Annual Report
for
Tri-Town Youth Services Bureau, Inc.

for the year ended June 30, 2016

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Letter from the President of the Board of Directors

In my two previous letters as president of the Board of Directors I mentioned our mission to support children and families in Chester, Deep River, and Essex. I am doing that again and since I will soon begin my fourth year in this position, I expect to be doing the same thing again next year. I also spoke before of our efforts to support the growth of developmental assets and strategies for involving community resources in the support of all that is right with our young people. We hope through our programs, and in partnering with others to increase the number and quality of assets and continue to build a supportive community that includes education, businesses, law enforcement, and town governments as well as many other agencies. We do this because we know that these are effective ways for children to flourish while avoiding risky behaviors and situations.

I repeat myself, not because I lack other things to say, but because of the importance and success of our continuing efforts. While nationally marijuana and other substance use among secondary school students has been on the increase, among Region 4 students it has been declining. We are able to report that opioid use, which is cause for alarm in Connecticut and nationally is not an issue for Region 4 students. We do however, together with law enforcement continue to closely monitor this potential problem. This good news parallels our efforts at support and asset building.

Taste of the Valley, which is our signature fundraising event as well as a celebration of what we do will be held at the Stone House in Deep River. This year it has been advanced to September 23. As that date approaches look for chatter on social media and think about joining us for good music and exciting variety of foods.

Sincerely,

David Fitzgibbons, Ph.D.
Board President

Board of Directors

David Fitzgibbons, President (4)
Candace Konrad, V.P. (1)
Theresa Konefal, Secretary (2)
Richard Dalterio, Treasurer (3)
Julia Bogaert, Youth Rep. (2)
James Connelly (3)
D.G. Fitton (2)
Robert Lee (2)
Peg Meehan (1)
Sandy Senior-Dauer (1)
Jeff Smith (5)
Susan Strecker (1)

Board Committees

Personnel
Candace Konrad
Theresa Konefal
Robert Lee
Peg Meehan

Finance
Rich Dalterio
Peg Meehan

Nominating
Richard Dalterio
Theresa Konefal
Letter from the Executive Director

“The Year of the Story,” 2015 featured numerous activities and events with this theme. Volunteers were trained as story gatherers, who then solicited personal stories from tri-town residents who had met challenges or obstacles in their lives and had triumphed. These transcribed stories were woven into a one-act play, “What Got Me Through,” which was performed in October at the Chester Meeting House. One evening was taped, which led to the video screening at Valley Regional High School in June, 2016.

Tri-Town Youth Services was founded as a nonprofit in 1984. Our founders possessed great wisdom and foresight in establishing a programmatic framework that continues to serve us well today. This framework meets legislative charges, while at the same time provides flexibility to address local concerns.

This agency has evolved over time to become a recognized leader in the field of substance abuse prevention. On May 3, Tri-Town hosted its third Community Coalition Breakfast/Town Hall Meeting. This event included an interactive component during which participants shared ideas pertaining to marketing of tobacco, marijuana, and alcohol and how these substances affect our youth.

Tri-Town is fortunate to have a stellar, well-credentialed staff, actively engaged in the pursuit of ongoing professional development. Working with the State Department of Education, Tri-Town employs Results Based Accountability to ensure quality programs with positive outcomes.

As this annual report reflects, our agency’s work at the individual, family, and community level is driven by our Mission, Vision, and Values. With support and direction from our Board of Directors—and with the support and generosity of our community—Tri-Town continues to move forward.

Sincerely,
Gail E. Beck
Executive Director
MISSION STATEMENT

TRI-TOWN YOUTH SERVICES BUREAU, INC. is a nonprofit agency that coordinates, develops and provides services dedicated to promoting the positive growth and development of youth and families in Chester, Deep River, and Essex, Connecticut.

“Coordinates…”

With its many connections and well-developed relationships throughout our three communities, Tri-Town Youth Services is poised to collaborate on many fronts. Tri-Town convenes the Tri-Town Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition, the Middlesex County Chapter of Youth Service Bureau Directors, is an active participant in the Early Childhood Council, and attends numerous meetings in our local schools.

The Tri-Town Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition comprises everyone who lives or works in Chester, Deep River, or Essex who has an interest in substance abuse prevention. Represented community sectors include business, faith community, schools, law enforcement, parents, youth, youth serving organizations, local government, health care, civic clubs, media, and substance prevention organizations. In addition to its annually-organized awareness week, “High on Life,” the Coalition hosted their Community Coalition Breakfast/Town Hall Meeting at Camp Hazen YMCA in early May.

Window Painting 2016, Main Street Deep River. Window painting has become a rite of passage for DRES sixth graders.

Parents, Teachers and Participants Respond!

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<th>Safe Grad:</th>
<th>“I love knowing my daughter will be with her friends, have a blast, and be safe.”</th>
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<td>Job Bank:</td>
<td>&quot;It’s wonderful to have help. These are great kids. Thank you for all you do.&quot; &quot;My neighbor recommended your Job Bank and I couldn’t be happier. Found some great helpers.&quot;</td>
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<td>Youth Action Council:</td>
<td>I’m glad to have an outlet to help our community. It felt good to do the holiday gift card drive helping pre-teens and teens receive something they’d like especially since that age often miss out. Most of the holiday drives are for young kids.</td>
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<td>Homework Hangout:</td>
<td>Some kids don’t have computers at home. It’s good that you’re here so they have access to them.”</td>
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“Growth and Development...”

Tri-Town supports children and youth as they develop across programs and over time. For example, previously trained Peer Advocates received additional training to become Peer Captains to support students transitioning from middle to high school at the Tri-Town/Valley Regional High School collaborative Freshman Transition at Camp Hazen.

Through an initiative funded by Middlesex United Way, Healthy CommunitiesHealthy Youth of Chester, Deep River and Essex, Tri-Town Youth Services has mobilized the community, building youth developmental assets since 2005. That’s a full decade of asset building efforts in collaboration with a broad range of sectors, including schools, business, the faith community, and parents. Data collected over the years using Search Institute’s “Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors” demonstrates the strides our community has made increasing youth assets and reducing youth substance use and other risk-taking behaviors.

Many Tri-Town programs are designed to assist youth and families navigate through various transitions including Pre-K into Kindergarten, a Summer Co-op for elementary students moving on to middle school, participation in Middle School and High School Orientations, Mother/Daughter Night Out, involvement in Driver Education, Freshman Transition, and Safe Graduation.

Working with the Early Childhood Council, social development is an integral part of preschool curriculum as well as for grades K-12. Tri-Town collaborates with other services and individuals to deliver a consistent message to the community: working together, we can create environments where children, youth and families thrive.

**Parent Voices**

I believe Rowan has been one of the longest attending students because of the love I have for the Tri-Town toddler groups. I continue to sing the praises of this program to others. Thanks to Tri-Town, Rowan is well prepared for preschool! I can’t thank all of you enough. What a terrific program you offer the community!

— Stephen Holmes

Thank you for having my daughter in your (Mentoring) group years ago. Being that we were new to the area, it really helped her feel good and better able to adjust to being in a new school. It made such a difference and meant so much.
“Provides services...”

Parenting Programs

Allison Abramson
Parent Resource Coordinator

- **Outstanding Ones and Terrific Twos:** Provide parent support and relevant information as well as stories, movement, and art exploration.
- **Family Fun Activities:** Vision Screenings, Eye-Popping Pop Art creation and Storytelling Crafts were offered in partnership with the Essex Lions Club, Ivoryton Library and Essex Library.
- **Parent Education:** “Mother/Daughter Night Out: Getting Ready for Change, “and “Open Up: a Conversation for Parents of Teens” were offered.
- **Parent Consultations:** Provided by appointment.
- **Early Childhood Council Panel Presentation:** Holistic Learning for the Whole Child.
- **Early Childhood Council Professional Development:** FUN with Writing.

Positive Youth Development

Melissa Haines
Youth Program Coordinator

- **Youth in Action:** Leadership development, recreation, community service for middle schoolers.
- **Youth Action Council:** Leadership development, recreation, community service for high school youth.
- **Summer Co-op** for youth entering grades 7-9: Asset-building fun.
- **Youth Job Bank:** Matches youth with residents who need some help.
- **Safe Graduation Party:** A drug-free alternative for graduating seniors.
- **Mentoring:** Adults paired with elementary aged youth meet as a group.
- **Reach-Out!** High school girls, paired with elementary-aged girls, meet as a group.
- **Homework Hangout:** Underscores the importance of education and provides help after school.
- **Babysitter Training Classes:** Provide skills and information.
- **Peer Advocate Training:** Co-taught with Valley Regional High School.

Working side by side.

Summer Co-op participants enjoyed a day of fun at Six Flags!
Counseling and Referral
Available by appointment, Tri-Town provides confidential individual, family, and group counseling to youth and families who reside in Chester, Deep River, or Essex. For payment, we offer a sliding fee scale and we are Husky approved.

Tri-Town Juvenile Review Board
The Tri-Town Juvenile Review Board employs a restorative justice philosophy and meets to handle individual cases of youth in trouble with the law. This year, nine cases came before the Board.

Media
Tri-Town’s website (www.tritownys.org) offers numerous resources for children, youth and families and now registration for most programs and events can be done on-line. Facebook users who “like” Tri-Town Youth Services gain access to announcements pertaining to events and activities in the tri-town region. Parents who register with Tri-Town to receive Community Emails receive bi-weekly articles on how we can all build developmental assets for children and youth. Press releases for Tri-Town activities and events are regularly published in six regional media outlets. And our Tri-Town Newsletter is published twice a year and delivered to all homes in Chester, Deep River and Essex.

Environmental Prevention
Cate Bourke
Prevention Coordinator

The Tri-Town Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (SAPC) is made up of a collaborative body of volunteers from 12 community sectors. Sector representatives plan, implement and evaluate strategies in the tri-town area that have been shown to reduce substance use and abuse in youth.

In 2015-16, in collaboration with Valley Regional High School and Camp Hazen YMCA, the fourth annual Freshman Transition was held. Part of a larger transition-focused initiative which includes the training of both Peer Advocates and Peer Captains, youth receive leadership training to support self-awareness, positive self-esteem, problem solving, crisis intervention and referral, and communication skills development. The Freshman Transition is intended to ensure that incoming freshmen experience high levels of support and school/community connections not only as they enter high school but throughout their VRHS career.

Research shows that students who start their year with a positive experience and feel connected to other students, faculty and staff are more likely to get involved in healthy activities that promote social, emotional, and scholastic success.
Vision and Values

Our Vision:

Tri-Town Youth Services envisions a community where youth are able to establish strong and positive relationships with family, school, peers, and the community. We will:

♦ Provide information, resources, and innovative services and programs that meet the changing needs of families, youth, and our community.
♦ Be a financially stable organization supported by our local towns, grants, and fund-raising.
♦ Be known for our role in supporting families, youth, and our community.
♦ Be recognized as a leader in the field of substance abuse prevention.
♦ Inspire positive changes in the attitudes and practices of individuals, community organizations, businesses, and town government agencies through advocacy and modeling so that our youth feel like valued, integral members of our community.

Our Values:

♦ We respect the families, youth, and community members with whom we work.
♦ We are accepting and caring in our interactions.
♦ We believe in a strength-based clinical philosophy, centered on the individual and/or family.
♦ We offer customized services and resources for individuals and families.
♦ We are collaborative.
♦ We are in constant partnership with local government, schools, businesses, faith organizations, law enforcement, and the people we serve to develop solutions to our communities’ challenges.
♦ We commit to a high standard of professional ethics and integrity.
♦ We are accessible and friendly.
Tri-Town Youth Services’ 2015-2016 Budget*

Income
State Department of Education $21,636 12%
Municipal Funds $86,918 47%
Fundraising, fees, gifts, and other grants $75,141 41%
Total $183,695 100%

Expenditures
Positive Youth Development $38,576 21%
Parent Resource Program $23,880 13%
Educational Programs $9,185 5%
Prevention Programs $77,152 42%
Intervention Programs $34,903 19%
Total $183,695 100%

Where Tri-Town’s Funding Comes From and Where it Goes