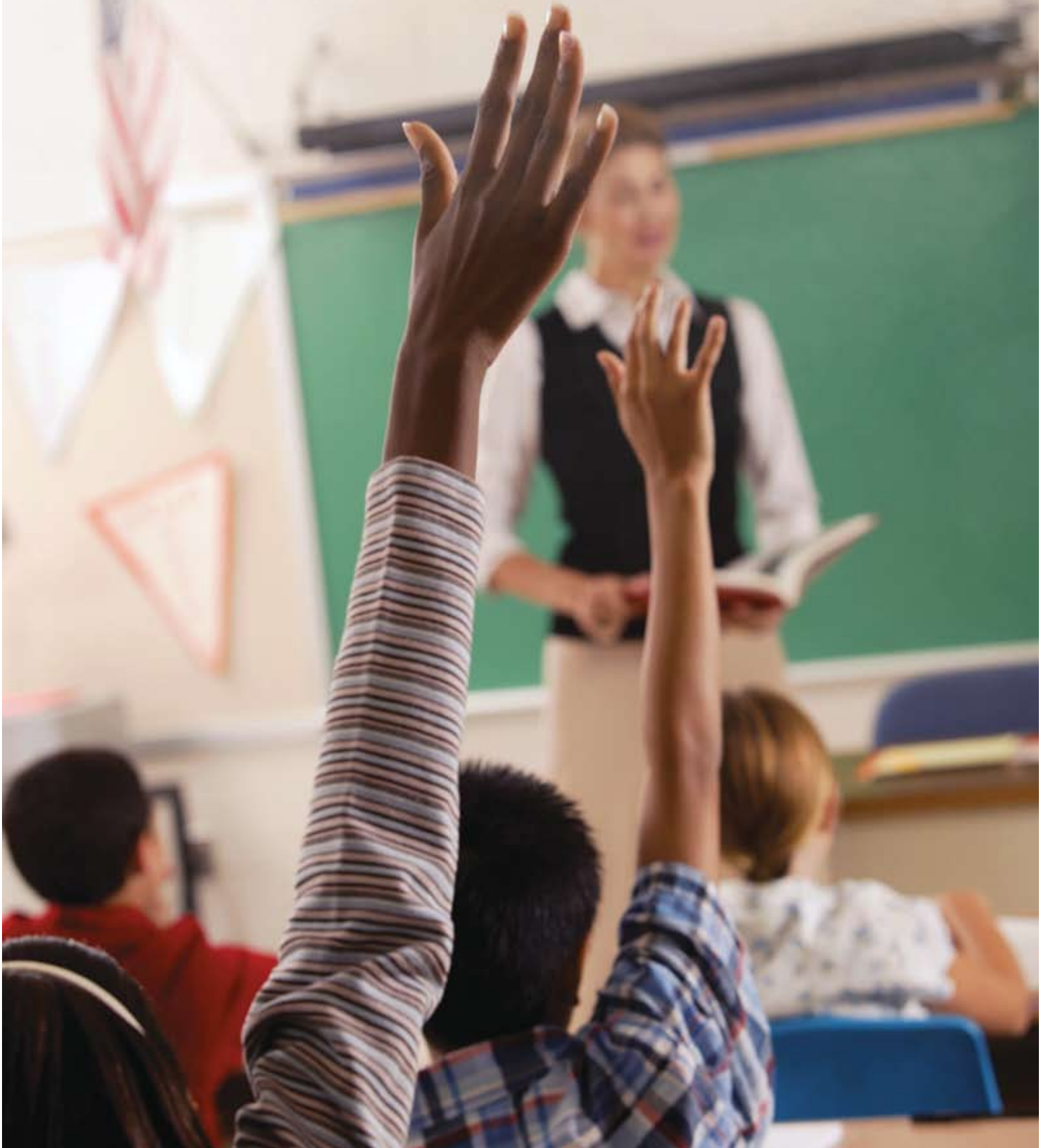


Report Card to the Community

Heart of Illinois United Way and
Peoria Area Community & Educational Services



Since 2006 the Heart of Illinois United Way, and its partner agencies, have been helping to address these gaps in Peoria Public Schools' educational system in regards to substance use and abuse:

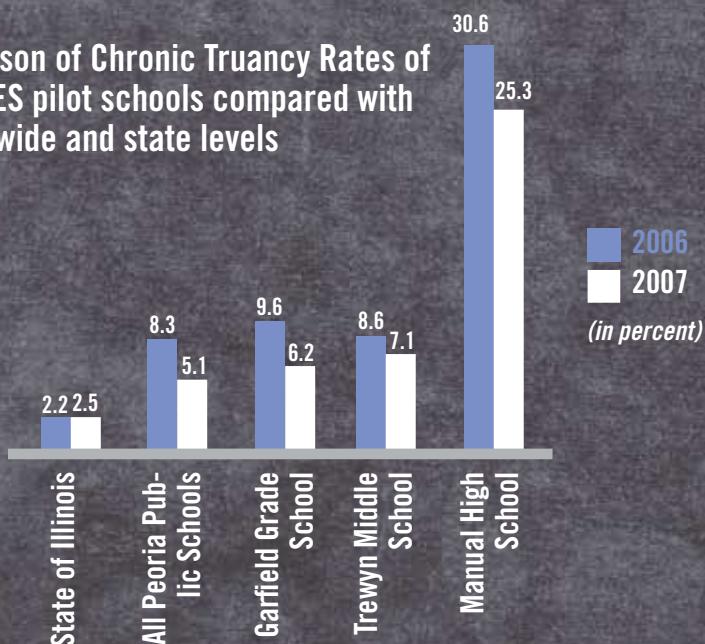
1. No specific curriculum existed to teach students, parents, teachers, and the community about substance abuse and mental health (research in universal prevention programs indicated 80 percent of the people instructed will learn and make appropriate choices, but they must be instructed).
2. The school staff available for student assistance, such as behavior and grades, were not trained to do substance screening.
3. Students were not assessed for substance abuse on-site and there were no direct referrals to a licensed professional for assessment.
4. There were no on-site substance abuse services available for students.
5. There were no continuing care programs once students were released from substance abuse treatment and returned to their home and school resulting in average relapse rate of around 80 percent.

Heart of Illinois United Way Response

After reviewing the data, the United Way collaborated to create new programs that would positively change these trends that were negatively effecting the community. The United Way brought together key community resources to target the following issues:

1. Substance abuse and mental health issues
2. Violence in and out of school
3. Chronic truancy in part caused by substance abuse, mental health and violence

Comparison of Chronic Truancy Rates of the PACES pilot schools compared with district-wide and state levels



PACES History

In October 2005, volunteers asked more than 400 Peoria students and parents, "What issues are keeping students from being successful in school?"

The top two answers were drug/alcohol abuse and crime.

The following spring, focus groups at Manual High School uncovered how many students come to school 'high' on a regular basis. Despite a zero-tolerance policy, District 150 administrators and counselors agreed that substance abuse was resulting in absence, mental health issues, poor decision making and unengaged or disruptive behavior.

School administrators knew student learning was being adversely affected by substance abuse in their community and living situations - including students who don't abuse substances but live with the effects of a family member who does. This evidence from students, community members and school staff was the compelling starting point for the PACES program.

Their beliefs and subsequent research indicate that in order to improve student learning, these substance abuse and mental health issues required immediate attention with a program focused on assessment, prevention, intervention and family assistance.

Until Fall 2006 and the launch of the PACES program, District 150 schools operated under a 'zero tolerance' policy for all students. Students caught using or possessing a substance were immediately suspended and recommended for expulsion.

Students and families were reluctant to seek help for suspected substance problems because they did not want their children to be in trouble with the school or police, but many did not have resources to seek help within the community.

With PACES, students and families can get the help they need within the safety of their school - building parental trust and involvement while keeping students in school and learning.

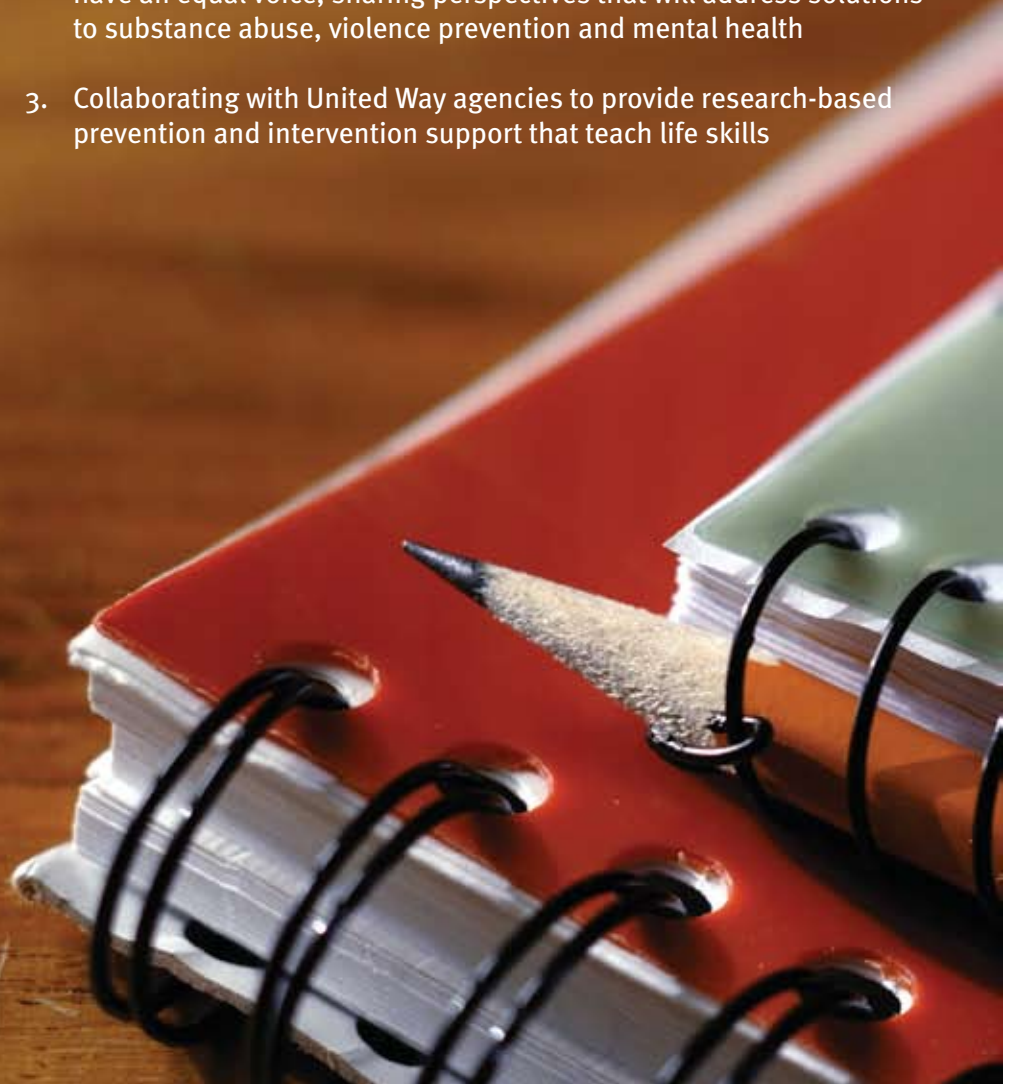
PACES, or Peoria Area Community and Educational Services, is a collaborative effort between Peoria Public Schools and Heart of Illinois United Way member agencies that, through the United Way grant process, established a full-service substance abuse, violence prevention and mental health program for students in kindergarten through high school in the Manual High School region.

PACES focuses on drug and alcohol abuse among students, which often results in problems such as violence, anger, physical and mental health issues that students bring to school interfering with learning in the classroom environment.

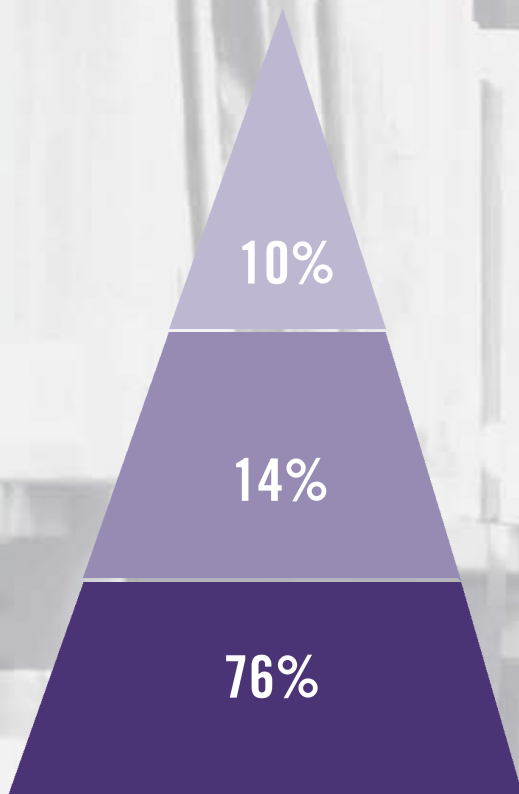
District 150, as the lead agency, is working collaboratively with Heart of Illinois United Way member agencies to bring on-site, direct services that address substance abuse, violence and mental health issues to students and families that attend the three targeted schools - Garfield Primary, Trewyn Middle School and Manual High School.

This goal is being accomplished by:

1. Strengthening families through outreach and mentoring
2. Formation of a round-table advisory group that allows the community to have an equal voice, sharing perspectives that will address solutions to substance abuse, violence prevention and mental health
3. Collaborating with United Way agencies to provide research-based prevention and intervention support that teach life skills



How the Comprehensive System of Student Support Approach Works:



Level 3 - 10 percent of students in PACES

Tertiary intensive services, mental health services, individual and group therapy. Intensive abeyance monitoring and case management.

Level 2 - 14 percent of students in PACES

Secondary Targeted Interventions. Mental health therapist will provide assessment to students referred from the Target Teams, referral and linkage to appropriate services, abeyance drug education and case management parent support groups.

Level 1 - 76 percent of students in PACES

Universal Interventions Community/District/School Resources, violence prevention and education, substance abuse prevention education, staff training on substance abuse.

A New Approach: *Focusing on academics, social skills and emotional health.*

Through studying school discipline data and examining city/county statistics for juvenile delinquency, Peoria Public Schools were able to consistently prove that many students were exposed to violence and crime with many more living in poverty and experiencing high levels of continuous trauma and anxiety.

District administrators and educators strongly suggested that student anger and violence is countered with a desire for relationships with caring adults.

To address these needs, Peoria Public Schools adopted a Comprehensive System of Student Support focusing on the whole child academically, socially and emotionally.

An advisory committee of mental health providers, educators, juvenile justice and law enforcement officials held collaborative meetings to determine service gaps in areas of substance abuse, violence and mental health.

In addition, support personnel from the State of Illinois, representing the Department of Human Services and the Illinois State Board of Education have offered their guidance and expertise to this new approach. Best practices of the State Social and Emotional Standards, the federal government and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Association have been used in the selection of programs and services.

Through Heart of Illinois United Way funding, Peoria Public Schools have had the opportunity to utilize recommendations from the advisory committee and expand these practices throughout District 150. The Comprehensive System of Student Support model has been used to integrate United Way funded social services under the umbrella of the PACES program.

In establishing the PACES Program, Peoria Public Schools have developed a complex, integrated continuum of prevention and intervention programs and services. The program uses a systematic structure for ongoing communication, shared vision and goals and measurable objectives. Data collection provides ongoing evaluation of the program to determine strengths and weaknesses for modification.

The Comprehensive System of Student Support is critical to creating change while addressing the learning and developmental needs of District 150's children and adolescents. The academic culture has changed from punishment to assistance, with a shift to focusing on intervention and support. Through the PACES Program, Peoria Public Schools continues to realign and reallocate existing resources and collaborate with providers and the community.

Community in Schools

A health and social service approach to student success

Prevention Services - The Center for Prevention of Abuse

Goal: *Students at Manual High School and Trewyn Middle School acquire strengthened skills to develop healthy relationships, exhibit behaviors of respect and self-control, respond to conflict, and improve self-esteem.*

Activities to Achieve Outcomes

- Implement curriculums - provide educational/prevention sessions
- Facilitate female support groups
- Provide teacher training and education in bullying prevention
- Provide parent education

Measurement Tools

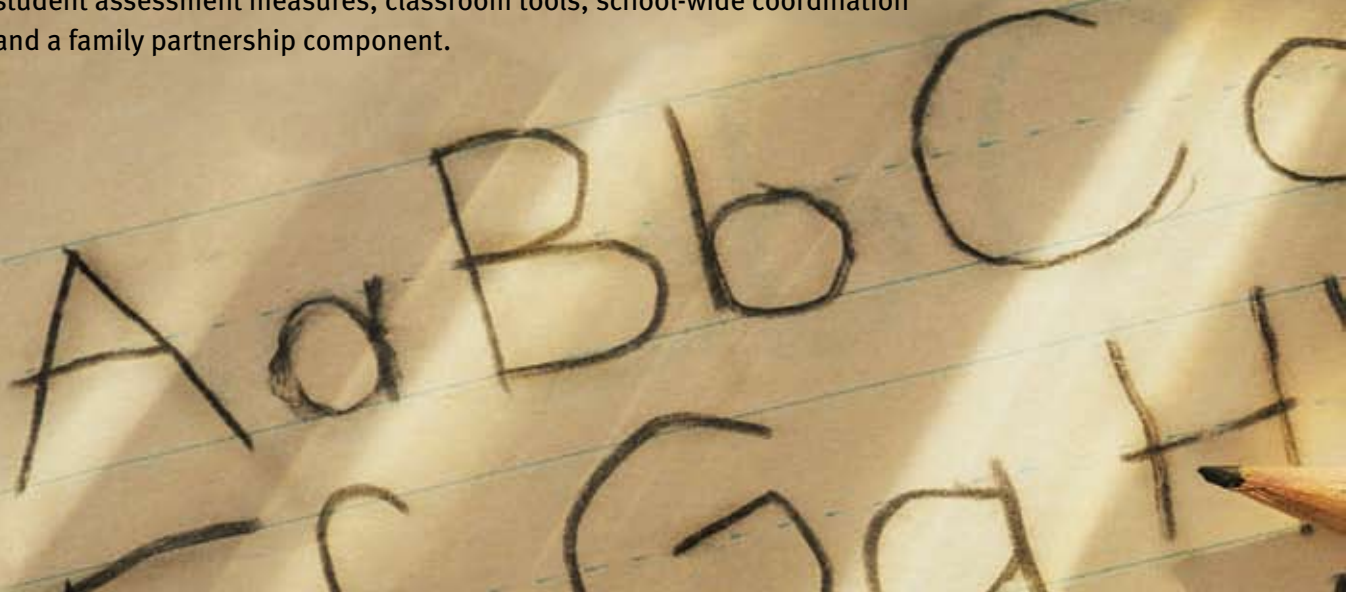
Steps to Respect - a research-based bullying prevention curriculum addressing self-awareness, social awareness, self-management and relationship skills.

Inside the Classroom Health Relationship Curriculum - a four-week program focused on healthy relationships for high school students. Created by the Center for Prevention of Abuse, the program has been recognized by Illinois as one of the top five programs in the state.

Helping All Relationships to be Safe - another Center for Prevention of Abuse program that is based upon national domestic violence prevention standards. Includes a pre-test/post-test to measure impact.

Staying Connected with Your Teen Parent Program - a national research-based Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Association program focusing on communication skills to use with teens. It includes a pre-test/post-test to measure impact.

Second Step - a research-based curriculum addressing self-awareness, social awareness, self-management skills and responsible decision making. Includes student assessment measures, classroom tools, school-wide coordination and a family partnership component.



Community in Schools

A health and social service approach to student success

Prevention and Intervention Services – Counseling and Family Services

Goal: *Students at Garfield acquire and strengthen skills to develop relationships, use appropriate behaviors to respond to conflict, and reduce feelings of anger.*

Outcomes: Improved behavior, attendance, grades, attitudes, and relationships; reduced number of referrals, suspensions and expulsions; decreased aggression and increased knowledge of bullying prevention behaviors.

Activities to Achieve Outcomes

- Steps to Respect - a research-based bullying prevention curriculum addressing self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship skills.
- Family School Liaison serves as the link between families and schools and provides case management, assessment, small group counseling and referrals.

Mental Health and Intervention Services – Counseling and Family Services and Children’s Home

Goals: *Utilize the Comprehensive System of Student Support model to identify students in need of intensive mental health services, provide mental health services to students in need at Garfield, Trewyn and Manual schools through continuity, flexibility and parent support.*

Outcomes: Reduced number of expulsions, improved attendance, improved academic achievement and behavior in the classroom and increased overall mental health.

Activities to Achieve Outcomes

- Intake, assessment and on-site individual/group therapy
- Engagement of parents/guardians in the therapeutic process
- Training and education for school personnel requesting assistance to effectively address mental health related to classroom behaviors
- Provide therapeutic interventions at the school site
- Referral to outside agencies as needed

Measurement Tools

Client global assessment of functioning scale - this measures clients functioning level at the time of intake and then after intervention.

Beck Depression Inventory - this scale measures depression at the time of intake and after intervention.

Tracking forms are used to measure decrease/increase in behavior outbursts in the classroom.



Community in Schools

A health and social service approach to student success

Abeyance Program - Human Service Center

Goals: *Students, parents, and staff will understand the impact of substance abuse and how to identify the signs; have access to screening, case management, counseling, and referrals to outside agencies while gaining skills to choose not to use illegal substances.*

Activities to achieve outcomes:

- Provide intake and assessment for abeyance students
- Provide case management and support
- Monthly random drug screenings
- Train and educate District 150 personnel
- Provide parent education and support

Measurement Tools:

Drug screenings

Tracking student attendance at drug education classes or treatment

Global Appraisal of Individual Needs - a short research-based screening tool to assess substance abuse and conduct issues

Pre-test, post-test in drug education class to measure students' knowledge of substances

Satisfaction survey for parents and students

Completion of Abeyance Program

Decreased suspensions

What is Abeyance?

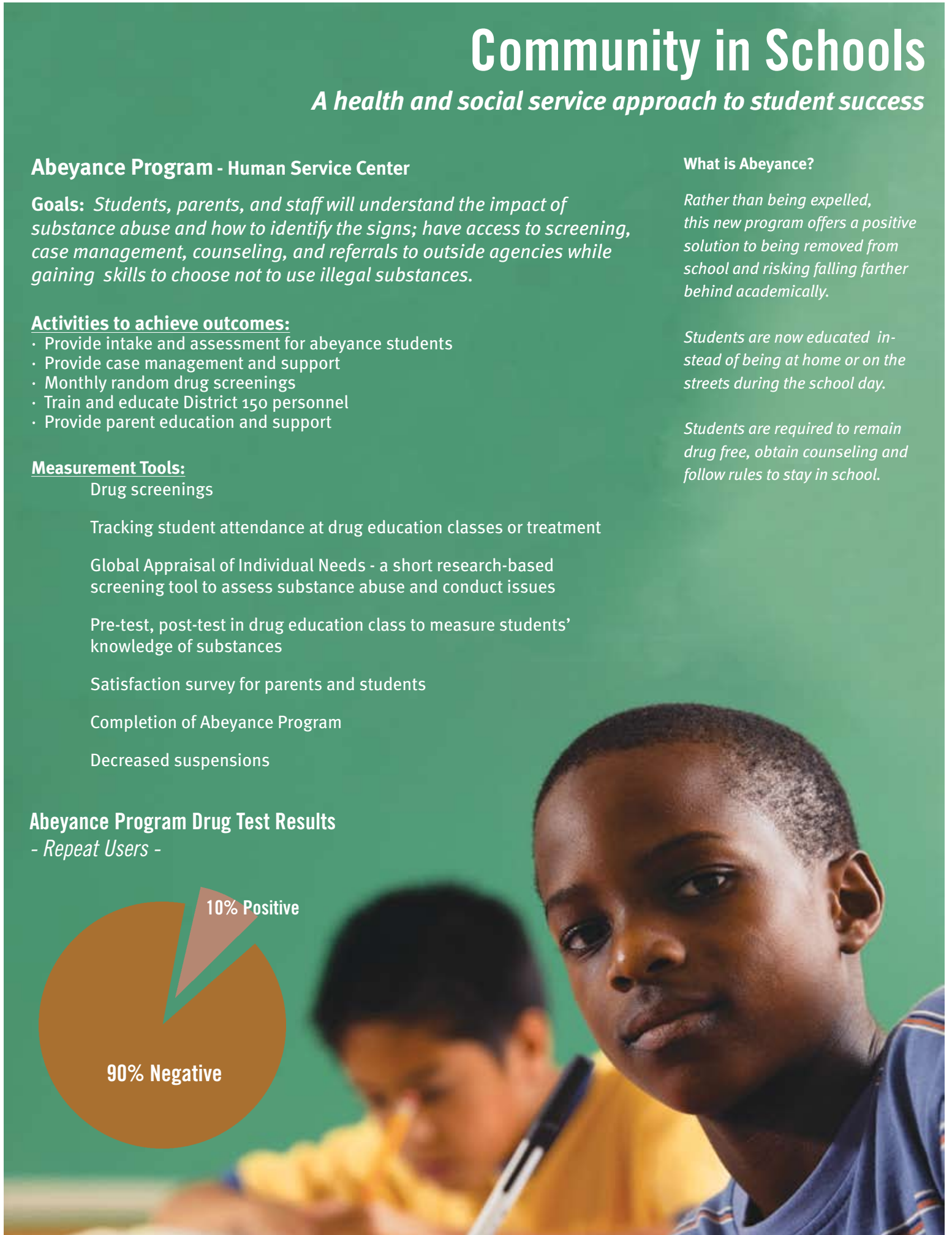
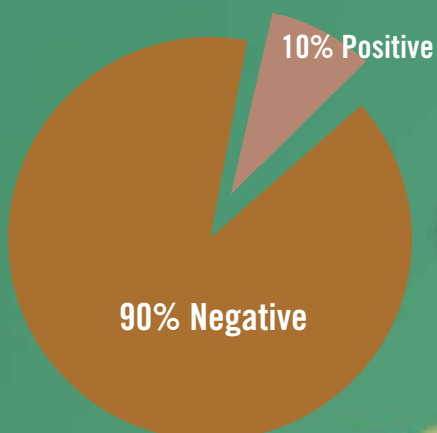
Rather than being expelled, this new program offers a positive solution to being removed from school and risking falling farther behind academically.

Students are now educated instead of being at home or on the streets during the school day.

Students are required to remain drug free, obtain counseling and follow rules to stay in school.

Abeyance Program Drug Test Results

- Repeat Users -



Community in Schools

A health and social service approach to student success

Substance Abuse Prevention - Human Service Center

Goals: 1) Students, parents and staff will gain knowledge of the impact of substance abuse, how to identify the signs and the resources for support and services 2) students throughout the Peoria Public Schools will have access to screening, small group interventions, case management, direct interventions, and access through referral to outside agencies.; and 3) students will have the skills to choose not to use illegal substances.

Outcomes: Improved academic attendance, performance and behavior of students. Teams have been trained to perform screenings and staff are knowledgeable about substance abuse and how to refer students in need of assistance. Parents are active in assisting the intervention team.

Activities used to achieve outcomes for substance abuse prevention:

- Implement curriculums – provide educational/prevention sessions
- Facilitate groups for students

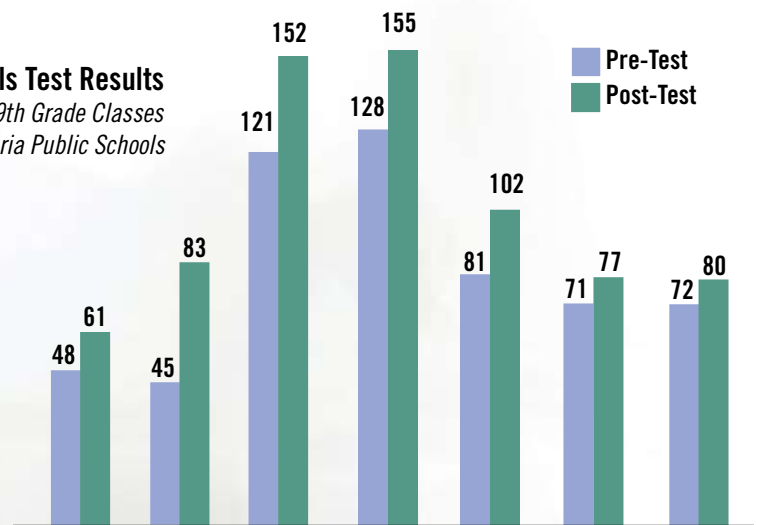
Measurement and Curriculum Tools:

Botvins Lifeskills Training - a highly recognized program by the U.S. Department of Education, the National Drug Institute, the American Medical Association, and the Center for Disease Control. It is a research-based curriculum that focuses on developing personal and social skills to improve students' general competence. The program also reduces the motivation to use tobacco and other substances and improves the students' ability to apply these skills to situations in which they may experience social pressure to use drugs.

Elementary school programming utilizes the I Can Problem Solve curriculum. This curriculum helps children learn how to think in ways that help them successfully resolve interpersonal problems. It is a research-based curriculum promoting empathy, problem-solving and interpersonal skills.

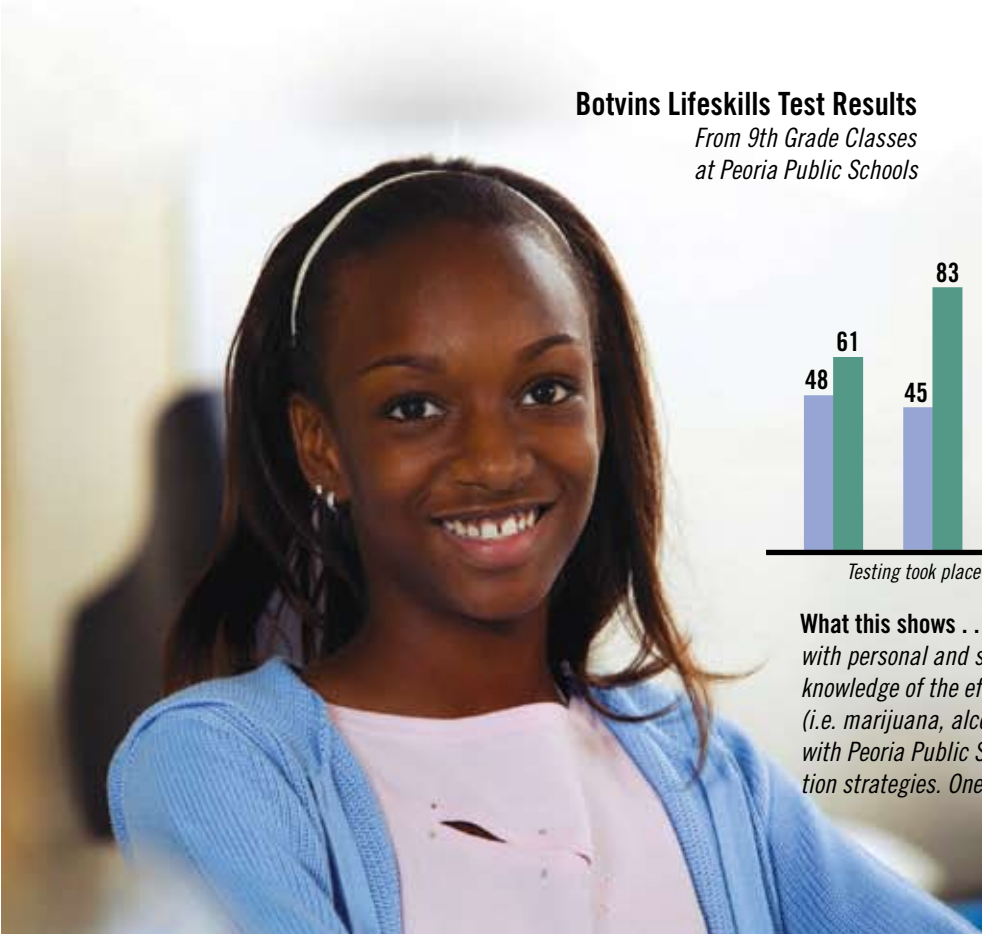
Botvins Lifeskills Test Results

*From 9th Grade Classes
at Peoria Public Schools*



Testing took place in seven different 9th grade classes during February 2008.

What this shows . . . when students learn both resistance training combined with personal and social skills training, they consistently increase their knowledge of the effect of drugs and decrease their usage of 'gateway drugs' (i.e. marijuana, alcohol and tobacco). Botvins Life Skills has been successful with Peoria Public Schools at teaching students the most basic of prevention strategies. One class was deleted from these results due to incomplete post-tests. All classes combined equated to a 17 percent increase between pre and post-test knowledge base.



Community in Schools

A health and social service approach to student success

Intervention Services - Mental Health Association of Illinois Valley

Goal: *Identify students in need of mental health services, specifically those related to suicide.*

Outcomes: Students remain in school and successfully complete their education as measured by academic performance, attendance, and behavior.

Activities to achieve outcomes:

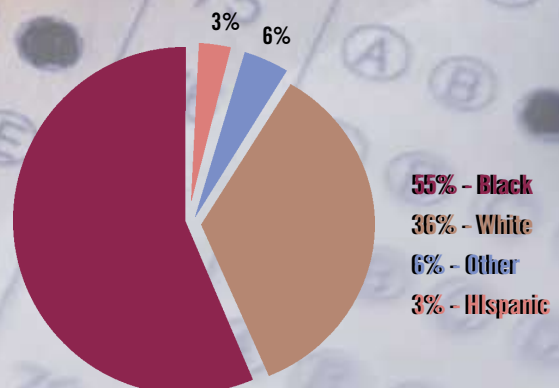
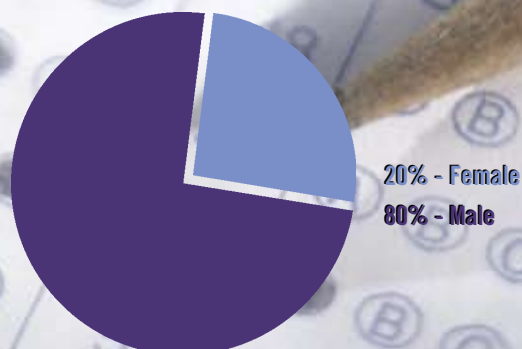
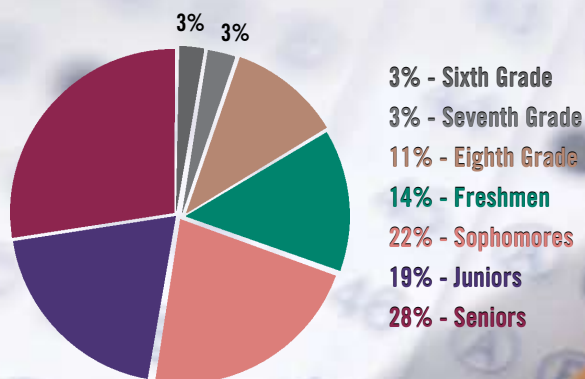
Teen Screen - a national, research-based, mental health and suicide prevention risk screening program for youth developed by Columbia University's Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

Linkage and referral - trained mental health therapists debrief students using results of the screen, resulting in appropriate referrals to outside agencies.

Case management - case management services follow those students who have a positive screening to ensure appropriate services are provided.

Background of Students Enrolled in PACES:

Students and families that attend the three targeted schools - Garfield Primary, Trewyn Middle School and Manual High School receive on-site, direct services that address substance abuse, violence and mental health issues. Below is the demographic information for the students in the PACES Abeyance Program.



Community in Schools

What has been learned from integrating community-based health and social service agencies into the schools:

1. Drug and mental health counseling is more effective within each neighborhood school.
2. Social service agencies have more focused time and expertise to devote to the PACES program and the issues of substance abuse, mental health and violence.
3. There is a direct correlation between substance abuse, violence, mental health issues and truancy.
4. Communication at all levels within each school regarding each child is very important – from the principal to the teachers to the parent(s) to the service providers.
5. Community liaisons soften the stigma associated with mental health issues – children and parents are now seeking support.
6. Drug testing can be an effective tool to test repeat abusers and keep them in school.
7. Prevention techniques and strategies are a good solid base to any treatment model.
8. Schools have to help students and families better connect to community resources. From eye glasses to public health department, we have noticed major family issues eliminated.



Community in Schools

A glimpse at student, educator and family successes

“This year is off to a great start. The difference from last year to this year is amazing. The agency staff is great to work with. They have all just jumped right in to help our students. This program is excellent because these kids have so many issues that the agency staff can address.” - Mr. Bill Salzman, principal at Manual High School.

“This program really carries out the vision of the community school model. It has helped meet the needs of students immediately. Before PACES, if a student had an issue, my staff and I would spend a lot of time trying to find resources and link families. Now those services are right at our school.” - Mr. Kevin Curtin, principal of Garfield Primary School.

“Prior to the abeyance program, a very punitive approach was taken towards students using/abusing substances. With the abeyance program, the students are given the opportunity to change their lifestyle and learn ways to make better choices. 75 percent of the students have been successful in the program and have been able to stay in school.” - Mr. David Barnwell, Former Director of Student Affairs for District 150.

“My daughter really benefited from the program. She connected with the abeyance counselor. Best of all, she received help and got to stay in school.” - a parent talking about the abeyance program.

“Our home life is getting better and there is less fighting thanks to the PACES therapist.” - a family who received therapeutic services at Manual High School.

“A positive change has been seen in several of the middle school girls because of the contact with the prevention educator.” - a teacher at Trewyn Middle School.

“My child thought the drug education classes were very helpful. The abeyance manager really connected with him. She earned his respect and really was concerned about him. The abeyance program held my child accountable with the random drug screens. This was a great experience. The abeyance program has been nothing short of spectacular.” - a parent whose child has participated in the abeyance program.

More Successes:

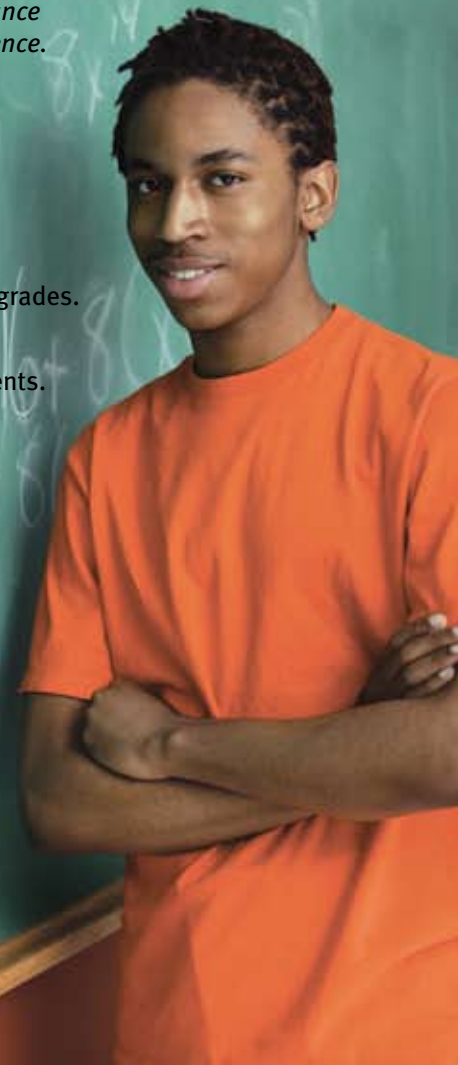
At Garfield Grade School, an 8 year-old girl was coming to school depressed and crying and through the work of the therapist, the student has shown improvement in her attitude and grades.

Because of the work done by the liaison at Garfield, one child's family received assistance to pay utility bills. This allowed the child to continue to use her machine for asthma treatments.

At Garfield School, a teacher informed the family school liaison that a student was having difficulty seeing. This resulted in her grades declining. The worker contacted the mother and facilitated an appointment for the girl at Carver Center. He also contacted Lens Crafters to help the girl obtain a pair of much needed glasses for free.

Positive changes are being noted of students' behavior at Trewyn due to the work of the prevention educator. Her presence there is as important as the information she has been presenting. She states that she has seen a change in attitude of the students. When the students with whom she works stop her in the hallway to say “hi” or “you are a good teacher Ms. Brenda”, the educator knows she is making a difference.

“In November, a group of school personnel and agency staff from the Mattoon area visited the the schools that are implementing PACES. Many of the PACES agency and school personnel were able to attend the meeting to share information about the program. The visitors were very impressed with the PACES project. They commented that the program was cutting edge.” - Mary Eddy, Lumpkin Foundation.



**United
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