



Rockland 21st Century Collaborative for Children & Youth

FACT SHEET

What is Rockland 21st Century Collaborative for Children and Youth?

The collaborative, often known as Rockland 21C, was started in 1996 as a pioneering County-wide coalition focused on the optimum development of children. It is comprised of Rockland's eight school districts, Rockland BOCES, child-centered organizations, teacher centers, colleges, government and business leaders, as well as numerous public and private agencies. Rockland 21C evolved from the Schools of the 21st Century concept developed at Yale University.

Why was Rockland 21C created?

At the time of its creation, the growing numbers of two-parent working families, more families leaving public assistance, and increased academic and social pressures in school, all made suburban life more challenging for children and parents. Communities which "re-invent" schools with Family Resource Center programs either providing--or linked to--affordable, high-quality preschool education and after-school care; health and mental health services; and parent support and involvement programs find that children are more successful academically, emotionally and socially.

What is the 21st Century Schools concept?

Schools of the 21st Century is a model for school-based, school-linked childcare, health and family support services, developed at Yale's Zigler Center in Child Development and Social Policy by Dr. Edward Zigler, a principal architect of the Head Start program. Visits to Yale by County leaders and educators to study the concept led to our Rockland Schools of the 21st Century network, which was the first 21st Century School county-wide effort in the United States. Rockland 21C now boasts that more than 30 elementary schools in seven of its school districts and Rockland BOCES have 21C programs, as do several secondary schools.

How does Rockland 21C support the development of 21C schools and other child-centered partnerships?

Rockland 21C supports schools with Family Resource Center programs by providing professional development through peer meetings, conferences, guest speakers and field trips. It recommends national models and best practices, and aids in the implementation and tailoring of strategies. 21C serves as an intermediary for community partners who wish to share their information with schools and families, or whom 21C represents on countywide initiatives such as *YouthFest*. 21C looks for opportunities to build capacity thru partnerships, notably including managing a project with *AmeriCorps*, a program of the Rockland County Youth Bureau, to provide *The Parent-Child Home Program*, an evidence-based early literacy home-visiting program, with 21C-garnered support from private donors and *United Way of Rockland County*, and collaborating with the *Steps* program of the Rockland County Department of Health on the *School Health Coalition*. We search for relevant grant opportunities. Finally, 21C ensures accountability.