



# CT Cradle to Career Coalition Inaugural Newsletter

*Advancing Economic, Educational, and Health Equity  
Across Connecticut*

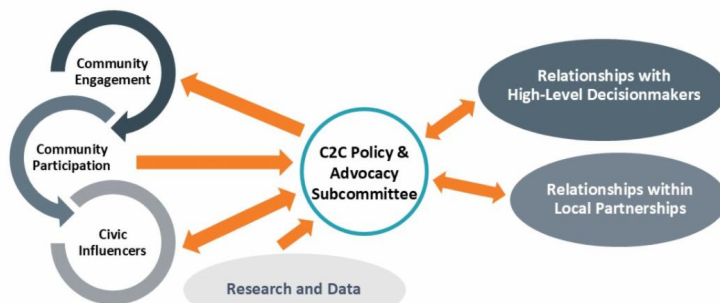
***Welcome to the inaugural Connecticut Cradle to Career (C2C) Coalition  
Quarterly Newsletter!***

The [CT C2C Coalition](#) unites five StriveTogether partnerships serving 125,000 children across Bridgeport, Danbury, Norwalk, Stamford, and Waterbury and includes over 440+ organizations and 15 working groups to advance policies that create equitable opportunities for all children and families. We are thankful for the investment from [StriveTogether](#) to help us move the statewide effort forward.

This quarter, we put our values into action—elevating youth, families, and community voices to shape policy. Through the Coalition's Policy & Advocacy Subcommittee, community representatives and partners co-created our 2025 statewide [policy agenda](#), which was unanimously adopted by Coalition leadership. This milestone reflects our commitment to ensuring those most impacted by policy decisions help drive them.

*Our agenda was informed by input from community, local and state research and data, issue-aligned state collaborations, elected and appointed leaders, and the state and federal political climate.*

## Informing and Driving Our Policy Agenda



Together with the [United Way of Connecticut, Connecticut Voices for Children](#), and other advocates, we support the creation of a permanent, **fully refundable state Child Tax Credit** to reduce child poverty, drive

## Social Determinants of Health



Social Determinants of Health  
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Healthy People 2030

economic mobility, support family stability and child development, lift local economies, and promote workforce participation. Our second priority is to **enhance legislative awareness of youth disconnection factors**, their relation to social determinants of health, and the need for cross-sector collaborations and solutions.

## Coalition Wide Advocacy Impact at a Glance



**SIX participants testified before the legislature**



**TEN submitted testimony on EIGHTEEN bills**



**TWO youth recorded PSA videos**

**OVER 150 were trained in civic engagement and advocacy, covering local and state government processes and the policy agenda.**

Each C2C is strengthening civic engagement by equipping community members with advocacy skills and leadership opportunities in different ways.

This powerful advocacy—strength in

numbers, voices from across the state, and a blend of personal stories, data, and research—is giving lawmakers the insight they need to make informed decisions in the coming weeks.



### **Waterbury Bridge to Success Let Youth Lead member testifying**

## **C2C Initiative Highlights**



### ***Youth Voice in Action: A Conversation with Secretary of State Stephanie Thomas***

On September 24, 2024, the five Coalition partners co-hosted “*The Importance & Power of the Youth Vote*”—[a livestreamed conversation](#) featuring Secretary of the State Stephanie Thomas and facilitated by a youth from each community. The discussion centered around youth perspectives on civic engagement and the importance of getting involved at the local level. In-person watch parties were hosted in all 5 communities engaging 46 youth and 706 online viewers.



### ***Back on Track: Youth Overcoming Obstacles***

More than 100,000 young people in Connecticut aged 14 to 26 are struggling to find their paths. Many face hardships at home, challenges in school and barriers to stable work, leaving them feeling stuck, alone and disconnected.

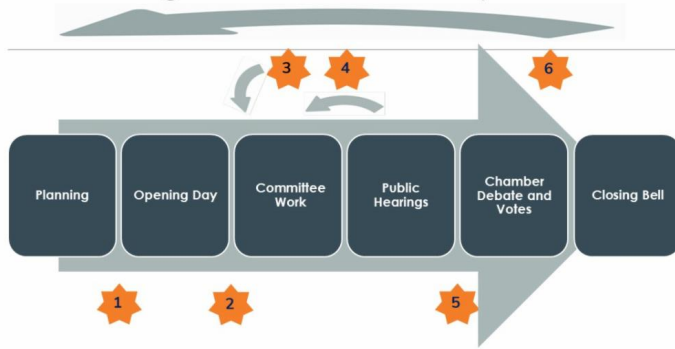
United Way of CT's Back on Track [video series](#), including two of our Bridgeport youth, shows what that struggle looks like — and how the right support can change everything. The Campaign for Working CT's Opportunity Youth Initiative is working to ensure these young people have the tools they need to succeed!

## **Looking Ahead**

*The Connecticut  
General Assembly  
is moving from*



## CGA Legislative Advocacy Timeline



*Committee Work and Public Hearings into the next critical phase: Chamber Debates and Votes.*

We're issuing **Calls to Action** through the final week in April on [C2C Coalition priority bills](#) currently in the Appropriations or Finance Committee.

If you'd like to help move these bills forward, **email us at** [policy@ctc2c.org](mailto:policy@ctc2c.org) for templates, talking points, and guidance on submitting testimony, contacting legislators or writing OpEds. Your voice continues to matter – calls and emails can help ensure these bills make it onto the legislative calendar and get a vote!

[Check out our advocacy resources, including a primer on fiscal guardrails.](#)

## Learn about each Cradle to Career Initiatives



The Danbury Collective



United Way of Coastal and Western Connecticut

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