

**Youth Service Bureaus
Best Practices**

YSB

**Youth Service
Bureau Showcase
2000**



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Youth Service Bureau Showcase

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Introduction

Since Youth Service Bureaus are designated as the municipal agent to coordinate, plan, implement and evaluate services for community youth, it is advantageous for providers and legislators to study how YSB's are building resiliency for Connecticut's children. This showcase will display best practices, model programs and innovative strategies to address, intervene and resolve modern crises and challenges that engage our youngsters. It is very invigorating working with such motivated, committed and skilled youth advocates!

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A Best Practice for Youth Service Bureaus has 2 key perspectives. The first is a community belief that collaboration between individuals, agencies and systems is critical for promoting positive youth development. And, creating caring pathways of access to opportunities for youth to develop and practice skills for living that promote physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health is the responsibility of an entire community. Second, Administrative Core Unit (ACU) functions include a range of activities that promote;

- 1.) administration and management,*
- 2.) research,*
- 3.) resource development,*
- 4.) community involvement, and*
- 5.) youth advocacy*

Each of these 5 ACU functions has standards. These standards help to strengthen services that promote in youth a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging, and power through positive outlets for growth.

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WETHERSFIELD

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All of the programs and services provided by Wethersfield Social and Youth Services' Youth Division are linked to the ROPE (Rite of Passage Experience) Program and its three phases. Phase I consists of a twelve session experiential curriculum. Goals of the ROPE program include: involving citizens of Wethersfield in a community sanctioned rite of passage program, easing the transition to middle school, and teaching problem solving skills. Phase II of the Rite of Passage Experience includes the Parent Action Committee (PAC) and Crossroads, an after school program which connects youth with various positive leisure time activities. Phase III offers young people volunteer opportunities such as community service programs so that connections to the community and its residents are made. All of the Department's additional programs such as Wilderness Programs, Community Service Programs, and the Climbing Club for High School students utilize the relationships with young people that are established through the ROPE program. Additionally, the goals established in ROPE are supported through all of the programs offered. Clinical services (counseling, crisis intervention, case management) and the Juvenile Review Board programs (the Diversion Program, an alternative to Juvenile Court for first time juvenile offenders, and Community Service Programs for juvenile offenders) also promote the ROPE program goals with young people. In linking its services in this manner, the Department weaves a safety net for the young people in this community as well as offering them a community based rite of passage experience.