



33 Whitney Avenue
New Haven, CT 06510
Voice: 203-498-4240
Fax: 203-498-4242
www.ctvoices.org

Youth Opportunity in Fairfield County

A Project Commissioned by Fairfield County's Community Foundation

September 2015

Introduction

Do all children have a meaningful chance to succeed in every town in Fairfield County? Do children from different towns face different barriers to success? Do different towns offer different resources? Fairfield Community Foundation posed these questions to Connecticut Voices for Children¹ in the fall of 2014, seeking information to inform the development of its Thrive by 25 Program.

Connecticut Voices for Children found significant unmet needs among the children and youth of Fairfield County, with over 800 students dropping out of high school each year, 1 in 8 youth ages 16-24 unemployed and over 2,600 youth ages 16-19 neither employed nor in school. Youth well-being differs from town to town and city to city. Consider for example the contrast between Bridgeport and Westport. Bridgeport educates a student population of which nearly 40% never attended preschool² and almost 80% of third graders failed to score proficient in reading,³ drawing from a property tax base less than one-sixth the size per pupil of Westport.⁴ In Westport, barely 5% of students miss preschool⁵ and only 17% of third graders fail to score proficient in reading.⁶ While over 400 students drop out of Bridgeport high schools each year⁷ and only 18% of Bridgeport students complete college within six years,⁸ Westport reports only 4 high school drop-outs per year⁹ and a 71% college completion rate.¹⁰ These outcome disparities present a threat not only to the children, families and neighborhoods of Bridgeport, but also to Fairfield County. Bridgeport today educates as many students as Westport, Wilton, Weston, New Canaan, and Darien combined.¹¹ Fairfield County's future lives in its cities and depends very much on the success of its vulnerable children and youth.

¹ Connecticut Voices for Children is a research-based think tank that focuses on issues that affect child well-being, from educational opportunity to healthy child development to family economic security. Its mission is to ensure that all of Connecticut's children have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

² *Id.*

³ Connecticut State Data Portal.

⁴ Connecticut Office of Policy and Management, Municipal Fiscal Indicators.

⁵ U.S. Census American Community Survey.

⁶ Connecticut State Data Portal.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ National Education Clearinghouse.

⁹ Connecticut State Data Portal.

¹⁰ National Education Clearinghouse.

¹¹ Connecticut State Data Portal.

Indicators of Youth Opportunity

To assess specific obstacles to youth opportunity in Fairfield County and to prepare the way for new solutions, Connecticut Voices for Children constructed a Youth Opportunity Index containing over two-dozen indicators from the U.S. Census Bureau, State Department of Education, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and others.¹² Guided by existing research,¹³ we compiled family, community, and school indicators for every town in Fairfield County, from Sherman to Shelton to Stamford. We also assessed three measures of the number of disconnected youth in each town: the annual number of high school dropouts, the number of youth, ages 16-19 neither employed nor in school, and youth unemployment (ages 16-24). For each indicator, we assessed towns' standing relative to one another. We then looked across indicators and assessed how each town stacked up relative to others in Fairfield County. In addition, we compared Fairfield County as a whole to the broader State of Connecticut.

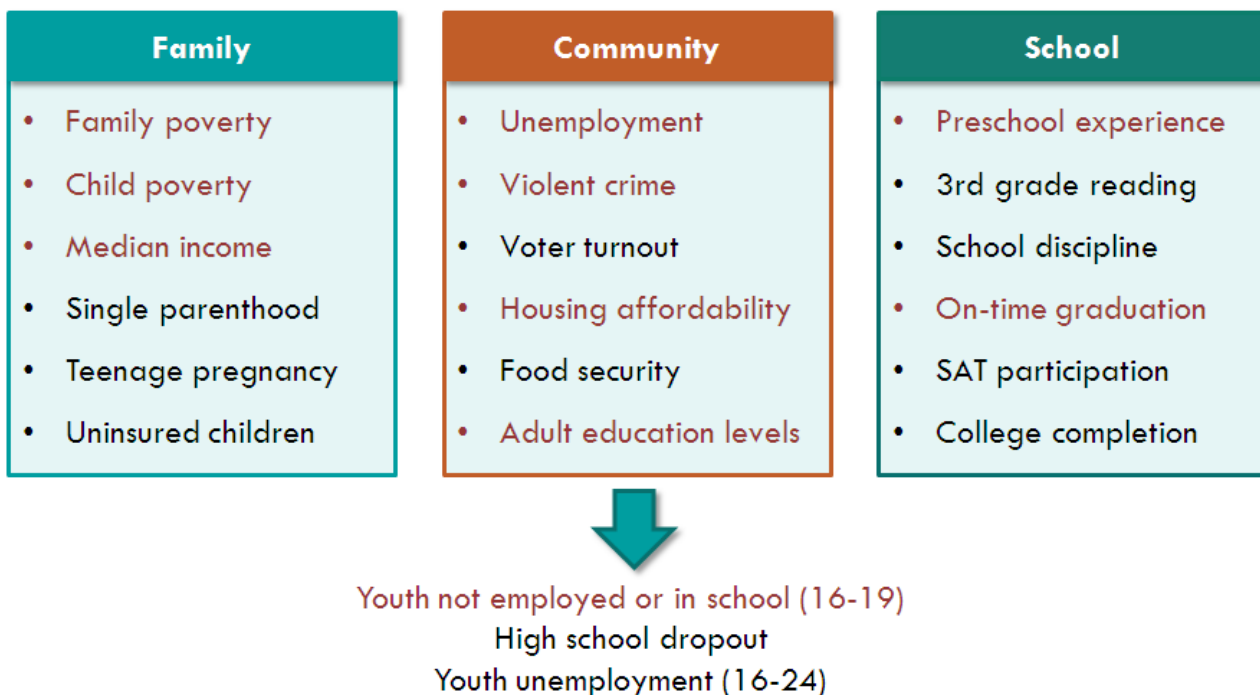


Figure 1. Components of the Youth Opportunity Index (Indicators from the Opportunity Nation index in red)

¹² The indicators and data sources follow. U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates- Family poverty – percent of families under the Federal Poverty Level (FPL); Child poverty – percent of children under 200% of the FPL; Median income; Single parenthood; Uninsured children; Unemployment; Housing affordability – families spending more than 30% of income on housing costs; Food security – percent of children on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; Adult education – percent of adults with a post-secondary degree; Youth 16-19 neither employed nor in school; Youth 16-24 unemployment; Youth 16-24 count. Connecticut Department of Public Health- Teenage pregnancy – percent of births to teenage mothers. Federal Bureau of Investigation- Violent crime per 10,000 residents. Connecticut Secretary of the State- Voter turnout. Connecticut State Department of Education- 3rd grade reading proficiency; School discipline – school arrests per 1,000 students; On-time graduation; High school dropout. Connecticut State Data Portal- SAT/ACT participation; Preschool experience. National Education Clearinghouse- 6-year college completion.

¹³ Our research review included materials from the Anne E. Casey Foundation, Aspen Institute, and Opportunity Nation, among others.

Relative Youth Opportunity by Town

Looking across the towns of Fairfield County, large disparities in relative opportunity emerged. Six “very high opportunity towns” stood out clearly among their peers: Darien, Westport, New Canaan, Wilton, Weston, and Easton are among the richest towns in the United States. Unsurprisingly, few children in those towns face the sort of barriers to opportunity children typically face in Bridgeport, Stratford, Norwalk, Stamford, and Danbury. These five relatively “low opportunity towns” also stood out: on nearly every indicator they fell in the bottom third of Fairfield County’s 23 towns. Even more disturbing, these “low opportunity towns” were home to racially concentrated areas of poverty: not only is youth opportunity lower, but that lower opportunity affects mainly children of color.

In the middle of our sample were 12 towns in Fairfield County. Most, such as Greenwich or Fairfield, are generally well-off suburbs. However, many young people in these two towns encounter barriers to opportunity similar to those faced by their peers in Stamford and Bridgeport. One in nine children in Greenwich lives in or near poverty and 140 Greenwich youth ages 16-19 are neither employed nor in school. In the town of Fairfield, 158 youth 16-19 are similarly disconnected and 30 students dropped out of the two Fairfield high schools.

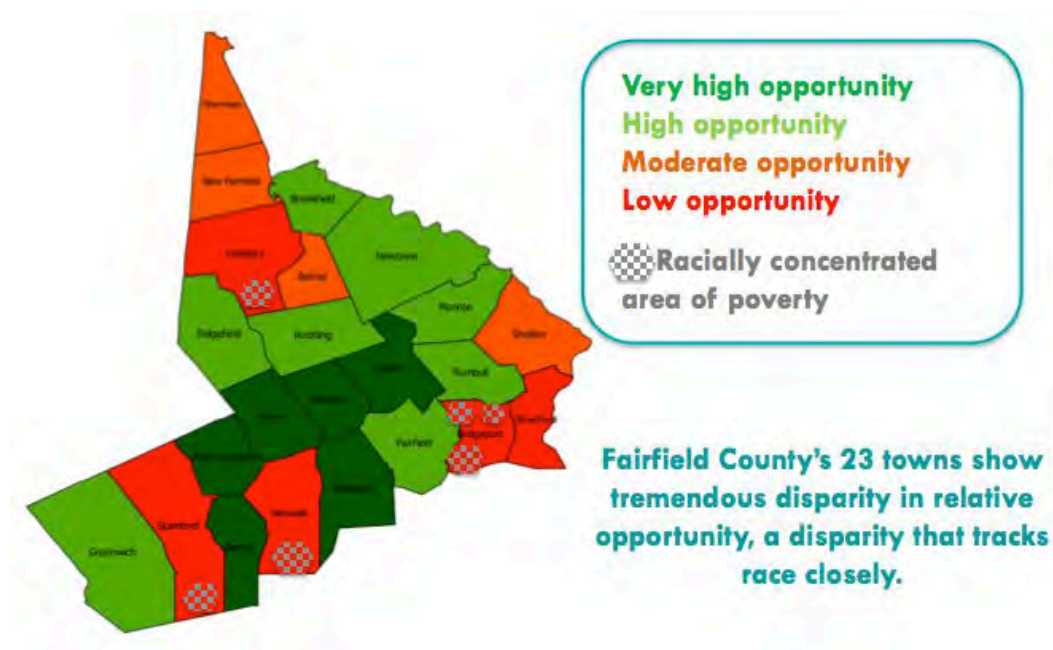


Figure 2. Town-by-Town Relative Youth Opportunity

Comparing Fairfield County’s overall indicators with those of the entire state was also revealing. Although Fairfield County is known as one of the wealthiest places in the country, its performance differed little from that of the state as a whole. While Fairfield County’s median household income (\$81K) significantly exceeds the state’s (\$68K), its 3rd grade reading, graduation, and college completion rates surpassed those of the state by much smaller margins. Fairfield County is wealthy, but not exceptional, when compared to the rest of Connecticut.

Family	FC	CT	Community	FC	CT	School	FC	CT
Families in poverty	7%	8%	Unemployment	7%	7%	Preschool experience	88%	80%
Children near poverty ¹	27%	28%	Violent crime ³	30	32	Grade 3 reading proficiency	60%	57%
Median income	81K	68K	Voter turnout	78%	74%	Percent of ELL students	7%	6%
Single-parent families	25%	31%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	41%	39%	Student arrests ⁵	4	4
Teenage pregnancy ²	4%	6%	Families w/kids on SNAP	11%	17%	Percent chronically absent	11%	11%
Children w/o insurance	5%	4%	College educated adults	51%	44%	On-time graduation	87%	83%
						SAT participation rate	79%	83%
						College completion rate	48%	41%

¹ Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.
² Percent of total births.
³ Rate per 10,000 residents.
⁴ Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.
⁵ Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.
 Town-by-town data for all indicators, and many others, are available in our data appendix, along with source documentation.

Figure 3. Fairfield County (FC) vs. Connecticut Youth Opportunity (CT)

Approaches to Expand Youth Opportunity

Children thrive when families and communities thrive, yet there are major obstacles to success in many Fairfield County towns. Fairfield County's future depends on addressing the interconnected problems that create barriers to youth success, including housing segregation, unemployment and underemployment, poverty, mass incarceration, poor health, and struggling public schools. These issues affect both children and parents, whose fates are inextricably intertwined. To move children past their ill effects requires focused public and philanthropic interventions. While some of the most effective interventions occur early,¹⁴ before problems can metastasize, others address important life events—both positive ones such as the transition to college and career and negative ones such as having a baby at age 14.¹⁵ Looking forward, the combination of more town-level and longitudinal data will help identify specific community needs for intervention, which can then be compared with the effectiveness and capacity of local services.¹⁶ Areas with the greatest needs, and services least equipped to fill those needs, will be prime areas for future Community Foundation grant making and leadership.

¹⁴ See, e.g., Connecticut Voices for Children, "Investing in the Early Years: A Great Return for Kids and for Connecticut."

¹⁵ See www.familycenters.org

¹⁶ Data Haven, funded by Fairfield County's Community Foundation and other Connecticut community foundations, will provide some of this future data via the Community Well-Being Index. See www.ctdatahaven.org

Town By Town Youth Opportunity Report

Bridgeport

Low Opportunity

Racially Concentrated area of Poverty

- Bridgeport is the city in Fairfield County with the greatest need, with over 1,100 disconnected youth, 400 annual high school dropouts, and a youth unemployment rate of 17%
- Educational need starts early, as nearly 40% of parents report their children did not attend pre-K and barely a fifth of 3rd graders are proficient in reading
- Moreover, scarcely half of Bridgeport students take the SAT or ACT, leading to one of the lowest college completion rates in the state: only 18% finish an AA or BA within 6 years
- One in nine births in Bridgeport is to a teenager – among the highest rates in the state
- Bridgeport sees one of the highest levels of housing unaffordability in Fairfield County, in part due to its low median income (\$40,000)
- Nearly two-thirds of children in Bridgeport live in households with incomes below 200% of the poverty level – \$47,700 for a family of four

Total number of youth 16-24	21,472
16-19 not employed or in school	1,139
Annual high school dropouts	423
Age 16-24 unemployment	17%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	20%	Unemployment	11%	Preschool experience	63%
Children near poverty ¹	62%	Violent crime ³	121	Grade 3 reading proficiency	21%
Median income	40K	Voter turnout	52%	Percent of ELL students	13%
Single-parent families	52%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	56%	Student arrests ⁵	5
Teenage pregnancy ²	11%	Families w/kids on SNAP	33%	Percent chronically absent	25%
Children w/o insurance	8%	College educated adults	22%	On-time graduation	66%
				SAT participation	53%
				College completion	18%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Danbury
Low Opportunity
 Racially Concentrated area of Poverty

- Danbury has the highest proportion of students learning English in Fairfield County (21%), and a rate of student arrest twice that of Bridgeport, Norwalk, and Stamford
- Over a third of Danbury children live in households with income below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (\$47,700 for a family of four), and nearly a third of households are headed by a single parent
- Almost one out of every ten (8%) of children in Danbury does not have health insurance coverage

Total number of youth 16-24	10,300
16-19 not employed or in school	354
Annual high school dropouts	122
Age 16-24 unemployment	12%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	7%	Unemployment	6%	Preschool experience	76%
Children near poverty ¹	35%	Violent crime ³	13	Grade 3 reading proficiency	42%
Median income	67K	Voter turnout	79%	Percent of ELL students	21%
Single-parent families	29%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	46%	Student arrests ⁵	12
Teenage pregnancy ²	4%	Families w/kids on SNAP	14%	Percent chronically absent	11%
Children w/o insurance	8%	College educated adults	37%	On-time graduation	77%
				SAT participation	71%
				College completion	37%

¹ Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

² Percent of total births.

³ Rate per 10,000 residents.

⁴ Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

⁵ Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Stratford Low Opportunity

- While Stratford performs fairly well on most school indicators – 80% of children experience pre-K, and 87% of students graduate on time – there remains room for improvement, particularly with regard to 3rd grade reading proficiency and six-year college completion rates
- Compared to many other towns in Fairfield County, Stratford is more unaffordable (46% of households spend over 30% of their income on housing costs) and sees higher rates of violent crime

Total number of youth 16-24	5,210
16-19 not employed or in school	120
Annual high school dropouts	24
Age 16-24 unemployment	11%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	4%	Unemployment	7%	Preschool experience	80%
Children near poverty ¹	23%	Violent crime ³	20	Grade 3 reading proficiency	55%
Median income	67K	Voter turnout	71%	Percent of ELL students	4%
Single-parent families	29%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	46%	Student arrests ⁵	6
Teenage pregnancy ²	7%	Families w/kids on SNAP	11%	Percent chronically absent	12%
Children w/o insurance	6%	College educated adults	37%	On-time graduation	87%
				SAT participation	74%
				College completion	36%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Stamford
Low Opportunity
 Racially Concentrated area of Poverty

- Youth in Stamford face relatively high barriers to success, with 8% of families earning an income below the Federal Poverty Line (\$23,850 for a family of four) and 32% of children living below 200% of poverty (\$47,700 for a family of four)
- At 8%, the uninsured rate for Stamford children is higher than most other Fairfield County towns
- A bright spot: the city's teenage pregnancy rate (3% of total births) is lower than in many suburban towns

Total number of youth 16-24	12,674
16-19 not employed or in school	273
Annual high school dropouts	122
Age 16-24 unemployment	13%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	8%	Unemployment	8%	Preschool experience	77%
Children near poverty ¹	32%	Violent crime ³	28	Grade 3 reading proficiency	53%
Median income	77K	Voter turnout	72%	Percent of ELL students	12%
Single-parent families	28%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	48%	Student arrests ⁵	5
Teenage pregnancy ²	3%	Families w/kids on SNAP	11%	Percent chronically absent	15%
Children w/o insurance	8%	College educated adults	49%	On-time graduation	85%
				SAT participation	71%
				College completion	38%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Norwalk
Low Opportunity
 Racially Concentrated area of Poverty

- Particular challenges to youth opportunity in Norwalk include:
 - Almost a quarter of children living near poverty, as well as over a quarter living in single-parent families
 - A high rate of violent crime (31 per 10,000 residents)
 - Unaffordable housing (48% of households spend over 30% of income on housing costs)
 - Low 3rd grade reading proficiency (51%)

Total number of youth 16-24	6,653
16-19 not employed or in school	220
Annual high school dropouts	34
Age 16-24 unemployment	12%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	6%	Unemployment	6%	Preschool experience	84%
Children near poverty ¹	24%	Violent crime ³	31	Grade 3 reading proficiency	51%
Median income	75K	Voter turnout	75%	Percent of ELL students	12%
Single-parent families	27%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	48%	Student arrests ⁵	5
Teenage pregnancy ²	4%	Families w/kids on SNAP	8%	Percent chronically absent	12%
Children w/o insurance	8%	College educated adults	49%	On-time graduation	85%
				SAT participation	68%
				College completion	40%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Bethel

Moderate Opportunity

- The number of disconnected youth in Bethel is relatively small, as only eight children between the ages of 16 and 19 were neither employed nor in school
- Early education in Bethel is relatively strong, with more than 9 out of 10 children enrolled in pre-K and nearly 80% of 3rd graders reading at a proficient level
- Still, the town faces a number of areas in which it could improve, including lowering the percentage of children near poverty (17%), improving housing affordability (39% of housing is unaffordable), and increasing college completion rates (currently 46%)

Total number of youth 16-24	1,979
16-19 not employed or in school	8
Annual high school dropouts	2
Age 16-24 unemployment	10%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	2%	Unemployment	7%	Preschool experience	93%
Children near poverty ¹	17%	Violent crime ³	3	Grade 3 reading proficiency	78%
Median income	88K	Voter turnout	80%	Percent of ELL students	1%
Single-parent families	20%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	39%	Student arrests ⁵	3
Teenage pregnancy ²	2%	Families w/kids on SNAP	6%	Percent chronically absent	7%
Children w/o insurance	4%	College educated adults	50%	On-time graduation	94%
				SAT participation	82%
				College completion	46%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

New Fairfield Moderate Opportunity

- New Fairfield has a number of bright spots in its indicators: virtually all children are enrolled in pre-K programs, and over 95% of high school students are graduating on time and taking the SAT or ACT
- Third grade reading proficiency, however, is noticeably lower than other school indicators, as one out of every three third graders is unable to read at a proficient level
- The youth unemployment rate in New Fairfield, at 15%, is comparatively higher than in similar towns
- The violent crime rate for New Fairfield was not reported by the FBI

Total number of youth 16-24	1,566
16-19 not employed or in school	43
Annual high school dropouts	2
Age 16-24 unemployment	15%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	1%	Unemployment	6%	Preschool experience	100%
Children near poverty ¹	10%	Violent crime ³		Grade 3 reading proficiency	68%
Median income	\$8K	Voter turnout	74%	Percent of ELL students	1%
Single-parent families	9%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	32%	Student arrests ⁵	0
Teenage pregnancy ²	2%	Families w/kids on SNAP	7%	Percent chronically absent	8%
Children w/o insurance	4%	College educated adults	53%	On-time graduation	98%
				SAT participation	95%
				College completion	54%

¹ Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

² Percent of total births.

³ Rate per 10,000 residents.

⁴ Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

⁵ Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Shelton
Moderate Opportunity

- Shelton has an abnormally high rate of chronically absent youth – on par with cities like Norwalk and Stamford
- Shelton may be able to improve opportunity for youth by focusing on its public school schools. All of its schools indicators are ranked yellow, or worse – a factor that probably contributes to the relatively high rate of 28 high school dropouts, as well as the low proportion of college-educated adults

Total number of youth 16-24	3,662
16-19 not employed or in school	76
Annual high school dropouts	28
Age 16-24 unemployment	8%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	3%	Unemployment	6%	Preschool experience	84%
Children near poverty ¹	12%	Violent crime ³	5	Grade 3 reading proficiency	73%
Median income	84%	Voter turnout	77%	Percent of ELL students	4%
Single-parent families	16%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	38%	Student arrests ⁵	3
Teenage pregnancy ²	4%	Families w/kids on SNAP	5%	Percent chronically absent	13%
Children w/o insurance	3%	College educated adults	44%	On-time graduation	91%
				SAT participation	73%
				College completion	54%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Sherman
Moderate Opportunity

- Despite performing well on most other measures, Sherman has low rates of preschool experience (74%) and third grade reading proficiency (57%), as well as voter turnout (67%)
- The FBI did not report the violent crime rate for Sherman
- The town of Sherman does not have a high school, rendering data analysis for the indicators related to high school (on-time graduation, SAT/ACT participation, college completion) difficult

Total number of youth 16-24	304
16-19 not employed or in school	8
Annual high school dropouts	n/a
Age 16-24 unemployment	6%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	2%	Unemployment	5%	Preschool experience	74%
Children near poverty ¹	10%	Violent crime ³		Grade 3 reading proficiency	57%
Median income	119%	Voter turnout	67%	Percent of ELL students	0
Single-parent families	10%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	28%	Student arrests ⁵	0
Teenage pregnancy ²	0%	Families w/kids on SNAP	2%	Percent chronically absent	7%
Children w/o insurance	0%	College educated adults	65%	On-time graduation	
				SAT participation	
				College completion	

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Brookfield High Opportunity

- Performing well on every indicator, the town of Brookfield could improve its third grade reading scores (75% of third graders read proficiently) and housing affordability (36% of housing is unaffordable) to increase youth opportunity

Total number of youth 16-24	2,029
16-19 not employed or in school	0
Annual high school dropouts	13
Age 16-24 unemployment	8%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	3%	Unemployment	4%	Preschool experience	84%
Children near poverty ¹	4%	Violent crime ³	1	Grade 3 reading proficiency	75%
Median income	111%	Voter turnout	83%	Percent of ELL students	2%
Single-parent families	16%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	36%	Student arrests ⁵	0
Teenage pregnancy ²	1%	Families w/kids on SNAP	3%	Percent chronically absent	2%
Children w/o insurance	2%	College educated adults	58%	On-time graduation	97%
				SAT participation	87%
				College completion	55%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Fairfield High Opportunity

- Thirty students dropped out of Fairfield high schools while 158 youth ages 16-19 are neither employed nor in school—relatively high rates, given Fairfield’s overall town profile
- Youth opportunity in Fairfield is also hindered by moderately lower rates of third grade reading proficiency (79%) and SAT participation (83%), as well as moderately higher rates of violent crime (5 per 10,000 residents) and unaffordable housing (36% of housing stock)

Total number of youth 16-24	8,483
16-19 not employed or in school	158
Annual high school dropouts	30
Age 16-24 unemployment	8%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	2%	Unemployment	5%	Preschool experience	91%
Children near poverty ¹	9%	Violent crime ³	5	Grade 3 reading proficiency	79%
Median income	120%	Voter turnout	79%	Percent of ELL students	2%
Single-parent families	14%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	36%	Student arrests ⁵	2
Teenage pregnancy ²	1%	Families w/kids on SNAP	2%	Percent chronically absent	3%
Children w/o insurance	2%	College educated adults	66%	On-time graduation	94%
				SAT participation	83%
				College completion	57%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Greenwich High Opportunity

- Despite a median income of about \$130,000, one in nine Greenwich children live in or near poverty and 140 youth ages 16-19 are disconnected.
- Additionally, many of the school indicators—third grade reading, chronic absenteeism, on-time graduation, and college completion—should be improved in order to increase youth opportunity

Total number of youth 16-24	4,852
16-19 not employed or in school	140
Annual high school dropouts	10
Age 16-24 unemployment	9%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	2%	Unemployment	5%	Preschool experience	95%
Children near poverty ¹	11%	Violent crime ³	4	Grade 3 reading proficiency	75%
Median income	130K	Voter turnout	62%	Percent of ELL students	6%
Single-parent families	16%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	37%	Student arrests ⁵	3
Teenage pregnancy ²	1%	Families w/kids on SNAP	2%	Percent chronically absent	8%
Children w/o insurance	3%	College educated adults	69%	On-time graduation	92%
				SAT participation	94%
				College completion	53%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Monroe High Opportunity

- With one disconnected youth, no high school dropouts, and a youth unemployment rate of 6%, Monroe has relatively high youth opportunity
- The town could improve by increasing the SAT/ACT participation rate (currently 79%) and lowering the percentage of children in or near poverty (14%)

Total number of youth 16-24	1,989
16-19 not employed or in school	1
Annual high school dropouts	0
Age 16-24 unemployment	6%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	2%	Unemployment	5%	Preschool experience	95%
Children near poverty ¹	14%	Violent crime ³	2	Grade 3 reading proficiency	80%
Median income	113k	Voter turnout	79%	Percent of ELL students	0%
Single-parent families	13%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	13%	Student arrests ⁵	3
Teenage pregnancy ²	17%	Families w/kids on SNAP	2%	Percent chronically absent	6%
Children w/o insurance	2%	College educated adults	56%	On-time graduation	99%
				SAT participation	79%
				College completion	57%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Newtown High Opportunity

- Newtown performs relatively well: all of its measured schools indicators are among the highest in Fairfield County, unemployment is low (5%), and there are few families in absolute poverty (2%)
- The town could bolster youth opportunity by reducing the moderately higher rates of children living in or near poverty (11%), teenage pregnancy (4%), and children who are uninsured (4%)
- The violent crime rate was not reported due to complications involving the December 2012 tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School. For the same reason, third grade reading proficiency was not tested in the most recent year available

Total number of youth 16-24	3,165
16-19 not employed or in school	53
Annual high school dropouts	8
Age 16-24 unemployment	9%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	2%	Unemployment	5%	Preschool experience	97%
Children near poverty ¹	11%	Violent crime ³		Grade 3 reading proficiency	
Median income	116%	Voter turnout	64%	Percent of ELL students	0%
Single-parent families	8%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	39%	Student arrests ⁵	3
Teenage pregnancy ²	4%	Families w/kids on SNAP	3%	Percent chronically absent	5%
Children w/o insurance	4%	College educated adults	58%	On-time graduation	95%
				SAT participation	99%
				College completion	57%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Redding High Opportunity

- With no disconnected youth and only three high school dropouts, Redding enjoys relatively high youth opportunity
- Redding performs exceptionally low on housing affordability compared to other high opportunity towns, with almost half of housing unaffordable (45%)
- Third grade reading scores in Redding, where 75% of third graders read at a proficient level, are comparatively lower

Total number of youth 16-24	746
16-19 not employed or in school	0
Annual high school dropouts	3
Age 16-24 unemployment	12%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	2%	Unemployment	6%	Preschool experience	97%
Children near poverty ¹	6%	Violent crime ³	0	Grade 3 reading proficiency	75%
Median income	120%	Voter turnout	76%	Percent of ELL students	1%
Single-parent families	20%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	45%	Student arrests ⁵	0
Teenage pregnancy ²	2%	Families w/kids on SNAP	1%	Percent chronically absent	5%
Children w/o insurance	1%	College educated adults	73%	On-time graduation	97%
				SAT participation	90%
				College completion	66%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Ridgefield High Opportunity

- Ridgefield performs well on nearly every indicator, resulting in low levels of disconnected youth (26), high school dropouts (4), and youth unemployment (6%)
- The only indicators that are moderately lower are the percentage of single-parent families (13%), housing unaffordability (36%), pre-K experience (89%) and chronic absenteeism (7%)

Total number of youth 16-24	2,181
16-19 not employed or in school	26
Annual high school dropouts	4
Age 16-24 unemployment	6%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	1%	Unemployment	4%	Preschool experience	89%
Children near poverty ¹	4%	Violent crime ³	0	Grade 3 reading proficiency	81%
Median income	148%	Voter turnout	65%	Percent of ELL students	1%
Single-parent families	13%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	36%	Student arrests ⁵	2
Teenage pregnancy ²	1%	Families w/kids on SNAP	2%	Percent chronically absent	7%
Children w/o insurance	1%	College educated adults	26%	On-time graduation	98%
				SAT participation	84%
				College completion	73%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Trumbull High Opportunity

- With 11 disconnected youth and 2 high school dropouts, Trumbull enjoys high youth opportunity
- Indicators that are comparatively lower than similar towns include pre-K experience (89%), third grade reading (75%), and affordable housing (39% of housing is unaffordable)

Total number of youth 16-24	3,558
16-19 not employed or in school	11
Annual high school dropouts	2
Age 16-24 unemployment	9%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	1%	Unemployment	4%	Preschool experience	89%
Children near poverty ¹	5%	Violent crime ³	1	Grade 3 reading proficiency	75%
Median income	109%	Voter turnout	77%	Percent of ELL students	2%
Single-parent families	13%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	39%	Student arrests ⁵	1
Teenage pregnancy ²	0%	Families w/kids on SNAP	4%	Percent chronically absent	4%
Children w/o insurance	1%	College educated adults	59%	On-time graduation	97%
				SAT participation	87%
				College completion	58%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Darien High Opportunity

- Darien sees high youth opportunity, with only 23 disconnected youth and no high school dropouts
- The only indicator that is comparatively lower than other high opportunity towns is the percentage of families with incomes below poverty, at 4%

Total number of youth 16-24	1,635
16-19 not employed or in school	23
Annual high school dropouts	0
Age 16-24 unemployment	9%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	4%	Unemployment	8%	Preschool experience	94%
Children near poverty ¹	7%	Violent crime ³	1	Grade 3 reading proficiency	80%
Median income	201k	Voter turnout	84%	Percent of ELL students	0%
Single-parent families	10%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	55%	Student arrests ⁵	2
Teenage pregnancy ²	0%	Families w/kids on SNAP	1%	Percent chronically absent	4%
Children w/o insurance	1%	College educated adults	93%	On-time graduation	97%
				SAT participation	99%
				College completion	63%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Easton Very High Opportunity

- Easton is one of the towns with the highest youth opportunity in Fairfield County, with no disconnected youth and 3 high school dropouts
- The town scores remarkably low on housing affordability, as 46% of households spending over 30% of their incomes on housing costs

Total number of youth 16-24	605
16-19 not employed or in school	0
Annual high school dropouts	3
Age 16-24 unemployment	9%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	1%	Unemployment	3%	Preschool experience	98%
Children near poverty ¹	1%	Violent crime ³	0	Grade 3 reading proficiency	62%
Median income	142k	Voter turnout	80%	Percent of ELL students	0
Single-parent families	11%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	46%	Student arrests ⁵	0
Teenage pregnancy ²	0%	Families w/kids on SNAP	3%	Percent chronically absent	3%
Children w/o insurance	0%	College educated adults	70%	On-time graduation	97%
				SAT participation	90%
				College completion	65%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

New Canaan
Very High Opportunity

- With four disconnected youth and two high school dropouts, New Canaan enjoys high youth opportunity

Total number of youth 16-24	1,688
16-19 not employed or in school	4
Annual high school dropouts	2
Age 16-24 unemployment	4%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	2%	Unemployment	3%	Preschool experience	99%
Children near poverty ¹	7%	Violent crime ³	1	Grade 3 reading proficiency	90%
Median income	167k	Voter turnout	83%	Percent of ELL students	1%
Single-parent families	12%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	34%	Student arrests ⁵	0
Teenage pregnancy ²	0%	Families w/kids on SNAP	1%	Percent chronically absent	4%
Children w/o insurance	0%	College educated adults	91%	On-time graduation	97%
				SAT participation	94%
				College completion	62%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.
2 Percent of total births.
3 Rate per 10,000 residents.
4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.
5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.
Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Weston
Very High Opportunity

- Overall, with no disconnected youth or high school dropouts, children in Weston have high levels of opportunity
- The percent of students who are chronically absent is exceptionally high (13%), and third grade reading proficiency (79%) and SAT/ACT participation (79%) are low given Weston's wealth

Total number of youth 16-24	984
16-19 not employed or in school	0
Annual high school dropouts	0
Age 16-24 unemployment	13%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	3%	Unemployment	4%	Preschool experience	98%
Children near poverty ¹	2%	Violent crime ³	3	Grade 3 reading proficiency	79%
Median income	213k	Voter turnout	81%	Percent of ELL students	1%
Single-parent families	9%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	14%	Student arrests ⁵	0
Teenage pregnancy ²	0%	Families w/kids on SNAP	0%	Percent chronically absent	13%
Children w/o insurance	0%	College educated adults	83%	On-time graduation	100%
				SAT participation	79%
				College completion	72%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Westport Very High Opportunity

- Westport children enjoy very high opportunity, as only 20 are disconnected and 4 dropped out of high school in the most recent year available
- The rates of families in poverty (3%), single-parent families (14%) and housing unaffordability (39%) are slightly higher than the same indicators for other towns with very high youth opportunity

Total number of youth 16-24	1,993
16-19 not employed or in school	20
Annual high school dropouts	4
Age 16-24 unemployment	7%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	3%	Unemployment	5%	Preschool experience	95%
Children near poverty ¹	6%	Violent crime ³	4	Grade 3 reading proficiency	83%
Median income	153k	Voter turnout	82%	Percent of ELL students	1%
Single-parent families	14%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	39%	Student arrests ⁵	1
Teenage pregnancy ²	1%	Families w/kids on SNAP	1%	Percent chronically absent	3%
Children w/o insurance	1%	College educated adults	79%	On-time graduation	98%
				SAT participation	88%
				College completion	71%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Wilton
Very High Opportunity

- Youth opportunity is very high in Wilton, where no youth are disconnected, youth unemployment is 5% and only two students dropped out of high school the most recent year available
- Chronic absenteeism is, as in Weston, at an exceptionally high rate (17%) on par with those for Norwalk and Stamford

Total number of youth 16-24	1,534
16-19 not employed or in school	0
Annual high school dropouts	2
Age 16-24 unemployment	5%

Family		Community		School	
Families in poverty	1%	Unemployment	3%	Preschool experience	99%
Children near poverty ¹	4%	Violent crime ³	1	Grade 3 reading proficiency	85%
Median income	162k	Voter turnout	86%	Percent of ELL students	1%
Single-parent families	10%	Housing unaffordability ⁴	34%	Student arrests ⁵	0
Teenage pregnancy ²	0%	Families w/kids on SNAP	0%	Percent chronically absent	17%
Children w/o insurance	1%	College educated adults	79%	On-time graduation	98%
				SAT participation	95%
				College completion	69%

1 Percent living under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

2 Percent of total births.

3 Rate per 10,000 residents.

4 Percent of households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

5 Rate per 1,000 enrolled students.

Sources: State Departments of Education and Public Health, CT Data Portal, CT State University System, Secretary of the State, U.S. Census Bureau, Federal Bureau of Investigation