



Celebrating 20 Years!

Our vision is that children, youth, young adults and families experiencing or at risk to experience social, emotional or behavioral challenges are:

- Connected to Peers for support
- Receive practical information
- Have access to and get the resources they need and want
- Are valued and seen as resources in their community

Celebrate Children's Mental Health Week

Wear your green ribbon!

May 2nd - May 8th, 2010

Did you know?

-According to the US Surgeon General, up to 20% of children in this country will be diagnosed with a mental illness or addictive related disorder. In Vermont, that translates to over 28,000 young people diagnosed with a disorder that affects their daily lives.

-70% of youth involved in state and local juvenile justice systems have serious mental illness.

-50% of students with mental illness age 14 and older drop out of high school - the highest rate of any disability group.

A Vermont Story

Elizabeth is a young lady of 16. She loves to cook and..... She is also mentally ill. The mental illness impacts her whole life. The issues that brought her and her mother to the Vermont Federation of Families for Children's mental Health (VFF) were educational. She had become so anxious about and during school that she was no longer able to attend. The school tried to put tutoring in place, but this was not successful either. This family needed a different look at the issues they struggled with, and some assistance to move forward. A VFF staff person who is a parent assisted the mother while a VFF Young Adult Coordinator assisted the young lady to participate.

After a consultation with Elizabeth and her mom, the first step was to do a MAPS (Make action plan) with Elizabeth and her family to identify Elizabeth's strengths, her and her family's hopes and dreams, needs and fears. From this process they called together an ACT 264 Coordinated Services meeting. At this meeting the information gathered through the MAPS process and many other sources were put together to come up with a plan that could address Elizabeth's educational needs and those of her family, home and community life. The plan also contained a strong transition plan, as she will soon be moving into her adult life.

The educational road that made the most sense was for Elizabeth to become part of the ACT 117 process which assists youth either dropped out of school or at risk of to come up with an alternate plan to complete high school. The alternative plan consisted of high school attendance for those classes she could be successful in, tech school with assistance to train for a culinary job, with ongoing support as needed from VFF staff. Once the educational piece was in place and working, the other issues of home, community, treatment were addressed.