

Did you know Community Connections includes:

- ◆ A full-time **Youth Outreach Coordinator** who works with more than 30 out-of-school youth, and those who are at risk of dropping out of school, to explore alternative education options and employment opportunities, and guide them in making healthy life choices.
- ◆ Last year, a full 10% of the Montpelier High School class of 2007 graduated through this drop out prevention program, as did 5% of all U-32 2007 grads!
- ◆ Our ten-year-old **Girls/Boyz First** mentoring program now has 50 adult/kid pairs and 40 peer pairs – some have been together for 6 years!
- ◆ Our **PEP Program** enhances student wellness by providing physical activities and nutrition education after school, during school and through community events. Obesity and diabetes prevention are core goals of this programming.
- ◆ Our **Community Education Program** helps open up the school facilities to the community. Programs have included: computer lab, yoga, healthy cooking, scrap booking, self-defense, photography and lots more.



Locations and Coordinator Contacts:

Berlin Elementary

Donna Barr, 223-2796, ext. 345

Calais Elementary

Jen Wiater, 454-7777, ext. 348

Doty Memorial

Kim Bolduc, 223-5656 ext. 134

East Montpelier Elementary

Guy Viens, 223-7936, ext. 305

Union Elementary

Main Street Middle

Montpelier High School

Drew McNaughton, 225-8678

Rumney Elementary

Ann Gilbert, 223-5429 ext. 322

Steering Committee Members:

Robbe Brook, Superintendent,
Washington Central Supervisory Union

Stephen Metcalf, Superintendent,
Montpelier Public Schools

Sue Clayton,
Washington Central Friends of Education

Suzanne Hechmer, Montpelier Downtown
Community Association



Community Connections

Berlin, Calais, East Montpelier,
Middlesex, Montpelier, Worcester

Bringing School and Community Together

Year 7 Update January, 2008



Ginny Burley, Director
Heather Pagel, Administrative Assistant
Danny Hendershot, Youth Outreach Coordinator
Bill Merrylees, PEP Fitness Coordinator
Wendy Farber, Ivy Zeller Mentor Coordinators
Anne Loecher, Development Director

58 Barre Street, Montpelier, VT 05602
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www.communityconnections.us

Approximately 1,100 of our community's children participated in Community Connections programs during the 2006-2007 school year.

They engaged in academic assistance programs like reading and homework clubs, computer skills programs, physical activities embedded with fitness, wellness and nutrition learning, arts programming, natural and environmental sciences studies, drop out prevention, mentoring, adventure-based learning, summer camps, field trips and more. Community Connections programming is based on prevention best practices that protect and inoculate our youth against risk; activities bolster teamwork and self-esteem, build assets and life skills, and enhance academic achievement.

It Takes a Community!

Community Connections was started in June 2001 by a federal 21st Century Community Learning Center grant written by school and community members from the Washington Central and Montpelier school districts who wanted to provide opportunities and reduce risk for unsupervised children after school. The organization is a project of the Montpelier Public School District and Washington Central Supervisory Union along with community partners Washington Central Friends of Education and Montpelier Downtown Community Association, which are both 501(c)3 non profits.

Our Mission:

Community Connections fosters collaboration between the schools and communities of Montpelier and WCSU to work in partnership with organizations and community members to:

- ◆ Provide expanded learning enrichment opportunities for all children and adults
- ◆ Increase healthy behaviors
- ◆ Expand the schools' role as a community resource

During its first four years, while funded by the original grant, Community Connections moved toward a fee-based business model and began to seek funding from diversified sources: user fees, childcare subsidies, grants, town appropriations, businesses, individual gifts and donations and school budgets. Our programs in Berlin, Calais, East Montpelier, Middlesex and Worcester are now licensed afterschool care providers by the State of Vermont. Licensing is imminent at Union Elementary School.

Community Connections includes in its mission the intent to serve all families, regardless of ability to pay. While the organization can sustain some core programming through user fees, there are vital components to our operations that do not lend themselves to fee generation: homework clubs, teen centers, mentoring, youth outreach, and central administration.

Over the last six years Community Connections has touched over 50% of the 2,700 area school children. In some



schools participation exceeds 85%! We estimate we have enough revenue to continue providing the educational, enrichment and life-skill building opportunities that the community has found important – until the summer of 2008. Looking ahead, to keep Community Connections viable and affordable, we will need to raise about \$600,000 per year in addition to user fees.

Our goal over the next five years is to build a full Board of Directors and an Advisory Board, to further develop Site Councils at each of our six service towns, and to create a diversified and sustainable funding portfolio.

Just as the original grant was written by community members, this is a community-based effort. We are approaching key community leaders to help us craft strategies to lead us into the next ten years and beyond.

We hope you will join us.
