



Date: November 17, 2016

To: Vermont Child Poverty Council

From: Catherine Simonson, LICSW  
Chief Client Services Officer

Re: Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Testimony

#### Introduction

Provider of Services in the following areas: Community Support, Criminal Justice, Crisis Services, Education, Outpatient, Residential and Substance Use Disorders.

- In FY15 we supported over 16,000 people across the agency.
- Highlights of programs addressing the AHS Population Outcome:
  - Vermont's families are safe, nurturing, stable and supported.

#### ARCh (Accessing Resources for Children) *see attached infographic*

- Supported initially via non-categorical funding through the personal care transition
- Expanded access to children and families regardless of diagnosis

#### Early Childhood Mental Health *see attached infographic*

- Key partner in the Children's Integrated Services

#### School Services *see attached infographic*

- Addressing barriers that interfere with school success including poverty
- Tracking Family Stressors and Resource Limitation- FY16 data

#### Crisis – First Call *see attached infographic*

- Three crisis teams at Howard Center are now one team:
- First Call for Chittenden County
- Community Presentations as part of our public health outreach

What works or how do we know people are better off?

See Howard Center 2015 Outcomes Report

[http://www.howardcenter.org/assets/userfiles/files/HowardCenter\\_OutcomesReport\\_FY2015\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.howardcenter.org/assets/userfiles/files/HowardCenter_OutcomesReport_FY2015_WEB.pdf)

Statewide Perspective: Vermont Care Partners 2015 Annual Report

[http://www.vermontcarepartners.org/pdf/files/140\\_VCP\\_Outcomes-Report-FY2015\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.vermontcarepartners.org/pdf/files/140_VCP_Outcomes-Report-FY2015_WEB.pdf)

Challenges:

- ABA or Applied Behavioral Services for Children with Autism
- State is faced with a Medicaid crisis
- Growing population of children and families impacted by opiate crisis
- Designated Agency System has documented sustainability issue

Notes from the field:

- Food Insecurity: Gaps in food programs to include evenings and school vacations
- Housing: A social determinant that impacts mental health for children and families
- Transportation challenges and impact on access to treatment
- Reach-up sanctions and the impact on children

Bright Spots:

- PCIT – Parent Child Interaction Therapy- Evidenced based treatment for families with children ages 2-6. Challenge: Sustainable funding *See PCIT infographic*
- Caring Collaborative- Collective Impact initiative to include UVMMC, United Way, Howard Center and a local child care center designed to address children’s mental health in the context of family and their child care center.
  - Nutrition program (lunch and snack) for all children
  - Pre K expansion grant – expanded partnership with CCSU
  - Medical Home learning collaborative with Essex Pediatrics
  - Working Bridges – A United Way program geared toward supporting families in finding necessary resources
  - A Steering Committee of over 20 representatives from area organizations and agencies who are committed to bringing their most creative thinking to meet the needs of families

