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ABSTRACT

This report provides brief descriptions of a variety of community and educational programs for children and families with special needs, especially at the early childhood level in Vermont. Part 1 describes six programs characterized as community/regional-state partnerships. Part 2 describes family-centered resources, supports, and services, especially early childhood programs. The early childhood programs are grouped into those focused on infants, general early childhood, and "Success by Six" community projects in 17 areas. Also described in the family-centered resources section are several programs grouped under the category of "educating children for success," programs supporting the health and other human service needs of children, and programs to assist with transitions to the workforce. Part 3 describes three programs which maximize federal Medicaid funding to enhance services; Part 4 discusses a program in professional preparation and development; and Part 5 outlines a program to monitor progress toward desired outcomes in Vermont programs for children and families. (DB)

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**HELPING CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES:
UPDATES ON RECENT
EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICE INITIATIVES**

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Prepared by the

AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES AND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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VERMONT EDUCATION/HUMAN SERVICES INITIATIVES

I. COMMUNITY/REGIONAL -- STATE PARTNERSHIPS

VERMONT COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Community partnerships are developing across the State to ensure collaborative efforts among schools, human service organizations, families, and other community members and organizations. The goal of these partnerships is to design effective community-wide strategies to improve the well-being of children and their families.

Vermont has received funding support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation and from the Department of Justice's Caring Communities Program to support several communities in developing strong partnerships around needs assessment, planning, collaborative service delivery, methods of pooling funds, cross-disciplinary professional development, and comprehensive system-wide performance and outcome evaluation.

All 12 districts of the Agency of Human Services have received some financial support to strengthen their community partnerships.

*Contact: Cheryl Mitchell, Agency of Human Services, Secretary's Office, 241-2244
E-mail: cherylm@wpgate1.ahs.state.vt.us*

*Ted Mable, Agency of Human Services, Division of Planning, 241-2234
E-mail: tedmable@wpgate1.ahs.state.vt.us*

*Dennis Kane, Department of Education, 828-5118
E-mail: dkane@doe.state.vt.us*

STATE TEAM FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The State Team was established in May, 1994 as a way to foster greater collaboration among agencies, organizations, teams, and families working with children and their families and at the same time to consolidate the efforts of existing state interagency teams. Current membership consists of the Division Directors of state agencies that serve children and families, state level coordinators of interagency teams, and directors of several major family service and advocacy organizations.

The State Team has defined its mission as follows: "to support the creation and maintenance of effective services for children and families through partnerships with

families and communities." One central focus of the Team has been to formulate common desired outcomes shared by families, advocates, and service agencies and to determine specific indicators by which to track progress toward these outcomes by community and state partnerships. A second major task of the State Team has been to develop effective strategies to support regional teams and communities that in turn support families and their children. These strategies include policies that enable the achievement of desired outcomes, equitable allocation of resources, and development of creative funding sources and mechanisms. Other strategies work to provide connections to technical assistance, provide data to communities and assist with the analysis of data, and foster leadership around best practices.

Contact: *Alice Maynard, Interagency Teams Administrator, 241-2609*
E-mail: alice@dmh.state.vt.us

EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKGROUP

The Workgroup consists of parents and representatives from the whole range of community and state early childhood providers and program managers. Since its creation in 1992, it has concentrated its efforts on: formulating common definitions and core standards for Vermont center-based early childhood programs (i.e., child care centers, Head Start, preschool public education, and parent child centers); enhancing opportunities for professional preparation and career development in the early childhood field; developing strategies to integrate programmatic and fiscal resources; ensuring statewide public awareness of the importance of early childhood development and the range of resources and services available to enhance child development; and ensuring that service systems and outcomes for children and families are assessed in a unified manner.

Contact: *Kim Keiser, Child Care Services Division, 241-3110*
E-mail: kim@srs.ahs.state.vt.us

K. C. Whiteley, Project Coordinator, 241-2705
E-mail: kcw@wpgate1.ahs.state.vt.us

STARTING POINTS

Starting Points is a public-private, multi-faceted, two-year initiative funded by the Carnegie Corporation to improve the well-being of young children in Vermont. Its lead partners are the Vermont Community Foundation, the Agency of Human Services, the Department of Education, and Families as Partners. Its expected results are to ensure access to health care for all children; to provide information about child development services to all families; to ensure access to high quality child care and development services; to reduce child abuse and neglect; and to develop Starting Points networks of

child care services, providers, centers and schools in each Agency of Human Services district.

The Vermont Community Foundation and former members of the Governor's Partnership on Child Care have established the Child Care Fund of Vermont to strengthen and improve child care in the State. Cheryl Mitchell coordinates the efforts of the Agency of Human Services to reduce child abuse and neglect, to ensure access to health care, and to provide appropriate information to families. Starting Points networks are being developed at the community level, with Resource and Referral agencies, child care centers, child care providers, schools, parent/child centers, "Success by Six" community projects, and others collaborating to deliver child and family-centered services and to support providers.

*Contacts: Cheryl Mitchell, Agency of Human Services, Secretary's Office, 241-2244
E-mail: cherylm@wpgate1.ahs.state.vt.us*

*Julie Cadwallader Staub, Starting Points Coordinator, 241-2585
E-mail: jcadwall@dmh.state.vt.us*

HEAD START - STATE COLLABORATION PROJECT

The major federal goals of this project are to: (1) help build more integrated and comprehensive service delivery systems and improve access to comprehensive services and supports for all low-income children; (2) encourage widespread local collaboration between Head Start and other programs, services, and initiatives and augment Head Start's capacity to be a partner in State initiatives on behalf of children and their families; (3) facilitate involvement of Head Start in the development of state policies and plans and in decisions that affect the Head Start population and other low income families.

There are seven priority areas that State Collaboration Projects must address: improving access to health care services, improving the availability, accessibility and quality of child care services, collaboration with welfare systems, expanding and improving early childhood education opportunities, initiating interaction with AmeriCorp, improving access to family literacy services, and improving opportunities for children with disabilities.

In addition, the Collaboration Project's focus is to help integrate Vermont's diverse early childhood initiatives into a unified, high quality system of services and resources for children and their families. Activities include publication of the Vermont Core Standards and Self-Assessment Tool for Center-Based Early Childhood Programs, development of a

statewide Parent Leadership training capacity, co-sponsorship of Vermont's "How Are the Children?" Campaign, and coordination of many of the Early Childhood Workgroup's activities.

Contact: K. C. Whiteley, Project Coordinator, 241-2705
E-mail: kcw@wpgate1.ahs.state.vt.us

STATE PRIMARY PREVENTION PLAN

The State of Vermont is required to have a Primary Prevention Plan that indicates how state resources can be used to strengthen the commitment of local communities to alter conditions from those that contribute to delinquency or other problem behaviors to those that promote the health and well being of all citizens. Several departments and agencies are mandated to participate in the Primary Prevention Plan. They include: the Department of Education, Agency of Human Services, Department of Motor Vehicles, Office of the Attorney General, Agency of Development and Community Affairs, Department of Employment and Training, Department of Public Safety, Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation (Agency of Natural Resources). The Primary Prevention planning process, funded by the Children and Family Council for Prevention Programs, is overseen by a steering committee composed of the Council and the Vermont Prevention Institute. In developing the Plan, the steering committee works collaboratively with citizens on the local level, since this plan is primarily about empowering communities to determine their own needs and direct the implementation of programs and empowerment of individuals.

Contact: Ted Mable, Agency of Human Services, Division of Planning, 241-2234
E-mail: tedmable@wpgate1.ahs.state.vt.us

II. FAMILY-CENTERED RESOURCES, SUPPORTS, AND SERVICES

ENSURING ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON COMMUNITY RESOURCES

INFORMATION STRATEGY PLANNING (ISP) PROJECT

The goal of the Agency of Human Services' ISP Project is to enhance significantly the responsiveness of service delivery to the people of Vermont by improving the effectiveness and efficiency of its information and technological infrastructure.

Two important strategies to achieve this goal are: (1) streamlining eligibility determination through more efficient prescreening, common "intake" forms, and easier methods of referral (within the bounds of confidentiality); and (2) "client action planning" (also known as "service coordination" and "case management") where the emphasis is on working with individuals and families to develop a unified action plan. Although the pace of activity has slowed due to reductions in the AHS information technology budget, these components of the project are being piloted in Lamoille County.

A third strategy is a computerized guide to education, health, and other human services that was developed by the Agency of Human Services. It is designed using Internet technologies that incorporate graphics and links to service agencies. Users are offered information menus on computer screens that include a wide array of types of services, from education, jobs and training, families and children, services for people with disabilities, health, crises/emergencies, etc. Information is provided on services in specific geographical areas, with agency addresses, telephone numbers, eligibility criteria, and costs to users of services. People can access "Vermont Service Net" directly through the Internet, or through an agency with access to the Internet, by selecting the AHS Homepage at www.dsw.state.vt.us/ahs/ahs/htm. In the near future, a common intake form (single application) will be provided from the AHS Homepage as well. People will be able to obtain a copy of the form from any location where a printer is connected to an Internet PC.

Contact: *Eileen Underwood, Agency of Human Services, Secretary's Office,*
241-2732; E-mail: eileenu@wpgate1.ahs.state.vt.us

Rod Dehner, Chief of Information Services, Agency of Human Services,
241-1107; E-mail: rodd@wpgate1.ahs.state.vt.us

NURTURING EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT ("SUCCESS BY SIX")

HEALTHY BIRTHS, INFANCY, AND CHILDHOOD

HEALTHY BABIES PROGRAM

Vermont's Healthy Babies program, administered by the Department of Health, is an enhanced, comprehensive, family-centered public health program to improve the health of pregnant women and infants who receive Medicaid. The program, which is voluntary, is meant to address any remaining gaps in accessibility and availability of comprehensive health care for this population.

Service coordination ("case management"), counseling and health education, risk reduction intervention, home based care, and other supportive services are bundled together in a Healthy Babies "package" that is tailored to meet the health needs of each pregnant woman or family with an infant. A community coalition of obstetrical and pediatric care providers, public health and visiting nurses, parent child centers, participating families, and other providers oversee the local implementation of the program.

Twenty program objectives, which include all relevant *Healthy Vermonters 2000* goals, have been identified with specific activities to achieve these outcomes. Eight districts (Barre, Bennington, Brattleboro, Burlington, Middlebury, Morrisville, Rutland, and Springfield) are actively working to enroll families and to provide the services identified by the family and team members. In each community a Maternal Child Health Coalition has been meeting to identify the resources, needs and gaps unique to the local area. The program will become statewide by July, 1997, when the final four areas (Newport, St. Albans, St. Johnsbury, and White River Junction) become fully operational.

Contact: *Jane Jackson, Department of Health, 863-7333*
 E-mail: jjackso@vdhvax.vdh.state.vt.us

HEALTHY FAMILIES - NEWPORT

Healthy Families - Newport is an intensive, long-term home visiting program targeting overburdened families at the very beginning of a child's life. Modelled after a successful national program which began in Hawaii 20 years ago, Healthy Families - Newport began accepting referrals in November 1996 after a start up period that laid a strong foundation of community collaboration. Prenatally or at the birth of their child, referred families undergo a comprehensive assessment that allows them and the assessment worker to identify their individual needs. A Healthy Families - Newport Family Support Worker initially meets with a family at least weekly. Visits are reduced in

frequency on a schedule appropriate to each family's needs, and generally continue for up to five years. During these visits the Family Support Worker works with the family to promote positive, healthy parent-child interaction, enhance family functioning and promote healthy childhood growth and development. As a pilot program through the Vermont Department of Health, the program anticipates creating a long-term reduction in the City of Newport's overall rates of childhood abuse and neglect.

*Contact: Karen Margolis, Department of Health/Newport, 334-6707
E-mail: kmargol@vdhvax.vdh.state.vt.us*

FAMILY, INFANT, AND TODDLER PROJECT

"Part H" of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) created the structure for a statewide system of comprehensive, family centered early intervention services for infants and toddlers and their families. The Family, Infant, and Toddler Project is responsible for implementing Part H in Vermont. The project began statewide implementation in October, 1993. The Vermont Agency of Human Services and Department of Education share the responsibility as co-lead agencies for this project.

The Family, Infant and Toddler Project brings together families and service providers from many aspects of the community, including public and private agencies, parent child centers, local school districts, and private providers to enhance the collaboration and coordination that already exists in communities throughout Vermont. Supports and services come together to meet each child's unique needs and the needs of their family in their home and community, regardless of where they live in the State. Payment for services comes from a variety of sources, including insurance, Medicaid, participating agencies, local schools, family cost share, etc. By assisting in the coordination of locally available services, the Family, Infant and Toddler Project is working to ensure that Vermont's young children and their families have access to the widest possible array of early intervention services.

*Contact: Beverly MacCarty, Project Director, 1-800-660-4427 (Voice/TTY) and
863-7338 (Voice/TTY); E-mail: bmccart@vdhvax.vdh.state.vt.us*

IMMUNIZATION ACTION PLAN

The Vermont Department of Health has adopted an Immunization Action Plan to improve immunization rates among preschool children against diseases such as polio, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, hepatitis B, measles, mumps, rubella, etc. The plan targets children in day care and enrolled in the WIC program. Public health nurses from the local Health Department office visit day care centers to train operators in record keeping and check immunization records of children who participate in the WIC program. When they find children who are behind on their shots, they help the day care operators

and parents get the child to a doctor or Health Department clinic for vaccination.

Contact: *Kathy Keating, Department of Health, 863-7333*
E-mail: kkeatin@vdhvax.vdh.state.vt.us

WIC (THE SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR WOMEN, INFANTS & CHILDREN)

The Department of Health WIC program aims to improve the health of low-income pregnant women, infants and young children by providing an individually designed package of nutritious foods, teaching families about good health and nutritional practices and assuring access to health care. More than 96 percent of children who participate in Vermont's program are not anemic (low iron in blood), the highest rate in the nation.

WIC clinics are held in 62 locations statewide. At scheduled clinics, participants receive health screening, nutritional counseling and education about breastfeeding, children's growth and development, smoking cessation, and other health issues. Families are also offered access to other services, including Medicaid, lead screening, immunizations, and Healthy Babies visits.

Working with other state agencies, the Department of Health has arranged for WIC participants to receive, for example, in-home education on food budgeting and preparation. In addition, WIC provides coupons that are redeemable at statewide farmers' markets for fresh fruits and vegetables.

Contact: *Donna Bister, Department of Health, 863-7333*
E-mail: dbister@vdhvax.vdh.state.vt.us

CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING PREVENTION PROGRAM

The Vermont Department of Health sets standards for lead screening and follow-up, keeps track of the number of screenings done and diagnoses made, promotes professional and public education, staffs a toll-free hotline, and offers free lead screening clinics for children under the age of 6. For severely lead poisoned children, the department conducts environmental assessments of home and day care, develops remediation recommendations, requires remediation of lead hazards in rental housing, and monitors treatment and follow-up to make sure the child gets needed services. The Department's laboratory provides analytic services for blood lead determination, and

analyzes environmental samples including water, paint, dust, and soil.

Vermont Department of Health nurses offer regular lead screening clinics in a variety of settings in the community.

Contact: Kathy Keating, Department of Health, 863-7333
E-mail: kkeatin@vdhvax.vdh.state.vt.us

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

TITLE I

Chapter 1 has been reauthorized as Title I under the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994. Title I money is directed toward schools that are most in need and encourages the use of dollars to help all children attain the state's high performance standards. New emphasis has been placed upon school-wide reform models, parent-school compacts, professional development, and a statewide system of support for those embracing a school-wide model as well as schools in need of improvement. Title I is a major player in the Consolidated Federal Programs (Titles I/II/IV/VI) efforts at both the state and local levels.

Contact: David Baroudi, Department of Education, 828-5156
E-mail: dbaroudi@doe.state.vt.us

EARLY EDUCATION INITIATIVE

The Early Education Initiative (EEI) program was established by the Vermont Legislature in 1987 to fund community-based programs providing early childhood services for young children at risk of school failure and their families who are not eligible for other services. There are 45 community EEI programs serving a total of 1,167 children in 164 towns. These programs are required to provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum, including early literacy; to provide real opportunities for parent involvement; and demonstrate interagency collaboration.

Contact: Jim Squires, Department of Education, 828-3892
E-mail: jsquires@doe.state.vt.us

ESSENTIAL EARLY EDUCATION

Essential Early Education (EEE) services are provided by local school districts to children ages three through five who have a developmental delay or a medical condition that may result in significant delays by the time the child enrolls in elementary school. Since July 1, 1991, each school district has been required to assure that all eligible children, ages three through five, are receiving appropriate early childhood special education and related services. These services are provided to more than 1,200 children at home, at school, in a childcare setting, or wherever meets the needs of the child and her/his family.

Contact: *Kathy Andrews, Department of Education, 828-5115*
E-mail: kandrews@doe.state.vt.us

EVEN START

Even Start is a federally funded family literacy program. Its purpose is to break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy by improving the educational opportunities of low income families through the integration of early childhood education, adult literacy, and parenting education into a *unified* family centered program. Partnerships and collaborative agreements are required for success. The intention is to build on existing resources through collaborative projects that will create a new, highly intensive range of services, but not new programs. Local programs review strengths and needs and use Even Start funds to provide the 'glue' to strengthen and tie those programs together. Funds are awarded through a competitive process.

Currently, there are four Even Start projects in Vermont. Windham Southeast Supervisory Union through Early Education Services of Windham County in collaboration with Vermont Adult Learning is in its eighth year serving Windham County. Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union in partnership with Northeast Kingdom Adult Basic Education is in its fourth year serving Hardwick and Greensboro/Stannard communities. Two other programs are in their second year. The Troy Area Even Start partnership includes the Early Childhood programs of Orleans Essex North Supervisory Union, Northeast Kingdom Community Action Child and Family Development and Parent Child Center, and Northeast Kingdom Adult Basic Education. The South Windsor Even Start program has a number of partners serving the communities of Andover, Cavendish, Chester, Springfield, Weathersfield, and Windsor: Springfield Area Parent Child Center, Vermont Adult Learning, Southeastern Vermont Community Action, Springfield and Windsor School Supervisory Unions and Districts, Reach Up, "Success by Six," Five C Head Start, the Vermont Departments of Health and Social and Rehabilitation Services, the Family, Infant, and Toddler Project, the Center for Rural Studies, and the Vermont Center for the Book.

Contact: *Jennifer Howard, Department of Education, 828-5159*
E-mail: jhoward@doe.state.vt.us

CHILD CARE INTEGRATION GRANTS

The Child Care Services Division, within the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, awards Child Care Integration grants annually to 16 child care programs statewide to improve their ability to serve children with special needs. To be eligible for a grant, a program must pursue and obtain national accreditation and collaborate with Essential Early Education (EEE) programs, the Family, Infant, and Toddler Project, and the local mental health agency. This project has resulted in over 100 infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with special needs being able to obtain comprehensive services through their child care program. It is currently supported with federal Child Care and Protective Services funds.

Contact: *Kim Keiser, Child Care Services Division, 241-3110*
E-mail: kim@srs.ahs.state.vt.us

"Success by Six" Community Projects: Developing and Coordinating Community Resources to Support Early Childhood Development

The Addison County "Success by Six" Project is entitled "Family Focus" and provides an information and referral phone line for parents and providers in the area. The intent of this service is to provide "one-stop-shopping" for families with young children. In addition to the phone line, the project produces a monthly calendar of events for children, parents, and providers in Addison County. The project also offers "Welcome Baby" visits to all families with newborns in Addison County, co-leads a play group in Middlebury, offers a five-part workshop series aimed at enhancing the quality of child care in the county, partially funds a mentoring project for child care providers in the area, and facilitates and coordinates the work of the Addison County Early Childhood Network.

Contact: *Howard Russell, "Success by Six" Coordinator, 388-3171*
E-Mail: ACPCC@sover.net

Barton FOCUS ("For Our Children United Support") offers opportunities for community parents and service providers to participate in activities designed to benefit the area's children and families. These activities have included on-going family reading and literacy based activities, organized parent education activities, after-school enrichment programs, summer recreation programs, and a community-wide health assessment. Barton FOCUS has begun collaborating with neighboring communities as well.

Contact: *Tanya Sousa, "Success by Six" Coordinator, 525-4377*

Bennington "Success by Six" collaborates with over 15 agencies to provide a wide variety of activities and services to young children and their families. The project is primarily responsible for distributing First Birthday Bags to all children turning one year of age in Bennington County, maintaining and expanding a network of five community playgroups, and initiating transition services for children entering kindergarten in Bennington and the surrounding towns of Pownal, Woodford, North Bennington, and Shaftsbury.

Contact: Roberta Lynch Carroll, "Success by Six" Coordinator, 447-3531

Brandon's "Success by Six" Project (the Neshobe Family Network) focuses on helping families, community, and schools to work together to support safe, healthy homes and schools for young children, and on collaboration with other service providers in Rutland County. The project provides supports to families through the Neshobe Family Room, a drop-in play space and resource center located at the former Brandon Training School. Many families find a connection to the school, community, and other families through the family room, which provides a safe, comfortable meeting place, playgroups, and a variety of information relevant to families. Through its collaboration with other service providers, parenting classes, and literacy training, families have better access to available services. The Neshobe Family Network also engages in collaborative efforts to provide voluntary home visits, including Welcome Baby Bags, to all families with newborns in the Brandon area.

Contact: Kristin Germain, "Success by Six" Coordinator, 247-4418

The Alliance for Building Community (ABC) in Brattleboro is a coalition of groups and individuals working to bring a unified system of education, health, and social services to all of the region's citizens, especially its children. This vision of a unified system is based on the promotion of a community culture that is nurturing, supportive, and committed to all of its citizens. Ongoing projects focusing on young children include: a child care scholarship fund and after-school scholarship fund, "Last Night" (a substance-free New Year's celebration for all family members), "It Takes a Village to Raise a Child" month (an annual celebration of children that includes, among it many family-oriented activities, a parade, a film festival, a literacy fair, and Family Friendly Business Awards), and oversight for the Family Preservation/Access Initiative. In addition, this year ABC will oversee the provision of voluntary Welcome Baby visits to all families with new borns, and will complete a Community Health Assessment for residents over age 45 in 15 Windham County towns.

Contact: Diana Wahle, ABC Administrative Coordinator, 254-9469

The mission of the **Early Childhood CONNECTION of Chittenden County** is to enhance the ability of families and communities to protect, nurture, educate, and support the development of their children and to recognize and support parents as their child's first and most important teacher. To fulfill this mission, the CONNECTION has two goals: *all children will be healthy "active" learners when they enter school; and all families will have access to information and community services to support them in their role as a child's first and most important teacher.* Because of the number of births (about 2,000) in the county each year and its commitment to local autonomy and control, the CONNECTION is helping each of the county's 18 cities and towns to develop its capacity to provide families with the support they need. Although the CONNECTION will continue to distribute informative "Baby Packets" to all newborns through the hospital, midwife services, and adoption agencies, it will look to local groups to design service delivery systems "closer to home" and in a manner that best meets the real needs of families. Consultation and resources will be provided to these groups as they develop and deliver programs that may include, for example, home visits, play groups, family education and support, quality group early childhood experiences, access to health care and wellness activities, and transition to school activities.

Contact: *Jane Di Ferdinando, "Success by Six" Coordinator, 864-8523*
E-Mail: SBSCHITTCO@aol.com

The goal of the **Franklin County "Success by Six" Project** is coordination of all services, programs, and resources for young children and their families in Franklin County and the improvement of public perceptions about the importance of supporting families while their children are young. The Project's vision is that Franklin County will be a community in which: all children from birth and their families are supported by caring neighbors, community resources, and professional service providers; all families have the opportunity to learn about their role as their child's first teacher and the community resources that will assist them in parenting; and resources and services are available to all families, not just families who are labeled "at risk," who "qualify," or are "troubled." The Project facilitates the planning, delivery, and evaluation of direct services for young children that address the needs articulated by families, educators, human service professionals, business people and leaders in 15 local communities in the county. As part of its direct services, each community will coordinate a "Welcome Infant Program" in collaboration with the Department of Health and a "Kindergarten Transition Program" in collaboration with local school districts.

Contact: *Julie Benay, Franklin County Early Childhood Programs, 868-4457*
E-mail: juliebenay@fairfaxbbs.org
Susan Landsman, Franklin County Early Childhood Programs, 868-4457
Mark Sustic, Franklin County Early Childhood Programs, 868-4457

The "Good Beginnings Project" of Barnet, Danville, Peacham, and Walden supports community-based, early childhood/family programs that strive to work collaboratively, share resources, and include families in their planning process. Good Beginnings aims to enhance the connections among families, communities, and schools. Good Beginnings is supporting the Caledonia Rural Early Education Program (CREEP) and Beginning in Barnet (BIB). CREEP brings preschool classrooms for three to five year olds to all four communities. BIB provides family education, a lending library of parent educational material and resources, information on available area services, a drop-in center for parents to meet with a family service coordinator in a non-intrusive manner, and home visits. CREEP and BIB work in harmony with the Parent/Child Center South to bring socialization groups and additional family education and home visits. BIB's special projects this year include updating a family interest survey/community needs assessment, establishing a story hour in each of the local public libraries and coordinating activities during the "Week of the Young Child."

Contact: *Jean Hall-Bouffard, "Success by Six" Coordinator, 748-6040*

The Grand Isle Early Childhood Network focuses its "Success by Six" efforts providing local services that promote the ability of families to nurture, educate, and support the health and well-being of children from birth to age eight. In Grand Isle, early childhood services supported partially with "Success by Six" funds include: "WIN-- Welcoming Island Newborns," a program offering gifts, books, resources, information, and support to parents of newborns; scholarships for low-income children to attend preschool; family literacy services to encourage regular reading between parents and children; and programs that offer creative movement experiences to children ages 1-4. The Early Childhood Network also serves as a advisory group to early childhood programs in the county, and helps agencies to coordinate and maximize services and resources by improving communication among providers, offering joint play-based preschool screenings, sponsoring quality joint trainings across agency and community lines, and developing common processes for referral and release of information.

Contact: *Barbara Carter, "Success by Six" Coordinator, 796-3013*

Hartford "Success by Six" is working with the Department of Health's Healthy Babies Program, local hospitals, physicians, and other family service providers to ensure a coordinated effort in Upper Windsor County to offer all families with newborns a voluntary welcome baby visit. They are also distributing the results of the parent surveys and interviews to the Hartford community and prioritizing the activities suggested by parents. These activities focus on filling gaps in service for young children birth to six identified in the last year.

Contact: *Marcy Nelson, "Success by Six" Coordinator, 296-2545*
E-mail: the.family.place@valley.net

"Success by Six" in the Lamoille Valley Region is a community driven initiative to ensure that all parents are the best possible teachers for their children. Families, agencies, the school, businesses, and community members work together to identify and address gaps, eliminate barriers, avoid service duplication, and create an atmosphere that represents collaboration, cooperation, and best practice. A Community Board (composed of 50% parents, and 50% agency representatives) makes decisions about the allocation of resources to respond to the needs of young children and their families. The Lamoille Valley "Success by Six" project has responded to family desires by offering more preschool experiences (e.g., play groups, events on Saturdays for children and their families, Dabble Day, etc.), tuition for childbirth education classes, breast feeding support, coordination of parent education services, discussions about reading to young children, etc. In addition, a Welcome Visit is offered to all families with newborns.

*Contact: Nancy Daigle, "Success by Six" Coordinator, 888-1400
E-mail: morristown62@morristown.k12.vt.us*

Newport District "Success by Six" has designed a mini-grant process to enhance efforts to meet the needs of young children and their families in areas within Orleans and Northern Essex counties (consisting of three Supervisory Unions) that are currently underserved. Community groups may apply for funds to support a full range of "Success by Six" community capacity building activities in their individual areas.

Contact: Madge Rossinoff, "Success by Six" Coordinator, 766-5331

The Orange County "Success by Six" Project is administered by the Orange County Parent Child Center. With its roots in Randolph where the project began, the project is actively at work creating a region-wide effort that includes the Windsor County towns of Bethel, Stockbridge, and Rochester, as well as the Orange County communities in its AHS district. This year the project will offer funds to help develop and support local early education networks in each of its four school districts.

Expanding the Welcome Baby effort is a major focus for this year. In the Randolph area, a Gifford Area Welcome Baby Coalition is being established to ensure that all parents delivering at Gifford Medical Center are offered a range of education and support options as part of the normal continuum of care. These include prenatal and post partum skilled nursing home visits, Welcome Baby information packets and follow up contacts, weekly home visits from a Good Beginnings volunteer, and Healthy Babies services. In other parts of the region, outreach efforts are being strengthened via hospital delivered information packets, follow up calls, letters, and home visits.

Other project activities include expanding access to preschool and child care, developing an outreach program for home care providers, fostering family literacy through the "Read With Me" series, providing a 1-800 telephone information line and

resource library, conducting a survey of parenting education needs, collaborating on the Family Fair in Randolph and other community events, and promoting the importance of early education and support for all families. The activities sponsored by this grant are primarily implemented by Orange County Parent Child Center staff in collaboration with other community providers.

Contact: Christie Binzen, "Success by Six" Coordinator, 728-6155

Rutland's "Success by Six" Project will offer New Baby Celebration Bags to all families with newborns in Rutland County in partnership with the Neshobe Family Network. Early childhood service providers are working collaboratively to offer Celebration Bags through voluntary home visits or family "pick up" at Rutland County Parent/Child Center and the Neshobe Family Room. A strong home visiting system is already in place in Rutland County, with partnerships among the Department of Health, Visiting Nurse Association, Family, Infant, and Toddler Project, Early Education, Head Start, Neshobe Family Network, Associates in Child and Family Services, Rutland County Parent/Child Center, and community playgroup facilitators. Outreach to families has increased as a direct result of expanded "Success by Six" funding. Early literacy continues to be a priority for the coming year, as well as making resources available and accessible for new families. A partnership with the Chamber of Commerce has resulted in a bimonthly newsletter of events that is distributed to Rutland County families.

Contact: Megan Evans, "Success by Six" Coordinator, 775-9711
E-mail: mercpcc@vermontel.com

Springfield "Kids Ready for School & Schools Ready for Kids" Project focuses on building a unified system of services to families with young children and increasing the level of family-centered services available to families within the Springfield AHS District. Services have included early outreach to families, home visits, parenting education classes and family literacy activities, as requested by parents. The project has also worked with families, educators, and human service providers to change the schools so that they are ready for all children. This effort includes a major focus on transition planning and activities. The Springfield project began working with one school district, and is now expanding to other supervisory unions in the region.

Contact: Betty Kinsman, "Success by Six" Team Contact, 885-5242;
E-mail: bettyk@vermontel.com or
sappc1@vermontel.com

St. Johnsbury Community Coordinating Council allocates "Success by Six" funds in mini-grants in response to requests for proposals. In FY 1996, eight community-based projects were allotted funding: Youth Wellness Center in St. Johnsbury for "Parenting Plus"; Colbeigh Public Library for "Encouraging Family Learning - a Life Long Experience"; Caledonia North Supervisory Union for a "Transition to Kindergarten" video project; Caledonia Rural Early Education Project for "The Walden Early Education" Project; St. Johnsbury Elementary School District for "Making Connections"; Brown's Day Care Center for "The Well-Being of Children and Their Families"; Lucy Hickey for "Interactive Community Workshops on Coping with Loss, Grief, Transition and Change"; and Village Preschool for "Parents and Children Learning Together." As the list of recipients suggests, "Success by Six" funds were awarded to a wide variety of programs that were both broad-based and non-categorical.

Contact: Jean Hall-Bouffard, "Success by Six" Coordinator, 748-6040

The Washington Area "Success By Six Project," a community effort in its third year, brings together people from 22 towns in the Washington County area to support young children, their families and their communities. The Project is committed to work both regionally and locally to support families as they raise healthy, happy children who are active learners throughout early childhood and are ready for success in school.

Local teams are a vital part of making the Project's vision real in communities. Teams create community-driven plans offering: (1) more opportunities for parents to find resource information and to plan & participate in a variety of activities; and (2) expanded/integrated local coordination of services for families. Project funds are available to each local team based on the proportion of 1994 births in the Supervisory Union to the total for the region.

Parents ask teams to support their learning through "networking" activities, more formal workshop opportunities, and fun, educational events as well. Activities include: Workshops, held locally for both parents and child care providers; EAT, MEET and PLAY days (potluck breakfast, toy swap, resource table, activity centers); FAMILY FUN (nature experiences, storytelling, "Saturday Gym Times", "Make and Take" activities at the local mall); KIDSNET phone cards; PARENT TALKS (builds partnerships with businesses to serve the needs of parent employees); and contributing to their local library's parenting book and video collection.

The Project has identified missing services in the network of regional resources available to families. Community members work with human service and education professionals to design services offering families with young children a variety of support: (1) Welcome Baby visits offer parents with newborns a community connection, a bag of gifts and a packet of local and regional community resources; (2) Teen Parent Services offer outreach and engagement of pregnant and/or parenting teens and strong linkages between teen parents and other area services; (3) Family Support Home Visits,

available to any family not otherwise served, assist parents with concerns about health, growth, development and behavior; (4) Therapeutic Family Counseling Services range from individual psychotherapy and play therapy for children and their parents to case management activities to regular support and counsel on mental health issues to a full spectrum of providers serving young children and their families.

This year, the Project's Regional Committee is also taking on new work building training opportunities and coordination efforts for people who work with families, engaging the community in a dialogue regarding early childhood issues and assisting parents' advocacy efforts.

*Contact: Lee Lauber, Washington Area "Success By Six" Project Coordinator,
828-8765; E-mail: llauber@srs.state.vt.us*

EDUCATING CHILDREN FOR SUCCESS

VERMONT ALLIANCE

The Vermont Alliance is a network of 125 schools and 28 affiliated organizations that are or want to be involved in significant education reform, with each other and with state, regional and national level organizations, and higher education. The Alliance serves four purposes: (1) sharing the knowledge and expertise that currently exists within Alliance schools; (2) bringing new knowledge and skills to Alliance schools from other high performance schools as well as national and international expertise; (3) sharing in the work required to transform schools; and (4) providing a forum to challenge current assumptions about education reform.

The Vermont Alliance is focusing its work in three areas: (1) teaching, learning, and assessment; (2) leadership and accountability; and (3) community development and community engagement.

The State Department of Education has assigned five department staff part time to support the work of the Vermont Alliance. The Department has awarded about \$1.5 million in Goals 2000 funds to support education improvement, and it plans to award another \$1 million in Fall, 1996.

Contact: Bob McNamara, Department of Education, 828-2756
E-mail: bmcnamara@doe.state.vt.us

CONSOLIDATED FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Federal programs at the Department of Education, specifically, Title I, Title II (Professional Development), Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities, Title VI (Innovative), Even Start, Goals 2000, and McKinney Homeless are involved in an effort to assist schools through an integrated planning process; to develop a statewide system of support which will assure high quality technical assistance to schools around a variety of areas, such as, federal program requirements, becoming a Title I schoolwide program, assessment, using data to determine need, integrating resiliency and asset-development research, identifying measurable goals and objectives for drug and violence prevention, meaningful parent involvement, coordinating around health and social services, and identifying and serving under-represented populations; and to establish an evaluation process which includes a comprehensive system of assessment.

Contact: Sue Mahoney, Vermont Department of Education, 828-3125
E-mail: SueMNAS@aol.com

BEST -- BUILDING EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING STUDENTS WITH BEHAVIORAL CHALLENGES

In order to address the needs of students who exhibit challenging behaviors, the Department of Education is working with members of the University Affiliated Program of Vermont, the Northeast Regional Resource Center at Trinity College, and the Department of Developmental and Mental Health Services to provide technical assistance and training aimed at strengthening school and community capacity both locally and regionally. Three major strategies are being supported: (1) building local school capacity to meet better the needs of students with a wide range of behavior and emotional problems; (2) building regional capacity to help schools and communities meet the needs of students with serious behavior and emotional problems; and (3) identifying and implementing effective prevention and early intervention practices to reduce the number of students with behavioral and emotional problems.

Contacts:

Local Capacity Building:

*Ron Rubin, University Affiliated Program of Vermont, 656-1244
E-mail: rrubin@zoo.uvm.edu*

*Richard Boltax, Department of Education, 828-5125
E-mail: rboltax@doe.state.vt.us*

*Sherry Shoenberg, Coordinator, Access Vermont Training Technical Assistance,
229-4554; E-mail: sherscho@sover.net*

Regional Capacity Building:

Ken Kramberg, Wilder School, 295-8638

*Richard Boltax, Department of Education, 828-5125
E-mail: rboltax@doe.state.vt.us*

Prevention/Early Intervention:

*Karen Mikkelsen, Northeast Regional Resource Center, 658-5036
E-mail: NERRC@aol.com*

SUPPORTING THE HEALTH AND OTHER HUMAN SERVICE NEEDS OF CHILDREN

PARENTS ASSISTANCE LINE (PAL)

The Parents Assistance Line is a statewide, toll-free phone line (1-800-PARENTS) provided by the Agency of Human Services. The purpose of PAL is to provide specialized listening and emotional support, creating conditions facilitating parents' efforts to draw on the unique strengths of themselves and their families as they work to nurture growth. All callers also get access to information and help with assessing and solving problems. PAL serves as a clearinghouse of resource information and referral for children, individuals, and family services. PAL counselors also respond to the Healthy Babies Pregnancy Helpline (1-800-649-HELP), assisting parents-to-be.

Contact: Susan Miners, Agency of Human Services, 241-2249
E-mail: susanm@wpgate1.ahs.state.vt.us

COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAMS (CSHP)

The Vermont Comprehensive School Health Program Guidelines were developed through a collaboration among the Comprehensive Health Education Advisory Council (CHEAC), the Vermont Agency of Human Services, the Department of Health, and the Department of Education. The guidelines, based on a national initiative, are not mandates, but rather are organizational tools to assist schools in planning, developing, and assessing a comprehensive, coordinated program to facilitate the optimal health, development, and learning of each member of the school community. The Guidelines show the connections among CSHP, the *Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities*, and *Healthy Vermonters 2000*.

The State Department of Education, the Agency of Human Services, and the Department of Health are also collaborating to provide a Vermont Comprehensive School Health Institute (VCSHI). The Institute is a three day conference, with follow up technical assistance available, for school teams to help them plan and implement a coordinated Comprehensive School Health Program at their local schools. In the comprehensive model, the school relies on the family, as well as community health services, to ensure that young people participate in school in a state of physical, mental, and social well-being.

Contact: Nancy Emberley, Department of Education, 828-5151
E-mail: nemberley@doe.state.vt.us

VERMONT MIDDLE GRADES INITIATIVE

In 1993, the Department of Education received a grant from the Carnegie Corporation to enhance middle grades education. Recognizing that student achievement is directly tied to positive health status, this grant emphasizes enhancing comprehensive school health programs for early adolescents in middle grades schools. In 1995, the Department of Education received a continuation grant to expand this effort. At the state level, work has begun on offering a systematic process for schools to improve and enhance their comprehensive school health programs. A guide has been developed to assist schools in using the Vermont Framework of Standards and Learning Opportunities to meet the objectives of comprehensive school health programs and to understand their relationship to the indicators in Healthy Vermonters 2000. Communities have participated in assessing the way that they support the health needs of early adolescents, developing a model of school-linked and school-based health services, and piloting the way that Medicaid can be used to support comprehensive school health programs.

Middle grades schools in 12 demonstration sites are developing model middle level programs through strengthening the Comprehensive School Health Program in order to: demonstrate good school-family-community and agency-private provider partnerships in the delivery of health services to early adolescents; strengthen health education in the middle grades by integrating personal health knowledge, decision-making, and conflict resolution skills throughout the curriculum; and develop and implement strategies to increase knowledge about adolescent health for parents and teachers.

*Contact: Judith Dwyer Pierce, Department of Health and University of Vermont,
651-1869; E-mail: jdpierce@zoo.uvm.edu*

VERMONT "MAKING THE GRADE" -- STATE AND LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS TO ESTABLISH SCHOOL BASED HEALTH CENTERS

Through the collaboration of the Agency of Human Services and Department of Education, Vermont has been awarded an implementation grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation as the next step in a \$1.2 million program aimed at bringing comprehensive health services to Vermont's school-age children. The major goal of the project is to facilitate the establishment and continued operation of school-based health centers in interested communities.

Key activities during the planning phase included reviewing laws, regulations, and policies having a bearing on school-based health; identification of potential barriers; and encouraging interest in and commitment to school-based centers. During the four year implementation phase, project staff will continue to work with interested communities to assist with community assessment and planning for comprehensive health services for children and adolescents.

In addition to the planning work, four communities will be selected as Vermont Making the Grade local partners and will receive financial and technical assistance with the development of a comprehensive school based health center. Project staff are interested in working with any school/community interested in assessing and planning for improved health and social services for children and adolescents.

Contact: Sara Simpson, Project Coordinator, 241-3102
E-mail: saras@wpgate1.ahs.state.vt.us

ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION EDUCATION IN VERMONT SCHOOLS (ACT 51)

The Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs and the Department of Education provide technical assistance to Vermont schools on the development of comprehensive substance abuse prevention programs. The goal of the program is for each school to implement an effective program tailored to the needs of the particular school community. Such efforts are comprehensive and include: training for school staff and administrators; a K-12 curriculum that has age appropriate learning objectives; an alcohol, tobacco and other drug policy; student support and referral systems, including linkages with community resources; and a system for informing the community about the school's prevention program.

Contact: Marcia LaPlante, Department of Health, Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs, 651-1560; E-mail: marcia@adap.adp.state.vt.us

COORDINATED SERVICE PLANS

If a child has an emotional or behavioral problem, she or he may be entitled to a Coordinated Service Plan. Such a plan ensures that, when the needs of the child require services from more than one public agency, those needs are met in an integrated way. Whenever possible, the plan shall try to meet the need of the child within his or her family, and in the school and the community.

Contacts: The Special Education Administrator in a Supervisory Union

The Local Interagency Team Coordinator at the Community Mental Health Center

Alice Maynard, Department of Developmental and Mental Health Services, 241-2609; E-mail: alice@dmh.state.vt.us

FAMILY PRESERVATION/ACCESS VERMONT INITIATIVE

The purpose of this statewide initiative is reduce the number and rate of children entering state custody, especially on emergency detention orders. The goal is being accomplished through implementation of Regional Family Preservation Plans in each of the 12 districts of the Agency of Human Services. The plans were devised by groups of service providers, parents, and community members in the regions.

The Regional Plans improve the services available locally for children and families in crisis. The services generally include increased capacity for crisis outreach, intensive family-based services, shelter and other forms of temporary respite, short-term follow-up, and flexible funding to help meet the diverse needs of children and families in crisis.

The Regional Plans are being funded at \$2.6 million for FY 1996 through the Department of Developmental and Mental Health Services' "Access Vermont" grant, Medicaid, and through General Funds contributed by the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services. Other state departments and offices are involved in a State Outreach Team that supports the regions.

***Contact:** Charlie Biss, Department of Developmental and Mental Health Services,
241-2650; E-mail: charlie@dmh.state.vt.us*

*Susan Kimmerly, Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services,
241-2131; E-mail: susank@srs.state.vt.us*

*Dennis Kane, State Department of Education, 828-5118
E-mail: dkane@doe.state.vt.us*

*Richard Boltax, State Department of Education, 828-5125
E-mail: rboltax@doe.state.vt.us*

PRIVATE NON-MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS (P.N.M.I.)

The Agency of Human Services and the Department of Education are working together to ensure age appropriate treatment, provided in a safe and predictable environment, for children and adolescents whose needs cannot be met in a child's own family. The goal of residential treatment is the amelioration of cognitive, social, behavioral, and emotional conditions that interfere with a child's or adolescent's development. The Agency and Department also believe that residential treatment, when it is necessary, should be done in state rather than out-of-state.

During the last year, the Department of Education and the Departments of Developmental and Mental Health Services and Social and Rehabilitation Services (both within the Agency of Human Services) have streamlined the provision of services

authorized under the Medicaid Rehabilitation option -- Private Non-Medical Institutions (P.N.M.I.). These services are provided in 20 residential child care facilities by 13 different providers.

Contact: *David Struck, AHS Secretary's Office, 241-2235*
E-mail: davids@wpgate1.ahs.state.vt.us

VERMONT ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY PROJECT

The Vermont Assistive Technology (AT) Project is a federally funded systems change project designed to increase consumer awareness of, access to, and funding for all types of assistive technology for Vermonters of all ages with disabilities. Assistive technology is any device or related service that improves a person's ability to be independent at home, at work, at school, or at play. The AT project supports a grant with the Vermont Parent Information Center (VPIC) to provide education and support to families around access and rights to assistive technology for their child in the education process. The project also supports three Computer Access Learning Centers designed to educate teachers and families about the potential of assistive technology. The Adaptive Equipment Revolving Loan Fund serves as a resource for families who may need to borrow funds to purchase AT that is not funded by the school. A "How Do I Pay For It?" funding guide helps families understand all the potential systems and funding sources for purchasing AT. The Vermont Assistive Technology Project is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, National Institute for Disability and Rehabilitation Research.

Contacts: *Lynne Cleveland, Vermont Assistive Technology Project, 1-800-750-6355*
E-mail: lynnec@dad.state.vt.us

Jeneane Lunn, Vermont Parent Information Center, 1-800-639-7170
E-mail: access@plainfield.bypass.com

Dan Gilman, Computer Access - Rutland, 1-800-750-6352
E-mail: djgilman@sover.net

Chris Carstensen, Computer Access - Randolph, 728-1520
E-mail: dcarsten@night.vtc.vsc.edu

Gail Poitras, Software Resource Center, Vermont College, 828-8796
E-mail: gail@norwich.edu

Jim Schultheiss, Adaptive Equipment Revolving Loan Fund, 865-3404

ASSISTING WITH TRANSITIONS TO THE WORKFORCE

REACH UP

Reach Up is the Department of Social Welfare's (DSW) welfare to work program. It provides education, job training, work experience, support services and job development to parents receiving Aid to Needy Families with Children (ANFC) through an individualized case management process. The goal for each Reach Up participant is the attainment of employment that will make his or her family self-sufficient.

Reach Up is designed to respond to the wide range of parents' needs by making services and programs from many government and community organizations accessible to them. Responsiveness to the individual needs of parents is ensured through the use of a service coordination system, in which a case manager works with the parents to assess family needs, develop an individualized family development plan, and coordinate the delivery of services called for in the plan.

While not an entitlement, Reach Up is available to all parents on ANFC. It targets single parents who are at high risk of long-term welfare dependency (e.g., teen parents, young high school dropouts, parents with limited job experience, and long-term recipients of ANFC).

An expanded Reach Up program is a major building block of the Vermont's Welfare Restructuring Project. Welfare reform requires most parents to enter employment and Reach Up after a defined time period of receiving ANFC benefits. In addition to the core group of DSW Reach Up Social Workers, Reach Up has expanded to meet the pre-employment needs of very young families receiving ANFC benefits by contracting with 15 parent child centers to provide Reach Up services. Reach Up also has agreements with the Department of Employment and Training, the Work Experience, Education and Employment for Vermonters Program, the Barre Housing Authority, Champlain Vocational Services, and several colleges (including Community College of Vermont, Champlain, Trinity, and Johnson, Castleton and Lyndon State) to provide participants with service coordination. DSW has also restructured its staffing to increase Reach Up case management capacity in its district offices.

A variety of additional services, from assistance obtaining child care services, to activities that prepare clients for education and explore employment options, to assistance with accessing higher education, are provided by agreements with the Vermont Association of Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies, Vermont Adult Learning, Inc., and the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation.

Contact: ***Steve Gold, Reach Up Director, Department of Social Welfare, 241-2834***
E-mail: steveg@wpgate1.ahs.state.vt.us

VERMONT SCHOOL-TO-WORK INITIATIVE

The purpose of this initiative is to support and coordinate the creation of a comprehensive School-To-Work System in Vermont that results in a high performing work force capable of competing on a global level. The goals of the initiative are to: (1) improve student learning through meeting Common Core of Learning performance standards related to work preparation and occupation or skill standards; (2) help to develop strong regional school-to-work partnerships in all Vermont labor market regions; and (3) establish effective statewide organization and management of the school-to-work system. There are 14 regional School-To-Work partnerships covering all of Vermont. The Department of Employment office can direct people to the partnership in their region.

Contact: Jeanie Crosby, Governor's Office, 828-3333; E-mail: jcrosby@state.vt.us

*Rich Tulikangas, University of Vermont, 656-2936;
E-mail: rtulikangas@doe.state.vt.us*

VERMONT TRANSITION SYSTEMS CHANGE PROJECT

This five-year project has been completed. Although the training and technical assistance capacity afforded by federal funds will no longer be available the following people, resources, and activities are available:

Vermont's Anticipated Needs Survey: The survey identifies students who will be graduating over the next 2-4 years. It includes information on the type and level of support needed in the areas of employment, living arrangements, post-secondary education, and community participation. Information is reported at the local school, regional, and state levels; and it is used for individual transition planning, programmatic planning, and supporting for grant and budget building.

*Contact: Olga Pschorr, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, 241-2186
E-mail: olga@dad.state.vt.us*

Vermont's Interagency Transition Guidelines: The Guidelines call for the development of a State Core Transition Team to provide problem-solving assistance to local schools and regional Core Transition Teams (17 are currently active in the State), and the identification of a "Transition Specialist" in each agency at the state level with encouragement for the same locally. The Guidelines include information on eligibility in special education, Vocation Rehabilitation, the Department of Developmental and Mental

Health Services, as well as information that can assist individuals in transition from school to adult life. A listing of active Core Teams is also included.

*Contact: Susan Cano, VT Department of Education, 828-3149;
E-mail: scano@doe.state.vt.us*

Information on transition planning in general or strategies, such as MAPs ("Making Action Plans"), self-advocacy curricula, and other "Transition Practices that Work" are available.

*Contact: Susan Cano, VT Department of Education, 828-3149;
E-mail: scano@doe.state.vt.us*

III. MAXIMIZING FEDERAL MEDICAID FUNDING TO ENHANCE SERVICES

SCHOOL E.P.S.D.T. (EARLY AND PERIODIC SCREENING, DIAGNOSIS, AND TREATMENT) HEALTH ACCESS PROGRAM

The purpose of this program is twofold: (1) to finance school health activities in a new way with federal Medicaid dollars and to free-up local money to reinvest in health and other human services that foster good outcomes for preschool and school-age children and for adolescents; and (2) to expand the Department of Health's E.P.S.D.T. capacity to ensure that children receiving Medicaid get appropriate health services and that their full learning potential is not threatened by poor health.

This program is administered through a contract between the Department of Health and supervisory unions or school districts. Thirty one supervisory unions participated in the first full year of the program; they generated over \$500,000 to reinvest in services that enhance the health and well-being of children and families in their communities.

Contact: Garry Schaedel, Department of Health, 863-7333
E-mail: gschaed@vdhvax.vdh.state.vt.us

HEALTH-RELATED SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

If a child is eligible for Medicaid, most health-related special education services specified on an Individual Education Program (I.E.P.) and Individualized Family Service Plan (I.F.S.P.) are Medicaid reimbursable. These services include, for example, assessments, evaluations, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, hearing services, mental health counseling, medical consultations, transportation, durable medical equipment, service coordination ("case management"), and nutrition services.

To date, 50 of Vermont's Supervisory Unions have been enrolled as Medicaid service providers. The Department of Education has been enrolled as a Medicaid billing provider with responsibility for making claims to Medicaid for health-related special education services. Education and the Department of Health are working closely together to explain the benefits of this approach to primary care medical providers and the importance of their involvement in signing off on I.E.P.'s as plans of care.

Contact: Joan Stasulis, Department of Education, 828-5111
E-mail Address: jstasulis@doe.state.vt.us

SCHOOL-LINKED MENTAL HEALTH AND OTHER HUMAN SERVICES ("SUCCESS BEYOND SIX")

"Success Beyond Six" is a flexible model for providing a variety of mental health services (e.g., case management; individual, group, and family psychotherapy or counseling; and specialized rehabilitation services) in the schools. It has been shown to work well for children and families needing home-school coordination as well as for children needing intensive behavioral management at school and at home.

Participating schools and mental health centers jointly hire staff who serve as clinicians or social workers or home-school coordinators for children and youth with severe emotional disturbance. These mental health staff work in partnership with the schools to provide and link children and their families with an array of mental health and other community based services. During State FY 1995, "Success Beyond Six" constituted 18% of all the children's mental health outpatient services provided by Community Mental Health Centers, serving 1,595 children and youth. Evaluations of the case management and "Success Beyond Six" projects in a few schools have shown that children who receive the services improve their school performance and behavior.

Before "Success Beyond Six" began in State FY 1994, 13 school supervisory unions had contracts which involved the use of Medicaid through Community Mental Health Centers. As of October 1996, it is expected that at least 42 of the 60 (or 70%) of the school supervisory unions will have contracts that involve the use of Medicaid through Community Mental Health Centers in FY 1997. "Success Beyond Six" has resulted in a greatly increased capacity in schools for early intervention with children with emotional and behavioral problems. Through "Success Beyond Six," the equivalent of 85 full-time mental health clinicians or home-school coordinators will be working in Vermont schools during the 1996 -1997 school year.

***Contact: Brenda Bean, Division of Mental Health Services, 241-2630
E-mail: brendab@dmh.state.vt.us***

***Nancy Thomas, Department of Education, 828-5121
E-mail: nthomas@doe.state.vt.us***

IV. PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION AND DEVELOPMENT

VERMONT PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT CONSORTIUM

The Consortium is focusing on the personnel and training needs of education and human service personnel as Vermont develops an integrated system of education and family support. This effort is prompted by the increasing need for personnel development created by school improvement efforts and by the Federal laws governing "Part H" (for infants and toddlers with developmental delays), Special Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation. These laws require states to have a system of personnel development that: (1) identifies and coordinates the training needs of staff, (2) identifies the state's needs of personnel, and (3) outlines a plan for the recruitment and retention of personnel. The success of the many reform efforts that have been initiated will depend to great measure on Vermont's ability to provide human services and education personnel with the knowledge and skills they need to work in a changing environment. The work of this group will be a cornerstone of this system.

The goals for 1996 -- 1997:

- (1) a Higher Education Task Force to identify and address barriers that limit flexibility in meeting local professional development needs and a Special Education Consortium to ensure core courses
- (2) two or three pilots for regional staff development and three to five year plans.

Contact: *Dennis Kane, Department of Education, 828-5118*
E-mail: dkane@doe.state.vt.us

V. CONTINUOUS LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT (EVALUATION)

INFORMATION RESOURCES TO MONITOR PROGRESS TOWARD DESIRED OUTCOMES

There are several tools that assist in monitoring state and community progress toward desired outcomes for children and families.

The Department of Education publishes the *Vermont School Report*, a by-school report on 24 indicators of student achievement and school resources and capacity. This report is available on the Internet (<http://www.uvm.edu/~cdae/crs/deptofed.htm>) or by data disc.

The AHS Division of Planning has prepared a *Community Profile* report for each school Supervisory Union and county in Vermont. The *Profile* contains current and recent-trend data on the set of indicators adopted by the State Team for Children and Families to measure community progress toward achieving the outcomes. Communities are able to track, through charts and tables, progress relative to the State as a whole on each of these indicators. *Community Profiles* will be made available in multiple formats (including paper, electronic on the world wide web).

The development of these different reports has highlighted the need for much greater information systems integration than currently exists. The Agency of Human Services is pursuing the creation of a "data warehouse" client-server system that would provide the capability for a common "view" of data from diverse systems. In addition, it would support much more sophisticated (and automated) query-and-report functions than are currently possible.

Contact: *Bob McNamara, Department of Education, 828-2756*
E-mail: bmcnamara@doe.state.vt.us

David Murphey, AHS Planning Division, 241-2238
E-mail: davidm@wpgate1.ahs.state.vt.us



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