



Nurturing A Trauma- Informed Community

IMPACT REPORT
2023 TO 2024



Mission

Our mission is to partner with individuals, youth, and families to improve well-being, strengthen resilience, and create a brighter future.

17,521

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COUNSELING SESSIONS

1,608

UNIQUE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CLIENTS SERVED

106

YOUTH (AGED 6-18) SCREENED FOR TRAUMA

32%

INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF YOUTH
SERVED FROM 263 TO 347

53%

YOUTH SCREENED HAD EXPERIENCED
SIX OR MORE TRAUMATIC EVENTS

290,260

NUTRITIOUS MEALS SERVED TO 2,343 SENIOR CLIENTS

4,156

SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETING VISITS



Edith Boyle, LCSW
President & CEO



Howard Greene
Board Chair

Dear Friends,

This past year, LifeBridge honed our core behavioral health services and expanded our offerings to support our community. We opened our doors wider to serve additional youth and families, strengthened our financial health, and began reimagining our policies and procedures through a trauma-informed lens. Our team has had a busy year, and we are proud of our progress. As you read this report, we hope you reflect on the importance of LifeBridge's role in the community and the impact of our services.

Our efforts to expand access to services this year resulted in a 32% increase in children receiving our services. Every child seen at LifeBridge undergoes a screening to determine the degree of exposure they've had to traumatic events (e.g., witnessing violence, experiencing verbal, physical, or sexual abuse, death or separation from a primary caregiver, not enough food to eat, or bullying). Concerningly, 53% of the children seen screened positive for six or more traumatic events. Our team of mental health professionals then supports these children and their families to address the social, psychological, and emotional issues caused by chronic exposure to traumatic events or adversity.

Providing access to mental and behavioral health services not only serves as a public health intervention, it is also prevention. Some adults who experienced adverse experiences or traumatic events when they were children have a harder time providing a safe and nurturing environment for themselves and their children, which increases the risk that their children will experience events that affect them in adulthood. And unless it is disrupted, the cycle continues. This is why our mental and behavioral health services are critical to both children and adults.

Despite the significant challenges faced by those who need our support, we recognize and celebrate the many strengths within our community and our incredible partners. We believe fostering collaboration, shared learning, and steadfast support to be the path forward.

This is our role in the community. This is our impact.

In partnership,
Edith & Howard

Affiliations












Our membership affiliations serve as vital, reciprocal strategic tools offering a range of benefits that contribute to our sustainability, effectiveness, and ability to impact our community and beyond.

National Child Traumatic Stress Network

Our credibility is bolstered by our partnership with the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, a national network of frontline providers committed to raising the standard of care and increasing access to services for children and families who experience or witness traumatic events.

Urban Trauma Provider Network

LifeBridge is a proud member of the Urban Trauma Provider Network, a network of providers trained on racial trauma and equipped with the knowledge necessary to support the mental health of youth within communities of color.

<p>National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)</p> 	<p>Urban Trauma Provider Network (UTPN)</p> 	<p>Bridgeport Regional Business Council</p> 	<p>The CT Collaborative to End Loneliness</p> 
<p>CT Community Nonprofit Alliance (The Alliance)</p> 	<p>Cultural Alliance of Fairfield County</p> 	<p>Fairfield CARES</p> 	<p>Health Improvement Alliance (HIA)</p> 
<p>The HIVE</p> 	<p>National Health Service Corps</p> 	<p>Transforming Children's Behavioral Health Policy and Planning Committee</p> 	

Behavioral Health

LifeBridge's core service is providing behavioral health services to support low-income and underserved adults, youth, and families throughout the greater Bridgeport region, with accessible locations in Bridgeport and Fairfield or via teletherapy. A portion of our team is bilingual, and we also utilize advanced language translation technology to offer near real-time translation in 82-plus languages when needed.

Serving adults and children (age six and older), our licensed clinicians offer two primary treatment approaches: talk therapy and art therapy. Our team provides support for a range of issues, including trauma, depression, anxiety, substance use, relationships, transitions and adjustments, domestic violence, grief, and more. We also offer youth and parent support groups and facilitate a Community Support Program (CSP) to provide intensive case management to adults with severe mental health and addiction concerns for them to live more independently and improve their quality of life.



CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

33.7%

HISPANIC OR LATINO

27.8%

BLACK

25.4%

WHITE

2.7%

TWO OR MORE RACES

82%

AT OR BELOW POVERTY LEVEL

HOW WE'RE DOING

44%

OF CLIENTS INCREASED THEIR RESILIENCE

51%

EXPERIENCED A DECREASE IN DEPRESSION / ANXIETY

83%

BELIEVE LIFEBRIDGE HAS HELPED THEM

88%

BELIEVE THEIR CLINICIAN IS ON THEIR SIDE

92%

WOULD RECOMMEND LIFEBRIDGE TO OTHERS

Behavioral Health

Demonstrated Strategy Execution and Progress

This past year, we made three strategic improvements to our behavioral health service offerings:

1. Increased capacity to serve more youth

State and federal grant funding allowed us to renovate our headquarters in Bridgeport to expand our clinical team and replace an inoperable elevator to expand access to much needed services. We also extended our hours of operation in Bridgeport and Fairfield.

2. Increased competency and expertise in treating psychological trauma

One of thirty sites nationally, we secured multi-year funding through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to administer programming focused on addressing child trauma and toxic stress, which includes advanced training for our clinicians in evidence-based practices to treat complex trauma. As a result, we now administer the Child Trauma Screen (CTS) to every child completing an intake assessment.

Efforts to expand access to services resulted in a 32% increase in youth serviced (from 263 to 347), and over half (53%) of youth screened positive for six or more traumatic events (e.g., witnessing violence, verbal, physical, or sexual abuse, death or separation from primary caregiver, not enough food to eat, bullying).

The Child Health Development Institute recognized our team during its annual Evidence-Based Practice Conference for outstanding work implementing Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) to treat child trauma.

Many Bridgeport children face significant challenges like poverty, underperforming schools, trauma, and unstable home situations, which affect their physical and mental health. The community's health needs stem from systemic issues such as historical trauma, poverty, violence, and racial inequalities. Access to mental health services, alongside concerns about violence and safety, is a top priority in this federally designated Mental Health Professional Shortage Area (MHPSA) to improve population health and reduce the prevalence of unhealthy coping mechanisms.

The City of Bridgeport has one of the highest poverty rates in the state at 21%, a stark contrast to Fairfield County (2%), the state (10%), and nationally (15%).

Violent crime is 75% higher than the national average.

Health-related cost of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) to Connecticut taxpayers is \$174 billion annually (this is just in healthcare costs alone – increased utilization of services for health conditions that could be prevented or mitigated – and does not account for related costs in the criminal justice, education, child welfare, or other systems due to the consequences of ACEs.)

Well-being disparities in Fairfield County remain among the greatest in the country.

These statistics demonstrate the urgent need for quality trauma-focused treatment services for Bridgeport communities.

3. Implemented art therapy

We now offer art therapy, a powerful approach particularly effective with youth but beneficial for all ages. Art therapy involves structured guidance from a board-certified or professionally credentialed art therapist to achieve clinical outcomes. This service supports mental and emotional well-being, allowing participants to express themselves and process experiences in a meaningful way.



We recognize and promote the intersection between art and mental health.

Studies show that art therapy is especially effective in reducing symptoms of depression, anxiety, low mood, trauma, distress, poor quality of life, inability to cope, and low self-esteem. Another benefit of art therapy is that it has been known to help youth stay engaged in treatment longer until their conditions improve.



The Courage to Understand: Nurturing a Trauma-Informed Community Symposium

Our inaugural Symposium marked a meaningful shift from traditional fundraising to a community-centered learning experience, focusing on toxic stress, childhood trauma, its lasting effects, and the need for trauma-informed practices across sectors.

To support these efforts, we launched Connecticut's first Trauma-Informed Community of Practice (TI-CoP)!

We extend heartfelt thanks to our sponsors, keynote speaker Dr. Nadine Burke Harris, event panelists, and the hundreds of attendees—including health and human service providers, educators, community leaders, and policymakers. The event was offered free of charge to ensure broad access.

Presenting Sponsor
Yale New Haven Health

Keynote
Dr. Nadine Burke Harris
Founder, Center for Youth Wellness,
Former Surgeon General of California

Panelists
Edith Boyle, LCSW
President & CEO, LifeBridge Community Services

Dr. Magna Dias
Bridgeport Hospital/Yale New Haven Health

Dr. Steven Marans
Co-Director, Yale Center for
Traumatic Stress and Recovery

Dr. Albert Sackey
Bridgeport Public Schools

Dr. Listy Thomas
St. Vincent's Medical Center/Hartford HealthCare

Moderator
Adhlere Coffy
Dalio Education

[**VIEW PROGRAM**](#)



"This was a fantastic symposium, a great network gathering event, and we were able to learn a ton from an incredible leader in the field. Well done!"

We proudly had 280 attendees! Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with an overall satisfaction rating of 4.95 out of 5.



Trauma-Informed Community of Practice (TI-CoP)

To better serve our community, we have begun integrating trauma-informed principles and practices into the DNA of our organization and our team to strengthen our service delivery and outcomes. The TI-CoP was developed to support local agencies that desire to do the same. Following the Symposium, over twenty agencies expressed interest in participating.

From the voice of trauma survivors, the climate and conditions in which services are provided across systems play a significant role in maximizing treatment interventions and contributing to the healing and recovery of the people we serve. Truly, it takes a village.

What is a trauma-informed organization?

Realizes

widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery

Responds

by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices

Recognizes

signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, others involved with the system

Resists

seeks to actively **resist** re-traumatization

Community Training

In addition to providing clinical services, we provide trauma awareness training. Trauma-awareness training equips individuals, organizations, and communities with the knowledge and skills to recognize and respond to the effects of trauma in others. It is a foundational step in building trauma-informed systems that prioritize health, reduce harm, and promote well-being.

368

INDIVIDUALS TRAINED

31%

IMPROVEMENT IN KNOWLEDGE AND SELF-EFFICACY

88%

SATISFACTION WITH THE TRAINING



The Community Mural Club

This platform connected youth with peers and the wider community, offering not only support but also opportunities to give back. Led by professional artist Alicia Cobb, the Community Mural Club empowered Bridgeport youth with a passion for visual arts to conceptualize and create a community mural. Through this experience, participants developed skills in teamwork, critical thinking, math, spatial awareness, and more, fostering a strong sense of belonging and purpose. Recognizing that patients, staff, and visitors were their primary audience, the club designed a mural to evoke feelings of calm, peace, and joy for those at the hospital.

In partnership with

YaleNewHavenHealth
Bridgeport Hospital



Feeling like one plays a helpful, contributory role in the lives of others is associated with lower levels of depression and higher levels of mastery and control. When youth give back to their community by creating something beautiful together, it supports their mental and emotional well-being.

80%

SHOWED IMPROVEMENT IN SELF-EFFICACY, THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE FUTURE, THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD COMMUNITY, AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

100%

SHOWED IMPROVEMENT IN THEIR SELF-ESTEEM

Senior Meals on Wheels

LifeBridge provides nutritional meals to older adults in Greater New Haven through our home delivered meals and congregate dining programs. Our Elderly Nutrition Program has a significant impact on the health and well-being of seniors in these communities. We provide nutritious meals that seniors may not otherwise have access to – especially important for those who live alone or have difficulty preparing meals. In addition to improving nutrition, congregate dining helps promote social interaction among participants. This offers an opportunity for seniors to interact with others on a regular basis, which can help reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness. Drivers typically check in with each senior during meal delivery, providing an extra layer of safety and security for those who live alone.

seniormealsct.org

88,366

CONGREGATE MEALS SERVED TO 1,392 PARTICIPANTS

201,894

HOME-DELIVERED MEALS SERVED TO 951 PARTICIPANTS

93%

PARTICIPANTS SATISFIED WITH THE MEAL SERVICE

Sign Language Interpreting Services

Sign language interpreters provide a valuable service for our community, with benefits that extend to both hearing and hard-of-hearing individuals: facilitating meaningful communication. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that Title II entities (state and local governments) and Title III entities (businesses and nonprofit organizations that serve the public) communicate effectively with people who have communication disabilities. Our interpreters support the needs of these individuals in a way that can improve many life experiences. LifeBridge has provided professional on-site sign language interpreting services across Connecticut for over 30 years. Our qualified interpreters are available 24/7/365 for interpreting needs based on availability.

signlanguagect.org

4,156

SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETING VISITS

973

DEAF AND HEARING-IMPAIRED CLIENTS SERVED

100%

PARTICIPANTS SATISFIED WITH LIFEBRIDGE'S TIMELINESS, PROFESSIONALISM, AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

Leadership

Board of Directors

Howard Greene, Chair
VOYA Financial (ret)

Anne Diamond, MDA, JD, CNMT, First Vice Chair
Bridgeport Hospital

Jeanne D. Breen, MD, Second Vice Chair
Physician, Private Practice

John J. Lombardi, Ph.D., Treasurer
CentrePoint Industries

Libby Traynor, LCSW, Assistant Treasurer
AABR, Inc.

Ellen Tower, Secretary
Citibank (ret)

Dara Richards, MD, Assistant Secretary
Southwest Community Health

Kenneth Weinstein, At-Large
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George Kasper, Esq.
Pullman and Comley

Steve Finnegan
Newtown Savings Bank

Thomas Travers, MD
Oxford Health (ret)

Nicole Cassidy
Americares

Adhlere Coffy
Dalio Education

PeJay Lucky
Fairfield University

Natalie A. Pryce, CPCC
Pryceless Consulting

Dr. Lesly Valbrun
Bridgeport NAACP

Leadership

LifeBridge Team

Edith Boyle, LCSW
President and CEO

Frank Farias
Chief Financial Officer

Lori Goertz, MPA
Senior Director, Marketing and Development

Cary Ostrow
Senior Director, Quality and Compliance

Tia Reid
Senior Director, Behavioral Health Services

Linda Dunn
Director of Human Resources

Division Leadership

Elizabeth Campbell
Director
Sign Language Interpreting Services

Shanie Velazquez
Director
Senior Meals on Wheels of Greater New Haven

FY24

Operating Revenue

\$8,579,469

- 51% Public Funding
- 32% Fee for Service
- 8% Contributions
- 8% Gain on Sale
- 1% Other



FY24

Operating Expenses

\$7,917,206

- 89% Program Expenses
- 7% Administrative
- 4% Fundraising



Gifts by Credit Card



Gifts by Check

LifeBridge Community Services
Attention: Development
475 Clinton Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06605

Matching Gifts

Check with your employer to see if they have a matching gift program

Legacy Giving

Including LifeBridge in your will is a way to make a lasting impact

Donors

Thank You, Partners! We thank all our donors who made contributions between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024. Your support makes our services possible. All who engage in strengthening the community are equally valued, whether a donor, volunteer, staff member, or nonprofit peer. We strive to respect, appreciate, recognize, and build relationships with all stakeholders. *The donor list reflects contributions of \$1,000 or more, excluding government grants.*

\$50,000+

M&T Bank / M&T Charitable Foundation
Tudor Foundation, Inc.
Yale New Haven Health

\$20,000 to \$49,999

Joyce and Howard Greene
Hartford HealthCare / St. Vincent's Medical Center
Philip Marett Fund
United Way of Coastal and Western Connecticut &
State of Connecticut Social Equity Council

\$10,000 to \$19,999

The Alice Lawrence Foundation Inc.
The Ernest & Joan Trefz Foundation
Lone Pine Foundation, Inc.
The Mary Hawley Trust
Near & Far Aid
Newtown Savings Bank / Foundation, Inc.
United Way of Coastal and Western Connecticut /
Bridgeport Prosper

\$5,000 to \$9,999

Alex G. Nason Foundation
CentrePoint Industries / John J. Lombardi, Ph.D.
Collin Comey Guardian Angel Fund
Federation for Jewish Philanthropy of Upper
Fairfield County
Levi S. Cobb Trust
Mary W. Beardsley Trust
Sacred Heart University
Sally Dickson Fund
Rita and Kenneth Weinstein

\$2,500 to \$4,999

Benjamin B. Lewis Trust
David & Eunice Bigelow Foundation
Sylvia and Shane Eddy
Elsie Davis Young Endowment Fund
GBAPP, Inc.
Marta Jo Lawrence
Raytheon Technologies Corporation
The Ruth Krauss Foundation
Total Mortgage Community Foundation
Town Fair Tire Foundation, Inc.
Libby Traynor-Kouider, LCSW
United Illuminating Co., an AVANGRID company
University of Bridgeport

\$1,000 to \$2,499

Act II Thrift Shop
Jeanne D. Breen, M.D.
Ruth and Charles Chiusano
Connecticut Children's
Connecticut Health Foundation
Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants
Christine and James Cook
The Ethel & Abe Lapides Foundation
EBM, Inc.
Fairfield County's Community Foundation
Dana Fiatarone
Paula and Stephen Finnegan
Founders Entertainment
Fred R. and Hazel W. Carstensen Memorial
Foundation
A Gift for Bridgeport Children
Greenfield Hill Congregational Church
Richard Grellier
The Hilb Group
Lockheed Martin Employee Political Action
Committee Charity Match Program
NFP Corp.
Pullman & Comley, LLC
Recovery Network of Programs, Inc.
Katherine Rust
Southwest Community Health Center
Ellen and Stephen Tower
Dr. Katja Vehlow and Jeff Weinstein
Vimini Real Estate Services, LLC

A Look Ahead

Expand Access, Training, Shared Learning



This coming year, we will expand our reach and impact by partnering with Bridgeport Public Schools. Using the Trauma-Informed Multi-Tiered System of Support (TI-MTSS) framework we will support local schools by providing universal, targeted, and intensive evidence-based interventions to address the impact of prolonged exposure to adverse experiences and traumatic events. We will train staff in evidence-based Community Resilience Model (CRM) – simple, biologically based wellness skills to model and promote with students, such as techniques to soothe rather than escalate strong emotions and challenging situations. Additionally, we will integrate an age-appropriate social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum into wellness classes. While many students learn these skills at home, many students from challenging home situations may not; therefore, LifeBridge’s program is essential in helping young people practice and apply these skills in their school environment to prepare them for adulthood and life. For students with higher needs, we will offer individualized support, using mental health assessments and therapeutic counseling to address the root cause of disruptive behavior.

Our Trauma-Informed Community of Practice (TI-CoP) will begin to meet regularly to share learnings and best practices for implementing trauma-informed practices in Fairfield County – and ultimately – throughout Connecticut, with Bridgeport leading the way.

In July 2024, Mayor Joseph Ganim officially declared Bridgeport’s gun violence a mental health crisis. Access to mental health services is among the region’s most critical issues. The impact of community violence is not limited to physical injuries; it also encompasses emotional and psychological wounds that may not be immediately visible, and in children it has profound negative, and potentially long-lasting effects on their development.

Our services are needed now more than ever.
Join us as we launch our 175th year of service to the community.



475 Clinton Avenue
Bridgeport, CT 06605

125 Penfield Road
Fairfield, CT 06824

203-368-4291

lifebridgect.org
seniormealsct.org
signlangugagect.org



@LifeBridgeCT

