

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: August 27, 2024

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
x Health ___ Human Services ___ Religion

Mission: To improve outcomes for youth through partnership and prevention. At WCCTC, we envision a world where youth are supported by their parents, their peers and their community to live 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 the downtown 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 \$89,005.50

___60___ % of budget for program expenses ___1___ # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
___40___ % of budget for administrative expenses ___7___ # of Board Volunteers
___ % of budget for fundraising expenses ___25___ # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
100 % total ___1,085___ # of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources:

- Chester County Department of Drug and Alcohol Services
- Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board
- CCRES

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

If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:

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

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: \$ 4,995

Proposal Summary: WCCTC seeks funding to enhance our organizational capacity through strategic investments in professional development and technology. This proposal outlines a plan to equip our staff and board members with the skills and tools necessary to maximize our impact, improve efficiency, and enhance service delivery. We request \$4,995 to support professional training programs and critical technology upgrades.

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.

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

West Chester Communities That Care (WCCTC) is a nonprofit organization established in 1998, dedicated to supporting youth and families in the West Chester area. Through evidence-based, data-driven strategies, WCCTC focuses on preventing youth mental health issues, substance abuse, and violence, using the Communities That Care (CTC) model for community development. WCCTC's goals include increasing youth commitment to school, decreasing antisocial behavior among parents and peers, and enhancing community rewards for positive involvement. The organization is distinct in its use of the Pennsylvania Youth Survey to guide its initiatives and has shown significant economic returns on its community investments.

WCCTC promotes evidence-based programs and facilitates a coalition involving all sectors of our community, creating a collaborative approach to the prevention of youth health and behavior issues. We promote positive choices and seek to shape a community culture that encourages emotionally healthy lifestyles for youth in our local community. Key initiatives include:

The Community Coalition: Collaboration is key to our success. We unite local nonprofits, schools, parents, faith communities, mental health providers, and other leaders to ensure that prevention efforts for West Chester youth and parents are high-quality, comprehensive, and targeted. By sharing ideas and resources, we reduce service duplication, optimize resources, and enhance the effectiveness of our initiatives. We also simplify complex data from the Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS) into user-friendly resources like the "PAYS to Know" brochure, empowering stakeholders to make informed decisions. Likewise, our annual public health campaigns aim to spotlight a single strategy that the entire community can rally around. In Spring of 2024, we asked coalition partners to share a newly, professionally designed campaign to help youth and parents make the link between relationships (family/peer/community) and strong emotional health. You can see a sampling of this campaign at <https://www.wcctc.org/campaigns>.

Thrive Youth Initiative: This program empowers local teens to advocate for substance-free, emotionally healthy living. Teens gain knowledge about mental health, substance use, and resilience-building strategies, which they use to create public health campaigns targeting their peers in the community. These projects, like the "Prioritize the Pillow" sleep campaign, are showcased on billboards, in businesses, and through social media. Past initiatives include murals, T-shirt tosses, and anti-vaping campaigns, all designed to promote positive health messages while building students' skills in design, marketing, and communication. Thrive projects emphasize primary prevention, fostering emotional well-being and shaping a generation of resilient individuals.

Education and Awareness: WCCTC aims to educate youth, their families and the community on the inherent risks associated with the misuse of addictive substances. Every two years, the West Chester Area School District administers the Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS) among local 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th grade students to examine perceptions and behavior trends regarding mental health, substance use and violence. With our coalition partners and board members, we review the survey results and examine risk and protective factors impacting our local youth and choose priority areas for action. We use the following strategies to help our community understand primary prevention, our community's greatest risks and what can be done about them.

- A Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS) data review and community assessment are conducted by our coalition partners to identify the risk and protective factors most impacting our community. We then disseminate the highlights of this survey via a PAYS Summary Brochure (available in English and Spanish) outlining significant data points from the PAYS Report and offers parents concrete strategies for preventing substance use and mental health issues in later years. These brochures are shared with 5,000 parents each year through our education, healthcare, and faith partners.

- Awareness Campaigns (available in English and Spanish) that specifically address PAYS data points. Our 2023 campaign, Connection is Key, was developed to highlight that socially connected people with stable and supportive relationships are more likely to make healthy choices and to have better mental and physical health outcomes. They are also better able to cope with challenging times, stress, anxiety, and depression. Primarily a social media effort, we shared these ads with over 25 community partners, who helped us reach even more area parents to help spread messages that will improve outcomes for youth. The campaign was also on a local billboard for three months.

Parent Speaker Series: In collaboration with WCASD Pupil Services, WCCTC offers interactive symposiums on topics like healthy family relationships, stress management, and substance use prevention. These free webinars foster dialogue between parents and youth, promoting resilience and well-being.

WCCTC's holistic approach and strong community partnerships make it a vital force in promoting the well-being of West Chester's youth.

2. Funding request

- **Description of key initiatives**
- **Specific needs & issues to be addressed**
- **Why it is important to fund this now**
- **How impact & results will be demonstrated**
- *For capacity building grant proposals:*
 - *How will this capacity building initiative impact your nonprofit?*
 - *How will this impact be measured?*
 - *Include a description of the expected activities; timeline & costs to implement the initiative. If external consulting services are required, include the anticipated costs & expertise of the consultants to be hired. Include external consultant proposals if applicable.*

To continue to provide high-quality services and adapt to the evolving needs of our community, it is essential that we invest in our team's professional growth and our technological infrastructure.

Professional Development (\$3,150): Our staff and board members require ongoing training to stay current with best practices, emerging trends, and innovative strategies. By investing in professional development, we aim to strengthen skills in leadership, program management, grant writing, and community engagement. As a small nonprofit, WCCTC relies on staff who "wear many hats." Supporting their skill development and networking with other nonprofits is crucial for driving our organization forward.

Effective board governance is also vital. We are currently recruiting new board members and have initiated a strategic planning process. Ensuring that we have the resources to train and educate our board members will prepare us to meet our strategic goals. Trained board members are essential for maintaining governance standards, ensuring transparency, and making informed strategic decisions. By investing in their development, WCCTC fosters leadership excellence, ensuring we meet our shared objectives.

Objective: To provide staff with professional development opportunities that enhance their skills and knowledge.

Activities:

- Enroll staff and board members in relevant training programs and workshops.
- Provide access to online courses and certification.
- Organize in-house training sessions with industry experts.
- Support attendance at conferences and seminars.

Expected Outcomes:

- Improved staff competencies and job satisfaction.
- Enhanced program delivery and organizational effectiveness.

- Increased staff retention and motivation.

Technology Upgrades (\$1,845): Our current technological infrastructure is insufficient to support our growing needs. Upgraded hardware and software will enable us to streamline operations and improve data management.

We are seeking funds to replace an aging laptop that is critical to our daily operations. The current laptop, which is over five years old, has become increasingly unreliable, with frequent system crashes and slow processing speeds that hinder our productivity.

We also need an accounting system to improve resource management and accuracy. Currently, we track and report on grants using spreadsheets, which exposes us to the risk of mistakes, unnecessary delays, and a process that is not auditable. In the case of our reimbursable grants, money is expended by the organization to meet the grant or contract in advance of funding being received. This puts considerable pressure on us, as funds might be spent and not reimbursed if procedures aren't followed. We need to implement a software solution, such as QuickBooks, which will permit multiple users, cloud-based accessibility, grant management and reporting, automated expense tracking, and bank integration. It will also handle invoices, streamline bookkeeping, provide real-time financial data, and manage a broader range of accounting tasks. A software system will provide us the highest levels of transparency and accountability and allow us to make informed, strategic decisions.

In addition, we work a lot with graphics and PDFs to promote our work, we would benefit from purchasing Adobe Acrobat Pro. This will allow us to edit, create, manipulate, print and manage pdf files as part of our public health campaigns, speaker series flyers, applications, etc.

Objective: To upgrade our technological infrastructure to support efficient operations and effective service delivery.

Activities:

- Purchase new computers, laptops, and other essential hardware.
- Upgrade software to enhance productivity and security.
- Implement a reliable financial accounting management system.
- Work with TechSoup for IT assistance and discounted products

Expected Outcomes:

- Increased operational efficiency and productivity.
- Improved data security and management.
- Enhanced communication and collaboration within the organization and with external partners.

We will evaluate the success of this project through both qualitative and quantitative measures, including:

- Staff and board feedback and surveys to assess the impact of professional development.
- Performance metrics to measure improvements in program delivery and organizational efficiency.
- Regular review of technology performance and data management practices.

Investing in professional development and technology is crucial for WCCTC to enhance our capacity and better serve our community. We respectfully request \$4,995 to support these essential initiatives, which will have a lasting impact on our organization's effectiveness and sustainability. Thank you for considering our proposal. We look forward to the opportunity to further discuss how this investment can help us achieve our mission.