

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Talia Lent, MPH

Phone: (203) 450 - 3641

Email: tlent@catalystct.org

Catalyst CT | The Hub Announces \$40,000 in Grants to Support Underage Nicotine Prevention in Connecticut

Bridgeport, CT – Catalyst CT | The Hub is excited to announce the recipients of the **Underage Nicotine Prevention Program (UNPP) - Community Mini Grants**. This grant program, made possible through Juul Settlement Funds with support from the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (CT DMHAS), awards funding to community organizations dedicated to preventing underage nicotine use across the region.

A total of four organizations have been selected to receive grants of up to \$10,000 each, for a combined investment of up to \$40,000 in community-based nicotine prevention efforts. The grant period runs from July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027.

“We’re proud to invest in community organizations that are on the front lines of preventing underage nicotine use. Each of these grantees brings local knowledge, trusted relationships, and a strong commitment to protecting young people in our region. This funding will help them provide a wider array of resources for Connecticut communities’ youth and families.”

— Talia Lent, MPH, Region 1 Program Coordinator for the Underage Nicotine Prevention Program at Catalyst CT | The Hub

“The Underage Nicotine Prevention Program Community Mini Grants reflect our commitment to meeting young people where they are. By empowering local organizations with the tools and resources they need, we are building healthier, nicotine-free communities across Connecticut. We are grateful to Attorney General Tong for leading a multistate effort to reach a settlement agreement with Juul Labs to make this investment possible and to our regional partners for their expertise in delivering impactful services to Connecticut Communities.”

— Sarju Shah, MPH, Division Director, Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

About the Awardees

The following organizations were selected through a competitive review process based on their demonstrated capacity to address underage nicotine use within their communities:

Awardee 1: Greater Bridgeport Area Prevention Program (GBAPP), Inc. | Bridgeport, CT | Award Amount: \$10,000

Focus Area: Community-Based

Project Description: This project aims to provide information and/or conduct presentations to engage parents to encourage family conversations regarding underage nicotine prevention, develop and distribute nicotine quit and/or wellness kits, and host substance-free events for youth in the community.

Awardee 2: The Boys & Girls Club of Stamford | Stamford, CT | Award Amount: \$10,000

Focus Area: Community-Based

Project Description: This project aims to provide information and/or conduct presentations to engage parents and encourage family conversations regarding underage nicotine prevention, develop and distribute nicotine quit and/or wellness kits, promote a positive community norms campaign including social media and community interactions promoting shift in youth behavior, implement a photo voice project for youth to document and inform others on the environmental impacts of nicotine products in their community, and host prevention themed substance-free wellness activities at BGCS Teen Center, and one family game night.

Awardee 3: The Stratford Partnership for Youth & Families | Stratford, CT | Award Amount: \$10,000

Focus Area: Community-Based

Project Description: This project aims to utilize town-level data to customize and promote UNPP-developed positive community norms campaign, develop and distribute nicotine quit and/or wellness kits, and host substance-free events for youth in the community.

Awardee 4: TPAUD, Trumbull's Prevention Partnership | Trumbull, CT | Award Amount: \$10,000

Focus Areas: School-Based | Retail Environment | Community-Based

Project Description: This project aims to establish high school faculty "champion(s)" to be trained in an evidence-based alternative suspension program, review and recommend school policies regarding student nicotine use or possession infractions, coordinate training for school faculty in A-BIRT, and conduct presentations to engage parents and school staff regarding underage nicotine prevention.

In addition, this project will support the Regional UNPP coordinator in conducting retailer education and outreach, review local ordinances, retail location, and compliance data to inform and conduct retail environmental scans, and engage local community leaders. The project will also utilize town-level data to customize and promote UNPP-developed positive community norms campaign, develop and distribute nicotine quit kits in partnership with the YDT, THS Recovery Support Specialist, and the Health Department, and support at least one substance-free event for high school youth.

About the UNPP Community Mini Grant Program

The Underage Nicotine Prevention Program (UNPP) - Community Mini Grants program provides funding to help communities build capacity and advance local efforts to prevent underage nicotine initiation, educate youth and families on the harms of nicotine use, and expand access to cessation services.

Funded organizations work across three focus areas, (*School-Based, Retail Environment, Community-Based*) and are required to incorporate evidence-based interventions, engage priority populations identified through local and state data, and promote Connecticut cessation resource including [VapeFreeCT](#), [Commit to Quit](#), and [My Life My Quit](#).

This program is funded through the Juul Settlement and administered by Catalyst CT | The Hub in partnership with CT DMHAS.

About the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)

The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) promotes and administers comprehensive, recovery-oriented services in the areas of mental health treatment and substance misuse prevention and treatment throughout Connecticut.

About Catalyst CT | The Hub

Catalyst CT | The Hub is one of Connecticut's five Regional Behavioral Action Organizations, and serves Southwestern Connecticut. Catalyst CT | The Hub is dedicated to improving the behavioral health and wellness of communities in Region 1 by supporting effective, evidence-based prevention strategies. Through collaborative efforts with local community partners and state agencies, the RBHAO works to address substance use, mental health challenges, and other health disparities across Southwestern Connecticut.
