

CT STRONG: Seamless Transition and Recovery Opportunities through Network Growth



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the CT STRONG - Healthy Transitions initiative?

The CT STRONG (Seamless Transition and Recovery Opportunities through Network Growth) will engage and connect transition age youth and young adults to high quality behavioral health care. The youth to be served must reside in New London, Milford or Middletown and be at risk for, or have behavioral health disorders. This \$5 million dollar, five year grant, was awarded through a competitive application process to The CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), in partnership with the CT Department of Children and Families (DCF), by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)/Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS). This initiative will utilize innovative approaches to improve rates of service engagement, and outcomes with regard to housing stability, health and mental health, education and employment for individuals aged 16-25.

What are the goals and activities of the CT STRONG initiative?

CT STRONG will:

- Utilize social marketing and public education approaches such as media campaigns to inform people about mental illness, reduce stigma and discrimination and provide connections to services.
- Identify young people who may have behavioral health disorders and engage them into treatment, services and supports.
- Implement the key principles of the Wraparound approach; a planning process that incorporates the preferences, strengths and natural supports of the individual to determine how to best serve them.
- Ensure that families, including natural supports beyond traditional families are engaged and included in recovery planning.
- Enhance existing transitional youth behavioral health services to create a strengths based, family focused, gender responsive and recovery oriented system of care that takes into consideration the culture of the youth and family.

Who will administer the CT STRONG initiative?

The Project will be administered by the Connecticut Departments of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) and Children and Families (DCF) in collaboration with Advanced Behavioral Health (ABH). The Child and Family Agency of Southeastern CT (New London), Bridges (Milford), and Community Health Center (Middletown) will hire key project implementation staff to work with youth to ensure their successful transition to productive adult community members. DMHAS is the fiduciary agency on this grant, and the evaluation will be conducted by the University of Connecticut School of Social Work.

What role will state and local agencies and key stakeholders play in the success of this initiative?

The involvement of state and local agencies and key stakeholders is a crucial aspect of CT STRONG. Through collaborative efforts to engage and connect youth they will:

- Participate on State and Local Level Transition Teams to review progress and examine data to detect any changing trends.
- Make recommendations for program changes or enhancements.
- Assist with engaging stakeholders in implementation and evaluation activities.

For more information about CT STRONG, go to www.ct.gov/dmhas or contact Dawn Grodzki at 860-418-6772 or Dawn.Grodzki@ct.gov