

Drop-In Center

End-of-Year Report

Fiscal Year 23/24

(7.1.2023 – 6.30.2024)



Youth Served: 123

- Target population: youth in middle and high school enrolled in other Domus programs
- Average daily attendance: 25 youth

FY24 Program Highlights:

- Drop-In Center youth continuously give back to several different communities. This year, young people made Christmas cards for seniors, donated household items to a family shelter, and donated funds to support autism awareness. Drop-In Center activities emphasize the importance of giving back and work to instill that quality in our youth.
- The Domus Steppers dance team participated in several showcases and performed for several churches; the Steppers were also selected to lead the 2024 Stamford Juneteenth Parade.
- The Center was a supplemental and supportive setting for several youth graduating this year who overcame many obstacles and challenges.
- Center activities exposed young people to trips, activities, and family-style dinners they may have not otherwise experienced.

“

After being here for so many years, it feels like a family. I will forever be a Domus kid.

”

About the Program:

The Domus Drop-In Center is an out-of-school-time program located at our Lockwood Avenue site. Open five days a week after school as well as during school holidays and the summer, the center offers youth in middle and high school who are enrolled in other Domus programs an opportunity to spend time together and participate in enrichment activities and field trips. More than a fun hang-out space, the center is staffed by professionals who help young people build skills such as effective communication, healthy conflict resolution, and short- and long-term goal creation and attainment. Domus Drop-In Center staff members pride themselves on providing a safe space and positive outlet for young people.

“

I always want to come to Drop-In Center and see my friends. I get to do fun stuff with [a staff member] and go to the gym. Domus is my home!

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The Domus Relational Model:

The entirety of our work is based on the undeniable power of love to transform lives. Our staff work relentlessly to engage young people, never giving up until they feel a sense of safety and belonging. We use a unique and powerful combination of trauma-responsive, anti-racist practices, positive youth development, loving relationships, and Thoughts, Emotions, & Behaviors (a form of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) skills-building. Together, these elements engage a young person's entire nervous system to increase their safety, health, wisdom, resilience, and skills. Fundamentally, they help youth regulate, relate, and reason as they practice shifting from a chronic stress response (“fight, flight, or flee”) to engage their “calm and connect” systems. Thus, when facing life's inevitable challenges, youth can interrupt unproductive, automatic reactions and respond more skillfully. Through these loving, evidence-based interventions, Domus empowers young people to achieve life-changing outcomes.

FY24 Organizational Highlights:

- The Domus organizational focus this year was *A Year of Wellness and Healing*. Activities included connecting program youth with nature as well as providing 400 families with Spring into Spring gifts they could use together as a family. The year culminated in providing \$100 wellness scholarships to 80 Domus young people to support their mental and physical well-being.
- Domus partnered with the City of Stamford on the Stamford Kindness Project. During the month of December, Domus youth and staff made kindness walls at all our program locations. Domus then provided breakfast to all youth and staff to celebrate kindness.
- Domus provided holiday gifts and food to 476 families and Thanksgiving support to 357 families across all our programs.



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