

UNITED COUNSELING SERVICE



BUILDING A STRONGER COMMUNITY

60TH ANNIVERSARY | 1958-2018



Contact UCS

## March 2018 Newsletter

### Bowl For Kids' Sake is celebrating the Fantastic 50's.



Think poodle skirts, hot rods and Marilyn Monroe. On April 7<sup>th</sup> the community is invited to support Bowl For Kids' Sake at Bennington Lanes as we celebrate the *Fantastic 50's*. Funds raised allow Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bennington County to continue to make mentoring matches and provide ongoing assistance to mentors, mentees and families to help sustain long successful relationships unique to its program.

This is a fun, interactive way to make a difference. Local businesses can support the event by becoming sponsors, donating prizes for the silent auction, and encouraging employees to participate. Bowlers then raise money by soliciting donations from people they know. Each bowler is encouraged to raise a minimum of \$50; Costumes, clever team names, and friendly competition are also encouraged. Team Spirit awards will be presented in every wave and the grand prize for the top fundraiser is

a cruise for two!

Bowl for Kids' Sake brings the whole community together in support of a positive future for our kids and every dollar raised through Bowl For Kids' Sake stays in the local area to help maintain current matches and to build new ones.

Register now at [BFKS 2018](#). Start making an impact on your community by signing up to participate or making a donation. All bowlers receive one game of bowling and shoes, and are eligible for prizes and giveaways. Bowl For Kids' Sake will take place on Saturday, April 7<sup>th</sup> at Bennington Lanes. Big Brothers Big Sisters is the youth mentoring program of United Counseling Service.

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS

# BOWL FOR KIDS' SAKE

BENNINGTON LANES,  
219 NORTHSIDE DRIVE

SAVE THE DATE  
**APRIL 7, 2018**

JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE  
**THE FANTASTIC 50'S**

Register now at [BFKS2018](#).

Contact Sam Kenyon at [skenyon@ucsvt.org](mailto:skenyon@ucsvt.org) or (802) 442-5491 ext 313 with any questions.

## IN THE NEWS:

### Strangers in the Work Place

By JD Hebert, UCS Director of Facilities and Safety



**Consider this:** You are headed to a meeting and you exit the building heading for your car. As you walk across the grounds you see an unfamiliar person looking up at the building. Or this: You enter your building with your access card and a stranger tags along.

*Would either of these situations arouse your suspicions?*

*And if so, what would you do about it?*

In today's workplace, it is not uncommon to encounter unfamiliar persons several times a day. Sometimes those strangers are co-workers you have never seen before or they're new company employees. Other times they are authorized visitors, contractors or people with legitimate reasons for being on the property. Sometimes strangers are just people who are genuinely lost and

other times they are unauthorized persons who may be intending harm.

So, how can you tell whether a stranger legitimately belongs in the area, is innocently lost or is planning to cause trouble?

[READ FULL ARTICLE](#)

### Support for those Struggling in Wake of Florida School Shooting

Some Vermonters may find in the wake of the mass shooting at a Florida high school, as well as an averted threat in Fair Haven, Vt., that they are feeling anxious, depressed, having a hard time sleeping or having other feelings that are difficult to manage alone.



“Such events, horrific in themselves, can bring up old memories from personal experiences that were life threatening,” said Melissa Bailey, Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Mental Health. “When that happens, we can feel overwhelmed and in need of some additional support to help us manage.”

Resources to support Vermonters including those experiencing stress and anxiety related to recent events and experiencing these feelings in general including isolation and bullying are listed below:

For immediate support, the [Vermont Crisis Text Line™](#) provides free, round-the-clock support, seven days a week by providing access via text messaging to trained Crisis Counselors. Vermonters can reach the Crisis Text Line by texting “VT” to 741741. Within 5 minutes the person in crisis or needing support will get an automated text and then a secure, private response from a trained Crisis Counselor. No private information is collected, and the text will not show up for Verizon, AT & T, Sprint or T-Mobile Carriers.

Parents especially may be concerned for their children’s safety and exposure to the media coverage. It is important to be aware of the measures your school has taken to keep students and teachers safe. Children typically are aware of the crisis, even if it’s just an awareness that their parent and other adults are upset. Tips for parents on media coverage and how to talk with and support children can be found here: [NCTSN tips for parents.](#)

For all of us, it is important to find a balance of being informed and taking care of our stress reactions. The American Psychological Association has a helpful guide to managing your distress in the aftermath of a shooting <https://www.apa.org/helpcenter/mass-shooting.aspx>.

United Counseling Service is one of Vermont's designated agencies and we are available to provide mental health services. For more information contact us at (802) 442-5491.

## Rocking Horse Circle of Support Program Begins New Session March 12th



United Counseling Service is pleased to announce that The Rocking Horse Circle of Support program, an educational support group for low-income mothers living in Bennington County, will be starting a new ten-week session on March 12, 2018 at 339 Dewey Street in Bennington. This program provides assistance to pregnant and parenting women seeking to reduce the effects of substance abuse in their lives.

Meeting from 9:30am to 11:30am every Monday for ten weeks (March 12-May 14), the program offers assistance to pregnant and parenting women who are seeking to reduce the effects of substance abuse in their lives, acquire improved life skills, and learn more about safe, nurturing parenting. Transportation, childcare and light refreshments will be provided. There is no charge for participants. The Rocking Horse Program is funded through a grant from the Vermont Department of Health, Office of Drug and Alcohol Programs.

Any pregnant and/or parenting woman of childbearing age who may be questioning their own drinking

and/or drug use behaviors or experiencing the effect of someone else's substance use can benefit from the group. The program follows a dedicated ten session curriculum that frames substance use in four major domains: substance use and women's health, substance use and relationships, the effects of substance use on the family, and substance use as it influences life management. A substance abuse counselor and mental health clinician facilitate sessions.

Studies conclude that Rocking Horse participants increase understanding of the risks of drinking, drug use, and smoking during pregnancy. Participants also report an increase in their confidence at handling stress and parenting their children. **For information on the program, or to discuss a referral, call (802) 442-5491 and speak with Christine Ouellette or Amy Breese.**

## United Counseling Service hosted annual Legislative Breakfast



United Counseling Service hosted their annual legislative breakfast to share organizational needs with state representatives on Monday, January 29th, 2018. Elected representatives attending the event included Senators Dick Sears and Brian Champion, and Representatives Bill Botzow, Tim Corcoran, Alice Miller, and Mary Morrissey.

UCS Executive Director Lorna Mattern identified many of the positive changes that have occurred in the past year including a partnership with Southwest Vermont Health Center, becoming a Center of Excellence, expanding our Head Start to include Early Head Start and more. Difficult questions were addressed including the proposed state budget allowing for a 2% cut to current Developmental Services funding. Staff, clients and legislators held a poignant conversation.

### [WATCH UCS LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST](#)

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



Sue Pierce works in our Northshire Office as an Access Clinician. UCS is a great place to work and a great place to get care.

"I am so grateful that I was "convinced" to join the Advisory Board of the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bennington County (BBBS) in 2010. I have participated in at least 6 Bowl for Kids' Sake fundraising events, served as a BBBS coordinator for nearly 4 years, and now I am a mentor. I find it to be one of the most meaningful experiences in my career and life at UCS. I probably wouldn't have become a mentor if it wasn't for this association.

I have also worked for UCS for 30+ years. The reason I keep employed here is that it offers diversity of employment, a great team approach, access to so many programs that enhance a person's life, and lots of

recognition."

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## MARK YOUR CALENDARS:



### Youth Mental Health First Aid

March 14 and 15 from 9:00am to 1:00pm

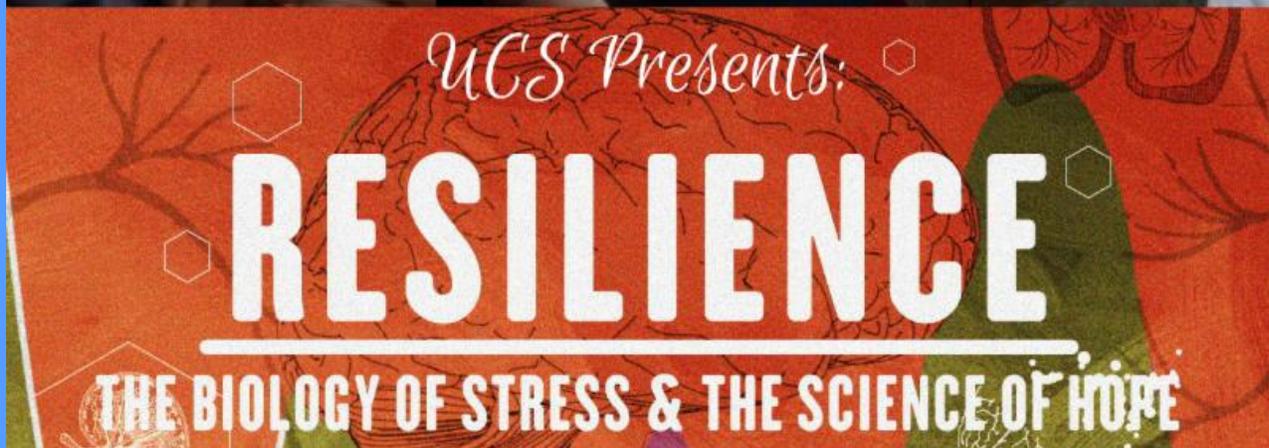
United Counseling Service

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](mailto:aniles@ucsvt.org) or call (802)445-7443. There is no charge for YMHFA, however, seating is limited.

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Join us on Wednesday, March 28th at 6:30 pm at the Oldcastle Theatre in Bennington for a free documentary film screening with a presentation on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) to follow. This documentary delves into the science of ACEs, a national movement to prevent Toxic Stress. Now understood to be one of the leading causes of everything from heart disease and cancer to substance abuse and depression, extremely stressful experiences in childhood can alter brain development and have lifelong effects on health and

behavior.

A discussion on ACEs and the impact of toxic stress on our kids will follow with Certified ACEs trainers Katie Aiken of United Counseling Service and Chris Hultquist of Mentor Connector.

This event is free and open to the public. For more information visit [www.ucsvt.org](http://www.ucsvt.org) or call Kate Aiken at (802) 442-5491 ext. 332.

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## **Trauma Informed Care Training**

Moving from Understanding the Effects of Trauma on the Lives of Those We Serve to Implementing Principles of Trauma Informed Care.

**Wednesday, April 4, 2018**

**Session 1 : 8:30am to 11:30am**

**Session 2: 1:00pm to 4:00pm**

Oldcastle Theatre

331 Main Street, Bennington, VT

This training is funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration National Center for Trauma Informed Care ([SAMHSA](http://SAMHSA.gov)).

This event is free and open to the public. Seating is limited and registration is required.

Register at [Trauma Informed Care Training](#).

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....and save the date for:

**Bowl for Kids' Sake Celebrates the Fantastic 50's**

April 7, 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

**Annual Youth Summit**

June 27, 2018

**The Barn Sale**

September, 22-23, 2018

**UCS Super Hero 5k**

November 3, 2018

For more information on our upcoming events visit [www.ucsvt.org](http://www.ucsvt.org).

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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:  
United Counseling Service  
PO Box 588  
Bennington, VT 05201  
or call us at (802) 442-5491 ext. 313

Donate Now

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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](#).

Visit our website

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