



VCTF GRANTS LIST 2023

The Vermont Children's Trust Foundation mission is to promote the well-being of children and families in Vermont by raising funds for community-based prevention programs that serve children aged birth to 18.

VCTF funds are granted to programs that meet the following State of Vermont outcomes:

- Vermont's families are safe, nurturing, stable, and supported.
- Vermont's children and young people achieve their potential.

The programs supported by VCTF work to prevent physical and emotional abuse, substance abuse, school failure and violence, and help ensure that every child in Vermont has a fair chance for success. Examples of programs include:

After-school and out-of-school programs, Preschool programs, Literacy initiatives, Music, Arts, Theater, Outdoor adventures, Parenting education, Mentoring programs, and Substance abuse prevention programs

We believe each child deserves the chance to realize his or her innate potential; to grow up in a nurturing environment with opportunities that feed the body, mind and soul; to have a meaningful connection to the community in which they live; and to be protected from harm. We know that engaged, healthy and educated children grow into self-reliant, contributing adults. Taking care of our children now ensures a stronger future for Vermont.

VCTF funds prevention programs for children and families throughout Vermont. Our focus continues to be supporting the grassroots, direct service organizations who provide primary prevention programs based on community need. From isolated rural communities to small city neighborhoods, VCTF provides seed money in every county of the state to help incubate new programs serving children and families.

The following is a list of descriptions of the programs who were awarded Vermont Children's Trust Foundation grants in fiscal year 2022.

For grant information contact the Vermont Children's Trust Foundation:
(802) 951-8604 or info@vtchildrenstrust.org

VCTF Grant Summary 2023

VCTF Grant Awards

Number of Grants	43
\$ Amount of Grants	\$336,210

Programs by County

VCTF funds programs throughout the state based on community need. The following shows the number of programs funded in each county for 2023. Some programs operate in more than one county.

County	# of Grants
Addison	6
Bennington	9
Caledonia	4
Chittenden	14
Essex	4
Franklin	7
Grand Isle	5
Lamoille	6
Orange	9
Orleans	7
Rutland	7
Washington	9
Windham	10
Windsor	14

Programs by Targeted Outcomes

Vermont's children and young people achieve their potential -	34
Vermont's families are safe, nurturing, stable and supported -	9

VCTF Grant Award List 2023

<u>Grantee</u>	<u>Award</u>	<u>Locations</u>	<u>Outcome</u>	<u>Est. # Served</u>
Addison Central Teens & Friends Inc	\$10,000	Addison	B	280
Arts Bus	\$5,000	Orange, Washington, Windsor	A	3,548
Bennington Early Childhood Center	\$609	Bennington	A	20
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Vermont	\$10,000	Addison, Bennington, Caledonia, Chittenden, Essex, Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille, Orange, Orleans, Rutland, Washington, Windham, Windsor	A	240
Big Heavy World	\$6,000	Chittenden	A	10
Boys & Girls Club of Brattleboro	\$10,000	Windham	A	102
Burlington Children's Space	\$10,000	Chittenden	B	501
Chandler Center for the Arts	\$10,000	Orange, Washington, Windsor	A	370
Community Sailing Center	\$10,000	Chittenden	B	35
Creative Lives, Inc.	\$10,000	Orange, Windsor	A	134
DREAM Program	\$3,613	Caledonia, Orleans	A	35
ECHO, Leahy Center for Lake Champlain	\$10,000	Chittenden, Franklin, Lamoille, Washington	A	900
Encore After School and Summer Program	\$10,000	Essex, Orleans	A	578
Franklin Grand Isle Bookmobile	\$10,000	Franklin, Grand Isle	A	159
Howard Center Inc.	\$10,000	Chittenden	A	150
Inclusive Arts Vermont	\$10,000	Addison, Bennington, Caledonia, Chittenden, Essex, Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille, Orange, Orleans, Rutland, Washington, Windham, Windsor	B	156
King Street Center	\$10,000	Chittenden	A	105
Mentor Connector	\$10,000	Addison, Bennington, Rutland, Windsor	A	120
Mentor Connector	\$5,000	Rutland	A	105
Milton Community Youth Coalition	\$10,000	Chittenden	A	20
MINT	\$10,000	Rutland	A	690
MoonRise Therapeutics	\$10,000	Windsor	B	90
Mountain Communities Supporting Education - The Collaborative	\$10,000	Bennington, Windham, Windsor	A	825

New England Youth Theatre	\$10,000	Windham	A	1,072
Outright Vermont	\$10,000	Addison, Bennington, Caledonia, Chittenden, Essex, Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille, Orange, Orleans, Rutland, Washington, Windham, Windsor	A	22
Paran Recreations	\$5,000	Bennington	A	25
Partners In Adventure, Inc.	\$2,000	Addison, Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle, Washington	A	110
River Arts of Morrisville, Inc	\$1,900	Lamoille	A	270
River Gallery School of Art	\$10,000	Windham	A	152
SafeArt, Inc.	\$10,000	Orange, Orleans, Washington	A	83
Sara Holbrook Community Center	\$5,000	Chittenden	A	142
Sharon Academy	\$10,000	Orange, Windsor	A	360
Shire Kids Corp	\$10,000	Bennington, Rutland, Windham, Windsor	A	2,010
St. Albans Free Library	\$9,250	Franklin	A	1,010
Stepping Stones Preschool	\$1,023	Windham Windsor	A	22
Steps to End Domestic Violence	\$10,000	Chittenden	B	49
Sunrise Family Resource Center	\$950	Bennington	B	4,550
University of Vermont Extension 4-H	\$10,000	Orleans	B	135
Vermont Family Network	\$10,000	Lamoille	A	790
Very Merry Theatre	\$2,000	Chittenden	A	1,716
Warren Public Library	\$1,365	Washington	B	100
We R H.O.P.E.	\$7,500	Orange, Windsor	A	75
Youth Services, Inc	\$10,000	Windham, Windsor	A	37

43 Programs Total Awards \$336,210 Est. # Served 21,903

Outcomes Reference Key:

- A) Vermont's children and young people achieve their potential
- B) Vermont's families are safe, nurturing, stable and supported

VCTF Grantees Fiscal Year 2023

(Alphabetical Order)

Addison Central Teens & Friends Inc

\$10,000.00

ConnetTeen

Our mission at Addison Central Teens is to offer space, programming and resources which supports teen development and well-being. We envision a community where all adolescents are valued and supported to realize their full potential. Recognizing the critical role parents play, we are requesting funding to help strengthen relationships between teens and their parents. While parent/teen relationships can often feel difficult, twice a month we will provide an opportunity to get loose, connect, and enjoy each other's company. We will provide food and a fun activity designed to bring teens and parents closer together. Should anyone request additional help, we will be ready to provide support and resources to help teens and parents thrive.

Arts Bus

\$5,000.00

Go BIG & Go HOME!

Now in its 12th year, The Arts Bus is a mobile art enrichment program that travels to afterschool programs, summer camps, where the bus closes the gap between quality art education and the children of Central Vermont in rural places in Orange, Windsor & Washington County. In its newly introduced Go BIG & Go HOME! periodic program, The Arts Bus has discovered a way to unlock kids' imaginations, empower them with choice and self-guided creative project, and reward going big, taking risks and pushing limits!

Bennington Early Childhood Center

\$609.00

Bennington Early Childhood Center

Over the past year we have started working on having a separate playground for our toddlers. We have secured the space and installed fencing. We now need to equip this playground! We serve 20 children under the age of three and want them to have a space that has age-appropriate equipment for outdoor gross motor activity. Our goal is to install a swingset with an appropriate fall zone as well as a sandbox.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Vermont

\$10,000.00

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Vermont

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Vermont (BBBSVT) is the only statewide 1:1 mentoring organization serving children aged 6-18 in site and/or community-based settings throughout Vermont. BBBSVT partners with parent/guardians, schools, prevention and recovery organizations, local businesses and social service agencies to provide quality 1:1 mentoring opportunities and wrap around supports for children and youth who have been identified as at risk or high risk or otherwise in need of a 1:1 mentoring relationship.

Big Heavy World**\$6,000.00****Afterschool Music Programming**

Big Heavy World is a youth and volunteer-staffed music development office which houses a community radio station, organizes local concerts, and hosts a museum of Vermont-made music. We are applying for this grant because we want to expand our youth mentorship program to include college visits and youth-led concerts, both of which will encourage young people to pursue careers in music or the music business. We are seeking funds for the Executive Director and our youth mentors to purchase food, t-shirts, and rent vehicles to bring youths on tours of local colleges with Music Industry programs, such as Northern Vermont University, so that high-school students can learn about the many exciting opportunities to pursue music in higher education.

Boys & Girls Club of Brattleboro**\$10,000.00****Expanding BGCB'S Academic Support Programs**

The Boys & Girls Club of Brattleboro (BGCB) is requesting funding to expand two ongoing academic support programs that serve groups of young people at our downtown Brattleboro facility. These two programs include a supported daily afterschool study hall and a college counseling workshop series; both will be offered free of charge. BGCB will hire math and science STEAM mentors to offer subject-specific tutoring during our study halls. We will also deliver a new quarterly five-part college counseling workshop series to help youth navigate the college application process. BGCB will promote these programs within our network of local schools and partners. We will also offer a daily afterschool transportation service from five area schools.

Burlington Children's Space**\$10,000.00****Burlington Children's Space**

The Burlington Children's Space is a 5 Star, nationally accredited early education program serving children from 6 weeks to 5 years, providing full day, full year care and wrap around supports for families. For 38 years, BCS has worked with community partners to enhance services and program quality. Partners include Head Start, The HowardCenter, and local school districts. BCS now seeks to join efforts with 4 other early education programs working in partnership with the HowardCenter in order to improve implementation of the therapeutic model, increase access to high quality training for staff across programs, and collect data about the impact of therapeutic strategies on child and family health and mental health.

Chandler Center for the Arts**\$10,000.00****Chandler Center for the Arts Summer Youth Musical and Elementary Chorus "Sounds of Summer" Camp Program**

For 30 years Chandler Center for the Arts has served the families of Central Vermont with an exceptional theater arts program. Each summer for several weeks between 60 to 150 kids participate in a powerful, collective experience creating a complete staged musical production, which helps them to form strong social connections, while also allowing them to achieve their full potential. Each year during these weeks of rehearsal, and during four public performances clustered around the 4th of July, children and teens learn to rely on each other, while testing their own abilities. While they also receiving supportive mentoring from the adults managing the show: the Director, Musical Director, Choreographer, Tech Director, Costumer, and volunteers

Community Sailing Center**\$10,000.00****BIPOC Initiative**

Since 1994, we have strived to eliminate barriers for people to access one of Vermont's greatest natural assets, Lake Champlain. We have created programs to promote better gender balance, classes for individuals with disabilities, scholarships for low-income families, and initiatives to promote sailing among older Vermonters. Now, in our 28th year, we are shifting focus to address racial, ethnic, and cultural barriers to access recreation on the lake.

In partnership with Burlington's Trusted Community Voices we have designed the Diversity Access

Initiative to create a new, long-term pathway for children in our community who identify as Black, Indigenous People of Color to access lake-based recreation in a safe, supportive and fun environment.

Creative Lives, Inc.**\$10,000.00****Creative Lives Youth in Community**

Creative Lives, a non-profit devoted to holistic education, will engage with community partners to implement The Creative Lives Youth in Community Camp (CLYCC). This hands-on day camp explores a holistic approach to teaching and creative problem solving with students in grades 6-12 in the Upper Valley Region of Vermont. Participants will work with adults experts and peers to develop holistic skills and experience in one of two tracks: education (teaching/mentoring younger students) or community projects (addressing social, economic, or environmental concerns). As a follow-up, campers will be eligible to help implement service projects or work as counselors in training via school-site afterschool programs during the 2022-23 school year.

DREAM Program**\$3,612.50****Growing DREAMs: DREAM Expansion to the Northeast Kingdom**

DREAM is working to reach some of the most underserved children in Vermont, those living in the Northeast Kingdom (NEK). We are currently engaged in a feasibility study, exploring a variation to our model that will train high school students to mentor younger youth living in low-income housing. Our model will maintain the high-quality DREAM mentor experience while also expanding our mentor pool to reach children in the NEK, an area that has proven difficult to reach, with little easy access to college student mentors. We are working to carry our study forward into implementation, including developing a service-learning curriculum for high school students and piloting the new model at a high school in the NEK.

ECHO, Leahy Center for Lake Champlain**\$10,000.00****Early Education STEM Outreach**

Early Education STEM Outreach is a statewide STEM outreach initiative focusing on underserved early childhood classrooms including those located in rural communities and Head Start programs. ECHO will continue to expand the delivery of early science learning programs, teacher professional development, STEM Kits, STEM Festivals, and leverage new opportunities in virtual program delivery - supporting 60 teachers and 900 children in 60 classrooms across rural Vermont. This initiative will address the needs of early learners and Preschool - 1st grade educators by creating high-quality curricula, hands-on materials and professional development to support science literacy and early science readiness.

Encore After School and Summer Program**\$10,000.00**

North Country Supervisory Union Encore After School and Summer Program

Encore Programs offer opportunities to over 1,100 youth in the North Country Supervisory Union, grades K-8 during out-of-school hours. Programming includes high quality offerings such as martial arts, wood working, sports, robotics, drama, book clubs, and so much more. These programs are organized at six of the nine sites by school day staff who add part time hours to their full schedules. Through the pandemic, expectations of these individuals have increased to include finding subs, contact tracing, increased academic engagement to reduce learning loss, and supporting the increased social emotional learning needs of kids. This grant would allow each of these six sites to hire a staff member, one day a week, for administrative support.

Franklin Grand Isle Bookmobile**\$10,000.00**

Youth Literacy Services

Franklin Grand Isle Bookmobile is a mobile library providing books and stories to children and families throughout Franklin and Grand Isle Counties. We travel throughout the region providing equal access to books, information, and resources regardless of economic status. Often the bucolic scenery of rural Vermont hides challenges faced by many impoverished Vermonters including lack of reliable transportation, internet access, and enrichment opportunities. Books are often overlooked when there is a struggle to make ends meet. FGI Bookmobile's unique structure overcomes some of these barriers by going directly to our patrons. Access to information helps to close the education gap between social classes.

Howard Center Inc.**\$10,000.00**

HC Afterschool and Summer Program Consultation and Training Project

Through staff training and regular observation and consultation with staff and caregivers, the assigned Howard Center's clinician(s) will offer partner Burlington area afterschool and summer program(s) regular support to minimize the incidence of expulsion of participating children/youth, ages 5-18 years who exhibit challenging behaviors. While drawing on the evidence-based ARC Model (Attachment, Competency and Regulation) and trauma informed practice that is culturally sensitive, staff and caregivers will be offered training and support that fosters child/youth and parental resilience, social connections as well as other Strengthening Families Protective Factors to ensure child/youth participation and increase family stability.

Inclusive Arts Vermont**\$10,000.00**

Start With The Arts & Arts First Pilot

Start With The Arts instills a lifelong love of learning in Vermont's youngest children by combining direct service arts-based literacy activities for children with professional development for childcare providers. In 2022-23, Start With The Arts will pilot Arts First, a new version of the program that focuses on supporting providers in meeting the emerging and increasing mental health and behavioral needs of children through arts-based social and emotional learning activities.

King Street Center**\$10,000.00****Afterschool Excellence & Summer Camp Support**

At King Street Center (KSC), children practice building their social-emotional skills, try new physical activities, and strengthen their academic skills daily. This is accomplished through strong staff, tutors, & community partners as well as close ties and communication with parents and the school district. Significant learning loss and emotional trauma has occurred during this pandemic for all children but even more so for KSC families. It is critical that we welcome tutors and additional literacy support back into our programs. In addition to this intensive academic support, every day at King Street Center also includes warm meals, tinkering, art, cooking, and loads of fun gym games – which contribute to the overall success of a child.

Mentor Connector**\$10,000.00****Career Awareness and Exploration in Mentoring**

The Mentor Connector is requesting \$10,000 to develop a train-the-trainer career development model within the organization to orient and assist 35 mentor matches to implement career awareness and exploration tools and resources within the mentoring experience.

Mentor Connector**\$5,000.00****Positive Action Group Program _ Year 2**

The Mentor Connector is expanding our Positive Action group mentoring program to serve 35 additional vulnerable youth with bi-weekly social-emotional skill-building tools and resources. The Positive Action Group Mentoring Program is one such program that utilizes two evidence-based interventions (group curriculum and one-on-one mentoring) as a multi-layered approach to enhance outcomes and provide sustainable, long-term support to youth. Bi-monthly meetings are established to 1) provide a platform for youth to discuss and learn tools to reduce stress, enhance refusal skills, and improve prosocial behavior and 2) an engaging group activity to expose youth to new activities and connect youth with each other.

Milton Community Youth Coalition**\$10,000.00****Milton Community Youth Coalition**

The pandemic has led to learning loss and adversely impacted youth mental health. To combat these worrisome trends, we are proposing a literacy based peer mentoring program designed to address both of these important issues by focusing nurturing relationships around a themed reading curriculum. These in-person mentoring relationships will build youth leadership, literacy, resilience and social connection. The program will train and match Milton High School students with younger students in the Milton Afterschool Kids Program (MASK). MCYC will take the lead on this collaborative program which will bring together youth serving community partners including the Milton Public Library, MASK, and the Milton Town School District.

MINT**\$10,000.00****MINT**

The MINT's kids and family Makerzone, The Boiler, seeks to expand programming to take our high quality STEAM content on the road to reach even more families, especially those who might not be able to get to our location. We piloted our Boiler Bus programming last summer and it was a big hit. Now we're looking to expand that programming model into more summer programming locations (public libraries, rec camps, school summer programs) and provide more outreach programming during the school year during afterschool hours. We also hope to develop a full complement of teacher inservice training to help more classroom teachers across our region up their game around STEAM activities in the classroom.

MoonRise Therapeutics**\$10,000.00****Family Support Programs at MoonRise Therapeutics**

MoonRise Therapeutics (MRT) is a farm-based nonprofit healing emotional and psychological trauma, and promoting mental health in the Upper Valley of Vermont. MRT brings together children and adults in need with skilled clinical professionals and a herd of well-loved horses. The practice of integrating horses into mental health work creates a uniquely effective setting for healing and growth.

As a member of Mt. Ascutney Hospital's Strengthening Families Workgroup, MRT requests funding to continue running Circle of Security Parenting trainings, Playgroups, and Family Days. These programs are designed to enhance caregivers' social connection, resulting in stronger, more secure attachments for children and families.

Mountain Communities Supporting Education - The Collaborative**\$10,000.00****The Collaborative's Refuse to Use Program**

TC's Refuse to Use (RTU) Program is a community & school based series of educational substance misuse & asset building events for scholars in grades 6-12. RTU is available to 8 schools & homeschoolers. Scholars learn about health risks associated with substance misuse & asset building skills like resilience, stigma reduction, & coping skills. Attend 5 lessons and scholars receive a season pass from local community recreation partners. This program addresses the physical, mental, & social well-being of young people by delivering vetted programs, cultivating community involvement & providing a season pass as a healthy alternative. This year by increasing programs and accessibility, our focus will create a community of preventionists.

New England Youth Theatre**\$10,000.00****NEYT's Mentorship Program**

The New England Youth Theatre (NEYT) is requesting a grant from the Vermont Children's Trust Foundation to launch our Mentorship Education program. Participants in this program will work with our team of staff and visiting artists to learn discipline-specific skills that are applied in support of our productions throughout the year. Through small group and one-on-one learning environments, young people in our Mentorship Program learn design competencies, team building, and leadership skills that plug into modules such as Costuming, Lighting, and Prop Construction. The young people who move through this program are offered more responsibilities in helping stage NEYT productions and educate their peers to apply the skills they have learned.

Outright Vermont**\$10,000.00**

Outright Vermont's QTBIPOC Group

Outright Vermont (ORVT) is seeking funding for the formal launch of a QTBIPOC youth group. QTBIPOC stands for Queer and Transgender Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. This group will be an intentional space, driven by youth and supported by QTBIPOC adult volunteers. The goal is to provide the opportunity to connect, build community, tackle challenges, harness joy, and simply be.

Paran Recreations**\$5,000.00**

Sustaining Camperships for Low Income Youth

Paran Recreations is dedicated to enhancing the health and well-being of rural children from low income families. Therefore our goal is to sustain the access of year-round outdoor and environmental education for our surrounding community focusing on youth populations by providing at least 25% of campers with a full funded scholarship to attend our camps throughout the year.

Partners In Adventure, Inc.**\$2,000.00**

Partners In Adventure, Inc.

Partners In Adventure (PIA) is a year-round program in its 23rd year of operation, supporting young people with disabilities and their friends, ages 7 and older. PIA provides an outlet for these young people to get together, have fun, learn, grow, and establish healthy habits. Due to COVID we have adjusted our programming to more opportunities outside. We piloted a "Music Therapy" program last summer and it was so well received we wanted to offer it again on a more consistent basis throughout the spring, summer, and fall. Our grant request would assist us in offsetting the fee for a certified music therapist, and to purchase a variety of simple playable instruments for participants to use over and over again.

River Arts of Morrisville, Inc**\$1,900.00**

River Arts of Morrisville, Inc

River Arts is a non-profit community arts center located in Morrisville, Vermont, with a mission of enriching and empowering the community through the arts. River Arts is requesting \$1,900 to purchase printmaking materials for our new classroom. These materials will enable us to offer more expressive opportunities for our youth through additional after school programming, kinderarts classes and our new youth healing arts programming. We believe that the artistic process is inherently therapeutic and educational, it presents opportunities for self-reflection and growth; it cultivates social emotional awareness, peer camaraderie and opportunities to become more empowered, resilient, and compassionate individuals.

River Gallery School of Art**\$10,000.00**

Art in School Partnerships Program

The Art in School Partnerships project will support community building and individual resilience for elementary school students through exploratory art making aligned with the school's values. This program is a partnership between River Gallery School of Art (RGS) and Brattleboro's Oak Grove elementary school to establish a partnership model that can be extended to other public elementary schools.

SafeArt, Inc. **\$10,000.00**

Youth Wellbeing Co-Creators

SafeArt's Youth Wellbeing Co-Creator program will provide an alternative learning environment for youth focused on supporting students' autonomy through active exploration of purpose, connection, and by creating space that fosters empowerment.

Sara Holbrook Community Center **\$5,000.00**

Youth Adventure Program

Founded in 1937 in Burlington, Sara Holbrook Community Center was created to support the needs of local children, youth, and families. We recognize the need for more high-quality, affordable youth experiences among the students and families we serve, so we are growing our Teen Center's Youth Adventure Program (YAP) program by 240% in program days and 226% in youth served by expanding this formerly 6-week summer program to be a year-round offering for youth 6th-12th grade. High-quality out-of-school programs enable family members to be employed, create a safe space for young people, allow academic support, limit high-risk behaviors and promote positive social-emotional and physical health all of which are essential for those we serve.

Sharon Academy **\$10,000.00**

Face-to-Face, Heart-to-Heart Speaker Series

The Sharon Academy will provide presentations and facilitated discussions on high-interest topics for youth, families, and community members. The primary goal of this project is to build community through connection, shared resources, and learning, and to provide education and support in optimizing the social and emotional development of our adolescents.

Shire Kids Corp **\$10,000.00**

Early Childhood Literacy in Southern Vermont

Shire Kids is spearheading the effort to increase early childhood literacy by expanding availability of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to all children from birth to five in Southern Vermont. The Imagination Library is a book-gifting program that mails a high-quality, age-appropriate book to enrolled children every month until the child's fifth birthday. By empowering young Vermonters with the earliest tools of literacy, books, we are establishing a lifelong love of reading a learning. After serving over 1,500 children Bennington County for the last two years, Shire Kids is expanding. On January 1st, 2020, Shire Kids began enrollment in nine additional towns in Windham and Windsor Counties and we plan to keep growing.

St. Albans Free Library **\$9,250.00**

First Fridays!

The St. Albans Free Library is a beloved institution here in the heart of St. Albans City. I am requesting grant funding through the Vermont Children's Trust Foundation for a once monthly Friday evening event at the St. Albans Free Library for high school students. In an effort to provide teens an outlet for some good safe fun that's also free, we'd love to offer our beautiful library space for a program called First Fridays. The goal of the program will be to offer a safe space where teens can come and be fed, socialize, participate in one of the evening's events, or just hang out. We plan to have food, drink, movies, and games at each program, (we have a movie room) and one special performer/event that will differ from month to month.

Stepping Stones Preschool**\$1,023.00****Stepping Stones Preschool**

Stepping Stones Preschool is a play-based early childhood education program serving children ages six weeks to five years old. An equipment grant from the Vermont Children's Trust Foundation will allow us to further encourage our youngest children's curiosity in science, discovery and sensory play using new light tables in both our preschool and infant/toddler classrooms. Our children will be able to explore colors, shapes, light exploration, early math and counting skills, color matching, design, and fine motor skills using colored light table tiles, letters, shapes, rocks and minerals and actual animal and human xrays!

Steps to End Domestic Violence**\$10,000.00****Children's Program Summer Camp**

Steps to End Domestic Violence Children's Summer Camp program is designed to support the childcare needs of parents who have experienced intimate partner violence by providing trauma-informed, engaging and educational summer programming for children who have been exposed to intimate partner violence. Our Youth Advocates will host 4-6 hours of out-of-school time summer activities each week day to provide children with a safe space to be kids and parents with time for work, meetings, or respite.

Sunrise Family Resource Center**\$950.00****Sunrise Family Resource Center**

Sunrise Family Resource Center has been "Strengthening Families" in our community for over 50 years and is Bennington County's only Parent Child Center. We recently opened a food Pantry for program participants to access free fresh, frozen, and nonperishable food items, clothing/shoes, toiletries, menstrual products, diapers/wipes, baby formula, household goods, and children's toys/books. The equipment we are requesting will allow us to expand our fresh/frozen food offerings, by doubling our refrigeration/freezer space in our Pantry. Since opening our Pantry in May 2021, our Pantry has been accessed over 260 times. Over the 2021 year, we worked with over 2,200 children, who have access to our Pantry.

University of Vermont Extension 4-H**\$10,000.00****PROSPER at Derby School**

PROSPER is an evidence based partnership model that facilitates the delivery of two evidence based programs that build strong families and help youth avoid risky behaviors. UVM Extension, Derby School, North Country Middle School and community partners will come together to implement strategies and programs that support needs identified in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey data by building protective factors through a strengths based approach. We will continue building the project that was disrupted by COVID. This site adds to others in the NEK implementing the PROSPER model supporting youth and families in having the skills they need to thrive.

Vermont Family Network**\$10,000.00**

Vermont Family Network's Puppets in Education's Kindness & Stress puppet programs and workshop

The sand has been shifting under our feet since March of 2020. This has been especially challenging for children. For 40 years Vermont Family Network's Puppets in Education (PiE) has connected with children through powerful puppet programs that address social and emotional issues.

During the pandemic, PiE adapted two topics most needed by students to virtual format: Kindness/Bullying and Worry/Anxiety. Schools now need a third option: one that addresses mental health and anti-bullying TOGETHER.

Schools and teachers report that children are so stressed that they are lashing out at fellow students, faculty and family. This new program will unite being an "upstander" with recognizing one's own stress and how to calm oneself.

Very Merry Theatre**\$2,000.00**

Very Merry Theatre

Very Merry Theatre is requesting funding for sound enhancement equipment to amplify the voices of our youth participants. Specifically, we are seeking funding to replace 3 portable microphone packs. The microphone packs make our performances more accessible and improve sound quality. This is particularly important because many of our performers have little voices and need extra assistance in projection as they gain more confidence on stage. During the pandemic we have experienced significant wear on our existing equipment due to increased use across participants, partially due to covid masking. Mics are expensive and we need to replace several that no longer work. Enhanced sound quality improves the theatrical experience for all involved!

Warren Public Library**\$1,365.00**

Warren Public Library children's programs

At the Warren Public Library, we work to build a strong and resilient community by fostering connections among families. Our storytimes, toddler-preschool playgroups, and baby groups offer activities for our youngest community members while allowing parents and caregivers to connect with one another. Previously, we had toys but could not offer a space for developmentally appropriate active play. This grant allows us to create a portable indoor play area for gross motor movement and sensory exploration during our children's programs.

These programs are free and open to all, filling a pressing community need not only for connecting families but also for providing free indoor play spaces.

We R H.O.P.E.**\$7,500.00**

2022 Upper Valley Youth Wellness Retreat

We R H.O.P.E. is requesting grant funding for its 2022 Upper Valley Youth Wellness Retreat which allows 75 kids to learn about their mental health, learn coping mechanisms, and create strong vulnerable connections with their peers. The Upper Valley Youth Wellness Retreat is an affordable camp that provides life-changing mental health support to kids who in many cases would not be able to receive mental health support without the retreat. Our Wellness Retreat is offered to low and moderate-income families for just \$25 per day because We R H.O.P.E. understands how crucial it is to be able to provide affordable and accessible mental health support to all those that need it. We are so thankful to help the children within our community.

Youth Services, Inc**\$10,000.00****Friends For Change**

Friends For Change is a grassroots community program built for and by youth in June of 2016. In partnership with our local substance abuse prevention coalition, we've built a program that specifically addresses the unique needs of our often overlooked community members. Our entire program is rooted in identifying and responding to the needs of marginalized and most impacted youth and families. In partnership with Greater Falls Connections (our area prevention coalition) we provide after-school and summer programming where youth and their families thrive and learn how to build a stronger community.