

VT9T026 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.



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For more information, contact Holly Morehouse at Vermont Afterschool:

hollymorehouse@vermontafterschool.org

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