'Hey, we're going to do something great.'"**

We've been with her every step of the way since she began working with our Youth Development Program (YDP) when she was 16.

### BUILDING A FOUNDATION

As a teenager and young adult, Ashley had a lot of catching up to do to learn basic life skills. Our staff helped her learn about personal hygiene, doing laundry and grocery shopping, getting a driver's license, budgeting, how to find a job, an apartment, a doctor, and more.

Ashley says of our staff, **"They set you up with the foundations and allow you to build off of it.** The foundation is always there. And when you know the stuff you need to know, you have more control over your life."

### ALWAYS THERE FOR HER

"They continued to support me with whatever I wanted help with and whatever endeavors I was trying to pursue at the time, and trust me there have been quite a few. They let me know that 'Hey, you might fall, but if you need a hand to get back up we're going to be here. And we're going to make sure you can do this.'"

"They actually care. You learn that **these are people you can rely on.** And these are people you can trust."

### SELF-DISCOVERY

Just as important to Ashley's journey has been discovering herself and who she wants to be. She came to realize that her past does not define her and need not limit her. She let go of destructive attitudes and behaviors that she'd developed as a defense from the trauma and upheaval in her young life and that limited her well-being and happiness.

"I was really scared that people would know that I was this small human that had nothing. I didn't want anybody to think that I was weak so I put on this façade of I don't care."

"The staff helped me realize this isn't who I am. This isn't who I want to be. They've helped me realize that nothing I've been through has been my fault. I didn't deserve the situation I was put in. I deserve better than that. And **I'm going to achieve better than that.**"

### SOCIAL COMPETENCY

Learning about appropriate interactions and social boundaries has been a game changer for Ashley. Knowing how to ask for help and express herself in positive ways has helped her be successful at work and to build healthy, supportive relationships in her personal life. "I feel like that's a big thing in resiliency. You need to know what's acceptable and what's not."

### SO PROUD

Ashley has come a long way. She's done the hard work and we've been there to guide and support her. She says, "Without the Youth Service Bureau I definitely wouldn't be where I am. I wouldn't have had half the experiences. They've made me stronger. **I'm so proud of who I've become and the things that I'm accomplishing in my life.**"



Thanks to you, *Trevor* is turning his life around.

Trevor, who experienced abuse as a child, says that for much of his life he's felt like it was him against the world. But now, at age 20, he's bravely taking charge of his life.

For the past year Trevor has been living at Return House – our residential program for young offenders and young men leaving prison. He's now holding down a job and working on his GED. He's learning about himself and how to be in the world as a responsible, law-abiding adult. He's enjoying his sobriety and is proud of the money he's saving for a car and apartment in preparation for moving out on his own.

The world is opening up to Trevor in new and exciting ways and he's embracing it. "I feel like I'm actually in the driver's seat for once. I feel like I can really succeed because of all the skills I've learned. And I know they'll always have my back."



## HOW 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.

**Trevor's reflections** show how these areas of growth and learning make a difference in *his* life.

### RESILIENCY

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

*"I can get myself out of situations that are really hard to get out of."*

### SUPPORT

96% of youth have supportive and stable connection with an adult.

*"I have a lot of supports here. I have a lot of people who know me, who really care about me."*

### POSITIVE VALUES

83% of youth can identify their own values, what is important to them or take personal responsibility.

*"I feel like I could make it out there being sober. I don't want to drink. I know it's not worth it."*

### SOCIAL COMPETENCY

86% of youth demonstrate the skills to interact effectively with others, to make difficult decisions or to cope with new situations.

*"I've learned how to be patient with people. I don't get frustrated very easily."*

### COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPMENT

78% of youth demonstrate skills, knowledge and growth mindset related to their personal development.

*"It took me a year to finally commit to it – now I'm 75% done with my GED. It's opening up my world."*

### POSITIVE IDENTITY

79% of youth feel they have control over their life, are optimistic about their personal future or have a positive sense of self-worth.

*"I found my sense of self. I'm not afraid to be who I really am."*

## YOUR IMPACT IN WASHINGTON COUNTY

Last year you helped us provide:



**282**  
youth with support and guidance



**3,145**  
nights of housing



**3,486**  
hours of counseling & case management

Of the **231 youth** who received intensive services:

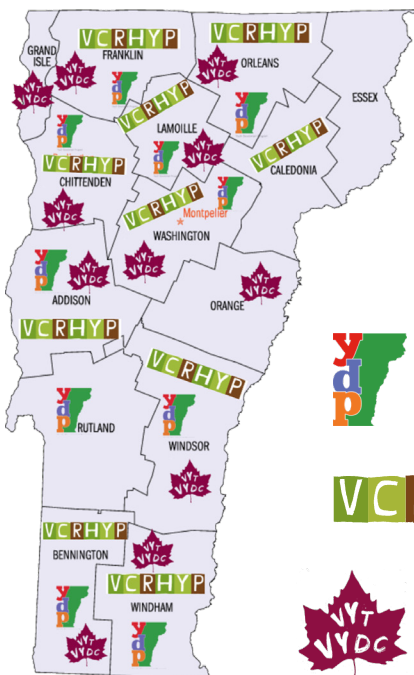
**41%** were homeless or at risk of being homeless

**75%** were involved with foster care or other aspects of Vermont's Dept. for Children and Families

**88%** were low income

## YOUR IMPACT STATEWIDE

Last year you touched the lives of **14,364 youth** across Vermont and ensured a statewide safety net for youth through our four coalitions with other service providers.



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

**68 AmeriCorps and Vista members** were placed at **31 agencies**.



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



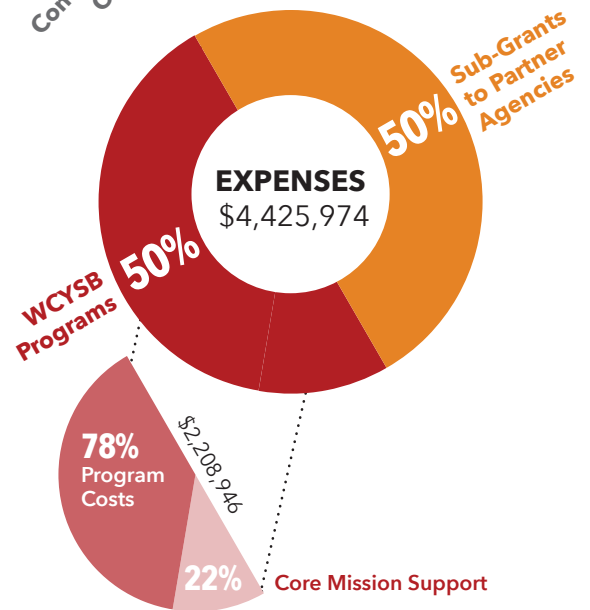
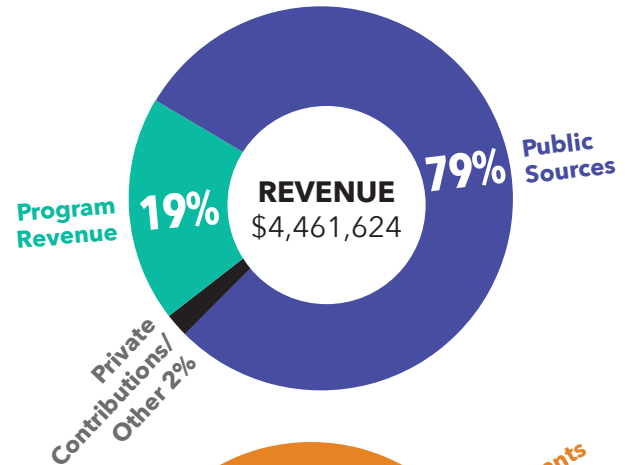
**Vermont Coalition of Runaway and Homeless Youth**



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

## FINANCIAL REPORT

unaudited | July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021



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**Washington County Youth Service  
Bureau / Boys & Girls Club**

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Youth  
Service  
Bureau



BOYS & GIRLS CLUB

# 2020-21 Annual Report

THANK YOU FOR  
MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

## BUILDING *Strength* TOGETHER

What a difference you have made for youth throughout the challenges and uncertainties of the pandemic. **Thank you for being there for them during such a critical time in their development and such a challenging time in our world!**

Your support has helped hundreds of youth solve pressing problems and meet basic needs. And beyond that, you've given them a solid foundation for the future, helping them learn life skills and leverage personal strengths to overcome challenges and build for future success.

One of the most resounding and pressing challenges of the past year has been youth homelessness. Often without a job or references or credit history, without experience in the adult world, youth face unique challenges to secure and maintain housing. The shortage of affordable housing certainly makes the task even harder.

**Yet we are getting youth off the street, off of friends' couches, and into stable housing.** And our work extends beyond that to make sure they know how to manage a budget, how to sustain positive relationships with landlords and neighbors, how to keep themselves safe, happy and healthy.

In the stories and numbers in this report, we spotlight our holistic, strength-building approach. And we extend our gratitude to our supporters, staff, and board for all that you make possible for youth.

**KREIG PINKHAM**, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR