September/October 2018 Newsletter

UCS Presents: The S Word followed with facilitated discussion

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness month and on September 5th UCS Presents, a free community film forum, will present a screening of the documentary The S Word. The event is co-sponsored by The Manchester Community Library. The S Word is a powerful award-winning feature documentary that puts a human face on a topic that has long been stigmatized and buried with the lives it has claimed. The film gives a platform to those with lived experience - people who have attempted to take their own lives and survived to tell their stories.

“Suicidal thoughts can affect anyone regardless of age, gender or background”, says Lorna Mattern, Executive Director of United Counseling Service. “Given that suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in America, it is essential to create a space for honest conversation around this difficult topic.” Dr. Alya Reeve, Medical Director at United Counseling Service will lead a discussion immediately following the presentation.

We hope you can join us – September 5th at 6pm at The Manchester Community Library, 138 Cemetery Ave. Manchester Center, VT. The event is free and open to everyone, and we ask you to please register at Eventbrite.com.
ICARE - Customer Service at UCS
By Leslie Addison, Director of Human Resources

This year United Counseling Service was certified as a Center of Excellence by Vermont Care Partners. The certification is granted when an agency demonstrates its provision of high quality and accessible comprehensive services to people living with mental health conditions, substance use disorders, and intellectual and developmental disabilities. One of the five elements that define a Center of Excellence is providing world class customer service. How do we make that happen at UCS? The foundation is built and promoted in the values outlined in the UCS “I CARE” model for customer service delivery.

What is “I CARE”? In its simplest form, “I CARE” is just that; it’s caring. Caring about the outcome, caring about one’s work and caring about the individual interaction facing you at any moment. According to Merriam-Webster, “caring” means a “showing concern for or kindness to others”. It can also refer to an awareness of another person’s emotion or experience. Demonstrating that one “cares” is also a form of respect and empathy. Therefore, we as a service agency, are obligated to ensure that not only do we “care”, but that we teach our employees its value and role in our workplace.

Aristotle, the early Greek philosopher, is quoted as saying that “Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.” With this in mind, UCS teaches, reinforces and upholds the I CARE model as its guiding principle for customer service. “I CARE”, although a stand-alone phrase, is actually an acronym for the words each letter represents: Ideal Service, Culture of Caring, Accountable, Responsive and Empowered. "Ideal Service" means that making customer service so important that it becomes a conscious choice; responding in an “ideal” manner to the situation or the person needing assistance. A “Culture of Caring” means that one’s actions support an
ingrained display of excellence in customer interactions; demonstrating pride in a job well done and living the I CARE values. Being “Accountable” shows that one understands that their actions impact others and can influence outcomes, including a willingness to take on that responsibility. The value of being “Responsive” acknowledges the importance of “being there when someone needs you”. Lastly, “Empowerment” enables people to take ownership of a matter at hand; to see it, own it, and solve it. What better way to resolve a matter than with creative people empowered to favorably impact an outcome.

Maintaining excellence in the I CARE customer service model takes leadership at all levels. Since rolling out our I CARE model and staff acknowledgements, hundreds of I CARE recognition pins have been given to staff to say thank you and to celebrate their success in making someone’s day a little bit brighter. Employees living these values in our workplace are our I CARE champions. We are proud of all who work to exemplify that UCS truly is a great place to work and great place to get care. Take a moment today and be mindful to simply “care”.

“I CARE” ... Will you?

IN THE NEWS:

Backpack giveaway exceeds expectations.

By David LaChance, Bennington Banner

And just like that, they were gone.

Within a half-hour of opening the doors at the Bennington Auto Mall, organizers of the Back to School Backpack
Challenge had given away all 150 backpacks filled with school supplies on hand, and then some. No child left empty-handed; some got vouchers to be redeemed when an additional order of backpacks comes in, and a handful got backpacks that organizers had picked up at Walmart earlier in the day, just in case.

The final tally: 250 children will be going back to school with a new backpack.

The Back to School Backpack Challenge was organized by the Bennington Auto Mall, the Bennington Banner and its sister paper, the Manchester Journal. It was intended as a way for students and their families to help get children ready for the new school year. Long before the advertised 3 p.m. starting time, a line of children and parents stretched around the outside of the dealership building on Performance Drive......Read more.

The Barn Sale is right around the corner.

Since 2012, United Counseling Service has been the beneficiary of The Barn Sale. This charitable fundraiser originally took place in a barn in Manchester, but due to the growth of the sale, it is now held at Northshire Civic Center at Riley Rink. This is an extremely successful event which celebrates the close-knit community of the Northshire and the desire of a wonderful group to help the community.

This year’s Barn Sale will take place (rain or shine) on Saturday, September 22th from 9 to 4pm and Sunday, September 23th from 9 to 1pm at Riley Rink at Hunter Park in Manchester, VT. The annual event is organized by the Barn Sale committee, a group of dedicated women who devote countless hours and energy to get the event off the ground. They spend months collecting the items, determine reasonable prices for the merchandise and staff the two-day event. The proceeds of the Barn Sale support the Northshire UCS office and the services they provide.

Early childhood experiences are an important issue.

Early childhood experiences are an important health issue. Prolonged exposure to trauma creates an environment of toxic stress that can change the architecture of the brain due to the physiological response stress produces.

UCS provides trainings that focus on the science behind Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE’s) and why it matters. Explanations of the impact of our own childhood stress, as well as resiliency and how to shift the dynamics
within our family, community and science are discussed.

The next scheduled training is Friday, October 5 from 9am to 12pm. The training is free, but seating is limited. To reserve a spot contact Katie Aiken at kaiken@ucsvt.org or call (802) 442-5491.

A chance to ride bikes

Developmental Services Consumers attended the Bart Adaptive Sports Center and got the chance to ride some pretty cool bikes. Bart Adaptive Sports Center provides instructions in skiing, snowboarding, kayaking, cycling and golfing to individuals with physical and cognitive impairments.

Head Start Happenings

Select Board Supports UCS, Head Start's proposal for rec center expansion

By Christie Wisniewski, Bennington Banner

Residents can look forward to more early childhood education services and an expanded recreation center next year, thanks to the unanimous support of the Select Board this week.

The United Counseling Service (UCS) has been given the go-ahead to expand the Bennington Recreation Center for an Early Childhood Center facility, receiving extra support from the Select Board since the project is entirely grant-funded and wouldn’t require funding from the town. UCS and Bennington County Head Start proposed this facility for the Bennington Recreation Center with hopes to enhance early childhood education as well as offer more recreation opportunities for all ages.
While two phases are ultimately planned for this endeavor, Phase I will be the primary focus, with an expected completion date of fall 2019.

Applications can be found online at [HS Applications](#) or call Sue Moffit at (802) 442-3686 ext. 148 for an application and requirements.

**UCS Head Start soccer clinic**

UCS Head Start annual soccer clinic for 3-5 year olds begins Wednesday, September 19th.

In collaboration with the Town of Bennington we are hosting our soccer clinic at the Bennington Recreation Center on Gage Street. The times and dates are as follows: Wednesday, September 19th 4:45- 5:45pm, Saturday September 22nd 9:00-10:00am, Wednesday, September 26th 4:45-5:45pm and Saturday, September 29th 9:00-10:00am.

All participants will receive a t-shirt and soccer ball. In addition to our Head Start students, preschoolers from the community are encouraged to register. Limited spots available.

Please contact Mary Monick at Bennington County Head Start at (802)442 3686 x147 or mmonick@ucsvt.org or find us on Facebook at [Bennington County Head Start](#).
**MARK YOUR CALENDARS:**

Register for UCS Superhero 5K today.

**Superhero 5K Run/Walk and Kids' Dash**

**Dress as Your Favorite Superhero!**

Who is your Superhero? Share your story on our Facebook event page!

*Proceeds from the race benefit the UCS Client Wellness Fund.*

**Saturday, November 3, 2018 at 9:00AM**
Bennington Recreation Center
655 Gage Street • Bennington, VT

**Register by October 1st:**
Adult $35 • Student $20 • UCS Staff $20 • UCS Client $10 • Under 12 FREE
Register at ucsvt.org/events or by mail.

**Kids' Dash - Free! Kids' Dash will take place immediately following race.**

**Packet pick-up:**
Friday, November 2 from 5:00 - 7:30 PM
UCS, 100 Ledge Hill Drive, Bennington, VT

**Day of registration and packet pick up:**
7:00 - 8:30 AM
Bennington Rec Center

*Shirts will be guaranteed to those who register by October 1, 2018.*
*For additional information contact Sam at 802.442.5491 ext. 313.*

....and save the date for:
Help us build a stronger community.

We would love to hear from you. Has UCS impacted your life? If you have a story you would like to share please contact Heidi French at hfrench@ucsvt.org.

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

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
Are you interested in a career with a great organization? Check out current openings with United Counseling Service at UCS Careers.