

REPORT FORM
Clay County LCTS Grant

Name of Project: Truancy Intervention Program

Risk Factor (s) Being Addressed: Preventing Out of Home Placement

Priority Need (s) Being Addressed: Attendance and Truancy Issues in School

Name of Focus Group That Identified the Need: Prevention and Early Intervention

Name of Agency Managing LCTS Grant: The Village Family Service Center

Name of Person Preparing the Report: Alex Ishaug

Today's Date: June 30, 2006

Dates of Report: March 1, 2006 through May 31, 2006

PART I
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF CHILDREN SERVED

Numbers This quarter by Gender

Male: 583
Female: 543
Total: 1126

Numbers Year to Date by Gender

Male: 826
Female: 749
Total: 1575

Numbers This Quarter by Race

Native American: 88
Asian: 15
Hispanic: 236
Black: 45
White: 742
Total: 1126

Numbers Year to Date by Race

Native American: 127
Asian: 15
Hispanic: 332
Black: 70
White: 1031
Total: 1575

Numbers This Quarter Grade Level

K-5: 517
6-8: 132
9-12: 477
Total: 1126

Numbers Year to Date Grade Level

K-5: 774
6-8: 234
9-12: 567
Total: 1575

PART II

Outcomes

The Truancy Intervention Program was designed to provide early intervention by identifying students who exhibit signs of truancy or attendance issues. The project will provide services, which will enhance attendance monitoring and improve contact with parents/guardians. Meetings with the students and their families are conducted and an intervention plan is developed to address the identified issues and risk factors. Referrals may be made for additional services or educational adjustments. The goals of this early intervention include increasing student attendance, maintaining or decreasing the number of referrals to the juvenile justice system and increasing the number of students referred for mental and chemical health assessments or other types of intervention.

Two measurable objectives will be monitored to determine the effectiveness of this program during the school year. The first objective is to maintain the current rate of all absences (excused and unexcused) for all students in Clay County. In the past this program has monitored only unexcused absences, as a result there is no comparable information and this serve as our baseline. Attendance information gathered this year will be higher than in past years due to this change. Average days missed in the Moorhead elementary schools per month were 2.65 for the quarter. The average for the Greater County elementary schools was 1.56 days missed per month. This shows a decrease in Moorhead of almost a half a day and a slight decrease in the Greater County schools from last quarter.

At the high school level all schools showed increases in periods and days missed. Moorhead High averaged 15.59 periods on 5.99 days absent, Horizon averaged 26.08 periods on 4.94 days absent and RRALC averaged 30.22 periods on 6.07 days absent. The Greater County schools averaged 16.98 periods on 3.44 days. This is an increase, but adjustments were made due to Ulen/Hitterdal being on a block schedule. Those adjustments were not made in previous quarters.

During the first two quarters of this year the average days missed in the Greater County schools was wrong. Some of the information reported was year-to-date instead of for the month as believed. The actual days missed average for Greater County elementary schools was 1.62 for the first quarter and 1.65 for the second quarter. It was originally reported as 2.2 days and 3.14 respectively. The correct periods and days missed for Greater County high school level is 14.52 periods on 3 days for first quarter and 15.62 periods on 3.11 days for second quarter. Adjustments were made for Ulen/Hitterdal because they are on a block schedule and the others are on periods. Original reports were of 33.91 periods on 6.14 days for first quarter and 12.62 periods on 2.57 days for second quarter.

The second objective is to maintain the number of court referrals for truancy. An average of 31 truancy petitions have been filed over the past four years with TIP. This year the

program made 36 reports of truancy that were screened in. This averages 4 per month. This is an increase from the last several years; there was also an increase in the number of students in the program. Additionally six reports of educational neglect were made this year. This averages .67 per month. Another 9 reports (8 truancy, 1 educational neglect) were made to social services that were screened out for various reasons and no services were offered. This number is an increase, but again the number of students worked with has increased as well.

Within the TIP workgroup there has been discussion about what “numbers filed on” means. We are finding that more students have multiple issues going on and that they are choosing to not address them until court ordered by a CHIPs (which occurs when filed on). Therefore, filing does not always indicate failure. Also, the family advocates of the TIP are providing social services with important information that in turn saves them time when working with a family to address their needs.

PART III

- A. Briefly describe any difficulties or problems you have had in implementing the project.
- B. Explain how the service/program has been collaborating with community partners.
- C. Attach copies of any press clippings, brochures, letters, survey results, etc. which relate to the project’s activities during this quarter.

A. This quarter we had in incident during a home visit with one of our family advocates. While in the home of a family she works with, a gun was pointed in her direction. No threats were made and the police were notified the following day. This incident reminded us all that caution and safety should be used, even when we know a family.

B. This quarter we have been involved with Headstart more than ever. Our advocates have been doing home visits to families that will be in the school system next fall. They have also been active in Kindergarten nights within the schools and making parents aware of attendance policies and their role in those policies. The Truancy Program collaborates with school personnel on a daily basis. We also work with social services, probation and various mental and chemical health agencies within the community.

- C. No new information this quarter.

PART IV

Additional Comments

Minnesota State Statutes define two types of truants: continuing and habitual. Continuing truants are defined as students who miss three or more unexcused days for elementary-age and three or more unexcused periods on three or more different days for

students 12 years of age and older. Of the elementary students within Clay County that were referred to the Truancy Intervention Program, 247 met the definition of a continuing truant. For junior high and high school-age students this number is 240. Habitual truants are defined as missing seven or more unexcused days as elementary students or seven or more unexcused periods on seven different days in high school or junior high. The program worked with 89 elementary-age students and 358 junior high and high school students who met the Minnesota definition of a habitual truant. A student must meet the criteria of a habitual truant in order for a CHIPs to be filed with social services. The other requirement for a CHIPs is that any student who is 11 1/2 years of age or older and is in need of a CHIPs must have been invited to the County Attorney Mediation Program (CAMP) within Clay County. The meeting is held monthly by the Clay County Attorney's office. This year TIP invited 98 students to CAMP.

A list of over 500 students that had been invited to the CAMP in the past was compiled this year. Those who are invited to CAMP are typically those students who are missing the most school and previous interventions have been ineffective. The following outlines the status of those students:

- 15% no information found
- 20% graduated
- 19% are still enrolled
- 30% transferred to another educational setting
- 16% dropped out

Although there is no way to know if the Truancy Program directly impacted the number of students that graduated or are still in school, it is probable that it was a factor. The number of high school dropouts in the county is difficult to determine. There is no national standard to determine the rate of dropouts; therefore comparing Clay County's rate to the national average may not be accurate. Numbers found differ greatly from organization to organization.

Contact Information for the Year

	<u>GC</u>	<u>Asp</u>	<u>Hopk</u>	<u>SGR</u>	<u>MHS</u>	<u>HMS</u>	<u>RRALC</u>	<u>Total</u>
Written	196	268	382	37	0	141	152	1176
Phone	366	524	530	78	539	464	1226	3728
Student	316	65	92	25	4963	1015	1528	8004
Family	111	363	455	16	321	192	178	1636
School	1222	297	390	1145	1412	2346	1332	8144
Services	91	36	158	161	177	230	459	1312
Total	2302	1553	2007	1462	7412	4388	4875	23999

This year the TIP has emphasized family involvement, which was hard to achieve in the last two years due to a decreased number of staff. The workgroup identified this as an important part of the success of the program. The chart above shows the number of contacts in each area. The number of family contacts this year (1636) is more than

double that of last year. (It should be noted that these numbers include attempted contacts as well as successful ones. Occasionally attempts are made that are unannounced and therefore find nobody home or nobody answering. The attempts are included in total numbers because if the same family continues to not respond to attempts at communication by the family advocate that is reported to social services along with the attendance information.

A list of about 150 students from this year will be tracked in the next school year. These students are ones where the family advocates made a referral to services. The students will be tracked to see if they progressed to the next grade level. It is difficult to determine at this time if they progressed due to many of the students being in summer school. Also, their attendance will be compared to the other students in the program.

PART V
Financial Report

Category	Approved Budget	Accrued Expenditures This Quarter	Accrued Cumulative Expenditures Year to Date	Do Not Use This Space	Do Not Use This Space
1. Salaries	164,609	49,318	146,106		
2. Fringe Benefits	49,383	6688	18,714		
3. Contracted Services	18,155	4746	13,805		
4. Equipment	3000	0	0		
5. Copying/Printing	0	0	0		
6. Telephone/Postage	3000	540	1230		
7. Travel	6200	2105	3896		
8. Supplies and Materials	500	36	687		
9. Other	3250	635	1344		
TOTAL	248,097	64,068	185,782		

Contracted service total is administrative costs. The “other” category includes training and advertising.

