

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES PROGRAM

A Sound Investment in Idaho's Children, Families and Future....

The **Community Resources for Families Program** assists Idaho families with school-aged children. As Idaho health and human services professionals realize, this program is often the last line of defense for children and families at risk, and a prudent investment in Idaho's future.

PROGRAM GOALS:

*** Increase safety and well-being of children**

Finding: Families have an increased ability to help their children participate in school and community activities, as well as increased ability to meet the basic physical and emotional needs of their children.

*** Increase school readiness of children**

Finding: More than 70% of the students referred to the program for academic, behavior, or attendance issues were subsequently evaluated by school personnel as having made progress due to the program. In 87%, the intervention successfully supported the child in improving for maintaining school performance. 91% of cases, students had an improved chance of being successful in school that year. In 50% of the cases, if intervention had not occurred, special education or special funds would have become necessary to support the student.

*** Increase self-reliance of families**

Finding: Families achieved positive self-reliance outcomes in providing for the basic living and emotional needs of their children. More than 70% referred increased their employment during services and 90% of families applied and received health insurance.

PROGRAM SERVICES:

- * Provides 30-90 day services to families,
- * Information, referral and support to families,
- * Strategic assessments and counseling,
- * Suggest parenting and coping skills,
- * Assist clients in securing essentials such as housing, clothing, food and medical care from local community resources.
- * Build assets in families through connecting/reconnecting them to support systems (church, extended family, groups, friends, school community activities and agencies)

BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY:

- * **Savings to taxpayers** (avoid homelessness shelter payments, foster care or other costly maintenance services).
 - Foster care of one child is conservatory estimated at \$1,011.93 per month. The states total minimum foster care per child/per year is 12,143.16.

BENEFIT: Average CRW Intervention (average annual cost per child impacted: \$450.00. Keeping children and families together.

*** Increased worker and student productivity for employers and schools, reduced crime for communities, and more families staying together.**

- Thousands of Idaho school children have no place to call home, no proper clothing, and have difficulty concentrating on school because of abuse, neglect or

financial and housing pressures faced by their families. One car breakdown, reduction in work hours, one illness or injury can be disastrous to families. Many are a paycheck away from homelessness. Once homeless, employability suffers.

- School system often focuses on behavioral problems of students that are frequently signs of families in crisis and financial hardship.
- Many families lack basic coping, communication and life skills.

BENEFIT: Early interventions often address crisis in families and students can again focus on learning and teachers on education.

BENEFIT: Early interventions can assist with maintaining employment and homelessness is avoided. Families can remain self reliant.

BENEFIT: CRW's address emergency conditions that disrupts families and impact children's well being.

Housing/Economic Facts

- A minimum wage earner (earning \$5.15 per hour) can afford monthly rent of no more than \$268.00
- 38% of renters in Idaho (2 of 5) are unable to afford Fair Market rent for a 2-bedroom unit.
- A minimum wage earner must work **72 hours per week** to afford the average 2-bedroom unit.
- Approximately 176,000 (1 in 6) Idahoans are at risk of homelessness, due to poverty (ID Dept of Labor)
- There is currently 1-2 year wait list for housing assistance in Idaho.

1999-2000 CRfF Program Accomplishments

- Approximately 5,000 families served
- Over 12,000 children benefited from services
- Average total cost per family served (counseling, assessment and referral and direct assistance)= \$683.00
- 90 Idaho school districts were served statewide
- 98% of families served are classified as the 'working poor', whose wages do not cover basic expenses
- 19.7% of families (1 in 5) were referred for homelessness prevention.
- 733 families received direct services, one-time housing assistance.

After one year....

- 93% of housing referrals were 'housing stabilized'.
- 59% of unemployed referrals had gained employment.
- 16% of employed referrals had increased their level of employment.
- Evaluation data indicates that the CRfF program strongly impacted school readiness.