

May 5, 2021

Dear Bath City Councilors,

According to a 2017 study, Sagadahoc County led the state in youth who felt depressed and hopeless. Our county also exceeded the state average in youth who committed self-harm and who considered suicide. During this past year of the pandemic and social isolation, teens have exhibited increased levels of anxiety and have struggled to feel connected to peers and caring adults.

The Midcoast Youth Center continues to take active steps to provide emotional, social, and academic support to the at-risk youth in our community: for the 2020-2021 school year, MYC provided a distance learning program for BMS students who were experiencing social and emotional stress; beginning last summer and continuing through spring and summer of this year, MYC has implemented the 21st Century Learning Program to help students who are behind in their studies; and, thus far this calendar year, 197 students have been helped at Midcoast Youth Center despite limited space and distancing requirements.

When Midcoast Youth Center took over full operation of the Bath Skate Park from Bath's Recreation Department in 2020, the initial contract with the city included \$24,000 annual rent to be paid by MYC to the city. Additionally, since MYC assumed operation of the skatepark, the city included the contribution of \$30,000 to MYC that it would have typically given to the Bath Rec Department, to help with expenses, including material costs and a staff position.

Unfortunately, the City's budget committee recently proposed a large reduction in MYC's funding for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, from \$30,000 to \$3,000. If this proposal is approved, it will significantly impact Midcoast Youth Center's capacity to continue to serve Bath's at-risk youth. We urge you to reconsider your proposed reduction of the funding that MYC so desperately needs to continue servicing the immense needs of youth in our community. Please partner with us in showing our kids, teens, and young adults that "They Matter!"

Sincerely,

Jamie Dorr Executive Director	Larry Bartlett Vice President	Jeff Labbe Finance Chair	Karen Curley Secretary	Joel Merry Board Member	Deb Hagler, MD Board Member
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