

END-OF-YEAR *REPORT*



INVICTUS

FISCAL YEAR 2025

(7/1/2024 - 6/30/2025)

Indicators of Success

86% participant
retention rate
through relentless
outreach

44%
maintained near
weekly contact
with program
staff despite
substantial
engagement
barriers

Our Young People

- 94%** Are young people of color.
- 86%** Have current or prior justice system involvement.
- 29%** Live in unstable housing situations.
- 49%** Have unreliable transportation.
- 43%** Have no high school diploma or GED.
- 86%** Are unemployed.
- 31%** Cannot meet basic needs (food, shelter, etc.) without support.

51 Young People Served



How Are We Doing?*

86% of PARTICIPANTS

feel the help program staff provides is *very/extremely* helpful.

73% of PARTICIPANTS

feel program staff *always* treats them with respect.



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, powerful combination of trauma-responsive and anti-racist practices, positive youth development principles, loving relationships, and skill building rooted in Thoughts, Emotions, & Behaviors, a form of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. 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 capably. Through these loving, evidence-based interventions, Domus empowers young people to achieve life-changing outcomes.

This year, Domus engaged 719 disengaged young people, each with an average of 3 traumatic experiences that have impacted their ability to succeed. Our evidence-supported interventions, in combination with the elements of our Relational Model, provided the support needed to help them re-engage and thrive.

Essential Supports for Success

- Engaging in **1,088 one-on-one meetings** to provide support and coaching.
- Conducting **777 outreach efforts** to re-engage disconnected program participants, including relentless calls, texts, and word-of-mouth messages.
- Offering **51 group class sessions** that provide skill-building opportunities.


About the Program

Invictus ensures that Stamford- and Norwalk-area young people disconnected from work and school are provided with the support, skills, and competencies they need to reconnect.

These individuals, aged 17 to 26, may:

- have left high school before graduation
- be unhoused or experiencing housing instability
- have prior justice system involvement
- be currently incarcerated

One-on-one meetings with youth development professionals — which may occur before release for those incarcerated — develop trusting relationships and build the capacity for goal setting. Skill-development training includes cognitive behavior skills to help young people change their behavior and build resiliency skills. We also help participants develop critical life skills around transportation and self-care. With support from Domus staff, participants pursue education or training, seek employment, or enroll in DomusWorks, our workforce development program.



Program Successes

Invictus **focused on goal planning** this year. During weekly face-to-face meetings, staff and young people created realistic goals, then worked to remove any barriers that may get in the way of goal completion. For example, many participants wanted to obtain a driver's license to qualify for better-paying jobs. While this was a common goal, our young people were not achieving it due to several barriers. We created a plan to address each barrier, including instituting a weekly study group. For those who attended, Domus rewarded them by paying for driver education classes at a professional driving school. This plan has resulted in three young people getting their driver's licenses and one receiving their permit.

I love the way Invictus treats us.

—Invictus Participant

Organization-Wide Successes

YOUTH & FAMILY WELL-BEING: We awarded 120 youth wellness scholarships of \$100 each. Young people applied to purchase items or services to improve their physical or mental well-being. We also provided *Spring into Summer* gifts of fun, activity-based supplies to 250 families.

SERVICE LEARNING: 75 Domus youth from across our programs planned and executed a community-wide spring/Easter celebration for over 100 local children. The celebration included pictures with the Easter Bunny, numerous egg hunts, and arts & crafts activities.

Families received food to help defray the cost of feeding their children during spring break.

ADVOCACY FOR DISCONNECTED YOUTH: Domus youth and staff educated decisionmakers about challenges facing disengaged and disconnected young people.

- Youth and staff testified in Hartford on several pieces of legislation.
- Domus joined with six other nonprofits across the state to form the 119K To Zero advocacy collaborative to support efforts reducing the number of disconnected youth in the state.
- Staff and youth met with the governor, the House minority leader, and many state representatives to share their experiences.



Endnote

*Survey response rate 81%

LOVE LIVES HERE