

I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

One page only. This page will be shared electronically with Grant Panel Members & Fund Advisors.

Note: If Philanthropy Network's Common Grant Application is used, CCCF's **Summary Sheet MUST accompany application.**

To obtain an electronic version of this application, visit www.chescocf.org

Date: October 2023

Contact Information

Organization Name: West Chester Communities That Care
Address: 127 E. Chestnut Street, West Chester, PA 19380
Phone: 484-401-9230
Website: <https://www.wcctc.org>
Year Incorporated: 1999
FEIN: 47-1139505

ED/CEO Name: Jill Liebling
ED/CEO E-mail: director@wcctc.org
Board Chair Name: Jeffrey Stone
Board Chair Approval (check here):
Primary Contact Name: Jill Liebling
Primary Contact E-mail:
director@wcctc.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

Arts, Culture & Humanities Environment/Animal Welfare Education
 Health Human Services Religion

Mission: The mission of West Chester Communities That Care is to build a community where all youth thrive, supported by their parents, their peers and their community to lead substance-free, violence-free and emotionally healthy lives.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): We focus our service on families within the West Chester Area School District. The geographic area served includes 6 townships, West Goshen, East Goshen, East Bradford, West Whiteland, Westtown and part of Thornbury Township (split with adjacent Delaware County) and a borough. These areas combined are home to 107,000 people.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served: WCCTC serves youth and parents throughout the greater West Chester area. Our focus is on 6th-12th graders and their parents. In 2022 we served an estimated 1,959 individuals.

Annual Budget <u>\$81,829.76</u>	<u>1</u> # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>60</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>8</u> # of Board Volunteers
<u>40</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>25</u> # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>0</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>208</u> # of Volunteer Hours
100% total	

Top 3-5 funding sources: 1. Chester County Department of Drug and Alcohol Services 2. PA Department of Transportation 3. CCRES

Is this grant proposal for: Capacity Building or General Operating ?

If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:

Mission, Vision & Strategy Governance & Leadership Partnerships & Collaborations
 Fundraising, Development & Marketing Technology Other: _____

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: \$7,500

Proposal Summary: We seek \$7,500 for general operating expenses to empower youth in West Chester. Our mission is to create a community where young individuals thrive with support from family, peers, and the community. Your funding will help us guide them toward substance-free, violence-free, and emotionally healthy lives. With your support, we can continue building a safer, nurturing environment for our youth.

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.

1. Nonprofit's history, goals, key achievements & distinctiveness

With a rich legacy spanning two decades, West Chester Communities That Care (WCCTC) has been a catalyst for positive change in our community. We focus on crucial youth issues, including mental health, substance use, and violence prevention. Our approach involves engaging every sector of our community through grassroots, community-based initiatives that have proven efficacy in enhancing youth outcomes.

2. Funding request

A. Description of key initiatives

THRIVE Projects

- **Objective:** The THRIVE Initiative empowers teens with vital knowledge about mental health and substance use. Through engaging discussions, participants understand behavioral impact on the brain and learn resilience-building strategies. Teens create actionable plans and implement youth-led initiatives in schools and communities.
- **Implementation:** Skilled volunteers collaborate with teens to develop sustainable business plans and marketing strategies. Projects emphasize primary prevention, providing tools for emotional well-being enhancement.
- **Impactful Initiatives:** Recent THRIVE Projects have included impactful campaigns such as a Wall Art Mural project and Tee Shirt Toss events. These initiatives actively involved hundreds of students, encouraging them to support their mental health positively. Other initiatives focused on discouraging vaping and underage drinking, utilizing social media platforms for advocacy. With grant funds, these campaigns reached approximately 100,000 peers, amplifying the impact of the students' efforts.
- **Rationale:** THRIVE utilizes marketing to shape behavior, teaching teens graphic design and communication skills while promoting public health messages. Addressing 30% of local students feeling sad daily (per PA Youth Survey), THRIVE focuses on primary prevention, fostering resilience against rising suicidal ideation among youth.
- **Long-Term Vision:** THRIVE envisions a future where youth are equipped with resilience-building strategies, reducing the prevalence of mental health issues and substance use among teens. By fostering positive coping mechanisms and encouraging conversation, THRIVE aims to create a lasting impact, shaping a generation of emotionally resilient and mentally healthy individuals.

Parent Speaker Series: WCCTC conducts 4-5 parent presentations annually, both in person and virtually, leveraging data from the biannual PA Youth Survey. These presentations foster a sense of community, encouraging healthy dialogue between parents and youth. Timely topics such as technology use, boundary setting, youth mental health, and underage substance use are addressed.

Targeted Intervention in Middle Schools: There is a well-established link between mental health and substance use; as mental health concerns rise, so does the risk of substance use. WCCTC's

presentations to middle school students form a proactive strategy to deter experimentation with addictive substances. Research underscores the importance of addressing these issues before age 25, a critical period for setting pathways toward either addiction or resilience. WCCTC concentrates its efforts on youth up to age 18, collaborating closely with trusted adults within the community to provide essential support. We collaborate with three area middle schools to engage all seventh-grade students and their parents with a guest speaker, Dr. Matt Bellace, a dynamic Comedian/Psychologist, to deliver a compelling program on the power of the brain and natural highs. Dr. Bellace's unique approach resonates with youth, providing essential insights before they encounter the pressures of drinking or smoking/vaping.

Coalition of Prevention Partners: WCCTC fosters collaboration among key leaders from diverse sectors within our community. By harnessing their expertise, we transform intricate state and local reports on youth mental health and underage substance use into accessible, actionable insights. Our active members analyze area-specific data, shaping targeted action plans tailored to our community's needs.

We translate complex statistical data into user-friendly resources for parents, professionals, and officials. For instance, our "PAYS to Know" brochure condenses a comprehensive 115-page document, simplifying crucial insights. This condensed format equips busy parents, teachers, therapists, medical professionals, and elected officials with actionable knowledge, empowering them to make informed decisions. The brochure is accessible at www.wcctc.org/data. Likewise, our annual public health campaigns aim to spotlight a single strategy that the entire community can rally around. In Spring of 2023, we asked coalition partners to share a newly, professionally designed campaign to help youth and parents make the link between volunteerism and strong emotional health. You can see a sampling of this campaign at wcctc.org/campaigns.

B. Specific needs & issues to be addressed.

In summary, the specific needs to be addressed through this grant include sustaining and expanding Thrive Project programs, supporting the Parent Speaker Series, and maintaining the community coalition. These initiatives collectively tackle youth substance use, mental health issues, and emotional well-being, fostering a supportive and resilient community environment for all. Grant funds will directly contribute to the continuity and growth of these essential services, making a significant impact on the lives of local youth and their families.

C. Why it is important to fund this now.

- **Evidence-Based Impact:** WCCTC stands firmly rooted in the evidence-based and nationally recognized Communities That Care (CTC) coalition model. This approach employs data-driven strategies involving all community sectors to tackle risk factors and promote proven methods, significantly improving youth health and behavior.
- **Long-Term Economic Benefits:** Studies from the University of Washington affirm CTC's substantial effects on youth outcomes. By investing in CTC initiatives, the community not only enhances youth well-being but also generates substantial economic benefits. For every dollar invested in CTC, a remarkable \$11.14 is returned. These returns manifest as reduced costs in the criminal justice system, crime victim support, and healthcare expenditures. Moreover, there are increased earnings and tax revenues, contributing positively to the community's economic landscape.

- **Proactive Approach:** WCCTC utilizes data from the longitudinal Pennsylvania Youth Survey, a critical tool administered to West Chester Area School District students since 1999. This robust dataset empowers WCCTC to identify emerging trends and swiftly respond to evolving challenges faced by our youth. By funding our initiatives now, we ensure a proactive and targeted approach, effectively steering our community towards positive, lasting change.

The urgency to fund WCCTC's endeavors lies in the tangible, evidence-backed impact on youth, the substantial economic returns, and the community's ability to proactively address emerging challenges. Investing now translates into a brighter future for our youth, reduced societal costs, and a thriving community where every individual has the opportunity to succeed.

D. How impact & results will be demonstrated.

Strategic Impact Assessment: WCCTC utilizes participation rates as a vital metric, providing a clear indicator of growth and community engagement. By tracking attendance, youth participation, and volunteer involvement, we assess the effectiveness of our initiatives.

Continuous Improvement Through Program Evaluations: Program evaluations play a pivotal role in our methodology. Past evaluations have been instrumental in restructuring, discontinuing ineffective programs, and innovating new initiatives. This adaptive approach ensures that our programs remain aligned with our mission and vision, consistently evolving to better serve the community's needs.

Success Criteria: We gauge the success of WCCTC's programs through several key criteria:

- **Sustained and/or Increased Attendance:** A rise in program attendance signifies the community's interest and engagement, indicating the program's relevance and effectiveness.
- **Sustained and/or Increased Youth Participation:** Increased youth involvement demonstrates the programs' appeal and their ability to connect with the younger demographic, fostering active community participation.
- **Sustained and/or Increased Volunteer Participation:** Growing volunteer engagement highlights the programs' positive impact, indicating the community's willingness to contribute actively.
- **Youth/Parent and Volunteer Satisfaction:** Regular feedback mechanisms gauge satisfaction levels, ensuring that participants and volunteers find value and fulfillment in their involvement.

Thank you for your consideration of partnering with West Chester Communities That Care to continue the prevention efforts in our local community.

III. ATTACHMENTS

E-mail or mail this support information

1. Copy of 501 (c) (3) federal tax-exempt letter
 2. List of Board of Directors, with their affiliations
 3. Most recent annual report & financial statement, audited if available
 4. Itemized organizational operating budget with actual results for prior fiscal year & current fiscal year to date
 5. If capacity building initiative, itemized budget (including external consultant's proposal, if applicable)
 6. Current strategic plan. If your nonprofit does not have a current strategic plan, explain why.
- Use this form @ www.chescof.org to apply online for grants from all Community Foundation Funds.
 - **Email proposals to grants@chescof.org**
 - Proposals are considered "complete" when CCCF has **confirmed** receipt of the **Grant Proposal Summary Sheet, Narrative & Attachments**.
 - Proposals are shared electronically and online with Fund Advisors, Donors & Grant Panels.
 - Per IRS Regulations, applicants must be charitable, tax exempt organizations with 501(c)(3) certification & cannot be individuals.

Please contact Grants Administrator Kevin Baffa at
(610) 696-8211 grants@chescof.org with questions.

