



Vermont Association for the
Blind and Visually Impaired

FY19 ANNUAL REPORT





" We believe that regardless of age, people with a vision loss should remain active participants, and be fully involved in their communities. Thanks to your ongoing support, and working together, we are making this a reality for more of your neighbors this year than ever before. "

- Steve Pouliot, Executive Director

Our Mission:

To enable Vermonters, whether blind or visually impaired, to be more independent, to cultivate adaptive skills and to improve their quality of life.

2019 Statistics at a Glance

The Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (VABVI), a non-profit organization founded in 1926, is the only private agency to offer training, services, and support to visually impaired Vermonters from birth to end of life.

104 clients participated in Peer Assisted Learning and Support Groups (PALS) across 8 counties in Vermont.

145 volunteers donated 7,121 hours of service, and volunteer drivers drove 148,107.4 miles in the past year.



VABVI provided assistance to 355 children and 1,556 adults - totaling 1,911 services provided in 2019!

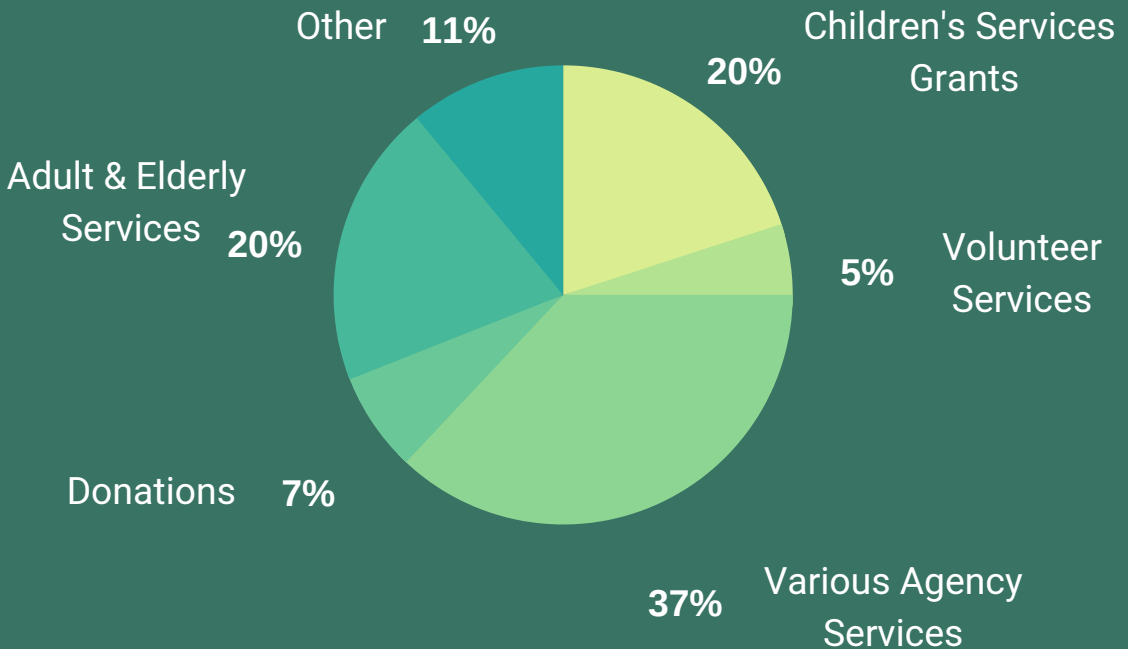
62 towns and cities supported VABVI by providing \$28,019 in donations.

www.vabvi.org   **@vabvi802**

Financials: July 2018 through June 2019

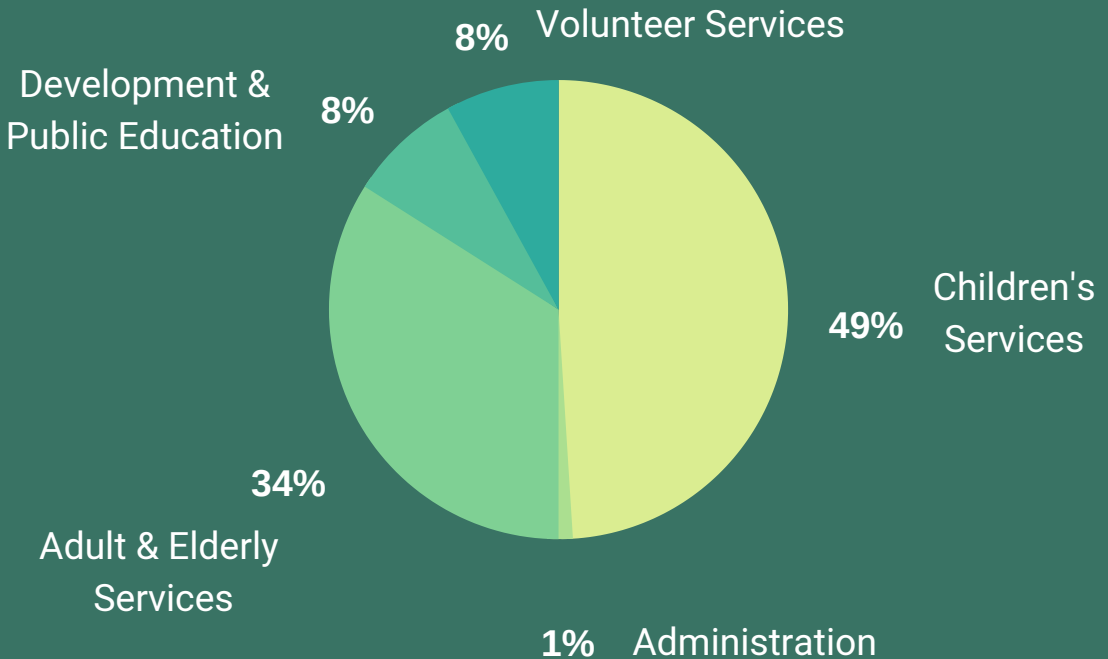
Revenue

Children's Services Grants	\$614,059
Adult & Elderly Services	\$630,000
Volunteer Services	\$150,000
Donations	\$214,338
Various Agency Services	\$1,163,616
Other	\$358,728
TOTAL	\$3,130,741



Expenses

Children's Services	\$1,545,092
Adult & Elderly Services	\$1,054,147
Volunteer Services	\$242,510
Development & Public Education	\$239,345
Administration	\$27,945
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TOTAL	\$3,109,039



\$500+ Level Donors

Alma Gibbs Donchian Foundation
BlueCross BlueShield VT
Robert Brinckerhoff
Frederick Buechner
The Byrne Foundation
Castleton Lions Club
William A. Catto
Charitable Foundation of Bryant
Chuckling Grinder Co.
Charter Communications
Thomas E. Chase
Comcast Corporation
Community National Bank
Concept 2, Inc.
Kim Cooper
Ray and Mary Doyle
Estate of Elizabeth Richmond
Creed
Stephen A. Feltus
Francis & Louise Nichols
Foundation
Thomas W. Frank
Freeman Foundation
G.W. Plastics
George W. Mergens Foundation
The Gibney Family Foundation
Elizabeth Hazen
Hope Hubbard Irrevocable Trust
Thomas Horner
J&E Gifford Memorial Fund
Carroll F. Ketchum
Kinney Drugs Foundation
Kinney Pike
Grace Levy

Mascoma Foundation
MBF Bioscience
Robert McDowell
Robert McEwing
Ormand Mongeon
Morris and Bessie Altman
Foundation
Marion Mueller
NBT Bank
Neagley & Chase Construction
NorthCountry Federal Credit Union
Norwich Lions Club
Oakland Foundation
PBM Nutritionals
Pete & Penny Peterson
Pizzagalli Foundation
Angelo Pizzagalli
James Pizzagalli
Steven Pouliot
Lillian Seward
Jeffrey Silcox
Special People In Need (SPIN)
Elizabeth Steele
Swenson Granite Company
TD Bank
Troy Area Lions Club
Vergennes Lions Club
Vermont Children's Trust
Foundation
Vermont Eastern Star Home, Inc.
Vermont Lions Charities, Inc.
Vermont Mutual Insurance
Eugene & Lili Walsh
WowToyz

Town and City Funding

Town of Albany	Town of Middlesex
Town of Alburgh	Town of Middletown Springs
Town of Arlington	Town of Milton
Town of Berlin	Town of Moretown
Town of Bethel	Town of Mt. Holly
Town of Bloomfield	Town of North Hero
Town of Bridport	Town of Northfield
Town of Brighton	Town of Orange
Town of Brookline	Town of Pawlet
Town of Cabot	Town of Peacham
Town of Calais	Town of Poultney
Town of Cambridge	Town of Randolph
Town of Castleton	Town of Readsboro
Town of Charlotte	Town of Richford
Town of Clarendon	Town of Roxbury
Town of Craftsbury	Town of Royalton
Town of Danby	Town of Saint Johnsbury
Town of East Montpelier	Town of Shaftsbury
Town of Eden	Town of Sharon
Town of Enosburgh	Town of Shelburne
Town of Essex	Town of Sheldon
Town of Fairfax	Town of Starksboro
Town of Fairlee	Town of Stowe
Town of Fayston	Town of Thetford
Town of Glover	Town of Tunbridge
Town of Granville	Town of Waterbury
Town of Hartford	Town of Weathersfield
Town of Highgate	Town of Wells
Town of Holland	Town of Weston
Town of Jay	Town of Williston
Town of Lowell	City of Barre
Town of Lunenburg	City of Montpelier
Town of Manchester	City of South Burlington
Town of Marshfield	

Adult Services

Updates from Dan Norris - Director of Adult Services

In FY 2018-2019 our program to teach how to utilize the accessibility features of iPhones and iPads was expanded. Now other smart tablets and phones including Android and Google platforms along with accessories like smart speakers are part of the training offered. Additionally, because of the low cost and increasing accessibility of Amazon products, the Amazon Dot, Echo and Kindle Fire tablets were included.

The expanded program took a new name **SMART Device training, which stands for Speech, Magnification, Accessibility Reading and Telecommunication**. Now, no matter what device a person might have, we can help them learn to use their phone, tablets or smart speakers to access the world!

VABVI also completed a project to develop a secure, online referral system through our website. This project began as doctor's offices and community partners requested the ability to make a referral this way to make it easier, speed up the process and shorten the lag time between a client being identified as needing our services and making the first contact with our staff. Numerous studies indicate that there is a direct correlation between the emotional health of a client and faster referral processes. **Shortening this time not only is connected with emotional health but the client's ability to maintain and regain independence in their home by learning adaptive strategies.** We are excited to have this new system in place and will be actively reaching out to eye care providers and other community partners!

Children's Services

Updates from Stephanie Bissonette - Director of Children's Services

- 339 students received consultation, monthly or weekly services during the 2018-19 school year.
- 45 new referrals for children (ages 0-18) during the 2018-19 school year.
- 28 students received summer services in 2019 from 9 TVI's from June through August.
- 20 students completed the 2019 summer employment program called Learn Earn and Prosper (LEAP)
- 13 Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVI) are employed, 8 of them have a dual certification in Orientation & Mobility and 1 of them is triple certified as an Assistive Technology Specialist for Individuals with Visual Impairments!
- 10 students attended our annual 2019 Intensive Residential Life Experience.

Gratitude comes 30 years later!

"I received a phone call from a parent at 8pm at night and my first thought was that something must be wrong. The parent went on to thank me for services provided 30 years ago, because recently her daughter had passed the bar exam and became a lawyer. She laughed about the time she disagreed with my recommendation for her daughter to use a cane and how absurd that seems now. We reminisced about how her daughter was resistant to learning braille because she wanted to read print like her siblings, but now her daughter is a braille speed reader and uses a cane to travel independently every day. The former student now lives independently and has a full time job as a lawyer. Ultimately, this mother was grateful for all the Children Services that VABVI provided over the years. How sweet it was for me to hear this level of gratitude 30 years later!" - Stephanie Bissonette

New in 2019: Dancing With the Burlington Stars

We are happy to report that our inaugural Dancing with Burlington Stars was a success! It was a fun night featuring amazing local talent, community spirit and a boisterous, engaged audience. One year ago, we made the decision to replace the annual dinner with a new event that would appeal to a broader audience and raise more funds for and greater awareness of the VABVI mission. The new event surpassed every goal that we set for it; it raised more funds, sold more tickets, brought VABVI more media attention and it increased our donor base!



We head into year two with great momentum and the goal of expanding on our first year success. If you attended the show, thank you for being part of our collective success! If you missed the first show, make sure you get your tickets for the next event: **Dancing with the Burlington Stars: Sept. 13, 2020 at the Flynn Theater. Save the date!**



For more information about ways you can support blind and visually impaired Vermonters, please contact our development department:

development@vabvi.org

802-863-1358 x 224

