

Good morning...My name is Dottie Moffitt and I am the Peer Navigator for northern Windsor county and all of Orange county. I am here today to briefly let you know what it is I, and peer navigators all over the state, do and why the Youth in Transition program is so important.

As a peer navigator I work with transition aged youth which includes youth between the ages of 16-22. These young adults have fallen through the cracks at some point in their lives. They suffer from depression, addiction, homelessness and have had home lives that would bring an adult to their knees. As a peer navigator I have the honor of helping them pull themselves back up and guide them so that they can live the life that they deserve.

The Youth in Transition program supports young adults in all aspects of their lives. We have groups that help youth deal with their addictions and groups that provide living skills and help to build self-esteem. We also have JOBS clinicians who guide the young adults so they can become employed and self-sufficient. Personally, as a Peer Navigator, I have helped young adults get health insurance so that they can enter into Suboxone treatment as they try to live life sober. I have brought them to the clinics for their appointments and taken them to second hand clothing shops to get clothes for job interviews. I have supported young adults whose parents have been taken to jail and have nowhere to go. I have helped to find safe housing and food for young adults who have nothing. I listen when they feel they have no one else. The Youth in Transition program helps young adults navigate social services, educational services and employment services so that they can become productive and valued members of their communities. We truly wrap our services around the youth in the state of Vermont.

I have previously worked for the department of corrections as a teacher and as a risk reduction clinician. I believe deeply that continuous funding of the Youth in Transition program will help keep our young adults out of jail and in the community where they belong. An ounce of prevention is definitely worth a pound of cure.

Thank you for listening.