



## Highlights

- **Networking Sessions:**
  - These were well attended, averaging 15-18 people.
  - Session was on *parent and family engagement* and stimulated good conversations around how we're connecting with caregivers at home and in the community.
  - Next session is April 3rd from 11am to Noon, which will address *positive staff culture and appreciation* as we gear up for summer programs.
- **Summer Camp Kickoff:**
  - This event is designed to provide professional development and community building for front line summer staff. There will be workshops on *transitions, de-escalation techniques, rainy day activities, creativity and improvisation*, and more.
  - In addition to the professional development hours themselves, we also want to send summer staff off feeling excited, positive, and prepared for their upcoming programs.
  - Date will be in early June. Location TBD
- **STEM Best Practices guide** for afterschool and summer programs has been developed.
  - The guide can be found here: <https://vermontafterschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/VTA-STEM-Best-Practices.pdf>
- **Training for youth working in afterschool and summer programs**, along with their adult colleagues, on handling common situations, including relationships and boundaries, leading and supporting groups, managing behavior, and engagement with adult

partners. This training was developed and facilitated in partnership with youth working in afterschool programs.

- **The Youth Voice Micro-Credential Series** - a 16 hour 5-part series on the knowledge base and skill sets needed for raising up youth voices and supporting them to create the change they wish to see in their lives, schools, and/or communities. From individual self-advocacy to empowering community level youth leadership, this series walks supportive adult participants through an Empowerment Model for creating youth-led change, while supporting them in developing their own youth leadership project plan.
- **SEL Work:**
  - 6 participants are set to complete the SEL micro credential, each with implementation projects being introduced into their programs ranging from more intentional opening circle time, sportsmanship club, and an overhaul of their PBIS system and how it relates to their SEL goals.
  - Over 400 staff have been trained throughout the state in flourish lab modules between the 4 facilitators we have.
- **Program Community Development** - a new workshop that asks participants to look at their program (school, organization, etc.) as a community and talking through how they can develop the culture of that community in a thoughtful and intentional way. Taking the time to consider both the needs of the adults, as staff, and the youth, as participants, and reflecting on them as equal partners in creating the culture of the program space.
- **Interaction and Engagement in youth mental health work** is becoming a space we are seeing that we have quite a bit of influence in, especially in terms of mental wellness and using empowerment as a healing practice. We have a list of workshops and PD offerings that support mental wellness, the social emotional wellbeing of youth, and supports programs to be proactive in fostering wellness in their youth.
  - We have an open youth mental health first aid training for anyone in the field on April 23<sup>rd</sup>
- **Vermont State Council updates:**

- The Council continues to meet bi-monthly for 90 minutes each meeting
  - The Council is actively requesting the Legislature to provide \$140,000 in State funding for FY27. The Council is currently funded through federal dollars. Due to possible financial insecurity or censorship that at times accompanies federal dollars, the Council is concerned and would like to shift to State funding
  - You can view this years' full set of State Youth Council recommendations on their website linked here: [Recommendations | SYC Recommendations for Governor and Legislature — Vermont State Youth Council](#)
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- **Other:**
    - The L.E.A.D. (Leadership, Exploration and Development) Cohort provided structured, cohort-based leadership development for emerging and current afterschool leaders. Participants engaged in their first session on November 3. There are 16 L.E.A.D. 1.0 participants and 5 L.E.A.D. 2.0 participants. The cohort model fosters peer learning, relationship-building, and shared problem-solving, empowering participants to apply leadership strategies directly within their programs and organizations.
    - SEL video project. Filming begins in April and May. We hope to improve programs efforts in the areas of Teamwork, Cultivating Empathy, Scaffolding Learning, and Furthering Learning by capturing and sharing high-quality video content that highlights best practices in these areas. Burlington, Springfield, Newbrook, Highgate.