

UP for Learning

Empowering youth and adults to reimagine & transform education *together*

Empowering youth to create, innovate, and lead

We believe that every young person should...



**BE KNOWN
AND VALUED**



**HAVE A SENSE
OF PURPOSE**



**HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY
AND ABILITY TO SHAPE
THEIR OWN LIVES AND
THE LIVES OF OTHERS**

“When students have a say,
they feel like they matter, and
what could possibly be more
important than that for a
student?”

—high school student,
Communicating School Redesign

“I was reminded of **how
much power we have** as
individuals to change
our own world and the
world of others ... for
the better.”

—middle school student, M3

“School district and
community visioning is time-
consuming and arduous
work; however, in working
with UP, **every member walks
away equipped with the tools
necessary to engage and inspire
others** toward a common goal.”

—Amy Rex, Milton Town School District
superintendent

PHOTOS: Left, Youth & Adults Transforming Schools Together team shares a joyful break after a day of drafting their action plan. Center, Youth Advisory Council member Maryann Songhurst leads a discussion about youth-centered issues. Right, Grace Johnson, youth facilitator from U-32 High School, interviews Jonathan Carrigan of Bellows Falls Union High School at the High School GTY orientation.

Partnership creates ownership. Ownership sparks motivation. Motivation drives learning.

THE CHALLENGE:
Vermont is losing the potential of too many of our young people. A widening opportunity gap is limiting their options.

HOW DO WE KNOW THIS?



2 out of 5

VT youth report that **THEY ARE NOT VALUED** by their community.
(Students of color and LGBT students are significantly less likely to feel that they matter to their community.)

Sources: Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations, Search Institute Developmental Asset Survey, Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey



Only **61%** of students believe that **THEY HAVE A VOICE**

in their learning and their lives upon entering middle school.

This drops to **37%** by twelfth grade.



Less than half

of youth (44%) report a sense of **PERSONAL POWER**.

RESULT:

- ↑ **DISENGAGEMENT** from learning
- ↑ Sense of **HOPELESSNESS**
- ↓ Decrease in **CRITICAL LIFE SKILL** development
- ↓ Decrease in high school completion and **POST-SECONDARY OPTIONS**
- ↓ Decrease in **CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

SOLUTION:

Ensure that every young person:

- Is **KNOWN AND VALUED** in their community
- Has a **SENSE OF PURPOSE**
- Has the ability to **SHAPE THEIR OWN LIVES**, and the **LIVES OF OTHERS**

Communicating School Redesign

Youth-adult teams build support for school redesign.



Getting to 'Y'

Young people become leaders in improving the health and wellness of their communities.



P4 Advisory: Personal Power & Purpose through Partnership

Youth build self-awareness, effective communication, and self-advocacy skills over the course of a school year.



M3: Mindset, Metacognition & Motivation

Youth master the ways brain-based strategies can drive their learning and share this knowledge with their peers and teachers. Concurrently, M3 teachers engage in professional development to hone their practice.



"M3 changes the culture at our school. Assignments become opportunities, not obligation; challenges are embraced, not avoided; and **mistakes are viewed as steps to growth, not signs of failure.**"

— M3 teacher advisor

Youth & Adults Transforming Schools Together

Students and teachers join together to ensure that learning is engaging and effective for all students, and youth are agents of change.



Transforming School Culture through Restorative Practices

Youth and adults weave restorative principles and practices into the fabric of their school culture.

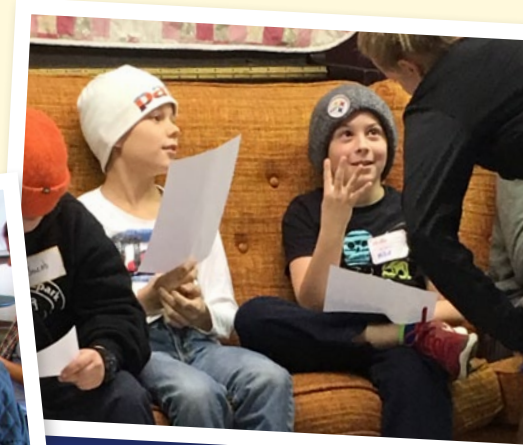


"I now know that education is a collaborative process between students and adults working together... I know that **meaningful action can be taken by anyone** and that it is an important part of democracy."

— CSR youth participant

Customized Programs & Support

Schools partners with UP for Learning to create a wide variety of opportunities to position youth as change agents in partnership with adults.



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. It is the premier nonprofit in the nation** that draws upon evidence-based practice and research to carefully design projects aimed at improving schools and empowering young people.

—Dr. Dana Mitra, Pennsylvania State University

I had many opportunities to listen to youth; they reflected such a high level of introspection and passion. My takeaway was simple: **No longer can change occur in education without youth and adults partnering together.**

— CSR principal and team member



OPENING DOORS TO YOUTH AS INNOVATIVE LEADERS



Unleashing the Power of Partnership for Learning

Core Values & Beliefs

Our fundamental value is to **SEEK EQUITY & JUSTICE**

We believe that educational equity is a human right. All young people have the right to a meaningful and engaging education. In order to pursue this aim, we are guided by these principles and values...

SHARE RESPONSIBILITY

Learning and change must be transparent and must be driven by adults and youth as equal partners.

START FROM STRENGTHS

Youth and adults have the wisdom and capacity to orchestrate change. Beginning with what's working provides hope and energizes a community to embrace change.















CREATE OPEN DIALOGUE

Deep conversation is central to changing school cultures. When systems are designed for youth to be engaged as full partners with equal value, the work of school transformation can occur by creating a shared vision for education and the learning process.

EMPLOY DATA TO DRIVE CHANGE

Research is a vitally important way to build credibility between youth and adults. When a community works together to make meaning of their own data, they are strengthened by what they learn and emboldened to take action.

Celebrating 12 Years of Growth

YEAR 1	YEAR 12
 4 high school teams engaged in improving schools	 388 high, middle and elementary school teams engaged in improving their schools & communities
 Served schools in 4 of 14 counties	 Served schools in 14 of 14 counties
 32 youth involved in changing their schools	 3,000 empowered & skilled youth leaders made a positive difference in their schools & communities
 1 school transformation program	 8 youth-adult partnership programs transforming schools & communities
 0 graduate courses	 11 accredited graduate classes supporting teachers in their role with youth as co-creators of change
 1 faculty founder	 7 experienced and passionate educational leaders
 An operating budget of \$60,000	 An operating budget of over \$600,000

WE ARE GRATEFUL to the individuals, foundations, and organizations who have made our work possible over the past 12 years!

SUPPORTERS & COLLABORATORS

In collaboration with the following foundations and organizations, we are proud to ensure that all young people have opportunities, support, knowledge, and skills needed to pursue active roles in their learning, their lives, and their community.



Wisdom
Connection

THE J. WARREN
& LOIS MCCLURE
FOUNDATION

JFF JOHNSON
FAMILY
FOUNDATION

ben & jerry's
foundation
nurturing the grassroots since 1985

nellie mae
EDUCATION
FOUNDATION



THE VERMONT
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION



National Life Group
Foundation



education
reimagined



VERMONT
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

VERMONT
AGENCY OF EDUCATION



VERMONT
SCHOOL
BOARDS
ASSOCIATION



PennState
College of Education



BRYN MAWR
COLLEGE



THE UNIVERSITY of
NEW MEXICO

COMMUNITY
CCV
OF VERMONT

We are committed to **ENSURING AFFORDABLE ACCESS** to our programs, and prioritizing our work with our most economically challenged and underserved schools. UP for Learning is committed to systemic social justice and closing the opportunity gap — ensuring that all schools have access to UP's work regardless of their ability to pay.

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