

END-OF-YEAR *REPORT*



**MIDDLE SCHOOL
FAMILY ADVOCATES**

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

Indicators of Success

91%
student
retention rate

88% avg
daily
attendance
rate

82% not
suspended
out of school



They really help, talking us through our feelings when we are upset [or] are having a hard time in school or just in life in general.

—Middle School Family Advocate Student

How Are We Doing?

**94% of STUDENTS
98% of FAMILIES**

feel the help their advocate provides is *very/extremely* helpful.

**87% of STUDENTS
95% of FAMILIES**

feel their advocate *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.

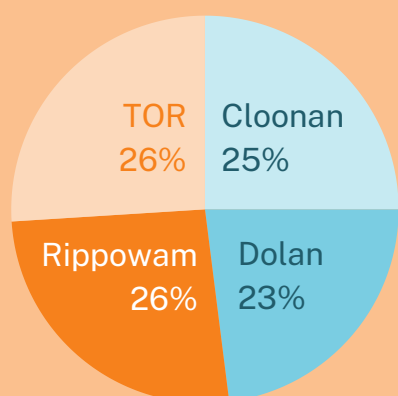
This year, Domus engaged 719 disengaged young people, each with an average of 3 traumatic experiences that have impacted their ability to succeed.

Our evidence-supported interventions, in combination with the elements of our Relational Model, provided the support needed to help them re-engage and thrive.

[This program] is great for our children and is a safe place... I've definitely seen a drastic change in my child due to this program.

—Middle School Family Advocate Parent

Our Students



	MSFA	SPS ²
Black students	27%	13%
Hispanic students	50%	54%
White students	4%	24%
Multiracial/other students	19%	9%
% qualify for free or reduced lunch	92%	54%
% are English Language Learners	22%	19%
% require special education services	28%	18%

108 Students Served

Essential Supports for Success

Building Relationships through the Relational Model by:

- Meeting weekly with students for at least 30 minutes, for **3,452 meaningful interactions** (97% in person)
- Connecting monthly with family members, for **1,217 family contacts** (64% in person)
- Engaging in **2,020 teacher connections**, including participation in PPTs

Supporting Improved Attendance and Behavior through:

- Incentives to spur improved and excellent attendance
- Wake-up calls and transportation to school
- Assistance with school-led restorative justice practices
- Connect students with community-based organizations such as LiveGirl (photo right) to foster confidence, leadership, and personal development
- Partnerships with School-Based Health Centers, the Vaping Diversionary Program, and the Juvenile Review Board to ensure students' physical, mental, and academic needs are met

Supporting Families Financially with:

- Back-to-school clothing and supplies, sports equipment, and winter coats and hats
- Monthly assistance with food, rent, and utilities as needed
- Holiday food, gifts, and gift cards
- Enrollment fees for community programs



The program is good at keeping everyone happy. I feel very safe and loved when I am at Domus.

—Middle School Family Advocate Student

About the Program

Domus' middle school family advocates (FAs) help students attain their maximum personal and educational development in four Stamford Public Schools middle schools. Students who need intensive individualized support inside and outside the school setting are supported by FAs and a variety of support services to ensure they overcome academic and social/ emotional barriers to learning.

Program Successes

The Middle School Family Advocacy team focused this year on staff professional development, parent recognition, and youth leadership.

Professional Development: Team members attended professional development opportunities including iCANVA 2025, the SERC Conference, the Yale Education Leadership Conference, and the Student Summit IV for Connecticut's African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Course of Studies. These experiences strengthened our advocacy and enriched our work.

Parent Recognition: We deepened family partnerships by engaging parents throughout the year, including co-attending field trips to build trust and community. Parents also fiercely advocated for our program, helping strengthen its impact. The year ended with a celebration honoring their dedication, with parents being presented with certificates of appreciation.

Youth Leadership: We created a student-led wellness program, with students taking the initiative to support causes they care about. One of their first major projects was organizing a school-wide bake sale fundraiser for breast cancer awareness. The success of this project empowered students to further engage in civic-minded activities and reinforced their roles as changemakers in their school community.

Organization-Wide Successes

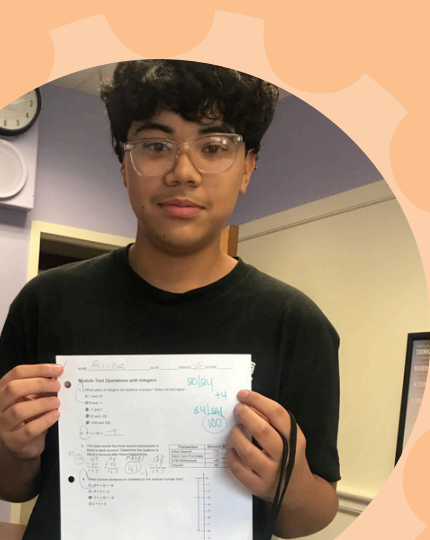
YOUTH & FAMILY WELL-BEING: We awarded 120 youth wellness scholarships of \$100 each. Young people applied to purchase items or services to improve their physical or mental well-being. We also provided *Spring into Summer* gifts of fun, activity-based supplies to 250 families.

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.



Endnotes

¹Survey response rates: 94% students, 85% families

²All Stamford Public Schools data from [State of CT DOE website](#).