We are all in this together. We will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and will follow guidance from public health officials and government agencies, so we can continue to support our community.

We respect **WOMEN**, **MEN** and **NON-BINARY** people • We value **BLACK LIVES** • We stand with our **LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY MEMBERS** • We celebrate **CHILDREN** • We stand with **IMMIGRANTS, REFUGEES**, with **INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**, and **PEOPLES OF ALL FAITHS** • We support **INDIVIDUALS** and **FAMILIES** challenged by mental health, substance use and developmental disabilities.

We stand with our **COMMUNITY**.

**HATE HAS NO BUSINESS HERE.**

**All are Welcome Here.**

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**Black Lives Matter to Vermont Care Partners**

Vermont Care Partners is deeply disturbed by the brutal murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officers and the ongoing violence and discrimination against Black people and people of color that pervades our state and country. Racism is dehumanizing whether the words and actions are deliberate or unintentional. It cannot go on, must not be accepted, and must be actively fought against.

Vermont Care Partners condemns racism and values justice for all, equity, diversity, and inclusion. Our work is anchored in the principle that all must be free to exercise their rights and have equitable access to the resources and supports necessary to live healthy, safe, productive, and peaceful lives as active integrated members of our communities. Everybody benefits from living in equitable, diverse, and inclusive communities...[Read More](#)
United Counseling Service: Proud to be a sponsor of this year’s Pride Parade

Pride on parade: Some 70 cars join caravan from Bennington to Manchester
By Michael Mawson, Bennington Banner

More than 70 cars, many decorated in rainbow colors, filled the streets of downtown Bennington on Saturday afternoon in a celebration aimed at increasing the visibility of the LGBTQ community.

June is officially LGBTQ Pride month. Saturday marked the second annual Pride Parade in Bennington, with this year’s event looking a little different due to the coronavirus. Instead of marching down Main Street, participants waved and cheered from cars and trucks.

The parade continued on throughout North Bennington, Shaftsbury, Arlington before ending in Manchester. The event was organized by Queer Connect, a local non-profit organization...

How to end the stigma
By Rachel Darby, PMHNP-BC, Nurse Practitioner at UCS

One in four adults experiences a mental illness. As COVID-19 continues, mental health issues—like anxiety and depression, which are sometimes brought on or exacerbated by challenging life events, including job loss or financial troubles—are expected to rise. At the same time, our culture sometimes expresses negativity about people with mental illness in ways that may prevent those who need help from getting it.

That’s why this is a great time to relearn how we talk about mental illness in ways that overcome stigma and encourage treatment.

Whether you are dealing with mental illness or know or love someone who is; whether the mental health issues are new or longstanding; and regardless of what type of mental health challenges you have—depression, anxiety, substance abuse, attention-deficit disorder, autism, or others—it’s important to listen for stigma, raise awareness, and make changes to encourage fair treatment for all. We all need to be a part of the solution to counteract stigma...

#EndTheStigma

Mental illness has touched my family on several fronts, and I’ve witnessed close family members struggle with the stigma associated with these challenges. Fortunately, these are incredibly brave people who have fought for their rights and to get the help that they need.

Eliminating the stigma associated with mental health issues is critically important. We all need to do our part to help and support those who struggle with these issues. I’m so proud of my family members who have prevailed in their fight against mental illness, and it’s clear that the support that they receive from those around them is essential.

_Dimitri Garder is the CEO of GlobalZ Enterprises._

_Do you have a story to share? Please send it to the Director of Community Relations at hfrench@ucsvt.org. Help us #endthestigma._
Take a look at the National Alliance on Mental Illness' (NAMI) HelpLine Resource list to continue the conversation and reduce the stigma. View Resources

Rocking Horse to Begin New Session July 9

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 session on July 9.

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. 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...Read More

Practicing Mindfulness
Wednesday, July 1 at 6pm

Mindfulness is a type of meditation in which you focus on being intensely aware of what you're sensing and feeling in the moment, without interpretation or judgement. Learn ways to practice mindfulness including breathing methods, guided imagery, and other practices to relax the body and mind and help reduce stress.

Presenters: Bob Wubbenhorst MA, NCC, ACS, Cht, LCMHC, Clinical Manager

Register at Practicing Mindfulness

Our Kids Are More Stressed Than Ever—What Can We Do About It?
Wednesday, August 5 at 6pm

Now more than ever it is important to support our youth, not just physically, but mentally. We will discuss signs and symptoms to look for that may indicate your child is feeling stressed. Join us for this presentation and learn helpful interventions and tools that parents and guardians can utilize.

Presenter: Kathleen Baroody, MA, Youth and Family Services/Blueprint Outpatient Mental Health Counselor

Register at Our Kids Are Stressed
Mark your calendars—the UCS Superhero 5K and Kids' Dash is ON, though it will be virtual. All registrants can join the free 10-week training program building up to the big day. More details coming soon.

Bennington County Head Start/Early Head Start Celebrates Summer Program

Bennington County Head Start-Early Head Start locations reopened last week under a staggered start, with each location opening a different day. Staff have been preparing to meet new Health Guidance requirements issued by the Department of Health and Child Care Licensing for several weeks now. Some changes include daily health checks, including temperatures for staff and children, outdoor classroom spaces and additional outdoor play as much as possible throughout the program day, additional cleaning and sanitation points, a reduction in many classroom sizes, and social distancing where possible. Safety including cloth facial coverings are an option for children over the age of 2 that can wear them appropriately, but mainly a topic for curriculum in understanding changes to the world around them.

In reopening, 72 preschoolers and 40 infants and toddlers are enrolled this summer, for a 4 day per week program, 8 hours per day program-wide. Curriculum this summer focuses around a Farm to School theme: crops, animals, machines, and technology. All locations are currently full for summer programming.

Head Start-Early Head Start is currently accepting applications for Fall enrollment. Please contact April Dunham at 442-3686 or adunham@ucsvt.org to apply for your child, ages 6 weeks-5 years.
Night Shift Direct Support Professional
Under the direction of the Shared Living Program Manager, the Direct Support Professional is responsible for providing individualized supports to a person with an intellectual disability or Autism Spectrum Disorder residing in the community. This position is one of several providing 24/7 supervision to a high-needs individual living. Learn More

Family Services Case Manager
Under the direction of the Family Services Program Coordinator, the Family Services Case Manager organizes, develops, implements, coordinates, supervises and monitors the provision of services to individuals with developmental disabilities that are assigned to them. Learn More

Our employees are creative, thoughtful, energetic, forward thinking and empowered. UCS is living its mission: Building a stronger community by empowering individuals to live healthy and meaningful lives. If you want to make a difference and help those who need it most, consider joining our team. UCS is a great place to work and a great place to get care. Check out all current openings at UCS JOB OPENINGS

Please be advised that the Coronavirus Virus/COVID-19 has altered the way we are currently recruiting at this time. Should you be contacted for consideration, we are limiting job interviews to telephone or video communication, in order to align with guidance by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Hiring for certain positions may also be slowed by efforts being used to promote social distancing and other recommended strategies. We thank you for your understanding as we navigate the best way to keep you, employees, and our community safe.

BENNINGTON COUNTY FOOD RESOURCES IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19*
The Bennington Banner has lifted the paywall on all coronavirus stories that provide critical public health information to readers.

See the full list

Additional resources for COVID-19 information

Vermont Department of Health
Center for Disease Control
As a part of the federal Coronavirus Relief Bill, 3SquaresVT households who don't already receive the maximum benefit will see an increase in benefits in April and May. To learn more & find out if you qualify for 3SquaresVT visit Hunger Free Vermont.

Articles of Interest

A recent report from the Trust for America’s Health and The Well Being Trust, Pain in the Nation Update: Alcohol, Drug and Suicide Death in 2018, revealed that while there was a slight decline in drug-induced deaths, alcohol-induced and suicide deaths continued to rise.

A Times Union Article on Cuts to Mental Health providers will hurt people in need provides some valuable insight.

The VT Department of Mental Health's current e-flyer about mental health awareness also contains links to additional resources.

PRI's The World reports that Past epidemics underscore importance of mental health amid COVID-19.

Please consider supporting UCS

Now more than ever, support from our donors is vital in ensuring that we continue to meet the growing needs of our community. Please consider making a donation. Your donation makes a difference and with your help we can build a stronger community.

Donations can be mailed to:
United Counseling Service
PO Box 588
Bennington, VT 05201

DONATE NOW

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(802) 442-5491 - ucsvt.org