

State of the Child in Bridgeport



Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition

Mobilizing for Children



2011 REPORT

Executive Summary

2011 Report on the State of the Child in Bridgeport

The Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition (BCAC) annual State of the Child report presents a snapshot of Bridgeport's children. It gives a grade comparing Bridgeport's children to children statewide and a grade for "effort" showing if progress has been made in key areas from one year to the next.

Where is Bridgeport Failing?

The Report Card used 17 indicators to assess the well-being of Bridgeport's children. When compared to children statewide, Bridgeport received an "F" on 14 of those indicators:

childhood poverty • economically disadvantaged students • child care • preschool enrollment • student achievement • graduation rate • infant mortality • low birthweight • prenatal care • teen births • homelessness • child abuse and neglect • family violence • juvenile arrests for violent crimes

Where is Bridgeport Improving?

Four indicators showed enough improvement from the previous year to earn an "A" and two earned an "A+", showing gains of more than 20%:

- The percent of women receiving prenatal care improved by 22%.
- The number of births to teens under the age of 18 declined by 15%.
- The number of families on the waiting list for public housing dropped by 11%, but over 4,300 families remain on the list.
- Juvenile arrests declined by 14% and juvenile arrests for violent crimes declined by 35%.

Disturbing Trends

One indicator deserves close attention:

- Child poverty increased from 26% in 2009 to 31% in 2010, a reflection of the continued economic crisis.

BCAC will continue its advocacy efforts to ensure that all Bridgeport children are able to grow up healthy, safe, and well educated.

A REPORT CARD ON THE WELL-BEING OF BRIDGEPORT CHILDREN

GRADE
Bridgeport
vs. State

EFFORT
Progress from
previous year

Child Poverty

% Children living in poverty	F	F
% Economically disadvantaged students (family income less than 185% of federal poverty guidelines)	F	C

Early Care

% Children entering school with preschool experience	F	C
Licensed child care for infants and toddlers	F	B

Education

% Meeting CT Mastery Test goal in reading	F	C
Graduation rate	F	C

Child Health

Infant mortality rate	F	D
% Low birthweight	F	C
% Late or no prenatal care	F	A+
Teen births	F	A
% 2-year-olds screened for lead poisoning	A+	A

GRADE
Bridgeport
vs. State

EFFORT
Progress from
previous year

Housing

Homeless children	F	B
Families on the waiting list for public housing	NA*	A

Child Safety

Children confirmed abused or neglected	F	C
Family violence arrests	F	C
Juvenile arrests	D	A
Juvenile arrests for violent crimes	F	A+

* Statewide data is not collected.

KEY:

A+ = more than 20% better

A = 10 - 20% better

B = 5 - 9% better

C = less than 5% difference

D = 5 - 10% worse

F = more than 10% worse

THE FACTS

Age Breakdown Population 2010*

Under the age of 5	10,731
Ages 5-9	9,639
Ages 10-14	9,607
Ages 15-17	6,070
Total Children Bridgeport	36,047
Total Population Bridgeport	144,229
Children as % of the Total Population	25%

* U.S. Bureau of the Census

Racial and Ethnic Composition* Children Under the Age of 18

African American	42%
Asian	2%
Latino	40%
Native American	0.08%
White	13%
Multiracial	3%

* U.S. Bureau of the Census, average 2005-2009

Living in poverty puts children at greater risk for disease, poor nutrition, poor school performance, violence, abuse, and homelessness.

CHILD POVERTY

Child Poverty

- According to the U.S. Census American Community Survey, an estimated **31% of Bridgeport children (11,245 children) lived in poverty in 2010**, compared to 26% in 2009.
- **Bridgeport's rate of child poverty in 2010, 31%, is nearly 2½ times the statewide rate of 13%.**
- In Bridgeport, 35% of African American children, 33% of Latino children, and 28% of white children live in poverty.
- 55% of Bridgeport children live in families earning less than 200% of the federal poverty level, the income considered necessary to meet a family's basic needs.
- The **unemployment rate in Bridgeport went from 13.3% in June 2010 to 14.3% in June 2011.** The statewide unemployment rate was 9.1%.

Child Hunger

- In June 2011, 13,460 Bridgeport children lived in families receiving food stamps, now known as SNAP. This was 639 more children than in June 2010, an increase of 5%.

Family Status

- In 2009, **50% of Bridgeport's families with children under the age of 18 were headed by a single parent**, compared to 27% statewide.
- 1,098 Bridgeport children (3%) were being cared for by a grandparent in 2009.

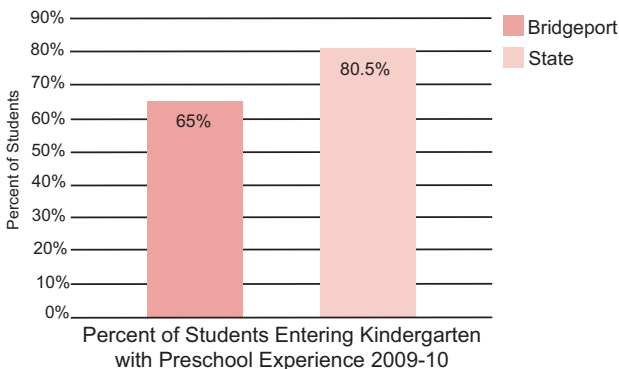
EARLY CARE

Children who participate in quality early childhood programs are more likely to do better in school, graduate high school, get a job, and earn a higher income than those children who do not participate.

Child Care Capacity and Need

- 65% of kindergarten students entered Bridgeport public schools with preschool, nursery school, or Head Start experience in the 2009-10 school year, compared to 67% in 2008-09. Statewide in 2009-10, 80.5% of kindergarten students entered school with preschool experience.
- In 2009, 7,542 Bridgeport children under the age of six (69%) lived in families in which both parents or the only parent was in the labor force.
- In 2010, there were 890 licensed child care spaces for infants and toddlers in Bridgeport, 49 more spaces than the previous year.
- In 2010, there were 14 licensed child care spaces per 100 children under the age of three in Bridgeport, compared to 21 spaces per 100 children under the age of three statewide.

Only Two in Three Bridgeport Students Have Preschool Experience



EARLY CARE

Child Care Costs

- In the Bridgeport area, the **average cost** for full-time licensed child care for one year is **\$13,385 for infants and toddlers, and \$11,385 for preschool age children.**
- In 2010, 3,205 Bridgeport children benefited from Care4Kids, Connecticut's child care subsidy program, 133 more children than in 2009.

Child Care Quality

- 1,372 children attend child care centers or preschool programs in Bridgeport accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) or its equivalent. In addition, nearly 900 children attend programs that meet standards established by Head Start.
- In 2010, 1,159 Bridgeport children receiving state child care subsidies (36%) were in informal child care settings, including care provided by a grandparent, other relative, or non-related adult in the child's home.

**BRIDGEPORT CHILD CARE AND PRESCHOOL
LICENSED PROGRAM CAPACITY 2010**

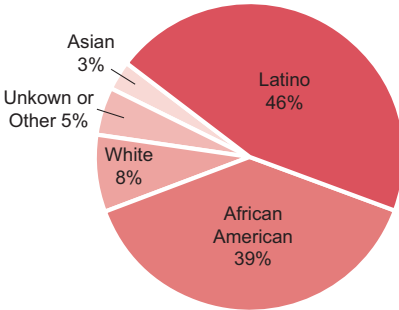
	Infants/ Toddlers	3-4 Year-Olds
Licensed child care centers and Head Start	648	2,636
Licensed family day care homes	242	498
Board of Education pre-kindergarten full-day	—	310
part-day	—	433
Total	890	3,877

EDUCATION

Overcrowded classrooms, high teacher turnover, and unsafe school environments contribute to poor student achievement and high dropout rates.

Student Enrollment

- There were 20,407 students in the Bridgeport school system as of October 1, 2010.



**Racial and Ethnic Composition
Bridgeport Schools 2010-11**

- During the 2009-10 school year, **98% of Bridgeport public school students were economically disadvantaged** or lived in families earning less than 185% of the federal poverty level (\$33,873 for a family of three), compared to 33% of students statewide.

Academic Performance

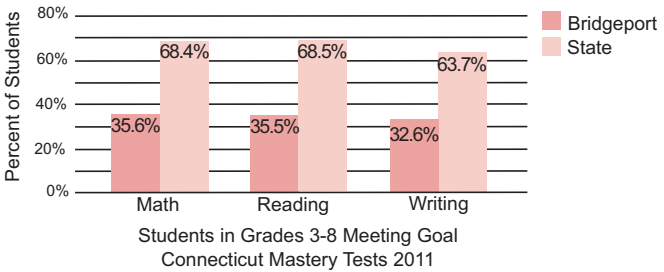
CMT AND CAPT RESULTS				
	Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT)		Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT)	
	2011	2010	2011	2010
Math	35.6%	36.3%	10.3%	10.3%
Reading	35.5%	35.0%	10.5%	9.9%
Writing	32.6%	33.9%	21.1%	21.4%
Science	24.2%*	22.5%*	10.7%	8.6%

Bridgeport Students Meeting Goal on 2011 and 2010 CMT (Grades 3-8) and CAPT (Grade 10)

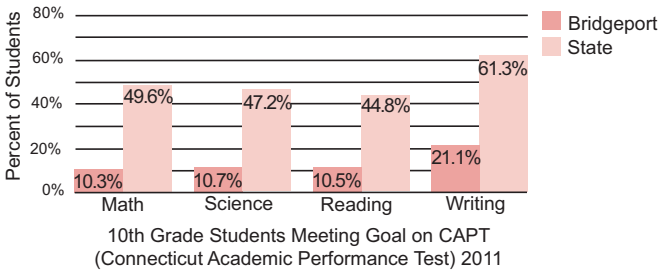
* 5th and 8th grade only

EDUCATION

Connecticut Mastery Test Results Clearly Show Achievement Gap



Wide Achievement Gap for High School Students



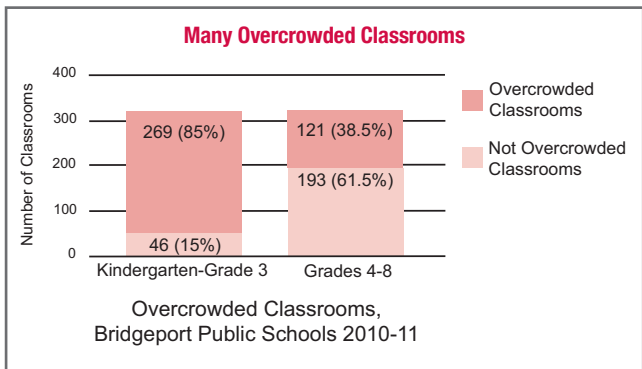
- 46% of Bridgeport's Class of 2010 took the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test), compared to 66% statewide. Bridgeport students averaged 400.5 on Reading, 396 on Math, and 397 on Writing. Statewide, students averaged 505 on Reading, 510.5 on Math, and 510 on Writing.
- 70% of Bridgeport's graduating Class of 2010 went on to post-secondary education, compared to 86% statewide.

EDUCATION

Bilingual Education

- In the Bridgeport school district, 73 different languages are spoken.
- During the 2009-10 school year, 2,638 Bridgeport students (14%) were not fluent in English, compared to 5% of students statewide. Bilingual education is provided in four languages: Spanish, Portuguese, Kurdish, and Haitian Creole.

Class Size

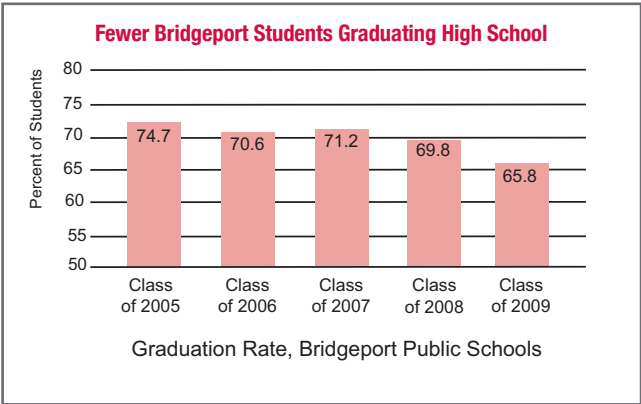


- The Connecticut Department of Education recommends a class size no larger than 18 in kindergarten through grade 3. The U.S. Department of Education recommends no more than 24 students in grades 4-8. While the district has lowered class sizes over the years, especially in the younger grades, nearly two in three Bridgeport classrooms are still overcrowded by this definition.

Students with Disabilities

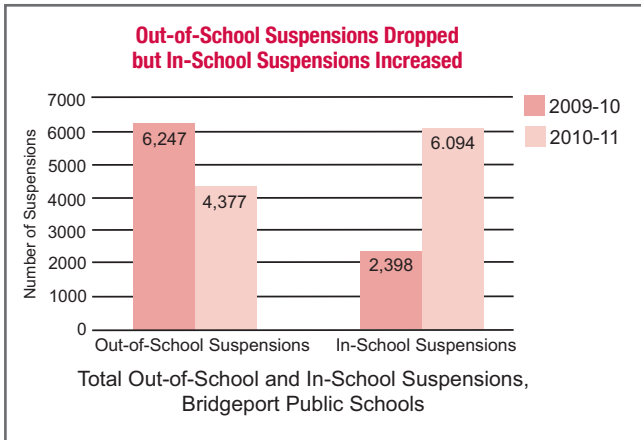
- 2,464 Bridgeport students (12%) received special education services in 2009-10.
- 67% of Bridgeport students with disabilities in the Class of 2009 graduated with a standard high school diploma, compared to 81% statewide.

Graduation Rate



- **66% of Bridgeport's Class of 2009 graduated**, compared to 91% statewide. Youth who do not graduate high school are more likely to live in poverty and be involved in criminal activity than those who do graduate.

Student Discipline



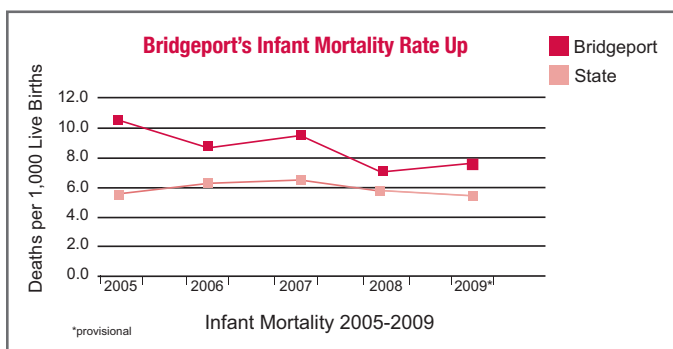
CHILD HEALTH

Good physical, behavioral, and oral health is essential for a child's development and well-being.

INFANT HEALTH

Infant Mortality & Low Birthweight Babies

- In 2009, the **infant mortality rate*** in Bridgeport was 7.8 infant deaths per 1,000 live births, compared to 7.3 in 2008, an **increase of 7%**. The statewide infant mortality rate* in 2009 was 5.5.



- In 2009, 9.8%* of all Bridgeport babies were born with low birthweight (about 5.5 pounds at birth), compared to 10.1% in 2008. Statewide, 8.0%* of all babies were born with low birthweight.

Prenatal Care

- In 2009, **14.5%*** of Bridgeport mothers received **late or no prenatal care during their pregnancy**, compared to 18.5% in 2008. Statewide, 12%* of mothers received late or no prenatal care in 2009. Mothers who receive late or no prenatal care are more likely to have a low-birthweight baby than mothers who receive prenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy.

* Provisional

CHILD HEALTH

RACIAL AND ETHNIC DISPARITIES IN PRENATAL CARE AND INFANT HEALTH			
	African American	Latino	White
Infant Mortality (Infant deaths per 1000 live births)	9.3	7.6	4.7
Low Birthweight	12.1%	9.0%	8.9%
Late or No Prenatal Care	13.0%	16.8%	9.9%

Provisional Infant Mortality, Low Birthweight, and Prenatal Care
by Race and Ethnicity, Bridgeport, 2009

CHILD HEALTH

Childhood Asthma

- In fall 2010, CARE (Community Allies to REACH Health Equity) surveyed 1,707 Bridgeport residents to determine health needs. Of the 627 respondents with children, 14% reported having a child with asthma; the percent rose to 18% for families living below poverty.

Health Coverage

- People without health insurance are less likely to go to the doctor, get a needed medical test, or fill a prescription than those with health insurance. Two-thirds of the uninsured are working.
- 25,022 Bridgeport children were enrolled in HUSKY, Connecticut's health insurance program for low-income children and their parents, as of August 2011, compared to 24,000 children in August 2010, an increase of 1,028 children or 4%. Statewide, enrollment in HUSKY also increased by 4%.
- According to the 2010 U.S. Census American Community Survey, an estimated 1,585 Bridgeport children under the age of 18 (4%) did not have health insurance coverage at the time of the survey.

Lead Poisoning

- Lead poisoning can lead to verbal, perceptual, motor, and behavioral disabilities. African American children are five times more likely than white children to suffer from lead poisoning.
- The State Department of Public Health highly recommends lead screening for children under the age of six, and particularly for children under the age of two. In 2009, 52% of Bridgeport children under the age of six and 86% under the age of two were screened for lead poisoning, compared to 47% and 77% respectively in 2008. Statewide, 61% of children under the age of two were screened for lead.
- Of all Bridgeport children screened in 2009, 1.6% (111 children) were lead poisoned, 40 fewer children than in 2008, a reduction of 26%. Statewide, a total of 737 children were lead poisoned, 30% fewer children than in 2008.

Mental Health

- In a survey conducted in April 2011 by the Search Institute for RYASAP, 23% of Bridgeport students in grades 7-12 reported feeling sad or depressed most or all of the time and 19% reported attempting suicide one or more times.

Oral Health

- 81% of adults with children who responded to the 2010 CARES survey reported that their child had a regular source of dental care.

Preventive Health Care

- In Bridgeport, 78% of Bridgeport children born in 2007 and enrolled in the State Immunization Registry and Tracking System were vaccinated against major vaccine-preventable diseases before they turned two, compared to 80% statewide.

TEEN HEALTH

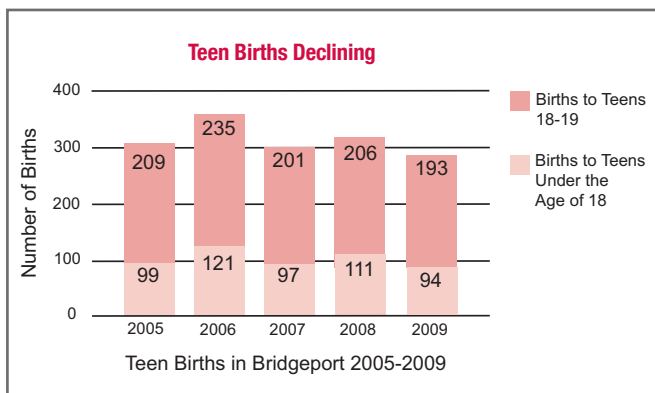
Sexually Transmitted Diseases

- In 2010, 496 Bridgeport adolescents under the age of 20 were treated for sexually transmitted diseases, compared to 462 in 2009, an increase of 7%.
- Bridgeport's rate of sexually transmitted diseases in 2010 was 24 cases per 1,000 adolescents, compared to 9 cases per 1,000 adolescents statewide.

Substance Abuse and Smoking

- In the April 2011 RYASAP survey, 25% of Bridgeport students in grades 7-12 reported using alcohol at least once during the previous month; 13% used marijuana; 10% used inhalants to get high; and 5% smoked cigarettes.

Teen Pregnancy



- In 2009, there were **94 births to teens under the age of 18, a decrease of 15%** compared to 2008. Teenage mothers are at high risk of poverty, domestic violence, and unemployment. Children born to teens are seven times more likely to live in poverty than children born to mothers who are older.
- **Bridgeport's teen birth rate is three times the statewide rate.** The 2007-09 birth rate for Bridgeport teens ages 15-17 was 34 births per 1,000 teenage girls, compared to the statewide rate of 11 births per 1,000 teenage girls.

HOUSING

Homeless children are at increased risk for poor health, developmental delays, mental and behavioral health problems, and lower educational achievement.

Homelessness

- In 2010, 279 children spent time in a Bridgeport homeless shelter, compared to 300 in 2009.
- The **rate of children living in homeless shelters in Bridgeport is four times the statewide rate.** In FY 2009-10, there were 8 homeless children in Bridgeport shelters per 1,000 children, compared to 2 homeless children per 1,000 children statewide.

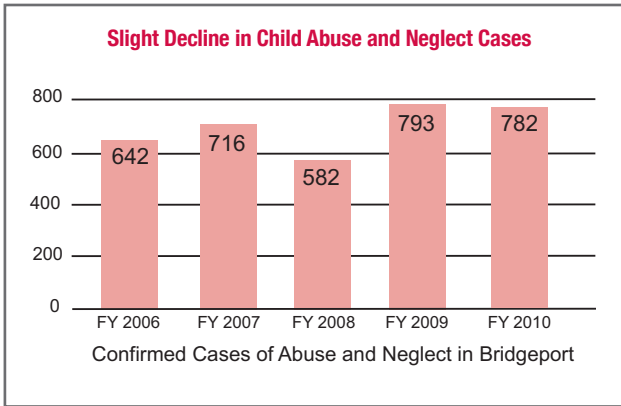
Housing

- A parent working 40 hours a week at the minimum wage (\$8.25/hour) earns \$1,430 a month. In FY 2010-11, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in greater Bridgeport was \$1,291 a month.
- The federal definition of affordable housing is housing that costs no more than 30% of a family's income. Using this definition, a family would have to earn \$24.83 an hour, three times the minimum wage, to afford the average two-bedroom apartment.
- As of July 2011, there were **4,322 families on the waiting list for public housing**, compared to 4,858 families the previous year, **a decrease of 11%.**
- As of August 2011, there were 2,884 Bridgeport families using a Section 8 voucher or a State Rental Assistance Program (RAP) certificate, with 1,652 families on the waiting list.

Long-term exposure to violence can lead to depression, academic failure, teen pregnancy, juvenile delinquency, and adult crime.

CHILD SAFETY

Child Abuse

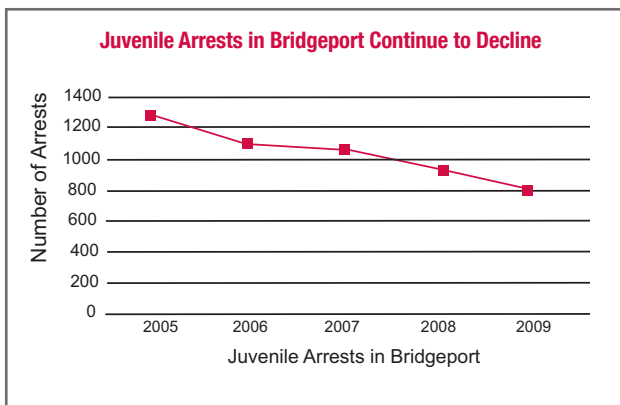


- The number of **children in Bridgeport confirmed as abused or neglected declined slightly (1%)** from 2008-09 to 2009-10. Statewide, abuse and neglect cases rose by 15.5%.
- There were 22 children confirmed as abused or neglected per 1,000 Bridgeport children in FY 2009-10, compared to 12 cases per 1,000 children statewide.

Domestic Violence

- In 2009, there were 880 arrests for family violence in Bridgeport, compared to 852 in 2008, an increase of 3%. Children who experience domestic violence are more likely to demonstrate aggressive behavior than children from nonviolent homes.
- Bridgeport's rate of family violence arrests in 2009, 27 arrests per 1,000 families, was 17% higher than the statewide rate of 23 arrests per 1,000 families.

Juvenile Violence



- There were **799 juvenile arrests in Bridgeport in 2009**, compared to 934 in 2008, **a decrease of 14%**.
- Bridgeport's juvenile crime arrest rate (51 arrests per 1,000 youth ages 10 to 17) in 2009 was 6% higher than the state rate (48 arrests per 1,000 youth).
- In 2009, 247 arrests, 31% of all juvenile arrests in Bridgeport, involved children under the age of 15, compared to 323 in 2008.
- **Juvenile arrests for violent crimes* in Bridgeport decreased by 34%** in 2009. There were **88 juvenile arrests for violent crimes** in 2009, compared to 134 in 2008.
- Bridgeport's juvenile violent crime arrest rate in 2009 (5.5 arrests per 1,000 youth ages 10 to 17) was more than double the state rate (2 arrests per 1,000 youth).

* Violent crimes are defined as murder, manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

The more positive experiences or developmental assets young people have, the less likely they are to be involved in risky behaviors and the more likely they are to succeed in school and in life.

NURTURING & SUPPORT

Youth Development

- Quality youth development programs have shown to reduce juvenile crime by as much as 25%, improve high school graduation rates by 20%, and reduce illegal drug use by as much as 50%.

POSITIVE EXPERIENCES ARE CRITICAL FOR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT	
Positive Experience	Percent of Students Reporting
Living in a caring neighborhood	27%
Getting a lot of encouragement at school	41%
Caring about their school	43%
Participating in youth programs in school or in the community	48%

*Search Institute Survey Results,
Sample of Bridgeport Students Grades 7-12, April 2011*

CALL TO ACTION

BCAC calls upon concerned residents and government at all levels – local, state, and federal – to work with us to ensure that all Bridgeport’s children:

- Have an equal opportunity to succeed in life
- Grow up in families with the economic resources to be self-sufficient
- Have access to affordable, licensed, quality child care
- Receive a high-quality education
- Have a healthy start in life
- Have access to affordable, quality health care
- Have a clean environment
- Live in decent housing
- Live in an environment that is safe and free from violence
- Receive the nurturing and support needed to achieve their full potential

JOIN US!

PARTICIPATE ON ONE OF OUR TASK FORCES:

- Children’s Health and Family Economic Empowerment
 - Education and Early Care

*To join a Task Force,
please call (203) 549-0075, ext 10,
or visit our website at www.bcacct.org.*



.....
Mobilizing for Children

BRIDGEPORT CHILD ADVOCACY COALITION

2470 Fairfield Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06605
(203) 549-0075 FAX (203) 549-0203 www.bcacct.org

Chairwoman	<i>Frances Newby</i>
Executive Director	<i>Mary Pat C. Healy</i>
Director of Research	<i>Barbara Edinberg</i>
Health Care Community Organizer	<i>Lazaro Corro Benites</i>
Outreach Associate	<i>Mory Hernandez</i>
Administrative Assistant	<i>Nicole Bass</i>

Sources are available upon request.

Information is based on the most current data available.

A very special thanks to
Pitney Bowes Foundation
for printing this report

and to...



PEOPLE'S UNITED BANK

THE UNITED ILLUMINATING COMPANY and
SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT GAS

for their support!

Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition (BCAC) is a coalition of organizations, parents, and other concerned individuals committed to improving the well-being of Bridgeport's children through research, advocacy, community education, and mobilization.