

THE VERMONT YOUTH PROJECT

COMMUNITY LEAD TOOLKIT



VYP
VERMONT YOUTH PROJECT

Imagine a community where...



**Every youth has access to
engaging spaces and activities**

**Feels connected and a sense
of belonging**



**Is heard and feels their
voice matters**



Is your community ready?

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**Information for full
implementation
communities!**

What is the Vermont Youth Project?

The Vermont Youth Project (VYP) is a statewide initiative supporting communities with creating a built environment that embraces positive youth development. As the state developer and manager of VYP, Vermont Afterschool helps participating communities with establishing local coalitions centered around positive youth development, creating localized plans to address risk and protective factors of youth, supporting youth voice and engagement, and building cross-sector partnerships and collaboration. Communities that participate in VYP commit to empowering youth and creating healthy accessible spaces for youth to be themselves, engage with peers, learn new skills, and connect with caring adults.

The Vermont Youth Project takes inspiration from Finland's efforts on youth voice as well as the Planet Youth data tool and the Icelandic Model of Prevention. However, ultimately this is a Vermont model designed to support the great efforts already happening in your community. Communities participating in this project have a support system that helps with amplifying, connecting, and refocusing the great programming and efforts already happening in your community as well as identifying new opportunities to provide healthy environments for youth.

Participating communities will each have specific and localized plans that start with access to real-time key data findings so they know what's going on with their youth right now. With these findings, the communities implement local strategies with support and facilitation from VYP staff and consultants.



Why VYP Works



Aims to make Vermont communities the healthiest place for youth to grow up

We make Vermonters here. If you grow up in Vermont, you can be ready for anything. VYP aims to create an environment in every community where youth have opportunities and spaces to have a voice, belong, explore hobbies and passions, connect with peers and caring adults, and be themselves.



Emphasis on positive youth development

Positive youth development emphasizes building on youth's strengths, creating opportunities to help youth achieve goals, fosters healthy relationships, and promotes protective factors.



Focus on the "causes of the causes"

VYP focuses upstream by exploring the societal and environmental factors ("causes of the causes") that lead to risk and protective factors that influence the behaviors of youth. With this information, communities are able to create strategies that support increasing protective factors in youth through healthy built environments.



Evidence-based

VYP includes evidence-based efforts into the framework of its Vermont approach to positive youth development; including Iceland's data tool, Finland's youth voice efforts, and initiatives already working well in Vermont. Please see page 7 for more information on the evidence-based tools, initiatives, and philosophies included in VYP.



Data driven

At the foundation of VYP are the annual key data findings. VYP collaborates with Iceland's prevention efforts and uses their Planet Youth data tool to support communities in positive youth development. In communities implementing the model at the fullest level, local youth take a survey in the fall and communities receive the key data findings 8 weeks later so they know what's going on with their youth right now.

VYP Talking Points



What is Vermont Youth Project?

The Vermont Youth Project (VYP) is a statewide initiative supporting communities with creating a built environment that embraces positive youth development. Vermont Afterschool helps participating communities with establishing local coalitions centered around positive youth development, creating localized plans to address risk and protective factors of youth, support youth voice and engagement, and building cross-sector partnerships and collaboration. Communities that participate in the VYP commit to empowering youth and creating healthy accessible spaces for youth to be themselves, engage with peers, learn new skills, and connect with caring adults.



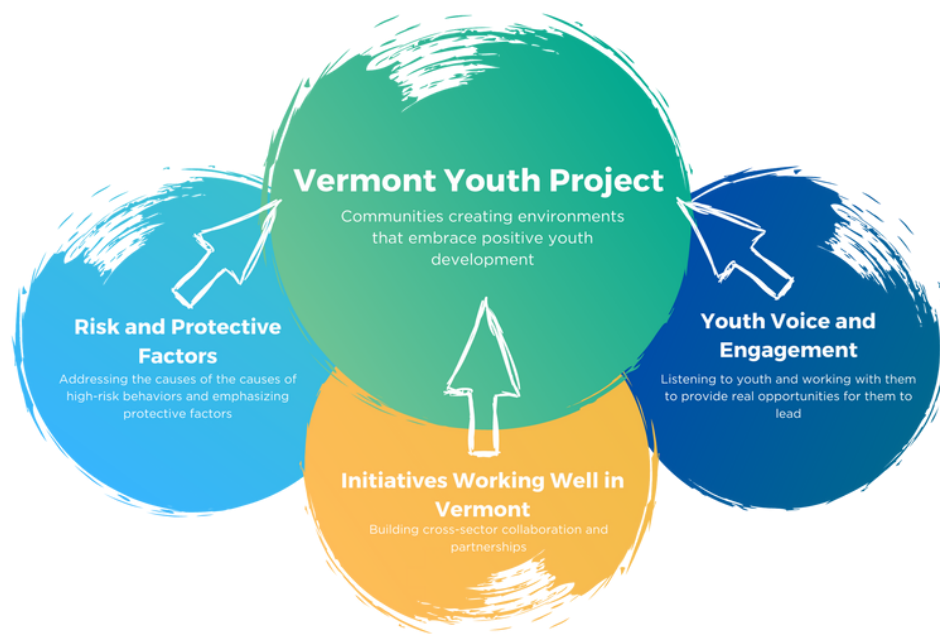
Who manages VYP?

The Vermont Youth Project is managed by Vermont Afterschool, a nonprofit dedicated to ensuring that children and youth in every Vermont community have access to high-quality out-of-school time programs.



Is this the Iceland Model of Prevention?

No, but VYP uses elements from both the Iceland Prevention Model and the Finnish youth work philosophy. The backbone of VYP is the data that is based on Planet Youth's efforts in Iceland (and worldwide) which encourages parents and communities to be engaged around positive youth development. VYP also takes inspiration from Finland's efforts on youth voice as a way to make this a truly unique "Vermont model" that focuses on boosting protective factors on the local level versus an exclusive drug and alcohol prevention tool.



VYP Talking Points

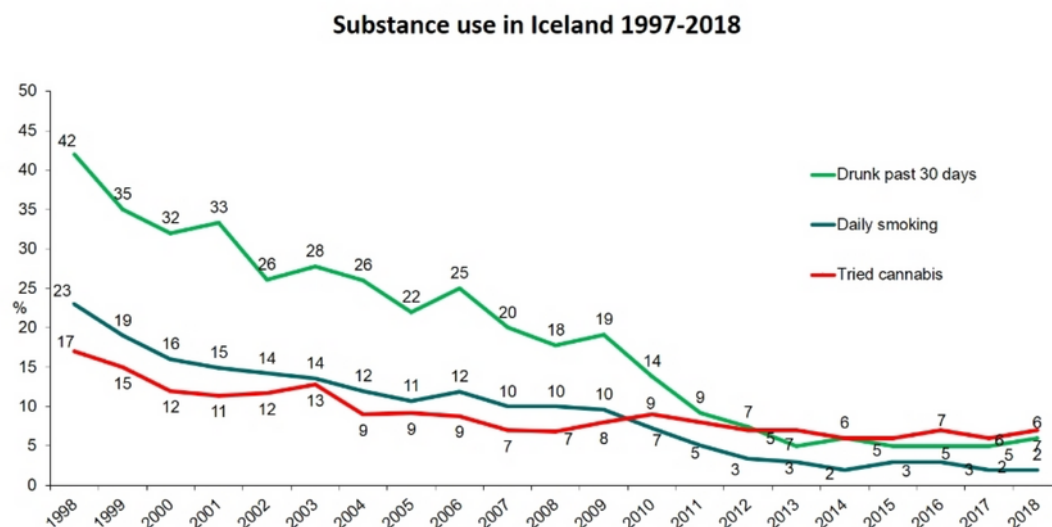


What is Planet Youth in Iceland?

In 1998, Iceland had a crisis on its hands. 42% of 10th grade students were drunk in the past 30 days, 23% were daily smokers and 17% had tried cannabis. “We had the worst youth in the world,” states Jon Sigfusson, Director of ICSRA. Through coordinated community efforts, the country dramatically reduced youth substance abuse rates, rates of bullying and youth theft, and has created a community of connectedness among its citizens.

Iceland researchers have worked with 30 countries to implement this effective prevention framework with great success. Over 900,000 youth surveys have been administered worldwide. Vermont was the first state in the nation to sign on with Planet Youth and uses their data tool at the foundation of Vermont Youth Project.

Positive development over 20 years (10th grade students)



What is Finland's philosophy on youth?

Finland believes that being a young person is a special time in a person's life and encourages youth to find their voice, be engaged citizens, explore hobbies and interests, and connect with peers and caring adults. Youth Work is a trained profession in Finland and youth workers frequently interact with young people to provide support and resources as they grow up.

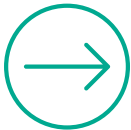
Finland believes that every youth should have a hobby and local youth centers in every neighborhood encourage creativity and exploration. Additionally, youth voice is encouraged and youth have a voice in laws and decisions that impact them in the government. Youth councils are mandated by law in Finland and provide a space for youth to use their voice on issues that impact them.

VYP Talking Points



Why is this being implemented?

The ultimate goal is communities creating healthy built environments that support positive youth development through cross-sector collaboration and partnerships. Above all, we know that young people make a better Vermont and we want Vermont to be the best place for a young person to grow up.



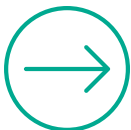
How can communities participate?

VYP recognizes that every community is in their own stage of readiness to build an environment that supports positive youth development. There are a variety of ways to participate in Vermont Youth Project as a community and an individual. VYP is ready to support you and your community at every step. Please visit the website to learn how to take action. www.vermontafterschool.org/vyp/



What is the survey in VYP for full implementation communities?

The Vermont Youth Project uses the Planet Youth data tool, designed by researchers at the Icelandic Center for Social Research and Analysis, to survey middle and high school youth in the participating communities on risk and protective factors around family, school, peer groups, and out-of-school time activities in addition to perceptions of substance use. The data is extremely important as the key findings drive the localized plans and strategies, as well as allow the local teams to revisit the data and track progress every year.

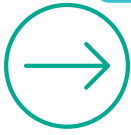


How is this different than the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)?

The YRBS and Planet Youth survey have different purposes but complement each other. The YRBS is used as a surveillance tool to track trends over time. The Planet Youth survey is designed to support local decision making by giving communities information on what is happening right now with their youth. The data from the Planet Youth survey is available in real-time (around eight weeks).



VYP Talking Points



What are protective factors?



What have we learned about Vermont Youth from the data so far?

Substance Use: Rates among youth in grades 7 through 12 are relatively high, particularly cannabis and alcohol use

Parent and Family Engagement: While there is significant monitoring on an individual level, there is limited collaboration and communication between parents in the community

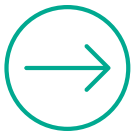
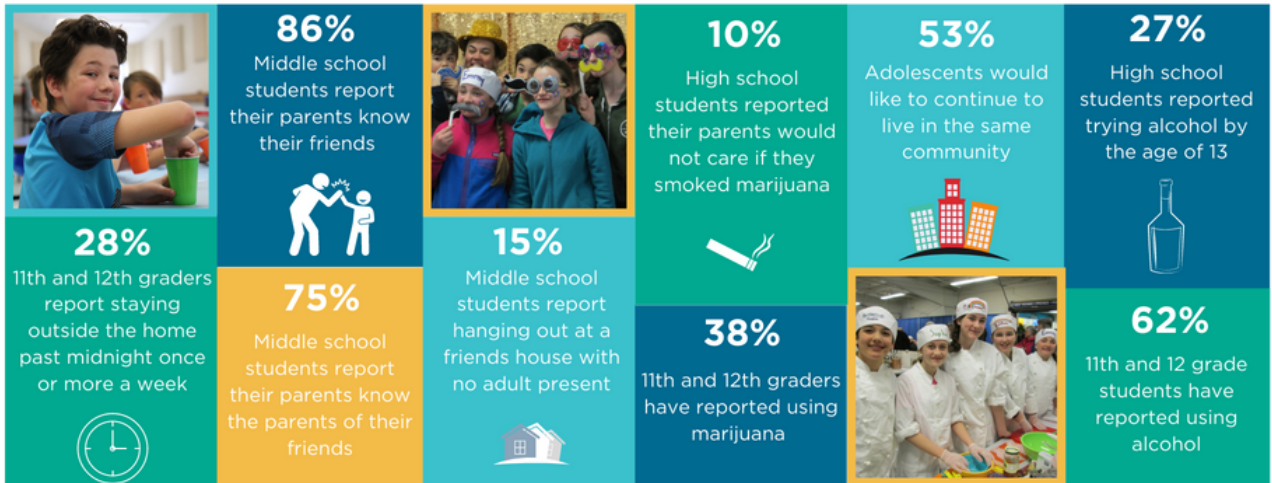
Youth Perceptions: There is a culture of acceptance, particularly around alcohol and cannabis

Third Space Activities: There is significant unorganized free time (e.g. late outside hours) and limited participation in structured activities in out of school time

VYP Talking Points

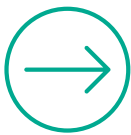


What are youth saying?



Where can I learn more?

Please visit the Vermont Youth Project website:
<http://www.vermontafterschool.org/vyp/>



Who can I contact for more information?

Contact info@vermontafterschool.org



How Communities can Participate in VYP

Capacity Building Communities

VYP Step 1:

Read the VYP Community and Prevention Guidebooks.

VYP Step 2:

Work with the VYP state team to form a local coalition focused on positive youth development and designate a community lead.

VYP Step 3:

Bring VYP workshops to your community.

VYP Step 4:

Begin to develop local strategies based on the key findings from the statewide data.



Full Implementation Communities

VYP Step 5:

Sign the 5 year MOA with VTA to receive wrap around support for positive youth development and real-time key data findings from the Planet Youth Survey. Please take our readiness assessment for a first step in participating in this stage of VYP: <https://bit.ly/readyforVYP>

VYP Step 6:

Continue the ongoing and deep level work to create systemic change. VYP is a continuous process and communities should work to look at youth data annually and adjust strategies. In step 6, communities have committed to positive youth development and have created the groundwork to continue this work beyond the 5 year MOA signed in Step 5.

How Vermont Afterschool Supports VYP Communities

Localized Plans

Regular Check Ins with VYP state team

Opportunities to connect with other VYP leads through trainings and sharing meetings

Access to real time key data findings (either local and state) and progress tracking

Facilitation: Coalition meetings, community meetings, and community workshops

Community Toolkit

Media and Promotion: VYP website, media releases for each community, and featured community stories

Applying for state and national funding to support the local work

Community Lead Role



Serving as the local point person for the participating community which includes overseeing local implementation, developing a strong understanding of VYP, getting all partners on board, and signing the MOA with Vermont Afterschool



Committing to monthly meetings with the VYP state lead, sharing regular communications, and including the state lead in local coalition meetings communications and meeting minutes



Together with the state lead, encouraging cross-sector collaboration on your local coalition supporting positive youth development. This coalition should meet 4-10 times per year and the state lead should be included (meeting facilitation support is available)



Attending VYP trainings offered by Vermont Afterschool and encourage the local coalition and greater community to attend select trainings as well



Distributing information and materials provided by the statewide VYP team. Informing the statewide team with appropriate notice if there are documents or information needed in your community (2 weeks is ideal)



Seeking and applying for local/regional funding for your community implementation. We also ask that communities don't apply for state or national funding. In order to avoid VYP communities competing against one another, we support this at the state level.



*Full implementation communities only: Together with school partners, ensuring implementation of school survey with an 80%+ participation rate

Please note:

- Our international partners have asked that community leads and community members do not reach out directly to them and instead direct any inquiries through the state lead. The state lead is the point of contact for our international partners.
- Additionally, please contact the state lead if you are thinking about presenting nationally about VYP (and let us know if there's an opportunity you want to pursue)

State Lead Role

The Vermont Youth Project state lead supports community leads by:



Serving as the main point of contact and support for community leads and serving as the main point of contact for international partners



Checking in monthly with each lead to create action items, troubleshoot, and create/update localized plans



Facilitation at local coalition meetings, community meetings, and community workshops



Developing trainings and workshops for leads, leadership teams, and communities



Overseeing the statewide implementation of VYP including developing the framework, toolkits, and materials for VYP



Onboarding interested communities and supporting them through all stages of VYP



Seeking and applying for state and national funding to support VYP communities

Contact Information:
info@vermontafterschool.org
Office: (802) 448-3464

Participating Community Agreement

Communities that sign on to VYP agree to the following:

Collaborate with and include the state team in the local work

Uphold project fidelity

Focus on the community that committed to signing on to VYP

Use the data key findings to support the work and recognize that is one piece of the greater project

Work with state team to create localized plans in the community

Keep efforts local

Trust the process - this is a 5+ year commitment and the state team will provide wrap-around support

Full implementation communities only: Agree to sign on to 5 year MOA and implement the Planet Youth survey on an annual basis to all middle and high school youth.

VYP Local Coalitions

VYP coalitions focus on positive youth development and support the community lead in driving VYP work forward locally. Meetings should be held a minimum of 4 times a year. Coalitions should have a good understanding of Vermont Youth Project and carry out the work with fidelity to the project.

Coalition Purpose

Encourage cross-sector collaboration and create an inclusive space to work on positive youth development and primary prevention.

Build a coalition and community understanding of Vermont Youth Project and positive youth development.

Develop community goals and strategies to support the key data findings. Re-evaluate the community work annually.

Support the lead and community by developing and carrying out action items to help drive VYP work forward.

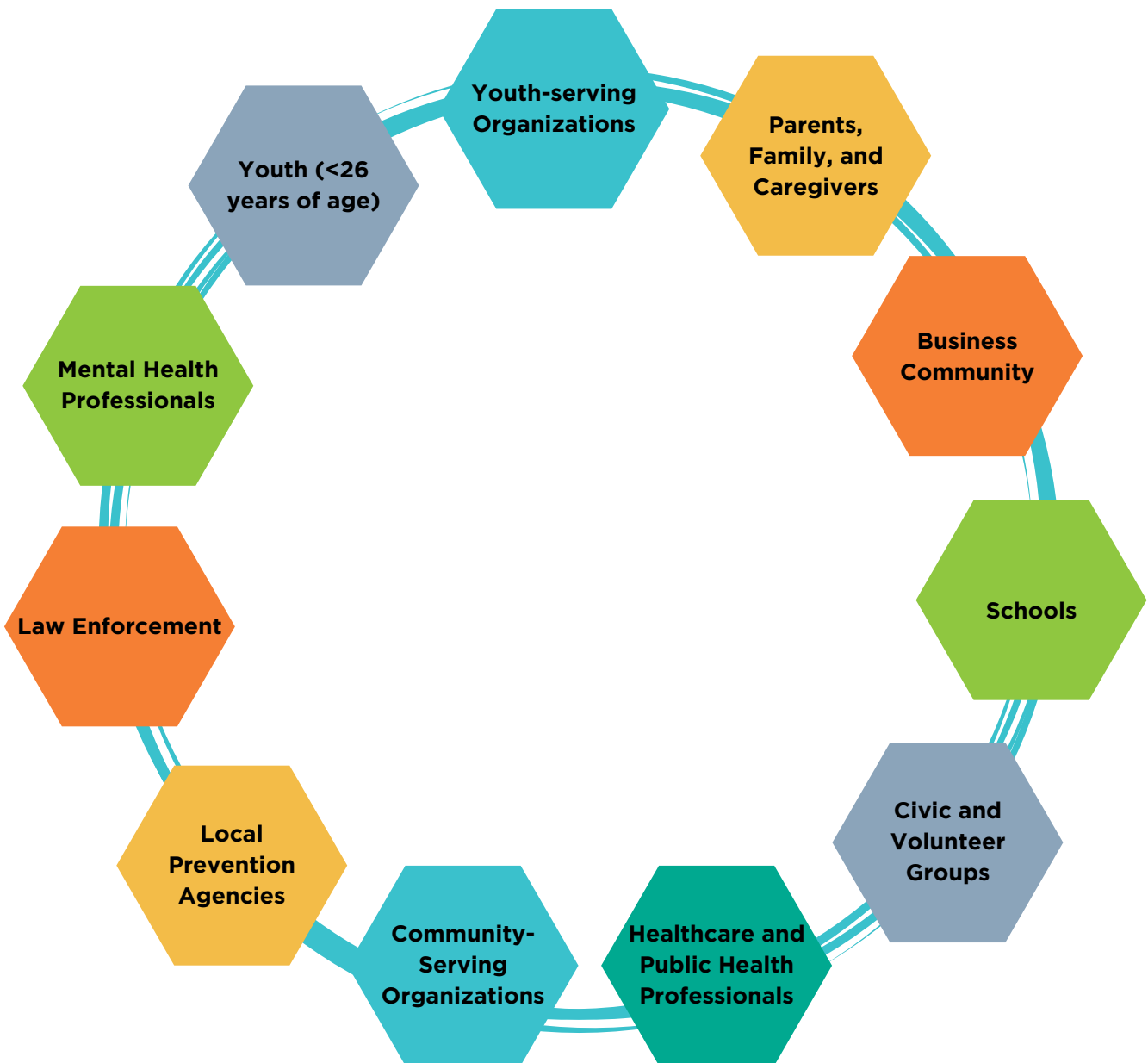
Inform the community about local and statewide VYP work regularly.



VYP Local Coalitions

Who is at the table?

A strong coalition includes many sectors and creates an inclusive space to support positive youth development. Coalition members should live and/or work in the VYP community. Consider who is on your coalition and who may be missing from the table in your local community. Not every community is the same and coalitions won't look the same. That being said, coalitions should be inclusive and support cross-sector collaboration.



VYP Local Coalitions

Building Strong Coalitions

To build a strong local coalition, it's important to consider the following:

Know who is at your table and why

What is their motivation for being there? What do they want their role to be in this work? What are their passions and skillsets?

Set expectations

Make sure everyone knows the coalition purpose and their role. Assign or rotate meeting roles (taking notes, time keeper, facilitator, etc) each meeting. Make sure everyone has an understanding of VYP and agrees to support project fidelity.

End meetings with action items

Everyone should leave knowing their tasks to complete and deadlines. A community lead needs to be able to delegate work to their coalition.

Include the VYP state lead

The VYP state lead can support with meeting facilitation, building an understanding of the Vermont Youth Project, creating action items, and/or provide updates. Make sure the VYP state lead is included in coalition meeting invites, minutes, and communications.

Take your time

Vermont Youth Project is a long-term commitment. It's okay to dream big and have long term goals. At the same time we ask that you trust the process and focus efforts on the year you're in to ensure the lead and coalition do not burn out. We promise that each year builds off the other and you will reach those long-term goals.

Regularly reflect

Reflect on who's at the table, outcomes, goals, and the key data findings.

Keep it local

We ask that you focus efforts on the community that signed the MOA. This is a local effort built from the ground up. If you have neighboring communities that share school data, we can support them through the VYP steps and creating their own coalition and community goals.

Community Workshops

It's important to roll-out data and engage the community shortly after receiving the key data findings for the year. The VYP state team with the local leads will offer the following in each community:



Community Meetings

For communities still building an understanding of VYP, we can offer a workshop about the project and key data findings.



Community Workshops on Key Findings

These workshops are centered around the key findings and support community awareness, support, and goals.

1

Parent Collaboration and Co-Communication

2

Substance Misuse and Perception of Harm

3

Youth and the Third Space



Additional Workshop Offerings

1

Youth Mental Health First Aid

2

Youth Resilience and Wellness

3

And more! We offer a wide variety of trainings and will keep leads informed of upcoming offerings.

Community Engagement

Engaging the community in VYP will take time. Here are some tips to building engagement in VYP communities.

Use the data. Showing the community the risk factors of youth in the community can be a motivator in community engagement.

Who asks tends to be as important as how they ask for community participation. Those in your community with great influence may be the best people to ask the community to attend meetings.

Advertise through multiple channels and multiple times. For example: School all calls, multiple social media groups like PTA/PTO, local TV/Radio/News spots, and messaging via political and/or faith networks.

Eliminate barriers to attendance by providing transportation, child care, and food when possible.

Prioritize key decision-makers and influencers (quality over quantity). If the group is small, but full of people who can magnify the message or marshal resources, that is a fine way to begin. The group tends to grow over time, but it grows faster when influential people are exposed to the process early on.

Being willing to have multiple meetings that reaches groups where they already are. For example: Meet with teachers right after school, faith community members after church, or PTA/PTA members either at a regularly scheduled meeting or afterward. There is nothing wrong with going to where people are in multiple locations.

People need to see action quickly after the first round of meetings (even if it's just messaging using the people/channels described above). Immediate feedback and calls for participation make a big difference in establishing momentum that can be carried into future community work.

Youth Engagement



We aim to have Vermont communities be the healthiest places for youth to live and grow up. Vermont Youth Project supports communities around positive youth development and is built upon the understanding that youth have the right to be active, engaged, connected, and heard. Data from youth surveys allows communities to understand the risk and protective factors of their youth right now. Incorporating youth voice into this work is essential. See below for how to incorporate youth voice in your community.

Communities participating in VYP are invited to work toward these indicators on youth voice and engagement



Learn the 9-26 Coalition's Talking Points (see page 22 or visit www.vermontafterschool.org)



Adopt the Youth Declaration of Rights (see page 23 or visit www.vermontafterschool.org)



Welcoming, inclusive, and accessible spaces in the community for all youth



Funding by the community in support of youth-led initiatives



Create inclusive spaces for youth on local coalitions and boards and provide the opportunity for youth voice



Establish and support a VYP Youth Council (please see page 24)



Take Action! You have local key data findings directly from youth. Show them you're listening by taking action as a community and creating healthy spaces for youth to thrive.

VT 9TO26 Coalition Talking Points

VT9TO26 COALITION

We make Vermonters here.

- If you grow up in Vermont, you can be ready for anything.
- Our young people will make Vermont better if we listen to and respect their voices.

Young people make a better Vermont.

- We value youth as they are. Just by being young people living here, they enrich our community.
- We can celebrate our young people being young and recognize the value of youth in our community.
- Young people are problem-solvers who are eager to be engaged.
- We have a collective responsibility to ensure that all young Vermonters are safe, healthy, supported, educated, and engaged.

Youth want and need what we all want and need.

- Vermont youth know what they need. We should listen to them and work with them to provide real opportunities for them to lead.
- We have the Youth Declaration of Rights as a starting point. Vermont youth have told us what they need in this document.
- Young and old alike want to be successful and want and need to be loved and appreciated for who they are.
- Young and old alike need community connection, opportunities to learn, and access to recreation and other activities.
- Vermont youth have a right to explore interests, connect with each other and build skills, and these opportunities should exist throughout our community.

The “third space” is where youth live, work, and play.

- The third space for youth is everywhere that is not home and not school.
- Young people spend lots of time outside of their homes and outside of school. This “third space” is an important place for them to get what they need as they grow up.
- As we go about our lives, we can welcome youth as part of our communities and provide opportunities for them to learn new skills and to have opportunities to play, relax and be young.

We can work with youth to provide many opportunities for young people to be young and to grow into healthy and happy Vermonters.



Funded in part by: The Vermont Community Foundation, the C.S. Mott Foundation, and the Vermont Department of Health

For more information, contact Holly Morehouse at Vermont Afterschool:
hollymorehouse@vermontafterschool.org

Youth Declaration of Rights

YOUTH DECLARATION OF RIGHTS

VERMONT YOUTH HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

EDUCATION

- Access free classes on Basic Life Skills (signing a lease, budgeting, taxes, resumes, etc.)
- Equal opportunities and experiences in arts education before, during, and after school
- A post-secondary education no matter their financial situation
- A student-directed, safe space for afterschool support and community engagement free of charge
- Time outdoors during the school (or work) day

EQUALITY & JUSTICE

- Explore their identities in a safe environment
- Education on gun safety and to live in a gun-aware community that is educated and aware of proper gun usage
- Have their voices heard in legal decisions that affect everyone
- Be protected in all of their life circumstances, be able to have their own privacy in their environments, and to have a private profile
- Education on anything concerning self-defense

HOBBIES & ENTERTAINMENT

- Free WIFI in or out of school or work for educational purposes
- Access free entertainment and opportunities to try a variety of activities
- Important people in their lives who spend time with them, and who teach them to do things safely (mentors)
- Live with and be supported by caring adults
- Provide input to the state when rules and regulations are developed that affect youth

HOME & SHELTER

- Access an affordable shelter with heating and electricity
- A safe place with a caring family and a bed
- Access clean, weather-appropriate clothing
- To be protected from abuse of all kinds

MENTAL HEALTH

- Have access to affordable mental health care
- A personal break to handle their mental situation
- Choose their own identity, whether that be sexual orientation, religious identification, and/or gender identification
- Have people in society who support their mental well-being

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- A healthy environment that provides the basic necessities to all life
- Know about the environment, and what is being done to it
- Have a say about what happens to the environment
- Safe recreation in the outdoors and in their communities

PHYSICAL HEALTH

- Hygienic products, clothing, and utilities suitable for all climates and environments
- Have access to outdoor recreational and natural spaces (e.g., parks, fields, courts, lakes, pitches, trails, paths, etc.)
- Safe and affordable health care that covers medical treatment, preventative care, reproductive health, vaccines, and intervention in the name of physical safety
- Have sports and recreational resources for the purposes of promoting physical health and activity
- Access to sustainable sources of clean water and food (fresh and healthy)--enough for at least two meals a day

SOCIAL SUPPORTS & CONNECTIONS

- Express themselves through feelings, speech, clothing, actions, creativity, and more
- Have support and education from friends, family, and community
- Have access to healthy food and water
- Connect to each other through technology and transportation
- Be respected and heard
- Be engaged in community
- A respected voice in making decisions that affect how they live

WORK & TRANSPORTATION

- Choose a safe and healthy job, while making a fair wage
- Accessible, reliable, and affordable transportation regardless of economic circumstances

This text was created by youth ages 9-22 who attended the Vermont Youth Rights Summit on October 5, 2017. It is 100% their own words and phrasing, and is an evolving document that aims to capture what matters to youth across Vermont.

VYP Youth Councils



Every VYP community is invited to have a youth council to engage youth and support youth voice in the VYP process. Youth will have the opportunity to develop skills, have a voice in community change, and go through a participatory budget process.



For the year 2020-2021, Vermont Afterschool will provide each full implementation community going into year 2 \$5000 for the youth to decide their priorities in the community. \$3000 of this will support ideas relating to the key data findings and \$2000 of this will support accessible third space opportunities.



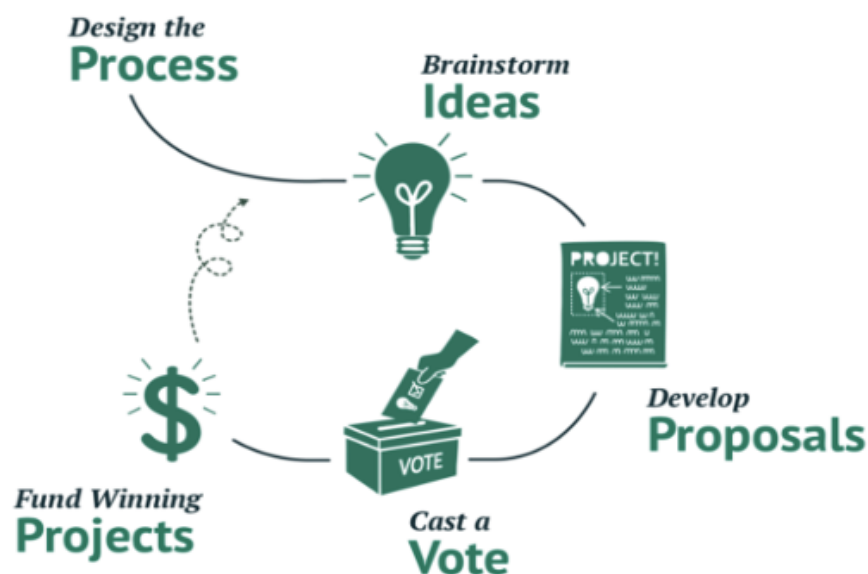
The youth council lead should not be the VYP community lead. It's important to find a lead that can designate time and focus efforts on the youth. It's also important to note, that this initiative should be supported by a caring adult, but encouraged to be youth-led.



Similar to the local VYP coalition, youth councils should be inclusive and ensure all youth who have an interest can participate.



For more information on our work with youth, please visit: <http://www.vermontafterschool.org> or contact the VYP state lead.



Parent and Caregiver Engagement

What is parent collaboration and co-communication?

Parents in a community working together to create parenting norms

Parents in a community building safe spaces for youth

Connection and support for parents

Why is this important?

When parents work together, they can create safe and healthy environments in their community for youth and adults. This fosters connection and support among parents in the community.

Example strategies supporting parent collaboration



Developing parenting norms in the community and parents creating a parent pledge. The state team will support this through our parent collaboration workshop.



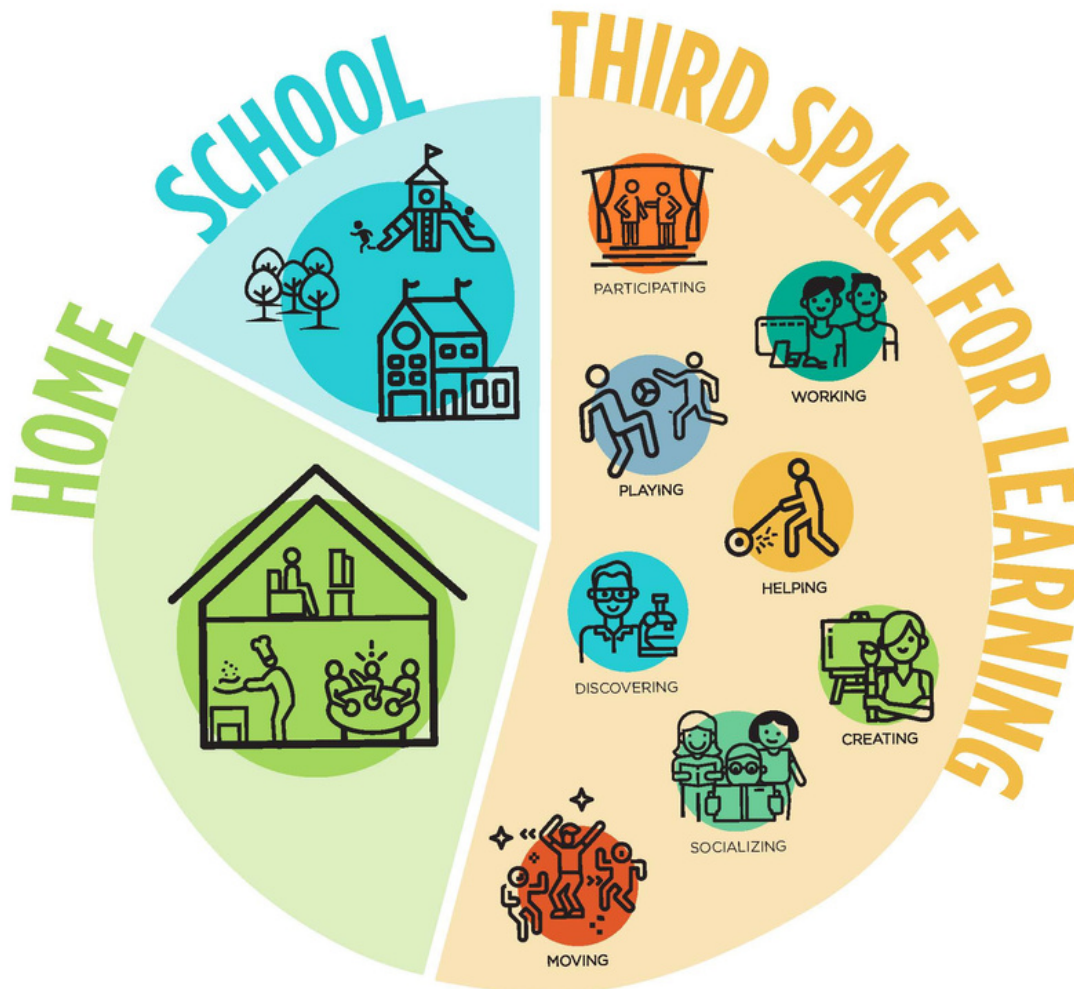
Targeted communications to parents with positive messaging



Local parent groups: Have parents sign up to join a local parent group here: <https://bit.ly/vypparents>

What is the Third Space

The “third space for learning” is anytime that children and youth spend outside of the home or school—i.e. when they are at afterschool programs, summer camps, rec programs, youth centers, extracurricular activities, service learning projects, etc. Young people spend lots of time outside of their homes and outside of school. This third space is an important place for them to get what they need as they grow up. As we go about our lives, we can welcome youth as part of our communities and provide opportunities for them to learn new skills and to have opportunities to play, learn, relax, explore, and be young.



How VYP Supports Third Space

Sports Coach and Third Space Leader trainings including Youth Mental Health First Aid and Youth Resilience

Funding for VYP youth councils to create accessible third space opportunities




Sports coach guidebook and coaching pledge

Supporting local VYP coalitions in community asset profiling



Is Your Community Ready For Even More?

If your community is looking to dive deeper and become a full implementation site please complete the following to ensure readiness:

-  1. Complete first 4 steps of VYP
-  2. Designate community lead
-  3. Take our readiness assessment:
<https://bit.ly/readyforVYP>
-  4. Schools (7th-12th grade) on board to administer annual youth survey
-  5. Establish community coalition focusing on positive youth development
-  6. Understand Vermont Youth Project and community-level indicators
-  7. Sign MOU with Vermont Afterschool
-  8. Secure funding for project and send to Vermont Afterschool

Community-Level Indicators: Full Implementation Year 1



Strong designated community lead, signed MOA and payment sent to VTA, lead and coalition understanding of Vermont Youth Project



Conduct Youth Survey with at least an 80% participation rate



Built a strong local VYP coalition focused on positive youth development that supports cross-sector collaboration



Attend at least 2 statewide leadership events: Survey and Data Training (attendance 2-5 per community) and Community Workshop (10 per community)



3 Community meetings with state lead to introduce key data findings locally



Coalition meets at least 4 times to discuss goals , strategies, and action items under the key findings with statewide lead attending at least 3 meetings

YEAR 1 GOAL: Increased community engagement, strong coalitions, understanding of Vermont Youth Project

Community-Level Indicators: Full implementation Years 2 + 3

- ✓ Conduct annual youth survey October 1 - October 15 with at least an 80% participation rate
- ✓ Attend at least 2 statewide leadership events (leads and coalitions)
- ✓ Promote 3 VYP strategy workshops with the attendance goal of 10-20 people from each community (these workshops will be facilitated by the VYP state team with support from local lead)
- ✓ Establish a local parent group of at least 20-30 parents to support VYP initiatives. Parents/caregivers can sign up to be involved in a parent group here: <https://bit.ly/vypparents>
- ✓ Establish a youth council and participatory budgeting process
- ✓ VYP local coalition meets 4-10 times with statewide lead attending at least 3 meetings
- ✓ Continue to build strong local VYP coalition on positive youth development
- ✓ Accessible third space efforts including: Supporting the VYP state team in training sports coaches and third space leaders in positive youth development, the youth council on creating new accessible third space activities, and promoting the sports coach guidebook

YEAR 2 and 3 GOALS: Increase Parent Co-Collaboration, Youth Councils, Leadership trainings, Community workshops, Third Space Opportunities

Covid-19 Survey Information

Survey implementation may look different for the 2020-2021 school year due to Covid-19 and alternative school schedules. The VYP state team at Vermont Afterschool is working closely with Planet Youth to support communities in moving forward with the survey in ways that make most sense for their schools.

In Person Implementation:

Please see the following pages below about survey implementation. Please let us know if you need extended time to offer the survey, additional support or materials from Vermont Afterschool, or need to change plans and switch to remote.

Remote Implementation:

If you are planning to offer the survey remotely, please let the VYP statewide team know and we will provide additional information on how to implement the survey in remote settings.

Please note, the survey may be reduced in length if remote implementation is selected.

Opt-Out:

We encourage all communities to continue with surveying this year because it will provide unique real-time data on youth health. This being said, communities and schools may choose to opt-out if they do not feel they can implement the survey this year. We ask that you connect with the VYP state team at Vermont Afterschool to discuss options regarding the survey before making a decision to opt-out.


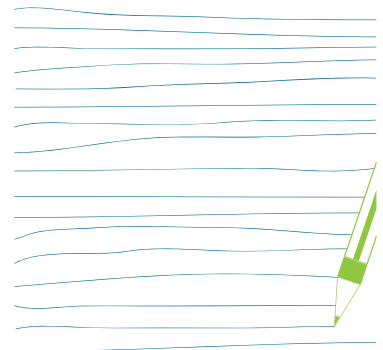
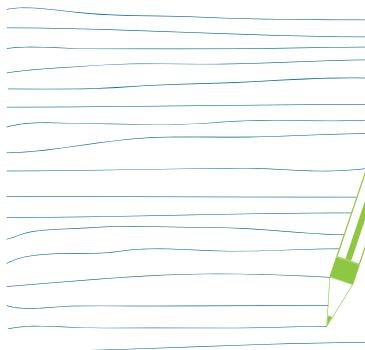
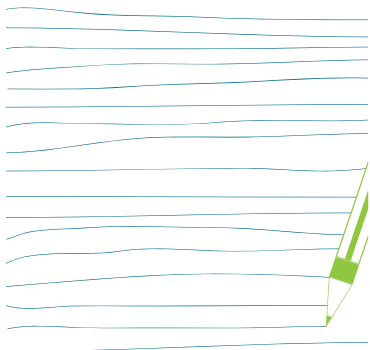
Survey Implementation

Survey Implementation dates: First two weeks of October every year


At least 80% participation rate. Between 85-90% will ensure stronger community data.

The survey takes between 45-60 minutes to complete.

The current survey is for grades 7-12.



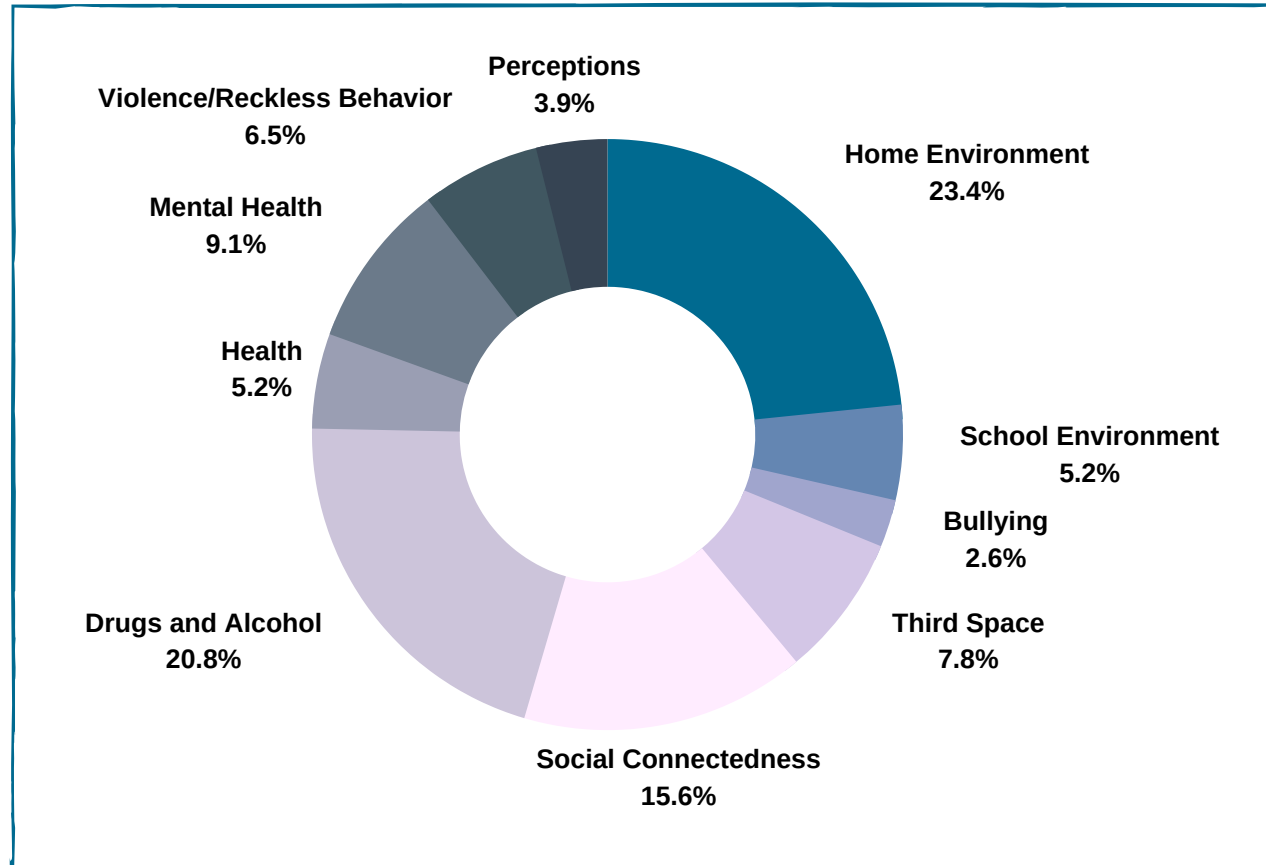
The survey answers are confidential. Students cannot and will not be identified for survey responses. They can feel comfortable to answer honestly without fear of getting in trouble for their responses.



It's important to provide information to principals, teachers, and students in advance. Scheduling time during teacher and principal meetings to talk about the Vermont Youth Project, the survey, and survey implementation ensures successful participation rates. Please be in touch with the VYP State Lead if you would like assistance with this.

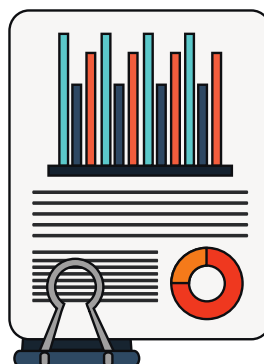
Survey Implementation

Distribution of Survey Topics



Survey Data and Analysis

- Key data findings and analysis available in 8 weeks
- Shows the risk and protective factors of youth in the community
- Key Findings workshop with Vermont Youth Project staff and consultants within 8-10 weeks of survey



Survey Implementation

Vermont Youth Project Survey: Example Questions

HOME ENVIRONMENT

- Do your parents know where you spend Saturday evenings
- How much time do you spend with your parents on weekdays/weekends?

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

- Is school too easy/too difficult for you?
- Are you bored with the studies?

BULLYING

- How often in the last 12 months have you been physically attacked or bullied by an individual or group?
- How often in the last 12 months have you physically attacked or bullied someone?

THIRD SPACE

- In the past 7 days, how often have you stayed out past midnight?
- Do you take part in organized recreation/extracurricular activities?

SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

- How easy would it be for you to receive caring and warmth/discussions about personal affairs/advice on studies/personal life/assistance from your parents/friends?
- How often does your family interact with your neighbors? (ex: talk to, borrow something from, etc.)

HEALTH

- Have you experienced any physical or mental discomforts in the past week?
- How much time do you spend on electronics for; studies, entertainment, playing games, reading the news, communicating with friends/family?

MENTAL HEALTH

- Do you feel positive about the future?
- How do you feel about yourself? (Options: you are at least worth as much as others, you are a failure, etc.)

VIOLENCE/RECKLESS BEHAVIOR

- Do you think it's okay to break the rules?
- Have you stolen something in the last 3 months?

DRUGS/ALCOHOL

- How often do you drink alcohol/smoke cigarettes/smoke marijuana?
- Where do you drink? (Options are: home, home of others, outside, club/bar, etc)

PERCEPTIONS

- Do you agree that sometimes it is necessary to drink alcohol to not be left out?
- How many of your friends do you think drink alcohol/become drunk at least once a month?

Teacher's Guide to Survey Implementation



Protocol for online survey administration

In order to make sure the information you are collecting is as meaningful as possible, please take the following steps when administering the survey.

Before students arrive in the computer lab, in order to make sure that students have as much time as possible to complete the surveys, please...

1. Make sure that all of the computers are on, working and connected to the internet and that any technical issues are fixed before students arrive to take the surveys.
2. Make sure to either a) put a shortcut to the survey on every computer's desktop that links to your survey website OR b) write the link in large letters on a whiteboard or chalkboard. This way students can quickly use the short cut or link information to get to the survey and begin taking it as quickly possible.
3. Please make a plan regarding how to deal with students who require longer than the allotted time to finish the survey. This should not happen very often, but it almost always happens with a few students. To the best of your ability, please make sure all students are able to complete the survey even if it takes a little longer than the planned one class period.

Before the survey, please...

1. Make sure that NO students on the "Do Not Participate" list are in the room or have been asked to take the survey. We certainly want to respect the wishes of the few parents who have asked that their children do not take the survey.

During the survey, please...

1. Ensure student privacy by staying in the front of the room and not walking among the students while they take the survey. If a student has a question, please ask them to come to you at the front of the room. This privacy helps increase honest responses to sensitive questions.
2. If a student asks you what a question means, please respond with, "What do you think the question means?" and encourage them to answer the question according to their interpretation.
3. Remember that students can skip any questions they feel uncomfortable answering and that they can stop completing the survey at any time without penalty.
4. Make sure that students complete the survey quietly, without distractions, and without talking to each other about how to answer the questions. Please ask students who have completed the survey to sit quietly or allow them to do something on the computer while they wait. If they are allowed to do something on the computer while waiting, it shouldn't be so fun that students taking the survey rush to finish so they can start participating in the fun activity.
5. Please make sure that all students, whether they answer the questions or not, click through all of the pages on the screen and press the "submit" button at the end of the survey.

After the survey, please...

1. Thank everyone for their help today.

Survey School Letter Template

Please note that the following must be included in the letter for IRB requirements:

- Clearly stated that participation is voluntary
- They can quit at any time
- Counselors will be made available
- Confidentiality is secured

An example of a paragraph to include in your school letter that meets IRB requirements is below:








As part of this endeavor (School) will be surveying all (grades) students on (date). Questions on the survey include your child's perceptions of their school, community, peers, and home life. Survey questions include questions relating to cigarettes, alcohol, or other drugs. We understand that these types of questions can be sensitive to some students/families and the survey questions are designed to be developmentally age appropriate. Students will be directed to skip any questions they do not want to answer or quit taking the survey whenever they want. We will let students know that their responses will be anonymous, their participation confidential, and that their names will never appear on any survey they complete. Finally, we will make sure school counselors are available in case anyone has something they want to discuss after the survey. The survey takes approximately 30-45 minutes to complete. Again, participation in the survey is voluntary, and participants can choose not to participate at any time. All responses are confidential.



Data Distribution and Protocols

Your data is your power in engaging your community around protective factors of youth. We want to protect the communities and their purpose.

In order to keep focusing on the community vision please follow the following protocols with data distribution.

-  1. Do use the data to back up what the lead researchers at Planet Youth have analyzed to be the key findings.
-  2. Don't distribute and send out this data without context. This can lead to misconceptions and setback the work you're doing in your communities. Please ensure that if you share the data packet, those you share it with are also going to distribute the data responsibly. Vermont afterschool will create supportive materials to help you communicate these findings widely to the greater community and partners.
-  3. Do reach out to the state lead for support communicating your data to the community, partners, and media. To keep VYP messaging consistent, please include us - we have a communications team here to support you.
-  4. Do ensure that the community responsibility is across all domains (Family, Community, Third Space, Peer Group, and School) and does not fall on one domain. Distributing data without context can lead to misconceptions about where the responsibility falls.
-  5. Do use the data to form community strategies and goals under the top priorities analyzed by Planet Youth listed above.
-  6. Do remember that this data is just one piece of Vermont Youth Project.
-  7. Do track where your data is going and who is using it in your communities. This tracking will help us continue to move the work forward.

VYP Key Findings Workshop

Every year, 8-10 weeks after the survey is taken, we will hold a community workshop to build an understanding of the key data findings. This is an opportunity for all participating VYP communities to come together to review the key findings of their data and map out the year ahead with the support of facilitators. You can expect:



Local and statewide key data findings with guided facilitation and activities to ensure you leave with an action plan for the months ahead



An opportunity to meet other community representatives



Sessions on specific needs and goals such as incorporating youth, parent engagement, community engagement and more



An opportunity to build a deeper understanding of the overall VYP vision and create a local action plan that fits into that



VYP Website

Share information from the statewide pages and send us information/news to post about something fun happening in your community! We ask that you don't create local Vermont Youth Project pages.

<http://www.vermontafterschool.org/vyp/>

Social Media

Some of our full implementation VYP communities have local facebook pages to engage the community in the project. If you decided to create the page, we ask that it is updated regularly with content that supports positive youth development and the fidelity of this project. Please use our logo and we can create a profile picture for you. Please let the state lead know if you have a VYP social media page.

Platforms VYP Uses

We frequently use platforms such as Canva, Mural, and Zoom for local and statewide engagement efforts.



Media

We will provide media releases for participating communities. Additionally, please use the talking points provided in this toolkit as a guide for speaking with the media about VYP. If you speak to media, please refer them to our website and state lead contact information as well.

Presentations and Conferences

Please do not present statewide or nationally on VYP. The statewide team holds the agreements with Planet Youth, VDH, and Finland. If you would like to be involved with a presentation or feel there is a good opportunity, please don't hesitate to reach out to the statewide team.

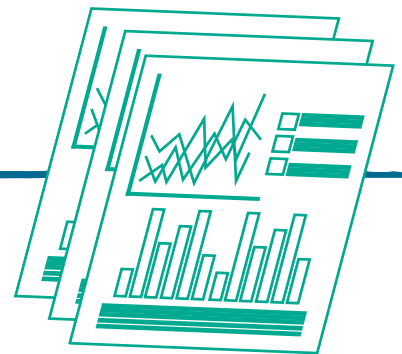


Handouts and Marketing Materials

Please use our created documents and templates for handouts. If you need something specific (a flyer or different handout for your community), let us know and we will create it for you! We ask that you give us two weeks notice with materials requests when possible.

Examples of materials that have been created for VYP

- VYP one pager - general information about project
- Local data summaries (easy to read key findings)
- Teacher Handout and Survey Implementation Protocols
- Event Flyers
- Survey Details Infographic
- Vermont Youth Project Powerpoint
- Posters for events and presentations





Strengthening Programs. Empowering Youth.

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