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Press Release

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VCS to Host Screening of *Shout it Out* April 30th

Vermont Commons School is hosting a special screening of *Shout it Out* with the film's director, Bess O'Brien, on Thursday, April 30th at 7:00 pm. *Shout it Out* is the REAL "High School Musical"---about real Vermont teenagers, their struggles and triumphs.



Shout it Out is a musical film about Vermont teenagers and the challenges they face as they make their way through high school. These challenges include some difficult topics such as bullying, sexuality, self mutilation, teen pregnancy, body image, depression and suicide. The film, produced by Kingdom County Productions, includes a cast of about 100 Vermont youth including Julia Cox of Shelburne, a graduate of Vermont Commons School currently in her first year at Skidmore College.

"*Shout it Out* toured Vermont in 2008, but many students and parents have not yet seen it," explains Hans Manske, Acting Head of School at Vermont Commons School. "We think it is important to be proactive about the themes in the film and look forward to the Q&A session with the director following the screening."

Shout it Out is based on months of research with more than 1,000 Vermont teens who participated in The Voices Project, a unique, statewide initiative that began in 2004 to raise awareness about the issues facing Vermont teens. The teens' concerns, hopes, fears, and ideas revealed during The Voices Project were then adapted into an original script with music, written in collaboration with teens from across the state. The theater production of *Shout it Out* toured Vermont in the fall of 2005. The film was shot last summer in Jericho, Vermont. The April 30th screening of *Shout it Out* at VCS with director Bess O'Brien is part of the new Visiting Artist Series at Vermont Commons School. The public is invited to attend.

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Shout it Out addresses mature themes that may not be appropriate for children under 12 years old. Check out the trailer of *Shout it Out* on You Tube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2SSPVpQVxA>) and the reviews below from the film's website.

--"*Shout it Out* is the first film that I have ever seen that allows students to portray themselves in a way that makes sense and is real to the issues at hand. ... This is a must-see for all high school students!"

Michelle Rath, Ph.D., Director of Guidance- Essex High School

--"Bess O'Brien's *Shout it Out* is the (stet) one of the most real-life looks into the lives of high school students that I have ever seen. I believe that this movie will help people be able to recognize when a loved one or a student needs help, and that is why this film is so important."

David Baker, age 17, St. Johnsbury, VT

"A tour de force—a critically important film for adults and youth to see!"

Angelo Dorta Vermont National Education Association VTNEA

If you go: VCS screening of *Shout it Out*

When: Thursday, April 30th at 7:00 pm
Question & Answer session with director, Bess O'Brien, to follow the film

Where: Vermont Commons School
75 Green Mountain Drive in South Burlington (behind GE)

Tickets: at the door (suggested donation \$5/adults; \$2/teens. Not recommended for kids under 12)

About Vermont Commons School: Vermont Commons School is an independent day school for students in grades 7 – 12. The school offers a rigorous, college-preparatory curriculum that includes a focus on community service and experiential education. The mission of the Vermont Commons School is to provide a vision of education that crosses traditional boundaries and develops ecological citizenship, with the goal of empowering students with the knowledge, character, skills, and moral vision necessary to become responsible, pro-active members of the world community. For more information, please visit www.vermontcommons.org.

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