Youth and Family Services

Matthew Morris-Wood, LCSW
Director

East Haddam Youth and Family Services (EHYFS) supports the well-being of youth and families by assessing community needs and planning creative, responsive solutions that strengthen the health and stability of our town. Through the coordination and implementation of prevention, intervention, and outreach services, and in collaboration with local, regional, state, and federal partners, EHYFS works to promote healthy growth and development for East Haddam's young people and families. We believe youth thrive when they feel connected, capable, and supported, and our programs are designed to build skills, encourage positive relationships with caring adults, and foster a sense of belonging and responsibility. By investing in preventative programming and targeted interventions, EHYFS helps build a stronger, healthier, and more resilient community for all residents of East Haddam.

Staffing:

- Director (full time)
- Prevention and Youth Services Coordinator (full time)
- Social Services Coordinator (part-time)
- Administrative Assistant (part-time)

Contracted Staff

- Bookkeeper (Contracted Services: part-time)
- Food Bank Manager (Contracted Services: part-time)
- Drug/Alcohol Counselor (Contracted Services: part-time) (vacancy)

Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Major Service Level Accomplishments

EHYFS provided the following programs and services to the East Haddam community in the 2025-2026 year. This programming is funded through support from the Town of East Haddam, private, state and federal grants, and community donations.

- Support Services, Community Education, and Counseling (funded in part by federal STOP Act prevention grant ending September 2026 as well as DCF grant)
    - Referral and connection to school and community-based mental health services
    - Provision of school-based substance use counseling
    - Parent education and support programs
    - Consultation and collaboration with local and regional mental health and substance use treatment providers
    - Collaboration and partnership with East Haddam schools and police
- Positive Youth Development Programming (funded in part by federal STOP Act prevention grant ending September 2026 as well as DCF grant)
    - School and community-based programming to support health and well-being of East Haddam's youth including presentations, workshops, videos, training community conversations, and town hall meetings
    - Substance use prevention and awareness presentations, social media campaigns, and marketing campaigns
    - Creation and distribution of educational and informational materials
    - Collaborations with community stakeholders
    - Facilitation and oversight of Local Prevention Council (LPC), a panel of community members committed to youth substance use prevention and awareness
- Social Services - (Funded in part through Everett L. and Irene L. Herden Fund, a field of interest grant at the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut).

    - Service referral and delivery for community members in need of assistance with financial instability, food insecurity, rental assistance, heating and energy assistance, housing insecurity, and other social service needs
    - Liaison between community members and East Haddam service and charity organizations such as the Food Bank, Clothing Bank, Fuel Bank, and River Valley Personal Care Products Project
    - Coordination and referral with regional and state agencies to address needs that cannot be met by local resources
    - Administrative and fiduciary oversight of the East Haddam Food Bank

- Youth Diversion Team (formerly Juvenile Review Board/JRB, funded in part by DCF Grant shared with Durham/Middlefield YFS)
    - Diversionary program for juvenile offenders
    - Provides an alternative to court involvement for youth who have committed minor to moderate criminal offenses
    - Consists of a team of community members, led by EHYFS, who support adolescents in various professional roles in the community
    - Sets a goal of guiding the child toward taking accountability for their offense, planning to ensure that the behavior does not recur, and "making right" the harm caused to all affected by the offense

- Truancy Intervention Services

    - Case management services providing intervention for youth to break down barriers to consistent school attendance
    - Referral to community based services such as mental health supports, social services
    - Regular meetings with the truant youth and family to act as an additional layer of support on interventions provided by the school professionals

- Sustainability and Diversification of Funding Sources

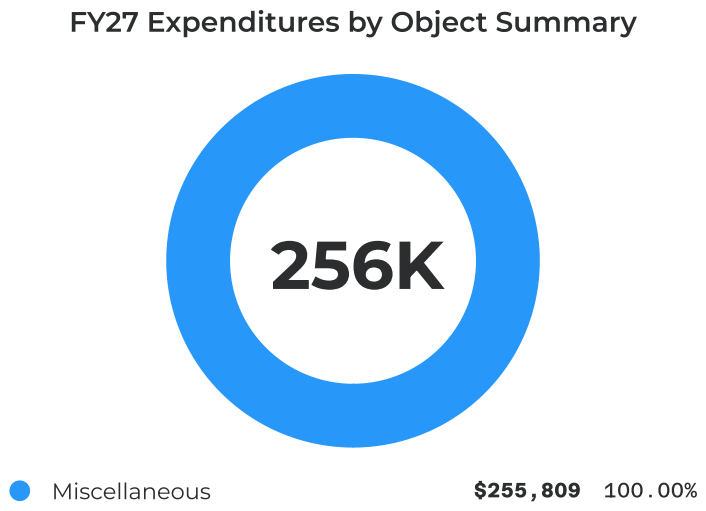
    - Grant writing, management, and reporting to supplement programming in addition to funding provided by municipality
    - Management of federal STOP Act prevention grant in addition to state and local grant and funds
    - Strengthening and building relationships with community partners and donors to maintain a sustainable line of charitable giving

Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Major Service Level Goals

- Sustain current programming and services
- Evaluate effectiveness and long-term sustainability of current programming
- Strengthen community relationships and partnerships, grow volunteer base to support programming and minimize additional expenditure
- Explore and procure supplemental funding sources through local, state, and federal grant opportunities (federal STOP Act grant ends in September 2026)
- Conduct a community needs assessment to set the stage for the development of a 5-year strategic plan
- Develop and administer Youth Voices Count Survey (YVCS), a survey of youth grades 6-12 to collect statistical data regarding youth behaviors, perspectives and experience, specific to substance use, mental health and related risk and protective factors (last completed Fall 2023)

Youth and Family Services Financials

Expenditures by Object Summary



Expenditures by Object Summary

Category	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Approved 2025-2026 Budget	FY 2027 Budgeted	FY 2026 Approved 2025-2026 Budget vs. FY 2027 Budgeted ($ Change)	FY 2026 Approved 2025-2026 Budget vs. FY 2027 Budgeted (% Change)
Miscellaneous	$238,312.00	$253,559.00	$250,364.00	$255,809.00	$5,445.00	2.17%
YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES	-	-	$250,364.00	$255,809.00	$5,445.00	2.17%
SPECIAL PROGRAM	$238,312.00	$253,559.00	-	-	-	0.00%
Total Expenditures	**$238,312.00**	**$253,559.00**	**$250,364.00**	**$255,809.00**	**$5,445.00**	**2.17%**