January 2018 Newsletter

Film Screening of *The Opiate Effect* and Community Forum

VT PBS in partnership with United Counseling Service, the Manchester Community Library, the Collaborative, FedUp Manchester and GNAT to focus on prevention and education geared toward youth in our community.

Join us on Thursday, January 25 at 6:30 p.m. for a showing of *The Opiate Effect*, an award-winning short documentary that deals with the overdose of a University of Vermont student, and will be followed by a panel discussion. Parents and those who work with children and adolescents are encouraged to attend.

The panel will focus on prevention and education strategies and resources, geared towards youth and will include James Reilly of United Counseling Service, Beth Sausville of DCF, Maryann Morris, of The Collaborative, Wendy Galbraith, of Fed Up, Manchester and Nissa Walke with Blueprint for Health. Andrew McKeever of GNAT-TV will moderate the discussion. This event is presented in partnership with United Counseling Service, The Collaborative, Fed Up Manchester, and GNAT-TV.

The event will be held at the Manchester Community Library, located at 138 Cemetery Ave. in Manchester Center, VT. The event is free and open to the public. Registration suggested at bit.ly/OpiateEffect.

For more information contact Heidi French at 802.442.5491 or Cindy Waters at 802.362.2607.
IN THE NEWS:

Spiritual Sharing Group Celebrates First Year
Vincent Gonzalez, Phd. South Street Group Home Manager

“The Spiritual Sharing Group respects the beliefs of all people, and all the ways people express them.” So reads the first ground-rule for the weekly therapeutic group currently celebrating its first full year of regular meetings, each Wednesday at 1:00 in the kitchen at UCS’ Center for Rehabilitation and Treatment (CRT). Co-leaders Vincent Gonzalez and Betty Kenyon explain that they created this group because “Our clients have a wide range of religious experiences, and we wanted to create a space where all can feel welcome to express themselves.”

Over their first year, clients have been able to learn and share on any religious topic of their choosing. The group has watched documentaries on world religions and read bits of scripture from various faiths, as well as bringing in stories, objects, art, and music that holds special spiritual significance for them. In the discussions around each of these sacred things, clients have had a chance to talk out some of their biggest hopes and fears, and to speak their deepest convictions. As a group open to all CRT clients, the Spiritual Sharing Group looks forward to welcoming new participants each week, no matter what they believe, and looks forward to coming years of exploration together.

Two SVC Students honored

Students Amber Archer and Alyvia Metcalfe will receive the Deborah Lisi-Baker Youth Leader Award from the Vermont Center for Independent Living, Southern Vermont College has announced. The awards will be presented by VCIL’s executive director, Sarah Launderville, and Deborah Lisi-Baker at VCIL’s Holiday Open House on Thursday, Dec. 14, from 4 to 6 p.m. in the First Baptist Church at 601 Main St. The Deborah Lisi-Baker Youth Leader Award was created by VCIL’s board of directors in 2006 in honor of the disability rights organization and emerging leaders who believe in the promise of disability rights and independent living movement. For much of her life, Lisi-Baker has advocated for human and civil rights of people with disabilities. She served as VCIL’s executive director for many years and retired in 2009. ...Read more.

UCS promoting an initiative with ACE Interface

UCS is promoting an initiative with ACE Interface, a company that provides education, analysis and facilitation to help engage and motivate everyone around preventing Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) and improved well-
Research has demonstrated that Adverse Childhood Experiences early in life increases physical, mental and behavioral problems later in life. Understanding ACE is a powerful pathway to health and well-being.

The presentation focuses on sharing the science behind ACE's and why it matters. Participants will walk away with a new way of thinking, compassion, hope and motivation to act.

Please contact Lavonne Freeman at lfreeeman@ucsvt.org or Katie Aiken at kaiken@ucsvt.org or call (802) 442-5491 to discuss upcoming presentations.

**UCS is a great place to work and a great place to get care.**

"Every day I see people overcome adversity, I see strength and courage, I see determination and love. It's such an incredible feeling to be surrounded by such caring people, to be part of something so important to our community.

Working for UCS has taught me so many things in such a short amount of time. I couldn’t possibly list everything, so I’ll share what I feel is the most important lesson I’ve learned.

We all have struggles, limitations, and insecurities. I’ve always known this, but for much of my life I saw these flaws as weaknesses. It didn’t take long after starting at UCS to realize how wrong I was. The consumers I work with have given me an incredible gift; the ability to embrace those things within myself and in others. I’ve learned that our own limitations make us who we are, they make us stronger, and perhaps they are the most human things about us. We are all flawed, and in some strange way I think that makes us perfect.

Working at UCS has truly shaped my outlook on life in the most positive of ways. It’s been a beautiful and humbling experience, one that I feel lucky and privileged to have had thus far."

Jon Kenyon works in Developmental Services and he is just one reason why UCS is a great place to work and a great place to get care.

**Spreading joy and cheer with music!**

Consumers and staff from our Developmental Services Division celebrated the holidays and went caroling at the Center for Living and Rehabilitation in Bennington, VT.
Big Brothers Big Sisters celebrated the holiday season.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bennington County had a busy holiday season. This year they worked hard and participated in the Lighted Tractor Parade in Manchester. They also attended the Elf Express put on by the Manchester Lions Club.

The work of our BBBS program impacts youth in our community. By helping children develop supportive relationships with positive role models, we make a direct and lasting impact on their lives. If you are interested in becoming a Big Brother or Big Sister contact us at (802) 442-5491 or email Katie Aiken at kaiken@ucsvt.org or Laurie Sallisky at lsallisky@ucsvt.org.
Help us build a stronger community.

This year support from our donors is absolutely vital in ensuring that we continue to meet the growing needs of our community. Please consider making a donation to our annual fund. Your donation makes a difference and with your help we can build a stronger community!

Donations can be made to:
MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Youth Mental Health First Aid  
January 16 and 17 from 12:30 to 4:30pm  
Co-Sponsored with Manchester Community Library  
Manchester Community Library  
138 Cemetery Avenue, Manchester, VT  

This is a public education program which introduces participants to the unique risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems in adolescents, builds understanding of the importance of early intervention, and teaches individuals how to help an adolescent in crisis or experiencing a mental health challenge.  

For more information or to sign up contact Amie Niles at aniles@ucsvt.org or call (802) 445-7443. There is no charge for YMHFA, however, seating is limited.

The Opiate Effect  
January 25, 2018 at 6:30pm  
Manchester Community Library  
138 Cemetery Avenue  
Manchester, VT 05255  

Vermont PBS along with United Counseling Service, the Manchester Community Library and Fed Up Manchester will present The Opiate Effect. The film is a documentary about the overdose of a UVM student that sends his father on a mission to educate the public on, not only the dangers of opiate abuse, but how we deal with it as a society.

A panel discussion will follow the presentation of the film. This
Youth Mental Health First Aid
March 14 and 15 from 9:00am to 1:00pm
United Counseling Service
100 Ledge Hill Drive, Bennington, VT 05201

This is a public education program which introduces participants to the unique risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems in adolescents, builds understanding of the importance of early intervention, and teaches individuals how to help an adolescent in crisis or experiencing a mental health challenge.

For more information or to sign up contact Amie Niles at aniles@ucsvt.org or call (802)445-7443.

There is no charge for YMHFA, however, seating is limited.

....and save the date for:

Bowl for Kids' Sake Celebrates the Fantastic 50's
April 7, 2018

Annual Youth Summit
Spring 2018

UCS Presents:
In celebration of our 60th Anniversary: The ME2/Orchestra
May 5, 2018

UCS Go the Distance 5k
SVHC Centennial Community Day
June 10, 2018

UCS Super Hero 5k
November 3, 2018
United Counseling Service provides Bennington County with nationally recognized community-based mental health and human social services for children, adults, families, and seniors with the mission of “Building a stronger community by empowering individuals and families to live healthy and meaningful lives.” Visit [www.ucsvt.org](http://www.ucsvt.org) to find out more.

Are you interested in a career with a great organization?
Check out current openings with United Counseling Service at [UCS Careers](http://UCS Careers).

Visit our website