



The Value of Support Systems

Early this fall, as hurricanes struck Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico and neighboring islands with violent force, we witnessed how vital support systems are to human survival. People from all around the world rallied to contribute however they could and worked together to help those who couldn't help themselves. If there was any silver lining to such widespread trauma, it was that when tragedy tested our humanity, we rose to the occasion and proved yet again that when it matters most, we understand instinctively that human survival depends on interdependence and systems of support.

WE OFFER SUPPORT TO OUR KIDS AND OUR STAFF

Here at the Bridge, we value support systems above all else when it comes to our work, because frankly, we couldn't do what we do without them.

In our residential programs, for example, the vast majority of the young people we shelter arrive on our doorstep in the midst of their own personal storms. They have endured unspeakable trauma and grown up without a proper support system. We give them one and help them learn to trust caring adults. We work very hard to put more support in place for them, so they have something to rely on when they move on from us. We strive to maintain strong inter-agency collaboration with our community colleagues, so together we can establish as many layers of support as possible for our kids. We can't do this work alone.

Residential work is emotionally charged, and it takes special people to do it. This is why we ensure that we not only put support systems in place for our kids, we also put them in place for our staff. The financial support we receive from you, our generous donors, allows us to maintain a strong training program for our youth workers and program directors, so they can meet the unique challenges of their jobs without compromising their own mental and physical health. If you have never thought about how your engagement with our mission serves this aspect of work, please know that it does and that it makes all the difference.

WE ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

As the Youth Service Bureau (YSB) for the Town of West Hartford, we are part of a highly collaborative environment that offers many support services for families, as well as for the professionals who support families. We value this rare aspect of our community and work hard to do our part to contribute to it. The West Hartford Community Network (WHCN) is an example of how we do so.

WHCN was founded and is currently managed by Pat Tyler, our Director of Youth and Family Services. It is a large, dedicated, and engaged group, whose members represent the school system, the town, the police department, the West Hartford Housing Authority, the YMCA, Jewish Family Services, and more. They meet monthly during the school year to share resources, discuss how best to support children and families in our town, and to nurture their own relationships.

WE APPRECIATE YOU AND YOUR SUPPORT

We could never do all that we do without you. Thank you for YOUR continued support, so we can help others when they need it most.

If this has been helpful to you, please visit our website to read past editions of Every Family, as well as our Every Family School Edition.



31st Annual Breakfast on the Bridge



On September 12, 2017, we hosted the 31st Annual Breakfast on the Bridge. Thank you to all who joined us to celebrate our collaboration on behalf of youth and families. We were especially proud to honor Tom Moore, Superintendent of West Hartford Public Schools, with the *Build No Fences Award*. Tom is a community leader with a strong moral compass who continues to demonstrate an unwavering commitment to the children and families we serve.

Top: Jamahl Hines, Tom Moore, Dan Zittoun, Roszema Haskins, Paul Vicinus, Tor Fiske, Julio Duarte
Center Left: Derek Slap, Shari Cantor, Margaret Hann | Center: Tom Moore, Amanda Aronson
(Photo credit: Ronni Newton, We-Ha.com) | Center Right: Natalie Simpson, Teresa Lerner
Bottom Left: Joy Wright, Lorna Little | Bottom Right: Gretchen Nelson, Kelly Brouse

Upcoming Events

VIEWS OF THE BRIDGE

- 11/15/17 West Hartford Counseling Center
8:30 – 9:30 a.m.
- 3/1/18 West Hartford Counseling Center
8:30 – 9:30 a.m.



CHILDREN'S CHARITY BALL – 1/20/18

This year, we will present our signature event in a NEW LOCATION: Marquee Events in Downtown Hartford. You may remember this site as the historic G. Fox building. This elegant, formal, evening will feature black and white glamour and new elements. Join Us!

Complementary valet parking will be offered. Tickets go on sale in December. Purchase early; event sells out quickly.

Visit www.bridgefamilycenter.org for details.



CONNECT WITH US

Support the Bridge through Workplace Giving

Fall is kick-off season for workplace giving campaigns, an easy and convenient way to support our mission and the safety net we provide for children and families. In these days of economic hardship and financial insecurity, your support means more than ever for the thousands of people whose lives we touch each year. Donors like you strengthen our safety net and help children grow and thrive.



Your donation may also qualify for a company matching gift. At many companies, you can apply directly online for a matching gift. Check with your HR department, or contact the Bridge at 860.521.8035 for more information.

HOW IT WORKS

The Bridge is affiliated with America's Best Local Charities, ABLC, for the Fall 2017/2018 campaign year. Our ABLC affiliation includes participation in the Connecticut State Employees' Campaign (agency code # 7824), as well as many corporations and other workplaces. You can find us in your campaign giving directory under the Bridge Family Center. If your company participates in the United Way Community Campaign, please designate the Bridge Family Center (agency code # 5237) on your donor pledge form.



#GIVINGTUESDAY™

#40FORTHEFRC

Our Family Resource Center (FRC) is an invaluable resource in the community of West Hartford and is often at the mercy of state funding changes. On November 28, 2017, help us continue to secure it by encouraging friends and colleagues to give \$40.00—or a gift in increments of \$40—on #Giving Tuesday.

Follow us on Instagram to be inspired by what makes our FRC so special:

@bridgefamilycenter

PLEASE INCLUDE US IN YOUR GIVING BY MAILING A GIFT IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE, OR BE IN TOUCH TO LEARN ABOUT THE ADDITIONAL GIVING AND ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES THAT FEEL RIGHT FOR YOU.

EVERY FAMILY is a newsletter of the Bridge Family Center | 1022 Farmington Avenue, West Hartford, CT 06107-2105 | 860.521.8035
info@bridgefamilycenter.org | www.bridgefamilycenter.org | facebook.com/BridgeFamilyCenter | Executive Director: Margaret A. Hann | Editor: Amanda Aronson.
The Bridge is a private, nonprofit youth and family service agency offering a broad range of services to children, youth, families, and adults. Our counseling centers are in Avon, West Hartford and Rockville, and our Family Resource Center is located within the Charter Oak International Academy in West Hartford.