

Summer Matters for All! Celebrating Our Successes

Forging Futures with Vermont's Youth



This year, Vermont's summer programs welcomed young people back for fun, friends, learning and adventures. Thanks to strong state-level leadership and an engaged network of providers, the Summer Matters for All Grant Program ensured that families across the state had access to affordable, high-quality programs.

Together, we created a great summer for young Vermonters, helping them make new memories, re-connect and re-engage.

THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

In 2021, Governor Scott directed nearly \$4 million in federal funding to support expanded learning for Vermont youth through the Summer Matters for All Grant Program. Vermont Afterschool worked closely with the Governor's office to establish and administer the grant program, which prioritized summer learning sites that reached students with disabilities or unique needs; provided transportation; and offered low- or no-cost programs for eligible students. The program received an overwhelming number of applications from providers across the state.

Best Practice Highlight: Fostering Cross-Agency Collaboration

Vermont Afterschool supported efforts across a diverse team formed by the Governor's office, including Vermont's Agency of Education, Child Development Division, Department of Health, Department of Mental Health, Department of Labor, Agency of Natural Resources, and Senator Sanders' office.

Role of Vermont Afterschool

- Create web presence and system to map programs
- Coordinate community outreach
- Provide technical assistance to programs
- Manage grant competition and administer awards
- Conduct site visits and collect outcomes data

The Impact!

Together, we ensured that summer opportunities were available to youth in every Vermont community by:

- 1. Expanding access to programs for underserved populations**
 - Students of color
 - Students with disabilities
 - Students with special needs
- 2. Reducing the cost for families**
- 3. Cutting the wait list by**
 - Increasing program slots
 - Increasing weeks, days and hours of programs
 - Expanding services in areas that lacked programs
- 4. Creating jobs for high school youth and college-aged students**
- 5. Accelerating students' social-emotional and academic learning**

Summer Matters Grant Program by the Numbers



Grant period: June 14-September 15, 2021 *Projected figures

LOOKING AHEAD: UNIVERSAL AFTERSCHOOL AND SUMMER

In Vermont, we are forging a bold new path to build on the successes of this summer. Our state will be the first in the nation to ensure that every youth who wants to attend afterschool and summer programs has the opportunity to do so.

Through universal afterschool and summer, we will address the longstanding unmet demand for afterschool in our state, which impacts nearly 40% of our young people. This system will provide essential support for working families and put youth at the center, helping all children realize their full potential and ensuring a brighter future for all Vermonters.

Meeting Vermont's Demand for Afterschool

26,000 kids
(39% of youth statewide)
are waiting to enroll



WHAT DO PARENTS SAY?

- 85%** are satisfied with their child's program
- 86%** support public funding for afterschool
- 69%** agree afterschool helps them keep their job

BARRIERS TO ENROLL:

- Cost (38%)**
- Transportation (31%)**
- Lack of programs (25%)**



Supporting Youth Statewide

In 2021, the Summer Matters for All Grant Program awarded \$3.5 million across 93 summer learning sites to help serve nearly 13,000 Vermont youth. Program leaders provided a safe, supported summer filled with fun, enriching activities for children and teens, including in areas that were previously underserved.

Vermont Works for Women Leverages Partners to Serve More Kids for Free

Making use of a Summer Matters grant, Vermont Works for Women (VWW) expanded access and affordability to their Rosie's Girls camp sites. The program offered six weeks of camp, serving 60 youth total, in six underserved communities around Vermont, including expanding to two new sites in Barre and Swanton. Using the grant, which covered most staffing and project costs, VWW leveraged other grant funding and made the six weeks of camp free for all campers. VWW worked with partners, such as 21st Century afterschool directors, Department of Children & Families case managers, Washington County mental health counselors, and school guidance counselors to ensure youth with special needs camp were able to participate.



Gallop to Success Offers Free Programming for 120 Youth

The Gallop to Success program in North Bennington helps campers learn to care for animals, socialize and work together as a team. It integrates academic and social experiences with afternoon activities and field trips. For 30 years, this program has been funded by donations, staffed by volunteers and able to serve about 12 youth each summer. With a Summer Matters grant, Gallop offered free programming for 120 youth and paid their volunteers for the first time, including paying youth who came up through the program and are now serving as leaders.

Jaquith Public Library in Marshfield Launches New Program to Accelerate Learning

The Jaquith Public Library used their Summer Matters grant to create "RENEW your Summer," a program designed to help campers accelerate learning with STEAM activities and visual arts workshops. They partnered with local schools to provide youth additional academic support. Campers also learned how to write graphic novels, and their families participated in a series of family fun nights.



Audubon Vermont Expands Programming to Reach 60+ Additional Campers

The Audubon program in Huntington offered experiential learning camps for youth in outdoor settings. Campers learned how to use a compass, identify wild edibles and make their own Chapstick, among other skills. With a Summer Matters grant, the program increased staffing and extended programming to an additional 64 campers. The program focuses on creating leadership opportunities and developing workforce development skills through their leaders program, where teens are paid a stipend to work with participating youth.



Supporting Youth Statewide continued

Camp Agape in Plymouth Serves More Local Families

Camp Agape increased the number of slots available to families in the community by 20 and increased the number of staff to keep the ratios low for children. The camp was offered for free, and staff were trained in youth mental health, first aid and crisis prevention. The program provided free transportation for campers. The Summer Matters grant also allowed them to hire a licensed mental health counselor to provide support around social-emotional learning skills, trauma and crisis intervention.

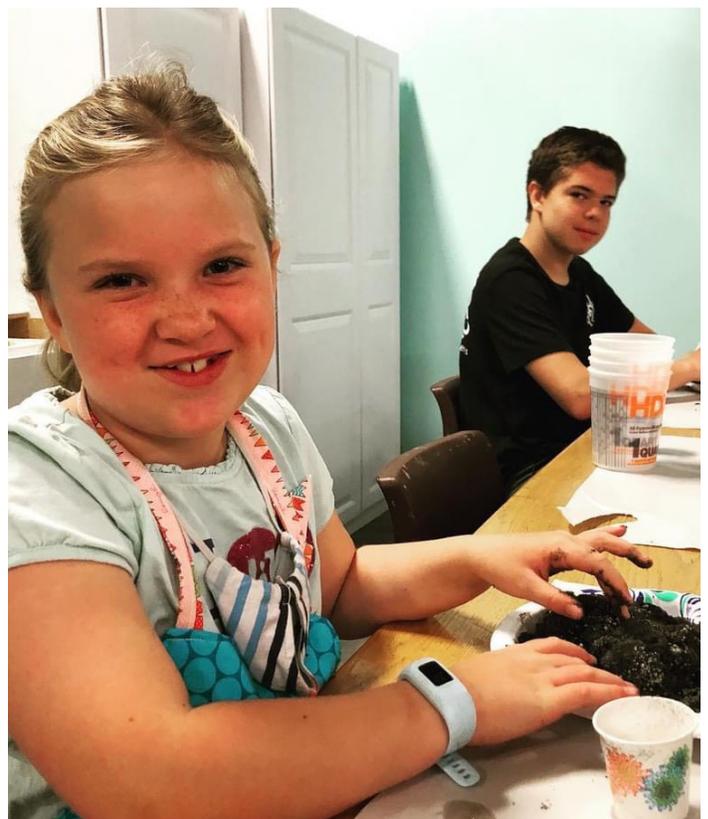
Haven Summer Camp Expands Programming to Serve the Community

Through the Haven Summer Camp at Upper Valley Haven, kids enjoyed a wonderful summer filled with activities and events, ranging from incredible recreational opportunities to enriching experiences to learn about nature and animals. Staff focused on helping youth care about themselves, others and the environment—and report that kids who participated gained confidence, compassion and caring. The Summer Matters grant enabled staff to expand their work across the Haven campus and into the community.



The MINT Offers Free- and Low-Cost STEAM Programming

This summer, the MINT created an exciting Makerspace for kids and families called *The Boiler: Where STEAM Happens*. With funding from the Summer Matters grant for both staffing and materials, the MINT offered programming at no or low cost to families (from free to \$10 per session). And they took their STEAM programming on the road making visits to summer camps, schools and public libraries across southwest Vermont. The summer was filled with new opportunities for students to put their hands on materials and create!



All photos were provided by Vermont afterschool and summer programs.

ABOUT VERMONT AFTERSCHOOL

Vermont Afterschool is the lead organization in the state for afterschool programs, out-of-school time, summer learning, and expanded learning opportunities. The network provides training, professional development, and technical assistance to providers across the state, including the Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCAs, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, licensed providers, and community-based organizations that collaborate with libraries, museums, colleges, faith-based centers, and local recreation and parks sites.



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