



North Hartford Ascend

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education Promise Neighborhoods Grant Program

Community Conversation

Wednesday, April 30, 2025

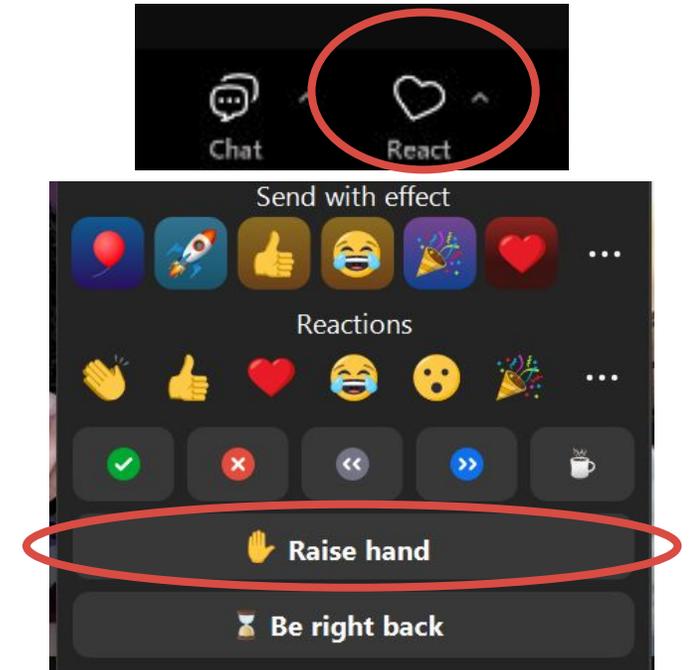


**Por favor levante la mano si necesita
interpretación al español**

**Spanish interpretation services are available. Please
see Alba for translation help.**

Discussion Guidelines

- Everyone deserves to be heard. Listen and respond respectfully.
 - Questions and comments should be added to note cards and shared with Ascend at any time.
- We are interested in hearing your authentic thoughts— please do not use AI or ChatGPT to respond to questions.
- Let's stay on topic— time is limited, so let's value each other's time.
- Successful dialogue is the responsibility of all participants.



Incentive Available to Hartford Residents

Let us know in the chat:

Why are you attending today's meeting?

Agenda



- Welcome & Guidelines
- Ascend Overview
- Featured Presenter: The department of Families, Children, and Youth
- Discussion
- Next Steps and Closing Remarks
- **Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 21st**

North Hartford Ascend: Overview

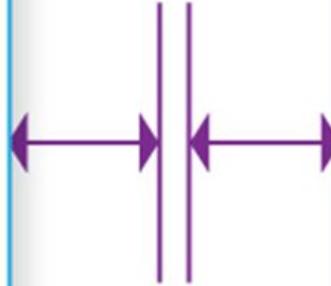


Connect children and families, prenatal through career, living in the **North Hartford Promise Zone** to the programs, services and other resources they need to **reach their full potential.**

Current State

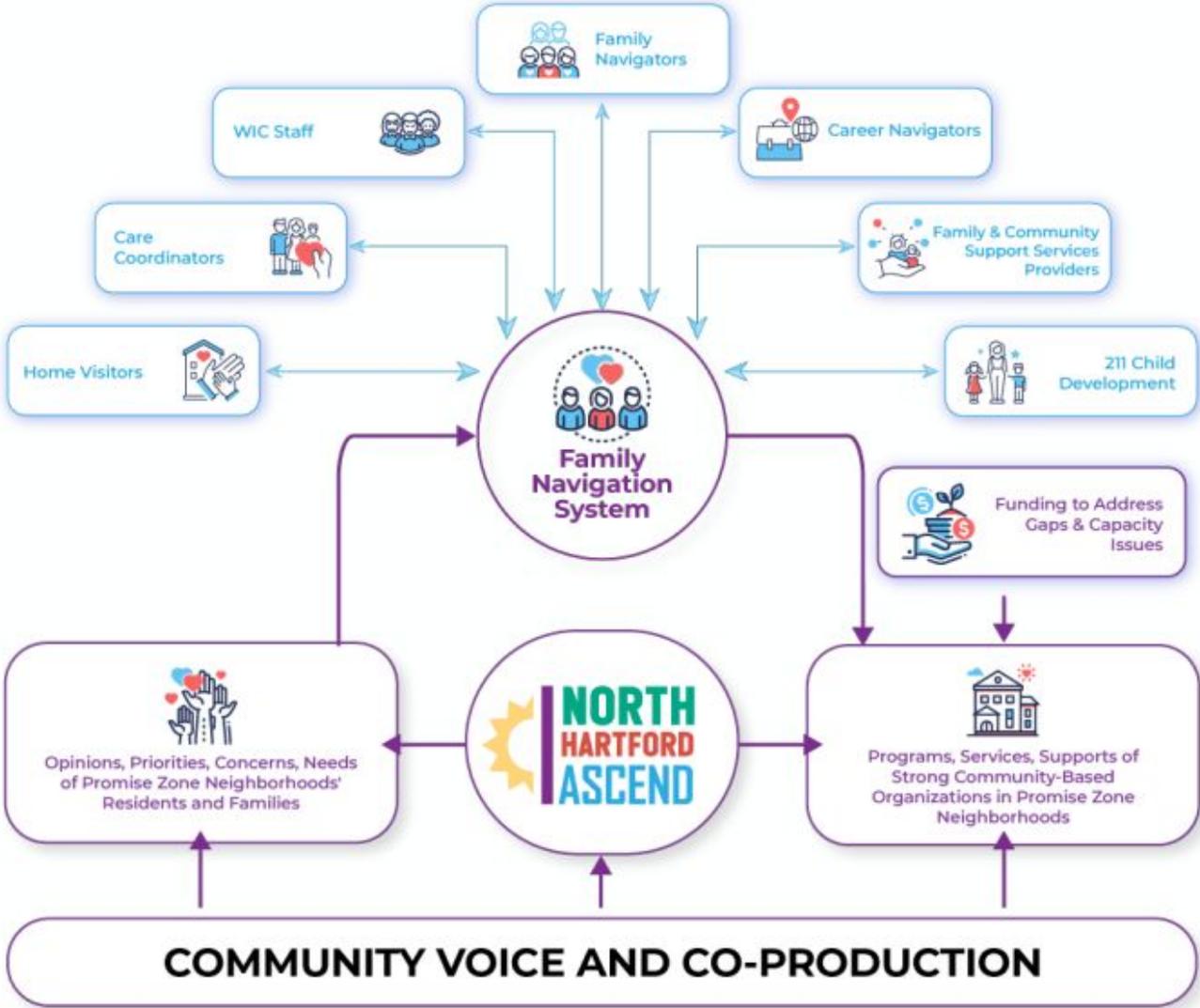


Opinions, Priorities,
Concerns, Needs of Promise
Zone Neighborhoods'
Residents and Families



Strong Array of Programs,
Services, Supports of Community-
Based Organizations in Promise
Zone Neighborhoods

Ideal State-Ascend System Building



Ascend & Community Updates

Ascend & Community Updates



Community Workshops: In-Person

- Wednesday, [May 14th](#) and Thursday, [May 15th](#) from 5:30pm-7:00pm - **Neurodiversity: Better Understanding and Supporting Neurodivergent Youth** presented by Q Plus at Parker Memorial Community Center
- Saturday, [May 17th](#) from 9:00am-12:00pm - **Public Speaking Skills for Community Leaders** presented by KJR at Parker Memorial Community Center

Community Events:

- Tuesday, May 13th from 4:00pm-6:00pm - **Hartford Data Walk** presented by Hartford Data Collaborative & the 2025 Hartford Youth Data Fellows at the CT State Capitol-Hall of Flags
 - Featuring projects on homeownership, housing conditions, education, and community safety in Hartford



Featured Presenter and Topic

The Department of Families, Children, and Youth



Department
of *FAMILIES*,
Children,
and Youth



City of Hartford
Department of Families,
Children and Youth
550 Main Street, Suite 305
Hartford, CT 06103

860.757.9595
www.hartford.gov/dfcy

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILIES, CHILDREN, AND YOUTH

City of Hartford

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and Youth



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MISSION

The Mission of the Department of Families, Children, and Youth is to ensure the well-being and success of all Hartford families. The Department works toward that goal by promoting and providing high-quality early childhood education, workforce development, juvenile justice, community services, and other related programs.

* Please Note: DFCY (formerly DFCYR) was significantly restructured as of July 2024. As such, DFCY is currently under a Strategic Planning process. Therefore, Mission, Vision, and Departmental Roles are likely subject to change.

Department
of Families,
CHILDREN,
and Youth



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Our Strategic Roles

- **Collaborate** with system leaders and partners to improve life course outcomes for Hartford residents with a strong focus on literacy, chronic absenteeism, and justice
- Act as a thought, implementation, and action **partner** in the development of innovative and effective strategies
- Promoting **holistic** learning and development of children and youth with two-generation approaches
- Collect, analyze, and share **data** to assess measurable impact and inform key decision-making
- **Empower** children, youth, and families to advise, advocate, and lead solutions for themselves, their peers, and city
- **Leverage** and align resources to sustain innovation and impact



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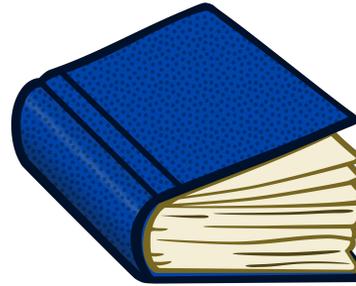
Our Strategic Initiatives

- **Early Learning:** Ensure equitable and holistic learning and development for young children through a multi-generational approach. Engage and empower parents, caregivers, and early educators as partners in shaping early childhood systems. Provide access to responsive supports and innovative tools that help families navigate care, advocate for their children, and build community. Focus areas include expanding high-quality early learning access, strengthening the workforce, and accelerating early literacy and developmental outcomes.
- **Youth Services:** Collaborate with system leaders and partners and act as a thought, implementation, and action partner to improve life course outcomes for Hartford youth with a focus on engagement, employment, and justice.
- **Family Services:** Understanding the importance of the family unit, our Family Services Division promotes/expands exploration, skill building, and leadership opportunities throughout the city so that resources are accessible to all residents and community members, with a focus on adolescent children, girls, and teens.

Our Pillars and Organizational Design

Every child and youth should:

- Be ready for school, college, career, and life
- Have a healthy start
- Feel safe and connected
- Have access to economic opportunities



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What does this mean?

In short, DFCY supports your
children and youth from

Cradle to Career.

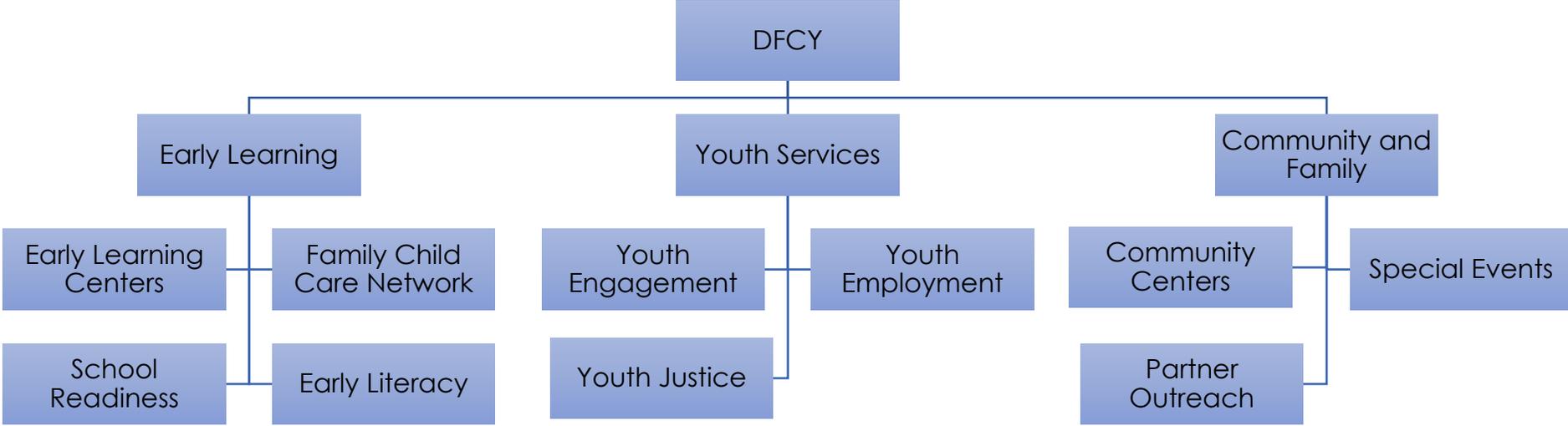


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Department Head/Director

- **Kristina Baldwin**, Director of Families, Children, and Youth

Division Heads

- **Shyleen Lopez**, Assistant Director of Early Learning Services
- **Chris Marcelli**, Assistant Director of Youth Services



Division of Early Learning

Our division provides day-to-day leadership in early learning and care for Hartford's children and contribute to the transformation of early childhood education. We want children to reach their full potential, and all stakeholders see the results and intended impacts.

- Focus on aligning systems, promoting quality, supporting families, and convening stakeholders
- Use best practices, data, and tools to make sure that every Hartford child is ready for kindergarten
- Lead citywide "get to mission" efforts that support families and accelerate early literacy and child development efforts
- Key programs: Early Learning Centers, School Readiness, Family Child Care Network, Hartford Talks, and more

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Division of Early Learning

Please see Handout



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Have you seen any of these logos?



**EARLY LEARNING
DIVISION**
City of Hartford



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Division of Youth Services

Our division is Hartford's Youth Service Bureau, an agency that plans, evaluates, coordinates, and implements a network of citywide resources and opportunities for children, youth, and their families. We want children and youth remain on safe and productive paths.

- Support families with service needs
- Help youth graduate, go to college, and make career plans
- Cultivate performance, analytics, and cross-agency collaboration to understand needs, close resource gaps, and address key indicators of success and disconnection
- Key programs: Mayor's Youth Service Corps, Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program, Youth Violence Prevention and Intervention Work Group, and more

Division of Youth Services

RED	<u>Racial & Ethnic Disparity Committee</u>	The goal is to engaged state, municipal and community actors working with youth in the juvenile justice system to track the disproportionate involvement of non-white youth in that system and to identify areas for tracking, advocacy, and reform. This includes: reducing the school-based arrests of youth, including a reduction in those arrests for offenses like Breach of Peace or Disorderly Conduct, establishing protocols for referring eligible youth to the YDT and reducing the detention admissions of non-white youth.
Tier 1/ YVPI	<u>Youth Violence Prevention & Intervention</u>	When a young person (aged 24 and under) is the victim of a stabbing or gunshot, the YJ team facilitates a collaborative call to discuss the incident and determine which CBO can provide the services the youth needs.
WYSH	<u>Wraparound Youth Supports for Homelessness</u>	WYSH is a pilot program that is meant to provide connections to resources and services for minors who are experiencing homelessness and housing instability. The YJ Team facilitates a monthly meeting to discuss new youth participants. DFCY does not provide direct services, but connects youth participants to CBOs.
YDT	<u>Youth Diversion Team</u> (formerly JRB: Juvenile Review Board)	YDT is a community-based diversion process for youth that may otherwise be referred to the Juvenile Court for minor violations of the law. DFCY contracts this service out to The Village and the YJ Team manages this contract.
YSB	<u>Youth Service Bureau</u>	DFCY manages Hartford's YSB, which includes two different types of referrals: Families with Service Needs (FWSN) and Truancy or Defiance of School Rules. Parents or guardians may submit the FWSN referrals; schools may submit the Truancy/Defiance referrals. After a school has provided sufficient interventions, but still does not see improved attendance or behavior, the school may submit a YSB referral to request additional assistance.
YOCC	<u>Youth Offender Care Coordination</u>	This program focuses on youth that engage in very risky behavior or are very well-known to law enforcement. Youth are connected to CBOs to help reduce offending/recidivism and get them back on track. DFCY contracts the services for this program out to five (5) CBOs: CCA, COMPASS, OPP, Roca, and SCRIP.

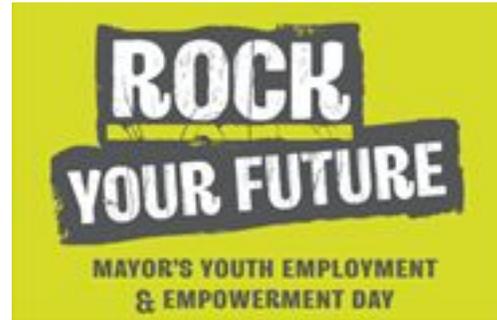


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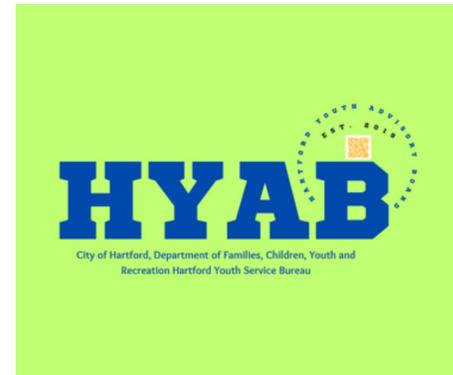
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Collaborative



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Have you ever been involved with any of these organizations in Hartford?

Actup Theater, Inc

All Hues LLC

Beyond Kids Foundation Inc

Big Brothers Big Sisters of
Connecticut, Inc.

Blue Hills Civic Association

Capitol Region Education Council
Foundation

Center for Latino Progress

Charter Oak Boxing Academy

Charter Oak Cultural Center

Community First School

Community Renewal Team, Inc.

COMPASS Youth Collaborative

City Council of Connecticut

Harc, Inc.

Hartford Knights Corp

Hartford Lions Soccer Academy

Hartford Performs

Hartford Public Library

Hartford Stage Company

Hartford Wildcats, Inc.

Hartford's Camp Courant

Heart Bible Institute

Main Stream Canoes and Kayaks LLC

McEIVR, Inc. / MakerspaceCT

Organized Parents Make A Difference, Inc.

Our Piece of the Pie, Inc.

Read to a Child, Inc.

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Our Piece of the Pie, Inc.
Read to a Child, Inc.
The DreamBig College
TKH Global Consulting
United Way of Central and
Northeastern CT
Urban League of Greater Hartford
URISE Ventures Inc.
Written Out Loud Group, LTD
YMCA of Greater Hartford
YWCA Hartford Region, Inc.
TKH Global Consulting
United Way of Central and
Northeastern CT

Urban League of Greater Hartford
URISE Ventures Inc.
Written Out Loud Group, LTD
YMCA of Greater Hartford
YWCA Hartford Region, Inc.
Center for Children's Advocacy
COMPASS
Our Piece of the Pie
Roca
Second Chance Re-entry Initiative Program
(SCRIP)
The Village for Families and Children

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Call to Action!

What can YOU do?

C.P.R. of DFCY

Connect – every child and youth should have the opportunity to be involved with a positive program, activity, organization, or interest with at least one caring adult.

Refer – refer children, youth and families seeking support to our department or another trusted agency.

Promote – help to spread the word about, and get involved with, DFCY programs, events, activates and services to others.

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How to Contact Us

City of Hartford, 550 Main Street
Room 305
Hartford, CT 06103

<https://www.hartfordct.gov/Government/Departments/DFCY>

<https://www.hartfordearlylearning.com/>

Phone: 860.757.9595

THANK YOU!

Discussion Questions



- In what ways do family navigation services benefit our community?
- What is the process for referring individuals to family navigators?
- How can we increase awareness of family navigation services within the community?

Thank You!

- **Next Conversations:**

- **Wednesday, May 21 - Zoom**
- **Saturday, June 28th - Artists Collective**

- Please take the [Post Meeting Feedback & Incentive Survey](#) to share your thoughts and feedback and access the incentive for Hartford residents. Use the QR code, or visit the link sent out via email following the meeting. Contact Ally McGinty at amcginty@unitedwayinc.org with any questions.

- Feedback or questions? Contact nhap@connecticutchildrens.org or share your thoughts in the open [Community Feedback and Ideas Form](#) at any time.

Feedback & Incentive

