

Good evening,

My name is Debra Hale. I have been the RU Case Manager for NEKCA here in St. Johnsbury for the past 3.5 years, with cases primarily age 24 and under, has steadied at an average of 40 participants at any given time. The majority of my participants benefit enormously in their journey to self-sufficiency from being supported at the PCC, where they have access to the wrap around services we have to offer, (such as our High School Program, Post Secondary Education, Early Head Start, Job Coaching, Family Services including Parenting Education and Support Groups, Housing Outreach, and Food Shelf), all at their finger-tips, without having to go to many other locations, which for most would be a hardship, as well as a delay in services for them. PCC's offer a welcoming, safe, non-judgmental, yet supporting, nurturing, and constant sense of well-being for the families we serve. Home visits are often done to expedite the services to the family, to alleviate missed appointments due to family transportation and child care hardships, which lead to possible loss of benefits and case closures, which causes more undo stress to the families, and additional administrative costs to the State.

PCC Case Managers are an important member on the Reach Up Team. They often serve as a bridge to the local ESD office Reach Up Case Managers. In example, but not limited to, helping to provide supports to their participants that may be placed on site at the PCC, with their time-in-point needs being met in a collaborative, yet all important time frame, which allows assisting the family in a more immediate and strength-based practice.

My belief based on my first-hand knowledge as the RU Case Manager at NEKCA/PCC, is, that keeping the RUFA case manager's position in the PCC is not only necessary for the destitute and deserving young families of Vermont, but for the overall benefit of the individual Communities, and the State over-all, monetarily, as well as humanitarially.

Thank you for your attention and your time.