



**THE DEPOT
Darien's Youth Center
25 Heights Road, Darien CT 06820**

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The Depot's mission is to build resilient youth and an engaged community.

The Depot is a collaborative youth center where community needs are addressed with staff supported guidance, programming by youth, and parenting education. An alcohol and drug-free zone monitored by caring, vetted adults, The Depot provides a safe space for youth to develop leadership, planning, and decision-making skills, interact with people of different backgrounds, access adult role models and serve as community assets.

The Depot Programs

The Depot welcomes all Darien-resident middle and high school youth from MMS, DHS, private schools and home schooled to create new programs, join programs and activities, and access resources. Parent programs reflect undercurrents of strong public feelings and opinions that are detectable though not always openly discussed. The Depot starts conversations providing the scaffolding and education needed for parents to formulate an informed decision based on personal and family values. As a safe place, The Depot promotes mutual respect, patience and integrity as we learn together.



2016-2017 YOUTH PROGRAMMING

These Depot hosted and sponsored activities are created and managed by Darien youth. The students are charged with planning, marketing and fundraising to support programs and events, as well as recruiting volunteers and working with mentors, local business owners and town officials. Activities take place an average two-four times per month, however, students involved with the coordination of these programs dedicate many additional hours to their planning and execution.

YOUTH PROGRAM SERIES	Purpose:	Accomplishment:
Sunday with Seniors	Promote and encourage intergenerational empathy, conversations and learning.	Intergenerational friendships between senior citizens and Darien youth deepening empathy, conversations and learning from others in a different phase of life.
Helping Hand (http://patch.com/connecticut/darien/thanks-giving-back-your-kids-0)	Helping Hand's goal is to raise awareness and collect supplies for the Darien Human Services Closet, which are in turn donated to Darien residents in need, especially at the holidays.	Donations of gifts-in-kind to Darien Human Services and greater awareness of challenges faces citizens of Darien.
Mother / Daughter Nights	Educate and facilitate often difficult conversations about women's health between mothers and daughters in the 7 th and 8 th grades	Discuss and learn about women's health issues from experts at the Sexual Assault and Crisis Education Center in an open and judgment-free setting.
Girls Night Out (http://www.darientimes.com/47499/state-budget-cuts-hit-home-at-the-depot/)	To provide a safe, healthy environment where high school girls can learn about, discuss, and support each other while discussing sensitive, relevant topics. The Depot hosts women from FIRP, the Families in Recovery Program at every other meeting.	Interaction with women from the Families in Recovery Program (FIRP), who have had very different life experience than most youth in Darien. FIRP is a residential program that helps pregnant or parenting single mothers with treatment and keeps them actively engaged in the lives of their children.
Avenue of Dreams (http://www.darientimes.com/59929/prom-donations-cafap/)	Promotion and sourcing gifts-in-kind for dress collection	Donations of gifts-in-kind to Connecticut Association of Foster and Adoptive Parents (CAFAP)



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Student League of Darien (SLOD)	Integration of the Darien High School male community	Opportunity for younger males to learn from and become friends with older male students at the high school
Respect Works	To build healthy dating relationships by understanding the causes, effects and means to avoid teen dating abuse (i.e. psychological, verbal, isolation, control, stalking, physical).	Respect Works Youth Council members obtain Healthy Relationship Training. Respect Works Youth Council members design, promote and execute awareness and educational initiatives to Darien youth. The Respect Works Youth Council receives training, funding and volunteer opportunities from the Darien Domestic Abuse Council.



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YOUTH EVENTS	Purpose:	Accomplishment:
<p>Youth at The Depot organize events to promote Depot programs, thank community partners, and introduce a wider cross section of the community to the Depot's mission all the while building event planning and hosting skills, practicing public speaking and promotional skills as well as serving as role models. An average of 15 events takes place each month September – June.</p>		
Celebrity Chef Nights (http://darien.dailyvoice.com/neighbors/darien-depot-hosts-celebrity-chef-series/441861/)	Introduce Darien youth to the many local restaurants and give exposure to local chefs who support the Depot through gifts-in-kind	Celebrity Chef Nights serve as a “thank you” and support for area restaurateurs.
DHS Theater 308 Reception (http://theatre308.org)	Host post production celebration for Darien High School students involved in the theater program	Youth support peers with recognition as well as experience the work required to independently fund, host and promote a free community event.
Depot tours for Darien middle school parents	Promote the mission and program of The Depot to the parents of the next generation of Darien's youth	Youth practice planning, hosting, public speaking and promotional skills.
4 th and 5 th Grade Parties	The two events' primary purpose is to familiarize rising middle school students and their parents with the staff, programs, activities, and resources available to them at The Depot once enrolled in a middle school program.	Depot Youth help staff the event and practice planning, hosting, public speaking and promotional skills and serve as role models to elementary age children of Darien.
6 th Grade Ice Cream Social	Encourage 6 th grade students to visit The Depot and familiarize them with the staff, programs and resources housed at the Depot.	Depot Youth help staff the event and practice planning, hosting, public speaking and promotional skills and serve as role models to middle school students.



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YOUTH FUNDRAISERS	Purpose:	Accomplishment:
Youth at The Depot organize fundraisers to support specific causes as well as their program series and events at The Depot. Fundraisers include car washes, Drop the Mic, 3x3 basketball tournaments and:		
Band Night (http://patch.com/connecticut/darien/depot-band-night-contributions-0)	Raise money for programs of special interest to The Depot youth community.	Financial donation to Darien's 7th Annual Feed My Starving Children Mobile Pack Event (September 2015, September 2016)
Depot Diner (http://patch.com/connecticut/darien/depot-diner-sponsored-stop-n-shop-0)	Raise money for youth programming at The Depot.	Support youth programming at the Depot and generate funds to donate to causes important to the youth of Darien.
Holiday Wrap-Up (http://darien.dailyvoice.com/news/darien-teens-wrap-up-christmas-with-fundraiser-at-the-depot/612515/)		
YOUTH VOLUNTEERISM		
Youth at The Depot organize themselves and volunteer in the wider Darien community. Youth assist the Kiwanis Club, Darien Youth Commission's Community Arts Festival and Tilly Pond Model Boat Regatta, Darien Chamber of Commerce Summer Sidewalk Sales and assist at many elementary school events when asked (Tokeneke Pumpkin Fair, Royle School Fair, Tokeneke Super bowl Pancake Breakfast, etc.		
YOUTH SOCIALIZING		
As a youth center, The Depot is open to 7 th & 8 th graders Wednesday's and Friday's from 2:30-5:30 pm, and most Saturday's (when there isn't a high school event) from 7-10 pm. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday's from 3-6pm are reserved for administrative work. However, as the Program Director is already working on-site, youths are welcome to gather socially and to complete school and homework assignments. Youth focused groups, such as sports teams and clubs, are welcome to use the space to meet after school.		



2016-2017 PARENT PROGRAMMING IN SUPPORT OF YOUTH

Depot hosted and sponsored programs that reflect undercurrents of strong public feelings and opinions that are detectable though not always openly discussed. Open to all members of the community and their guests. This list is a sampling of The Depot parent programming over the course of this academic year.

PARENT PROGRAM SERIES	Purpose:	Accomplishment:
Straight Talk Series	Topics to be announced	Discussion and actionable insights for parents.
Coffee & Conversation Parent Information Series	Informal conversations about raising healthy, happy teens. Q&A with local experts. Events are sponsored by The Depot, Silver Hill Hospital, Communities 4 Action and The Counseling Center for Discovery and Change.	Discussion and actionable insights for parents.
Learning Series: Essential Study Skills for Middle School Students (http://www.darientimes.com/60480/depot-study/)	Learning how to support strategic study skills and live long learning,	Discussion and actionable insights for parents of middle school youth.



2016-2017 YOUTH LOCAL COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING

Depot hosted and sponsored programs in partnership with local organizations.

COMMUNITY PROGRAM SERIES	Purpose:	Community Accomplishment:
<p>Cop Shop Community Partner: Darien Police Department Youth Officers</p>	<p>Opportunity for Darien youth to ask their local police force about any issues, concern or interests in a confidential setting. Youth Officers bring different officers each week. Students are encouraged to bring a friend each month.</p>	<p>Provides an opportunity for high school students to interact with and learn and from the DPD in a friendly, interactive environment.</p>
<p>Police Academy: CSI (http://www.darientimes.com/14025/csi-darien/) Community Partner: Darien Police Department</p>	<p>CSI gives middle school youth a better understanding of Darien Police Officers' duties, responsibilities and training requirements.</p>	<p>Provides an opportunity for middle school students to interact with and learn and from the DPD in a friendly, interactive environment.</p>
<p>Cops and Kids Adventures (http://www.darientimes.com/48936/cops-kids-conclude-this-years-adventures/) Community Partner: Darien Police Department Darien Police Commission</p>	<p>A cooperative team consisting of The Depot, Darien Police Officers and middle school youth who collectively enjoy free adventure outings and community outreach programs during the course of the school year.</p>	<p>Provides an opportunity for middle school students to interact with and learn and from the DPD in an individualized, friendly, interactive environment. Police Department sponsors this program fully.</p>
<p>Fun Busters (http://www.darien-ymca.org/funbusters/) Community Partner: Darien YMCA</p>	<p>Promotes independence and life skills learning for adults with special challenges. The focus is on learning important life skills to support an active and independent lifestyle. Each week Fun Buster participants socialize; do crafts and recreational activities with youth at The Depot.</p>	<p>Depot youth host Holiday Parties, socialize, and form friendships with special needs adults who have had a very different life experience despite living in the same town.</p>



COMMUNITY EVENT	Purpose:	Accomplishment:
Alumni Town Wide Party (November 2015)	Celebrated 25 years of serving Darien's youth, welcomed back alumni to reconnect with The Depot mission and programming.	Promote and celebrate Darien youth, alumni of the Depot and committed community partnerships.

2016 – 2017 YOUTH NATIONAL PROGRAMMING
 Depot hosted and sponsored programs that are part of a national organization.

NATIONAL PROGRAM	Purpose:	Accomplishment:
SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) http://patch.com/connecticut/darien/darien-sadd-chapter-seeks-raise-awareness-destructive-behavior-0	SADD's mission is "to provide students with the best prevention tools possible to deal with the issues of underage drinking, other drug use, impaired driving and other destructive decisions."	Team building, increased confidence, reduced peer pressure and propensity for risky behavior.

2016-2017 YOUTH STATE PROGRAMMING
 Depot hosted programs in support of the State of Connecticut.

STATE PROGRAM	Purpose:	Accomplishment:
Youth Service Bureau for the Town of Darien http://www.darientimes.com/47499/state-budget-cuts-hit-home-at-the-depot/	Connecticut's Youth Service Bureaus are community-based non-profit organizations responsible for intervention, treatment and follow-up services for local youth.	Local access to quality referral services for Darien resident high-risk youth in need of immediate help. Relationship building with but not limited to The Thriving Youth: Connected Community Initiative, Human Services Planning Council, Liberation Programs, Silver Hill Hospital, The Counseling Center for Discovery and Change, Inspirica, the Darien Police Department, Kids in Crisis, Post 53, YWCA Parent Awareness and the American Red Cross.