



# UCS

celebrating our 50th year!

skilled counseling,  
early care & education, clinical support.

## 1949 1954 1955 1956 1958 1959 1960 1961 1963 1964 1965 1966 1968 1969 1970 1971

Family Service Center forms to help families in Bennington and coordinate social services.

1301 psychiatric patients at Vermont State Hospital.

The Bennington Friends of Retarded Children is formally organized to aid children.

Bennington County Mental Health Association forms. Association President Dr. Curtis Flory lays out plans to establish a "mental hygiene clinic" in Bennington to serve all residents and share offices with the Family Service Center. Flory notes that care in a local clinic is significantly less expensive than for an institution.



"Timely Help for Troubled is Goal of United Counseling Service"

"Richard McDowell Begins Duties as a Director of UCS"

Family Service Center and the Bennington Mental Health Association merge on a trial basis for one year, with only 2 full-time and 4 part-time employees. Board members agree to bring on another full-time social worker. Annual budget \$43,000. 183 people are helped by the service in this year.

The merger is announced at the Knotty Pine Restaurant and operational reports are presented, including the typical case of a ten-year-old girl who is creating a disturbance in school, had been kept back a grade and is still failing. The clinic staff work with the girl, family, and school and solve the problems together to everyone's satisfaction. More and more, the meeting noted, parents are becoming aware of the clinic and are bringing in their problems.

Mrs. Dorothy Ellsworth is the first Executive Director. Rev. Charles J. Parsley is the first Board President.

UCS Board members unanimously approve the merger in May. The Bennington Banner reports Dr. Arthur S. Funke, the Director of the Division of Mental Health, State Department of Health, as saying "This is the first such merger in Vermont and gives Bennington County the best such organization in the state."

Clients are asked to pay 50 cents per visit and help is not to be denied to anyone who cannot afford it. The fees are introduced to establish value perception. It becomes well known that people are refusing their doctors' referral to UCS because they don't want to be seen as a "charity case."

UCS is located at 508 Main St., above Nichols Juvenile Shop.

Vermont Association of Mental Health responds to public outcry over \$7.8 million for hospital-based mental health care, most of which went to the Vermont State Hospital in Waterbury and the Brattleboro Retreat, which accommodate 1200 and 750 patients, respectively. VAMH notes that development of community-based services can reduce costs significantly.



"Mental Health Pioneering—Something to Crow About"

UCS first in state to shift to private non-profit status. Move reflects strong community support. Focus is to provide greater community needs.

UCS receives \$27,900 allocation from Vermont Health Commission, the largest allocation in the state for the 1960-1961 budget.

UCS expands service in Manchester to one full day, including service to Manchester Elementary School and Dorset Elementary School.

UCS proposes coordination and information sharing between Bennington County agencies, such as state agencies, courts, and the Dept. of Welfare, to help define and meet larger community needs.

443 people are helped by the service in this year; 60 percent are children. UCS is already outgrowing its office at 508 Main Street.

Battle over state budget for mental health pits Governor F. Ray Keyser, Jr. against local agencies that point to expanding community needs.

Annual UCS dinner at Mt. Anthony Country Club charges \$2.50 per person.

President Kennedy signs legislation to establish community centers to provide care for mental health and developmental disabilities. In an address to Congress, he asks that methods be found "to retain in and return to the community the mentally ill and mentally retarded, and there to restore and revitalize their lives through better health programs and strengthened educational and rehabilitation services."

"Mental illness and developmental disabilities occur more frequently, affect more people, require more prolonged treatment, and cause more individual and family suffering than any other condition in American life.... The mentally ill and the mentally retarded need no longer be alien to our affections or beyond the help of our communities."  
—President John F. Kennedy



1235 psychiatric patients at Vermont State Hospital

UCS sponsors new Big Brothers Big Sisters program to provide mentoring and guidance to boys and girls.

The federal government establishes Head Start and soon after, in a grant application initiated through Bennington College, Bennington County Head Start is created—one of the first programs in Vermont, enrolling 12 children in its first year.



UCS begins screening and evaluation of preschoolers for special education classes. There are an estimated 3,000 school age children with developmental disabilities. Most receive no special education. 800 are in Brandon Training School. 600 are in local school districts including Mount Anthony, which is the only one putting children with and without disabilities in the same classrooms.

UCS is one of fewer than 300 comprehensive mental health centers in the United States.

Abraham Maslow publishes *Toward a Psychology of Being*

UCS opens new Day Treatment Center in the basement of the Putnam Memorial Hospital Lodge. It provides group and individual therapy along with activities and family support to help people hospitalized with mental illness.

Gregory Bateson publishes *Schizophrenia and Family*



UCS helps 670 people this year. Annual budget is \$175,000, with 30 staff.

UCS establishes a 24-hour psychiatric emergency and suicide prevention phone line.

Medical Director Dr. James M. Toolin asserts that marijuana use is harmless in comparison to alcohol and tobacco.

The federal Developmental Disabilities Services and Facilities Construction Amendments are passed. They contain the first legal definition of developmental disabilities and authorize grants for services and facilities for the rehabilitation of people with developmental disabilities and state "DD Councils."

Head Start program expands operation to Red Brick Schoolhouse in Shaftsbury, offering full day programs for the summer. Previously, the program operated in the Baptist Church on East Main Street.

UCS helps 1,382 people this year with \$261,145 annual budget and 35 staff.

B. F. Skinner publishes *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*



# UCS

## community-based services for children, adults, families and seniors.

*celebrating our 50th year!*

1972 1973 1974 1975 1978 1979 1980 1981 1982 1988 1990 1993 1998 1999 2004 2005 2008

- Bennington County has the lowest rate of admissions to state hospitals, which state officials agree is due to the community care provided by UCS.
- Vermont Department of Mental Health ranks UCS programs most effective in the state among 11 mental health agencies.
- UCS establishes CRASH program to help people arrested for drunk driving.
- UCS receives multi-year grant from the National Institutes of Mental Health to develop comprehensive mental health services system for children.
- UCS establishes sheltered workshop in Shaftsbury for people with developmental disabilities.
- The Center for Independent Living (CIL) is founded in Berkeley, California. Generally recognized as the world's first independent living center, the CIL sparks the worldwide independent living movement.
- Passage of the Social Security Amendments of 1972 creates the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program. The law relieves families of the financial responsibility of caring for their adult disabled children. It consolidates existing federal programs for people who are disabled but not eligible for Social Security Disability Insurance.

- UCS begins sponsorship of Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). UCS also begins to increase focus on drug abuse counseling.
- Bennington Regional Alcohol Council is established under the auspices of UCS to prevent alcohol abuse and addiction through public education.
- Passage of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 marks the greatest achievement of the disability rights movement. The act confronts for the first time discrimination against people with disabilities. Section 504 prohibits programs receiving federal funds from discriminating against "otherwise qualified handicapped" individuals and sparks the formation of "504 workshops" and numerous grassroots organizations. Disability rights activism seizes on the act as a powerful tool and makes the signing of regulations to implement Section 504 a top priority. Litigation arising out of Section 504 will generate such central disability rights concepts as "reasonable modification," "reasonable accommodation," and "undue burden," which will form the framework for subsequent federal law, especially the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.



- UCS establishes the Community Work Activities Center to teach a variety of vocational and daily living skills to 60 to 70 people with developmental disabilities. Bennington Friends of Retarded Children provides volunteers and some funds.
- In response to community concerns about growing drug use, UCS establishes the Youth Information Center on Main Street to help youth work out any problems they need help with.
- To provide seniors with a nutritious dinner and social outlet, UCS begins hot meals program at the Worthy Inn in Manchester. Dinner is \$1.50, or as much as you can give.
- UCS begins the Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment program to provide preventative mental health care for children.
- UCS Northshire in Manchester now employs 10 clinical staff and offers service 5 days a week including evening hours.

- UCS develops rape counseling service coordinated with medical and legal services. UCS staff Jim Henry, coordinator of alternate care services, Sally Saile, RN, and Patricia Van Lenten, MA, launch the program.
- People with developmental disabilities are returning to their communities from Brandon Training Center. There are 19 "boarding" homes in Bennington County where people with disabilities are living with local families in a model known today as Shared Living. A home environment and high safety standards are the twin expectations for placement of people with disabilities in the community.
- Congress enacts the Community Services Act, stipulating that at least 10 percent of openings in the Head Start program are reserved for disabled children.

- UCS begins community outreach to establish a group home for severely and persistently mentally ill.
- UCS establishes the Bennington County Juvenile Court Diversion Program as a cost effective way to combat juvenile crime and require nonviolent first-time offenders to provide restitution.
- The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) is founded in Madison, Wisconsin, by parents of persons with mental illness.
- Alternate Care Center opens on Elm Street to teach daily living, community, and vocational skills to people with developmental disabilities leaving Brandon Training School and re-entering the community.
- UCS establishes Bennington Area Task Force on Domestic Violence, which continues to grow into PAVE, Project Against Violent Encounters.



- UCS begins work to establish independent group home on Bank Street, North Bennington.
- It is estimated that one out of ten doctorates granted in the United States is in psychology.
- Federal government replaces funding for social service programs with block grants to states.

- UCS opens group home for chronically mentally ill. First of its kind in Bennington County.
- UCS passes sponsorship of RSVP to the Red Cross.
- UCS opens expanded Manchester facility at the Battenshire Building on Route 7A.

Mountain House opens on Dewey Street—funded by the Department of Mental Health. It is a clubhouse for persons with severe and persistent mental illness, and is based on Fountain House in New York City. Clients are now members of a club, and work together with staff to maintain the house and run the program.

The Americans with Disabilities Act is signed by President George Bush on 26 July in a ceremony on the White House lawn witnessed by thousands of disability rights activists. The law is the most sweeping disability rights legislation in history, for the first time bringing full legal citizenship to Americans with disabilities. It mandates that local, state, and federal governments and programs be accessible, that businesses with more than 15 employees make "reasonable accommodations" for disabled workers, that public accommodations such as restaurants and stores make "reasonable modifications" to ensure access for disabled members of the public. The act also mandates access in public transportation, communication, and in other areas of public life.

- Brandon Training School closes. Autumn House opens to provide developmental services in group home setting.



Parent Outreach Services Program is established to help people with developmental disabilities to handle the responsibilities of parenthood.

- Sheltered Workshop closes for new program with vocational focus.
- Mountain House closes, and the CRT program is moved to 316 Dewey St, where all services for persons with severe and persistent mental illness are provided under one roof.



- Gatling House opens as developmental services group home.

Head Start celebrates 40<sup>th</sup> birthday with visit from Senator Patrick J. Leahy. Program receives quality award as one of the outstanding Head Start programs in the region. Head Start serves 116 children and their families in seven facilities across the county.



- Number of residents at Vermont State Psychiatric Hospital remains at about 50 or less.

united counseling service

we help.