

**What is Communities In Schools?**

Communities In Schools (CIS) is the nation's largest dropout prevention organization. Rather than duplicating services or competing with other youth serving organizations, CIS identifies and mobilizes existing community resources and fosters cooperative partnerships for the benefit of students and families. Communities In Schools operates in 26 states and serves 1.4 million children.

**What is the mission of Communities In Schools?**

The mission of Communities In Schools of Kansas is to champion the connection of needed community resources with schools to help young people successfully learn, stay in school, and prepare for life.

**How is Communities In Schools different from other community groups or organizations?**

Communities In Schools is not a program, but a process for coordinating services for youth and families—primarily in the schools, but also in the community. Through a community collaboration of public and private partners, existing community services are repositioned to the schools to meet the needs identified at each school or for each child.

**What are the values and principals of Communities In Schools?**

Communities In Schools has developed a formula for success by providing the Five Basics that all young people need. Those five basics are a one-on-one relationship with a caring adult, a safe place to learn and grow, a healthy start and a healthy future, a marketable skill to use upon graduation, and a chance to give back to peers and community. CIS operates on the principals of coordination, accountability, and personalism.

**What types of services does Communities In Schools provide?**

Some of the specific services, programs, or activities that a Communities In Schools local affiliate might provide include mentoring; tutoring; parent involvement activities; after-school activities and programs; leadership skills building; literacy; career preparation activities and opportunities; field trips; cultural enrichment activities; life skills training such as coping methods, conflict resolution and anger management; service learning; summer jobs programs; teen parenting programs; and referrals for counseling and social services.

**How many students does Communities In Schools serve?**

During the 2008-2009 school year, Communities In Schools of Kansas directly served more than 20,600 students in 83 school sites. Thousands more students and family members were touched by our school-wide programs. Nationally, more than 1.4 million students are reached each year.

**Why is Communities In Schools needed?**

Everyday many students face educational hurdles that come from outside the classroom. Hunger, poverty, family crisis, low self-esteem, medical problems, violence, alcohol, and drugs negatively affect a child's chances of being successful in school and in life. Communities In Schools takes a community development approach to supporting kids by unifying the full resources of the community around children, families, teachers, and schools as a support system to address these educational hurdles. Communities In Schools works at building relationships locally and statewide—because the impact of all groups linked to the schools can achieve the positive results in kids and families we all seek.

**How have Communities In Schools programs helped Kansas communities?**

Based on our most recent available statistics,

- 98% of students tracked for promotion risk were promoted to the next grade level
- 93% of students tracked as potential dropouts remained in school at the end of the school year
- 91% of students tracked for attitude problems showed improvement in attitude and commitment to learning
- 80% of students tracked for behavior problems showed improvement in behavior
- 73% of students tracked for academic performance showed improvement in achievement

### **Where are Communities In Schools programs in Kansas?**

The state office for Communities In Schools of Kansas is located in Lawrence, Kansas. Local affiliates are in Grant County, Harvey County, Kansas City/Wyandotte County, Marion County, Ottawa, Rice County, and Wichita/Sedgwick County.

### **What are some of the facts behind America's dropout crisis?**

By many estimates, one-third to one-quarter of young Americans are not graduating from high school or not graduating with their peers. Only half of African-American, Hispanic and Native American students graduate on time. With globalization and the decline in jobs that pay good wages and require relatively low literacy, problem solving and technical skills, only about 42% of high school dropouts find gainful employment. Both individuals and our society as a whole suffer, as dropouts earn less (if they are employed at all) and are more likely to apply for government assistance, to be arrested and to have health problems.

### **What is the history of Communities In Schools?**

In the 1960s, Bill Milliken and his colleagues launched a series of storefront schools in New York City to give school dropouts a second chance to earn a high school diploma and go on to college. In 1977, Milliken and his colleagues decided to work inside the school system to develop a safety net to help youth get the assistance they needed to stay in school under the original name, Cities In Schools. The growing strength and expansion of the program led to each CIS affiliate becoming independently incorporated. The name was changed to Communities In Schools in the mid 1990s to reflect the organization's devotion to creating community where it operates. Today, CIS affiliates operate in 26 states and serves more than 1.4 million students each year.

### **What makes Communities In Schools the "leading" organization in its field?**

We are not aware of another organization with a similar mission (helping young people successfully learn, stay in school, and prepare for life) that reaches such a large number of students, schools and communities, and has an equivalent history of experience and success.

### **How can I get involved with Communities In Schools programs as a volunteer or donor?**

Please contact the state office at [cis@ciskansas.org](mailto:cis@ciskansas.org) or 785.856.5190 if you are interested in volunteering or making a donation. There are many ways for both individuals and groups to support CIS of Kansas, whether through time and effort, skills and expertise, or financial and in-kind support.

### **How can I start a Communities In Schools program in my area?**

Please contact Malissa Martin-Wilke of CIS of Kansas at 785.856.5190 or [Malissa@ciskansas.org](mailto:Malissa@ciskansas.org) if you are interested in starting a CIS program in your area. We can also refer you to local resources and organizations as available.

### **How is Communities In Schools funded?**

Communities In Schools, Inc. is privately and publicly funded through a variety of corporate, foundation, and federal grants. Communities In Schools of Kansas is primarily funded through the Kansas State Department of Education, but also seeks private funding through foundations, corporations, and individuals. Local affiliates in Kansas are supported through a combination of public funds, private fundraising and special events. In-kind and volunteer resources, such as staff repositioned from other agencies, are critical for CIS.

### **What is the purpose of the Communities In Schools state office?**

The state office works to provide support to local affiliates in Kansas. This includes training opportunities, program development and evaluation, community development, resource development and fund raising, and public relations and marketing. The state office also works with communities to develop new CIS programs that will improve the outcomes for students and schools in Kansas.

### **How can I get more information about Communities In Schools of Kansas?**

Please visit our website, [www.ciskansas.org](http://www.ciskansas.org) or send us an email at [cis@ciskansas.org](mailto:cis@ciskansas.org) to request a brochure or other promotional materials.