



OUTCOMES & IMPACT

2025 REPORT

UTECINC.ORG



TABLE OF CONTENTS

3. A Note From Our CEO
4. 2025 Highlights
5. Mission & Values
6. 25th Anniversary Gala & Theory of Change
7. Streetwork & Outreach
9. Reentry
10. Reentry Transitional Housing
11. Transformational Beginnings
12. Workforce Development, Education & Mental Health
14. Social Enterprises
15. Policy Advocacy & Community Organizing
17. 2Gen Early Childhood Education Center
18. Training Center for Excellence
20. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging
21. Financials & Board Members
23. Year in Headlines



A NOTE FROM OUR CEO



Dear Friends,

Each year, this report offers a moment to pause and reflect on what we've built together, the challenges we've faced, and the opportunities that lie ahead. Thank you for your support!

As UTEC marked 25 years of service, this past year reminded us why collaboration matters more than ever. Even amid federal funding cuts that are profoundly impacting community violence intervention programs like ours across the country, we stayed grounded in what has always carried us forward: relationships, resilience, and the belief that real change happens together.

We launched two major initiatives that embody that spirit. The Breaking Barriers Food Truck hit the road, bringing job training and opportunity directly into our communities, and our new Reentry Transitional Housing Program opened its doors to help young adults returning from incarceration find stability and independence. These milestones reflect how UTEC continues to evolve, meeting young people where they are and walking beside them as they build new futures. None of it would be possible without your support.

Our 25th Anniversary Gala celebrated that same spirit of connection; it was a moment to honor how far we've come and to recommit to the work ahead. Across every team at UTEC, from Streetwork to Workforce to Reentry, we remain focused on healing, hope, and opportunity.

As we move forward, we do so with clear eyes and unwavering purpose. Budget shifts and policy changes may alter the landscape, but our commitment to young adults and to the communities that believe in multiple chances remains stronger than ever. Together, we'll continue building pathways to peace, opportunity, and lasting change.

With deep appreciation,

Gregg Croteau, MSW
Chief Executive Officer



2025 HIGHLIGHTS

In fiscal year 2025 (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025), UTEC continued to transform lives and break cycles of violence and poverty, achieving meaningful outcomes for young adults in our community. This impact was made possible thanks to the unwavering support of our donors, partners, and advocates. Together, we are creating brighter futures one young person at a time.



554

Last year, **554** young adults received support through UTEC's Streetwork, Reentry, and Workforce Development programs.

351

351 were reached through street outreach, providing crisis response, conflict mediation, and consistent relationship-based support in neighborhoods most impacted by violence.

185

185 were supported with trauma-informed programming and 1:1 reentry planning in correctional facilities, preparing them for a successful return to their communities.

115

115 participated in intensive programming, receiving deeper, wraparound support including job training, education, 1:1 coaching, and pathways to long-term stability.

69%

69% of young adults enrolled in UTEC programming avoided new arraignment within one year. 68% had no new arraignments after two years.

Who We Serve*

71% Latino or Hispanic

62% young men

31% gang-involved (family or self) at intake

21 y.o. average age

39% pregnant or parenting at intake

**Defined as young adults enrolled in UTEC's intensive programming.*

MISSION &

VALUES

UTEC's mission and promise is to ignite and nurture the ambition of our most disconnected young people ages 18 - 25 to trade violence and poverty for social and economic success.

Today, we serve Lowell, Lawrence, and Haverhill, MA, and are nationally recognized as a model agency supporting young adults involved in the criminal justice system.

Our hypothesis:

IF young adults who have experienced or caused harm engage early and often with restorative practices, healing-informed care, and self-knowledge,

THEN they can begin to build a stronger sense of identity and a positive mindset to take ownership of their choices.

When enriched with moments of joy, connection, and uplifting experiences, this journey fosters awareness and a renewed sense of possibility. With strengthened support networks and access to skill-building and learning opportunities, they will be empowered to continue their healing and growth for a positive future.

RESPECTFUL CURIOSITY
IGNITE SOCIAL JUSTICE
SPARK SUSTAINABILITY
MADD LOVE ASSUME GOODNESS
BE A SPONGE SEE BEYOND THE MASK
CONTAGIOUS PASSION
CLEAN SLATE PLANT SEEDS OF PEACE
CHIPPING AWAY THINK BIG

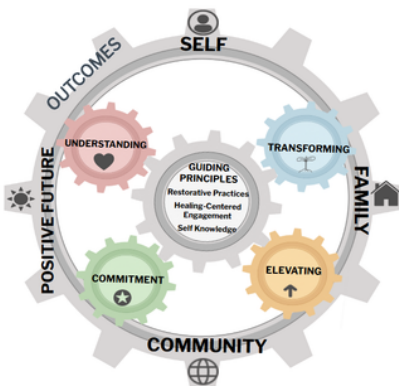
Celebrating 25 Years of MADD LOVE

A Night To Honor Our Past and Inspire Our Future

On November 20, 2024, more than 800 friends, partners, and alumni gathered from far and wide at the Lowell Memorial Auditorium in downtown Lowell to celebrate UTEC's 25th anniversary, a milestone made possible by the countless young adults, staff, and supporters who believe in second chances. One UTEC alumnus even flew in from the Philippines for the special occasion!



CHARTING OUR NEXT CHAPTER: Turning Theory into Practice



UTEC's Theory of Change explains who we serve, how we help, and why it works. It connects our mission to measurable outcomes, ensuring that every part of our model is aligned toward one goal: helping young adults trade violence and poverty for social and economic success.

Our refreshed Theory of Change will guide UTEC's next years of growth. It ensures every lesson from our 25-year journey fuels the next era of innovation, equity, and madd love.

STREETWORK & OUTREACH

Streetworkers are often the first point of connection between UTEC and young people. Across Lowell, Haverhill, and Lawrence, they meet young adults where they are: on street corners, in schools, and during moments of crisis, building trust, peacemaking, and guiding individuals toward safer, more stable paths that strengthen both them and their communities.

This year, UTEC's Streetwork team expanded restorative programming to help young adults repair harm, rebuild relationships, and reconnect with their communities. The team also deepened engagement with those reentering the community after incarceration.

Across all three cities, Streetworkers maintained a consistent presence in hotspot neighborhoods, helping young adults secure IDs, connect with potential employers, and navigate their interactions with courts, schools, and law enforcement.

Building Connection & Wellness

Streetworkers engaged families at National Night Out at a local school and organized a Peace Fishing Trip for reflection and team wellness. They also provided cross-regional crisis support in Haverhill, underscoring their commitment beyond city lines.

AMPLIFYING YOUNG VOICES

Xavier, a recent UTEC graduate, built this podcast booth with Matt, our Woodworking Program Manager. Crafted in Lowell and reassembled in Haverhill, it now serves as a space to amplify young adult voices.



STOP GUN VIOLENCE HANDBALL TOURNAMENT

Lawrence Streetworkers, with the help of young adults, organized a Stop Gun Violence Handball Tournament that included food, prizes, and opportunities for community building.



Empowering Young Women & Amplifying Young Voices

The team increased outreach to young women facing reentry challenges, housing instability, or substance use concerns. They advanced plans for a youth drop-in center and began developing a podcast to amplify young adult voices.

Strengthening Skills & Partnerships

UTEC's Lawrence Center is home to our Transformational Beginnings orientation program. In addition to helping these young adults lay the foundation for future growth, the team also partnered with other community organizations that serve families and at-risk individuals in the area in various capacities.

351

Streetworkers worked **1:1 with 351** young adults, building trust and connections that led to further engagement in UTEC programs.

14

The team organized **14 community events** to promote peace, healing, and connection.





REENTRY

In partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Correction, the Essex County Sheriff's Department, the Middlesex County Sheriff's Office, and the Department of Youth Services, UTEC's Reentry team supports young adults as they prepare for release and navigate the challenges of returning home after incarceration.

Expanding Services into New Facilities

After the closure of the Massachusetts Correctional Institution (MCI) in Concord, the team moved the B.R.A.V.E. unit (Building Responsible Adults through Validation and Education) to the North Central Correctional Institution. The team also began programming at two new units with no prior UTEC presence, including the P.E.A.C.E. unit (Progressing Every Day and Changing in Every Way) at MCI in Framingham, an all-women's unit.



Creativity and Skill-Building Behind the Walls

Young adults participated in expanded behind-the-walls programming, including a restorative justice training with 16 graduates, entrepreneurship through music and creative expression, and "Paint for Peace" events (pictured left) across multiple facilities. The Reentry team also worked closely with the Department of Youth Services, where 30 young adults earned certificates through an eight-week restorative justice workshop.

UTEC HANDBOOK APPROVED FOR DOC TABLETS

UTEC's Reentry Handbook, filled with pre-release resources, planning tools, and clear guidance, was approved by the Massachusetts Department of Correction for placement on inmate tablets, giving young people the information they need to prepare for reentry and connect to housing, jobs, and support as soon as they return home from incarceration.

REENTRY TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM

Launched in early 2025 with support from the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, UTEC's Reentry Transitional Housing Program helps young adults returning from incarceration access stable housing and the support they need to rebuild their lives. Safe, secure housing provides the foundation for everything else: employment, wellness, education, and long-term stability. As the program enters its first full year, the team looks forward to its growth.

How It Works

Through partnerships with local landlords, UTEC leases apartments and contracts them to eligible young adults for up to 24 months. During this time, residents receive coaching and resources to strengthen life skills, secure employment, and transition into permanent housing, reducing barriers and promoting long-term success.

Highlights & Accomplishments

- This year, the team focused on establishing relationships with landlords in Lowell, Lawrence, and Haverhill.
- 5 participants transitioned to permanent housing.
- 100% of participants completed independent living and wellness workshops.
- Young adults built positive relationships with landlords and neighbors, strengthening community ties.

ALL HANDS ON DECK

Members of UTEC's internal Housing Committee set up an apartment for a young adult. All apartments are furnished to remove another barrier to housing stability.



TRANSFORMATIONAL BEGINNINGS



Transformational Beginnings (TrB) is the first step for young adults who enter UTEC's intensive programming. Based at our Lawrence site, TrB introduces participants to UTEC's culture of trust, support, and accountability. Through restorative justice circles, life skills workshops, and 1:1 coaching, young adults begin building the habits and mindset that prepare them for long-term success in education, workforce, and personal growth.

This year, the team strategized on how to boost enrollment and find new ways to engage young adults who are new to UTEC. We continued to align accountability with opportunity and help young adults repair harm, meet their commitments, and move forward toward a positive future.

FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

TrB staff help young adults obtain IDs, earn learner's permits and driver's licenses, and find stable housing. These may seem like small steps to some, but for participants who have faced significant barriers, they represent major milestones and are essential building blocks toward personal and professional success.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION & MENTAL HEALTH



UTEC's Workforce, Education, and Mental Health programs provide holistic support, allowing young adults to earn professionally recognized career credentials, develop career paths, and strengthen personal well-being.

Transitional Coaching

Transitional Coaches (TCs) earned certifications in risk assessment and BEST youth worker training. New staff were also trained in trauma-informed practice.

Education

The team introduced new courses, including CAD/3D printing, baking, storytelling, art therapy, volleyball, and strategic games. UTEC secured accommodations to support multilingual learners, including a read-aloud HiSET exam for the first time, helping students show their knowledge without the added challenge of complex written English.



10

10 young adults at UTEC earned their high-school credential last year.

Workforce

This year, the highest number of young adults completed UTEC's Enterprise program since before the pandemic, with many successfully transitioning to and sustaining external employment.

Pathways

This year, young adults demonstrated tremendous growth and commitment in their career journeys. Each Pathways participant maintained full-time employment, successfully completing their 90-day benchmarks, with several reaching impressive milestones of six months to one year on the job. Alongside their work achievements, many continued to advance their education, earning certificates and pursuing college degrees. Their dedication reflects the core mission of Pathways: supporting young adults in building stability, independence, and long-term success.

Mental Health

UTEC's mental health team expanded clinical offerings with group sessions like Don't Be Toxic (healthy relationships) and CREATE a Safe Space (art therapy). Wellness events included massages, haircuts, mini facials, and creative activities. Partnerships with local farms and wellness practitioners provided enriching experiences and supported young adults in getting comfortable outside their comfort zone. The team hopes to hire an additional Mental Health Clinician this year.



SOCIAL ENTERPRISES



UTEC's Social Enterprises offer real-world job experience to young adults enrolled in UTEC programming. From recycling thousands of mattresses to serving meals from our new food truck, young adults learn transferable skills, earn income, and gain confidence as they build pathways to long-term employment.



More Mattresses, More Opportunity

This year marked record growth and new momentum for UTEC's Mattress Recycling program. Not only did the team retain 100% of its curbside municipal contracts, it added five more in Salem, Westford, Woburn, Groveland, and Canton. The team also recycled a record number of mattresses and box springs.

53,461

UTEC's Mattress Recycling team recycling **53,461 mattresses and box springs** last year.

Another key milestone was strengthening the Reentry-to-Employment pipeline, hiring returning citizens into stipended roles that transitioned to full-time, living-wage jobs. Together, these efforts show how meaningful work builds healing, dignity, and stability.

BREAKING BARRIERS FOOD TRUCK LAUNCH

UTEC launched the Breaking Barriers Food Truck this year, bringing fresh opportunities for young adults to gain culinary and customer-service experience. The enterprise also supports community food relief through regular give-back days.

Book our food truck for your next event!
Visit www.utecinc.org/food-truck.



POLICY ADVOCACY & COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

UTEC's Policy and Organizing team works to ensure that young adults most impacted by the justice system have a voice in shaping the policies that affect their lives. Through civic engagement, leadership development, and statewide advocacy, the team elevates lived experience into powerful youth-led change across the state of Massachusetts.



Expanding Voter Education

This year, the team expanded voter education in Lowell, Lawrence, and Haverhill, hosting registration and Q&A tables that made the democratic process more accessible to young people. Young adults also took their voices directly to the State House, meeting with lawmakers and sharing testimony on critical issues such as Raise the Age and access to educational programming for incarcerated young adults.

Collaboration & Partnerships


The team partnered closely with the Merrimack Valley Delegation and delivered legal literacy workshops alongside Strategies for Youth. We also hosted academic and nonprofit delegations at UTEC, including from Boston College, Flinders University, and the United Way of Massachusetts Bay, reinforcing UTEC's role as a model for youth-led policy and systems change.

This year, the team navigated the impact of ICE activity on local neighborhoods, while remaining grounded in a trauma-informed, relationship-centered approach that prioritizes safety, dignity, and trust.

LEADING STATEWIDE CHANGE

Through coalitions including Raise the Age, Clean Slate, RESET, and Citizens for Juvenile Justice, UTEC helped drive youth-led advocacy and systems change across Massachusetts.





“I’ve been learning real workforce skills, like how to drive delivery trucks and operate forklifts and other equipment. More than that, having this job has helped me get my own place and really focus on bettering myself.”

Earlier this year, Jamie, a young adult who worked with UTEC’s Reentry Team while preparing to return to the community after incarceration, testified in support of the Mattress Recycling program at the Massachusetts State House. He is now employed full time at UTEC’s mattress recycling facility.



2GEN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTER

At UTEC’s 2Gen Early Childhood Education Center (2Gen), little ones learn while young parents pursue their goals: work, school, and participation at UTEC. This year, our classrooms, family workshops, and “parent hub” came alive with story time, messy art, first friendships, and steady support that helps families thrive.



Grounded in UTEC’s two-generational approach, 2Gen strengthens parent–teacher partnerships by supporting both children and their parents together. This year, young parents participated in classes on child development and benefits navigation, and accessed food support, cribs, and car seats, addressing needs and reducing barriers so families can learn and grow together.

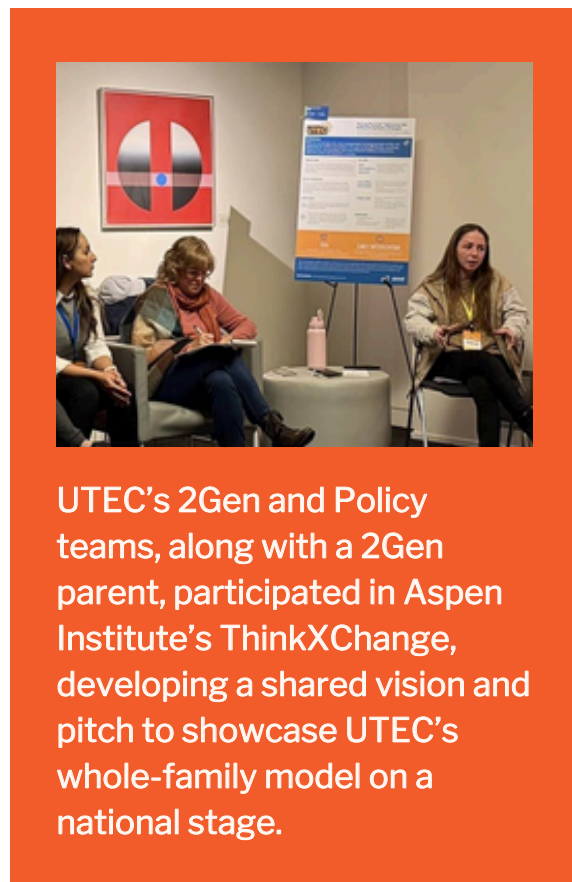
22

Last year, 22 children were enrolled in UTEC’s 2Gen Early Childhood Education Center.

A Year of Growth & Learning

We welcomed three new teachers, including Miss Sandy, who spent three weeks in Reggio Emilia, Italy, learning child-led practices that now inspire our classrooms. A major milestone this year was the re-opening of our Toddler Classroom, giving infants a smoother transition and serving more families under one roof. Early literacy remained a focus, and families reached our “100 Books by 100 Days” goal.

Transportation remains a barrier for field trips, so this year, we brought the world in. Families gathered for a cozy Holiday Craft Celebration, laughed through a Fall Festival, marked the 100th day of school together, and headed outdoors for a cheerful Spring Festival complete with surprise toy basket drop-offs.



UTEC’s 2Gen and Policy teams, along with a 2Gen parent, participated in Aspen Institute’s ThinkXChange, developing a shared vision and pitch to showcase UTEC’s whole-family model on a national stage.

TRAINING CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE

UTEC's Training Center for Excellence (TC4E) equips professionals and organizations working in community violence prevention and reentry with practical tools, training, curriculum development, and technical assistance.

By sharing UTEC's relationship-driven, trauma-informed approach, the Center strengthens programs and outcomes statewide and nationally. TC4E also supports grassroots and community-based organizations and hosts restorative justice circles that promote healing, dialogue, and stronger communities.

This year, TC4E provided training and technical assistance to Gun Violence Prevention (GVP) and Emerging Adult Research Initiative (EARI) grantees, and delivered Circle and Medicine Wheel trainings for partners including Boston University's School of Theology and the Massachusetts Teachers Association.

TC4E expanded in meaningful ways:

- Hired a Director of Stakeholder Engagement, a new position designed to deepen partnerships and accelerate impact.
- Added an additional fellow to our Circling Home Fellowship and increased housing supports for those returning from incarceration.
- Partnered with UTEC's Reentry team to launch a restorative justice curriculum at the Massachusetts Correctional Institute in Framingham's P.E.A.C.E. Unit.

SHAPING STATE POLICY

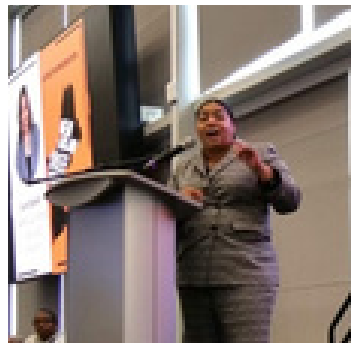
UTEC's TC4E partnered with the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security to support the Emerging Adult Leadership Academy and Emerging Adult Summit, both designed to advance youth-led policy and systems change.



2024 NEW ENGLAND STREETWORKER CONFERENCE

Gillette Stadium • 300+ frontline workers Regional collaboration for peace

More than 300 street outreach workers from across New England gathered at Gillette Stadium for the annual New England Streetworker Conference, hosted by UTEC's Training Center for Excellence. The event uplifted those on the front lines of violence prevention, sharing strategies, renewing purpose, and affirming that healing and public safety begin in community.



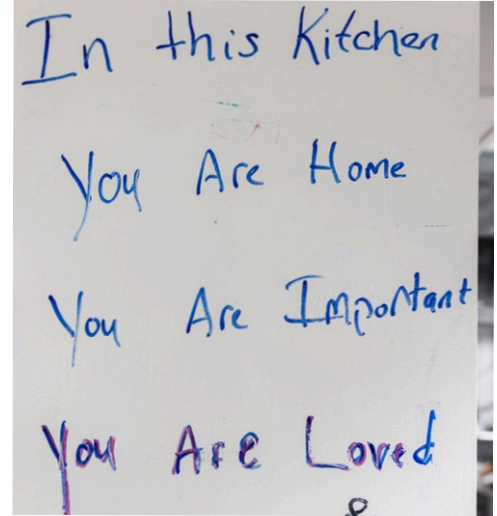
"We just see ourselves as part of the solution. Legislation is important. Law enforcement is important, but street workers... community violence intervention... specialists are also important."

-Nichelle Sadler, Executive Director, UTEC'S Training Center for Excellence



DIVERSITY, EQUITY,

INCLUSION & BELONGING



At UTEC, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) are essential to creating a workplace where staff and young adults feel respected, affirmed, and empowered to show up fully as themselves.

Strengthening Our Culture

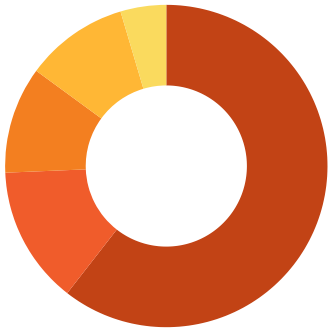
This year, UTEC launched a new DEIB training series in partnership with Peace of Culture to deepen learning and embed equity across teams. Trainings focused on gender identity, inclusive language, everyday biases, and social identities, helping staff build shared understanding and practical skills for creating more inclusive spaces.

Additional efforts included organization-wide unconscious bias training and specialized gender identity training for the DEIB Committee, strengthening leadership, accountability, and our ability to model this work across the organization. Together, these steps help ensure our culture reflects the dignity, safety, and belonging we strive to create for every young adult and staff member.

Practices That Promote Belonging

UTEC continued integrating inclusive practices into daily operations, including normalizing pronoun and preferred-name sharing in meetings, and highlighting cultural and religious observances informed by staff through the annual Holidays and Celebrations Survey.

Through this work, UTEC is building a community where every staff member and young adult feels seen, respected, and valued.



Revenue

- 60%** Government Grants & Contracts
- 11%** Individual & Corporate Giving
- 14%** Social Enterprise Revenue
- 10%** Private Grants
- 5%** Other

BOARD MEMBERS

Marianela Vasquez, Board Chair

Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Reading Cooperative Bank

Gregg Croteau, MSW

Chief Executive Officer, UTEC, Inc.

Jonathan Kelly, Treasurer

Retired, Fidelity Investments

Neil Maniar

Director of MPH Program, Northeastern University

Scott Mellen

CEO, President & Co-Owner, wTe Corporation

Tim Nichols, Secretary

Chief of Organizational Effectiveness, Ropes & Gray

Lon Povich

Counsel, Anderson & Kreiger and Former Chief Legal Counsel for Governor Baker

JuanCarlos Rivera

Deputy Executive Director, Boys and Girls Club of Greater Lowell

Barbara Vlacich

Sales Executive

Juanita Zerda

Director, Collective Change Lab

FULL CIRCLE MOMENT

Founding young adult and long-time board member

Marianela Vasquez became **UTEC's new board chair.**

She is Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Reading Cooperative Bank.



THE YEAR IN HEADLINES

Newsweek

Former Assistant AG: Local Nonprofit Workers Are Public Safety Heroes Too | Opinion

MAY 29, 2025 AT 12:35 PM EDT



UTEC's Streetworkers were recognized as essential public safety partners in a national op-ed by former U.S. Assistant Attorney General Amy Solomon. The piece highlights UTEC's role in responding to crises, building trust in the most impacted neighborhoods, and partnering with local law enforcement to keep communities safe.

"The voices of these heroes rang with pride as they described how they instinctively react 'like firefighters' to emergency calls and 'plant seeds of hope' in some of the hardest-hit neighborhoods. We were joined that day by a local police chief and sheriff, both full of praise for the work of UTEC as a key partner in keeping their communities safe."

Former U.S. Assistant Attorney General Amy Solomon

The Eagle-Tribune

UTEC celebrates 25 years of changing lives

Nov 25, 2024



UTEC marks 25 years of youth support and community impact.

UTEC celebrated its 25th anniversary with a gala honoring alumni leaders whose work reflects the organization's sustained commitment to supporting young adults and strengthening communities across the region.



Street workers collaborate, share strategies to keep Massachusetts communities safe

Updated: 12:45 PM EDT Sep 20, 2024



Todd Kazakiewicz

Reporter



Streetworker Conference grows regional community safety network.

UTEC partnered with organizations across New England to convene the annual New England Streetworker Conference, bringing together frontline outreach workers to share strategies, build connections, and advance community-based violence prevention.

THE SUN

LOCAL NEWS

DOJ cancels \$2 million in grants to UTEC mid-cycle, nonprofit says

'These cuts directly affect communities like ours across the country that are working to prevent violence'

By PETER CURRIER | pcurrier@thesun.com | Lowell Sun
Published: April 23, 2025 at 6:48 PM EDT | Updated: April 23, 2025 at 6:48 PM EDT



DOJ cuts community violence prevention funding.

The federal government cut \$2 million in funding from UTEC this year as part of nationwide reductions to local violence prevention programs. The move cut resources for street outreach and reentry services, even as these programs continue to play a critical role in supporting young people and building community.

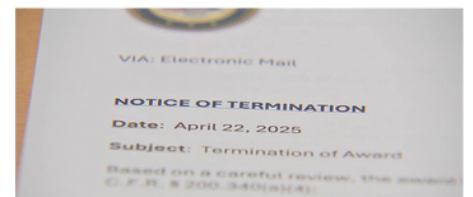
BOSTON 25 NEWS

LOCAL

Millions in federal funds slashed for violence prevention in Massachusetts

By Drew Karedes, Boston 25 News

April 24, 2025 at 9:45 pm EDT





UTEC advances youth-centered policy change in Massachusetts.

Throughout 2025, UTEC helped elevate the voices of young people in statewide policy discussions, including advocacy to raise the age of juvenile court jurisdiction, efforts to expand access to education for people incarcerated, as well as participation in the state government’s Emerging Adult Summit. Together, these efforts reflect UTEC’s commitment to shaping policies that better support young people impacted by the justice system.

“After more than a year advocating to raise the age with UTEC, it was great to be at the State House to see it actually get passed. I believe in young people and I think **we deserve a chance or even multiple opportunities at getting things right.**”
Fredo Estevez, UTEC graduate



Regional media highlight UTEC’s social enterprises.

This year, GBH highlighted how UTEC’s mattress recycling enterprise creates paid job opportunities and hands-on work experience for young adults returning to the community after incarceration. WBUR and The Lowell Sun featured UTEC’s Breaking Barriers Kitchen food truck, highlighting its benefits for participants and the broader community.



Celebrating community and achievement.

Throughout the year, UTEC marked moments of connection and progress, with celebrations like a Juneteenth Block Party honoring culture and community and a graduation ceremony recognizing young adults who earned their HiSET diplomas through UTEC’s education programs.



**Your support helps young adults in the Merrimack Valley
break the cycles of violence and poverty.**

LEARN MORE



DONATE NOW

