

# END-OF-YEAR *REPORT*

## DOMUS

**VAPING DIVERSIONARY PROGRAM**  
FISCAL YEAR 2025 (7/1/2024 - 6/30/2025)

## Indicators of Success\*

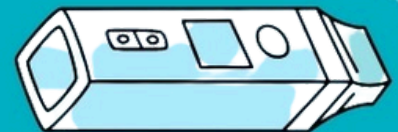
66% of youth, post-class, say they "definitely will not vape again"

84% of youth say the class educated them on dangers of vaping

100% of families say the class educated them on dangers of vaping

### "Harmless water vapor?"

E-cigarette aerosol contains at least 10 chemicals known to cause birth defects, other reproductive harm, or cancer.



## Our Young People

- 90%** Are young people of color.
- 62%** Are male.
- 48%** Of referred high school students are in 9<sup>th</sup> grade.
- 66%** Of youth attend high school, 34% attend middle school.

**50 Young People Served Across 7 Classes**



# 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.**



All the information they give is very interesting and alarming. [translated from Spanish]

—VDP Parent

## About the Program

The Vaping Diversionary Program is a volunteer partnership among Domus, Liberation Programs, the Stamford Public Schools (SPS), and the Stamford Police Department (SPD). Students are referred by SPS and are first-time vaping/marijuana/THC offenders in 6th through 12th grade in SPS schools. The program educates students on the behavioral and health dangers of vaping, marijuana, and/or THC and encourages them to re-think their decisions based on education and outreach. Domus staff conducts an intake with the referred student and family, assessing the situation and identifying concerns regarding substance use and mental health. The student and their family then attend a class together; classes are offered monthly. The goal is to incorporate a restorative response to the behavior by reducing student suspensions and school-based arrests for vaping/marijuana/THC, which research shows further disengages students from school.



*What is good about this program?*

They go through every possible phase or obstacle of doing nicotine and THC. It shows all the bad effects of it and clearly explains why it's so bad for someone to do at such a young age or in general.

—VDP 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 rates: 88% youth, 84% families

**LOVE LIVES HERE**

