

# Green Mountain Self-Advocates Youth Summit



## Basic Description:

GMSA has developed scripts and materials for a 6-hour Youth Summit. Activities are geared for students who experience a wide variety of developmental disabilities. The presenters are adults with developmental disabilities supported by allies. The Summit can be held on one day or split into two days.

Typically, 4 to 6 high schools participate. There can be 20 to 40 students supported by teachers as needed. and 10 teachers.

Allow a couple of months to recruit students. Vermont is a rural state so we select a county and approach all the high schools. We recommend getting letters of recommendation from teachers and students who are familiar you're your work to give to new school contacts.

We typically rent a meeting room and provide refreshments or lunch as needed. Attendees receive resources about joining a self-advocacy group nearby (Roadmap to Self-Advocacy) and other resources. The agenda includes:

- Establish Group Agreements
- Several Interactive Ice Breaker Games About Making Choices
- Green Mountain Self-Advocates: What We Believe
- Activity: What Is Self-Advocacy?

Green Mountain Self-Advocates [www.gmsavt.org](http://www.gmsavt.org) ~ 2018

- Life is Good and Getting Better: Peer Advice
- Activity: Making Your Case Role Plays
- Positive Self-Talk (Are your words proactive or reactive?)
- Proactive Vs Reactive Problem Solving Activity
- One Page Profiles



## Testimonies from teachers about the St. Albans Youth Summit held in 2016

### 1. MVU Special Educator - Sherry Dumont

"Thank you to the dedicated and informative people Green Mountain Self-Advocates. As a special-educator it was wonderful spending the day with people who have disabilities who are working and advocating for students. My students left feeling more hopeful. The presenters did an amazing job; the students rarely see other young adults (with disabilities) making a difference in the community. As a special educator at the high school level I spend a great deal of time working with Seniors on transition plans. As a team we try to find job placements, which can be difficult at times. Sometimes the students give up because they feel like employers won't hire them after they graduate. This presentation helped them to see the possibilities. They have asked me on more than one occasion if there is another workshop in the near future. Once again thank you for this beneficial experience."

### 2. Richford High School Special Educator - Sarah Rucki

"I brought four students from Richford High School to the Youth Summit. We were not really sure what to expect and the students were very curious. When we first walked in the door, my students were greeted with people saying hello and they immediately felt comfortable. As the Summit began, group and individual tasks began. My students were apprehensive with sharing, very unsure of themselves and worried about the response to their sharing. After some time, I saw my students willing to take risks. Students that shared/role played had great positive feedback from the group. All students were made to feel good about themselves. More students began speaking up and contributing as the day progressed. By the end of the conference, all students stood up. They all formed a circle and they all spoke about an "Easy Step" that they could do to start self-advocating. My students completely had a great positive experience seeing adults with disabilities leading a fantastic event. They all enjoyed the day, they all learned why it's important to stick up for yourself, and they all participated. This was a great event. My students would be thrilled to go again. I feel that these types of groups and programs are very important for students with disabilities. The more they learn about self-advocacy the more they will start to believe in themselves, be able to follow through with their own plans, and learn they can be independent and successful. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in such a great event."

### 3. SOAR School Special Educator - Ann Browning

"My staff was super impressed with how our students from Soar Learning Center did. The Summit was very well organized, presenters were super, and the activities the students participated in were geared toward them and their needs. It was fantastic to see a couple of our students engage in activities that we would never have guessed they would have engaged in up until now. We had a couple of students that participated in the role-play activity and did a great job with it. I'm thrilled that we were included in this and hope to receive invitations in the future. Thank you for reaching out to us. I think a great day was had by all from Soar Learning Center."





# Teamwork

Speaking Up



Leadership

# Connecting

Green Mountain Self-Advocates

**2 Day**

# Youth Summit

**Wednesday 9/30/15**

**Friday 10/2/15**

**A leadership and self-advocacy summit for high school students with developmental disabilities in Chittenden County High schools.**

Do you have Questions about the Youth Summit?

Call Karen Topper at (802) 229-2600 or email [topper@gmsavt.org](mailto:topper@gmsavt.org)

Funded By: VT Developmental Disabilities Council

## SUMMIT DETAILS

GMSA and The Bridging Program ~ Youth Summit

**Wednesday 9/30/15**

And

**Friday 10/2/15**

**9:00 am—12:00pm**

Location:

Elley Long Music Center  
223 Ethan Allen Ave.

Colchester, VT

Participating Schools:

Burlington High School,  
Colchester High School,  
Mt. Mansfield Union, Winooski  
High School, South Burlington HS

Each school is invited to elect 6 students with disabilities to attend the Youth Summit. (Please limit support staff to 3 people)

**Event is Free**

**Green Mountain Self-Advocates**  
2 Prospect St., Suite 6  
Montpelier, VT 05602  
802-229-2600

[www.gmsavt.org](http://www.gmsavt.org)



# Green Mountain Self-Advocates Youth Summit

September 30th and October 2, 2015

Elley Long Center, Colchester, VT



**Group Agreements**



**Ice Breaker Game ~ Would You Rather?**



**Green Mountain Self-Advocates  
★What we believe ★**



**Standing Up for Yourself**

**Kris Medina ~ Peer Advice**



**Activity: What is Self-Advocacy?**



**Making Your Case**

# Green Mountain Self-Advocates

## Youth Summit

October 2, 2015

Elley Long Center, Colchester, VT



### Quick Review of what we learned on Wednesday



### Man in the mirror



### What do you think?



### Snow Ball game



### Listen to your words



### Proactive vs Reactive

### One Page Profiles



