

A stylized landscape illustration featuring rolling green hills in the foreground and background. On the left, there is a green tree, a purple flower, and some orange foliage. A small red bird is flying in the sky above the tree. The sky is composed of horizontal bands of blue and white. The text is positioned on the right side of the image.

# Vermont Community Health Equity Partnership

*Updates May 2, 2022*

# Community Health Equity Partnership in the St. Johnsbury District

Supported by funding from the CDC Health Equity Grant awarded to the Vermont Dept. of Health and administered by VTPHI

- Grounds work in collective impact principles
  - Population and systems level change happen when we work together to achieve results
  - Community members, organizations and institutions all share in the responsibility
- Builds on the strengths and successes of NEK Prosper!
- Engages a diverse range of community members and partners through new and existing opportunities
- Develops capacity to advance health equity focused activities

# Building Blocks



*"Backbone" Agency and Key Staff*

*(Northern Counties/Kari White)*



*Action Learning Collaboratives*

*(VTPHI Coordinating/Resources  
Archived at NEPHTC)*



*Community Grants (\$150,000 to be  
awarded in the St. Johnsbury District)*

*\* NOT the same funding offered  
through the Vermont Community  
Foundation*





## VT Community Health Equity Partnership - Mark Your Calendar - Updated - April 2022

\* Webinars have no limit on the number of attendees.

\*Grant End Date, May 31, 2023

- ALL are welcome
- Stipends available—remove barriers to attendance and meeting participation (\$1800/month available)
- Broad range of topics to meet people where they are in terms of experience with collective impact and health equity work
- Encourage participation of those who may not yet be at the table

Topic	Date	Time	Required Attendees
Webinar #3 - Creating Health Equity in Vermont's Communities: Building partnerships through engagement and trust	May 12, 2022	10-12pm 12-2pm - lunch working session 2-4pm  <i>*12-2pm is a time to work with your team, collaborate on webinar prompts, and local groups are encouraged to enjoy lunch together; cost will be reimbursed.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- District Directors</li> <li>- Backbone/integrator members/non-profit leadership</li> <li>- Community members representing populations most negatively impacted by Covid-19</li> <li>- Stakeholders in partnering organizations supporting your health equity work</li> <li>- Local groups are encouraged to enjoy lunch together; cost will be reimbursed</li> </ul>
Webinar #4 - Collective Impact Principles and Importance  Led by: Backbone/Integrator Organizations	June 2, 2022	8:30-10am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- District Directors</li> <li>- Backbone/integrator members/non-profit leadership</li> <li>- Community members representing populations most negatively impacted by Covid-19</li> <li>- Stakeholders in partnering organizations supporting your health equity work</li> </ul>
Webinar #5 - Topic will be based on input/feedback	July 19, 2022	8:30-10am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- District Directors</li> <li>- Backbone/integrator members/non-profit leadership</li> <li>- Community members representing populations most negatively impacted by Covid-19</li> <li>- Stakeholders in partnering organizations supporting your health equity work</li> </ul>
Statewide Convening (in-person)	Fall 2022 Either last 2 weeks Oct/1st 2 weeks Nov		

# Resources

- NEK Prosper! Community Health Equity website
  - <https://nekprosper.org/get-involved/nek-community-health-equity/>
- Learning Collaborative Archive—recordings, slides, handouts, background materials, for more information:
  - <https://nekprosper.org/get-involved/nek-community-health-equity/learning-collaboratives/>
- Access to Coaching
  - Padgett Coaching—team support/coaching
  - Health Resources in Action (HRiA)—coaching on health equity, stakeholder engagement, addressing inequities and power imbalance



# Community Grants

Total of \$150,000 available to the St. Johnsbury District

\* Additional \$150,000 available to Newport District through Vibrant ONE

# Community Grants

*Make positive change to address ongoing health inequities and advance health equity*

*Meaningful interactions with residents are vital*

*Fund organizations that may have been excluded from past funding*

*Activities coordinate and align with other community resources striving to advance equity and impact the social determinants of health*

*Include strategies that build skills, knowledge, leadership or confidence in new community partners and residents*

*Positively change formal or informal rules or regulations in an organization or community*

*Application process will be intentionally designed to build capacity within communities—easy to understand, simplified reporting requirements.*

*Consider ways for those who may not have an organizational infrastructure to apply for grants to participate.*

*Change the economic, social or physical surroundings that affect health outcomes*

*Funds directly benefit people who have first-hand lived experience with health inequities*

*Consider two deadlines for applications June 1 and November 1, 2022*

*All funds MUST be expended by May 31, 2023*



# Some Grant Nuts and Bolts

- Northern Counties will be the fiscal agent and contract with sub-recipients
  - Sub-recipients must expend their own funds and invoice for reimbursement
  - Options for organizations without existing infrastructure are being considered
- Discussions on how to allocate funding are ongoing—options may include:
  - Welcome applications to be reviewed by a smaller team
  - Provide funds to NEK Prosper! CANs to support projects of their choice
  - Reserve portion of funding for organizational capacity building
  - Earmark funds for community engagement capacity building



## Where are we and where are we growing?

NEK Prosper! sprouted the seed for our community to be a place where everyone could be: mentally healthy, well housed, financially secure, well nourished, and physically healthy.



An illustration showing the stages of plant growth from left to right. On the far left is a large, mature plant with a thick green stem, many green leaves, and a dense cluster of colorful flowers (yellow, pink, blue, and purple) at the top. Its roots are extensive and spread out in the brown soil. To its right is a medium-sized seedling with a thinner stem and fewer leaves. Further right is a small seedling with a very thin stem and just a few leaves. To the right of the smallest seedling is a single brown seed lying on the surface of the soil. The background features a bright yellow sun with rays in a blue sky with white clouds.

## Where are we and where are we growing?

To continue the impact of NEK Prosper! on the health and wellbeing of our community, and to have an even greater impact at the population and systems level, we need to reflect on who may have been left behind. Who hasn't had fair and just opportunities for health? How do we engage those members of our community? How do we collectively define the work we need to do in the future?

# Tools We Can Use

- *Community Health Equity Assessment*
- *Data Driven Problem Statement*
- *Emergent Learning After Action Review*





# Community Health Equity Assessment

## Instructions:

- Start by deciding who should take this assessment. This decision is up to each district. Things to consider: can the Learning Collaborative Team represent the larger community group? Do you want to include more members? If so, how? For example, having a group discussion and coming to consensus, or using a survey tool and averaging the results.
- Complete the assessment, using the suggested discussion questions under each topic to get to your answer.

## Assessment scoring:

1: Not at all

2: Starting to Make Progress

3: Making Good Progress

4: Fully in Place

To what extent does your organization or group...	1	2	3	4	Why is this habit important?
<u>Engage local residents to support your efforts</u> (e.g., by providing input, selecting priorities, co-designing strategies, taking action roles, etc. <b>Discussion questions:</b> What could you engage residents in? Who do you engage or want to engage? How do you want to or engage these residents?					<u>Local residents</u> have first-hand experience with community problems; their perspectives and action roles can help your efforts meet local needs and achieve better outcomes.
<u>Ask questions to understand the systemic reasons why problems are happening before designing solutions.</u> <b>Discussion questions:</b> Have you done a root cause analysis? If so, what did you learn and what has been done to address the root causes?					Strategies that address system root causes are more effective at solving problems. Root causes are the underlying reason problems are happening.

# Community Health Equity Assessment

To what extent does your organization or group...	1	2	3	4	Why is this habit important?
<p>Use <u>action learning</u> and gather rapid feedback from diverse perspectives on the implementation and impact of your efforts to <u>promote continuous improvement</u>. Action learning is also called the PDSA cycle (plan, do, study, act). <u>Discussion questions:</u> How often does your group use the concept of continuous improvement in your work? Example: Plan – identify a problem; Do - pilot or implement a strategy; Study – track and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy toward the intended outcome; Act – adjust the strategy based on what you have learned.</p>					<p>Rapid feedback cycles and action learning helps stakeholders quickly develop and adapt their efforts until they discover the solution that works in their community.</p>
<p><u>Ask questions</u> during planning and decision-making processes to ensure your efforts are contributing to equity rather than unintentionally contributing to local inequities. <u>Discussion questions:</u> How often does your group ask health equity questions before making decisions? <i>Example questions:</i> What disparities (e.g., differences in outcomes across groups) exist related to your organization's targeted outcomes? Which groups are experiencing these disparities? Are some groups disproportionately disadvantaged and advantaged? Which groups should be prioritized by your efforts? What outcomes/indicators should be used to track progress on reducing these disparities? Which do residents from disadvantaged groups prioritize? What systemic root causes are driving these disparities/inequities? Which root causes do residents from disadvantaged groups identify and prioritize? Which root causes are the most important to prioritize for action (e.g., have the biggest impact on affected groups, are prioritized by residents, etc.)?</p>					<p>Many routine policies and decisions can unintentionally disadvantage certain groups in the <u>community</u>, and require intentional consideration to ensure they are designed to promote equity.</p>



## VIBRANT ONE (Orleans/No. Essex)

**VISION:** Orleans and Northern Essex is a vibrant, thriving, safe and inclusive community. We work collaboratively toward our shared vision: building on the strengths of our community; honoring voice and choice; and fostering health and wellness, dignity and respect.

**WICKED PROBLEM/OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT #1:** We are not providing the right mental health/substance misuse care, at the right place at the right time, every time and too many in our community are getting stuck at the wrong level of care/ wrong care location. This is frustrating, costly, and ineffective.

**COMMUNITY ASPIRATION/RESULTS STATEMENT #1:** Everyone living in Orleans/No. Essex will have easy access to person-centered and coordinated mental health and substance misuse services that are timely, close to home, at the appropriate level and with the appropriate transition supports for continued success in a person's home community.

### ROOT CAUSES

*What is holding the wicked problem in place?*

(identifying the root causes will help point to strategies to address those root causes)

### COMMUNITY ASSETS

*Why isn't the problem worse (what's going well)?*

(identifying community assets will help point to strategies to make use of assets)

**POPULATION GOAL #1a:** By 2025 we will have reduced the number of ED visits/length of stay for MH

**POPULATION GOAL #1b:** By 2025 we will have reduced the number of ED visits/length of stay for SUD

**POPULATION GOAL #1c:** By 2025 we will have reduced the number of opioid related deaths

**POPULATION GOAL #1d:** By 2025 we will have reduced the number of suicide deaths

**POPULATION GOAL #1e:** By 2025 we will have reduced the number of poor mental health days

**IDEAS of POP LEVEL INDICATORS**  
(how will we know we are achieving our aspiration?)

- Fewer ED visits for MH/SUD
- Shorter ED stays for MH/SUD
- More texts to Crisis Text Line
- More local options for "less than crisis-level care"
- Decrease in poor mental days
- Reduced opioid deaths
- Reduced suicide deaths
- More MAT providers
- More MH/SUD providers

### BACKBONE/DESIGN GROUP ROLE

- Guide Overall Vision and Strategy
- Support Aligned and High-Leverage Activities
- Establish Shared Measurement Practices
- Cultivate Inclusive Community Aspiration, Engagement and Ownership
  - Advance Policy
  - Mobilize Resources
  - Provide Strategic Learning Opportunities
- Cultivate Systems Change Leaders

### SOCIAL DETOX ACTION TEAM

Rapid learning through iteration (accelerated process) to build proposal to bring back to Steering Committee

# Data Driven Problem Statement

- What is the problem/opportunity?
- What is the community aspiration/expected result?
- Identify the root causes of the problem or the "5 Whys" to guide strategies
- Define population level goals
- How will we know if we have moved towards our aspirations? (population level indicators)



# Emergent Learning After Action Review

## Emergent Learning After Action Review

**Organization:**

**Date:**

**Intervention:**

**Target population(s):**

**What were our intended results?**

**What were our actual results?**

**What caused our results?**

**What will we sustain or improve?**

**What is our next opportunity to test what we learned?**

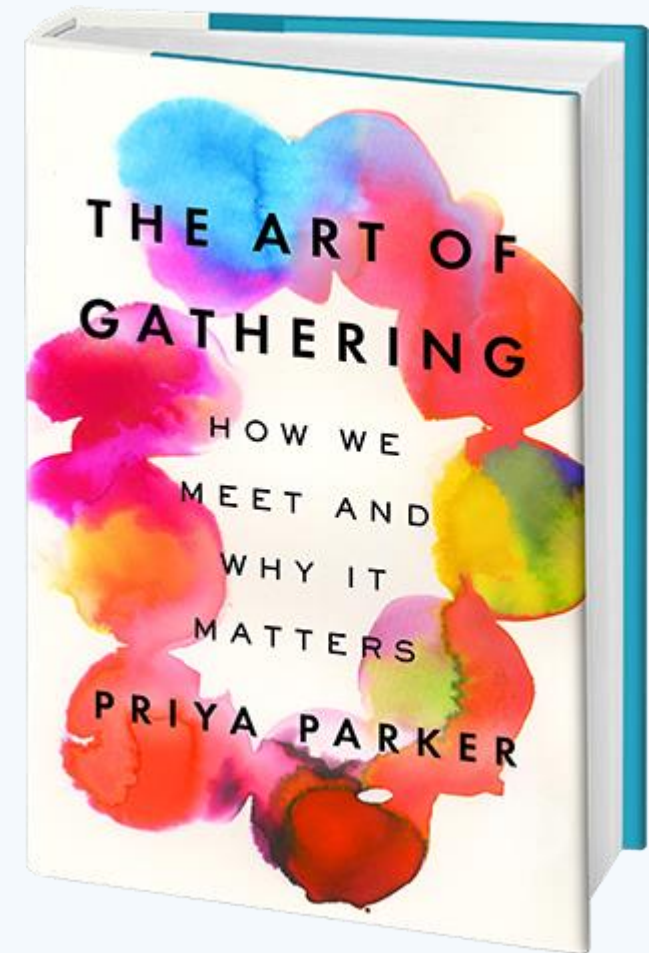
A stylized landscape illustration featuring rolling green hills in the foreground, a small tree with a brown trunk and purple and pink foliage on the left, and blue and white wavy hills in the background. The text is centered in the white area.

# *Collective Impact Summit*

*Reflections*

# Priya Parker and the Art of Gathering

- A gathering is 3 or more people coming together, but so much more!
- Purposeful—has a beginning/middle/end
- THE most powerful tool we have to shift culture, one group at a time as a daily practice
- Connect around a common purpose even though we have different sources of power.
- Choose to share that power.
- The moment of discovery begins with the invitation







## Grow with Me Garden Project

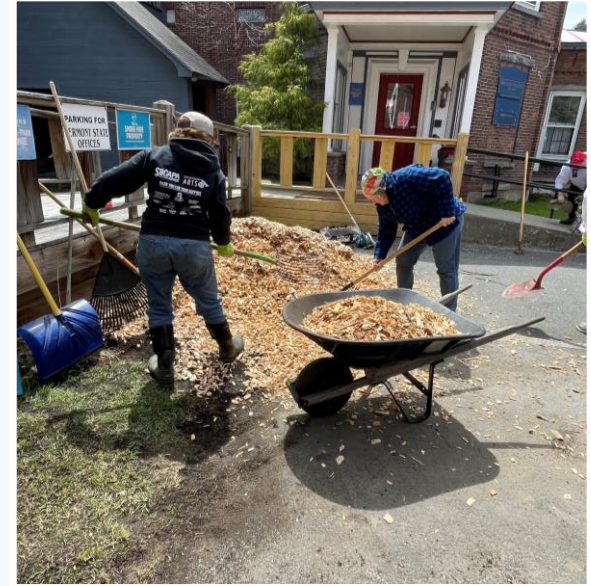
- Revitalize an unused outdoor space for planting flowers and vegetables, and for a peaceful space for visitors to enjoy
- Partners:
  - Vermont Dept. of Health staff
  - Hub Community Members (10+)

# Before...107 Eastern Ave, Vermont Department of Health





During...





# More Work...

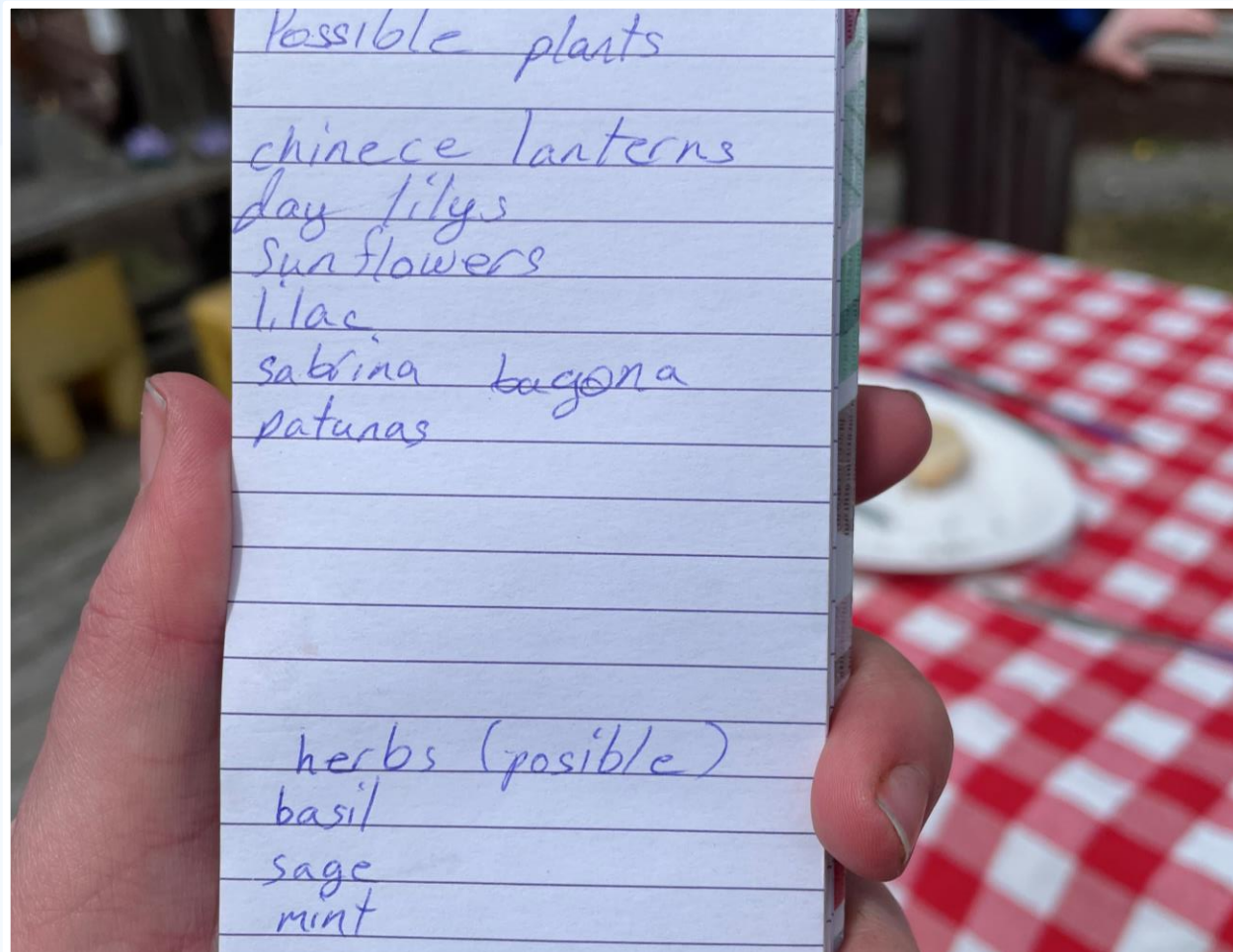




After...







## Next Steps

- June planting day!
- Planting boxes may be themed and incorporate links to Food Hero recipes (Well Nourished CAN)
- Look for more info on the Hub June calendar