

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends, Colleagues, and Partners,



I write with a mingled sense of accomplishment, relief, and gratitude. Despite the fact that 2020 was a difficult year like none other in my tenure of the Center of Health and Learning (CHL), we were able, with the support of our Board of Directors, donors, and many partners, to carry on and excel in our work to address critical health issues.

The many challenges of 2020 required that we recommit our talents, resources and efforts in new ways to fulfill our mission to improve health outcomes. CHL was able to retool training and project activities toward the increasingly technological and remote environment of workforce development and practice improvement. Our ability to transition to remote work, project planning and professional development were bolstered by the many systems we had in place. The shift to remote learning caused some disruption to timelines as we grappled with appropriate technology and e-learning resources, and the comfort level and confidence of our staff and the people we work with to develop and deliver programs, as well as the participants and students in our trainings!

Still, some things remained the same: a commitment to keeping those most affected by our work engaged—people with lived experience, project partners, and the professionals we train. We moved all our programs online, moving instruction into multiple formats and modes — both remote and hybrid. We continued the emphasis on evidence-based approaches and, in a time of increased focus on equity, to consider the cultural considerations for services delivery and to ensure better accessibility to online formats. We used as much data as possible, to inform our practices. Some of our staff participated in exemplary professional development provided by other organizations.

There can be no doubt about the secondary effects of the pandemic. Economic stress and social isolation exacerbates

preexisting mental and physical health problems for people at risk of suicide. By mid year 2020, the Disaster Distress Helpline, a federal crisis hotline operated by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, saw a spike in calls of more than 300% since February. At the end of June, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention surveyed Americans on their mental health and found symptoms of anxiety and depression were up sharply. Almost 11% of all survey respondents said they had “seriously considered” suicide in the past 30 days.

Our work in health promotion, prevention and early intervention, has never seemed more timely and important. In 2020 we:

- Converted our Umatter® for Schools and Umatter® for Youth and Young Adults to an online format to engage our partners statewide, inclusive of K- 12 audiences;
- Continued supporting the development of suicide safer care pathways within and between health care partners;
- Offered trainings related to compassionate opiate addiction intervention, treatment and recovery to professionals in healthcare, mental health, and community serving organizations
- Offered trainings in alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, opiate and other drug prevention and intervention, and social-emotional learning to school staff;
- Built out a new online product called Umatter® for Families to promote mental health well-being.
- Offered, for the first time ever, the VT Suicide Prevention Symposium in a virtual format to over 350 participants.

This Annual Report summarizes our impact in 2020. Please take stock, stay in touch, and thank you for your support.



JoEllen Tarallo, ED.D., MCHES, FASHA
Executive Director

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THANK YOU!

SUPPORTERS

CHL is grateful to the many individuals whose financial contributions make our program possible. We are also thankful to the following supporters of our work in 2020.

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Vermont Chapter
Biogen
Blue Cross Blue Shield
C&S Grocers
Chroma Technology
Bowse Health Trust
Fanny Holt Ames and Edna Louise Holt Fund
Fraternal Order of Eagles
Invest EAP
MHTTC
Mount Ascutney Hospital and Health Center
NAMI VT
NEPHTC
North Country Hospital
Northeast Telehealth Resource Center (NETRC)
OneCare
The Family of Alan Lopez Gottesman
TJX
University of Vermont Medical Center Community Health Investment Fund
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Vermont Department of Health Division of Maternal & Child Health
Vermont Department of Mental Health
Agnes Lindsay Trust
Kettering Family Foundation
National Life Foundation
Stratton Foundation
Thomas Thompson Trust
Vermont Community Foundation
Capital Candy
Central Vermont Kustoms Klassics
Charlotte Congregational Church
The Family of Kande and Gary Guilmette

Vermont Kitchen Supply
The Family of Hailey Christine Kubas
The Elks Club
Kinney Pike

SPONSORS

The following businesses and organizations sponsored our 2020 Suicide Prevention Symposium.

Vermont Department of Mental Health
Invest EAP
NAMI-VT
Mt. Ascutney Hospital and Health Center
Blue Cross Blue Shield
OneCare
North Country Hospital
NEPHTC
Northeast Telehealth Resource Center (NETRC)
Vermont Care Partners
Vermont Department of Health, Maternal and Child Health
C&S Grocers
Chroma Technology
MHTTC
UVM Medical Center
The Family of Alan Lopez Gottesman

PARTNERS

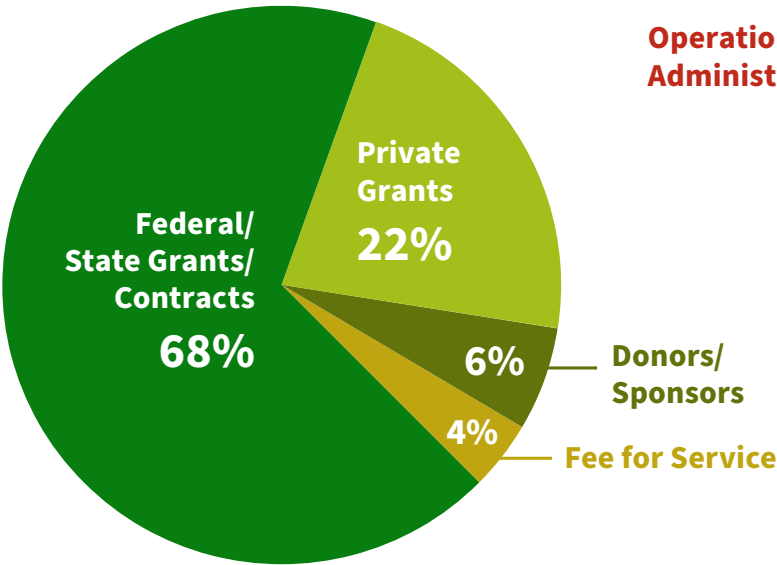
The Center for Health and Learning collaborated on community projects and workforce development with the following agencies, schools and community organizations.

American Association of Suicidology
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Vermont Chapter
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont
Bowse Health Trust
CAMS-care
Community Health Center of the Rutland Region
Health Care & Rehabilitation Services
Howard Center

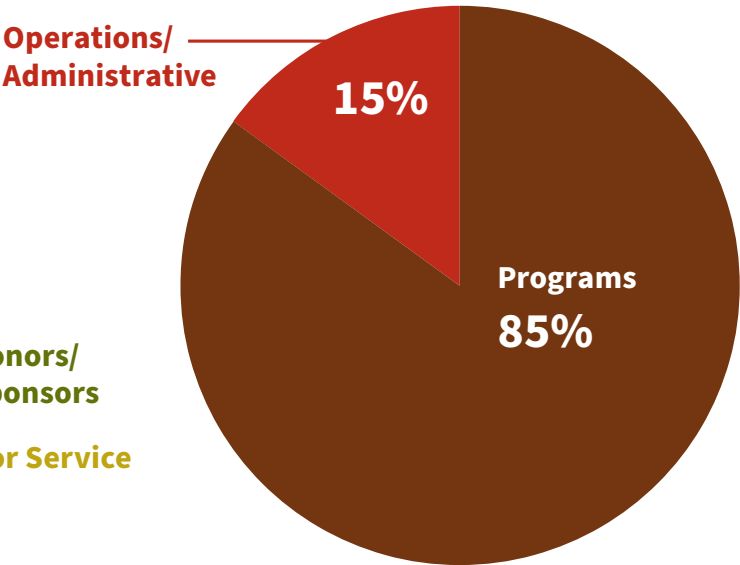
Lamoille County Mental Health Services
Mount Ascutney Hospital and Health Center
Northwestern Counseling & Support Services
OneCare Vermont
Outright Vermont
Rutland High School
Rutland Mental Health Services
Rutland Regional Medical Center
Springfield School District
Stratton Foundation
Support and Services at Home (SASH) Cathedral Square
The Collaborative
United Way of Windham County
University of Vermont
UVM: Community Partners, Collective Impact Grant
Vermont Agency of Education, Project AWARE.
Vermont Association for the Mentally Ill
Vermont Care Partners
Vermont Cooperative for Practice Improvement
Vermont Department of Health, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs
Vermont Department of Health, Emergency Preparedness, EMS & Injury Prevention
Vermont Department of Health, Maternal and Child Health
Vermont Department of Health, Vermont Health Access
Vermont Department of Mental Health
Vermont Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health
VT Public Health Institute/NEPHTC
Washington County Mental Health
Windham Southwest Supervisory Union
Bellows Falls Union High School
Indian Education Program of Franklin County's Abenaki Title VI Parent Advisory Committee
Missiquoi Valley Union H.S.

2020 FINANCIALS

INCOME \$1,193,312



EXPENSE



TRAININGS & PRESENTATIONS

 **50+**
trainings

 **1,600+**
people trained



This is how we conducted our meetings and trainings in 2020.

SUBSTANCE MISUSE AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER PREVENTION



CHL uses a public health planning model on the projects we design, integrating assessments and evaluation into all phases of our work.

Regional Prevention Partnerships:

CHL maintains a long-term relationship with VT Department of Health's Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs (ADAP) to implement a college symposium on substance misuse and trainings for ADAP's Regional Prevention Partnership.

Mt. Ascutney Hospital and Health Care Center Prevention Network Grant:

Through a grant from Mt. Ascutney Prevention Network, CHL offered courses in Emerging Trends in Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Education to area K – 12 teachers.

“Informed, nonjudgmental, supportive faculty.”

*“The training helped me remember that **there are more variables at play** than just their SUD.”*

—feedback on the Brief Emergency Medicine Interventions to Prevent Opioid Overdose training

Brief Emergency Medicine Interventions to Prevent Opioid Overdoses,

funded by ADAP, provides training allowing Emergency Medicine staff, and others who come into contact with people at risk of opioid overdoses, to have needed and critical conversations effectively.

Despite the fact that the trainers had to pivot quickly due to COVID and change what was an in-person training to a virtual training delivered by Zoom, 47 people were trained over 5 trainings delivered between March and early August. Additionally, while outreach for the trainings was initially targeted at Emergency Department personnel, it generated a great deal of interest from personnel in the Department of Corrections .

250 professionals from education, health, mental health, and community serving agencies received training or attended events related to substance use education, prevention, and intervention.



ZERO SUICIDE

“I have been working with CHL for the last 18 months on several projects and presentations. *Their tireless work around mental health and suicide prevention is unparalleled.*”

—feedback on Rutland Suicide Safer Care project

Supported by a three-year grant from the Bowse Health Trust, Rutland Regional Medical Center, Rutland Mental Health, and Community Health Center of the Rutland Region have been participating in the Rutland Suicide Safer Care Project with the goal of reducing suicide in Rutland County.

78 staff were trained in **Umatter® Suicide Prevention Awareness** trainings.

17 staff were trained in the **Introduction to Zero Suicide Training** offered through CHL.

100+ staff participated in **workforce development surveys** and **Suicide Awareness** trainings.



Zero Suicide work across Vermont under funding from the Vermont Department of Mental Health (DMH) and in partnership with Vermont Department of Health (VDH), continued.



This work involved ongoing training in Collaborative Assessment for the Management of Suicide (CAMS). CAMS is a 20-plus year evidence based, internationally recognized top-tier intervention with proven efficacy. CAMS offers training to learn how to assess, treat and manage suicidality.

In 2020, **86 Designated Mental Health Agency staff were trained** in the full CAMS training process.

CHL guided work through a Mini-grant program to improve Suicide Prevention infrastructure in Vermont through COVID Relief and other funds from the Department of Mental Health.



This Mini-grant program supported activities that build suicide safer care pathways in Primary Care Practices (PCPs) that are part of Blueprint Patient Centered Medical Homes and are also part of the larger system of care with a local Designated Mental Health Agency.

This Mini-grant Program was developed by the Center for Health and Learning/VT Suicide Prevention Center with input from Zero Suicide 2020 Coordinators at the seven participating Designated Agencies.

17 Primary Care Practices (PCPs) have participated in this Mini-grant project.



UMATTER

Umatter® is a best practice training program, and public information campaign that engages youth, schools and communities to reduce the incidence of suicide. The program teaches students and adults to recognize and address depression and risk factors while building strengths through self-care, caring for others, help-seeking and community action.

Umatter® FOR SCHOOLS ONLINE COURSE

25 participants
representing
11 Schools and/
or Mental Health
Agencies

Umatter® SUICIDE PREVENTION AWARENESS OVERVIEW

3 webinars
81 participants
from
68 organizations

Umatter® FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

67 youth trained
from
12 schools;
600 impacted by
Community Action
Projects

Umatter® FOR SCHOOLS ELEMENTARY TRAINING FOR WSESU

25 participants

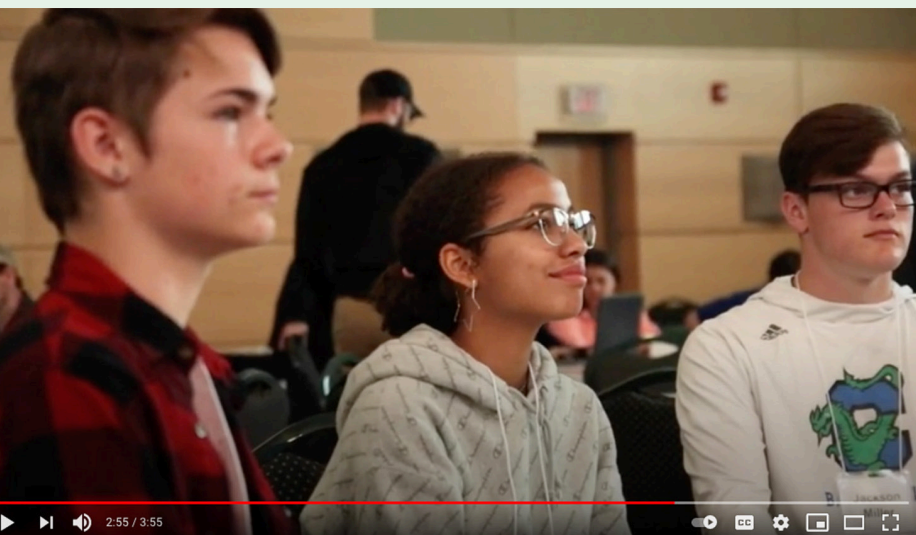
Umatter® GATEKEEPER

5 trainings
135 participants
from
5 organizations

“The two-day training was excellent.

I particularly appreciated having the time to focus on this important work and update our school procedures with my colleague who I attended with. I know that we are both looking forward to doing more with this work in the coming year.”

—Umatter training participant



UMATTER® VIDEO WINS AWARD

“What is Umatter® YYA” video received first place in the Community Impact Division at the 2020 Nor’easter Video Festival put on by the Alliance for Community Media – Northeast Regions. The video was made in partnership with Brattleboro Community TV. The award recognizes programs that generate community involvement and interest through awareness, empowerment and education. youtu.be/IND7omnkV2Q

VERMONT SUICIDE PREVENTION CENTER

The Vermont Suicide Prevention Center (VTSPC) is a public-private partnership of the Center for Health and Learning with the VT Agency of Human Services and many partner organizations and individuals. The mission is to create health-promoting communities in which people have the knowledge, attitudes, skills, and resources to reduce suicides in Vermont. VTSPC is supported by the Vermont Department of Mental Health.



EVENTS



Adapted to online format!

More than **320** participants

7 keynote speakers

More than **20** workshop presenters

View recordings of the event at vermontsuicideprevention.org

*“This was my first Suicide Symposium, and it was absolutely amazing. There were a few times that I wanted to cry, because **it was so moving, so touching, so close to home**... A round of applause to everyone who presented and shared, and everyone who worked behind the scenes to make this happen.”*

—feedback on the 2020 Symposium

LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

60 participants from across the state

Testimony from a variety of stakeholders was organized and offered to both the House Committee on Health Care and Senate Health and Welfare Committee

VTSPC COALITION MEETINGS

161 participants over 4 quarterly meetings

(This is an increase over 2019, which saw 89 participants over 3 meetings)

Stakeholders represented: **Government, academic, social services, public health, and medicine**

PUBLIC INFO & OUTREACH



VTSPC FACEBOOK
Page likes: **897**
People reached: **27,810**



VTSPC WEBSITE
Page views: **24,657**
Users: **11,924**
New visitors: **90%**

VT CRISIS TEXT LINE
In A Crisis? Text VT to 741741

VT CRISIS TEXT LINE WEBSITE
Page views: **5,389**
Users: **3,461**
New visitors: **90%**

FEATURED PROGRAM: CONNECTING RURAL COMMUNITIES

With funding from the Community Health Investment Fund of the University of Vermont Medical Center, CHL partnered with Abenaki leadership from the Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi's Title VI Indian Education Parent Advisory Committee (PAC), and Northwestern Counseling and Support Services to implement Connecting Rural Communities (CRC). CRC's goal is to improve suicide prevention efforts in the Grand Isle County region, with a focus on providing culturally competent services to members of the Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi.

NORTHWESTERN COUNSELING & SUPPORT SERVICES



Need Confidential Help for Mental Health?

- Call the Pathways Support Line – 18+ Adult:
(833) VT-TALKS / (833) 888-2557
- Talk to someone you trust – a family member, friend, health care provider or faith leader
- Call **2-1-1** to connect to your local mental health agency and COVID supports
- Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
800-273-TALK (8255)
- Resources for help can be found at:**
www.sprc.org and **www.vtspc.org**

CHL DEPENDS ON THE GENEROSITY OF ALL OUR DONORS TO MAKE OUR WORK POSSIBLE.

You can make a one-time or monthly sustaining gift online at donorbox.org/donate-to-health-and-learning or write a check to the Center for Health and Learning and mail to:

Center for Health and Learning
28 Vernon Street, Suite 319
Brattleboro, VT 05301

THANK YOU!

In Crisis?
Text VT to 741741
CRISIS TEXT LINE
Free, 24/7, Confidential

NATIONAL
SUICIDE PREVENTION
LIFELINE
1-800-273-TALK (8255)
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

THE **TREVOR** PROJECT
Saving Young LGBTQ Lives
LGBTQ CRISIS HOTLINE:
CALL 1-866-488-7386

 **Veterans**
Crisis Line
1-800-273-8255 PRESS 1

Visit our websites:
healthandlearning.org
vtspc.org
umatterucangethelp.com
to learn more about our
programs, trainings and staff.



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