

2014 Needs Assessment for Cullman

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Accomplishments

1. Increasing High School Graduation Rates- Recognizing that we need to decrease the school dropout rate and increase the number of high school graduates the Cullman Children's Policy Council was able to partner with the Cullman County and Cullman City School Systems to help provide funding for a new School Credit Recovery Program that allows students to catch up on their school credits at night.

We use this program in conjunction with the Cullman Juvenile Court Early Warning Truancy Program that quickly identifies students who have unexcused absences and the Parent Accountability Court which is used to address parents who could benefit from help and/or direction to better assist their children. Because of our

joint efforts this school many students who were dropping out of school graduated with High School Diplomas.

2. Trauma Prevention Program - Recognizing that Distracted Driving plays a part in the large number of young drivers being injured, many fatally, in Cullman County; We have expanded our partnership with Cullman Regional Medical Center to create a Trauma Prevention Program. This is a safety driving education program designed for young offenders charged with speeding to be ordered to the CRMC Emergency Room to tour the trauma room and meet with peers and surviving family members of injured drivers in an effort to assist them in making better safer driving decisions. This is the fourth year for the program which has been extremely successful and has seen tremendous community support. The program is now almost self funded. In an effort to be more proactive participants no longer have tickets or be in the court system to attend. Young community members are allowed to attend.
3. Cullman Drug Court - Illegal drug use has again been recognized as one of the most important issue facing Cullman County children and families because of the far reaching problems it creates for the health, safety and economic security risks to our children. For another year Cullman County is successfully maintaining a Drug Court which is a year long program used as an alternative to incarceration. Currently there are over 80 participants in the program. Not only is this program saving the State of Alabama money it is improving the quality of life for its participants and their families. This year we are applying for a grant to begin a Family Drug Court to assist with Dependency Cases.
4. Cullman County Partnership for Children, Inc - The Cullman Children's Policy Council continues to operate a non-profit corporation which was created years ago. It has successfully served as the funding mechanism used to apply for and fund grants. This year the Cullman County Partnership for Children, Inc with the help of Cullman Savings Bank awarded a \$200.00 scholarship to one graduating Senior from every public High School in Cullman County (9 schools total) who worked to overcome a hardship or difficulty to graduate. These ""Judicial Awards of Excellent" were presented to these students at their Senior Awards day.
5. Safe Kids Expo - In 2014 we again were able to co-sponsor the Cullman Safe Kids Expo with the local Child Advocacy Center. All partners of child safety were invited to set up information booths and participate. Cullman families were provided a free day of fun at a local county park for the children and a forum for all parents to receive a free child ID packet and information how to protect their children from abuse and make sure their children are safe. School Resource Officers were on hand
6. Casa - Following through with past recommendations and building on our success from last year the Cullman CASA program is thriving. Cullman CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) is a member of the State and National CASA network and boasts a paid volunteer coordinator and still recruiting volunteers and child advocates for training to assisting the Juvenile Court with dependency cases. This program has proven to be very beneficial to dependant children.

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First Priority

Need related to children of this county

Child Safety

Existing resources available to help meet this need include:	Resources needed but unavailable to meet this need include:
<p>Active enforcement of drug laws by drug task force made of all law enforcement agencies in Cullman County.</p> <p>Implementation of a post-conviction Drug Court for those arrested which require mandated drug treatment. We currently have approximately 100 participants</p> <p>For Drug Offenders: Use of pre-trial screening such as random drug screens and attendance to AA or NA as a condition of bond for earlier intervention to reduce incarceration rates and decrease recidivism in pending drug cases.</p> <p>Community drug education programs for children and adults.</p> <p>In school drug education and intervention programs.</p>	<p>Education of local physicians and medical providers to help reduce abuse of prescribed controlled substances.</p> <p>Coordinated review or better monitoring of those seeking multiple prescriptions in the regional medical communities.</p> <p>Uniform accessible and regional rehabilitation centers offering detox, short term, long term and half way house services for drug offenders. Ideally the regional rehabs would also offer live skills, educational and/or vocational training.</p> <p>Expand the Adult drug court to include a separate Family Drug Court</p>

Action steps that will result in progress toward meeting the identified need:

1. Make ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, the main ingredients of methamphetamine a controlled substance which requires a doctors prescription. This has been used successfully by other states to reduce the manufacturing of methamphetamine.
2. Seek a grant from the Alabama Association of Drug Court Professionals to fund a Family Drug Court.

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Second Priority

Need related to children of this county

High School Graduation Rate

Existing resources available to help meet this need include:	Resources needed but unavailable to meet this need include:
<p>Early Warning truancy Program : This is a partnership between the school systems and the Juvenile Court. When utilized properly, it quickly identify students who are tardy and absent from school.</p> <p>Credit recovery Program: has been developed to help students recover credits so they do not drop out of school.</p> <p>Parental Accountability Court: Is used by the Juvenile court to hold parents accountable and to help parents make sure they know how to help their children be more successful in school.</p>	<p>More funding for at risk students.</p> <p>Program to address the problems associated with young school aged single mothers who normally drop out of school.</p> <p>An alternative vocational track that could be used instead of high school diploma used to engage those who are not academically inclined to give them motivation to stay in school an learn a marketable trade.</p>

Action steps that will result in progress toward meeting the identified need:

1. Meet with the local business leaders and the Chamber of Commerce to see what training a successful employee would need in an effort to match the training to the available local job market.
2. Develop public service announcements to advertise all the benefits of completing high school such as financial security and driver's license.

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Third Priority

Need related to children of this county

Child Safety

Existing resources available to help meet this need include:	Resources needed but unavailable to meet this need include:
<p>Cullman Park and Recreation offers child swimming lessons</p> <p>Some fire departments offer fire safety programs</p> <p>Some local insurance companies offer materials on bike safety</p>	<p>The Cullman CPC would like to engage local schools to have students participate in video and poster contests to educate and highlight safety issues that have been identified. Particularly distracted driving, water safety and fire safety.</p> <p>The Cullman CPC talked about getting a face book page to share information, public service announcements with the members and the public</p> <p>We need to find or develop Public Service Announcements for the local paper and radio to educate and call attention to the 5 safety issues that have been identified. ie distracted driving (texting), water safety, fire safety, dangers of tobacco, bicycle safety.</p> <p>The Cullman CPC would like to develop a Youth Advisory Council</p>

Action steps that will result in progress toward meeting the identified need:

Meet with the local superintendents of education to gain access to the schools to participate in video and poster contest.

Talk to local IT individuals to help develop Cullman CPC face book.

Identify appropriate PSA's and approach local media outlets for some free public service announcements that promote the 5 safety issues identified by Cullman CPC

Meet with local superintendents of education or Youth Leadership groups to make up a Youth Advisory Council.