

Impact Report



2026



Trackside

For Teens, by Teens

www.trackside.org

Welcome

Founded 2002 as a Public/Private Partnership with the Town of Wilton. Our doors have been open since 2004. Trackside Teen Center is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) organization devoted to providing our youth a safe & fun place to socialize with their peers, engage in enriching activities, and enjoy themselves.

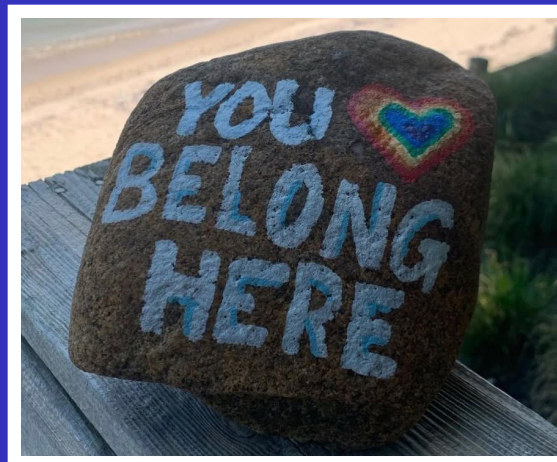


Every day, young people walk through our doors looking for connection, belonging, and opportunities to grow. Whether they are participating in a leadership program, learning a new skill, volunteering, creating something in our kitchen or artist loft, connecting with peers, or simply finding a safe and welcoming place to spend time, Trackside sends one powerful message: **You belong here.**

At its core, Trackside exists to provide teens with a safe, welcoming space where they feel a true sense of belonging—where they are known, valued, and reminded that they matter. In a time when many teens are navigating stress, social pressure, and disconnection, Trackside offers a consistent place of relief, support, and healthy socialization grounded in positive peer relationships and mentorship.

Each day, teens gather to take part in hands-on, interest-based clubs—from cooking and fashion design to sports and student-led activities. These programs are more than extracurriculars; they are spaces where teens build confidence, develop real-world skills, and experience connection in meaningful ways.

Providing a safe, inclusive, space for teens that quietly shapes who they become — moments where they discover passions, develop friendships, build a strong sense of self. In a world where many young people feel increasing pressure to perform, Trackside offers the freedom to connect, to be heard, and to know that they matter.



Team Trackside



Pictured (L-R) **Assistant** Liz Sims, **Program Director** John Priest, **Executive Director** Lori Fields,



HR/Finance Mindy Morgan

President
Mike Handel

Treasurer
Andrea Leifer

Selectman Appointed
Kevin Smith, Forrest Close

Directors
Courtney Boucher, Alison Smith, Olga Traub,
Leslie Radal, Tamara Conway

Trackside
For Teens, by Teens



- 15-18 clubs offered per season
- 25-40 teens lead each session
(paid & volunteer)
- 200+ middle school teens attend
after school clubs

- 6-10 teens run our kitchen/cafe
- Teens help run all special events

Trackside
For Teens, by Teens



100% of clubs led BY Teens FOR Teens

Trackside offers programs and special events "FOR teens, BY teens", running a variety of activities for Middle School and High School students during the school year and summers.

All of our afterschool clubs are led by high school teens.

Our program calendar is broken into 4 different sessions, Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer. During the school year, sessions typically run 8-10 weeks, with breaks in between where special 1-off activities are offered many days after school.

Throughout the year, we also offer special events such as movie nights and themed events for local Middle School and High School students to enjoy.

Membership is not required to participate in Trackside programs, but helps support our continued growth allowing us to continue providing enriching programs and events for both our teens & community at large.



Message from the Executive Director

Lori Fields

For four years, I had the privilege of serving as a Board member at Trackside. When the search began for a new Executive Director, something in me knew—this wasn't just a role, it was a calling.

My professional life has been rooted in understanding people. As a social worker and high-performance coach, I've spent decades exploring the deeply ingrained story of

“Not good enough.” that we all carry. It's a story that begins in adolescence and quietly shapes the trajectory of our lives.

What an extraordinary privilege it is now to work with teens during these pivotal years—offering a space where they can step out of the pressure, the expectations, and the constant feeling that they need to be something more or someone different. A space where, even in small ways, we can begin to shift that story.

Running a small nonprofit means wearing many hats—from program development and leadership to community engagement and even facilities management. But what matters most to me are the simple, everyday moments. Watching a teen make a new friend. Seeing someone try something for the first time. Witnessing confidence take root where uncertainty once lived. These moments happen here, every single day.

We pride ourselves on being a place of “yes.” When a teen comes to us with an idea, we lean in. We listen. We help them bring it to life. And in that process, something powerful happens—they begin to see themselves as capable, creative, and worthy of being taken seriously.

Trackside is powered by a unique and deeply devoted staff who care fiercely about preserving what makes this place so special. Together, with the devotion of our Board and the Wilton Community we've built something that feels like a family. A place where teens are known, where they are welcomed as they are, and where they are encouraged to grow into who they're becoming.

Every day, we watch teens run programs, manage our café and kitchen, share ideas, take risks, and discover what they're capable of. It is a constant reminder of how much this place matters.

Everything we do is designed to enrich and empower our teens while strengthening our community as a whole. Because having a place to belong—where you are seen, accepted, and supported as you figure out who you are—is essential. It's essential in adolescence, and truthfully, it's essential for all of us.

Feeling like you matter, regardless of grades, performance, or preferences, creates a powerful layer of protection. It's the life vest that helps keep us afloat when life inevitably gets hard.

And while much of what happens at Trackside may look like playfulness, socializing, or ordinary teenage moments, something far more profound is unfolding beneath the surface. It is the quiet, powerful witnessing of our kids—of your kids—blossoming into who they are meant to be. That is why we are so protective of this mission and this culture. Because a place like Trackside isn't just nice to have—it's essential to the well-being of our teens and our town.

xx Lori Fields

Message from the Program Director

As both an educator of more than 30 years and someone who has spent over four decades working with young people, I have learned that the most transformative experiences happen when youth are trusted not just to participate, but to lead. That is what makes Trackside extraordinary. Every season begins with a simple question to our high school students: "What's your thing? What do you love?" Whether the answer is fashion, graphic novels, graffiti art, coding, movies, music, or something entirely unexpected, the response is always the same: "That's amazing. Let's build it." We help our high school teens transform their personal passions into meaningful experiences for younger students, giving them the agency, autonomy, and mentorship to create something that is authentically their own.

Having spent my career in exceptional public schools, I know firsthand how important classrooms are in shaping young minds. What makes Trackside so special is that it complements that work in a completely different way. At school, students are guided through curriculum and academic growth. At Trackside, they discover who they are beyond the classroom. They are given the freedom to explore their passions, take ownership of their ideas, make meaningful decisions, and experience the confidence that comes from knowing their voice matters. It is



one of the few places where young people are not simply consumers of a program—they are its creators.

Just as importantly, Trackside provides something that every adolescent deserves but too few experience consistently, a place to simply be themselves. It is neither school nor home, but a third place where teens know they are welcomed exactly as they are. Here they can be creative, thoughtful, quiet, outgoing, goofy, uncertain, or confident without fear of being defined by a grade, a team, or a social label. They discover trusted adults who listen without judgment and older peers who remind them that they belong.

In a world where many young people feel increasing pressure to perform, Trackside offers the freedom to connect, to be heard, and to know that they matter. This culture of ownership and belonging creates life-changing experiences that strengthen not only individual teens, but the entire community.

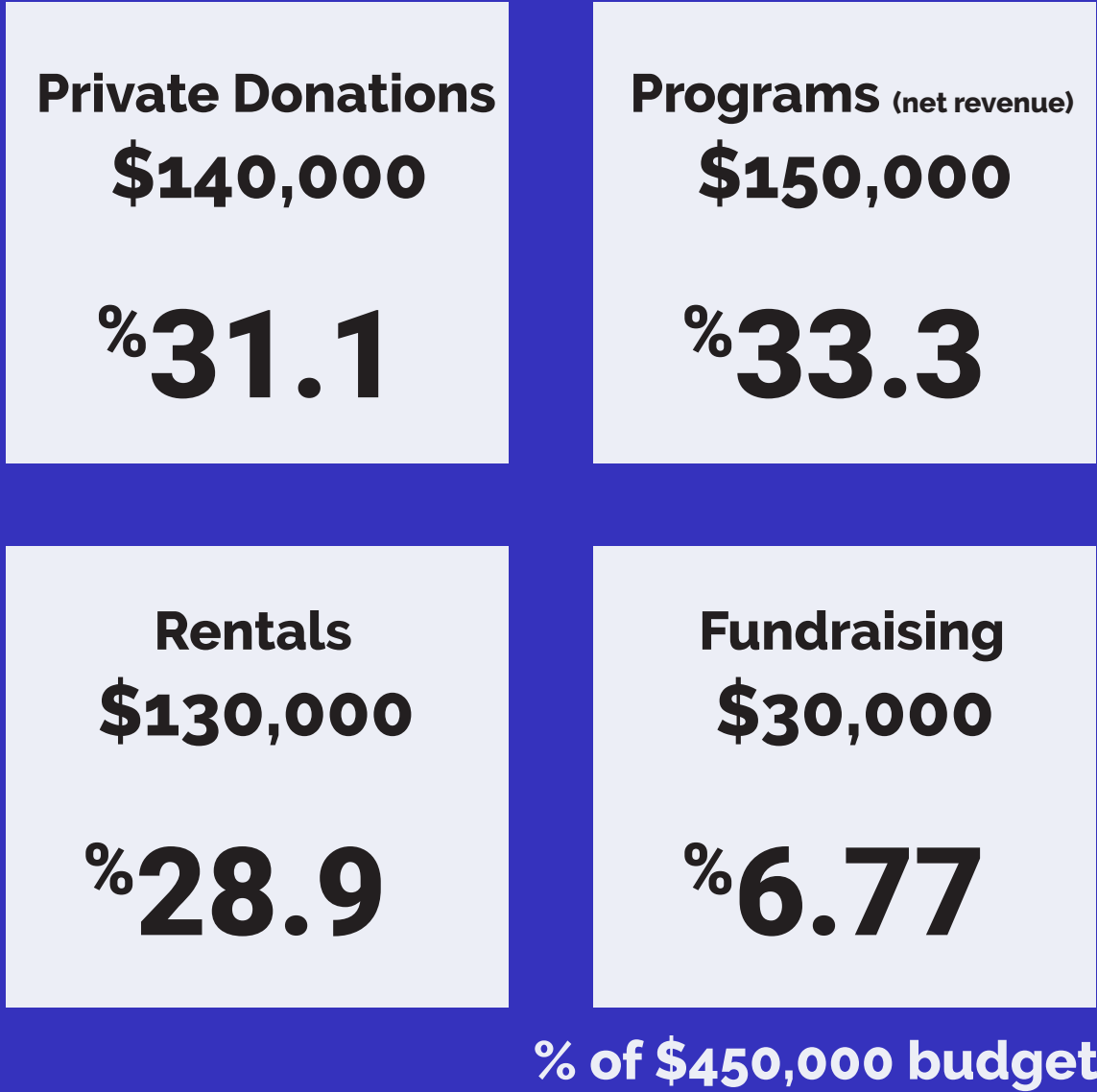


John Priest

Operations

Trackside must raise money to fund 100% of annual operating expenses, regular maintenance, facility upgrades and programming designed to reach out and appeal to a broad cross-section of teenagers.

Revenue Sources



Operating Expenses

Expense Category	Amount	% of \$450,000 Budget
Payroll	\$232,500	% 51.7
Utilities	\$30,000	% 6.7
Maintenance	\$20,000	% 4.4
Travel	\$30,000	% 6.7
Supplies	\$6,000	% 1.3
Insurance	\$10,000	% 02.2

LOSS OF 25% of RENTAL INCOME

As of June 2026 Trackside no longer receives rental income from WPS - Genesis Program. Losing this anchor long-term tenant leaves a \$100k+ deficit annually for the organization



Programs

After-school Clubs

All afterschool clubs are FOR middle school teens and up, led BY high school teens. Clubs run weekdays 3:15-5:15p and are created, managed, led by older teens.

Clubs Spring 2026

15-18 Clubs offered per season

STRENGTH & AGILITY 	FISHING CLINIC 	CLUB BASKETBALL 	VIDEO EDITING MASTERCLASS 	TSN TRACKSIDE SPORTS NETWORK 	PREPLAY / IMPROV 	CODING CLUB 	ROBOTICS
KITCHEN CRAFT COOKING 	OPEN ART & DESIGN 	ULTIMATE FRISBEE 	QUIZBOWL 	GAMERS DAY 	D&D BEGINNER • EXPERIENCED 	ASL AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE 	DEBATE CLUB



LATE NIGHT AT TRACKSIDE

An Opportunity to Express



SPECIAL NIGHTS TWICE A MONTH FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ONLY

Generously funded by a Wilton Family. We're able to offer free food and drink, free participation to all teens. 25-50 teens in attendance each Friday.

Featuring...

MUSIC

FOOD

COFFEE

GAMING

OPEN MIC

CHESS

CONVERSATION

PERSONAL PROJECTS

CHILL VIBE

Special Events for Teens

Movie Nights, Gaming Tournaments - Escape Rooms, Halloween, Buddy Movie Night, Service Projects



Trackside Trips

Overnight camp meets immersive history and adventure trips

2 travel trips each summer

- Unique to Trackside
- Incredibly enriching & empowering opportunity
- Offers a one-of-a-kind, life-shaping, safe & supportive experience for teens who otherwise wouldn't have them



Exposure & Independence

Build confidence

Navigating real life experiences

Create connections

Community & Connection

Sept 2025

We offered a FREE Town Wide Scavenger Hunt

& Community BBQ. Over 30 local Businesses & Organizations Participated.



WHS Teen, Ronan runs the marathon as a fundraiser for Trackside raising over \$10K in 2 years.

We created a community challenge around this - encouraging the community to Run With Ronan.



Partnership with Circle of Care.
Teens built a treehouse for a child with cancer. Summer Volunteer week

WHS + Trackside Teen, James created his own Burger Bar offering to the community.



James discovered his passion for cooking at Trackside & staff helped him bring his vision to life.

He offered his Burger Bar 3 times while at Trackside.



Teen led sneaker drive @ Trackside
Has collected more than 150+ pairs of used sneakers reducing landfill waste - giving new & used sneakers a recycled second life.

Partnership with Open Doors Shelter & local business Blue Star Bazaar. Collected teen clothing for special Teen Fashion Night at the shelter.



Annual Community Partnership with Wilton YMCA - Buddy & Santa Pancake Breakfast Raises money for the Melissa McFadden Scholarship.



Free Annual Community Offering

Trackside Legacy of Love Leadership Award

Presented annually to select graduating seniors
accompanied by scholarship funds.



Spring Fundraiser March 2026

Our biggest fundraiser to date! 250 tickets sold net profit \$38K

**“BEST 80s SHOW
IN THE COUNTRY!”**
PETER SHAPIRO
(BROOKLYN BOWL / CAPITOL THEATRE)

**BACK TO THE
EIGHTIES
SHOW WITH
JESSIE'S
GIRL**

**“THANKS, JESSIE'S GIRL
FOR KICKING
80s ASS!”**
NEIL PATRICK HARRIS



MARCH 7 2026

AN UNFORGETTABLE BENEFIT CONCERT FOR TRACKSIDE TEEN CENTER



Why Trackside Matters

At Trackside we don't just run programs.

We create the environment where teens find joy, purpose, and their people — where they begin building their lifelong story of self-worth and capability.

For some teens, Trackside is a fun place to socialize and hang out.

For others... it's the only place they feel good about themselves.

More important than grades - how a young person feels about themselves - shapes the trajectory of their entire life.

Testimonials

“

I like how its all high school students helping younger teens. A lot of people go out of their way to make Trackside happen. I feel good about myself when I'm here. ”

Aarya Patel, 7th grade

“

I can't leave this teen center without feeling like there's hope for humanity. I wish I had a place like this when I was a teenager. ”

Mike Handel

“

We can't thank you enough for giving our son the chance to work at Trackside. Finding his place at Trackside has made a positive difference in his life. Your mentoring & encouragement have had an incredible impact - he's happier and more confident now. Trackside staff has a remarkable ability to connect with teens, and we feel so lucky to have you supporting him. ”

Wilton Family



To inspire people, don't show them your super powers. Show them theirs





Preplay Spring 2026

Your Impact

- Directly support and empower teens
- Caring for families in need
- Magnify Impact on our teens and our community
- Foundational well being of our youth matters

As a not-for-profit organization with no town funding, your support makes a meaningful impact on our mission. It keeps our programs affordable for local families and supports the continued operation and growth of this important place of belonging for all.

Trackside
For Teens, by Teens

and belonging creates life-changing experiences that strengthen not only individual teens, but the entire community"

"Trackside offers the freedom to connect, to be heard, and to know that they matter. This culture of ownership

Program Director John Priest



Trackside

For Teens, by Teens

Let's build the Future Together

We are actively working to strengthen our financial foundation for the years ahead and are seeking community partners who believe, as we do, that investing in young people is investing in the future of Wilton.

Trackside
For Teens, by Teens

www.trackside.org

15 Station Road Wilton, CT 06897

info@trackside.org