



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2026 – 2028

OUR MISSION

CTNCY engages in training, research, coalition-building, and advocacy to drive systems-level change to improve the lives of children and youth in Connecticut.

We bring people together through strong local and statewide partnerships to help children, youth, and families thrive.

OUR VISION

All Connecticut children and youth are safe, healthy, happy and well-educated.

OUR VALUES

- **Leadership:** *We accomplish great things for children and youth when we all work together.*
- **Excellence:** *We bring out the best in ourselves and in others.*
- **Engagement:** *We inspire joyful and meaningful connections.*
- **Inclusivity:** *We seek out and value diverse voices in our work.*
- **Equity:** *We strive to ensure every child's needs are met.*

OUR BELIEFS

- Children and youth should be supported from a holistic “whole child” approach.
- The voices of children, youth and caregivers should be heard and celebrated.
- We work with all programs regardless of their level of development. Programs that serve children and youth should be met where they are.
- Children and youth deserve the best and the partners we work with should strive for continuous improvement.
- Through coalition building and partnership, we can be a catalyst for change.
- The way we work together is as essential to our mission as the work we do.
- We believe in systems-level change, which happens when we:
 - Work in partnership,

- o Share resources, training and learning that inspires change in the practice,
- o Build trusting and caring relationships, and
- o Advocate together for the change we want to see

OUR PRACTICES

To do this work we:

- Work on the **systems level**, **educating stakeholders** and **driving connection**
- Focus on **high-quality service across our initiatives**
- Support families and the staff of youth- and child-serving organizations through **trainings, toolkits, consultation** and **convenings**
- Use **research** to encourage use of **quality** best practices
- **Convene stakeholders** and engage in coalition building
- Create, cultivate, and support a **network** of professional relationships

OUR 2025 – 2028 PRIORITIES

PRIORITY 1: BE A CATALYST FOR LOCAL AND STATEWIDE CHANGE TO IMPROVE THE WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR IMPACT FRAMEWORK

PRIORITY 2: IMPROVE OUR LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY BY RAISING AWARENESS OF OUR WORK, DIVERSIFYING FUNDING, AND EXPANDING RELATIONSHIPS

PRIORITY 3: CONTINUE INVESTING IN OUR TEAM AND INTERNAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES TO ANCHOR OUR WORK

PRIORITY 4: ACTIVATE OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO SUPPORT OUR WORK AND SHARE OUR STORY

OUR 2026 – 2028 PRIORITIES & SUPPORTING STRATEGIES

PRIORITY 1: BE A CATALYST FOR LOCAL AND STATEWIDE CHANGE TO IMPROVE THE WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH THROUGH IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR IMPACT FRAMEWORK.

SUPPORTING STRATEGY 1: ENGAGE IN PROJECT ACTIVITIES ALIGNED WITH OUR IMPACT FRAMEWORK LEVERS OF INTERVENTION

Proposed Activities:

- Determine, plan, and implement project activities outlined by the lever of intervention.
- Prioritize project activities through a transparent, annual planning process.
- Utilize the impact framework to guide the design of new projects and offerings.

The table below shows how within a project, the Network can offer sample supports and activities. Specific engagement with each activity and the level of detail will vary based on the project.

IMPACT FRAMEWORK – PROJECT GUIDANCE

Strategic Levers	Sample Activities
Tools & Research	• Develop and curate toolkits, guides, resources, and curricula • Gather input from field professionals and families • Increase access to high-quality, engaging educational materials
Support & Funding	• Create shared staffing and administrative models
Community & Coalition Building	• Host convenings: roundtables, summits, town halls, monthly network meetings • Partner with statewide and local organizations • Create informal engagement spaces (cafes, meet-a-partner sessions)
Advocacy & Policy	• Coordinate campaigns and advocacy events (Day at the Capitol) • Train parents, youth, and organization staff and partners in advocacy • Maintain relationships with state agencies and policymakers • Develop advocacy tools and guides
Training & Learning	• Design and deliver training for providers, and orgs (Fall afterschool conference, STEM CLASP) • Conduct pre-/post-assessments and track participation • Tailor trainings to program needs

See Appendix A for more detailed guidance around the types of activities and efforts aligned with each lever of our impact framework that emerged at our joint Board and Staff Retreat.

SUPPORTING STRATEGY 2: BUILD TRANSPARENCY AND STRENGTHEN COMMUNICATION ACROSS NETWORK PROJECTS

Proposed Activities:

- Develop accessible timelines and activities for each major network project.

- Identify clear roles and responsibilities for each project team member.
- Develop structures to periodically convene staff working within functional levers to share approaches and practices.
- Engage in regular communication across both project teams and functional levers.

PRIORITY 2: IMPROVE OUR LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY BY RAISING AWARENESS OF OUR WORK, DIVERSIFYING FUNDING, AND EXPANDING RELATIONSHIPS

SUPPORTING STRATEGY 1: CREATE AND IMPLEMENT A MARKETING PLAN EMPHASIZING EXPANDED OUTREACH AND PROVIDING ACCESSIBLE RESOURCES TO THE COMMUNITY.

Proposed Activities:

- Maintain an annual events calendar that supports lever activities and reaches diverse audiences.
- Clarify and prioritize the network's different audiences (e.g. donors, professionals, parents) and tailor the message and outreach method to the audience.
- Grow the media messaging and asset bank to ensure clarity and consistency in media and marketing engagement, including an annual messaging bank and plan for board member use.
- Build in more messaging targeting donors on how and why to support the network.
- Continue the social media posting strategy including new tools and research updates, provider spotlights, and linking to events and trainings for public engagement.
- Expand toolkits, resources, and opportunities on the website that are easy to locate and utilize.
- Engage with local radio and television to create awareness of CTNCY's efforts.

SUPPORTING STRATEGY 2: IDENTIFY PATHWAYS FOR DIVERSIFIED FUNDING TO SUPPORT EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL INITIATIVES

Proposed Activities:

- Initiate and expand corporate and vendor partnerships with those invested in the mission.
- Consider passive product income opportunities by leveraging current/future developed content.
- Lead 1-2 fundraising initiatives (e.g. runs, golf events, Adult Spelling Bee, Annual Gala).
- Invest more resources in identifying and applying for larger grant opportunities.
- Develop consulting services and market them broadly.
- Seek out opportunities to provide fiscal sponsorship for projects and aligned organizations.
- Develop a 3–5-minute standard description of the Network's services and upcoming events and look for opportunities to share it, e.g. monthly virtual after school office hour to "Ask an Expert"

SUPPORTING STRATEGY 3: DEVELOP A RELATIONSHIP MAP AND IDENTIFY KEY PARTNERSHIPS FOR FOCUSED DEVELOPMENT

Proposed Activities:

- Map all CTNCY relationships ranging from federal agencies to local communities and identify gaps.
- Identify and prioritize partners and connect with them (e.g. through training, tabling and in-person and outreach).
- Engage in coalition building with existing partners that share a common goal.
- Strengthen outreach to parents providing additional opportunities for training and learning.
- Utilize convenings, trainings, and community sessions to gather stakeholder feedback and consider pathways for continued partnership.

PRIORITY 3: CONTINUE INVESTING IN OUR TEAM AND INTERNAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES TO ANCHOR OUR WORK

SUPPORTING STRATEGY 1: MODEL OUR COMMITMENT TO SYSTEMS LEVEL CHANGE THROUGH OUR ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES

Proposed Activities:

- Continue to build trusting and caring relationships among our staff, developing policies that center trust and partnership.
- Engage in ongoing learning and professional development through shared resources, articles, and training opportunities.
- Maintain and refine internal team working groups with clear and common goals, initiatives, and functions.

SUPPORTING STRATEGY 2: CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN OUR FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Proposed Activities:

- Review our current financial systems and practices to ensure clarity.
- Refine our budgeting process to align with funding streams and projects.
- Develop and monitor financial dashboards, providing real-time financial insights.

SUPPORTING STRATEGY 3: UTILIZE OUR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK TO GUIDE THE WORK TO BE DONE

Proposed Activities:

- Engage in annual planning, referring to the strategic and impact framework to ensure alignment
- Develop internal metrics to monitor the completion of activities against the plan.
- Celebrate success and manage and adjust during periods of organizational challenge.

PRIORITY 4: ACTIVATE OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO SUPPORT OUR WORK AND SHARE OUR STORY

SUPPORTING STRATEGY 1: BUILD COMMUNITY AND STRONG BOARD GOVERNANCE PRACTICES

Proposed Activities:

- Foster relationships and learn about each other as individuals.
- Enhance our committee structure to increase effectiveness and full board session reporting.
- Continue the recruitment of new board members that fill gaps in skills and experience.

SUPPORTING STRATEGY 2: SUPPORT THE WORK AS AMBASSADORS & FUNDRAISERS

Proposed Activities:

- Share board members' personal and professional organizational resources with the board and network staff as appropriate.
- Serve as ambassadors for the Network to amplify external support to its programs including sharing information with board members' personal and professional connections.
- Participate in organization events (attend at least one organization event with 100% board participation).
- Support fund development and marketing initiatives, including hosting 1-2 in-person fundraising events
- Develop additional written materials to clarify and streamline board operations including an annual calendar and committee charges.

SUPPORTING STRATEGY 3: SERVE AS STRATEGIC ADVISORS TO ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP

Proposed Activities:

- Assist with strategic framework implementation.
- Build and implement a succession plan and timeline of required activities.
- Engage organization leadership in opportunities to promote professional growth.

IMPLEMENTATION

The strategic framework provides a foundation for the organization to meet and curate a more detailed annual plan, outlining clear activities, responsibilities, and goals.