



GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

PARTNERSHIPS

- ◆ Kent Intermediate School District
- ◆ Grand Rapids Public Schools
- ◆ Cedar Springs Public Schools
- ◆ Godfrey Lee Public Schools
- ◆ Godwin Heights Public Schools
- ◆ Kentwood Public Schools
- ◆ Wyoming Public Schools
- ◆ Kent County Health Department
- ◆ Spectrum Health - Healthier Communities
- ◆ Network 180
- ◆ Kent County Department of Human Services
- ◆ Kent County Government
- ◆ Grand Rapids Community Foundation
- ◆ Steelcase Foundation
- ◆ Frey Foundation
- ◆ Keller Foundation
- ◆ W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- ◆ Sebastian Foundation
- ◆ Heart of West Michigan United Way
- ◆ Douglas and Maria DeVos Foundation
- ◆ Dyer-Ives Foundation
- ◆ Arbor Circle
- ◆ D.A. Blodgett
- ◆ St. John's Family Outreach Center

RESULTS

From the start of the program in the 2006 - 2007 school year to the end of the 2009 - 2010 school year, chronic absenteeism decreased from 25.3% to 17% in KSSN elementary schools.



BACKGROUND

The Kent School Service Network (KSSN) was created in 2006 after the Kent County Family and Children's Coordinating Council decided how to strategically use community resources to support achievement. The Council collaborated with key community partners, including county government, local foundations, the United Way, county agencies, local health care organization and the Kent Intermediate School District in order to bring the school and community together to attain the following results for children and families:

- ◆ Students learn, grow, and achieve (increased achievement and attendance),
- ◆ Students and families get the services they need at schools,
- ◆ All children are physically, emotionally, socially and academically ready to learn, and
- ◆ Improved coordination of services for the benefit of students and families.

KSSN has been successful due to having a strong public private partnership at the beginning willing to support a community school approach in those school districts with the highest need. The initiative has tripled over five years and is now in 18 schools across 6 districts.

LEADERSHIP

The Kent School Services Network Leadership Team is responsible for the overall direction of the initiative. It includes philanthropic organizations, local county government, six local school districts, county mental health and social service agencies, health care organizations and KSSN lead partner agencies.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Using public schools as hubs, community schools bring together many partners to offer a range of supports and opportunities to children, youth, families and communities. KSSN schools may include the following staff:

Community School Coordinators: Provide coordinated access to health and human services within the school setting. Responsibilities include collaboration with schools and service providers, coordinating and linking families to community and local resources, organizing activities for parents and community, developing relationships with businesses, faith-based institutions and other non-profit partners, data collection, and reporting.

Site Team Clinicians: Provide strengths based, child centered and family focused services to families in schools, in home, and the targeted local community. Responsibilities include individual and family therapy, crisis response, early impact services, clinical case management, and psycho-educational group services provided during the school and after school.

Department of Human Services (DHS) Staff: Provide social services to students and families who are chronically absent, truant or suspended as well as working with families to help identify and develop plans for self-sufficiency and connect families to necessary services.

Nurses and Health Aides: Provide on-site medical services to students to promote health and prevent disease among students in the KSSN schools.