



## 2025 IMPACT REPORT

### Working Bridges in a Year

The year 2025 was marked by strong collaboration with employer partners as we navigated system-level uncertainty and growing challenges affecting employees across Vermont. Together, we addressed emerging gaps in real time—leveraging resources, sharing insights, and strengthening workforce stability at worksites across the region. Looking ahead, 2026 will focus on refining and strengthening our work so employers and employees continue to receive effective, high-quality support as the network sustains and grows. **Our commitment remains the same:** to be a responsive, trusted partner helping workplaces adapt, innovate, and meet the evolving needs of their workforce.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with you—and to the opportunities ahead to innovate, plan, and take meaningful action together.

**30** Companies

**44** Locations

**100+** HR Partners

**20,000+**

Individuals with access to Working Bridges

### Resource Coordination: Who We Served

**2340** unique individuals served in 2025



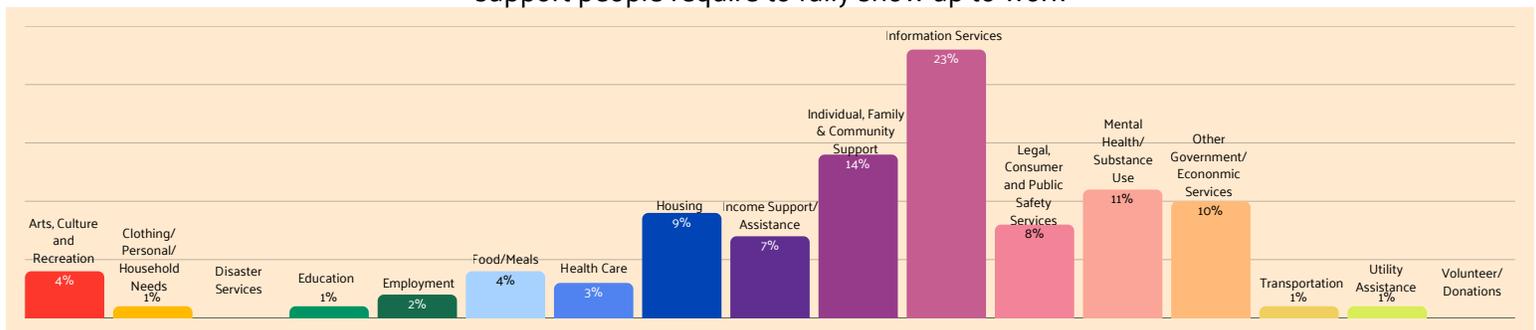
**8703** referrals and services

**5630** total interactions



### Categories of Referrals and Services

Employees seek support from RC's for a variety of reasons, categorized below. These categories demonstrate the multitude of support people require to fully show up to work



# Top 3 Referrals and Services



## Information Services

- Information Only
- Appointment Scheduling
- Listening Support



## Individual, Family & Community Support

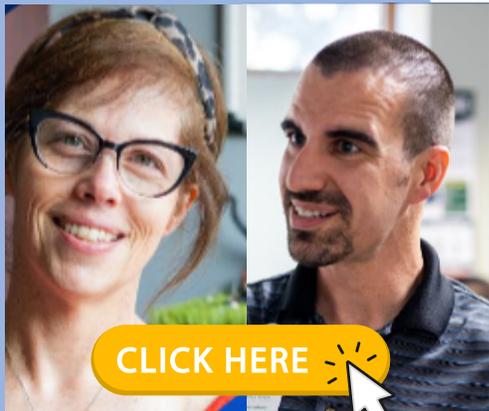
- Following up with employees
- Listening support
- Problem solving
- Child care provider referrals



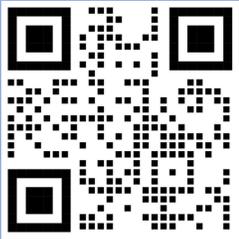
## Mental Health & Substance Use

- Listening Support
- Referral to EAP
- General mental health information & education

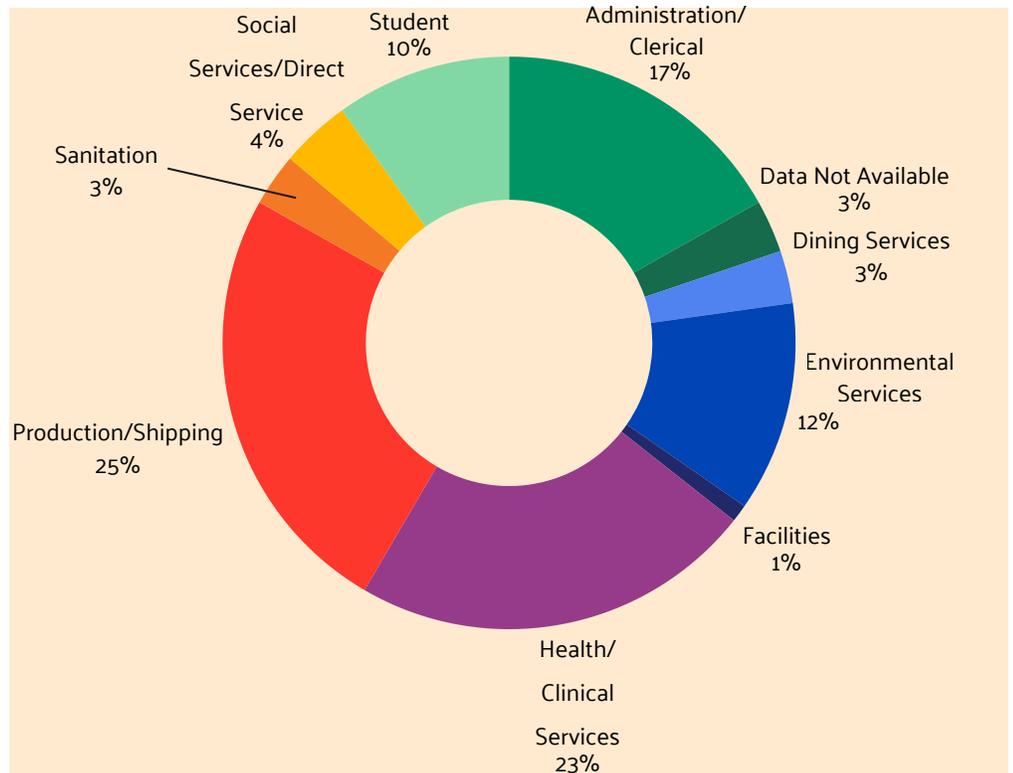
## UNITED IS THE WAY IMPACT STORIES



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## Individuals Served by Their Role



## Primary referral sources

- Returning client (56%)
- Walkabout (15%)
- Training/Presentation (5%)
- Email (4%)
- Supervisor (3%)
- Human Resources (2%)
- Bulletin Board/E-Board (2%)
- EFAP/EAP (2%)



# Training, Education, and Innovation

## Training and Education Program

In 2025, the Working Bridges team strengthened workforce stability by delivering or participating in **18 trainings** that reached over **1,025 individuals**, equipping employers and practitioners with practical tools to better support employees. Below are just some of the trainings provided in 2025.



### Working Bridges Concepts Training

Interactive leadership training that builds understanding of community resources, mental models, and the impacts of scarcity—using activities like **Strain** and **Caught in the Middle** to help teams identify barriers and strengthen supportive workplace practices.

### Workplace Lunch & Learns

Brief, onsite sessions that expand employees' awareness of essential resources. 2025 topics included mental health supports, advance care directives, and financial well-being.

### Earn It, Keep It, Grow It

A four-part onsite financial education series focused on practical skills such as goal setting, budgeting, credit building, and saving.

*"Collaboration with Working Bridges has truly been a wonderful experience. The trust and support that the community places in Working Bridges and the United Way are truly inspiring. I am genuinely excited about the future of our partnership and the opportunities it holds for making a positive impact."*  
-Ariel Chant, North Country Federal Credit Union

## Innovation and Collaboration

Innovation and collaboration is core to Working Bridges, guided by the experience of employers, employees, and community partners. Quarterly Innovation Labs help employers share best practices and identify scalable solutions for a stable workforce, while smaller regional groups tackle more localized challenges. Here are examples of innovation and collaboration in 2025:

- **Working Bridges Alliance** – Improved coordination across two United Ways and opened new conversations with United Way of Lamoille County to strengthen regional support for employers and employees.
- **Feed Every Need** – Advanced the continuous food delivery service toward an employer-sponsored benefit in Central Vermont and the Northeast Kingdom.
- **Federal Government Shutdown Response** – Mobilized support during the shutdown, delivering \$2,000 in food assistance to employees reliant on 3SquaresVT.
- **Integrated Health Assister Services** – Integrated Healthcare Assister Services into Resource Coordination to streamline employee access to health coverage guidance and reduce workplace disruptions.
- **Central Vermont Prevention Coalition Partnership** – Partnered with workplaces in Central Vermont to provide family and youth substance-misuse prevention education.
- **Anti-Fat Bias & Weight-Based Discrimination Training** – Offered training with Annie Valentine to help employers strengthen inclusive practices and policies that support all employees.

## Thank you to our supporters!





# Advocacy at the Statehouse

Reliable transportation remains a major barrier to employee attendance and retention—especially in Vermont, where limited public transit and van services leave many workers without options when a vehicle fails, a license is suspended, or work schedules don't align with available routes. These challenges directly affect employers through absenteeism, turnover, and lost productivity.

In February 2025, Working Bridges provided testimony to the House Committee on Transportation, sharing employer-informed data on the transportation solutions most critical to maintaining a stable workforce—including public transit improvements, workplace transportation innovations, vanpool options, and support for personal vehicle access.

## Beyond the Cliff - Responding to Gaps

### Food Access Support

Food access continues to be a major focus at our worksites. A partnership with Feed Every Need provided over **1800 frozen meals onsite to employees**. Resource Coordinators distributed **200 additional meals around the Thanksgiving holiday**, with support from National Life. A grant through Bi-State Primary Care Association supported additional grocery card distribution and **40 no-cost CSA shares at over 8 different Working Bridges sites**. During the SNAP benefit delays in October, employer partners invested in additional grocery cards to help support employees impacted by the Government Shutdown.

*“As CVMC site coordinator for the monthly Veggie Van Go food distribution, I am happy to collaborate with our friends at Green Mountain United Way each month. Together, we connect healthy vegetables and fruits with Working Bridges participants to help make putting nutritious food on the table a little bit easier.”*

*-Barbara McAndrew, Central Vermont Medical Center*

### PFC Housing Fund

Launched in 2025 in response to the housing crisis, Paul Frank & Collins donated funds to directly help employees who live and/or work in Chittenden County. Through their generosity, **7 employees** who could not obtain assistance elsewhere were granted financial assistance. Funds were used to prevent eviction through partial rent assistance, to help an employee secure safe rental housing by covering part of the security deposit needed. Additionally, these funds helped keep the lights on and the heat running during times of financial strain. **For one employee, these funds helped cover closing costs for a home purchase—an incredible milestone that provides long-term stability.**

### The 185 Bridge Fund

The Bridge Fund is a small-dollar grant fund that Resource Coordinators can access to help employees with financial emergencies. It's used as a last-resort fund to help employees retain employment and support financial stability, when other community resources are not available. The fund exists because of the generosity of community donors, grants, and earned dividends on investment accounts. In 2025, **126 employees** utilized this resource. The main needs of employees who utilized this fund were around food access and transportation. Over **118 grocery cards** were given out as well as funds to help with transportation needs such as gas, repairs, and maintenance.

### VT Parks Forever

During the 2025 season, Vermont State Parks generously provided **1000 day-use passes** to Working Bridges to distribute at our worksites. We were able to connect **297 different employees** with park passes for themselves and their families to enjoy. We easily distributed all 1000 park passes, as well as educated on the **Park Access Fund Pilot Program**, which provided free access all summer long, to employees receiving state benefits.

# Relationships - the Heart of Working Bridges

At the core of our work are the strong relationships we are able to form--relationships with employees, employer partners, and community partners and local organizations. Our strong relationships with our community partners and local organizations allow for direct access to the support employees need to address the challenges and goals they might have. Our Resource Coordinators establish these relationships by attending regular community meetings, participating in on-going trainings, serving on boards and committees, and inviting these organizations to team-meetings to share information and establish referral processes. **Here's what some of our community partners have said about working with our Working Bridges Program:**

**"Champlain Housing Trust sincerely appreciates the opportunity to partner with Working Bridges so that working Vermonters can learn about the educational resources and housing opportunities that CHT has to offer."**

**-Jaclyn Marcotte, Champlain Housing Trust**

**"As a social worker serving refugee and immigrant clients at the Association of Africans Living in Vermont, I have had the pleasure of collaborating with a number of Working Bridges' Resource Coordinators. These folks have gone above and beyond in helping our clients access services in the community that are difficult to access given a language barrier. In addition, they provided excellent follow-up-- both to me and to the client-- which aided in my ability to coordinate care."**

**-Jessica Story, Association of Africans Living in Vermont**

**"Over the years, I have had the pleasure of working with Working Bridges Resource Coordinators to support families as they navigate complicated childcare systems. This includes submitting childcare searches for full-time care, afterschool, summer, and school vacation care, for families with the WBRC and Child Care Resource's referral team, then assisting the WBRC on identifying the best way for the family to apply for Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFAP). We coordinate to help with application completion and acquiring the required extra documentation. When the family has a WBRC who is working directly with a CCR Eligibility Specialist, the success rate for application completion just skyrockets. The family is more likely to meet imposed deadlines and to gather all the required documentation, which is sometimes complicated to get or requires working with another agency (like the Office of Child Support, for example.) Without the WBRCs, I can identify many families who would not have completed the process, and would have ended up with a huge unmanageable childcare bill causing them to stop childcare altogether, or lose their jobs when they lose their childcare, and eventually, would perhaps lose housing when they could not work/pay bills. It is always a pleasure to coordinate services for families with Working Bridges!"**

**-Wendy Lachapelle, Children's Integrated Services - Specialized Child Care**

**"Our organization, Turning Point Center of Central Vermont, focuses on substance use recovery. We have partnered with the Working Bridges program to offer on-site substance use support to employers enrolled in their program. Not only were the Working Bridges staff extremely professional and fun to work with, they were effective in making introductions and helping us build relationships with the employers. They helped us connect with management and staff directly to offer innovative and outside the box programming. We look forward to working more with Working Bridges in the future!"**

**-Rosemary Rosa, Turning Point Center of Central Vermont**

**Contact us!**



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