

Theresa Utton

Subject: FW: VIT funding

From: karolyn towne []

Sent: Friday, March 06, 2015 8:58 AM

To: Governorvt@state.vt.us; Theresa Utton; Rebecca Buck; Kary Towne

Subject: VIT funding

It has come to my attention that the current budget recommends \$0 for VIT in fiscal year 2016.

I am a frequent user of this important resource. The Area Health Education Centers Program (AHEC) provides Nursing Grand Rounds for School nursing 5 times a year. The program gives school nurses access to continuing education with VT speakers with expertise in areas that are critical to have current knowledge in. These sessions are specifically planned for *after school hours*. The nurses *do not* have to find subs to cover for them (*saving school districts money*). This opportunity - the partnership with VIT and AHEC is invaluable for school nurses.

I have recently completed training to become a VT Child Care Wellness Consultant. Because those of us in the class came from almost every county in VT, the VIT system was used most effectively to get the training completed. Having the VIT technology available to us, there are now about 15 trained child care wellness consultants available for all of Vermont counties and we are now making visits to all child care centers in all corners of Vermont. I feel this was an efficient use of resources in order to have all child care program have access to a consultant.

I am currently taking a course with about 125 people through the VIT system (UVM Master Gardening Course). When the 13 week course is over, we will all be doing a minimum of 40 hours volunteer hours throughout Vermont. To keep the title Master Gardener, 40 volunteer hours are required each year and most folks who complete the course go on to do many more hours every year. What a gift for the State of Vermont to have this opportunity!

Just from my experience using the VIT system the following benefits are real:

- continuing nursing education specific to the needs of school nurses (at no cost to my school district)
- the students and families who benefit from my knowledge due to AHEC opportunity
- child care centers in Chittenden, Franklin and Addison counties (I have made visits in these counties)
- Chittenden and Franklin Counties - I will be volunteering my minimum of 40 hours in these counties each year.

Please reconsider and restore funding for VIT.

Kary Towne RN NCSN

School Nurse

VT Child Care Wellness Consultant

UVM Master Gardener Student