February 2025

Disconnected Youth in Connecticut

2024 Annual Report (DR-0043b), per Public Act 24-45, Section 22

BCG | P20·WIN

Contents

Table of figures

Executive summary

Published in October 2023, the *Connecticut's Unspoken Crisis* report highlighted that around 1 in 5 young people (119,000 in total) aged 14 to 26 are either disconnected from employment and education institutions or at risk of disconnection in the 2021-2022 school year. Since last reported, the count of disconnected and at-risk young people decreased by an estimated 13,000 from approximately 119,000 to 106,000 in the 2023-2024 school year. This decline is driven by:

- Approximately 4,000 fewer severely disconnected and 3,000 fewer moderately disconnected young people. Potential explanations include an uptick in post-secondary enrollment rates, strong Connecticut labor market conditions, and a reduction in the number of 14 to 26-year-olds in CT (from 614,000 to 591,000) over this period
- Approximately 6,000 fewer at-risk high school students, driven primarily by a decline in chronic absenteeism. Nonetheless, the at-risk count remains elevated compared to pre-pandemic years

This report looked at several socioeconomic, demographic, and other factors associated with disconnection to inform stakeholders seeking to identify subpopulations to target in their efforts to reconnect young people and/or prevent disconnection. Young people experiencing many of the factors studied were disconnected or at-risk at higher rates. These factors include economic need, behavioral health need, child welfare system involvement, criminal justice involvement, and select secondary education pathways (e.g., special education, alternative education, and transiency). Moreover, select demographic groups are disproportionately represented among disconnected and at-risk youth (e.g., English language learners; Black, Hispanic, and Native American youth; young men).

Disconnected and at-risk youth can be found in every municipality in Connecticut. On a per capita basis, urban core areas (e.g., Hartford, New Haven) face higher disconnected and at-risk youth rates. However, the majority of disconnected and at-risk youth reside in urban periphery (e.g., Windham, Norwich) and suburban areas (e.g., Windsor, Shelton), reflective of Connecticut's population distribution. Select rural towns in Eastern and Western Connecticut (e.g., Plainfield, Kent) also have high concentrations of disconnected and at-risk youth.

Being at-risk while in high school is associated with higher disconnection rates upon leaving high school, which underscores the importance of supporting at-risk students in high school as an avenue to reduce disconnection rates. Furthermore, being at-risk for more years is associated with higher disconnection rates (2 or more grades at-risk vs only 1 grade at-risk).

In addition to the significant human impacts, disconnection is also associated with meaningful economic impacts. Factors associated with disconnection are connected to lower educational attainment rates and wages. For instance, among the cohort who entered high school in the 2014-2015 school year, 9% of child welfare involved youth attained post-secondary credentials by age 23/24, compared to 44% across the entire cohort. Young people with child welfare involvement who earned post-secondary credentials reported approximately $6,800 less per year in earned wages than the median for all post-secondary graduates in this cohort. In the aggregate, these individual economic impacts translate to meaningful economic implications for the state budget, labor market, and GDP.

Introduction

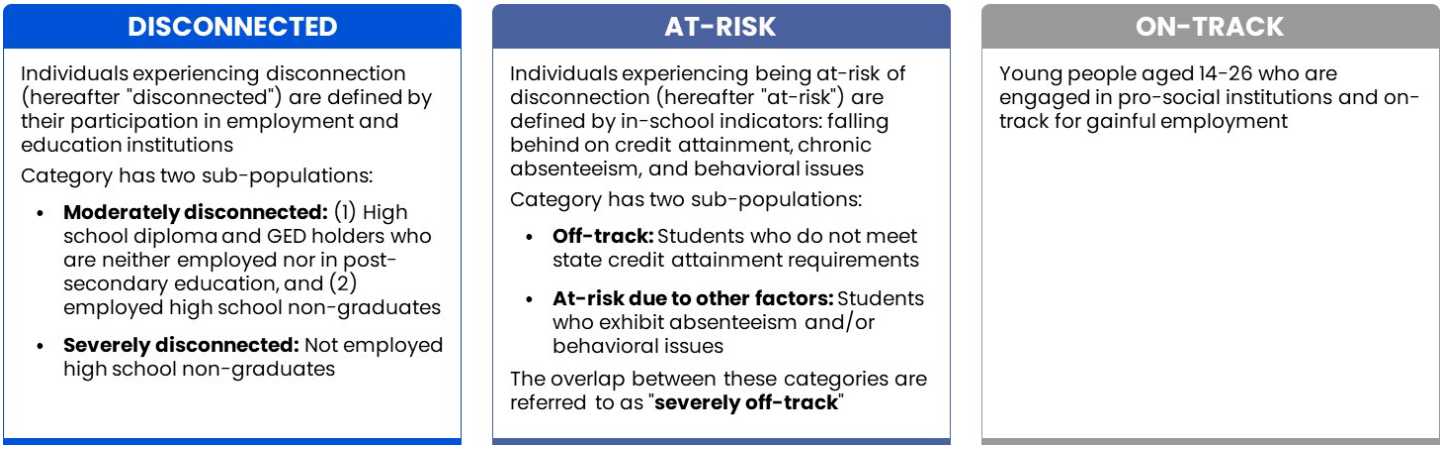
Background for this report

The 2023 *Connecticut's Unspoken Crisis* report (hereafter DR-0043) highlighted that approximately 1 in 5 young people aged 14 to 26 were disconnected from employment and education institutions or at risk of disconnection in 2021-2022.[1] Since the 2023 report's publication, there has been a groundswell of public interest across the state to better understand and address this issue. In May 2024, the state legislature passed Public Act No. 24-45 (PA 24-45), which mandates that the Connecticut Preschool Through Twenty Workforce Information Network (P20 WIN) Executive Board disseminate a report on this topic on an annual basis, starting 2025, using the same definitions and data models as the 2023 report (DR-0043).

Definitional framework

Per PA 24-45, this year's report (DR-0043b) follows the same definitional framework as the 2023 report (see Figure 1), which defines a continuum of indicators at key transition points between secondary education and post-secondary education and/or employment often experienced by young people ages 14 through 26. Being "at-risk" or "disconnected" from education and employment institutions are point in time statuses. An individual can experience disconnection and later reconnect with education and employment opportunities.

Figure 1: Definitional framework for identifying at-risk and disconnected young people



While this continuum is defined by engagement with education and employment institutions, other factors and systems, including economic need, behavioral health need, criminal justice system involvement also play a role in disconnection. To unpack the roles of a subset of systems and factors on youth engagement with education and employment, this report focuses on at-risk status for Connecticut publicly funded high school students and looks at the disconnection status of students one year after they leave high school (hereafter **"newly disconnected"**[2]), defined and measured using P20 WIN agencies' education and employment data.

How to interpret this report

This report aims to maintain transparency and deepen the fact base on the issue of at-risk and disconnected youth with refreshed data. It does **not intend to:**

- Draw conclusions about specific individuals' outcomes
- Prescribe or assess effectiveness of specific services, programs, policies, and other solutions

- Propose deterministic views of youth disconnection
- Pass value judgment on individuals' educational or employment outcomes
- Make claims about causation[3] or the absolute level of need within the population
- Analyze exhaustively every possible factor that may be associated with disconnection

This report estimates counts of disconnected and at-risk youth based on available sources and data elements. However, available data does not exhaustively account for all "pro-social" activities that may require disconnection from employment and education, including those who are taking gap years from education[4], or those who are full-time caretakers after having completed post-secondary education[5]. Estimates of the magnitude of these sub-populations suggests they are relatively small (i.e., less than 5,000 per year across Connecticut) and would neither materially change the count of disconnected and at-risk youth nor obviate the need for develop solutions to serve these young people.

To study factors associated with disconnection and being at-risk, the report uses variables (detailed in the Appendix) derived from P20 WIN agency datasets. These indicators may not fully capture all individuals experiencing factors. For instance, behavioral health needs indicators are estimated based on whether individuals received services from DMHAS operated and funded facilities or contracted behavioral health services participating in DCF's Provider Information Exchange (PIE). As such, they do not capture young people whose behavioral health needs are going unserved or served by providers not included in the P20 WIN datasets.

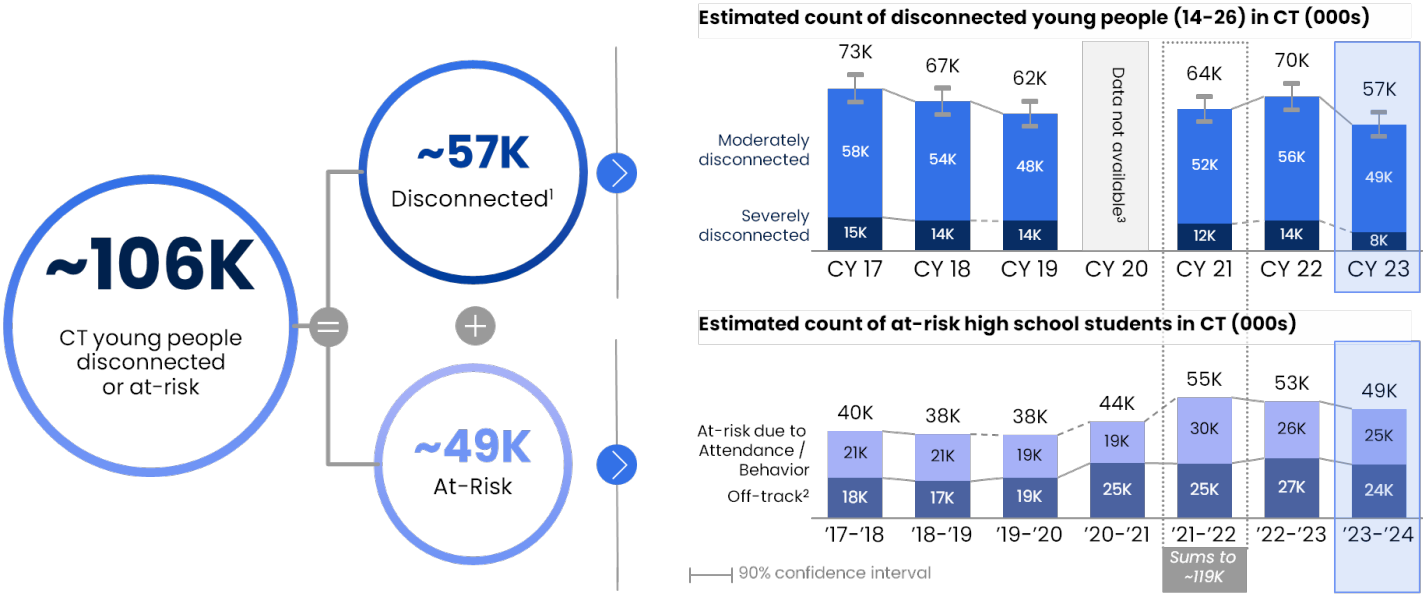
Where feasible, insights are compared to findings of Connecticut-specific studies or relevant national literature. Users should review this report in conjunction with other state agency reporting, academic literature, and qualitative analyses (e.g., stakeholder interviews) informing policies, decision-making, and interventions to serve and support this sub-population. Future reports may consider further refining factor indicators to better capture the factors and reduce potential reporting biases.

Counts & trends of disconnected and at-risk youth

As of the 2023-24 school year, approximately 106,000 of Connecticut's 591,000 young people aged 14 to 26 were disconnected or at-risk of disconnection. Among these individuals (see Figure 2):

- An estimated 57,000 young people were counted as disconnected, meaning they were high school non-graduates, or high school graduates not in post-secondary education or employment
- An additional 49,000 high school students were counted as at-risk, exhibiting signs of potential disconnection such as displaying chronic absenteeism, falling behind on credit attainment required to graduate high school in four years, and/or were involved in behavioral incidents leading to expulsions or suspensions and/or involving bullying, controlled substances, or weapons

Figure 2: Total counts and trends for disconnected and at-risk young people (2017-2023)



1. Data variables not available to accurately estimate "intent" or count of any individuals who are "voluntarily disconnected" 2. Includes severely off-track populations 3. 2020 PUMS not available due to sampling issues during COVID pandemic
Source: P20WIN DR-0043b matched data (2017-2023), American Community Survey 1-year Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), Connecticut DOL Economic Digest (Mar 2024)

The count of disconnected young people has decreased since the last report, rising from approximately 64,000 in 2021 to 70,000 in 2022, before falling to 57,000 in 2023. The count of disconnected youth as a percentage of Connecticut 14 to 26 year olds (hereafter **"disconnection rate"**) has decreased from 10.4% in 2021 to 9.7%[6] in 2023, which is below historical disconnection rates that ranged between 10.1% and 11.8% over 2017 to 2022. Connecticut. In particular, the severely disconnected count and rate are notably lower than counts and rates in pre-COVID years. Approximately 8,000 are severely disconnected in 2023 (or 1.4% of the 2023 14-26 population), compared to 14,000-15,000 over 2017 to 2019 (or 2.2 to 2.5% of the annual 14-26 population).

Some of the fluctuations in the counts and rates of disconnected youth may be driven by the underlying data source's sampling margins of error (shown as 90% confidence intervals in Figure 2). As a result, stakeholders should focus on sustained, multi-year trends in the count of disconnected youth, rather than year to year changes, and how they correlate with concurrent education and employment trends.

Potential explanations for the net decline in the disconnected count from 2021 to 2023 include:

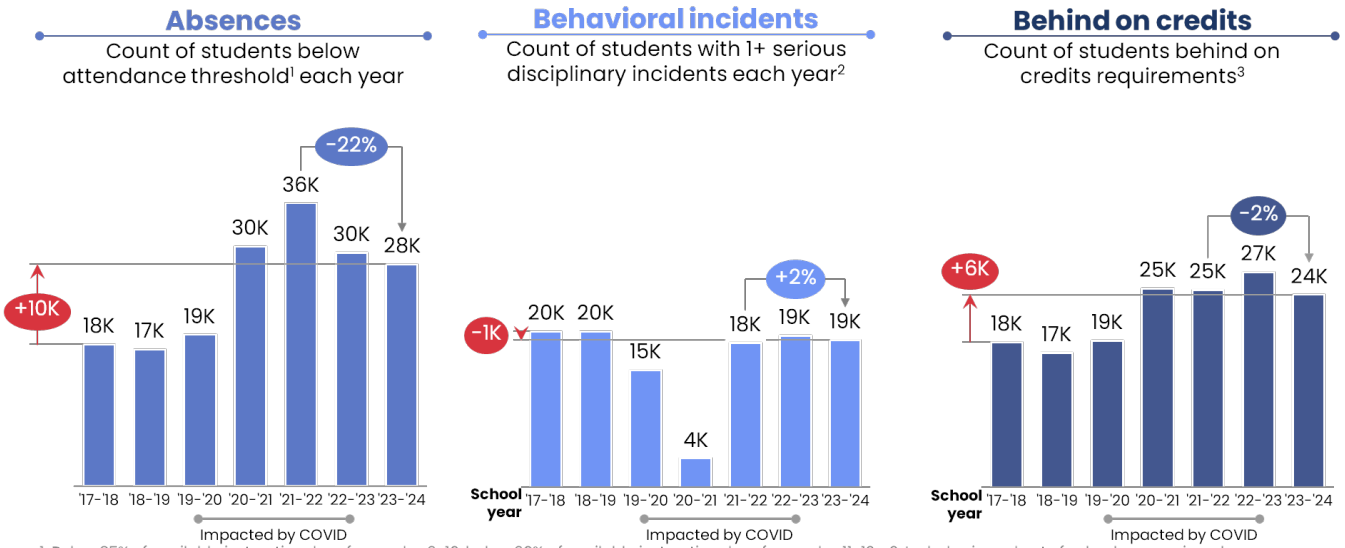
- Improvements in Connecticut's labor market, which has seen a 1.6% increase in total employment and 0.3 percentage points (hereafter "**p.p.**") lower unemployment rate since the last count;

- Increase in post-secondary entrance rate among Connecticut's publicly funded high school students, which grew by 1.8 p.p. between the 2021-22 and 2022-2023 graduating classes[7]; and
- Decrease in Connecticut's 14 to 26 population (from approximately 614,000 to 591,000)

The count of at-risk students has declined by approximately 10% from 55,000 in the 2021-22 school year to 49,000 in the 2023-24 school year. Similarly, the percentage of enrolled, publicly funded high school students who are at-risk of disconnection (hereafter **"at-risk rate"**) has declined from 32% to 30% over the same period. However, both the at-risk count and the at-risk rate remain elevated compared to pre-pandemic years (i.e., approximately 38,000-39,000 or 22-23% of enrolled, publicly funded high school students over 2017-18 to 2019-20 school years).

The decrease over this period is primarily driven by a decline in absenteeism from a peak of 36,000 students in 2021-22 school year to 28,000 students in 2023-2024 school year. This reduction is aligned with Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) recent findings on the Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP)[8], which noted chronic absenteeism rates (i.e., students missing at least 10% of school days[9]) have declined by 2.3 p.p., from 20.0% to 17.7%.

Figure 3: Count of high school students with absences, behavioral incidents, and behind on credits flags (17-18 to 22-23 school years) in thousands



Relationship between at-risk and disconnected

The analysis of students leaving high school before receiving their diplomas over the 2016-17 to 2022-23 school years underscores the importance of early intervention. On average:

1. The earlier a student leaves high school before graduation, the more often they end up disconnected, and the more severe their disconnection status tends to be (see Figure 4)
    a. **Rate of reconnection:** Less than 1% of students who left high school in grade 9 were connected one year after exit from high school, compared to 5% of students who left high school in grade 12
    b. **Severity of disconnection:** 90% of students who left in grade 9 were severely disconnected one year after exit, compared to 63% of students who left in grade 12
    c. **At-risk status prior to disconnection:** The majority of students who left high school without their diplomas were at-risk while they were enrolled
2. Students at-risk for longer periods of time in high school tend to have higher newly disconnected rates. For instance, among students who attended Connecticut public high schools for grades 9 through 12, approximately

51% of students **at-risk in all 4 grades** (i.e., 9 through 12) were disconnected one year after exit, compared to approximately 16% of students who were **at-risk for only one grade**. (see Figure 5) Similar associations between duration and newly disconnected rates hold for all indicators of at-risk status (i.e., absences, behavioral incidents, behind on credits)

3. Supplemental analyses (not pictured below) focused on the cohort of 15/16 year olds in Connecticut high schools in the 2014-15 school year found that being at-risk in high school is associated with:
    a. Lower post-secondary education attainment rates (e.g., approximately 30% among those ever at-risk in high school vs. 70% among those never at-risk in high school)
    b. Lower median annual earned wages by age 23/24 (e.g., 10% lower wages among post-secondary graduates who were ever at-risk in high school compared to peers with the same educational attainment but were never at-risk)

Figure 4: Association between high school exit point (without diploma) and disconnection outcomes 1 year post-exit

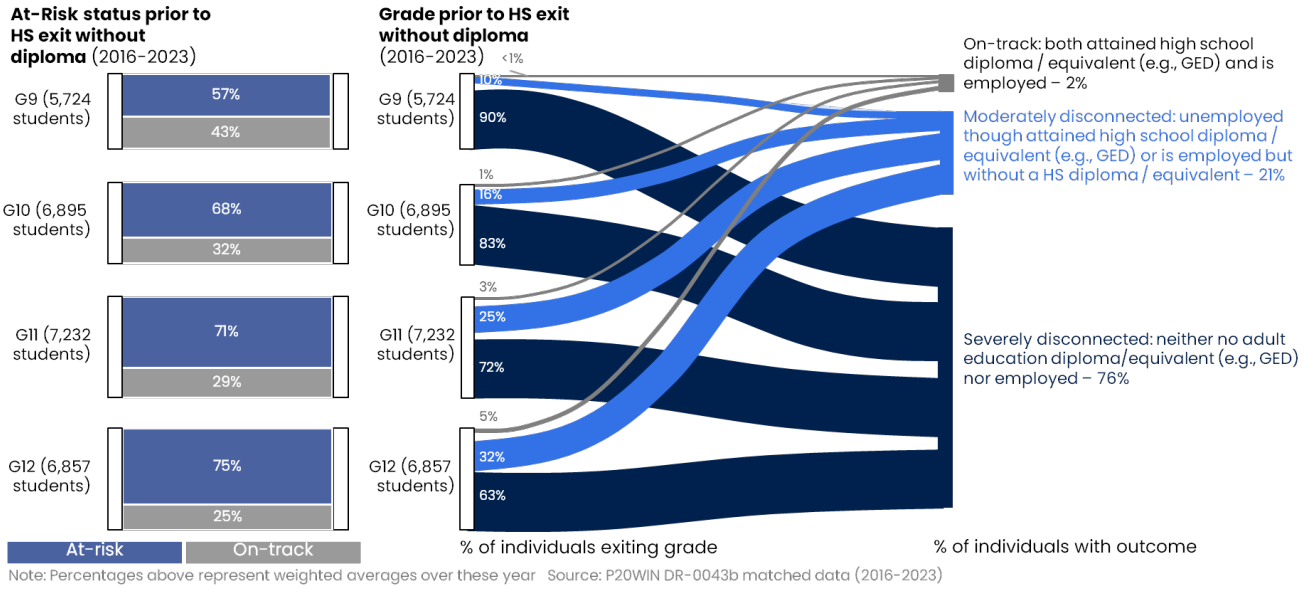
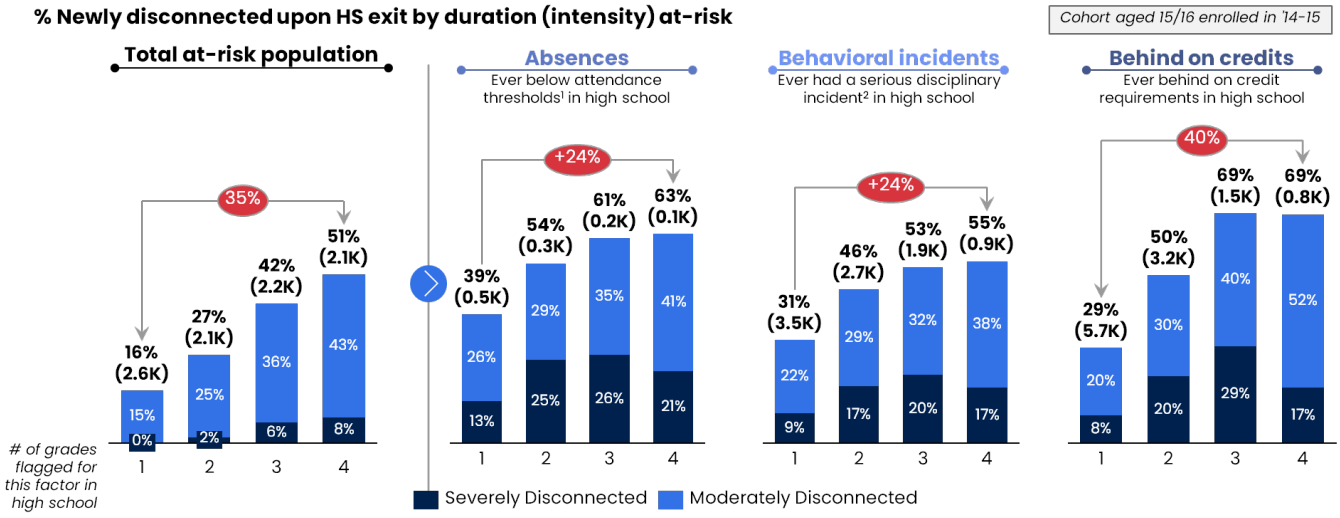


Figure 5:Association between duration at-risk and disconnection outcomes 1 year post-exit



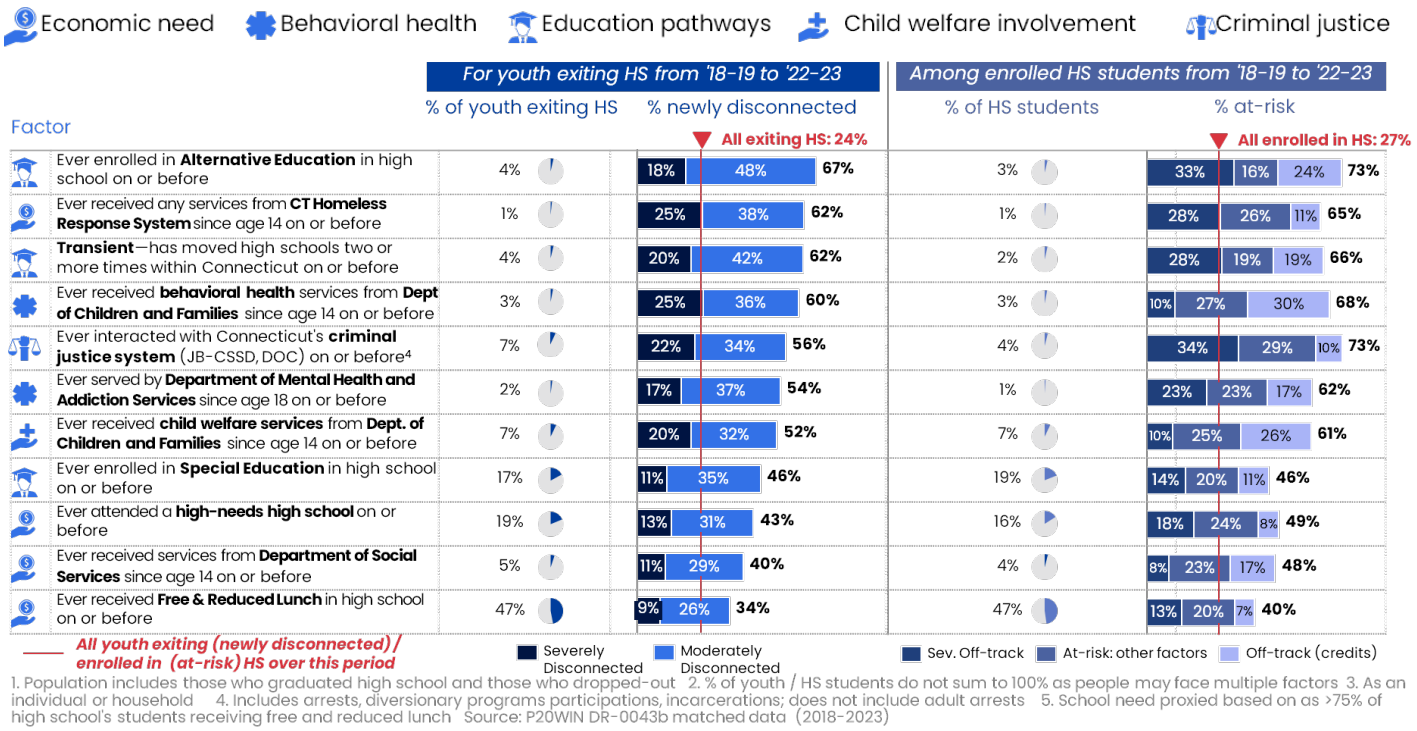
Factors associated with disconnection and being at-risk

This section explores how newly disconnected and at-risk rates vary based on factors experienced during or immediately after high school as well as across demographic and geographic segments to identify particularly vulnerable populations and inform policies, decision-making, and program design.

This analysis focuses on 5 categories of factors: household and community economic need, educational pathways, behavioral health needs, child welfare involvement, and criminal justice involvement.[10] From left to right, Figure 6 summarizes: factors studied; prevalence of factors among youth exiting high school and newly disconnected rates among youth experiencing these factors during high school or one year after exit; and prevalence of factors among youth enrolled in high school and at-risk rates among youth experiencing these factors during high school.

All of the factor indicators are associated with higher newly disconnected and at-risk rates, with the highest rates observed for individuals who were part of alternative education pathways, who experienced housing insecurity, or who changed high school 2 or more times.

Figure 6: Association between factors and newly disconnected and at-risk rates



1. Population includes those who graduated high school and those who dropped-out 2. % of youth / HS students do not sum to 100% as people may face multiple factors 3. As an individual or household 4. Includes arrests, diversionary programs participations, incarcerations; does not include adult arrests 5. School need proxied based on as >75% of high school's students receiving free and reduced lunch Source: P20WIN DR-0043b matched data (2018-2023)

Economic need

Approximately 1 in 2 young people exiting high school over this period have experienced 1 or more economic need indicators. Household-level economic need indicators include participation in public benefits programs (i.e., individual receives Medicaid, SNAP, TANF, or free / reduced-price school lunch) and experiencing housing insecurity (i.e., individual served by the Connecticut Homelessness Response System). Community-level economic need indicators include more than 75% of the school ever having received free or reduced-price lunch. Experiencing these economic need indicators during or up to one year after high school exit is associated with a higher newly disconnected rate and higher at-risk rate, although the differences vary across economic need indicators (see Figure 6).

For example, 1% of youth exiting high school over this period received services from the Connecticut Homelessness Response System (hereafter "CTHRS") during high school or up to 1 year after exit. Among these young people, approximately 62% were newly disconnected, which is 38 p.p. higher than the average newly disconnected rate across all youth exiting high school over this period (24%). Similarly, among youth enrolled in high school who received services from CTHRS, approximately 65% were at-risk, or 38 p.p. higher compared to the average at-risk rate of 27% among all youth enrolled in high school over this period.

These associations between economic need and disconnection outcomes align with the broader literature. For instance, young people facing housing insecurity often face challenges such as frequent school changes, inconsistent attendance, and emotional distress, all of which may hamper their ability to stay engaged in education and employment institutions over the long term.[11] Similarly, national literature has pointed to high-needs schools' resource constraints (e.g., lack of advanced courses, extracurricular activities, career readiness programs, and post-secondary education support)[12] as factors associated with being disconnected or at-risk.[13]

Education pathways: Alternative education

Alternative education includes alternative high schools, drop out diversion / credit recovery, expulsion programs, and public transition programs, serving students who have struggled to succeed in traditional high school environments due to factors such as academic challenges, behavioral issues, and personal circumstances, among others. Approximately 4% of all young people exiting high school over this period were ever enrolled in alternative education during high school. These young people face 43 p.p. higher newly disconnected rates than all youth exiting high school and 46 p.p. higher at-risk rates than all youth enrolled in high school over this period.

Education pathways: Special education

Special education serves students with learning disabilities, behavioral issues, or other developmental challenges through individualized instruction delivered by certified education professionals. Approximately 17% of all young people exiting high school over this period were ever enrolled in special education. This group faces 22 p.p. higher newly disconnected rates than all youth exiting high school and 19 p.p. higher at-risk rates than all youth enrolled in high school.

Education pathways: Transiency

Transient youth, defined as students changing between Connecticut high schools two or more times, make up approximately 3% of all young people exiting high school over this period.[14] Those who changed high schools two or more times face 37 p.p. higher newly disconnected rates than all youth exiting high school and 39 p.p. higher at-risk rates than all youth enrolled in high school. Notably, **within** town school changes are associated with higher newly disconnected rate compared to similarly transient peers who changed high schools **across** towns (see Figure 7).

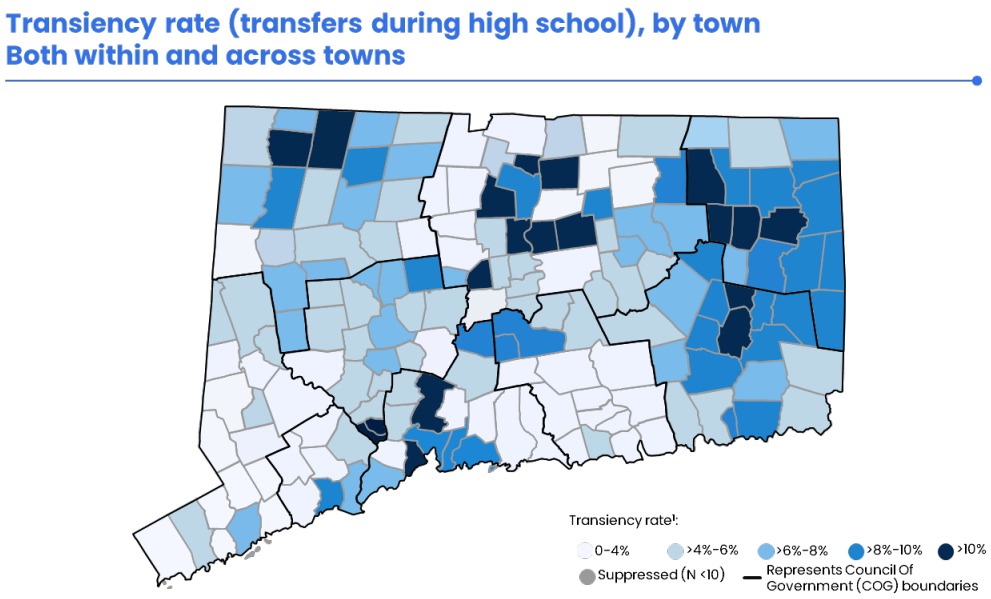
Figure 7: Transiency rates across Connecticut

Note: Analysis does not include across town transfers out of state; Data only captures one school transfer per school year, so may undercount the total number of transfers; select combinations excluded
Source: P20WIN DR-0043b matched data (2017-2023)

Academic literature has identified associations between transiency and behavioral health challenges, which are also associated with elevated disconnection rates.[15] Furthermore, districts and schools may have faced difficulties to track and ensure continued support for at-risk young people when they change schools. Additional analysis is required to identify tailored solutions to reduce the disparate disconnection outcomes observed among transient youth.

Transient youth can be found across the state (see Figure 8). Urban core youth (e.g., New Haven, Hartford) and neighboring municipalities (e.g., East Hartford, New Britain, West Haven) face high transiency rates, especially within-town transfers. Youth in rural areas (e.g., Sprague in Eastern CT and Norfolk in Northwest CT) also face higher transiency rates, especially across-town transfers.[16]

Figure 8: Map of transiency rates by town / municipality



1. Calculated as the percentage of high school students who transfer in a given school year, as a blended average across data from 2017-2023; any cells with data with less than 10 individuals have been suppressed; mapped to town of residence Note: Analysis does not include across town transfers out of state; Data only captures one school transfer per school year, so may undercount the total number of transfers Source: P20WIN DR-0043b matched data (2017-2023)

Behavioral health need

Approximately 3% of young people exiting high school have received behavioral health services from participants in DCF's Provider Information Exchange during high school and up to one year after exit, and approximately 2% have received behavioral health services from DMHAS funded and operated facilities over the same period. These young people face 30 to 36 p.p. higher newly disconnected rates than all youth exiting high school and 35 to 41 p.p. higher at-risk rates than all youth enrolled in high school.[17] These disparate outcomes align with academic literature findings that behavioral health challenges can present barriers to engagement with education and employment institutions[18]. These challenges are often compounded by other socioeconomic and experiential factors (e.g., homelessness), which may further reduce a young person's ability to remain connected to education and employment institutions.[19]

Child welfare system involvement

Approximately 7% of youth exiting high school over this time period were involved with the child welfare system during high school or up to one year after exit. These young people face 28 p.p. higher newly disconnected rates than all youth exiting high school and 34 p.p. higher at-risk rates than all youth enrolled in high school. Many young people involved with the child welfare system also experience other factors associated with disconnection. (see Figure 9).

Criminal justice system involvement

Young people involved with the criminal justice system[20] (i.e., arrested[21], referred to diversionary programming, detained, and/or incarcerated) during high school or up to one year after exit comprise approximately 7% of all young people exiting high school over this time period. These young people face 32 p.p. higher newly disconnected rates than all youth exiting high school and 34 p.p. higher at-risk rates than all youth enrolled in high school.

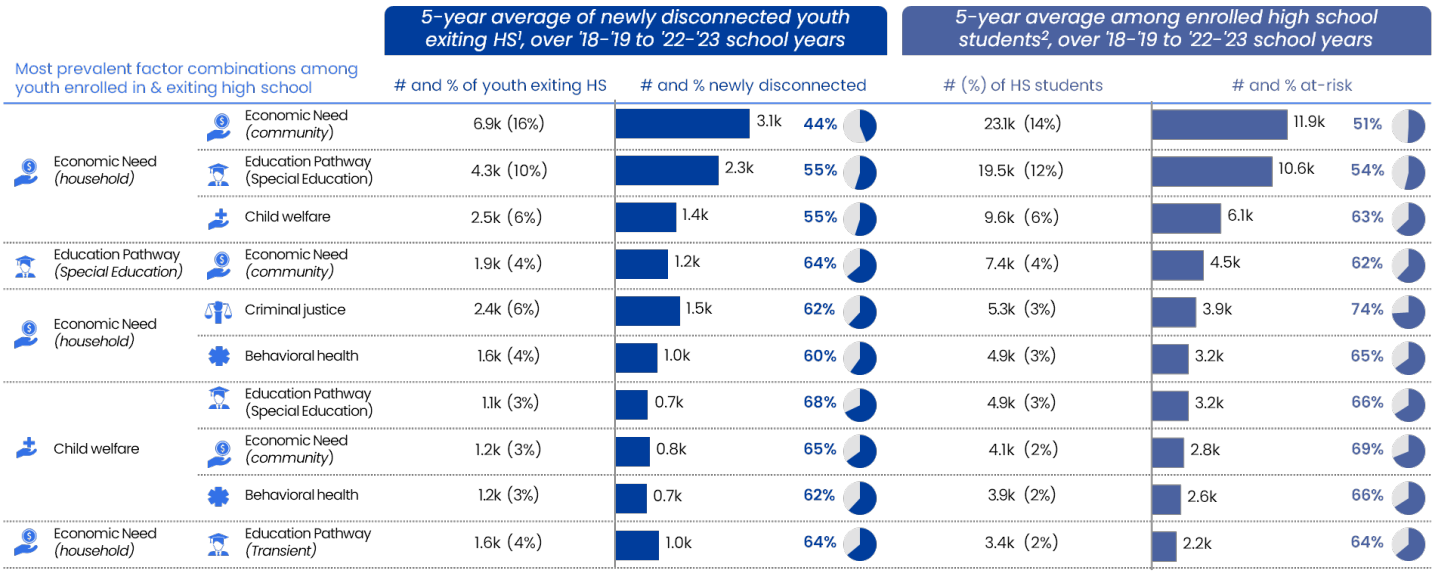
Intersectionality across factors

Young people do not experience the above factors in isolation. Instead, they exist at the convergence of multiple, overlapping factors and systems, including but not limited to structural racism, economic need, behavioral health need, child welfare system involvement, education pathways, and justice system involvement, among others. Young people at these intersections often face disproportionately high disconnected and at-risk rates. This report begins to unpack this intersectionality among factors, but there is value in further investigating specific sub-populations that are vulnerable to disconnection and at-risk.

Experiencing more factors is associated with higher at-risk and newly disconnected rates. For instance, among young people who experienced two or more factors during high school or one year after exit, approximately 43% are newly disconnected, compared to 23% newly disconnected among peers who only experienced 1 factor and 12% newly disconnected among peers who did not experience any factors in the same period. Similar associations exist between at-risk rates and number of factors experienced during high school. These findings align with the hypothesis that the more challenges a young person encounters simultaneously, the more difficult it becomes to stay engaged with education and employment institutions.

As observed in Figure 9, combinations of the 5 factors are not equally prevalent and some combinations are associated with notably higher newly disconnected and at-risk rates.

Figure 9: Factor combinations most commonly experienced by at-risk and disconnected youth



1. Population includes those who graduated high school and those who dropped-out 2. 5 year running average of total;
Note: Counts are not mutually exclusive given presence of youth with 3+ factors Source: P20WIN DR-0043b matched data (2018-2023)

This analysis also demonstrates that the state has several channels (in addition to secondary education institutions) to reach youth before they become disconnected. Over the 2018-19 to 2022-2023 school years, approximately 25% of newly disconnected youth were ever served by 1 of the following agencies and organizations – DSS, DCF, DMHAS, CCEH, DOL[22] – during high school leading up to their disconnection. There are meaningful overlaps in newly disconnected and at-risk youth served across agencies. For instance, approximately 13% of the 14,200 at-risk high school students served by DSS from 2018-19 to 2022-23 school years were also served in parallel[23] by DCF for child welfare and/or behavioral health. It is critical that agencies coordinate to serve these particularly vulnerable sub-populations, who face higher newly disconnected and at-risk rates on average.

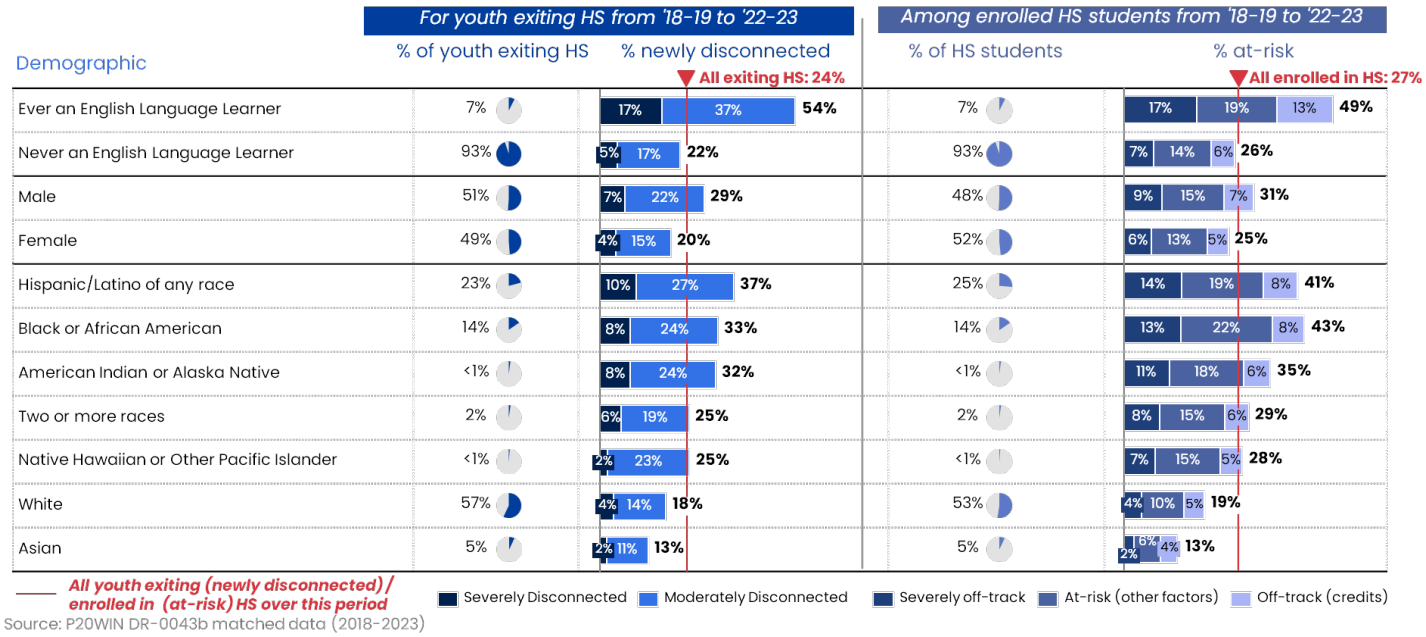
Demographic lens

Select demographic groups face notably higher newly disconnected and at-risk rates (see Figure 10):

- English language learners, who represent approximately 7% of all youth exiting high school over this period, face 30 p.p. higher newly disconnected rates and 23 p.p. higher at-risk rate, compared to peers who were never English language learners
- Young men face +9 p.p. higher newly disconnected and +6 p.p. higher at-risk rates than young women
- Black / African American, Hispanic / Latino, and Native American youth, who collectively represent approximately 38% of all young people exiting high school over this time period experienced 8 to 13 p.p. higher newly disconnected rates than all youth exiting high school and 8 to 16 p.p. higher at-risk rates than all youth enrolled in high school

Supplemental analysis (not pictured below) found that disparities for English language learners and young men are consistent across almost all racial / ethnicity groups and factors studied, including economic need, and behavioral health need, among others.

Figure 10: Newly disconnected and at-risk rates by demographic factors



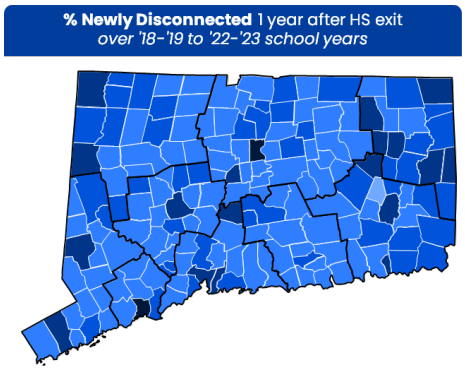
Source: P20WIN DR-0043b matched data (2018-2023)

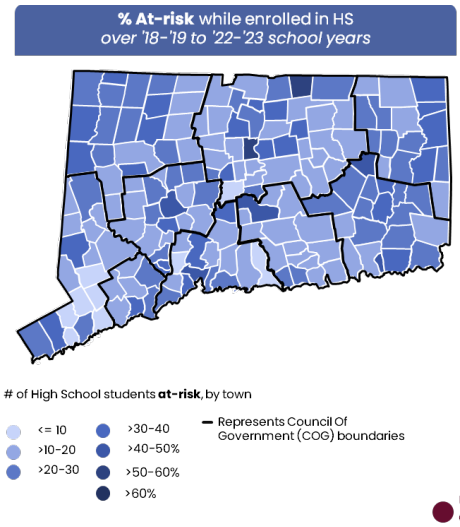
As detailed further in "Next steps" section, the disparities in disconnection outcomes across demographic groups suggest the need to further unpack the underlying dynamics, including the role of institutional bias / systemic racism in the disparities and the relative contribution of and interaction among factors through quantitative and qualitiative methods.

Geographic lens

At-risk and disconnected young people live in every town in Connecticut, underscoring the widespread nature of this challenge and the need for an array of cross-cutting solutions. (see Figure 11)

Figure 11: Newly disconnected and at-risk youth across Connecticut towns & municipalities (2018-2023)





Towns with highest concentration[2] of newly disconnected & at-risk

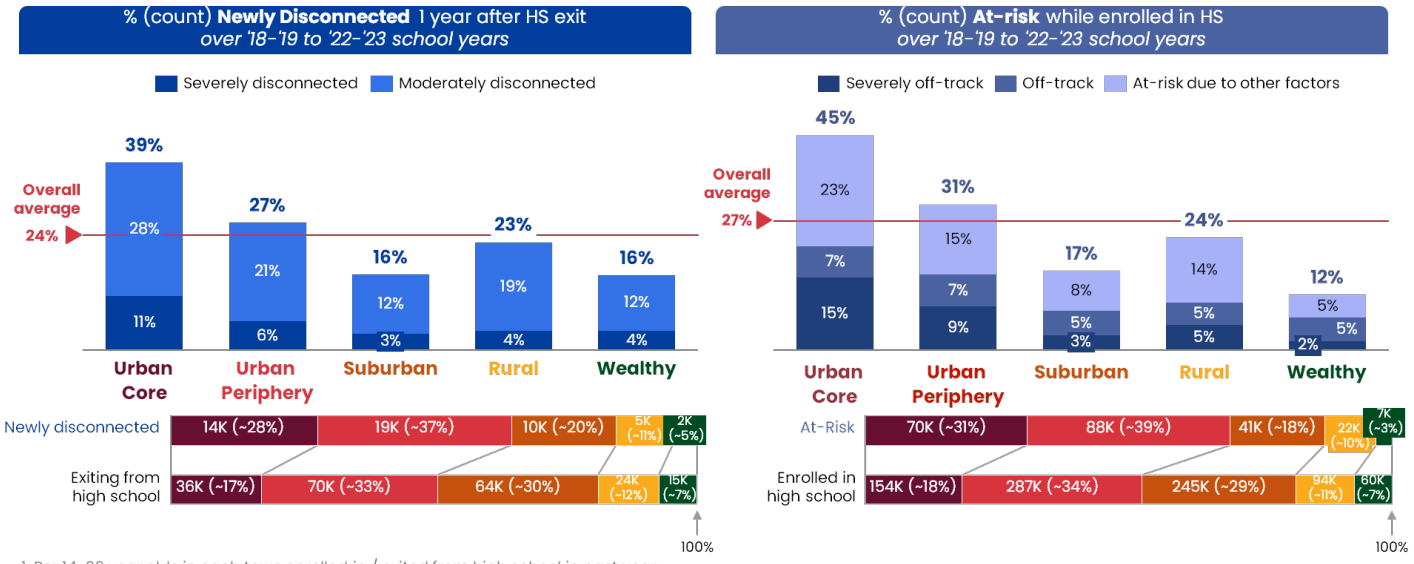
	Town	%Newly Disc.	% At-risk
1	Hartford	43%	48%
2	New Britain	36%	49%
3	New Haven	39%	43%
4	Bridgeport	41%	41%
5	Windham	40%	40%
6	Waterbury	36%	44%
7	New London	36%	41%
8	Norwich	33%	37%
9	Derby	30%	39%
10	Plainfield	33%	35%

Urban Core · Urban Periphery · Suburban · Rural · Wealthy

1. Newly disconnected is an effective proxy for disconnected rate ACS true disconnected count data at district level supports town-level rates; 2. Sorted by average of % newly disconnected and % at-risk, 5-year running 2017-'18 – 2022-'23 Note: Categorized based on town of residence Note: # of towns by type: Urban – 8, Suburban – 97, Rural – 64; Urban: Majority of population in the town / municipality live in census blockgroups with greater than 7000 residents and employees located within 1 mile radius of the population-weighted center of each blockgroup; Suburban: Majority of population in the town / municipality live in census blockgroups with between 451 and 7000 residents and employees located within 1 mile radius of the population-weighted center of each blockgroup; Rural: Majority of population in the town / municipality live in census blockgroups with 450 or fewer residents and employees located within 1 mile radius of the population-weighted center of each blockgroup Source: P20WIN DR-0043b matched data (2018-2023)

The majority of Connecticut at-risk and newly disconnected youth reside in urban periphery and suburban areas, reflecting the distribution of the state's youth population, which leans towards these regions.

Figure 12: At-risk and newly disconnected rates and counts across the urban-rural spectrum



1. Per 14-26 year olds in each town enrolled in / exited from high school in past year
Source: P20WIN DR-0043b matched data (2018-2023), CT Data 2024 Town Profiles, Levy, Don and DataHaven. (2015): Five Connecticuts 2010 Update

However, on a per capita basis, urban core municipalities face the highest newly disconnected and at-risk rates, followed by urban periphery and rural municipalities (see Figure 12). Compared to other areas of the state, most factors studied are more prevalent among urban core areas. Similarly, urban core youth are overrepresented by demographic groups facing the highest newly disconnected and at-risk rates (e.g., English language learners, Hispanic, African American). Compared to peers in other geographies experiencing the factors listed below, urban core youth experience higher newly disconnected rates. For instance, young people[24]:

- Facing the same factors (or lack thereof):
    - Among those who never experienced any studied factors during high school or up to one year after exit, urban core youth faced 17 p.p. higher newly disconnected rates than average across Connecticut[25]
    - Among those who were served DMHAS during high school or up to one year after exit, urban core youth faced 14 p.p. higher newly disconnected rates than average across Connecticut
    - Among those who were enrolled in special education in high school, urban core youth faced 13 p.p. higher newly disconnected rates than average across Connecticut
- Are the same sex:
    - Among males: urban core youth faced 17 p.p. higher newly disconnected rates than average across Connecticut
    - Among females: urban core youth faced 13 p.p. higher newly disconnected rates than average across Connecticut
- Belong to the same race / ethnicity group:
    - Are white: faced 16 p.p. higher newly disconnected rates than average across Connecticut
    - Are two or more races: faced 11 p.p. higher newly disconnected rates than average across Connecticut

Economic impact of disconnection

The 2023 report as well as other related publications[26] have highlighted the human impacts of youth disconnection from employment and education institutions. This section discusses estimates of the economic impacts of this issue.

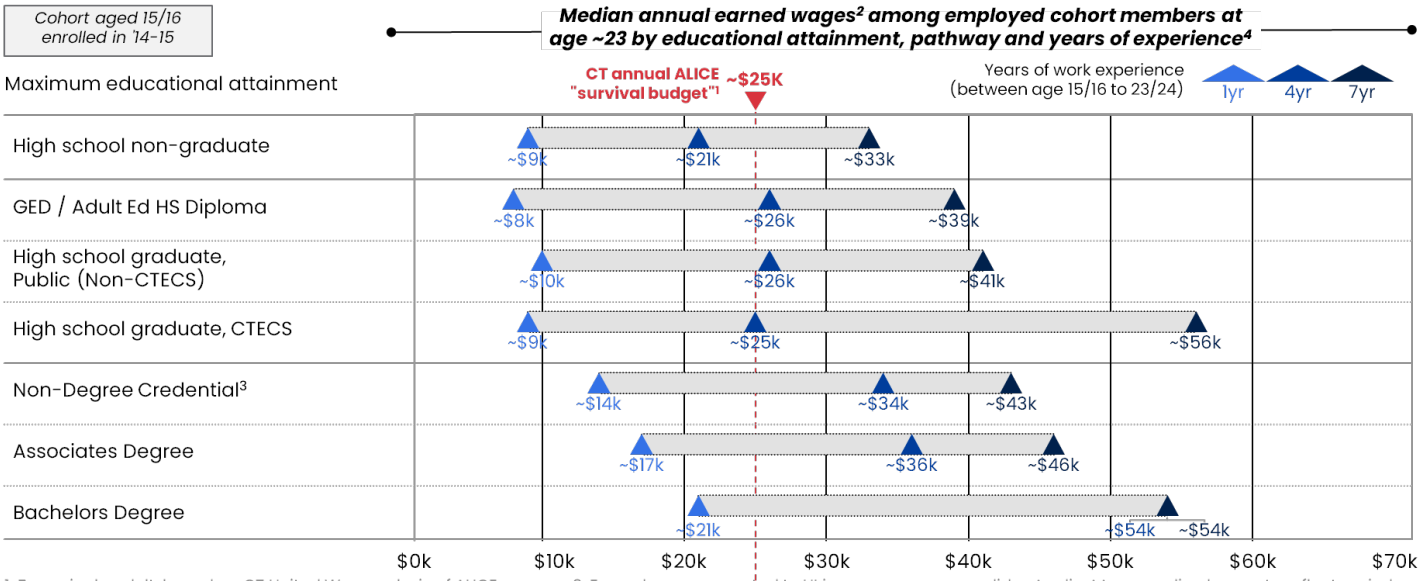
Individual: Earned wages impact

Educational attainment and years of work experience both appear to influence annual earned wages.[27] By age 23/24, wage gaps have already emerged for young people with lower educational attainment than their peers with similar years of work experience (see Figure 13). These disparities align with the broader literature and national level statistics and serve to highlight the long-term economic impact of disconnection on individuals.

In addition, this analysis highlights wage differences across educational pathways:

1. Median wages for **GED holders** are moderately reduced compared to peers who hold high school diplomas from traditional public high schools across year of experience (e.g., approximately $2,000 per year at 1 and 7 years of experience)**.** This aligns with national studies, which found GED recipients often pursue postsecondary education later, face lower retention and completion rates, experience poorer demand from the labor market, and come from more disadvantaged backgrounds than high school graduates[28]
2. Compared to high school graduates in non-CTECS institutions, median wages among employed **CTECS high school** graduates are similar at 1 and 4 years of experience, but notably higher (i.e., by approximately $15,000 per year) at 7 years of experience. This may reflect higher wages associated with obtaining licenses / credentials after completing both their education and apprenticeship / work requirements.

Figure 13: Earned wages at age 23/24 by educational attainment and years of experience[29]

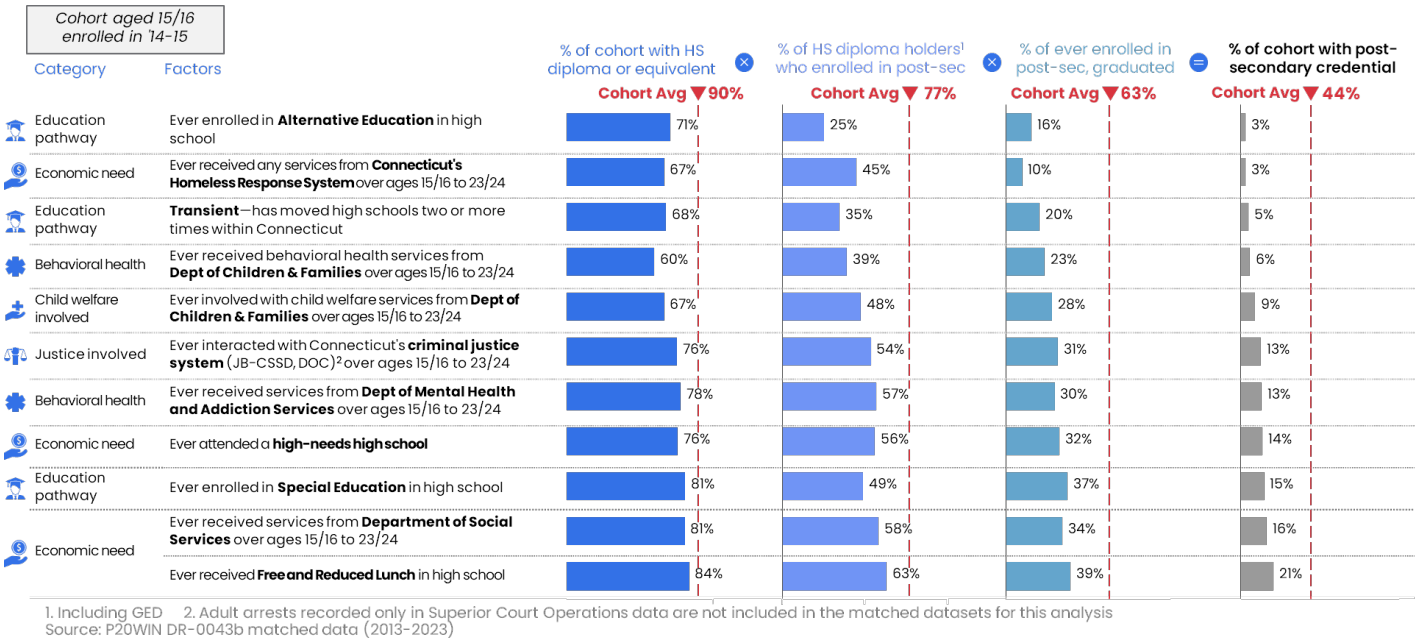


1. For a single adult, based on CT United Way analysis of ALICE wages 2. Earned wages reported to UI insurance program, did not adjust to annualized wage to reflect periods in year not employed at all / on a full-time basis 3. Non-degree credentials reported to National Student Clearinghouse 4. Each year with >$0 in earned wages reported to CT DOL UI program = 1 year of experience Note: Did not filter out those earning between $1 and $7K; Adult Ed = Adult Basic Education
Source: P20WIN DR-0043b matched data (2013-2023)

Post-secondary education attainment rates at age 23/24 are notably lower for those who experienced factors associated with being newly disconnected and at-risk – ranging between 3 and 21% across factors studied – compared to attainment rates across the entire cohort (i.e., 44%). These differences are driven by disparities at each step of the secondary education to post-secondary education pathways (see Figure 14). Furthermore, even when compared to peers with the

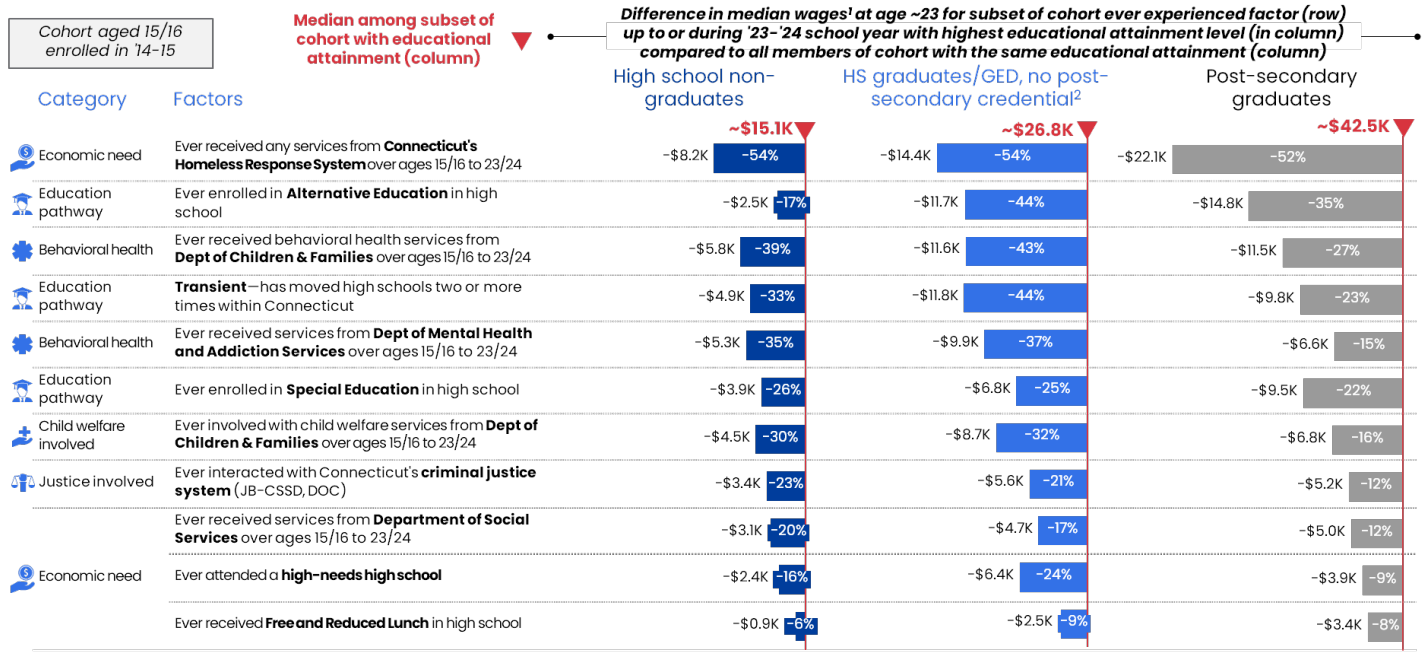
same educational attainment, youth who experienced these factors have lower median wages by age 23/24, which may reflect later completion of their degree / credential and thus fewer years of experience.

Figure 14: Educational outcomes at age 23/24 across factors studied



1. Including GED 2. Adult arrests recorded only in Superior Court Operations data are not included in the matched datasets for this analysis
Source: P20WIN DR-0043b matched data (2013-2023)

Figure 15: Median wages at age 23/24 across educational attainment levels and factors studied



1. Median earned wages reported to UI insurance program among population at education level with >$1 wages; did not adjust to annualized wage to reflect periods in year not employed at all / on a full-time basis 2. 1. Excludes young people with some postsecondary education Source: P20WIN DR-0043b matched data (2013-2023)

These findings align with EdSight analyses[30], which found lower post-secondary enrollment, lower 4 / 6 year post-secondary graduation rates, and lower annual earned wages among youth identified as "high needs" (i.e., eligible for free/reduced-price lunch and/or have special education needs), compared to peers not identified as "high needs".[31]

Community: Fiscal, labor market and GDP impact

In addition to individual economic impacts, youth disconnection is also associated with substantial community economic impacts. BCG modeling estimates that youth disconnection is associated with a fiscal impact of at least $600-700 million per year,[32] compared to a scenario where all 57,000 currently disconnected youth are both on-track and employed. In particular:

- An estimated $250 to 300 million in lost tax revenue opportunities per year, associated with reduced collection of income-based, sales & use, and property taxes
- An estimated $350 to 400 million in elevated services spend per year, across expenses for incarceration, as well as public benefits programs, such as Medicaid, rental assistance, SNAP, and TANF

Connecticut's labor market appears sufficiently robust to accommodate the entry of these disconnected youth into the workforce. BCG analysis of Lightcast Job Posting Analytics data finds that there are approximately 56,000 unique open jobs posted over August to October 2024 across the state that may suitable based on stated educational and experience requirements[33], a figure which is well above the approximately 47,000 disconnected, not employed young people in the state as of 2023. Employing these young people is associated with an economic value-add of approximately $4.5 to $5.0 billion per year. These estimates underscore the material economic impact that the disconnected youth issue has on communities.

Next steps

In addition to this report, a public dashboard is available to improve transparency and provide another channel for the public to access and interact with insights identified through this report's development process. Furthermore, per PA 24-45, P20 WIN is required to annually refresh this report, incorporating updated data and findings.

In future years, additional research questions can be investigated[34] to help deepen the understanding of this population and inform intervention design and decision-making. Two themes emerged through discussions with P20 WIN agencies:

- **Further unpack the roles of factors on disconnection outcomes:**
    - What other factors may be associated with disconnection (e.g., systemic racism and/or institutional bias, early childhood experiences, middle school and post-secondary education risk factors, standardized test scores, transport accessibility)?
    - How do education and employment outcomes vary across alternative indicators of factors (e.g., newly disconnected rate for those who were ever arrested vs. incarcerated on or before high school exit)?
    - What are the likelihoods of disconnection and at-risk associated with factors, demographics, geographies studied in this report and what are the relative contributions of each factor?
- **Assess pathways to reconnection:**
    - What are the most important resources, channels, pathways, programs, and policies associated with reconnection of young people (e.g., those being considered and/or evaluated by P20 WIN agencies)?
    - What share of the disconnected and at-risk population that are eligible to access state-provided services are being covered today?
    - How can service coordination be optimized across public sector and civil society providing critical supportive services to disconnected and at-risk populations?

Appendix

Methodology

Context on the definitional framework

During the development of last year's report, the authors conducted a literature review, which found a range of terms and definitions to refer to youth disengaged / disconnected from education and employment institutions (e.g., Opportunity Youth, individuals Not in Education, Employment, or Training). To avoid confusion and differentiate from related frameworks, the terms "at-risk" and "disconnected youth" were chosen. Pursuant to the legislation (PA 24-45 §§ 22) that mandates development of this report, DR-0043b follows the same naming convention.

Counts & trends of disconnected youth

Three discrete analyses were conducted to determine the counts and trends of at-risk and disconnected young people.

1. **At-risk high school students:** Using SDE data, publicly funded[35] high school students were flagged as at-risk based on credit accumulation / repeated grades, attendance rates, and serious behavioral incidents that led to discipline; indicators include:
    a. Credit accumulation: Flagged if student was repeating a grade that year[36] and/or off-track for meeting the state's evolving total credit requirements for 4-year high school graduation at each grade level:
        i. For those in CT public high school grades 9-12: 20 cumulative credits for graduating classes of 2022 and prior, 25 credits for following classes[37]
        ii. For others: 5 credits / year for classes of 2022 and prior, 6 credits / year for following classes
    b. Attendance rate: Flagged if days attended by student divided by the total available days in the school year fell below thresholds by grade (90% for grades 9 and 10, 85% for grades 11 and 12)[38]
    c. Behavior incidents: Flagged if student faced 1 or more serious disciplinary events that must be reported to SDE,[39] which includes but is not limited to in and out of school suspensions, bus suspensions, expulsion, and other serious incidents involving bullying, controlled substances, or weapons
2. **Disconnected youth:** Using US Census 1 Year American Community Survey (ACS) Public-Use Microdata Sample (PUMS)[40], estimated point in time disconnection counts and rates among all 14- to 26-year-olds in CT; approach filtered on:
    a. State: Connecticut
    b. Age: 14- to 26-year-olds
    c. Education enrollment status: Only individuals who had not attended school in the last three months
    d. Employment status recode: Unemployed, not in labor force; or employed in civilian workforce for high school non-grad population
3. **Newly disconnected youth:** Using P20 WIN data across agencies, examined disconnection one year after high school exits for publicly funded high school students;[41] for this purpose adopted the tactical criteria for engagement with education and employment institutions:
    a. In education: Enrolled in CT high school, or National Student Clearinghouse (NSC)-reporting post-secondary institution for any credential[42], or an adult learner in CTECS institutions; or graduated this year from SDE Adult Basic Education
    b. In employment: Earning $7,000 or more in annual wages reported to DOL's Unemployment Insurance program in the year[43], approximately the "survival budget" for an Asset Limited Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE[44]) single adult working full-time for one quarter.[45][46]

When reporting the current count of youth who are disconnected or at-risk, the analysis sums calendar year 2023 disconnected count with school year 2023-24 at-risk count as it aligns with the last report's data model and provides the most up-to-date information as both figures were finalized around the same time (i.e., 2024 Q4).

Factors associated with disconnection

Using P20 WIN data over five school years (2017-18 to 2022-23 school years), three analyses were conducted to better understand how disconnection[47] and at-risk outcomes are associated with hypothesized factors, demographic and geographic segments, and intersectionalities among factors, demographic lenses, and geographic lenses.

1. **Prevalence:** The first analysis investigated the percentage of young people enrolled in or exiting high school in the past year who were part of a given demographic or were associated with a specific factor (e.g., what percentage of this population was male).
2. **Severity:** The second analysis investigated the newly disconnected and at-risk rates among young people part of a given demographic or ever experienced a specific factor during or after high school (e.g., what percentage of the Male population exiting high school experienced disconnection)
3. **Intersectionality:** The third analysis analyzed disparities in newly disconnected and at-risk rates for young people who experienced multiple factors and/or were part of a demographic with above-average newly disconnected / at-risk rates

Economic need indicators:

- **Household level:**
    - Has received any services from Connecticut's Homeless Response System since age 14 (using CCEH data) on or before the year measurement (e.g., 1 year after exiting high school)
    - Has received Medicaid, SNAP, or TANF support from Department of Social Services since age 14[48] on or before the year of measurement (DSS)
    - Has ever received free / reduced-price lunch while enrolled in CT high school on or before the year of measurement (SDE)
- **Community level:**
    - Has ever attended a high-needs high school, as defined more than 75% of its students are eligible for a free/reduced-price lunch,[49] on or before the year of measurement (SDE)

Behavioral health need indicators:

- **Juvenile:** Received a contracted behavioral health service for a program participating in the Department of Children and Families Provider Information Exchange (PIE) since age 14 on or before the year of measurement (DCF)
- **Young adult:** Received services from facilities funded and operated by Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services since age 18 on or before the year of measurement (DMHAS)

Child welfare system involvement indicator:

- Received child welfare services from Department of Children and Families from age 14 through 26 (inclusive); specifically, including having been an alleged victim of abuse or neglect, having been in a child welfare placement, and/or having received a non-behavioral health service for a program participating in the DCF PIE on or before the year of measurement (DCF)[50]

Secondary education pathways:

- **Transient:** Has moved high schools two or more school years within Connecticut (SDE)
- **Special education:** Has ever been received special needs education in high school (SDE)
- **Alternative education:** Has ever been enrolled in high school with alternative education program, i.e., alternative, dropout diversion / credit recovery, and public transition program (SDE)

Criminal justice system involvement indicators:[51]

- **Arrests:** Ever been arrested, as recorded by Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division (JB-CSSD)[52]
- **Diversionary program:** Has ever participated in a diversionary program[53], as recorded by Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division (JB-CSSD)
- **Incarcerated:** Has ever been incarcerated, pre or post-trial, as recorded by the Department of Corrections (DOC)

The "Geographic lens" sub-section uses the DataHaven update of the Five Connecticuts (5CT) framework, which was originally developed in 2004 by Don Levy, Orlando Rodriguez, and Wayne Villemez, to allow better comparisons across Connecticut's geographical areas. Using statistical methods, the authors grouped each of the 169 towns of Connecticut into one of five segments based on their analysis of demographic variables such as population density, median household income[54], and poverty rate.[55]

Economic impact of reconnection

Individual: At the individual level, the report sought to understand the impact of disconnection on wages at age 23/24 for those aged 15/16 and enrolled in Connecticut publicly funded high schools in the 2014-15 school year, as well as the educational attainment outcomes at age 23/24 across factors and demographics.

Community: At the community level, the report sought to understand the magnitude of annualized economic impact that may be possible by helping to get disconnected young people back on track. The high-level estimate is not meant to serve as a forecast of what is likely to happen based on implementing the report's recommendations, which is beyond the scope of the report. It is instead meant to motivate the economic argument for addressing disconnection; namely, that there are substantial, unrealized economic costs for inaction on the youth disconnection issue.

The report conducted two specific community economic impact analyses:

1. Assessment of feasibility of directing disconnected young people to suitable Connecticut-based **jobs and the associated economic value add impact**[56]; process included:
    a. Examined Lightcast Job Posting Analytics dataset for unique jobs posted over August to October 2024
    b. Checked that there are more suitable job openings (i.e., <3 years of experience required, bachelor's or lower educational attainment requirements) than not-employed disconnected young people in 2023
    c. Assumed an equal share of job postings in ~12 industries[57] are filled
    d. Multiplied against 2023 Connecticut-specific average economic value-add per worker[58] benchmarks, computed via Bureau of Economic Analysis data on CT economic value add by NAICS industry sectors and CT DOL data on employment by NAICS industry sectors
2. Estimate of **fiscal impact**[59] of the 2023 count of disconnected young people based on current benchmarks compared to a world where these young people are on-track (i.e., employed and have high school degrees or higher education) [60]; process included:
    a. Estimated fiscal differences between the average on-track, employed young person and the average disconnected young person individual, across lost tax revenues and elevated expenses on most age & connection status appropriate benchmarks for CT disconnected and on-track youth[61]
    b. Tax revenue differences considered include Federal and state income taxes, FICA taxes, state sales & use tax, and local property tax based
    c. Spend differences for non-incarcerated disconnected individuals include costs of programs such as federal & state Medicaid contributions, federal and state rental assistance, federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and federal and state Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) contributions

d. Spend differences for incarcerated, disconnected individuals focus on per-inmate cost of incarceration based on analysis of DOC data

Glossary

As the use of terms varies widely across sectors, this report provides definitions as used in this report. In many instances, these definitions build off those established by researchers and practitioners, while several others are newly developed concepts that are entered as contributions to the broader effort.

ACS: U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey program; specifically, used PUMS (public-use microdata sample) as part of the analyses

ALICE: Refers to Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed households. ALICE wages are based on family size and estimate the bare minimum required for purchasing household necessities, including housing, childcare, food, transportation, health care, and basic technology. The ALICE threshold is calculated for every US county and is also reported as a state-level threshold.

Association: Refers to observed relationships, trends, and patterns between variables; not meant to imply causation

At-risk and disconnected young people: Combined population of 14- to 26-year-olds who are either at risk of not graduating high school on time (four years) or experiencing disconnection through limited educational attainment and low to no labor force participation. For readability, this report describes the subgroups within this population as "at-risk young people" and "disconnected young people." These terms signify temporary conditions that are experienced at points in a young person's journey and can be overcome. They are not intended to be read as descriptors of these individuals or any who may share in their lived experience.

At-risk: Population of high school students who are at heightened risk of not graduating; combines students who are off-track, severely off-track, and at-risk due to other factors:

- Off-track: Students not on track to graduate due to low credit attainment (as defined by the Connecticut State Department of Education)
- Severely off-track: Students off-track due to low credit attainment and displaying additional risk factors of absenteeism and/or behavioral incidents (suspensions and expulsions)
- At-risk due to other factors: Students on-track with credit attainment, but displaying concerning trends in attendance and/or behavioral incidents

BEA: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

Behavioral health: Refers to mental health and substance use related challenges

CCEH: Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, Homeless Management Information System data steward for CT Homeless Response System

Chronic absenteeism: Attendance is defined as the percentage of available days a student attends school. This report considers students chronically absent if their attendance is below 90% for 9th and 10th grade, and below 85% for 11th and 12th grade

Credit attainment: Student's cumulative credit attainment compared with what they need to graduate, as defined by the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) graduation requirements (e.g., for years that CSDE required 20 credits to graduate high school, on-track 9th graders attained at least 5 credits, 10th graders attained at least 10 credits, etc.)

CSSD (also JB-CSSD): State of Connecticut Judicial Branch – Court Support Services Division

CTECS: Connecticut Technical Education and Career System

CY: Calendar year

DCF: Connecticut Department of Children and Families

Disconnected: Combined population of 14- to 26-year olds who are experiencing either moderate or severe disconnection, defined as:

- **Moderately disconnected:** Includes high school diploma holders, both traditional graduates and those who have attained an adult education diploma/ equivalent (e.g., GED), who are neither employed nor enrolled in postsecondary education, as well as high school non-graduates who are employed
- **Severely disconnected:** Includes individuals neither employed nor holding a high school diploma, as well as incarcerated individuals

Diversionary program: Programs aimed at redirecting individuals away from incarceration or formal judicial proceedings

DMHAS: Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

DOC: Connecticut Department of Correction

DOL (also CTDOL): Connecticut Department of Labor

DR-0043: Abbreviation for the 2023 report, which was published by Connecticut Opportunity Project

DR-0043b: Abbreviation for this year's report

ELL: English language learner

Exiting high school: Refers to students graduating or dropping out of school; does not include those who transfer to another school out of state, or are deceased

FRL: Free or reduced-price lunch

High-needs school: A school where more than 75% of students are eligible for a free/reduced-price lunch

Justice-involved: The population of young people who have ever been arrested, participated in diversionary programming, and/or incarcerated in state of Connecticut, per CSSD and DOC records[62]

Lightcast: Labor market analytics firm reporting unique job postings, as part of one of its data products used in this report

NAICS: North American Industry Classification System

Newly disconnected: Young people who are disconnected from education and employment institutions as of 1 year after exiting high school

NSC: National Student Clearinghouse, which houses post-secondary enrollment and credential information

OPM: Office of Policy and Management

P20 WIN: Preschool through Twenty Workforce Information Network

PA 24-45: Public Act 24-45

p.p.: Percentage point(s)

SCO (also JB-SCO): State of Connecticut Judicial Branch – Superior Court Operations

SDE (also CSDE): Connecticut State Department of Education

SNAP: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Student behavioral incidents: Includes in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, and expulsions (does not include detention or other minor incidents)

TANF: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Transiency: Young people who ever moved high schools within state of Connecticut, either within towns or across towns

Young person / young people: Population aged 14–26, which covers the continuum across school-aged youth and young adults and allows for examination of how high school participation impacts longer-term outcomes

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- Connecticut Department of Correction (DOC)
- Connecticut Department of Labor (DOL)
- Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)
- Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS)
- Connecticut Judicial Branch – Court Support Services Division (CSSD)
- Connecticut Judicial Branch – Superior Court Operations Division (SCO)[64]
- Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM)
- Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS)
- Connecticut State Department of Education (SDE)

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Disclaimer

This publication does not express views of the P20 WIN Executive Board, participating agencies, the State of Connecticut, or Boston Consulting Group (BCG). The views, opinions, and analyses expressed are those of the author team.

Endnotes

[1] "Connecticut's Unspoken Crisis (DR-0043)," Dalio Education, October 2023, https://www.dalioeducation.org/Customer-Content/www/CMS/files/231011_Report_Final_vDigital_LowRes.pdf
[2] Newly disconnected is a proxy as youth disconnected 1 year after high school exit may reconnect and vice versa for their on-track youth counterparts. However, it remains useful for drawing insights as ~90% of newly disconnected young people who first entered grade 9 in '14-'15 school year remained disconnected approximately 5 years after high school exit
[3] Causation analysis would require additional analytical efforts beyond the crosstab analyses used to produce exhibits in this report
[4] Informed by Gap Year Association estimates, approximately 400 to 600 young people take gap years per year in Connecticut, assuming distribution of youth taking gap years across states reflects distribution of all 14-26 year olds not in school in recent years
[5] Based on 2021-2023 ACS PUMS data, an estimated 500 to 800 disconnected young people per year in Connecticut have post-secondary credential, are not in the labor force, reside in households with children age of 17 or under, and did not actively look for work in the past 4 weeks
[6] Per annual estimates via American Community Survey (ACS) Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) 1-Year data
[7] EdSight, College Enrollment, Persistence, and Graduation by Graduating Class, Connecticut State Department of Education, accessed December 2024, https://public-edsight.ct.gov/performance/college-enrollment-dashboard?language=en_US
[8] "Connecticut Students Show a Second Year of Improved Attendance and Mathematics and Science Scores" Connecticut State Department of Education, Aug 27, 2024, https://portal.ct.gov/sde/press-room/press-releases/2024/improved-attendance-and-mathematics-and-science-scores
[9] While CSDE uses below 90% of available instruction days as its threshold for reporting chronic absenteeism across all grades, this report's data model uses 85% for students in grades 11 and 12 and 90% in grades 9 and 10 to identify chronically absent students
[10] See Methodology Section in Appendix for detailed definitions
[11] Amelia Coffey, Heather Hahn, and Gina Adams, "Young People and Housing Assistance" *Urban Institute*, February 2021, accessed November 27, 2024, https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/103585/young-people-and-housing-assistance.pdf
[12] As an example, the Center for Connecticut Education Research Collaboration's 2022 Remote Learning study found that high-need districts were disproportionately impacted by academic performance and attendance rate declines during the COVID pandemic and attributed these declines to technology and household resource gaps for these districts' students in remote/hybrid learning environments
[13] "K-12 EDUCATION Student Population Has Significantly Diversified, But Many Schools Remain Divided Along Racial, Ethnic, and Economic Lines (GAO-22-104737)," United States Government Accountability Office, July 14, 2022, https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-22-104737
[14] Not inclusive of those who only transferred once during high school
[15] "Young People and Housing Assistance: Public Housing Section 8 Project-Based Vouchers and Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance, and Housing Choice Vouchers," Urban Institute, February 2021, accessed October 8, 2024, https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/103585/young-people-and-housing-assistance.pdf
[16] The mapping excludes students living in group quarters populations, who are not mapped as their town of residence is tagged to their unified school district
[17] Newly disconnected and at-risk rates vary depending on specific behavioral health indicator analyzed (i.e., Behavioral health services provided by DCF Provider Information Exchange (PIE) providers, behavioral health services provided by DMHAS funded and operated facilities)
[18] Giuseppe Germinario, Vikesh amin, Carlos A. Flores, and Alfonso Flores-Lagunes, "What can we learn about the effect of mental health on labor market outcomes under weak assumptions? Evidence from the NLSY79," *Labor Economics* (Vol.79), December 2022, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.labeco.2022.102258
[19] Mark Saldua, "Addressing Social Determinants of Health Among Individuals Experiencing Homelessness" Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, November 15, 2023, accessed October 8, 2024, https://www.samhsa.gov/blog/addressing-social-determinants-health-among-individuals-experiencing-homelessness
[20] Excludes indirect involvement with the justice system through close family and friends, which has been found in national literature to have long-term negative impact on a young person's outcomes (e.g., heightened risk of dropping out of school)
[21] Based on CSSD and DOC records; does not include those who were arrested as adults and whose arrests were only recorded with SCO, which was not a member of the P20 WIN network and whose data was not matched as part of DR-0043b
[22] Via workforce programs (i.e., Apprenticeships, Best Chance, Jobs First Employment Services, State Youth Employment Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Wagner-Peyser Adult, Youth and Dislocated Workers)
[23] During high school, served 1 or more times by both DCF and DSS in the same school year
[24] Non-exhaustive, noted here a subset of biggest disparities identified via supplemental analyses
[25] In other words, newly disconnected rate among urban core youth served by DMHAS is 14 p.p. higher than newly disconnected rate across all youth served by DMHAS over the same period
[26] For example, Community Science's report "Elevating the Voices of Young People"

[27] To examine these associations, this analysis looked at the cohort that was aged 15/16 and enrolled in high school over the 2014-15 school year or dropped out in the prior school year
[28] From GED to College: Age Trajectories of Nontraditional Educational Paths – National Institute of Health, https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4479155/
[29] Bachelor's degrees' wage impacts may be understated as some students few have many years of work experience at this stage
[30] EdSight Postsecondary Labor and Earnings dashboard analyzes similar UI wage data, but do not disaggregate by years of work experience
[31] EdSight, Postsecondary Labor and Earnings, Connecticut State Department of Education, accessed December 2024, https://public-edsight.ct.gov/performance/college-enrollment-dashboard/postsecondary-labor-and-earnings?language=en_US
[32] Of the $600-700 million in annual fiscal impact, around half are borne by the federal budget and the remainder are largely borne by the state fiscus; only property taxes directly impact local expenses; these estimates likely form the lower bound of fiscal impact of disconnection as they do not include fiscal impacts associated with individuals who remain disconnected once they age out of the 14 to 26 years old cohort and the fiscal impacts of later workforce entry among individuals who reconnect after they age out this cohort
[33] Requires undergraduate degree (or less) and 2 or less years of experience
[34] This list is non-exhaustive; data improvements and additional analytical will be required to support investigation of many of these research questions (e.g., joining in additional agencies' datasets and/or improve data quality, collection, and codebooks).
[35] SDE does not collect individual outcomes data on non-publicly funded high school students
[36] In 2023 report, at-risk due to repeated grade was calculated as ever repeated in any year vs. repeated in the school year in question, which over-estimated the count by ~1K for 2021-22 school year
[37] Different credits threshold applied to account for increased credits required starting with graduating classes of 2022
[38] SDE uses 90% of available instructional days for its chronic absenteeism reporting across all years; consistent with DR-0043, this report uses 85% threshold for grades 11 and 12
[39] For additional details, please consult SDE's discipline data collection FAQ site
[40] 2020 estimate was not available due to sampling challenges during the COVID pandemic
[41] Additional analyses were conducted to triangulate relative geographic concentrations and confirm utility of newly disconnected as proxy for unpacking factors associated with currently disconnected. The counts of newly disconnected is currently the best-available approximation for disconnection outcomes for use in longitudinal analyses, as the migration impact on the integrated P20 WIN dataset (e.g., people who moved out) is less pronounced during high school and year immediately following high school exit.
[42] Current data subscription includes any publicly funded student ever enrolled in CT high school that enroll in post-secondary education for ~7 years after their exit from CT high schools
[43] The state's unemployment insurance wage dataset does not include self-employment, independent contractor arrangements (e.g., gig economy), and informal economy work, as they do not report earned wages into the state's unemployment insurance program. The count of disconnected young people in Connecticut is less impacted as it is estimated based on US Census's American Community Survey, where young people are able to report their employment regardless of coverage by unemployment insurance
[44] See Definitions section for details
[45] "2018 ALICE Update Report," Connecticut ALICE, 2018, https://alice.ctunitedway.org/meet_alice/
[46] This threshold was established on the recognition that a certain amount of workforce participation was necessary for there to be a benefit to a young person in terms of (1) serving as a connection to a prosocial institution and a protective factor against disconnection, and (2) of supporting a young person's pathway to economic self-sufficiency for at least 1 quarter of the year
[47] Proxied through newly disconnected (i.e., disconnected 1 year after high school exit)
[48] New addition as DSS has since signed onto the updated data sharing agreement.
[49] This definition is used widely in education research, including at the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).
[50] Not inclusive of all contracted services data, though the majority do / have participated in PIE data collection
[51] New addition since the 2023 *Connecticut's Unspoken Crisis* report as DOC and JB-CSSD have since joined the P20 WIN data sharing framework
[52] Judicial Branch Superior Court Operations adult arrests data were analyzed separately to corroborate overall trends, but could not be incorporated into the factors analysis due to time constraints
[53] List of programs included in the data received: AEP (Pre-trial Alcohol Education Program), DEP (Pre-trial Drug Education Program), DICSP (Drug Intervention and Community Service Program), FVEP (Pre-trial Family Violence Education Program), IDIP (Pre-trial Impaired Driving Intervention Program), SVP (School Violence Prevention Program), U21 (Under 21 Motor Vehicle / Underage Driving Program)
[54] For instance, "wealthy towns" correspond to the top 9 municipalities in Connecticut by median household income (all of which surpass $155,000 per year)
[55] Levy, Don and DataHaven. (2015): Five Connecticuts 2010 Update. Produced for Siena College Research Institute and DataHaven based on the original method of assigning designations used in Levy, Don, Orlando Rodriguez, and Wayne Villemez. 2004. The Changing Demographics of Connecticut - 1990 to 2000. Part 2: The Five Connecticuts. Storrs, Connecticut: University of Connecticut SDC Series, no. OP 2004-01. Published by DataHaven. https://www.ctdatahaven.org/data-resources/datahaven-five-connecticuts-5ct-

ct-data-and-town-groups-2010?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR02Eu7hhrF-U7XDT4KXMsPUIW80KV4lPh2lNgiyj3LryKJCbMdIzzoZjT8_aem_iWVE8xqw5fRjHkhS5-YYlg

[56] While not all jobs provide sustainable career pathways for young people, being employed is, on average, a more desirable outcome for state GDP output than the alternative. It is also worth noting that the GDP impact would require years to be fully realized once actions are taken, since disconnected young people would need to go back to school to earn more diplomas and degrees, then successfully navigate the labor market to secure a job, and typical labor market "frictions" (e.g., young peoples' job preferences).

[57] Healthcare and social assistance, office and administrative support, retail trade, manufacturing, accommodation and food service, educational services, other non-government services, transportation & warehousing, construction, arts, entertainment & recreation

[58] Both full time and part-time

[59] The estimated fiscal impacts presented in this report likely represent the lower bound of total annual impact as they do not include the costs associated with youth who remain disconnected from education and employment institutions once they age out of the 14 to 26 years old demographic.

[60] Assumed same mix as current on-track 14-26 year olds in CT

[61] ACS 2022 5 year PUMS, 2023 1 year PUMS, US Department of Health and Human Services, Connecticut Department of Social Services, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, and National Institute of Corrections

[62] SCO records were not able to be integrated due to time constraints

[63] CCEH is the lead agency. Nutmeg Consulting, Inc. is the HMIS system administrator

[64] SCO data was not matched as SCO is not a member of P20 WIN but was analyzed separately to support development of this report