



**CONNECTICUT
WORKFORCE
COLLABORATIVE
ON BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**

Strong Workforce | Healthy Connecticut

**Connecticut Resources
for
Fostering the Youth and Young Adult Voice in
Behavioral Health**

**A project funded by the
Connecticut Workforce Collaborative on Behavioral Health**

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North Central Regional Mental Health Board

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INTRODUCTION

This report was funded by the Connecticut Workforce Collaborative on Behavioral Health (CWCBH) to provide a brief summary of information collected from Connecticut organizations, groups, and agencies that identify themselves as currently having opportunities for youth and young adults with mental health and/or substance abuse needs to be leaders, advocates, mentors, providers of peer support, and advisory group members. Only programs created specifically for youth and/or young adults are included. Participation in these programs is not contingent upon participants receiving clinical services from these organizations, groups and agencies. As part of the state's Mental Health Transformation State Incentive Grant, CWCBH provided funding to North Central Regional Mental Health Board to gather this information.

This report is intended to be a resource for youth, young adults, families and providers. Information provided in the Directory could bolster collaborative efforts among programs surveyed and state systems serving youth and young adults. It could furthermore be a valuable resource for individuals, organizations, groups and agencies in developing and strengthening the youth and young adult voice so that youth and young adults can contribute meaningfully in the planning and management of state-funded services.

Representatives of organizations, groups and agencies were interviewed to learn about their program(s) serving youth and young adults, and contact information for each. Representatives were surveyed via in-person or phone interviews, or via email surveys. All representatives were interviewed using the same survey questionnaire and were invited to add any additional information about the opportunities they provide. Information was gathered from organizations, groups and agencies from every region of Connecticut. Only a sampling of youth and young adult opportunities provided by a set of agencies or organizations with similar offerings is presented. This report is not a comprehensive directory.

We thank the many organizations, groups, and agencies that contributed to this project and are working diligently to develop the voice of youth and young adults in Connecticut.

ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

Active Minds: University of Connecticut, Storrs www.activeminds.org

Active Minds is a national organization dedicated to changing the conversation about mental health on college campuses. The Active Minds chapter at the University of Connecticut (UConn) Storrs Campus is a student-run organization that works to increase students' awareness of mental health issues through education and advocacy. Based on dashboard metrics of attendance and campus press publicity, the UConn Active Minds chapter is a successful student organization. The success of Active Minds utilizing the student voice has enabled implementation of tailored programming specific to young adults in the educational setting and a strong student coalition with other on-campus clubs. Active Minds maintains a strong collaborative relationship with the UConn Counseling Center, which supports and sponsors the chapter.

University of Connecticut, 234 Glenbrook Rd., Unit 2011, Storrs, CT 06269
Barry Schreier, Faculty Advisor, Tel: (860) 486-4705 Barry.schreier@uconn.edu

Advocacy Unlimited: Young Adult Super Advocate Program www.mindlink.org

The Advocacy Unlimited (AU) young adult Super Advocate program can be described as an advocacy-to-recovery young adult initiative, and maintains the integrity of the overall mission of AU. AU is a statewide agency whose mission is to improve the quality of life for all persons with or in recovery from mental health issues through education in self, systems, and legislative advocacy skills. The Super Advocate program is tailored to the developmental stage of individuals between the ages of 18 through 25.

The Super Advocate program has been offered for 1.5 years and has graduated 35 young adults that represent four cohorts from throughout the state. The curriculum includes twelve lessons of empowerment, recovery, and advocacy, which are taught with an individualized approach. The first lesson begins by having young adults identify their "passion." A passion is a set of skills that enables the individual to find personal strength through the application of these skills towards a meaningful goal. The first lesson is also intended for participants to identify community norms by discussing their personal experiences. Through the next nine lessons young adults are taught about multiple aspects of the mental health system, including supported services, the history of the Mental Health Movement, the legislative process, the ADA, empathy, and cultural awareness. In the last two lessons, young adults identify a current issue and produce a multimedia video that can be used to raise awareness within the community.

300 Russell Road, Wethersfield, CT 06109
Lyne Stokes, Program Director, Tel. (860) 667-0460 lstokes@mindlink.org

Bridge House www.bridgehousect.org

Bridge House is a psychosocial rehabilitation program whose mission is to provide a positive, encouraging environment of support, which empowers persons with mental illness and provides opportunities to live productive and satisfying lives. The program's day-to-day structure is designed using the Clubhouse model, which is defined by standards published by the International Center for Clubhouse Development. These standards exclude programming that is limited to certain groups, including young adults. Without creating a program specifically limited to young adults, Bridge House successfully engages and retains young adults between the ages of 18-30 in daily programming. Currently Bridge House has 23 young adults consistently attending the clubhouse at least 2-3 days per week.

Over the past 1.5 years Bridge House has made changes to the layout of the building and has incorporated an active Audio Visual Program into general programming in response to the increasing interest of young adults at Bridge House. Bridge House has recognized that young adults require tailored services to facilitate the development of the whole person and emphasizes development of peer connectedness through identifying and establishing activities based on similar interests of young adults in the program. Bridge House young adults have participated in the AU Super Advocate program (see *Advocacy Unlimited: Young Adult Super Advocate Program*).

880 Fairfield Ave., Bridgeport, CT 06605

Josh Brellis, Caseworker, Tel. (203) 335-5339 audiovisual@bridgehouse.org

Casey Family Services www.caseyfamilyservices.org

Casey Family Services provides services for youth in foster care and in struggling communities, achieving positive outcomes of child welfare practices at the local, state, and national levels. The organization engages youth in the development of leadership, advocacy and peer-support skills. Mentoring by agency staff is offered, as well as a Connecticut-based Youth Advocacy Leadership Program and an alumni group now incorporated as its own entity.

Casey Family Services also offers a continuum of comprehensive services, including foster care and adoption, family advocacy, prevention, reunification, adoption support and other post-permanency services.

127 Church Street, New Haven, CT 06510

David Johnston, Casey Family Services Life Skills, Tel. (203) 401-6920

djohnston@caseyfamilyservices.org

Central Access & Student Development, Central Connecticut State University

<http://web.ccsu.edu/casd>

Central Access & Student Development (CASD) is a department of Counseling and Family Therapy at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU). The mission of CASD is to assist

individuals who are recovering from mental health or substance abuse issues in gaining access to educational opportunities, to maximize their educational potential, and to help them succeed in their chosen fields of study. CASD uses an individualized approach to assist in the development of the whole person while promoting educational, personal, and career achievements. Services through CASD are often provided through a one-on-one meeting with the project coordinator. CASD offers confidential and educational support services, such as academic, administrative, ADA-related, financial, personal, and career-related. Services are available to current and potential students. Approximately 25–35 students access services through CASD during any given semester, and they are between the ages of 18 and 32.

Central Connecticut State University, Barnard Hall Rm. 120
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Lila Coddington, Assistant Director, Tel. (860) 832-0078 coddingtonl@ccsu.edu

Connecticut Turning to Youth and Families www.ctyouthandfamilies.org

Connecticut Turning to Youth and Families (CTYF) is a non-profit statewide volunteer organization dedicated to strengthening Connecticut's prevention, treatment, and recovery support services for youth and families facing drug and alcohol concerns. Utilizing peer-to-peer programs and services, CTYF provides opportunities for youth and families to discuss and learn about prevention and recovery. CTYF provides statewide assistance in efforts to transition preventive, treatment and recovery programs into youth-guided, family-centered systems of care.

CTYF works for an effective, accessible system of alcohol and other drug abuse prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery for CT youth and families. The organization works with three community partners to provide the "Advocacy to Increase Access" program, the "Peer-to-Peer Recovery Support" program, and the "Building Community Peer-to-Peer Support Services." The goal of each program is to provide trainings to youth, families, and communities while creating opportunities for connections to be formed between groups. CTYF provides technical assistance so that every Connecticut community can become linked with other prevention, treatment and peer-to-peer recovery resources statewide. CTYF also helps to build on existing community strengths and capacities, recognizing that many successful, innovative and promising practices and programs have been quietly working alone to help Connecticut youth and families.

CTYF has an active board and both youth and family recovery volunteers are regularly involved in routine organizational programming. Community efforts have included up to 2,000 face-to-face contacts, and 6,000 online connections. Events such as Youth Film Festivals, in-school programs, town hall meetings, sober college campus social activities, leadership groups, recovery support service mapping; drumming circles, and video production have all been found to be highly effective in engaging youth in staying sober at the high school and college levels. Currently there are 34 youth and young adults involved in routine organizational programming while community efforts have included up to 1500 participants. CTYF is co-directed by a young adult and an adult consumer.

CTYF has been featured in the June 2010 edition of Seventeen Magazine and co-director Greg Williams' story of recovery was featured in the June 2010 edition of Family Circle.

135 West Road, Marlborough, CT 06447
Donna Aligata, Executive Director, Tel. (860) 295-9773 donnaa@ctyouthandfamilies.org

Focus on Recovery United www.focusonrecovery.org

Focus on Recovery United (FOR-U) is a non-profit organization dedicated to a culture of wellness. FOR-U encourages positive change towards creating a statewide network of peer-provided educational and supportive opportunities for adults with mental health issues in Connecticut. FOR-U has developed and continuously updates a statewide database of opportunities for community engagement. These include vacancies on town councils, community boards and health boards.

FOR-U offers a variety of training opportunities to ensure participants have the skills necessary to meaningfully effect change. Activities include Wellness Recovery Action Plan; Self-Esteem 101; Healthy Relationships 101; Pathways FOR-U; and Intentional Peer Support. Each activity is offered specifically to young adults (18-25) on a periodic basis. Currently, FOR-U offers the Project ACT II program, which is a standard service tailored to young adults.

Project ACT II is a comprehensive and individualized program that is designed to promote legacy planning, leadership development, and cross mentoring for systems change. Program activities include an intensive Connecticut Leadership Academy (CTLA) followed by six months of mentorship. CTLA participants complete a 19-lesson curriculum designed to enhance consumer skills for effective speaking and civil advocacy. The young adult CTLA is structured as a 3-day retreat, and includes a strong social component. This has been found to be an effective strategy for initial engagement of young adults. The CTLA is an evidence-based program with significant outcomes.

Project ACT II also includes a mentorship component that is offered to graduates of the CTLA and includes individualized coaching and strategic business planning, monthly trainings, networking opportunities, and technical assistance. From 2009-2010, FOR-U produced two cohorts totaling 30 young adults.

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Kimberly Guy, C-RECS Coach/Educator kimg.foru@gmail.com

National Alliance on Mental Illness – Connecticut www.namict.org

The National Alliance on Mental Illness – Connecticut (NAMI-CT) is a private, non-profit organization that provides education, advocacy and support for individuals and families affected by mental illness within the state of Connecticut. NAMI-CT offers an array of peer

education and training programs, initiatives and services for individuals, family members, health care providers, and the general public in an effort to raise awareness about mental health concerns.

NAMI-CT also offers opportunities for advocacy. Advocates have fought for policy changes that raise the bar on mental health care and promote treatment and research on par with other illnesses. NAMI-CT advocacy efforts work towards providing a unique voice for people who live with mental illness and their families. Through advocacy, consumers are given the opportunity to end discrimination, reduce barriers to successful life in the community and promote timely and comprehensive mental health services and supports.

Young adults are encouraged to become involved in the many opportunities that NAMI-CT offers that engage young adults in leadership and advocacy. NAMI-CT programs include: NAMI Connections, NAMI Peer-to-Peer; NAMI In Our Own Voice; and legislative advocacy opportunities through the NAMI Keep the Promise Coalition. In designing and evaluating services, programs are developed for the target audience. This ensures that consumers of all ages have provided input and helped to design programs.

241 Main Street, 5th Floor, Hartford, CT 06106 Kate Mattias, Executive Director, Tel. (860) 882-0236 namicted@namict.org
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Quality Improvement Collaborative www.ncrmhb.org/QuiC.htm

The Quality Improvement Collaborative (QuIC) is a project funded through Connecticut's 5-year Mental Health Transformation State Incentive Grant. The mission of the QuIC is to ensure that Consumers, Youth and Family (CYF) play a primary role in the development of a recovery- and resiliency-oriented mental health system. This is being pursued through efforts to build a quality improvement collaborative made up of key stakeholders; identify and implement recovery-oriented, CYF-focused performance measurements for quality improvement; design an assessment approach to evaluate the current service delivery system that incorporates the knowledge and experiences of CYF; and recognize CYF as experts in their own recovery.

Through youth involvement in each aspect of the QuIC, they are provided the opportunity to engage in the development of leadership skills; to advocate needs through participation in standards development; and evaluation of mental healthcare services. Also, youth are seen as equal partners, and have the opportunity to voice their need for full participation in the planning, developing, and evaluation of services. It is intended that the CCC will maintain administrative responsibilities to ensure that the QuIC can continue to increase the trend of CYF involvement in mental healthcare, while ensuring a high quality of services are provided throughout the state.

The QuIC project and Grant will end in June 2011. The work that began in QuIC will be sustained through other efforts. Please contact NCRMHB for additional information

North Central Regional Mental Health Board, 367 Russell Road, Newington, CT 06111
Sheryl Breetz, Executive Director, Tel. (860) 667-6388 sbreetz@ncrmhb.org

Young Adult Peer Support (YAPS) www.yapsgroup.org

Young Adult Peer Support (YAPS) is a social and peer-support group for young adults between the ages of 16 – 26 experiencing symptoms of mental illness. The mission of YAPS is to provide a safe and supportive environment that engenders interconnectedness and unity amongst members. YAPS is determined to increase self-awareness and the exploration of common experiences.

YAPS is completely voluntary and peer-led, giving members the opportunity to gain leadership skills while engaging in the path through recovery at an individual pace. The YAPS environment encourages members to share their personal experiences openly and honestly and learn from one another's shared stories. Decisions are made as a group, facilitated through active and equal participation amongst members.

In addition to the overall mission of YAPS, the group is currently working towards raising public awareness about mental health issues prevalent in the young adult population. Targeted groups include family, friends, and local communities. This is achieved through participation of group members in outside mental health activism programs, such as the Consumer Council (see *Greater Bridgeport Community Mental Health Clinic*); Super Advocates Program (see *Advocacy Unlimited*); and QuIC (see *Quality Improvement Collaborative*).

Cranbury Community Chapel, 365 Newtown Ave., Norwalk, CT 06851
Kalan Ross, Tel. (203) 681-5245 kalan@yapsgroup.org

Youth Continuum www.youthcontinuum.org

Youth Continuum is a multi-service agency that focuses on the successful transition of homeless youth into adulthood. The mission of Youth Continuum is to protect and promote the wellbeing of at-risk youth by providing them with the necessary skills to develop into healthy and productive adults. Youth Continuum offers supportive housing; six group homes; "Helping Our Society to Survive"; an emergency shelter; two transitional and independent living sites; counseling; basic needs; and education and life skill training through the Education and Job Training Center. Youth Continuum also performs outreach to homeless youth and offers temporary employment opportunities with YouthBuild.

746 Chapel Street, New Haven, CT 06510
Carole Shomo, CEO, Tel. (203) 562-3396 ext. 21 cshomo@youthcontinuum.org

LEGAL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS

Connecticut Legal Rights Project www.clrp.org

Connecticut Legal Rights Project (CLRP) is a private non-profit organization that provides free legal services to dually diagnosed adults and those with psychiatric disabilities who reside in hospitals or the community and who are eligible for services from the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) and its affiliates for both long- and short-term treatment. CLRP staff is comprised of Attorneys, Paralegals and a Community Liaison dedicated to protecting the civil rights of individuals while supporting personal choices and individual self-determination. CLRP has a special interest in providing representation for young adults (aged 18 – 25). Between July 2009 and June 2010 180 young adults received services from CLRP.

CLRP offers services ranging from brief legal advice to representation on legal issues concerning services, treatment, and discharge from DMHAS or other providers. Other issues include the Americans with Disabilities Act; the Rehabilitation Act; Connecticut Patients' Bill of Rights; disability discrimination; Advanced Directives; Probate Court matters such as commitment, conservatorship and forced medication; and Fair Housing Act issues, including evictions and subsidized housing eligibility. CLRP staff members represent clients on the administrative, judicial, and legislative levels.

In addition, CLRP actively engages in outreach to and trainings for young adults. Through education it is anticipated that young adults will gain a sense of empowerment and become effective self-advocates.

Connecticut Valley Hospital, P.O. Box 351, Silver Street, Middletown, CT 06451 Karyl Lee Hall, Attorney, TEL. (860) 262-5044 klhall@clrp.org
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Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness www.ct.gov/opapd

Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI) is a program of the State of Connecticut Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities. PAIMI was established in 1986 by the federal government to protect the rights of adults (18+) with psychiatric disabilities, and to investigate reported or suspected incidents of abuse, mistreatment, and neglect in institutions, residential facilities, community programs, or for those living independently in the community. PAIMI works towards pre-identifying and removing systemic barriers that prevent individuals with psychiatric diagnoses from exercising their rights.

Rights PAIMI enforces are outlined in the Patient Bill of Rights and include, but are not limited to: freedom from physical or mental abuse; the use of personal funds to manage personal affairs; participating in the development of a written, specialized treatment plan that meets the individual's needs; reasonable notice of discharge, which includes a plan; and that medication is not to be used as a substitute for treatment.

Although PAIMI does not target the young adult population specifically, representatives of PAIMI incorporate the needs of young adults into advocacy work completed by the PAIMI Advisory Council. The council advises the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities' Executive Director on policies and priorities. This is carried out to establish programmatic priorities for PAIMI to advocate on the federal level.

60B Weston Street, Hartford, CT 06120
Susan Werboff, Program Director, Tel. (860) 297-4326 susan.werboff@po.state.ct.us

REGIONAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE ACTION COUNCILS

www.ct.gov/dmhas/cwp/view.asp?a=2908&q=334690#racs

A Regional Substance Abuse Action Council (RAC) is a public-private partnership comprised of community leaders. RACs are responsible for establishing and implementing an action plan to develop and coordinate needed services in the field of substance abuse. Services include initiatives to raise community awareness and education, prevention, treatment, and follow-up care. Currently, there are 14 RACs throughout the state.

Membership in local RACs is voluntary, and includes representatives of major community leadership constituencies: chief elected officials, chiefs of police, superintendents of schools, major business and professional persons, legislators, major substance abuse service providers, funders, minority communities, religious organizations and the media.

As specified by DMHAS, RACs are not direct-service providers. Their main purpose is to develop and coordinate services, and participate in statewide planning. This involves management objectives such as, but not limited to: identifying gaps in services along the continuum of care; developing annual action plans to fill gaps; conducting fund-raising initiatives; and conducting activities to promote visibility. The RAC also completes prevention functions, which include, but are not limited to: developing agreements between all resource links; supporting emerging efforts to link/integrate prevention information; serving as a Resource Center to local constituents; and participating on Resource Link Advisory Committees.

East of the River Action for Substance Abuse Elimination www.erasect.org

East of the River Action for Substance Abuse Elimination (ERASE) is a Regional Action Council (see *Regional Action Council, DMHAS*). ERASE is comprised of 13 Local Prevention Councils that are dedicated to substance abuse prevention and early intervention at the local level. This involves the participation of community members from a variety of sectors, including local YSB (see *Connecticut Youth Services Association*), youth, parents, business leaders, educators, law enforcement, religious organizations, healthcare professionals, concerned citizens and other organizations dedicated to prevention. Through collaborative efforts, ERASE is able to develop prevention strategies specific to community needs

identified at the local level while providing small DMHAS grants to Local Prevention Councils.

ERASE has developed the “Peers are Wonderful Support” (PAWS) program to develop youth empowerment. PAWS consists of 19 towns in the eastern region of Connecticut that act as supportive resources to other peer helper groups. Each year there is an annual PAWS conference held at Manchester Community College, where representatives from the Peer Advocate Teams gather to celebrate their hard work for the year. They also participate in workshops that focus on leadership, substance use issues, effective peer helping techniques, and other educational programs.

ERASE communicates community concerns and needs to DMHAS through the collection and analysis of data. ERASE regularly conducts needs assessment through surveys, focus groups, and secondary data sources. ERASE has developed the “Student Use Survey,” which assesses students’ attitudes and actions regarding substance use, gambling and school climate. The “Student Use Survey” is available to outside organizations for administration within other communities.

Through collaboration with DMHAS, ERASE is able to administer small grants to each of the Local Prevention Councils within the region. ERASE meets regularly with Local Prevention Councils to provide guidance and support for policy and planning of youth development programs.

70 Canterbury Street, East Hartford, CT 06118
Bonnie Smith, Executive Director, Tel. (860) 568-4442 bonnie.smith@erasect.org

Regional Youth/Adult Social Action Program (RYASAP) www.ryasap.org

Regional Youth/Adult Social Action Program (RYASAP) is a youth and community development coalition comprised of local towns and statewide programs in juvenile justice advocacy, young adult leadership, and youth community development training and consultation. The mission of RYASAP is to create healthy communities free of the harm caused by substance abuse, crime and violence. RYASAP believes that the most effective approach to addressing these problems and promoting community change is through collaboration of youth, adult citizens, volunteer associations and institutions.

RYASAP offers programs in research and evaluation, training and consultation; advocacy; youth development; community development; leadership development; AmeriCorps and public safety; and addiction prevention. Specific programs for youth in grades 7th through 12th include YouthSPEAK; Finding Her Voice; Youth as Resources; and Teen Yellow Pages. Opportunities for youth to advocate for legislative and administrative change are also made available through a partnership with the Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition.

RYASAP acts as an interface between community providers and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS). RYASAP reports research findings to DMHAS and secures grant funding for preventative programs and youth development initiatives.

Through intermediary work, RYASAP can identify needs and facilitate greater community impact, including structural change and program development.

Burroughs Community Center, 2470 Fairfield Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06605
Robert Francis, Executive Director, Tel. (203) 579-2727 ext. 304 rfrancis@ryasap.org
Jan Laster, Regional Action Council Dir., Tel. (203-579-2727) ext. 310, jlaster@ryasap.org

Capitol Area Substance Abuse Council www.casac.org

3 Barnard Lane, First Floor, Bloomfield, CT 06002

Mirelle Freedman, Executive Director, Tel. (860) 286-9333 mfreedman@casac.org

Central Naugatuck Valley Regional Action Council www.cnvrac.org

22 Chase River Road, Waterbury, CT 06704

Jennifer Dewitt, Executive Director, Tel. (203) 578-4044 jdewitt.fic@sbcglobal.net

Housatonic Valley Coalition Against Substance Abuse www.hvcasa.org

69 Stony Hill Road, Bethel, CT 06801

Allison Fulton, Executive Director, Tel. (203) 743-7741 housatonic.valley@snet.net

Lower Fairfield County Communities in Action www.lfrac.org

115-125 Main Street, Stamford, CT 06901

Ingrid Gillespie, Executive Director, Tel. (203) 356-1980 x 108 rac@liberationprograms.org

Meriden and Wallingford Substance Abuse Council www.mawsac.org

5 Brookside Drive, P.O. Box 307, Wallingford, CT 06492

Marlene F. McGann, Executive Director, Tel. (203) 294-3591 mawsac@aol.com

Mid Fairfield Substance Abuse Coalition www.ctprevention.org/mfsac

c/o Human Services Council of Mid-Fairfield, 1 Park Street, Norwalk, CT 06851

Lisa Cooper, Executive Director, Tel. (203) 849-1151 lcooper@hscct.org

Middlesex County Substance Abuse Action Council www.mcsaac.org

Business Industry Foundation of Middlesex County, 393 Main St., Middletown, CT 06457

Betsey Chadwick, Executive Director, Tel. (860) 347-5959 mcsaac@sbcglobal.net

Northeast Communities Against Substance Abuse www.necasaonline.org

559 Hartford Pike, Suite 210B, Dayville, CT 06241

Robert Brex, Executive Director, Tel. (860) 779-9253 necasa@snet.net

South Central Connecticut Regional Action Council www.sccrac.org

Connecticut Children and Family Center, Inc., 230 Ashmun Street, New Haven, CT 06511

Michael Jefferson, Acting Executive Director, Tel. (203) 776-1981 sccrac@yahoo.com

Southeastern Regional Action Council www.sectrac.org/index.php

165 State Street, Suite 419, New London, CT 06320

Michele Devine, Executive Director, Tel. (860) 442-1330 serac.ed@sbcglobal.net

Substance Abuse Action Council of Central Connecticut, Inc. www.saacct.org

92 Vine Street, New Britain, CT 06052

(Vacant), Director, Tel. (860) 826-4985 saac1@aol.com

Valley Substance Abuse Action Council www.bghealth.org/vsaac/vsaac.htm

435 East Main Street, Ansonia, CT 06401

Pamela Jones Mautte, Executive Director, Tel. (203) 736-8566 pjones@bghealth.org

REGIONAL MENTAL HEALTH BOARDS

Five Regional Mental Health Boards were established by the Connecticut General Assembly in 1974 to bring citizens together to evaluate state-funded mental health services and stimulate development of new and needed services. The Boards serve as advisory councils to the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS). The Boards' members are comprised of individuals who use state mental health services, family members, concerned citizens, providers of state mental health and other services, and town representatives who work together to improve mental health services provided by the State and provided locally to citizens in every town in Connecticut.

Each Board seeks members who have experience with mental health issues or services and is eager to recruit young adults. The Boards have evaluated DMHAS Young Adult Services (see *Young Adult Services*) and included young adults on their review panels, as well as interviewed young adults at the agencies under review.

Each Board conducts local units called Catchment Area Councils (CACs) that serve defined groups of towns providing a more local focus in addition to the regional focus of the Board. Each Board sends representatives to the State Advisory Board of DMHAS, which meets monthly with the Commissioner of DMHAS.

The Boards' volunteer members conduct interviews, focus groups, and surveys with individuals who use DMHAS-funded services, family members of people who use services, and local community organizations who interact with people using or needing mental health services. The Boards report their findings and recommendations directly to service providers and to the Commissioner of DMHAS. This kind of independent feedback helps improve local services, as well as impact state policy and funding.

Eastern Regional Mental Health Board (ERMHB) www.ermhb.org

401 West Thames Street, Campbell Building, Unit 105, Norwich, CT 06360

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North Central Regional Mental Health Board (NCRMHB) www.ncrmhb.org

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Northwest Regional Mental Health Board (NWRMHB) www.nwrmhb.org

969 West Main Street, Suite 1B, Waterbury, CT 06708

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South Central Regional Mental Health Board (SCRMHB - Region II)

www.southcentralhealth.org

P.O. Box 351, Middletown, CT 06457

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Southwest Regional Mental Health Board www.swrmhb.org

1 Park Street, Norwalk, CT 06851

Kim O'Reilly, Executive Director, Tel. (203) 840-1187 swrmhb@optline.net

YOUTH SERVICE BUREAUS

Connecticut Youth Services Association www.ctyouthservices.org

The Connecticut Youth Services Association serves as a collective voice for the Youth Service Bureau (YSB) system of Connecticut. Local YSBs are agencies operated by municipalities or private organizations under municipal contract. Mandated by Connecticut General Statue, YSB agencies are designed for planning, evaluation, coordination, and implementation of a network of resources and opportunities for children, youth, and families. Agencies are dedicated to providing services and programs for all youth to develop positively and to function as responsible community members. Generally, YSBs provide juvenile justice, mental health, youth development, community outreach, family involvement, teen pregnancy prevention, and child welfare services at 103 YSB sites located throughout the state. Go to www.ctyouthservices.org for a complete list of all YSBs in Connecticut.

Guilford Youth and Family Services

http://guilfordct.virtualltownhall.net/Public_Documents/GuilfordCT_youth/index%20two

Guilford Youth and Family Services is a Youth Service Bureau (YSB) municipal agency of Guilford that offers community residents support, coordination, planning, development and implementation of broad-based services and multi-faceted programs. Guilford Youth and Family Services emphasize the link between youth, family, and community through collaboration with parents, guardians, police, school, community members, town officials and representatives from the YSB Youth Board.

As a YSB, Guilford Youth and Family Services offers preventative programs and services designed to positively impact youth development. The agency has recently administered the Search Institute Developmental Assets survey. The Developmental Assets survey determines the number of assets a youth has, which indicates the likelihood that youth will

engage in risky behavior. Guilford Youth and Family Services has used survey results to more clearly target character assets to build upon through programming efforts.

Unique to Guilford Youth and Family Services is the incorporation of a mental health clinic that provides behavioral healthcare for approximately 80 youth. Services include individual and group therapy, social skill training and medication management. The agency also engages youth in leadership training through a summer camp offered to participants in the program. The summer camp is offered to youth who could not regularly participate through enhancement funds offered by the State Department of Education. The Connecticut Workforce Alliance provides funding for camp staff.

36 Graves Avenue, Guilford, CT 06437
Lyne Landry, Director, Tel. (203) 453-8047 Landry@ci.guilford.ct.us

Madison Youth and Family Services www.madisonct.org/mys

Madison Youth and Family Services structure programming using the Youth Service Bureau (YSB) model. The agency offers preventative substance use programs and services that promote positive youth development. Madison Youth and Family Services has had success in their peer-to-peer services, including the Peer Advocate program and the Peer Helpers program.

The Peer Advocate program is implemented in two parts. In the first phase, high school applicants are trained to effectively listen and act as resources for their peers. Once an advocate is trained, they can mentor other students at their high school. Trained high school Peer Advocates can also mentor 5th and 8th graders through the Mentoring Matters program. The second program, Peer Helpers, is offered at the middle school level. Youth who are considered to be trustworthy and helpful to their peers mentor other students who might be struggling with issues most effectively addressed by their peers.

Other peer-to-peer programs offered through Madison Youth and Family Services include, but are not limited to: Safe Rides, which offers peer transportation on Friday and Saturday nights as an alternative to driving with or as a person under the influence; and a cross-age, student-to-student Perspectives program developed by an interracial, interfaith group of high school teens to combat the use of hateful language towards groups such as the Gay and Straight People group and the Alliance of Racial Minority Students group.

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Manchester Youth Service Bureau www.ci.manchester.ct.us/ysb

The Youth Service Bureau of Manchester is a community-based YSB. The Manchester YSB provides a variety of programs and services using a personal approach for the purpose of helping to develop responsible individuals who make positive contributions to the

community. The Manchester YSB also acts as a referral agency to local resources when a problem can be most effectively addressed by a community organization.

Programs offered by the Manchester YSB include Strengthening Families, Peer Advocate Team, Girl Circle, Boys Council, Boyz to Men Mentoring Program, JOBS Work Readiness Program, Transition to Adulthood, CREC Year Round Work Group Program, LINCS Tutoring Program, Community Service Program, Diversion Program, and Juvenile Fire Setter Intervention Program. Manchester YSB also runs a Teen Center and multiple summer programs to keep youth engaged in positive development while on summer vacation.

In addition to programming specifically targeting Manchester youth, members of the Manchester YSB Peer Advocates Team also participate in the annual Peers are Wonderful Support (P.A.W.S.) cooperative (see *East of the River Action for Substance Abuse Elimination*). The Manchester YSB has also had success with their Youth Commission. The Commission acts as an advisory group to the town's Board of Directors. The goals of the Commission are to engage youth in community issues and facilitate opportunities for their involvement in town planning. The Manchester YSB Youth Commission is considered an equal partner in town planning efforts, and officials regularly reach out to the Commission to ensure that the youth voice is considered.

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