WHY GETTING TO ‘Y’?

There is a growing concern about the mental and physical health of youth, particularly school safety, opioid addiction, bullying and suicide. The national Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) data is a primary tool used by school officials and community organizers to inform work and dialogue around these critically important issues. Students are rarely involved in the process of analyzing this data or actively shaping the health and well being of their schools.

Getting to ‘Y’ invites youth teams, working with adult advisors, to facilitate the analysis of the YRBS data for their own schools, empowering students to take the lead and bring meaningful solutions to their specific issues. The Getting to ‘Y’ program cultivates student and community engagement, which promotes the healthy development and resilience of young people and seeds lifelong civic engagement.

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT YOUTH DEVELOPMENT:

- The adolescent years are a key time to develop healthy behaviors.
- Schools play a central role in promoting the health and safety of young people.
- When students are engaged in meaningful work they are highly effective in initiating positive changes in their schools and community.
- Youth who become agents of change are more likely to become civically engaged later in life.

GTY BY THE NUMBERS (as of 2018-19)

- 12 years
- 79 Vermont schools
- 132 teams
- 1,050 student leaders

Getting to ‘Y’ 6-Step Program

1. Core Team Training
   5 to 8 student leaders and adult advisor attend peer-led training.

2. YRBS Data Analysis Retreat
   The core team leads analysis with 15 to 20 peers.

3. Community Dialogue Event
   The team plans and leads a multi-generational discussion.

4. Action Plan Implementation
   The core team prioritizes next steps, assigns tasks, and makes change.

5. Reflect and Celebrate
   Teams celebrate successes and identify lessons learned.

6. Keep it Moving
   Action steps are carried forward and revised as new data becomes available.

Our GTY partners
- Vermont Department of Health
- Vermont Agency of Education

In 2012, the program was successfully replicated in Albuquerque, NM, in diverse, urban schools.
Getting to ‘Y’ Impact

- Youth ownership of their own health issues.
- Sense of responsibility for peer and community well-being among students.
- Increased youth belonging and competence.
- Administrators, teachers, and parents gain new insight into school culture, adolescent health, and students as agents of change.

For more info about GTY, contact Sharon Koller: sharon@upforlearning.org or 802.373.7594.

OUR GOAL: To expand GTY nationally to schools and state agencies who wish to mobilize their students as agents of change to improve school climate and culture.

Getting to ‘Y’ is presented by

UP for Learning

A nonprofit organization amplifying the role of youth as partners & agents of change in education

UP for Learning works to:

- Ensure students own their learning and participate actively in school change,
- Create engaging learning environments where all students thrive,
- Elevate youth personal power and purpose, and
- Develop leadership skills and promote lifelong civic engagement.

“Students who believe they have a voice in school are seven times more likely to be academically motivated than students who do not believe they have a voice in school.”

—Russell Quaglia, Quaglia Institute of Student Aspirations, 2014

To achieve these outcomes, UP for Learning crafts innovative, student-centered education initiatives and supports schools with customized training, coaching, graduate courses, professional development, and online resources. In addition, we are an active contributor to national and international efforts to integrate student-centered practices in education.

“When people ask me for an example of high quality work on student voice and youth-adult partnerships, I always send them to UP for Learning.”

—Dr. Dana Mitra, national leader in youth-adult partnership research and practices, Pennsylvania University

Since 2008, UP has trained more than 2,600 student leaders in 113 Vermont schools through 334 programs.