

Whole Child, Whole School Measures

Whole Child:

Our agency has extensive experience in the facilitation of Integrated Student Services (ISS), a cost-effective approach to dropout prevention that has been found to improve educational outcomes and promote positive youth development. Integrated Student Supports are defined by Child Trends as "a school-based approach to promoting students' academic success by coordinating a seamless system of wraparound supports for the child, the family, and schools, to target students' academic and non-academic barriers to learning" (Moore K.A., 2014).

When a school chooses to have CIS-SA, their students benefit from the presence of a dedicated social service professional, or Site Coordinator, whose sole purpose is to help them succeed. CIS-SA Site Coordinators bring a range of resources, connections, and evidence-based practices to students through virtual and on-site case management supports. Trained in the model of integrated student services, Site Coordinators help schools identify student needs and create a feasible action plan for promoting academic success. With that plan, Site Coordinators draw upon a network of over 200 community partners to deliver needed resources, aligned with 6 core service components:

1. *Supportive guidance and counseling*: life skills, mentoring, character development
2. *Health and human services*: food packs, emergency aid, referrals to support agencies
3. *Parental and family engagement*: parenting workshops, support groups, home visits
4. *College and career awareness*: job shadowing, college tours, workplace mentoring
5. *Enrichment activities*: service-learning, field trips, STEM enrichment
6. *Academic enhancement and support*: tutoring services, homework assistance, afterschool programs

Whole School:

A key component of CIS-SA's tiered model of services is Tier 1: Whole School Supports. Examples of Tier 1 resources or services include motivational speakers for school-wide assemblies, career or college fairs, and school-wide anti-bullying programs. Below are other programs/initiatives that CIS-SA has established or are in the process of developing to more intentionally and effectively improve whole school climate and culture.

School Box of Trainings

CIS-SA's established network of CIS Site Coordinators, educators, and youth-serving organizations informed the development of our School Box of Training workshops, which is now highly requested by the districts and partner agencies we work with. CIS-SA's workshops include high-quality mental health focused trainings for school-based staff and youth development professionals to ensure greater numbers of the adults in our youths' ecosystem utilize a common framework to ensure healthy whole-child development. These trauma-informed workshops are critical to campus-based staffs' ability to understand and improve their own mental wellness as well as address the cross-generational traumas and historical and present racial and socioeconomic inequities affecting this communities predominately minority (79%) student population. Our goal is to ensure all youth-serving professionals in San Antonio have the capacity to protect their own health and wellness while providing necessary prevention and/or early intervention

supports to, ultimately, advance catalytic change in the system of care available to vulnerable youth and families affected by the pandemic

Trauma-Informed Certification

CIS-SA is currently working with The Ecumenical Center and The Institute for Trauma Informed Care to become a Trauma-Informed Certified agency. CIS-SA with leadership commitment will implement change that promotes the understanding of trauma, its impact and sign and symptoms as well as promote trauma resilience and recovery to avoid re-traumatization. CIS-SA will do this by creating a trauma certification team, following an implementation model and the 5 domains set out by The Ecumenical Center and The Institute for Trauma Informed Care. CIS-SA will also survey their staff, clients, and stakeholders through this process.

CIS National School Climate Project

CIS-SA currently partners with the National School Climate Center at Ramapo for Children and one Northside ISD campus to provide school climate guidance. The goal is to improve school climate and culture by going through the following steps: reflecting, embodying, enacting, and embedding. This project includes system evaluation, assessment of impact (staff and students), and accountability protocols.

RESEARCH NEEDS: CIS-SA would like support determining how to measure whole-school impacts of our traditional program on school campuses. Outside of measures for individual case-managed youth served, we do not have measures that are consistent across schools/districts to illustrate the “spill over” effect of CIS-SA’s partnership with schools.

School-Based Metal Health Programs

CIS-SA’s team of Licensed Mental Health Clinicians creates a cohesive system of mental healthcare for students, expanding access to counseling services by connecting mental health providers to youth directly in school or at home through virtual tele-counseling supports. This support has never been more important as students recover from both distance learning and pandemic-related stressors at home. Our trauma-informed team of Clinicians offers invaluable services to children and families with little access to quality mental health care. Few mental health providers are allowed on-campus to provide services, however due to our unique relationship with the school districts our Clinicians are permitted to provide mental health counseling to students on-campus or through virtual supports during the school day.

Project Access

The Project Access program is our most established clinical program. The Project Access program was originally developed in 2005 and its purpose is to provide short-term (8-10 sessions) intensive counseling services to students (and their families) who are enrolled in CIS-SA as a case managed student at their school. The goal of the Project Access program is to bring counseling services to the students at their school because many of the families we work with have a difficult time accessing outside counseling services due to money, transportation, and/or time limitations. It is important to note that once the sessions are over the student is provided aftercare by the CIS-SA Site Coordinator staff on their home campus. This continuity of care is imperative to maintaining the student’s progress. Our Project Access staff currently serve students in the following San Antonio area school districts: San Antonio ISD, South San ISD, East Central ISD, Harlandale ISD,

Judson ISD, Southwest ISD, Pearsall ISD, Northeast ISD, Northside ISD, & Somerset ISD. In 2020 we introduced Devine ISD to Communities In Schools of San Antonio through our Devine ISD Project Access program.

Teen Parent Program

The Metro Health - Teen Parent Program is our clinical program dedicated to providing counseling and mental health support to pregnant and/or parenting teenagers across four San Antonio area school districts. This program was developed in 2017 in collaboration with the City of San Antonio Metropolitan Health District agency. Our Clinical Caseworkers dedicated to this program can provide counseling services to schools who may not have a CIS-SA Site Coordinator assigned to their campus. The purpose of the Metro Health Clinical program is to reduce the repeat pregnancy rate in teenage youth of San Antonio.

Domestic Violence Program

The Metro Health - Domestic Violence Program is our clinical program dedicated to providing counseling and mental health support to students (and their families) who have been affected by domestic violence. This program was developed in 2020 in collaboration with the City of San Antonio Metropolitan Health District agency and supports students across three San Antonio area school districts (Northside ISD, San Antonio ISD, and Judson ISD). Our Clinical Caseworkers dedicated to this program can provide counseling services to schools who may not have a CIS-SA Site Coordinator assigned to their campus.

SEEDS Program

The Social Emotional Education and Development with Students Program (SEEDS Program) is a clinical program, developed in 2018, which provides mental health services to campuses in Northside ISD & North East ISD that DO NOT have a traditional CIS-SA program on their campus. The SEEDS program is made up of licensed mental health professional teams who serve students from select high school feeder patterns in each district. Each team is made up of a counselor and a social worker who typically provide services to about seven elementary schools, two middle schools, and a single high school. The counselor for each of the feeder patterns provides intensive counseling services to students who are referred by the district's point of contact personnel at each of the schools in the feeder pattern. The social worker for each of the feeder patterns provides on-going case management and supportive guidance services to the referred students and any necessary after care to the students and their families once counseling services have ended.

PACE Wellness Program

The Parent and Child Emotional Wellness Program (PACE Wellness) was developed in 2020 and provides mental health services to select Head Start campuses in San Antonio ISD. The PACE Wellness program is made up of licensed mental health professional teams who serve students from select high school feeder patterns in each district. Each team is made up of a counselor and a social worker who typically provide services to about seven elementary schools, two middle schools, and a single high school. The counselor for each of the feeder patterns provides intensive counseling services to students and family members who are referred by the district's point of contact personnel at each of the schools in the feeder pattern.

RESEARCH NEEDS: There has never been an external evaluation of our clinical counseling programs.

Post-Secondary Preparation and Support Programs

Graduation Coaches

CIS-SA currently employs 2 Graduation Coaches to provide college and career navigation services for youth at risk of disconnection, effectively helping them transition to college or the workplace. This project currently targets young men of color in high-need high schools, predominately focusing on Junior and Senior level students. Youth at risk of dropping out need intentional year-over-year support to stay in school, graduate and obtain the skills required for a career. Although other pre-college support programs exist in San Antonio, CIS-SA has developed a unique program model to incorporate social, emotional, and academic college and career readiness services into the traditional CIS model of case management and wraparound Integrated Student Supports. As a CIS-SA program, the proposed initiative ensures participating students have access to dedicated college and career support, as well as a dedicated CIS Site Coordinator dedicated to addressing the underlying barriers to success in school. We believe such holistic support is necessary if underprivileged youth are to have the same opportunities as students with fewer barriers to success.

Palo Alto College – Wrap-Around Retention & Persistence Program

Communities In Schools seeks to provide continuous support to students as they transition from high school to post-secondary education as well as those in college preparing to transition to a four-year institution. The Transition Coordinator, embedded at Palo Alto College, works to assist students in navigating college demands and accessing resources relevant to them. The purpose is to provide wrap-around case management services to students enrolled at PAC to impact retention and persistence toward obtaining their post-secondary goals.

HS to College - PAC Re-Engagement Program

In partnership with Palo Alto College, CIS-SA has established a team of Re-Engagement Coordinators (RC) to ensure disengaged youth have the support and resources they need to enroll and persist in college. The RCs are equipped to pursue outreach and home visit efforts and coordinate with CIS-SA, district, and college staff to ensure students have equitable support and resources to persist throughout the school year. The Reengagement Coordinators provide in-person and virtual targeted interventions aimed at reengaging students and preventing an increase in San Antonio's Opportunity Youth population. There are two groups they essentially target:

- Population A) FTIC who are struggling with making it through the college application and enrollment process. This team also reconnects and supports graduating seniors who are struggling to recover in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The RCs target populations will include students who registered but did not follow through and attend community colleges or local college of intent, students who did not have a plan when they graduated in 2020, and, starting in June 2021 graduates who started but did not complete their college application for local community college and universities.
- Population B) Continuing students who began college at PAC and “stopped out” somewhere in the last 12 months

RESEARCH NEEDS: There has never been an external evaluation of our post-secondary preparation or support programs.

AmeriCorps Program

AmeriCorps is a network of national service programs where individuals commit their time to address critical community needs, while receiving hands-on professional development, a living stipend and an education award. Communities In Schools of San Antonio is proud to be selected as a recipient of the AmeriCorps State grant through the OneStar Foundation. AmeriCorps members help build our capacity as an organization to empower economically disadvantaged students at-risk of dropping out of school in San Antonio. CIS-SA recruits AmeriCorps members who are currently pursuing bachelor's or master's degrees in Social Work, Counseling, and related fields through strong partnerships with local and online universities. AmeriCorps members receive on-going training and are directly supervised by a highly qualified Site Coordinator at up to 60 identified school sites. CIS-SA AmeriCorps Members provide intentional, individualized student supports to 5 to 10 case managed students, facilitate groups to address common barriers and support school wide initiatives.

RESEARCH NEEDS: There has never been an evaluation of our AmeriCorps program. We are interested in learning how this project has 1) Impacted our recruitment and hiring processes; and 2) Influences job satisfaction/retention of AmeriCorps members who apply for and accept a FTE position with CIS-SA.