

Manchester Youth Service Bureau

63 Linden Street, Manchester, CT 06040
Phone: (860) 647-5213 Fax: (860) 647-5253



The Manchester Youth Service Bureau is a community-based youth serving agency that provides a variety of no-cost and low cost programs and services using a personal

approach, facilitated by dedicated staff, for the purpose of helping to develop responsible individuals who make positive contributions to the community.

We work in collaboration with a variety of town departments, community, state, and other organizations to assist youth in becoming healthy, productive members of their communities by offering programs and services to children age 0 - 21 and their families who reside in, or attend school in Manchester.

Youth programs create positive impacts in the lives of young people, encouraging them to build connections to the community, develop meaningful relationships with caring adults, supports academic achievement, and helps prevent juvenile delinquency.

Studies show that teens grow intellectually, personally, and emotionally from supportive environments and positive re-enforcement, allowing them to grow in self-confidence, self-awareness, become better planners, organizers and problem-solvers, with improved behaviors, attitudes, and relationships.

Our programs and services fall into **6 major core areas:**

- Life Skills
- Employment/Vocational
- Community Service
- Diversion
- Early Childhood Services
- Teen Center/Outreach

Please call us during office hours, **Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., at (860) 647-5213** for more information, or to register for programs. You may also visit us on the web at **ysb.townofmanchester.org**.

All programs and services are low cost or free of charge; a sample of our programs is listed below.

Programs at A Glance

Boys Council: This program is designed for young men age 12-14. An evidence-based "rite of passage" program for boys, separated into age-specific groups. This group offers a unique gender-specific approach to helping boys navigate growing up as a male in today's society. Boys are provided with a safe place to engage in "guy talk", discuss their experiences, express their ideas, and share their true selves. Boys Council meets for 10 weeks or more, depending on the capacity of the setting.

Boyz to Men: This program is designed for young men age 14-18. An enrichment program designed to provide support to young men who can benefit from

the guidance, friendship, and life experiences of adult male mentors in a group setting. Youth will be exposed to a variety of positive activities such as college tours, community events, and other cultural and recreational happenings. Boyz to Men meets twice per month for a period of 8 weeks, every other Tuesday.

Cradle to Crayons: This program is designed for 2-4 year olds. Children will have opportunities for free play, to socialize with others, and to engage in activities such as art projects, story time, and other happenings to prepare them for a classroom environment. All children are encouraged to engage in activities at their own pace and ability. Join us each week for new

themes and events! Parents are required to attend. Families are encouraged to come early, or stay late to enjoy use of the playground facilities.

Crafternoon Wednesdays: *This program is designed for 2-5 year olds.* Each week children will engage in a story and craft project to inspire creative thinking and extend the story line of the book into their project making. Children will participate in many types of projects including painting and cutting, so dress for a mess! Children will have the opportunity to begin the group with 15 minutes of free play to get their wiggles out. Parents are required to attend and help younger children take part in the activities.

Diversion: *Referrals for this program come directly from the Police Department.* This program is designed to prevent first-time juveniles offenders who have been cited by the police for a variety of predominantly minor criminal offences (larceny, breach of peace, trespassing, simple assault, low-level substance abuse) from being referred to Juvenile Court and from further police involvement. Together with a program coordinator, the youth and his/her family will create and implement a plan designed to make restitution to the community, improve the youth's social and life skills, and address other needs of the family.

Girls Circle: *This program is designed for young women age 10-16.* Girls Circle is an evidence-based program for girls (separated into age specific groups), that explores what it means to be a girl and navigate growing up as a young woman in today's society. The program allows for the exchange of ideas and discussion about their experiences and hopes for the future through creative, fun, and interactive activities. By design this program fosters confidence, self-esteem, and assists girls in creating authentic connections with peers and adult women in their community.

Happy Together: *This program is designed for 2 1/2-5 year olds.* This program is designed to provide young children with a great opportunity to discover learning through music, movement, and arts & crafts. Children

will experience socialization while parents or caregivers are present. Siblings under one year, and not mobile are welcome to attend. Older siblings are not allowed.

Journey: *This program is designed for Manchester youth age 9-14, separated into age-specific groups.* Journey is a service learning program with an emphasis on environmental education, leadership, and woodworking training. Projects focus on giving back to the community, while building relationships and learning important life skills. Participants will write and illustrate elements of a story created during the group.

Juvenile Fire Setter Intervention Program (Firehawk) *Referrals for this program come directly from the Police Department or other appropriate agencies.* This program is designed to provide meaningful interventions to children with fire setting behaviors and their families, and to reduce and eliminate destructive behavior through collaboration of the Manchester Juvenile Fire Setter Intervention Team. Intervention includes identification of behaviors, screening, referrals, education, treatment and follow-up. This program is made possible by partnership of the Youth Service Bureau, the Manchester Police Department, local clinician Carolyn Frye, Town of Manchester Fire Rescue & EMS, 8th Utilities Fire Department, and the Community Child Guidance Clinic of Manchester.

Learn and Play Workshop: *This program is designed for 3-5 year olds.* This 8-week workshop series for parents and caregivers of young children teaches developmentally appropriate skills, and promotes wellness and school readiness in a collaborative and supportive environment. Parents will have the opportunity to listen to presenters speak about various topics related to child-rearing such as positive parenting, nutrition, and literacy.

Mommy & Me Playgroup: *This program is designed for caretakers and their infants, newborn to age 2.* Parents will have opportunities to socialize themselves and their babies. Age appropriate toys

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will be provided for the little ones along with coffee for the caretakers. This is a laid back group with no judgement, come when you can. A private changing and feeding room is available. If you would like to join the group please email Caitlin McNamara at cmcnamara@manchesterct.gov.

Mother-Daughter Circle: *This program is designed for young women age 11-16, and their moms and guardians.* Mother-Daughter Circle is an evidence-based support program that promotes healthy, sustaining bonds between mothers, guardians and daughters during the transitional years from girlhood to young womanhood. This program provides a safe, consistent, and strength-based approach to supporting daughters and their caregivers on their relationship journey.

PFLAG (Parents, Families, Friends and Allies United with LGBTQ People to Move Equality Forward):

PFLAG is the nation's largest family and ally organization, and aims to make our community a healthier, more informed, safer, fairer and happier place for LGBTQ people and their loved ones by providing opportunities for dialogue about sexual orientation and gender identity, creating connections to community resources, and acts to create a society that is healthy and respectful of human diversity.

PFLAG is committed to a threefold mission of support (to cope with an evolving society), education (to enlighten and inform the public), and advocacy (to end discrimination and to secure equal civil rights). PFLAG is committed to advancing equality and full societal affirmation of LGBTQ people through its

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of every month, and are structured to include an art and activity group for gender non-conforming kids (ages 6-12), LGBTQ youth group (ages 12-18), and a parent/ally support group. Please call us with questions regarding PFLAG meetings at (860) 647-5213. To volunteer, donate, or for more information about PFLAG and upcoming events please visit the

PFLAG National Office Website at www.pflag.org, or call (202) 467-8180.

Reaching for the Stars: *This program is designed for young men age 14-18.* Youth participating in this program will train with Pierre Brillant, Youth Service Coordinator and former professional football player; Kyle Bell, Youth Service Coordinator and Certified Personal Trainer; and the Manchester Police Department. Reaching for the Stars is a program for young student athletes who desire to become more athletic. Throughout the program youth will learn various exercises to maximize their performance, including weight lifting with proper form; how to manage time between academic studies, athletic training, and personal life; leadership skills and the importance of being a team player; and how to fuel their bodies for optimum performance. This 2-week program will meet for 3 hours per day, 5 days a week.

Ropes Course Program: *This program is designed for Manchester students completing grades 5-7.* Each day will include fun active games and challenges. Participants may climb anywhere from 2-40 feet in the air, depending on their choice of challenge level. Games and activities promote teamwork, cooperation, problem-solving skills, and building trust among team mates. All instructors are certified Ropes Course Facilitators.

Sibshop: *This program is designed for youth age 7-15.* Every Sibshop meeting starts with dinner, and always includes a lot of fun, goofy games, and opportunity for heartfelt conversations between kids who share the pleasures and special challenges of having a sibling with special needs. Sibshop meets monthly at the Youth Service Bureau, on the second Friday of month.

STEM Play for Preschoolers: *This program is designed for 3-5 year olds.* Children will have the opportunity to engage with their parents in various science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) activities and challenges of their choosing. This is a hands-on group for both children and parents to explore, solve, and have fun! Come with your thinking

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cap on!

Summer Days Babies Playgroup: *This group is for infants under the age of 1, and is only available during the summer.* Infants and caretakers will have the opportunity to engage in activities including music, sensory stimulation, group walks, and more! Both babies and caretakers will have time to socialize and free play with other participants. Participants will also have opportunities to engage with local early childhood professionals on various occasions during informal group check-ins. Come enjoy the companionship of other local infants and caretakers! Older children can join if they are able to play quietly on their own.

Teen Center: *The Teen Center is designed for Manchester students age 12-18.* The Teen Center offers a place for students to come together and socialize with their peers in a structured, supervised environment. Students can play video games, pool, ping pong, foos ball, board games, surf the internet, or participate in a variety of other creative, fun, and interactive activities. Every *Wednesday at 2:30*, we offer a group discussion where students are able to discuss their experiences and express their ideas on a variety of topics. Pizza is served after group discussion.

The Teen Center also offers a junior high school social once a month. Every month, junior high school students are able to participate in a new event, including an ice cream social, trip to Manchester's Ropes Course, movie night, and more. Announcements will be made monthly regarding upcoming social events.

The Teen Center is open *Monday - Friday, 2:30 - 5:30 p.m.* during the school year. Please call or email Pierre Brillant, Youth Service Coordinator at (860) 647-5223, or at pbrillant@manchesterct.gov with questions regarding the Teen Center or Junior High School Socials.

Urban Expedition: *This program is designed for Manchester youth age 11-14.* Enjoy a week of

exploring Manchester and other local sights. Youth will be exposed to a range of positive activities, community events, and other cultural and recreational happenings in a group setting.

Wee Two: *This program is designed for 2-3 year olds.* Wee Two is designed to provide young children with a great opportunity to discover learning through music, movement, and arts & crafts. Children will experience socialization while parents or caregivers are present. Siblings under one year, and not mobile are welcome to attend. Older siblings are not allowed.

Wonder Years: *This program is designed for 1-2 year olds.* This program is designed to provide young children with a great opportunity to discover learning through music, movement, and arts & crafts. Children will experience socialization while parents or caregivers are present. Siblings under one year, and not mobile are welcome to attend. Older siblings are not allowed.

Youth Commission: *Commission members must reside in Manchester; and be enrolled in, or entering grades 9 through 12.* This diverse group of youth collaborates with local government in an effort to create open communication in the decision making process, making it possible to strengthen the community through the voice of youth. Applications are collected year round and selections are made each spring.

****Up to 4 members under the age of 19 enrolled in Manchester Community College (MCC) are eligible to serve on the Commission if they are able to serve a minimum of 2 years, unless joining as a senior or MCC student.**

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