



## Voices for Vermont's Children

Voices for Vermont's Children (Voices) has worked on behalf of children and youth in Vermont for twenty-nine years. As Vermont's only independent, statewide, non-profit children's research and policy advocacy organization, we focus a majority of our efforts on our most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and youth. Our purpose is to advance policies that support and protect Vermont children of all ages, increase public awareness of their needs, and organize and work with individuals and organizations across the state concerned about such issues as early care and education, access to health care, child protective services, the achievement and graduation gaps for low income students and the impacts of child poverty. Our independence, credible research, and grassroots connections have made Voices a trusted leader for Vermont's children and youth. Voices' mission is to promote public policy that enhances the lives of children and youth in Vermont.

At the community level, Voices has a strong track record of supporting parent leadership development. Voices sponsored the Vermont Parent and Community Leadership program and oversaw the implementation of leadership classes across the state. With the Vermont Rural Partnership, Voices developed *Our Voices: Our Communities*, a youth leadership program to empower youth to engage productively in their schools and communities.

Voices led community organizing efforts with parents and other community members in Burlington and Winooski during the 2010-2011 high school transformation planning year. As part of the Winooski-Burlington Partnership for Change, Voices' local community organizers partner with Vermont Interfaith Action (VIA), applying a relationship-based organizing approach to support and develop leaders from communities facing economic and social barriers in our society. Voices also works with school-based partners, Youth and Adults Transforming Schools Together (YATST) and the Parent Information Resource Center (PIRC-VT).

Working with community partners and the Burlington and Winooski Schools, Voices will build capacity in these communities to support youth and parent leaders to help design and ensure a student-centered learning system in which every student thrives.

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