



Dear Colleagues and Community Partners,

Does it seem to anyone else that once September begins the weeks rapidly pass and before you know it you are starting to look ahead to a whole new calendar year as you plan things? We enter the “ber” months of September, October, November, and December and from the rush of back to school and back-to-back holiday months, the days and weeks disappear. This is your gentle reminder to take a pause occasionally.

CSHN team members are no exception to the tendency for staying busy. We have resource mapping projects, pediatric care team building, Medicaid program improvements, and general system of care support, collaboration, and optimization.

One of the ways we can all support the system of care for children is by understanding and perhaps participating in Coordinated Service Plans or ACT 264 meetings with families and their care team members. This edition of

CSHN Connections is all about ACT 264 and Coordination of Services. We hope you find it informative and useful in your work with families.

CSHN Connections Team

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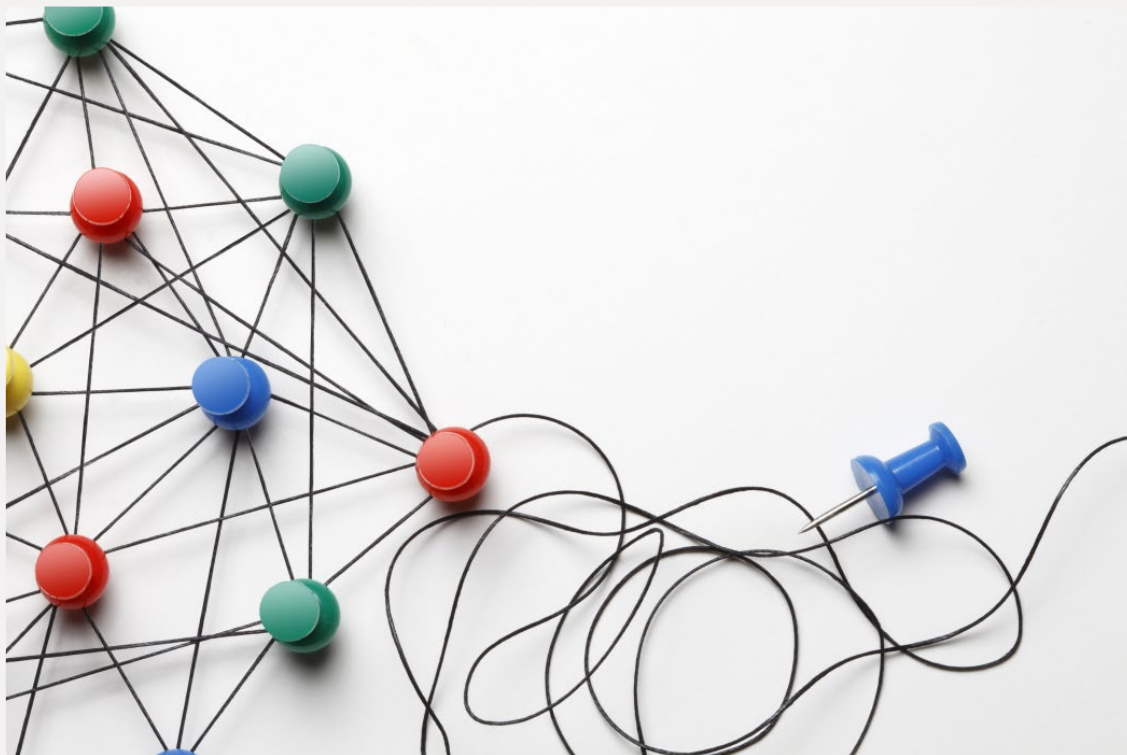
Program Spotlight

A note from Adam Poulin, CSHN Program Director:

Act 264 requires coordination between the human services and education systems. Coordination is core to CSHN's function as a public health program. In addition to human services and schools, CSHN works with primary care, hospitals, home health agencies, specialty clinics, and other State of Vermont programs. We coordinate with out-of-state providers, Vermont Medicaid, and other insurers. It involves relationship building and networking, making and sustaining connections at the family, local, regional, and statewide levels.

CSHN is entering its second year with its Family Partnerships Program. In year one, we heard consistently from family partners that the system of care is too complicated, with regional differences in how it is organized and what is available. We heard at once that the volume of care coordination available is not sufficient for the complexity of some children, and that an over-abundance of care coordinators on a child's care team requires that parents *coordinate their care coordinators*. And most concerning, we heard time and again about how the workforce shortage impacts families who cannot find a PCA or a respite provider, or for whom in-home nursing is not available. We know this shortage extends to SLPs, OTs, PTs, and beyond.

CSHN Care Consultants participate with the LIT Teams by adding their voice to the Act 264 process. This team is connected to services across the state to support the system of care. If you want to learn more or have any questions, please reach out to our Care Consultants at AHS.VDHCSHN@vermont.gov.



Want to reach the CSHN Care Consultant for your area? Local contact info is available on our website: [CSHN Service Area](#).

Community Partner Spotlight



What is ACT 264 Coordination of Services?

ACT 264 is a law that Vermont passed in 1988 to ensure that human service

agencies and public education work together, with parents to coordinate services and achieve better outcomes for children and families. The ACT was expanded in 2005 to include all children/youth with a disability who receive services from the Agency of Education and the Agency of Human Services. The act developed a coordinated system of care so that these children receive educational, mental health, child welfare, juvenile justice, residential, and other appropriate services based on an individual plan- the Coordinated Service Plan (CSP). These CSP documents are written for a child with input from parents and other providers that know the child's unique strengths and challenges.

The Act 264 process looks at the whole child in the context of family and community and not just their diagnosis. The goal of Act 264 is to coordinate services for better outcomes for children and families.

As a result of Act 264, Local Interagency Teams (LIT) were put in place, one in each region of the state. These teams meet monthly to discuss local and state systems issues as well as resolve conflicts or unresolved issues that arise in CSPs. They might also review requests for residential treatment. Parents who are dissatisfied with their CSP, or feel they need more to help their child, can always request a meeting with the LIT.

And last and importantly, families have the right to access a local Family Representative, a parent who has lived experience with the service system, who can meet with the parent to ensure they understand the process and have needed support. Family Representatives ensure that family voice is always heard.

CSHN Updates



Adult holding infant, child wearing green striped shirt touching head of infant.

New resource alert!

Check out the new [Non-Emergent Medical Transportation](#) resource posted on the [CSHN Website](#). It details Medicaid's Hardship Mileage Program, out of state travel info, and Medicaid Rides.

Helping Families Moving to Vermont

Our team at Vermont Department of Health, Children with Special Health Needs (Vermont Department of Health) is looking to engage with families who have a child with special health needs (chronic medical condition or developmental disability) and who have moved to Vermont from another state in the last 2 years. We are seeking to better understand the experience of planning, preparing, and moving to the state within the context of transferring and accessing healthcare for children with complex needs. The work will inform the creation of recommended protocols and practices as well as materials to support families moving to Vermont in the future.

Please share widely to any families with a child with special health needs that is new to Vermont. Participation is completing a survey that takes about 10 minutes and we will compensate families \$25 for their time .

If you or someone you know are interested in participating this study or have additional questions, please contact Marinell Newton at Marinell.newton@vermont.gov or 802-578-2667.



Adult sitting with child on sofa. Both wearing striped shirts. Child wearing glasses.

Resources for Families



Young adult wearing blue polo shirt, lifting hand weights.

Autism Resources in Vermont

Autism touches many of our lives. Approximately one in 36 children in the United States are diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. In November 2015, the Agency of Human Services launched a monthly Autism Workgroup to build on the work that was done by the previous Autism Plan Advisory Committee and the Vermont State Autism Plan. This group asked the following question: *How do we use our collective resources to move autism services forward for children and their families in Vermont?* The workgroup convenes to inform, empower, and educate ourselves, and others about the needs of neurodivergent children and their families in Vermont.

The Autism Workgroup is made up a diverse group of family members, state staff, the University of Vermont, UVM Health Network, and community partners who come together to talk about gaps, issues, sharing of resources, and how to yield improvements in Vermont. The group created a resource guide for Vermonters <https://ifs.vermont.gov/document/autism-resources-vermont> as one way for anyone in Vermont looking for adaptive sports, medical providers, assessment information, Applied Behavioral Analysis providers, legal advice, and much more.

This group meets virtually and is open to anyone interested in joining. You can find more information on the webpage at: [Autism Services and Planning Coordination | Integrating Family Services](#). The group is facilitated by Cheryle Wilcox (Department of Mental Health), Emmy Hilliard (Vermont Family Network), and Catherine Armani-Munn (University of Vermont). For more information or questions please feel free to reach out to Cheryle at Cheryle.wilcox@vermont.gov, 802-318-7841.

Vermont Family Network - Coordinated Services Plan (CSP)

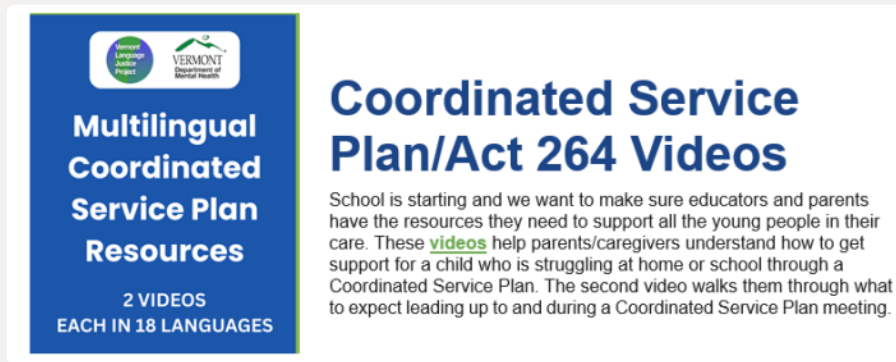
When a child with a disability or special health needs requires services from multiple organizations, and families need help with coordinating those services, they may be eligible for a Coordinated Services Plan (CSP). This tool coordinates the parties involved in a child's care by bringing all the service providers together at one meeting. Families who access the CSP are entitled to a parent representative who can support the family before, during and after the CSP meeting. VFN Family Support Consultants, through a contract with the Vermont Department of Mental Health, can support Vermont families in the CSP process in the role of parent rep.

If you have any questions regarding the parent representative role and how to access one for your meeting, CSP/Act 264 or mental health supports in general, please contact the VFN helpline at 802-876-5315 or info@vtn.org.

An upcoming webinar on this topic can be found at: [Register for 9/25: Parent Representatives in Act 264 and Coordination of Services \(CSP\) - Vermont Family Network](#)

Learn more at <https://www.vermontfamilynetwork.org>

The Vermont Language Justice Project creates public service videos in up to 21 languages to ensure that all Vermonters have access to the information they need to stay healthy, access services, and make informed choices. These videos were made in consultation with and with support from the VT Department of Mental Health and Howard Center.



Videos mentioned above are found at: [Coordinated Service Plan - YouTube](#)

Here are some other recommended videos for providers and families:

Listing of VLJP videos: [Resource Library](#)

A series on genetics that we did with VT Family Network [VLJP VFN Genetics Webinar](#)

A video about Children's Integrated Services [VLJP CIS Video](#)

Video about VT car seat laws: [VLJP Vermont Car Seat Laws](#)

Video about autism that we made with UVM Peds: [VLJP UVM Autism Video](#)

Did you know...? Want to know what's happening for Medicaid in Vermont? 2026 updates for families or patients are found here: [Health Insurance Changes in 2026: Stay Informed! | Vermont Health Connect](#)

Please consider sharing these resources with the families you serve and others at your organizations.

Policy Corner



Vermont Policy Updates

GCR 25-030 - Certified Community-Based integrated Health Center (CCBHC) Model Implementation. The Department of Mental Health (DMH) has identified Clara Martin Center and Ruland Mental Health Services as the two Designated Agencies best able to meet state and federal standards for certification to become CCBHCs. Comprehensive details are found in Policy Summary [GCR 25-030](#).

GCR 25-038 – Department of Mental Health Fee Service Rate Increase Effective July 1, 2025 increases the fee-for-service rates for Department of Mental Health (DMH) by 2%. The Fee for Service Rate Sheet for Fiscal Year 2026 can be found in [GCR 25-038](#).

GCR 25-039 – Community-Based Mobile Crisis Services payments are increased by 2% effective July 1, 2025. This is a statewide mobile crisis response system of care for all ages experiencing a mental health and/or substance use crisis. See [GCR 25-039 Final](#) for more info.

GCR 25-041 – Rate Increase for NFI. Effective July 1, 2025 increases the Northeastern Family Institute (NFI) bundled rate by 2%. [GCR 25-041 Final](#).

GCR 25-072 – Mental Health Services Coverage Update is effective July 1, 2025. Vermont's Medicaid program updated services provided in the Community Rehabilitation and Treatment (CRT) and Intensive Home and Community Based Services (IHCBS) program. This update includes services now authorized under the State Plan. For more information, view the Update at [GCR 25-072 FINAL](#).

GCR-25-073 – Division of Substance Preferred Providers Rate Increase 3% rate increase became effective on July 1, 2025. The notice refers to the Medicaid State Plan for more information. This is a continuation of GCR 25-065.

GCR 25-078 – Medicaid Assistive Community Care Services Reimbursement effective July 1, 2025, enacts a 2% increase in reimbursement rate for Assistive Community Care Services (ACCS). [GCR 25-078](#).

GCR 25-079 – Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living Medicaid Rate increased funding by 2% for home and community-based services delivered through DAIL. Details about the increase and the affected DAIL programs can be found at [GCR 25-079](#).

GCR 25-083 – Mental Health Residential Services Reimbursement Change updated the Final Notice clarifies rates for Crisis Beds. There is a comprehensive description of this policy summary at the [GCR 25-083 MH RS Reimbursement Change](#) register.

If you have questions about any of the GCRs above or wish to be added to email notifications for Global Commitment waivers please email AHS.MedicaidPolicy@vermont.gov.

Community Happenings

PedsProVT Community want to share some upcoming opportunities for providers:

The Early Intervention Project of Vermont (formerly I-Team Early Intervention) is presenting: Engage, Play, Connect: Practical Strategies for Young Children on the Autism Spectrum and their Families. Colchester series starts on October 14, 2025.

This 4-part training series is designed for professionals working with children from birth to age 3 with or at risk for autism spectrum disorder (ASD). While the primary focus is on toddlers, preschool providers working with children up to age 5 are welcome and will find the strategies applicable to their work.

More info and registration link at the Early Intervention Project of Vermont website. [Engage, Play, Connect](#)

The 24-Hour Postural Care Project is sponsoring: Pathways to Independence: Innovations in Pediatric Positioning and Mobility. Tuesday, October 28, 2025. Best Western Inn and Conference Center, South Burlington.

Morning Course: 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM (Registration required for morning course)

Afternoon Equipment Demo: 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM

More info and registration link at the 24-Hour Postural Care website. [Pathways to Independence: Innovations in Pediatric Positioning and Mobility](#)

Local Interagency Teams (LIT) Extravaganza 2025

October 16th from 9:30 am to 3:00 pm in Waterbury: This year, the LIT Extravaganza will have dedicated time for focused discussions aimed at advancing equity in the operations of Local Interagency Teams and fulfilling the statutory mandate of Act 264 which was passed in 1988. Additionally, a panel discussion will explore strategies for effectively elevating family voices, a crucial aspect of our work. This in-person event will help us all better understand and utilize our system of care as we work with and for Vermont children and families. Come connect, play MythBusters, learn, win prizes, have snacks, and build your network.

Interagency CORE Team Event - October 7 - Killington

The theme of this year's Interagency CORE Team Event is "Anchored in Collaboration: Building Strong Core Transition Teams". Featured speaker is Jayson Capobianco from the UVM Center for Disability and Community Inclusion. There will be Core district breakouts, a youth panel, and a number of workshops. Breakfast and lunch are provided. More information and registration can be found at this link: [2025 Interagency Core Team Event Tickets, Tue, Oct 7, 2025 at 9:00 AM | Eventbrite](#).

Preparing for the Future...3 part educational series from Special Needs Support Center

To register for this series about helping families prepare for their future,

click this link: [Preparing for the Future: A Three-Part Educational Series Tickets, Multiple Dates | Eventbrite](#)



Building Knowledge. Building Confidence. Building a Future.

In Person at Kilton Library Community Room & Live on Google Meet

Register once on [Eventbrite](#) to attend the full three-part series

The Special Needs Support Center is proud to present a three-part educational series created for parents and guardians who want to better understand guardianship, benefits, estate planning, and long-term support. Each session builds on the last, helping families prepare for the future with expert guidance in law, finance, and community support. We encourage participants to attend all three sessions to gain the full benefit of this comprehensive series.

Session 1: Guardianship, Alternatives, and Entitlement Programs

Wednesday, October 15, 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Understand guardianship and its alternatives while exploring essential entitlement programs: SSI, Medicaid, Medicare, Adult Family Care (AFC), Personal Care Assistance (PCA), SNAP benefits, Section 8 housing assistance (in flux), and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). Panelists: Alisha E.A. Cahall (Morneau Law), Kaitlyn Keating (Caffry & Keating), Kate Medeiros (Torch Family Capital)

Session 2: Estate Planning and Special Needs Trusts

Wednesday, November 5, 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Build on Session 1 by learning how to plan for the future with estate planning basics, Special Needs Trusts (1st and 3rd party), ABLE accounts, Roth IRA conversion strategies, and Charitable Remainder Trusts. Panelists: Alison Wells Sherman (Downs Rachlin Martin), Kaitlyn Keating (Caffry & Keating), Alisha E.A. Cahall (Morneau Law), Kate Medeiros (Torch Family Capital)

Session 3: Long-Term Services and Supported Housing

Wednesday, December 3, 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Conclude the series with a focus on long-term care and supported housing options available in our community. Panelists: Jim Caffry (Caffry & Keating), Hannah Schwartz (Riverflow Community), Sylvia Dow (Visions)

Complimentary childcare is available, please see additional questions section while registering.

129 South Main Street, Suite 103 White River Junction, VT 05001 603-448-6311 www.snsc-uv.org

[Register](#) NOW for Building Bright Futures's 6th Annual Regional Council Summit on October 16th at Capital Plaza Hotel and Conference Center in Montpelier, VT. The summit will focus on *Understanding the Adverse Effects of Substance Misuse on Children and Families* and planting seeds of hope for a healthier community. This free, in-person event will be from 10-2:30 and includes lunch.

**Building Bright Futures
Regional Council Summit**

**SAVE THE
DATE!**

October 16, 2025

**Capitol Plaza,
Montpelier, VT**

10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

**Understanding the
Adverse Effects of
Substance Misuse on
Children & Families**

Planting seeds of hope
for a healthier community



**Guest Speaker: Jessica Lahey,
Educator & New York Times
Bestselling Author**



- * Keynote address
- * Panel discussion
- * Network with peers



CSHN supports children with complex, chronic health conditions and/or developmental disorders, ages birth to-21, and their families, with flexible, experienced, and proactive services. If you'd like to learn more about CSHN programming and resources, please see the [CSHN Website](#).

Do you have feedback or content for this newsletter? Please [let us know!](#)



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