

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends, Colleagues, and Partners,



In 2021, the first hour of Monday morning became one of my favorite times of the week. As a result of the pandemic, which began in March 2020, CHL closed up the shop of 18 years and went fully remote. Every Monday morning, the full staff, now living in five states and working from home offices, would gather. We would start with a motivational warmer activity, experience professional development together, and share our priorities for the week. Often, we would troubleshoot one of the many challenges we faced: converting trainings, products, and services to remote platforms and maintaining quality in the services provided.

It was an extraordinary year involving ever-evolving modes of technology and communication and requiring significant commitment, with troubling social changes occurring around us. The mental health of CHL's staff became paramount as each of us coped with new circumstances, setting up home offices, homeschooling children, living with family members who needed support and, in some cases enduring the isolation of living alone. Zoom meetings became the norm, and working from 8 am to evening without breaks wasn't easy. Self-care became critical.

Our staff knew that we were privileged to live and work from home, while many of the providers we served were onsite in challenging situations. In this letter, we express appreciation for all the heroic acts delivered daily by people all over the world during the pandemic.

The pages ahead outline the results of our work during 2021. It required a lot of determination and tenacity. One of our staff ran webinars from her car high on the hill where she could receive internet connectivity. I am proud of our staff and this work, done despite many challenges because it was important.

Thank you for prioritizing a look at CHL's Annual Report, participating in CHL training and events, partnering with and advising CHL staff, and giving CHL the resources to do the work which enhances the well-being of the people we serve.

We are most grateful.

Sincerely,



JoEllen Tarallo, Ed.D., MCHES, Executive Director

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WHAT'S NEW AT CHL?

Thanks to Catherine Diduk, CHL's longtime Training and Events Coordinator!



2021 was the final full year at CHL for Catherine Diduk, CHL's longtime Training and Events Coordinator, who retired in 2022 after 12 years of service. Catherine oversaw all logistical planning for the many CHL trainings and events in and around the state of Vermont. She assisted with marketing, contracting and communication, evaluation, material production, and project follow-up. During Catherine's tenure, CHL coordinated more than 400 trainings and events (engaging more than 15,000 people), some large and some small, in-person and virtual, with different designs, materials, and logistics to consider.

"Catherine brought a wealth of experience and grace to her work, and we will miss her," stated Lorie Holtgrave, CHL's Director of Operations. "During COVID, she successfully navigated all of CHL's events from in-person training to virtual and online formats. In the final stages of her work, she demonstrated extraordinary efficiency in closing up CHL's physical office space, dispersing 18 years of materials, files, and stored technology and curriculum.

Catherine's attention to detail, calm approach, and "can do" attitude has been an inspiration to everyone. Everybody at CHL and beyond wishes Catherine the best in this next chapter!

Thank You to the Vermont Community Foundation!



At the close of 2021, CHL was honored to receive a grant from the Vermont Community Foundation to support strategic and business planning for CHL, specifically in

relation to its suicide prevention initiatives, the Vermont Suicide Prevention Center, the Vermont Suicide Prevention Coalition, and to support the planning and development of *Umatter®* Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Promotion programming.

"This grant is pivotal to CHL's strategic planning and will allow us to effectively continue projects in the various communities we serve," stated JoEllen Tarallo, CHL Executive Director.

Thank you to the Vermont Community Foundation!

CHL Has Moved–We've Gone Fully Remote!

After almost two years of remote work imposed by COVID, the staff and Board of CHL determined that it was best to

"go remote" and decided to use a shared office location that would allow staff to meet as needed without the same use of resources as a permanent location.

"It was a lot of work to pack up, shred, scan, disburse, recycle, donate and sell the contents of 20 years, but the time had come," said Lorie Holtgrave, CHL's Director of Operations.

CHL is fully remote as of December 31, 2021. The new mailing address for the Center for Health and Learning and Vermont Suicide Prevention Center is PO Box 1276, Brattleboro, VT 05302. The main telephone number has not changed: 802-254-6590.



THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS, SPONSORS, AND PARTNERS!

Supporters

CHL is grateful to the many individuals whose financial contributions make our program possible. We can't name them all, but would like to note the following supporters of our work in 2021.

Agnes Lindsay Trust
Blue Cross Blue Shield of VT
Biogen
Bowse Health Trust
Catholic Daughters of America
Chroma Technology
Everytown for Gun Safety
Fanny Holt Ames and Edna Louise Holt Fund
Green Mountain Semiconductor Inc.
Harry Chen and Anne Lezak
Kettering Family Foundation
Kustom Classics
Mattress Land
Montgomery Library
National Life Foundation
Northeast Federal Credit Union
People's United Bank
Stratton Community Foundation
Takeda Pharmaceuticals
The Elks Club
Thomas Thompson Trust
Town of Fletcher
University of Vermont Medical Center
Community Health Investment Fund
Vermont Community Foundation
Vermont Cooperative for Practice Improvement & Innovation
Vermont Department of Health
Vermont Department of Health Division of Maternal & Child Health
Vermont Department of Mental Health
Vermont Program for Quality in Health Care, Inc.
Wells Fargo Advisors

Special thanks to:

The Vermont Department of Health
The Vermont Department of Mental Health
The University of Vermont
The Fanny Holt Ames and Edna Louise Holt Fund

for your continued an ongoing support for our work!

Sponsors

The following businesses and organizations sponsored our 2021 Suicide Prevention Symposium and other events and trainings coordinated and implemented by CHL.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of VT
C&S Grocers
Cabot Creamery
Chroma Technology
Grace Cottage Hospital
Image Relay
Margolis Healy
MHTTC
Mount Ascutney Hospital and Health Center
NEPHTC
North Country Hospital
Northeast Telehealth Resource Center (NETRC)
OneCare
UVM Medical Center
Vermont Care Partners
Vermont Department of Health Division of Maternal & Child Health
Vermont Department of Mental Health
Vermont Program for Quality in Health Care, Inc.

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
Bellows Falls Union High School
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont
Bowse Health Trust
CAMS-care
Community Health Center of the Rutland Region
Health Care & Rehabilitation Services
Howard Center
Indian Education Program of Franklin County's Abenaki Title VI Parent Advisory Committee

Lamoille County Mental Health Services
Missiquoi Valley Union H.S.
Mt. Ascutney Hospital
NAMI VT
Northwestern Counseling & Support Services
OneCare Vermont
Outright Vermont
Rutland High School
Rutland Mental Health Services
Rutland Regional Medical Center
Springfield School District
Stratton Community 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 Association of Hospitals
Vermont Blueprint for Health
Vermont Care Partners
Vermont Cooperative for Practice Improvement & Innovation
Vermont Department of Health, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program
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
Vermont PHA
VT Public Health Institute/NEPHTC
Washington County Mental Health
Windham Southwest Supervisory Union

VERMONT SUICIDE PREVENTION CENTER



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

VT Suicide Prevention Symposium 2021

Adapted to online format!

More than **220** participants

3 keynote speakers

26 workshop presenters

2 pre-Symposium webinars:

- *Suicide Deaths in Vermont, The Intersection of Mental Health Challenges, Lethal Means, and Biological Sex*
- *Sustaining Yourself at Work*

View recordings of the event at vermontsuicidepreventionsymposium.org

Suicide Prevention in Vermont for State Legislators: Stakeholder Voices

40 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**.

Public Info & Outreach

VTSPC Facebook

Page likes: **1,111**

People reached:

5,486

VTSPC website

Page views: **39,763**

Users: **22,555**

New visitors: **90%**

VTSPC Coalition Meetings

148 participants over **3** meetings

Stakeholders represented:

- **Government**
- **Academic**
- **Social services**
- **Public health**
- **Medicine**

Vermont Crisis Text Line website

Page views: **6,351**

Users: **3,506**

New visitors: **79%**



Zero Suicide Project: Developing Infrastructure for Suicide Safer Pathways to Care

Mini-grants were issued to 17 Primary Care Practices (PCPs) to support their training and collaboration with seven Designated Mental Health Agencies (DAs). DAs and PCPs reported increased communication regarding suicide prevention and care between partners, which led to better suicide safer care.

7 Designated Agencies

- **Howard Center**
- **Northwestern Counseling and Support Services (NCSS)**
- **Lamoille County Mental Health Services (LCMHS)**
- **Washington County Mental Health Services (WCMHS)**
- **Northeast Kingdom Human Services, Inc. (NKHS)**
- **Community Care Network/Rutland Mental Health (CCN/RMH)**
- **Healthcare Rehabilitation Services (HCRS)**

Vermont Zero Suicide Project 2021-2022

19 participants

Suicide Safe Pathways to Care: Introduction to Zero Suicide in Vermont

4 webinars

89 participants from

54 organizations

Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality (CAMS)

157 Clinicians trained

CSSRS: Columbia Suicide Severity Ratings Scale

2 webinars

55 participants

Umatter® is a best practice training program and public information campaign that engages youth, schools, and communities to reduce the incidence of suicide. Umatter® teaches participants 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

52 participants
representing
17 Schools,
Supervisory Unions,
and Organizations

Umatter® Awareness Overview & Gatekeeper

8 webinars
163 participants from
68 organizations

Umatter® Awareness for TJX Corporation

71 participants

Umatter® Training of Trainers

43 participants

“I think of myself as knowledgeable about suicide trainings, and I must say, **this training was extraordinary.** It was well-balanced between facts and process, and presenters checked in with the participants often. The trainers were well-prepared and demonstrated a command of facts and process. I cannot say enough about the quality of this training.”

—Umatter® training participant

Umatter® Youth and Young Adults (Umatter® YYA)



Umatter® YYA started in the fall of 2020 and concluded on June 2, 2021. Five schools completed Community Action Projects (CAPs):

- Spaulding High School – It’s Okay, Not to be Okay – Part 2 – COVID Era
- Rutland High School – Sources of Hope
- Bellows Falls Union High School - Healthy Relationships
- Peoples Academy- Setting Sail: Surveying MH Needs of PA Youth
- Stratton Group-One Week of Random Acts of Kindness

Here is what some of the young people in the program said they got out of it:

- “I learned how to take notice of the important little things in life.”
- “I learned how to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of people around me.”
- “I learned about listening to my inner voice and knowing self.”
- “I learned about different resources and what we can do to promote mental health.”
- “I learned how to respond to friends in difficult situations.”

Umatter® Partnership with Bellows Falls Union High School

Under funding from the Fanny Holt Ames and Edna Louise Holt Fund, CHL’s partnership with Bellows Falls Union High School (BFUHS) provides training and education to school staff, youth empowerment programming, and introduces family engagement protocols. In 2021 we expanded work and extended it to K-8 schools in the Supervisory Union.

COMMUNITY SUICIDE PREVENTION PARTNERSHIPS

Rutland Suicide Safer Pathways

This project culminated in December 2021 after three years of work under Bowse Health Trust funding. CHL/VTSPC provided project management and technical assistance to project partners, Rutland Regional Medical Center (RRMC), Community Health of Rutland (CHCRR), and Rutland Mental Health (CCN/RMH), to help develop internal Zero Suicide systems and communication across organizations to improve care coordination for people struggling with suicidal thoughts and behaviors. The grant supported partner participation in *Umatter*® Awareness, Introduction to Zero Suicide, CAMS (Collaborative Assessment of Suicidality), CALM (Counseling on Access to Lethal Means), CSSRS (Columbia Suicide Severity Risk Scale), and ASQ (Ask Suicide Questions) training. Over the 3-year grant timeline, this project accomplished the following:

129 staff were trained in ***Umatter*® Suicide Prevention Awareness training.**

39 staff were trained in CHL's **Introduction to Zero Suicide Training.**

38 staff were trained in the **CAMS treatment model** (Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality)

26 staff were trained in **CSSRS for screening and assessment** (Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale)

Over **100** staff participated in **workforce development surveys** and **Suicide Awareness training.**

Connecting Rural Communities (CRC)

CRC completed the third year of an existing UVM Collective Impact Implementation Grant to improve suicide prevention efforts in the Grand Isle County region, focusing on providing culturally competent services to members of the Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi. The project is a collaboration between CHL/the VTSPC, Abenaki leadership from the Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi's Title VI Indian Education Parent Advisory Committee, hereafter referred to as The PAC, and Northwestern Counseling and Support Services.

A **Cultural Competency training** was developed by the PAC, then presented to **30 employees** at schools and community organizations

CHL and the PAC began planning to create a **short online module** about working with the Missisquoi Abenaki community members.

Project partners created an outline for a **proposal to revise the information gathering system for Death Certificate reporting**, with a focus on providing support and resources for people who are Abenaki.

HELP Cards have been updated with 9-8-8

Need Confidential Help for Mental Health?

- Call or text **988** for the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline
- Call or text **(833) VT-TALKS/(833)888-2557** for the Pathways Peer Support Warmline
- Talk to someone you trust – a family member, friend, health care provider or faith leader
- Call **211** for local mental health agencies and referrals
- Resources for help can be found at: www.sprc.org and www.vtspc.org

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

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

THE
TREVOR
PROJECT
For Young LGBTQ Lives
CALL 1-866-488-7386

 **Veterans
Crisis Line**
DIAL 988 then **PRESS 1**

SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION

Brief Emergency Medicine Interventions to Prevent Opioid Overdoses, under funding from the Vermont Department of Health Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs.

This training introduces or refreshes participants' SBIRT skills (Screening Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment.) The training was specifically tailored to meet the unique needs of emergency medicine with its fast pace and sense of urgency. This year, we also extended the training to professionals in parole and probation and other law enforcement personnel.

Participating Emergency Medicine staff included:

- Medical Doctors
- Health Care Practice Managers
- Registered Nurses
- Physician Assistants
- Social Workers
- Nurse Practitioners
- Directors
- Psychologists

Trainers provided **virtual training delivered by Zoom** to **91** people in 2021.



“Loved the opportunity to **practice and get feedback**, as well as the in-depth discussions about application of specific skills.”

“Great job to presenters, organizers and participants. **Great experience and wonderful instructors!**

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

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

The RPP's goal is to prevent the onset of substance use and reduce the progression to misuse and any associated negative consequences of substance use across the lifespan for VT's highest need groups.

This year's RPP trainings reached:

318 attendees at the **Vermont Youth Cannabis Conference:** Foundations in Cannabis Trends, Consequences of Legislation, and Impacts for Youth

183 attendees at webinars about the **Consequences of Cannabis Use** and the **Latest Trends in Cannabis and Youth**

80 attendees at webinars about **Health Equity Strategies for LGBTQ+ Youth**

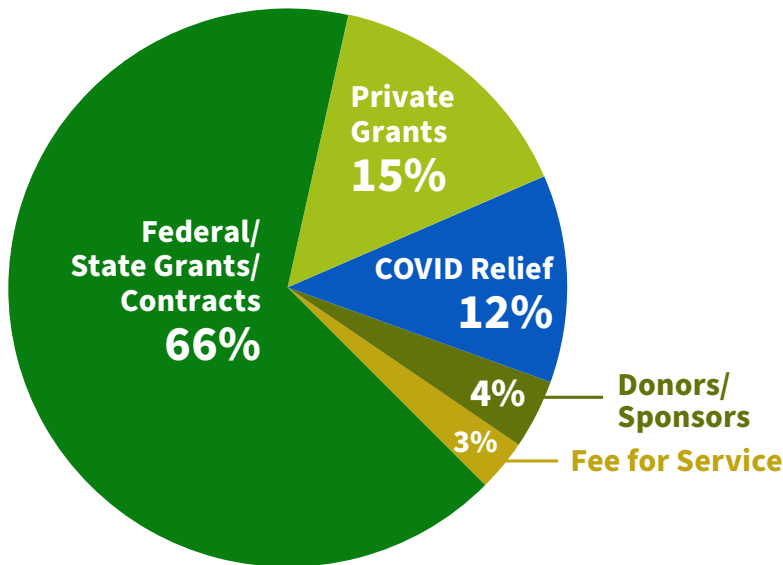
47 attendees at **Alcohol and COVID-19: Who is Minding the Stores?**

45 attendees from college campuses at the **College Symposium on Substance Misuse.**

2021 FINANCIALS

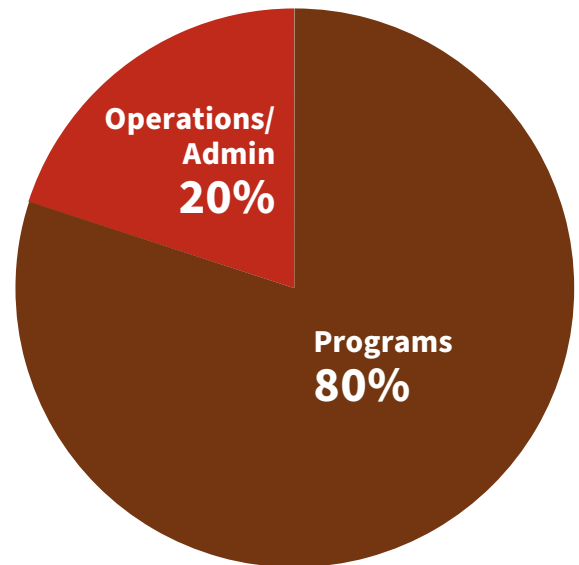
REVENUE

\$1,497,185



EXPENSE

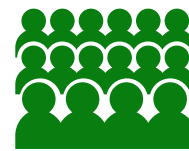
\$1,016,983



TRAININGS &
PRESENTATIONS



55
trainings



2,008
people trained

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

You can make a one-time, monthly sustaining gift, or gift “in honor of” or “in memory of” online at donorbox.org/partnering-with-you-to-prevent-suicide-2022-09 or write a check to the Center for Health and Learning and mail to:

Center for Health and Learning
PO Box 1276
Brattleboro, VT 05302-1276

THANK YOU!

Visit our websites:

healthandlearning.org

vtspc.org

to learn more about our
programs, trainings and staff.



info@healthandlearning.org

802-254-6590 | healthandlearning.org

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