

# Moving Back Home as Young Adults to Easton

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If moving away for college is a time for discovering one's identity and learning to live independently, then what is moving back home with parents after college all about?

For some young adults, returning home is a financially sound move, if not a necessary one. Even pre-pandemic, the trend toward young adults moving back in with their parents was already underway.

With careers and industries upended by Covid, even young people who were a few years out from college and used to living independently found themselves back home with their parents.

Living at home again has given them a chance to reconnect not only with their parents but with their town in new ways. This was true for sisters Emily and Abbie Winter, who grew up in Easton and returned for a time after college to the house where they grew up.

## Experiencing Easton as a Young Adult

Abbie graduated from Bucknell College in 2019 and moved back home while getting her feet under her. Although she moved out on her own in the fall of 2020, she found many

ways to get involved with life in Easton during her time at home.

Abbie joined the Easton Energy and Environment Task Force where her older sister Emily had previously participated. Abbie also joined the Easton, Redding and Region 9 Social Justice group when it formed in the summer of 2020.

“It was nice to root myself in the community again,” Abbie said. Participating in these activities gave her the chance to remember her own upbringing. As part of the Easton Energy and Environment task force, Abbie worked on the second phase of the solar project, which aims to expand the number of solar panels behind Samuel Staples Elementary School.

The solar project was of particular note to Abbie, who imagined what it would be like to go on a field trip in the school’s backyard. “In third grade, I would’ve been excited to see the solar field,” Abbie said.

Emily also experienced life in and out of Easton as a young adult. She lived at home for a few years after going straight from her undergraduate studies into a master’s degree program, then moved out to begin working on her doctorate. When her doctorate program moved to entirely online classes last year, she headed back to Easton.

For Emily, getting involved in the Easton community as an adult meant volunteering for the Mikey’s Way Foundation, helping kids cope with cancer. She had been a volunteer for the organization as a youth. The strong memories she had from her involvement as a youth were part of what drew her back in.

Emily McKeon is another Easton native who initially moved back home after graduating from college. When the pandemic hit, McKeon was looking into graduate school programs and decided the savings from not paying rent was worth it.



Emily McKeon enjoyed outdoor spaces as a child in Easton, and still does, as an adult. — Photo courtesy of Emily McKeon.

For her, the outdoor spaces in and around Easton have been a perk while staying at home. Whether with family or friends, she enjoys being able to hike in the area.

## Finding a New Home

Annabelle Fox grew up a few towns away in Wilton. She was already living on her own, when her parents, Kim and Daniel, moved to Easton a few years ago.

When the pandemic hit, Annabelle and her husband, Douglas Waterbury-Tieman, were living in New York City, working long and exciting days as freelance actors.

Neither Annabelle nor her husband intended to live with her parents; they packed their bags and headed to Easton thinking they'd be there for a few weeks while everything in

New York was shut down. Weeks turned into months, but Annabelle, Douglas, Kim, and Daniel were happy to be living together.

As a family, the four adults living together found ways to cope with the pandemic through creative outlets, such as re-creating scenes from the Wizard of Oz. They also had fun redecorating the sunroom for the holidays and pretending it was a restaurant.



Annabelle and Douglas enjoy a Cinco de Mayo dinner in the redecorated sunroom.

—Photo courtesy of the Fox family.

“As an adult, I appreciated that change of scenery, being able to go for a walk and not have a mask on, cook dinners together, and have this different kind of bond with my parents,” said Annabelle.

The Foxes also found small ways to enjoy Easton in their time together, whether going to Greiser’s or heading out for walks around town together.

“It’s a little gem of a time capsule that we talk about all the time,” Annabelle said. Kim said their time together was something they will always cherish. You can read more about the Fox family: [From Acting to Isolating](#).

## Moving Back Out

Even with a pandemic, life goes on. Young adults throughout Easton have moved in and out over the last year. Although many of the adults living home were grateful for the opportunity and enjoyed building relationships with their parents as adults, being home could also make it difficult to feel like independent adults.

As Abbie put it, “I was ready for my next step.”

For Annabelle and Douglas, who have since moved to Franklin, Tenn., leaving was bittersweet. They will be returning to Connecticut this July for a project they worked on prior to the pandemic and are eager to come back to see family and friends.

*Photo at top: Easton is known for its reservoirs and open spaces. Aspetuck Reservoir is one of them. — Tomas Koeck Photo*