THE NATIONAL EVALUATION OF CITIES IN SCHOOLS: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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OVERVIEW

This Executive Summary relays the key findings of a multi-year evaluation of the Cities in Schools (CIS) program, a school-based intervention for at-risk youth. Cities in Schools, Inc., is a nonprofit organization that provides training and technical assistance to promote replication of the CIS dropout prevention process in communities and schools. The CIS model involves establishing community-based CIS programs that develop projects in school sites to provide services to youth at risk of dropping out of school. The objective of the model is to integrate existing community services and resources, and relocate them to the school site to achieve dropout reduction and mitigate related problems, such as substance abuse, gang involvement, violence, and other risky behaviors.

This evaluation of CIS was sponsored by a consortium of federal agencies that provide support to the national CIS organization for replications of the CIS model. The federal partnership is led by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). Long-standing partners include the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Education, Health and Human Services, and Labor. The federal partners sought a process and impact evaluation that would assess the CIS national organization's replication process and its training and technical assistance efforts, as well as the degree to which the CIS model has been implemented at the community level and the effects it appears to have on schools and students.

The federal partner agencies also were interested in learning about conditions that promote or inhibit institutionalization of the model, program costs, and descriptions of CIS sites that received Department of Labor funding to develop CIS programs in cooperation with community-level Private Industry Councils. In addition, the evaluation plan called for identification and case studies of ten CIS programs that were felt to be good examples of adherence to the model, or particular components of it, or that had innovative features. The evaluation was intended to be useful not only to federal decision makers, but also to the national CIS organization and to communities that have CIS programs, or are contemplating such initiatives.

In addition to the specific research objectives identified by the federal partners, the CIS evaluation provides insight into a number of policy issues. An overarching policy theme related to this research is that of integrated service delivery, which has received increasing attention in recent years at the national, state, and local levels as a mechanism for (i) meeting the needs of clients with multiple problems and (ii) overcoming the drawbacks of the existing categorical service delivery system. Since the CIS model is, in effect, a collaborative service delivery model, the information obtained in this evaluation may be applicable to a variety of collaborative efforts. There are several sub-issues related to the broader issue of collaboration that also emerged in this evaluation, including:

- Partnerships and equity among partners.
- Information sharing.
- Collaborations' impact on reducing duplication of services.
- Stability and institutionalization.

Key findings of the evaluation related to the CIS national organization and network, its community programs, and related policy issues are presented in Exhibits 1, 2, and 3. We recommend that the CIS national organization place greater emphasis on providing training and technical assistance to bolster those areas where weaknesses have been identified. In particular, programs need guidance in terms of developing procedures to monitor client and system outcomes. The national organization might encourage local programs to annually document their program configuration, including descriptions of service provision and eligible clientele. Local programs probably would benefit from assistance in developing quality assurance/control procedures with respect to record keeping. We particularly recommend that CIS' concept of accountability be broadened to include maintaining data that enable assessments of the effects of programs on students served, as well as for fine-tuning program and project operations based upon demonstrated successes.

Similarly, if federal partnership agencies supporting the national CIS organization wish to have more robust outcome data from local affiliates in the future, we recommend they clearly establish that intent as part of their agreement with CIS. The national organization, in turn, could then stipulate that local participation in national evaluations is a condition that may be attached to communities requesting and receiving CIS training and technical assistance. In addition, guidance could be provided to both the national organization and the local community programs to clarify the issues involved in ensuring confidentiality and to facilitate information sharing among agencies and with the research community. Such guidance might model approaches that can be implemented to offer adequate protection, such as informed consent procedures for students and parents, and formal information-sharing agreements that would guarantee research access to official records for reasonably long periods of time (e.g., to permit longitudinal analysis for five years).

Detailed evaluation findings are presented in three volumes, each focused on specific elements of the research design (see Morley and Rossman 1995-a, 1995-b; and Rossman and Morley 1995). It should be noted that the conditions and practices described here (and in the three volumes) reflect circumstances at the time of field work and data collection (from October, 1991, to about February 1994). These descriptions or observations do not reflect changes that have occurred subsequently. Similarly, there are occasional references here to activities or initiatives that were expected to occur. However, it is not known whether such plans were implemented as anticipated, since implementation would have occurred after the evaluation was completed.

Exhibit 1

Findings Regarding the CIS National Organization and Replication Activities

- CIS has successfully promoted awareness of its prototype of service delivery, and provided leadership and support that led to considerable expansion of the CIS network in recent years. In a period of approximately five years (from March 1988 to December 1993), the number of community programs increased more than 200 percent (from 26 to 93 programs), and the number of school sites increased by more than 375 percent (from 128 to 612 school projects).

- As it has matured as an organization, the CIS national organization has strengthened and streamlined its organizational structure and management. This included creation of regional offices whose staff focus on providing training and technical assistance to promote replication of the CIS prototype. More recently, emphasis has been placed on development of autonomous state CIS programs to perform services similar to those of the regional offices. While regional and state offices appear to work well together, their respective roles are evolving and appear to need clarification.

- Development and refinement of centralized training (including three "core courses" related to replication of the CIS model and to managing local programs and school projects) has been a major accomplishment of CIS. More than 700 individuals have participated in these classes since 1989. "Elective" courses were under development to further expand CIS' training slate.

- Most local programs reported satisfaction with the support they received in the form of training and technical assistance (from all levels of CIS). However, more mature programs appear to be somewhat less satisfied with the level of support received than newer ones. The focus of support seems to be directed toward programs that are not yet operational, or are still relatively new. Efforts are needed to develop forms of support targeted to mature programs, and to ensure that they are not overlooked by the demands associated with facilitating large numbers of developing programs.

- For the most part, local CIS programs that entered the replication process after CIS' centralized training became available have adhered to the suggested replication process fairly closely. They have conducted most steps suggested, although not necessarily in the sequence recommended.

- Regional and state offices have contributed to the expansion of community programs through their provision of considerable amounts of training and technical assistance, although there is variation in the level and type of support provided by different regions and states. Community program staff perceive that regional or state training, rather than

centralized training, is more relevant to the issues they confront; this suggests a greater training role for regions and states may be appropriate.

- Based on existing state office contributions to development of community programs, it appears that CIS should encourage more state programs. Autonomous state offices may be preferable to programs located within state agencies, since the latter are vulnerable to potential changes within such agencies, including staff mobility, funding shifts, and changes in administration. State offices appear to need more than one year of support (regardless of funding source) to develop a lasting program at the state level.

- Although the experience with state programs has been largely satisfactory, using them as key providers of training and technical assistance may be something of a weak link due to their autonomous status. CIS should develop mechanisms to strengthen management skills of state directors; CIS also should consider developing uniform procedures or formats for key management practices to promote their use in all states.

- Centralized development of training or technical assistance materials (in addition to existing materials for core courses) for use by state (or regional) programs appears to be desirable to conserve resources and promote quality control (by encouraging provision of "standardized" training across states). Development of clearinghouse functions for training materials at the national organizational level also appears desirable.

- The autonomous nature of local programs presents quality control and accountability concerns for federal agencies that provide funding to the national organization with the intent of achieving particular objectives at the local level. CIS can provide training and attempt to influence state and local programs; however, except in cases where funds are channeled to community programs through the national organization, it does not have authority over local entities. Thus, local programs may choose not to address substantive issues of concern to the federal partnership agencies (e.g., substance abuse curricula or recruiting youth with court involvement) despite efforts on the part of the national organization to promote programming in those areas of interest.

- The national organization and CIS Board have appropriately turned attention to quality control issues, an important consideration in view of the growth of the network. A Quality and Standards Committee was established in 1993, and its recommendations may resolve some of the issues identified with respect to accountability. This is an area where continued attention and application of resources would be well-advised.

- Data routinely collected by CIS from community programs over the years have not included student outcome-related data. Since such data are closely associated with accountability, which CIS stresses, it appears desirable for CIS to take a stronger role in

promoting performance monitoring than it has done in the past. Proposed changes to national data collection may address this issue.

- As of early 1994, CIS anticipated undertaking several new initiatives, including development of community havens and provision of focused support for new and existing "flagship cities." The number of initiatives being introduced at one time may have detrimental impacts on existing programs and activities, despite anticipated staff growth to support them.

- The projected targeting of support to the flagship cities may divert resources from existing community programs and other developing programs. Care should be taken to avoid truncating the replication process in these communities due to perceived or real pressure to make new flagship programs operational within a particular time period.

- The increased emphasis on corporate academies, including new "sports academies" and JROTC/Career academies, seems inconsistent with CIS' emphasis on serving larger numbers of students, and on restructuring service delivery by providing services in public schools. However, academies can be regarded as viable alternatives if viewed in the context of a system that incorporates several models of site-based service delivery. Under that scenario, the smaller size and more flexible teaching methods associated with academies might be regarded as particularly appropriate for students who have severe problems, requiring more intensive attention. In addition, the academy structure appears to attract funders, who are interested in supporting an identifiable project, rather than co-mingling their funding with other supporters.

Exhibit 2

Findings Regarding Community Program and School-Based Issues

- Fund raising and community support are key elements for the success of local programs. Even programs that had attained such support were concerned about their ability to sustain funding in the future. Funding is often obtained in the form of seed money for new projects or programs. Once this initial funding is used, local programs, even those that have demonstrated "success," have difficulty finding funders willing to support continued operations of programs since most funding is geared toward start-up ventures.

- Early involvement of the private sector is a key factor in generating continued support for program operations. Having CIS program staff members involved and active in various community efforts and committees/task forces helps promote awareness of, and build support for, the CIS program. Use of publicity on a regular basis also generates public awareness and support. Participation in periodic high-profile community activities also serves this purpose.

- An involved Board is important for raising resources to support a program; several programs helped ensure Board involvement by engaging members in activities (e.g., interviewing potential student participants, mentorship roles) at specific school sites.

- Initial and on-going staff training -- for CIS employees and other staff associated with the program -- is emphasized in several programs. Some ensured that large numbers of staff attended centralized CIS training at NCPD or at the regional level, and developed local follow-up training. Some programs provided their own staff development mechanisms to provide on-going or specialized training.

- CIS regards the repositioning of staff from social service agencies and similar organizations to the school site to provide services for CIS students as a key ingredient that differentiates CIS from other programs. However, many programs reported that obtaining repositioned staff was a problem area. In addition, many staff considered as "repositioned" were actually paid, in whole or part, by CIS, or were hired specifically for CIS by agencies providing them. In short, true repositioning is not as widespread as it appears to be. In most programs, repositioned staff represented only a small number of service providers.

- Services integration and case management are weak links in many programs. Programs that use social workers as project directors, or have repositioned social workers, are more successful in providing case management than programs without such staff. Problem areas associated with services integration at many sites include: (i) difficulty establishing a comprehensive set of services; (ii) services sites are able to access tend not to be integrated with one another; and (iii) services are often accessed only through off-site referral. Most of the programs visited did not achieve real services integration in the

sense of providing a full spectrum of services at the school site. In addition, program and agency staff generally reported that participation in CIS had not led to significant changes in the way agencies provide services.

- A commitment to top-down reform on the part of the school district and committed leadership appear to be key factors in initiating CIS programs on a widespread local basis. Similarly, in terms of site selection strategy, some programs recommended choosing schools that are stable or have evidenced recent reforms; schools that are "going downhill" make it virtually impossible for CIS programs to succeed.

- Developing good working relationships between the CIS program and the schools in which projects are located helps ensure their survival. Several programs emphasized the principal as a key figure, since the heart of CIS operations occur at the school level. Ensuring that the principal wants the CIS program in his/her school is critical to overall success. A few programs enhance CIS-school relationships by periodically surveying principals and other school staff to determine their perceptions of the CIS programs in their school; having CIS staff serve on school management teams or committees that focus on identifying and responding to students' academic and social problems; or establishing program liaisons to facilitate communication between CIS and school staff and to provide training and assistance for teachers assigned to work with CIS students.

- Development of academies (alternative schools) for CIS students enables use of innovative teaching methods and curricula structured to meet the special needs of CIS students, in addition to providing ancillary services typically associated with CIS programs in regular schools. In alternative schools, principal support for such innovations is virtually guaranteed, since the entire school is developed for CIS. It is important to select or train teachers willing to be creative and to modify their teaching techniques for such settings. In some cases, non-traditional teaching styles also are used in CIS classes in regular schools.

- Programs that developed project components (such as tutoring or mentoring) that require substantial numbers of volunteers on a regular basis also have allocated staff to manage this component of the program, in terms of recruitment, training, and coordination of volunteers. Availability of on-going support to volunteers also is an important factor in success of such efforts.

- Although some programs have developed special components to involve or provide services to parents, most programs do relatively little along these lines. The majority of parental involvement appears to occur through telephone contact. Even programs that conduct regular home visits generally do so only a few times each year (sometimes only once or twice), except in special cases. Program staff often are frustrated by their difficulty in obtaining greater parental involvement, but lack the resources and time to

devote to this, given their primary objective of providing services to students. While some services are provided to parents or other family members (primarily referrals to services), most CIS programs do not appear to be able to meet the objective of treating the child holistically by providing services to the family, as well as the child.

- A few programs recognize the importance of tracking data on student outcomes to shape program/project operations, as well as to demonstrate program success to current and potential funders. However, most programs do not compile data along these lines. Programs keep varying types of information in student files, and most do not compile or aggregate information on a regular basis. Similarly, information sharing among partner agencies, including the CIS program and the school(s), often is not implemented, and can be a barrier to provision of holistic service delivery and to monitoring student progress.

Exhibit 3

Findings Regarding Student Outcomes and Client Satisfaction

- CIS programs clearly serve the targeted population. This includes both at-risk youth, who should be exposed to prevention efforts designed to avoid future problems, and youth who have already crossed the line into risky behaviors and consequences that require intervention to mitigate and resolve existing problems.

- Based on post-enrollment self-esteem scales, CIS participants evidence relatively high self-esteem. However, it was not possible to determine whether students' esteem was improved by their exposure to CIS, or whether they had reasonably high self-esteem at program entry. Given many CIS programs' emphases on activities designed to bolster students' self-esteem, we recommend that programs adopt the policy of administering self-esteem instruments to students upon intake as a means of focusing program services, and also to document outcomes with respect to students' improvements in this domain.

- Although CIS programs do not achieve stated objectives for all participants, attendance and academic performance are improved for students with serious problems (and also for students with moderately severe problems) in these areas. For example, of the 109 students (48.7 percent of the sample for whom records were available) who entered CIS programs with 10 or more days of absence the previous year, 67.9 percent demonstrated improved attendance. Further, for the 50 students who had severe absenteeism (i.e., exceeding 21 days or more than 10 percent of the school year) prior to CIS enrollment, 70.0 percent improved their attendance, and the average improvement was 6.6 days of increased attendance. Similarly, based on 289 students for whom records were available, 48.8 percent improved their GPAs. Of the students (45.3 percent of the sample) who entered CIS with GPAs of 1.99 or lower, 60.3 percent improved their GPAs during their first year in CIS. For students exhibiting the most severe academic problems (i.e., GPAs less than or equal to 1.0), 78.8 percent improved their grades, and the average improvement in GPA was 1.0 grade point.

- Given the at-risk characteristics of the students served, CIS programs' cumulative dropout rates compare reasonably well with other programs that serve the same type of student population (e.g., the Boston Compact estimated cumulative dropout rates of 36 percent to 43 percent; a New Jersey study in higher-risk urban areas estimated dropout rates of 40 to 60 percent). CIS students' records, which were tracked as closely as possible up to the date of field visitation during the 1992/93 school year, documented that: (i) 20.7 percent had dropped out of school; (ii) 68.4 percent were still in school; and (iii) 8.6 percent graduated, which represented 68.9 percent of those estimated to be eligible to graduate by this time (or 31.1 percent of the eligible graduation cohort dropped out).

Exhibit 3 (Cont'd)

- Students enrolled in CIS alternative school programs demonstrated greater improvements than students in CIS sites at typical public schools.

- Students perceive they have benefitted from their association with CIS. They articulated a number of overt, as well as more subtle, changes in attitude and behavior that they attributed to CIS' influence and support. In general, a positive relationship was found to exist between reported problems and improvements; that is, those who reported the most severe problems also reported the most dramatic improvements. This is consistent with the findings that evolved from the records-based analyses of student outcomes.

- The overwhelming majority of students not only reported personal progress, but also expressed high levels of satisfaction with the program. Students' responses were less favorable in their view of CIS's help in the areas of drug and alcohol use. More respondents considered those items non-salient, as compared to other items: 48.1 percent of the sample indicated that reducing drug use was not applicable to them or they did not need help in this area; 45.8 percent indicated non-salience for the statement about CIS helpfulness in becoming drug or alcohol free. However, for those who did respond to these statements along the continuum of agreement-disagreement: (i) nearly 39 percent disagreed that CIS had helped them reduce drug or alcohol use; 11.8 percent indicated strong disagreement and (ii) nearly 33 percent disagreed that CIS had helped them become drug or alcohol free.

- Students were particularly enamored with the warm, supportive relationships that CIS staff initiated and sustained. In general, the students' wish list for expanding CIS services focused on the need for jobs, particularly those they perceived as being of high quality (i.e., reasonably well compensated, pleasant working environment, and respectful employer-employee relations).

- Most parents are not heavily involved in either CIS activities or school activities; the bulk of CIS services are focused on students, not on their family members. However, parents perceived CIS as providing needed services that are beneficial to their children and that children generally appreciate. Again, parents noted that expanded employment services are crucial; jobs are needed by both students and other adult family members.

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation of CIS included both process and impact components designed to provide:

- A study of the CIS national organization and its replication activities, focusing on the effectiveness of training and technical assistance.

- A study of a representative sample of CIS sites to assess local implementation of the CIS prototype, the extent to which local programs are serving the designated target group of at-risk students, and the effects of local programs on student outcomes.

- Case studies of CIS programs selected for their innovative features, adherence to the CIS model, or similar features of interest.

Field work began in October, 1991, and was completed in February, 1994.

Replication, Training, and Technical Assistance

The structure and effects of the replication, training, and technical assistance activities of the national organization were assessed using several techniques. Interviews were conducted with senior-level CIS headquarters staff, as well as with staff in five regional and six state offices. Secondary data analyses included a review of documents describing the functions, responsibilities, and communication patterns within the national, regional, and state offices.

Site visits to 17 communities (described below) provided data on replication, training, and technical assistance from the perspective of older, more mature CIS projects. Detailed telephone discussions were completed with staff in 42 newly operational programs or programs in the replication process; and with representatives of 18 programs that had been discontinued or whose replication efforts were "stalled."

In addition, the research team observed several training sessions, including (i) two centralized courses conducted at CIS' National Center for Partnership Development located at Lehigh University, (ii) a joint regional/state annual training conference annually held in Texas, and (iii) a regional training session targeted to community-level personnel in one state. We reviewed related instructional manuals, and interviewed trainees present at those sessions.

Local Program Implementation and Outcomes

Data collection activities associated with the evaluation of local programs included field visits to 17 CIS programs selected to be representative of geographical diversity, various program strategies, and service configurations. CIS community program and school-based staff, and key affiliates, were interviewed and surveyed to document program strategies and implementation, barriers encountered, and perceived results in terms of systemic change and client outcomes.

Interviews also were conducted with students enrolled in CIS projects at middle and high schools, and with a small number of parents. Data on student characteristics and outcomes (primarily, school attendance, course grades, and grade point averages) were extracted from CIS program/project files and school records on individual participants. Questionnaires were used to augment these data with self-reported information on student profiles, school- and non-school-related difficulties and outcomes, and client satisfaction.

Local Program and Selection

Community program and school site selection were purposive. Key selection characteristics included geographic location/CIS regions; types of community (i.e., urban, medium or small cities, rural areas); program/project size; services offered; and partnership organizations involved. Beyond these, sample selection was based on three primary considerations: program maturity, willingness, and capacity to cooperate with planned evaluation activities, as discussed below. Mature sites were defined as those where school projects were in place for two or more years at the time the sample was drawn (i.e., sites that began operating in 1989 or earlier). This criteria was chosen to provide sufficient program longevity to enable tracking student outcome data over a multi-year period. Of the 60 CIS programs operating at the time, 36 communities met the eligibility criteria for program maturity, and most were willing to participate and reported they could provide access to student records of various kinds (i.e., CIS or school records).

There is considerable diversity among community types visited, which included five large urban areas (i.e., Chicago, Philadelphia, Miami, Long Beach, San Antonio, and Austin) and a group of medium-sized cities (i.e., Richmond, VA; Columbia, SC; High Point, NC). The West Palm Beach program is a county-level program that incorporates a city, suburbs, and extremely rural towns; Pinal County, AZ, also a county-level community program, was the most rural of the CIS programs operational at the time. The Southwestern Pennsylvania program is located in the suburbs of Pittsburgh. Greensville-Emporia, VA; Rocky Mount, NC; Griffin-Spalding, GA; Marianna, AR; and Helena/West Helena, AR, are in small to moderate-sized communities that are located in otherwise predominantly rural or semi-rural settings.

Within selected communities, CIS program directors were asked to identify the CIS school sites that had been operational sufficiently long to have had students who would present the opportunity to track longer-term outcomes. The final selection of CIS school sites emphasized data collection from middle, high, and alternative school projects. A few elementary schools also were included, since one evolving program strategy is to target youth at earlier ages to focus on prevention efforts, as well as intervention and mitigation of problems.

Exhibit 4 presents the final sample of 17 communities, and also identifies the CIS region in which the programs are located; the total number and types of schools served at the time the site was selected (as an indicator of overall program size); and the number and levels of schools visited.

Exhibit 4

CIS Programs Visited

CIS Region	Operational Since	CIS Region	Number/Type of Schools Served	Number/Type of Schools Visited
Richmond, VA*	1989	SE	1 A(H)	1 A(H)
Greensville-Emporia, VA*	1989	SE	1M	1M
Rocky Mount, NC	1988	SE	1E 2M	2M
Pinal County, AZ	1988	SW	10E, 6M, 5H, 1MU, 1O	1E, 1M, 1H
Long Beach, CA	1988	SW	1M 1B	1M 1B, H
Columbia, SC	1988	SE	1A, 1B, 2O	1 A(H)
Griffin-Spalding, GA	1989	SE	4M	1 A(MU)
Miami PIC, FL	1989	SE	13 H	2H
West Palm Beach Co., FL	1985	SE	3E, 7M, 13H, 1MU, 1B	2H, 1 A(H)
Philadelphia, PA	1986	NE	1M, 11H, 1B	2H
San Antonio,TX	1986	SC	2E, 6M, 5H, 1B	1E, 1M, 1H
Austin, TX	1985	SC	2E, 3M, 3H, 2O	1M, 1H
Chicago, IL	1989	NC	1H, 4MU, 1O	1M, 1H
SW Pennsylvania, PA	1986	NE	3E, 2M, 2H, 1MU	1M, 1H
High Point, NC	1988	SE	1H	1H
Marianna, AR*	1989	SC	1H	1H
Helena/W. Helena*	1990	SC	1M	1M

* PIC/CIS Initiative Sites

Key to school types:

E = Elementary
M = Middle
H = High
MU = Multiple
A = Alternative
O = Other
B = Burger King Academy

Site Visit Methodology

Information packages were sent to each site in advance of field visitation to inform program staff about the objectives of the visit and the planned activities, as well as to request documents (e.g., annual reports, program brochures, descriptions of CIS classes or services provided, staff information, and a sample of a "typical" student record) and information about obtaining research clearances. Research staff contacted each program by telephone to finalize logistics; and CIS regional staff also contacted sites in advance of the field visits to ensure that local programs had appropriately received "clearances" (e.g., parental consent forms, permission of school administrators) to provide access to student records and/or for team members to talk with students and school staff. Despite this advance planning, data collection from sources other than CIS program/project staff was extremely difficult to achieve: (i) records were missing or inaccessible; (ii) students were largely unavailable during classroom hours and could not be detained after class; and (iii) parents were largely uninvolved in school activities (often due to transportation difficulties or other demands on their time), and personally not committed to CIS, although supportive of their children's ability to access services through CIS.

In general, two-member teams visited each site for a period of three to five days, typically meeting with the CIS program director, local Board members, and staff; director(s) of partner agencies and personnel they assigned to CIS; school superintendents and principals; CIS school site (project) coordinators; CIS teachers; and volunteers, such as tutors or mentors. Semi-structured guides were used to discuss such topics as: community and school characteristics; nature of community support for dropout prevention in general, and CIS in particular; partnership development; fund raising; and program strategies with respect to implementation and expansion, school site selection, student eligibility, service provision, services integration and case management, monitoring and tracking of student progress, and program institutionalization.

Team members also examined program documents, such as brochures; announcements; forms related to student intake and services delivered; annual reports; evaluation reports; curricular materials; newsletters; publicity materials; and budget/funding information. The available materials varied considerably among sites; some were able to provide relatively few documents. Lack of documentation, for example, precluded cost and cost-effectiveness analyses for most of the programs. Only five programs were able to provide sufficient financial information for this purpose, and these locations were used to illustrate cost considerations.

Cost Estimation Methods

A key cost estimation issue was whether to assess costs and outcomes at the school level or program level. Although both seemed interesting, since most CIS programs do not calculate cost data on a per-school basis, we adopted the approach of calculating unit cost and/or cost effectiveness at the program level, in combination with aggregate student outcome data for all schools in the program. In cases where it was possible to obtain school-level cost data for one or two schools (generally those visited during our field work), we calculated cost-effectiveness and/or cost per student at both the program and school level. Given that the program office

exists to support the school sites in a variety of ways (developing resources for them, providing assistance, etc.), a portion of overall program-level costs were attributed to each school site where program resources could clearly be allocated in this fashion; where program costs were not clearly associated with individual schools, costs were allocated evenly among school sites.

Ideally, all costs associated with operating a program should be included in a cost analysis. This is a relatively straight-forward concept in many program areas, but is more complex in the case of CIS because of its reliance on repositioned staff, volunteers, and other in-kind donations. Estimations were based on the costs (total value) of actually providing the service (since this is an important policy consideration), rather than just dollars expended by the respective CIS programs.

The value of the repositioned staff used in this analysis was generally reported in the financial information provided by the respective CIS programs. In some cases, this was calculated in their annual reports or financial documents. In other cases, program staff estimated these amounts for us.

CIS programs often receive donations of space for program and school site offices. In cases where the value of such donations was included in program annual reports or audited statements, we included this figure in the total costs of service delivery. In cases where program staff could not provide estimates of such donations, we did not attempt to estimate their value. Nor did we attempt to attribute values to services associated with donated facilities, such as on-going maintenance and cleaning, utilities, etc. Absence of these items would appear to represent a relatively minor omission in the overall cost calculations.

Unlike the repositioned staff, the value of volunteer services was not reported by CIS; estimates were generated using the minimum hourly wage for this calculation. An alternative approach would have been to use the value of the time foregone by the volunteers, but this alternative was not chosen because it (i) would have added unnecessary complexity to the calculation, and (ii) also would have inflated the cost figure derived, since volunteers often include relatively highly-paid professionals. The amount of time donated by each volunteer was calculated by multiplying their standard weekly or monthly time commitment (which varied by program, but was often one or two hours a week) by an estimated number of weeks of service provided, using a conservative estimate of 30 weeks per year available for volunteer service. We multiplied the minimum wage and the expected volunteer time commitment for the particular program by 30. This, of course, would underestimate the cost of service delivery in programs where volunteer services are provided on a year-round basis.

It was not possible to ascertain the length of service associated with particular outcomes from the aggregate student data provided. Thus, we calculated unit cost or cost-effectiveness measures on a year-by-year basis. That is, outcomes in 1993 were related to costs in 1993, even though costs from prior years likely contributed to those outcomes. This approach was used even in the case of high school graduates, who had most likely been with CIS for more than a year,

and, in some cases, for four years. Thus, our calculations likely under-estimate the cost per student for most outcome measures.

The Student Sample

Several samples were used to examine CIS student characteristics, nature and intensity of service intervention, and outcomes. One sample, used for records analyses, was derived from student cohorts for the 1989/90 and 1990/91 academic years. The sampling frame included all rostered CIS students, not just those who entered the program, during those time periods (i.e., students who had enrolled in CIS during earlier years, and were still participating during the 1989/90 or 1990/91 timeframe, met eligibility criteria). Although the intent was to capture longer-term outcomes both during, and subsequent to, students' participation in CIS, only 27 of the 659 students sampled (or 4 percent) actually had entered CIS earlier than the specified time periods (and, all of these students had entered during 1988).

Students ranged in age from 7 to 35 (the average age of respondents was 14.6; the standard deviation was +/-2.15 years). Table 1 presents the distribution of students by racial/ethnic composition and gender. Tables 2 and 3 present these demographic characteristics of the sample, broken out by school type. [Note: percentages reported in this document are "valid percents" unless otherwise specified.]

Originally, this was intended to be a random sample of 50 CIS students per school site. The sampling plan proved infeasible for a number of reasons (e.g., program inability to reconstruct student rosters for the prescribed timeframe, program concern about confidentiality and information sharing, largely incomplete or missing records); therefore, no claims can be made about the generalizability of these findings to the larger population of at-risk students.

Two additional (overlapping and non-random) samples of students, who were accessible during the field visits conducted in the 1992/93 academic year, were used to buttress the findings from the analyses of records with self-reported information on demographics, service needs and provision, and outcomes. These included 125 middle- and high-school students, who participated in one-on-one or small-group interviews, and 391 students who responded to a brief questionnaire.

Survey respondents ranged in age from 12 to 32 (average age of respondents was 15.9; standard deviation +/-2.12); those who were older than 19 were either recently graduated former CIS students, students in an alternative learning school that also caters to adult education, or participants in the parenting skills class offered in conjunction with a community-based agency partnership at one CIS high school project. About 18 percent of survey respondents had been in CIS for three or more years at the time the survey was administered; more than 43 percent indicated less than one full year of participation in CIS; and an additional 25 percent reported between one full year and just under two years of exposure to CIS.

Table 1. **Racial/Ethnic Composition, by Gender, Using Records Sample**			
	Male	**Female**	**Total**
African-American	163	188	351 (57.4)
Caucasian	49	39	88 (14.4)
Hispanic	81	74	155 (25.3)
Other Races	11	7	18 (2.9)
Total	304 (49.7)	308 (50.3)	612 (100.0)
Missing = 47			

Table 2. **Racial/Ethnic Composition, by School Type, Using Records Sample**					
	School Type				
Race	**Elementary School**	**Middle School**	**High School**	**Alternative School**	**Total**
African American	7	111	163	70	351 (57.4)
Caucasian	7	40	36	4	87 (14.2)
Hispanic		86	69		155 (25.3)
Other Races/Ethnicity	2	5	11	1	19 (3.1)
Total	16 (2.6)	242 (39.5)	279 (45.6)	75 (12.3)	612 (100.0)
Missing = 47					

Table 3. **Gender, by School Type, Using Records Sample**					
	School Type				
Gender	**Elementary School**	**Middle School**	**High School**	**Alternative School**	**Total**
Male	11	131	143	39	324 (49.6)
Female	5	125	150	49	329 (50.4)
Total	16 (2.5)	256 (39.2)	293 (44.9)	88 (13.5)	653 (100.0)
Missing = 6					

The majority of respondents (48.5 percent) were high schoolers; 28.2 percent were middle schoolers; and 21.3 percent were alternative school students. An additional two percent of the sample was comprised of former CIS students who were no longer in school; this included six students who had graduated with a high school diploma or GED, and one student who had dropped out of school and not re-enrolled. Table 4 presents the distribution of students by racial/ethnic composition and gender. Tables 5 and 6 present these demographic characteristics of the sample, broken out by school type.

Data Collection Using Official Records on Student Characteristics, CIS Services, and Outcomes

Case files were created by linking information extracted from CIS files (e.g., reasons for referral, date of entry into CIS, service needs and services received, and exit date and reason for termination) to school data (e.g., number of days absent, history of promotion or retention in grade, and academic courses and performance -- grades and grade point averages, school enrollment status) for the year prior to CIS enrollment and all subsequent years.

Demographic data, together with CIS records of reasons for student referral into the program and documentation of problems exhibited while students were enrolled in CIS, were used to profile the characteristics of students served, and to address the extent to which this fit the target of serving at-risk students. Reasons for referral (and by extension, service needs, if not otherwise specified) were categorized using an extensive listing of at-risk characteristics, including: absenteeism, tardiness, poor or inconsistent grades, dropped out of school prior to referral, involvement with at-risk peers, suspensions, over age for grade, inappropriate school behavior, fighting, low self-esteem, suicidal, weapons use, suspected or known substance abuse, gang involvement, law breaking, pregnancy, teen parent, health problems, mental health problems, dysfunctional family, special education needs, poor attitude, at-risk siblings, and self- or parental referral.

Service delivery/program interventions were grouped into five categories, as follows:

- Physical health services, including medical care and treatment, vision screening or provision of eyeglasses, hearing screening, dental care, alcohol and drug treatment, family planning, prenatal care, and referral to health services.

- Mental health services, including individual counseling, group counseling, family counseling, structured support groups, informal support groups, and referral to mental health services.

- Academic services, including attendance monitoring, tutoring, mentoring, CIS life skills classes or core/remedial classes, block-scheduling of CIS students, college application assistance, and scholarship awards.

Table 4. **Race/Ethnicity of Survey Respondents by Gender**

	Male	Female	Total
African American	87	98	179 (56.3)
Caucasian	16	10	26 (8.2)
Hispanic	45	43	88 (27.7)
Other Races/Ethnicity	11	14	25 (7.9)
Total	153 (48.1)	165 (51.9)	318 (100.0)

* Missing = 73

Table 5. **Race/Ethnicity of Survey Respondents, by School Type**

	Middle School	High School	Alternative Schools	Total
African American	66	95	74	235 (61.2)
Caucasian	7	19	9	35 (9.1)
Hispanic	30	55	4	89 (23.2)
Other Races/Ethnicity	6	19	-	25 (6.5)
Total	109 (28.4)	188 (49.0)	87 (22.7)	384 (100.0)

* Missing = 7

Table 6. **Gender of Survey Respondents, by School Type**

	Middle School	High School	Alternative School	Total
Male	40	83	33	156 (48.1)
Female	44	110	14	168 (51.9)
Total	84 (25.9)	193 (59.6)	47 (14.5)	324 (100.0)

- Enrichment services, including educational and cultural field trips, recreational field trips, ROPES and other leadership events, and nationally-sponsored CIS events.

- Social services, including home visits, community service alternatives, clothing, food, housing for individual students or their families, job training referrals for students or family members, job training for students, student employment, summer student programs, and other social services.

Outcome measures were conceptualized primarily as school-based progress indicated by changes in school attendance; academic performance; and status with respect to retention in school, high school graduation, or having dropped out. Where CIS records could not accommodate extraction of school-based data and if the CIS program did not object, efforts were made to obtain the school records directly from the school system. In some cases, CIS or school staff accessed this information and transmitted it, in person or by mail, to the research team; in other cases, we extracted the data from school records during site visits.

Absenteeism was used as the indicator of attendance outcomes because the documentation in school records more often was noted in terms of days absent, than days present. Academic performance was measured in terms of grade point averages (GPAs); grades in two core areas, English and Math, since CIS students who are tutored often receive assistance in these subjects; and proportion of classes passed. The basic analyses for GPAs, and Math and English grades, used the grades as reported (where necessary, grades were converted to a scale of 0.0 to 4.0). School status was calculated by tracking this sample of students as closely as possible up to the date of field visitation, which occurred during the 1992/93 school year. Students' grade levels were cross-referenced against their month and year of entry into the CIS program to identify those who should have reached high school graduation by that time.

Data Collection Using Self-Reports

Data on CIS participation and outcomes also were gathered from the perspective of students, who reported their experiences before, during, and subsequent to enrollment in CIS programs. These self-reported data were collected during on-site interviews and using self-administered questionnaires. For the most part, student participation was contingent on two criteria: (i) individual availability during the time that we were at the CIS school sites during the 1992/93 academic year and (ii) student willingness to engage in in-person discussions or to complete the survey.

Most of the interviews were held as one-on-one discussions, but some involved small groups of two or three students, each describing his/her own personal experiences in school and CIS. The interviews addressed such issues as school climate (e.g., whether students felt safe at school; and if they perceived weapons, gangs, or drugs as prevailing school problems); problems experienced (both in and outside of school) by CIS students; CIS services received; and students' satisfaction with CIS support.

The questionnaire collected basic demographic information, but focused on students' self-reported problems and perceptions of improvement with respect to grades; homework completion; absenteeism and tardiness; fighting in school; suspensions from school; relationships with peers, teachers, and family; substance use; association with gang members; police/legal involvement; and pregnancy or child care needs. It included a short, ten-item self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965), and also captured: (i) students' perceptions of CIS helpfulness in meeting their affective, academic, and physical health needs, and in providing prevention education; (ii) students' satisfaction with their CIS experiences; and (iii) students' perceptions of their future outcomes in a limited number of areas.

Case Study

Upon completion of the initial round of site visits, the research team recommended eight programs be considered as candidates for the case study phase. CIS also submitted a list of 10 candidates for inclusion, two of which were sites that were included in the Urban Institute's candidate list. Using these materials, staff at the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention made the final selection of sites for inclusion in the case study group.

The final group was selected to encompass a variety of features of interest, together with diversity in terms of size and type of community (e.g., urban, suburban, and rural); region of the country; size and age of the CIS program; and school levels served. The case studies of ten communities included six that had participated in earlier phases of the research; listed alphabetically by state, these included: Pinal County, Arizona; Miami PIC Program, Florida; Palm Beach County, Florida; High Point, North Carolina; Columbia, South Carolina; and Austin, Texas. The four programs/sites, nominated by CIS, that had not been previously visited were: Adams County, Colorado; Houston, Texas; Metropolitan Corporate Academy, New York City; and Seattle, Washington.

Field visits were conducted at each site to obtain information about the features for which the site was nominated (e.g., crime and violence prevention activities, substance abuse services, employment skills and career development, parental involvement activities). These visits included interviews with program- and school-level staff, observation of activities, and collection and review of program documents.

CIS NATIONAL ORGANIZATION AND REPLICATION ACTIVITIES

Philosophy and Evolution

The national organization, CIS, Inc., was founded in 1977, but had earlier origins in "street academies," or storefront schools, established in New York City in the 1960s (CIS, 1993-a; Morley and Rossman, 1995-a). Core elements of the CIS philosophy and mission can be traced to the organization's early roots in the street academies. This is due, at least in part, to consistency of CIS leadership. The current CIS president is one of its founders and has served in this capacity since the organization's inception. Several other individuals who have served in key positions in the national organization or in local programs also were involved with CIS during these early stages.

CIS staff frequently refer to CIS as a movement, and to the CIS "model" or approach as being a process or strategy for service delivery, rather than a program. A related theme is that programs do not change people; relationships change people. The intent in the early years was to focus on community organizing, and it is largely by happenstance that the process focused on dropout prevention. Staff believe that the CIS process (service delivery system) can function in a variety of institutions and focus on other social issues.

A key philosophical underpinning of CIS is that the existing human services delivery system is fragmented, categorical and uncoordinated, and that clients of the system (including youth and their families) have multiple problems that extend beyond the relatively narrow agendas of particular agencies. It is believed that resources to help youth and their families are already allocated, but a coordinating structure for them is lacking. In addition, gaps and duplication of services may exist when agencies work in isolation. The CIS model is intended to bring various agencies together as a team, to promote more effective provision of services to youth and their families. Since CIS believes that service coordination and integration should take place at a common site, and since CIS focuses on youth, who are legally required to attend school, CIS projects are located within public schools or non-traditional education sites (CIS, 1993-a). The concept of bringing local government ("city") services into schools led to naming the organization Cities in Schools, although some community programs, or in some cases, all programs in a particular state, call themselves Communities in Schools.

The CIS philosophy emphasizes three concepts:

- Personalism, which involves building and maintaining a one-on-one relationship between a caring adult and the CIS student and his/her family.

- Accountability, which posits that individual team members will accept responsibility, rather than "blaming the system;" and that CIS staff are accountable to students and families; the school; partner agencies; the community; and each other.

- Coordination, which involves connecting previously fragmented services into a comprehensive plan for holistic service delivery through assembling integrated teams of service delivery staff at the education site (CIS, 1993-a).

The CIS philosophy and purpose are expressed in the organization's mission statement:

> The mission of Cities in Schools is to address the critical issues of youth such as school attendance, literacy, job preparedness, teen age pregnancy, drug and alcohol abuse, teen suicide, and school violence by developing public/private partnerships designed to coordinate the delivery of appropriate existing education, health, social and other support services at educational sites in a personal and accountable manner. (CIS, 1993-a.)

As CIS has evolved from its street academy origins to the national organization that now exists, three important shifts have occurred. First, the locus of service delivery has changed. Initially, CIS programs were "outside the system" in the street academies of the 1960s and the postal academies that followed them (so named because they received support from the U.S. Postal Service and provided part-time postal service employment for students). Starting in the early 1970s, CIS began working within the system in the sense of developing partnerships with schools and social service agencies, and locating programs within schools to facilitate access to students and their families.

Second, CIS programs have focused increasingly on prevention, rather than intervention. In the street and postal academies, CIS had an interventive focus, working with youth who had already left the school system. With the shift to establishing programs in schools, the focus became preventive in terms of working with students who had not yet dropped out of school. However, many of the early CIS programs initiated within schools were located at the high school level. Students selected for CIS at this level may be viewed as being beyond the "at risk" category, in the sense that they likely have already manifested a number of risky behaviors (such as being one or more years behind grade level; having already initiated substance use; being involved in gangs or violent behavior, etc.), although they still may be "at risk" of dropping out of school. In more recent years, many CIS programs have been established at the middle or junior high school level, and even at the elementary school level. As is the case for many other youth-focused programs (e.g., substance abuse prevention, pregnancy prevention), CIS has recognized that reaching youth at younger ages, before multiple risky behaviors are manifested or entrenched, is likely to be more effective than waiting until students are exhibiting multiple problems and are close to dropping out.

A third important change is greater emphasis on community "ownership" of CIS programs. During the early 1980s, the CIS national organization acted as a broker to channel funding from federal agencies to community-level CIS programs. Subsequently, the national organization placed emphasis on the need for communities to take greater ownership of their programs by developing autonomous, self-supporting initiatives, thus promoting recognition that the dropout problem is a community issue requiring local solutions and resources. Federal funds were no longer provided to CIS to channel to communities, but were provided to promote

replication activities at the national level, particularly through training and technical assistance (CIS, 1993-a). However, as this evaluation ended, the national organization had received commitments from some federal agencies that appeared to involve pass-through funding for local community programs.

CIS Community Program Model

A brief overview of the community-level CIS program model is provided here as context for the following discussion of the national organization and its activities, since that discussion references various aspects of community programs. A more detailed description of community programs and school projects is presented in the next section on program implementation and results. The CIS model for communities involves development of autonomous city or county CIS programs, which are responsible for initiating and managing CIS projects in local schools. There were approximately 100 CIS programs in the U.S. as of late 1993.

Community programs generally are formed through partnerships involving local government (e.g., school districts), service agencies, and local businesses. They are usually formed as nonprofit corporations with their own Boards of Directors, although in some cases they function as part of another organization. The community program is responsible for developing resources to support itself and its school projects by developing public-private partnerships, fund raising, making arrangements to relocate or outstation staff from service agencies to CIS school projects, and making arrangements for volunteers. Exhibit 5 illustrates the relationship between CIS and other community entities at the school site. CIS program staff are responsible for implementing and providing oversight for CIS projects in schools (or other educational settings). School sites may include existing alternative schools and "academies" developed by, or for, CIS.

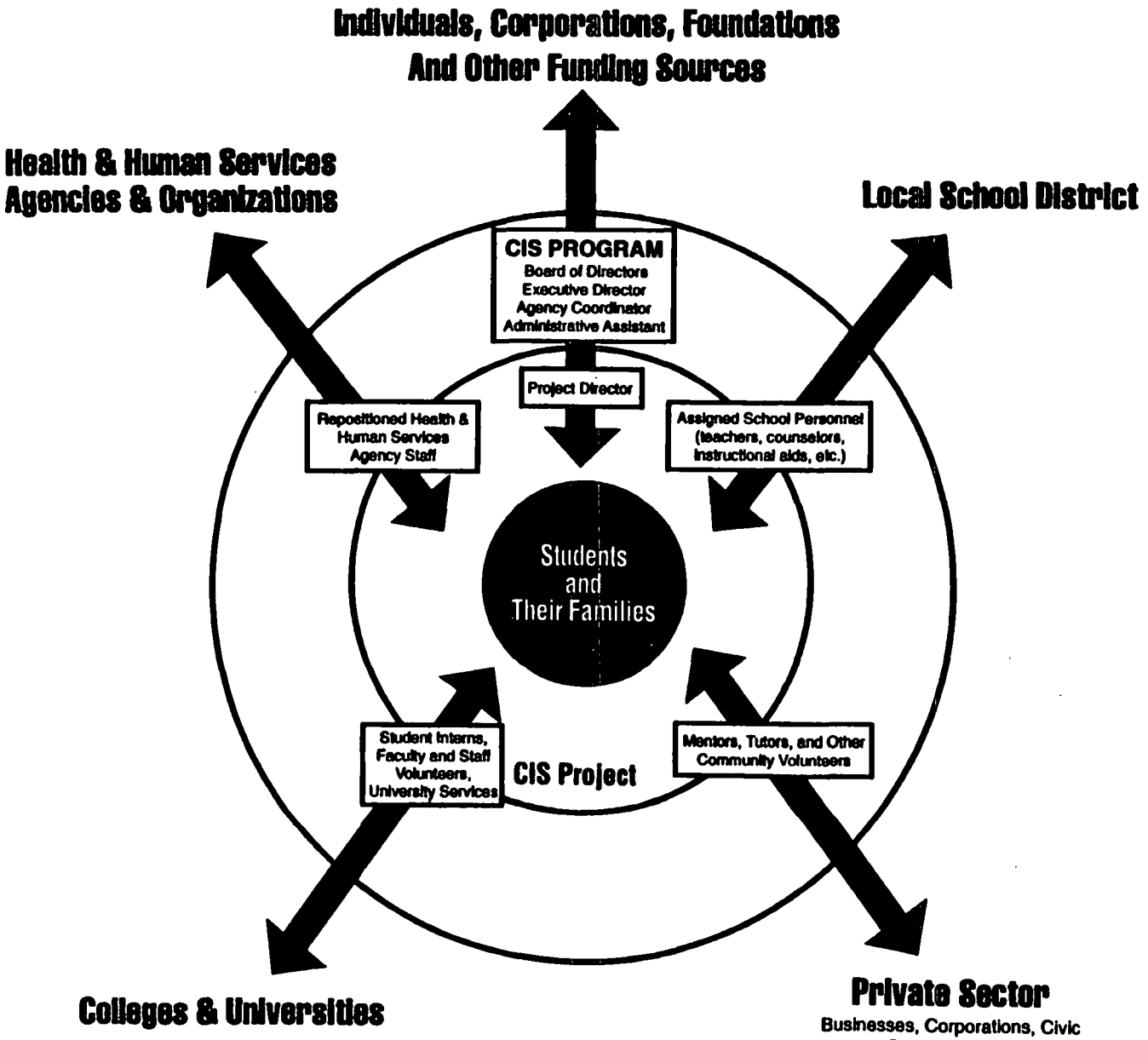
The CIS community program and commitment to develop school projects are brought about through a process of community involvement and empowerment (referred to as the replication process). An organizing group works to involve key community stakeholders and identifies target groups whose participation is essential or helpful to collaborative program development. All levels of the community should be involved to cement partnerships and facilitate "ownership" in the form of personalized stakes in the collaborative process (CIS, 1993-a). The CIS national organization provides training and technical assistance in this process to representatives of communities interested in developing CIS programs (discussed further below, and detailed in CIS, 1993-a; Morley and Rossman, 1995-a).

CIS Organization and Network

CIS Headquarters

A national organizational structure and network has evolved to support the CIS mission and philosophy. CIS is incorporated as a nonprofit organization, headquartered in Alexandria, VA. Headquarters staff numbered about 40 at the end of 1993. CIS has a Board of Directors with 23 members (in 1993-94), primarily drawn from the private sector (generally high-level

LOCAL CIS PROGRAM/COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP



Courtesy of Seattle Cities In Schools, 1992.

executives in their organizations). The CIS president and executive director also serve on the Board.

Key headquarters functions include: development and fund raising, including public affairs and communications; government relations (with agencies that provide funding, those with an interest in CIS activities, and with members of Congress); program development, which performs functions associated with developing direct support for community programs (this office has primarily focused on corporate academies in the past); and evaluation and planning. Training and technical assistance are significant functions discussed later in this section.

Another key headquarters function is administration/oversight, primarily of regional offices, which play a critical role in providing training and technical assistance associated with replication of the CIS model. Regional oversight falls under the executive director and the coordinator of regional operations. Coordination of regional activities with those of headquarters is promoted by development of workplans that include projected headquarters and regional activities. Each region develops plans that support national goals, which are approved by the executive director, as are regional budgets and travel plans. Monthly reports of activities are also submitted to headquarters. Regional directors travel to headquarters, usually at least quarterly, to participate in meetings (particularly those related to planning or policy) and in CIS' annual retreats, which focus on planning and budget development. There is also frequent telephone contact, and visits to regional offices by headquarters staff when they are in their vicinity, or as needed.

CIS headquarters does not monitor or evaluate community CIS programs, although regional and state offices provide oversight, as discussed below. Data from community programs are collected in the form of quarterly reports, which are transmitted to state or regional offices, and then forwarded to headquarters. These reports include basic program information such as numbers of school sites and grade levels; students served; staff information; local Board composition; finances and funding sources, etc. However, information useful to evaluate effectiveness of community programs, such as student outcome-related information, has not been collected. The forms used for quarterly reports were developed more than eight years ago, and their limitations are recognized by at least some headquarters staff. Development of a centralized "management information system" or mechanism to obtain data related to student outcomes has been under discussion for several years. Although an automated system had not yet evolved by the end of the evaluation, the 1994 budget included funding for development of an MIS, which was expected to include software to enable community programs to file quarterly reports directly. This would provide an opportunity to collect different kinds of data, although decisions about which specific outcome data to collect had not yet been made.

CIS' headquarters operations were restructured during 1992 and 1993. Previously, key headquarters functions were structured under the president and five vice presidents. The CIS president plays more of a leadership and visionary role than a hands-on administrative role, and travels frequently to develop awareness of, and support for, the CIS model and the social problems it addresses. As part of the restructuring, an executive director position was created

to centralize and streamline administrative functions, and to strengthen internal management. A chief financial officer position, with considerable general administrative responsibilities, was formed in early 1994. Key differences resulting from the restructuring are reported to be more "top down" management and formalization (although to some extent this reflects putting existing practices in writing), stronger administrative practices, and enhanced fiscal procedures.

Another example of CIS' maturing as an organization is a new focus on the issue of quality and standards, manifested in the form of a Board committee on Quality and Standards formed in 1993 (with representation from headquarters, regional offices, and state and community-level CIS programs). The committee's efforts include development of "minimum standards" that community programs should meet in order to be considered operational CIS programs, program review procedures, and quality indicators. Although the applications of the committee's recommendations were not known at the time this evaluation ended, it appeared that standards it developed might be used to determine which community programs should be considered part of the CIS network. Such standards also might be used to target training and technical assistance resources to help programs attain the desired components or quality attributes.

The organizational structure described above developed since the inception of the "partnership plan" approach to federal funding for CIS, which was initiated by OJJDP in 1984. The U.S. Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education joined the partnership in 1985. Partnership plans involving some or all of these federal agencies (and, sometimes, additional agencies) have continued to be a major source of support for CIS at the national level, although CIS also receives considerable support from corporations and foundations. Partnership plans generally have one or more areas of emphasis that affect CIS activities during the period of the grant. Areas of emphasis affecting organizational structure have included creation of regional and state offices, described below.

The national organization undertook some new initiatives in the early 1990s that entailed different kinds of program activities. Involvement in some of these efforts may have occurred more as a response to funding opportunities, than as planned ventures into new areas. Most of the new initiatives were in the planning or early implementation stages as this evaluation was drawing to a close, and they were outside of the scope of the evaluation's focus. Thus, relatively little can be said about them here, although some potential implications are noted below.

CIS began receiving support under the multi-agency "Weed and Seed" program in 1992 (involving the Departments of Justice, Education, and Housing and Urban Development) to provide training and technical assistance to help 20 pilot sites develop "safe haven" programs. These are multi-service educational centers featuring co-location of services for youth and adults, housed in facilities protected against crime and drugs. Support for CIS also had been included as a line-item in HUD's budget in 1993. Activities to be undertaken with these funds were under discussion at the time this evaluation ended, but development of "community havens" (similar to safe havens) in publicly-assisted housing developments was one possibility.

Other planned initiatives included development of 35 "key cities" or "flagship programs" that would serve as CIS showcases or models. CIS planned to focus a variety of resources on these programs, such as encouraging development of corporate academies, including National Football League or other sports academies, which were also new initiatives for CIS. For those cities in this group that did not yet have CIS programs, CIS planned to concentrate training and technical assistance to develop community programs. It was also expected that the U.S. Army would join the other federal partners in providing support for CIS, specifically to develop JROTC/Career Academies in cooperation with CIS. CIS also received a commitment for approximately 100 VISTA volunteer positions to allocate to state and local programs (CIS, 1993-b).

CIS Network

The linkage between CIS, Inc., and the CIS community programs can be visualized in terms of four tiers (see Exhibit 6). The first two tiers are composed of CIS headquarters and the five regional offices, which together comprise the national organization, CIS, Inc. These two levels exist in a traditional organizational hierarchy, in that regional staff report to specific headquarters staff. State CIS programs are a third tier, falling under the regional offices; community programs fall under the state program of the state in which they are located (if no state program exists in their state, they fall under the appropriate regional office).

The key distinction between the latter two tiers of the organization and the first two is the nature of the relationship between levels. CIS staff refer to state and local programs as having a "dotted line" relationship with the national organization, rather than a traditional hierarchical relationship: that is, state and local programs are autonomous organizations, generally structured as independent, nonprofit corporations; they function in a cooperative relationship with CIS, Inc., but the latter has no authority over them. Similarly, state and local programs have a cooperative relationship, but state programs generally do not have authority over local programs, except in cases where state programs provide funding for local programs (e.g., in Texas).

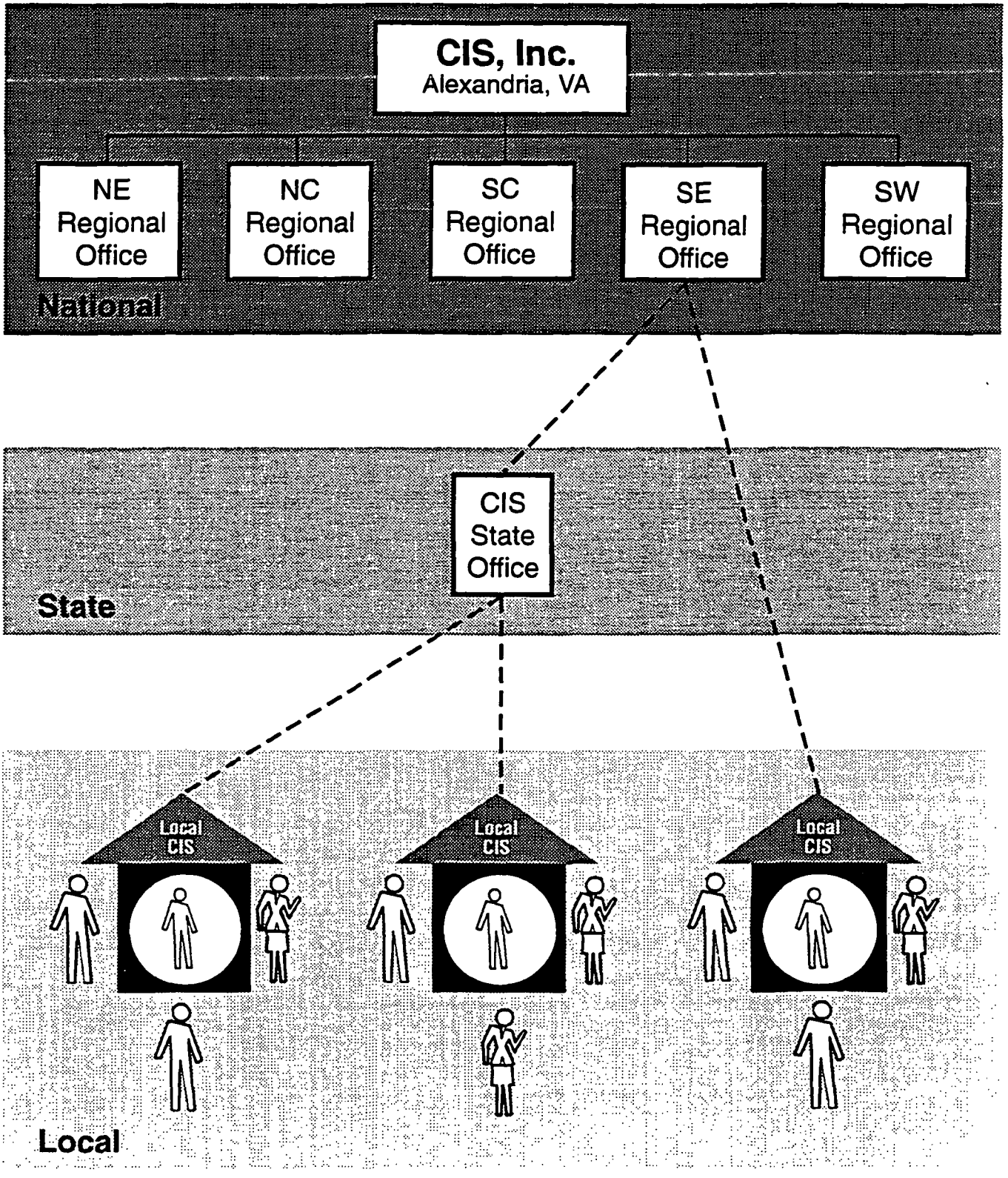
Regional Offices

Development of five regional offices, which occurred between 1988 and 1990, also reflects CIS' efforts to strengthen its organizational structure. The first three offices were located in the: southeast, in Atlanta; northeast, now in Washington, D.C. (formerly near Pittsburgh); and southwest, in Los Angeles. These were followed by the north central office in Chicago, and south central, now in Houston, TX (formerly in Austin). A sixth regional office for the northwest was expected to be developed, probably by initially building on to the Seattle CIS program.

With the formation of regional offices, regional staff became the primary providers of hands-on technical assistance and training to promote replication of new programs and to strengthen and support existing programs. Regional staff also provide training and technical assistance to state programs, particularly when they are under development, and work closely

Exhibit 6

The National Cities In Schools Network



with state programs to provide training and technical assistance to community programs. (Regional training and technical assistance functions are discussed in detail later in this section.)

Other regional functions include: performing outreach activities to promote interest in development of new local programs (e.g., providing CIS orientations and meeting with local officials and business leaders to generate support for starting new programs); generally supporting CIS by participating in conferences related to youth or education; creating linkages or partnerships with other entities; promoting communication among state and local programs within their region; serving as a link between CIS headquarters, state, and community programs; and performing an oversight role for state and community programs. Since regional directors are senior staff members of CIS, Inc., they are often expected to participate in headquarters activities, as noted above. Some regional staff also serve as trainers for CIS' centralized training (discussed below).

Regional offices vary considerably in the number of state and local programs located in their catchment areas, which can be seen as clients or customers for regional services. The southeast and south central regions had the largest number of community programs, 42 and 25, respectively, at the end of 1993. These two regions had a "head start" compared to the other regions, since much of the initial community development activity emanated from early CIS programs located in Atlanta and Houston. In contrast, the north central region had six programs; northeast had ten; and southwest had nine (at the end of 1993). CIS community programs in various stages of development were similarly concentrated most heavily in the southeast and south central regions, as were operational or developing state programs. Although there was no northwest regional office, that "region" had one community level program in Seattle, and the Washington state program was under development (and functioning).

Despite the disparity in number of programs in a region, regional offices have similar numbers of staff. Since regional offices are part of the national organization, budget and staffing allocations are centralized decisions. The standard regional staff complement was four: a regional director, two trainers, and an administrative assistant. Four of the five regional directors had held positions with CIS at the local or national level prior to becoming regional directors, thus bringing a variety of practical experience to their positions.

State Programs

Recently, emphasis has been placed on development of autonomous state CIS programs to perform services similar to those of the regional offices for communities in their state. Although growth in the number of state offices has not been as rapid as initially planned, eight state programs were recognized as being operational in Fall, 1993, and four were considered close to being operational.

Functions of state programs parallel those of regional offices, and can be grouped under four major categories:

- Promoting development of new local programs through outreach and provision of training and technical assistance to those in the replication process.

- Providing on-going training and technical assistance to support operational programs.

- Performing administrative functions such as state level planning, oversight of local programs, and communications/network building.

- Developing resources and support for programs within the state.

Most state programs are organized as nonprofit 501 (c)(3) corporations, and raise funds to support themselves. They also have Boards of Directors, whose membership generally includes considerable representation from the private sector (typically more than half), with other members generally drawn from state agencies whose functions are related to CIS objectives, such as education and human services. Several state Boards include representation from one or more of the community CIS programs in the state.

The Texas state program is an exception to this pattern, since it is administered as a program in the Texas Employment Commission, and its staff are employees of that Commission. Although this program has apparently thrived within a state agency, programs within state agencies elsewhere have not fared as well. The experiences of programs under the PIC/CIS (Private Industry Council/CIS) initiative (funded by the Department of Labor under Phases III and IV of the Partnership Plan, beginning in 1988) illustrate this. That initiative provided funds to support state-level coordinators who would work to develop community-level PIC/CIS employment-enhanced programs in their state. These coordinators were generally located in state agencies, and performed functions similar to state programs. Of the original three state-level offices developed under this initiative, only one remained operational for much longer than the initial support lasted. It appears that CIS programs operating within state agencies are vulnerable to potential changes within those agencies, including staff mobility, changes in administration, and vagaries of funding. As a result, they may not have the staying power of autonomous organizations (which, of course, are also vulnerable to changes of various kinds).

Since they are autonomous entities, state programs vary considerably on a range of characteristics. Staff size in 1993, for example, ranged from 1.5 in Arkansas (a full-time director and part-time administrative assistant) to 11 in Texas. Some states (e.g., Georgia and North Carolina) were able to supplement paid CIS staff with loaned executives and/or staff members assigned to them from state agencies. As is the case with regional directors, several state directors had previously held positions in community CIS programs or in the national organization. In other cases, directors were apparently chosen for their backgrounds in education or their ability to make contacts and develop support for CIS.

Staff size reflects program funding, another characteristic that varies considerably across states. Texas and several other state programs (including Florida, North Carolina, and South

Carolina) receive state funds for the state program and, in some cases, to pass through to local programs. In Texas, for example, each biennial legislature since 1989 has passed an appropriation to implement CIS programs in a specified number of new communities, to add school campuses in communities with existing programs, and to continue providing services on existing campuses. In 1993, $25.6 million was appropriated for these purposes. In other cases, state funding has been provided for limited periods of time, or for limited purposes. For example, a portion of the legislative funding for the North Carolina program is targeted to develop new programs by covering travel costs to enable staff to participate in CIS' centralized training. A risk associated with state funding is that it is subject to reduction or elimination due to fiscal conditions in the state, which has adversely affected at least one CIS state program.

The Georgia program has generated support for community programs by jointly applying for grants with five of them, and received a Department of Education grant to develop replicable dropout prevention strategies in these communities. The grant provides partial support for CIS staff in the participating programs, as well as some support for state staff and activities related to this initiative. Georgia also has developed support for local programs in the form of partnerships with state agencies to reposition local staff of these agencies to community CIS programs. State programs also secure support from corporations and individuals for state or community operations.

Although the state programs are all responsible for the same basic functions, some have developed particular areas of emphasis. For example, the Texas program is heavily involved in providing training and technical assistance, since this is required for development of the large number of new programs and school sites associated with state funds. It also performs extensive oversight and monitoring functions associated with use of state funds. Similarly, North Carolina emphasizes training and technical assistance, including training for teachers who are not involved with CIS programs. Georgia has developed curriculum for the CIS Success Seminar designed for middle school students, and provides training in its use for teachers.

Training and Technical Assistance

A key function of the CIS national organization is to promote replication of the CIS model in communities across the country. This is primarily accomplished through training and technical assistance, which is provided by three levels of the CIS network:

- Headquarters, through centralized training primarily provided at the CIS training Institute at Lehigh University, and through development of training, technical assistance, and support materials.

- Regional offices, through training provided centrally in the region, or in communities where programs are located, and through technical assistance provided in person, over the telephone, or by mail.

- State programs, through activities similar to regional office functions.

Development and refinement of centralized training has been a key factor in promoting replication of the CIS model. The third partnership plan (April 1988-1990) focused on development of training manuals and curriculum, to enable groups of community representatives to learn the CIS process in a central location. Centralized training was perceived to be necessary in order to achieve the desired growth in local CIS programs, rather than continued reliance on the intensive, hands-on approach that had been used in the past (CIS national staff used to spend extensive on-site time in communities, helping them build coalitions to support local development and transmitting the CIS philosophy and values).

The importance of centralized training was further emphasized at the headquarters level through creation of a vice presidency for training in January, 1991, with responsibility to develop curriculum and manage and coordinate training. Two additional staff positions were established to provide increased support for training activities.

CIS developed a partnership with Lehigh University (in Bethlehem, PA), its College of Education, and its Iacocca Institute to create a National Center for Partnership Development (now called the CIS Training Institute), where centralized training is primarily conducted. Lehigh faculty were contracted to develop training curricula, including "hypermedia" techniques that use personal computers for self-guided instruction incorporating videos, still pictures with audio voice-overs, printed text, and interactive exercises. Development of training manuals was contracted to the National Office for Social Responsibility (NOSR). Both Lehigh faculty and NOSR staff drew on the expertise of seasoned CIS staff from various levels of the network in developing training materials.

Three core training courses were developed through these efforts:

- Building a New CIS Partnership (formerly called Replication Training), intended for representatives of communities interested in developing a CIS program.

- Managing a CIS Project Site (formerly called Project Operations Training), intended for directors or staff of CIS projects at the school level.

- Executive Directors Seminar, intended for directors of community-level CIS programs.

Content of each training session varies, since participants are provided forms to identify specific needs and interests in advance, enabling trainers to modify each session somewhat to meet the audience's requests.

CIS regional directors, regional training staff, and selected headquarters staff, including the vice president for training, are the primary instructors for these training sessions. Training is provided free of charge, although participants are responsible for their travel costs, accommodations, and meals. The training sessions involve varying lengths of time: Building

a New CIS Partnership covers three and a half-days, for example, while Managing a Project Site covers five days.

Training sessions in building partnerships and managing project (school) sites have been offered since August, 1989 and March, 1991, respectively. Development of the Executive Directors Seminar and its accompanying training manual, both available since March, 1993, filled a serious gap in the initial slate of training offerings. Prior to that, program directors attended project operations training, which served something of a dual purpose. Portions of it were targeted to the needs of program directors, rather than school level project directors, the ostensible audience for the training. However, large portions of the training were not well suited to needs of program directors.

CIS also provides "train the trainers" sessions, focused on providing training in core courses for regional and state trainers. Since such courses are offered fairly infrequently (except when a new course is developed), new trainers generally attend training sessions in the various core courses to obtain a basic understanding of how CIS programs function, which is one of the key things new trainers need to learn.

More than 700 individuals participated in CIS' centralized training sessions between 1989 and December, 1993. Participation in training has been rather unevenly distributed, with the southeast accounting for the largest proportion of trainees by far, followed by the northeast and south central regions. Residents in these regions are closer to Lehigh than those in most other parts of the country. Participation in training appears to be influenced by proximity to the training facility at Lehigh, which affects transportation costs and travel time.

In recent years, CIS has provided some centralized training for non-CIS groups, such as developing and providing training in Safe Haven implementation in 1993 in conjunction with CIS' involvement with the Weed and Seed initiative; and providing training in partnership development for representatives of Georgia 2000 communities. Several "elective" courses focused on particular subject matter (or for specific groups) were planned for introduction in 1994. These include roundtables for state directors and for "senior" program directors who have held that position for three or more years (this will focus on issues related to mature programs). Other elective courses planned include topics such as Board development; rural programs; resources development; program evaluation; and strategic planning.

"Train the trainer" workshops also were planned for regional, state, and community program staff in 1994, to help them build capacity of school-level staff in terms of various kinds of service provision. Topics to be addressed included: implementing violence-prevention strategies; creating youth leadership programs; "street work" with high risk youth; and learning styles and teaching strategies. Such training appears to be a step in the right direction to address needs of project staff for curriculum and training related to working with at-risk youth, a need that was expressed by many of those interviewed for this evaluation.

Regional and state offices also play important roles in providing training and technical assistance. They generally provide more "hands on," individualized training and technical assistance that complements the centralized training provided at the CIS Training Institute. Regional and state staff go on site to provide such assistance. These offices also provide some centralized training in their regions or states, sometimes in core courses to enable participation in such training without travel to Lehigh. In 1991, CIS began expanding the training capacity of regional offices by providing equipment to enable them to use the same interactive hypermedia training materials used at Lehigh. Although it was initially planned that all regions would conduct more centralized training in their offices, it was later decided that this was not necessary for the north central and northeast regions, because of their proximity to Lehigh. Equipment for these offices was redistributed to the other regions.

Regional offices also conduct periodic needs assessment surveys to determine the kinds of training and technical assistance desired by communities they serve. Some regions (such as the southeast) have developed standard "course offerings" based on recurring needs of programs. These include such topics as Board development, fund raising, grant writing, volunteer management, and parental involvement.

Regional and state offices also provide training and technical assistance as part of the periodic conferences some of them sponsor. Large-scale conferences (extending more than one day and sometimes involving 100 to 200 or more participants) were introduced and regularly held in the southeast and south central regions, the latter in conjunction with Texas state in-service training.

A key aspect of training and technical assistance on the part of regional or state staff is their response to communities interested in developing CIS programs. Regional or state staff are generally heavily involved with communities in the early stages of development, traveling to them to conduct one or more orientation meetings with key leaders (from government, education, and business sectors), as well as with the community in general. They also may arrange to have representatives visit nearby CIS programs, and may accompany them on such visits, as well as encouraging participation in CIS' centralized training. Regional/state staff work closely with the local liaison assigned to coordinate and lead the development process, often having considerable telephone contact, as well as providing written information and materials to support their efforts. Regional/state staff also appear to play a kind of "nurturing" role, in addition to responding to requests for assistance. This involves periodic contact to monitor progress, provide encouragement, and make suggestions to keep things moving.

Regional offices also provide training and technical assistance to newly developing state programs in their regions, as well as in providing on-going assistance to state programs. Most state program directors were very satisfied with the support provided by regional offices, and with their overall relationships with regional staff.

As the CIS network has grown, there has been an increase in informal and "peer" technical assistance and networking. For example, some regional or state offices hold periodic

meetings of the program and/or project (school site) directors in their area, which fosters exchange of information and assistance. Some regions and states have annual conferences, where peers from state and community programs are among those making presentations or providing training. Community program staff sometimes call on their peers (both those in close physical proximity and those at a greater distance) for advice or assistance. There is also provision of peer assistance among staff at the state and regional levels. State and regional staff network and share resources (such as training or curricular materials, contact information, etc). with their colleagues in other states or regions. Staff from one state program occasionally provide training for staff of other state programs, or for community programs in other states. Regional staff similarly provide training or assistance outside of their regions on occasion. Some of the new elective courses to be provided at Lehigh are designed as roundtables to encourage peer interaction, in apparent recognition of the informal training along these lines that has developed in the field. In short, training and technical assistance has evolved from being primarily a "top down" function to include more decentralized and collegial interactions.

With the increased number of training events and conferences at all levels of CIS in recent years, the vice president for training has adopted a coordinating role. She now develops a coordinated training calendar, and works with regional staff to avert scheduling conflicts. She also initiated an annual meeting of training staff from throughout the network to share information and discuss potential changes to training. Additionally, she compiles information forwarded by regional staff regarding their training and technical assistance activities and the needs assessments conducted in their regions.

Observations

As it has matured as an organization, the CIS national organization has strengthened and streamlined its organizational structure and management. CIS headquarters has undergone considerable reorganization and formalization of its procedures, with a focus on strengthening internal management practices. These changes appear to have been needed, in part because of the growth in the CIS network.

Under the partnership plans for federal funding, CIS has had consistency of funding that has contributed to its ability to focus on other areas of development. Commitments for considerably larger amounts of support from HUD, as well as expansion of the number of large-scale partnerships, such as with the U.S. Army and with the National Football League, have enabled CIS to develop several new initiatives, which had largely not been implemented at the time this evaluation ended.

Development and refinement of centralized training has been another major accomplishment of CIS in recent years. Development of Executive Directors training in 1993 filled a serious gap in the initial slate of training offerings. New elective courses were also planned for various audiences. Management of centralized training has been strengthened, and coordination of training efforts by various levels of CIS was initiated.

There appears to be considerable satisfaction with centralized training on the part of those participating in it. The opportunity to interact, and share information with peers from other communities was widely reported to be one of the most useful features of centralized training. Trainees appeared to have contradictory feelings about the use of the hypermedia curriculum, however. Many found it useful, while others disliked it and felt it took time away from interaction opportunities. Needs for additional training in particular areas were often noted, however, with commonly mentioned areas including: fund raising/grant writing; case management; evaluation-related issues (outcome measures, tracking systems, MIS systems); and arranging for repositioned staff. Development of elective courses to address these topics, or more coverage of them in core courses, may be desirable. Inclusion of information about characteristics of at-risk youth and families, and about service provision characteristics and limitations associated with various kinds of service agencies also appears to be a desirable addition to core courses.

Regional and state offices have provided considerable amounts of training and technical assistance to local programs in their areas, although there is some variation in the level and type of support provided by different regions and states. In general, community program staff appear to be satisfied with the level of support they receive. There is fairly strong feeling that training provided at the regional or state level is more relevant to issues facing community programs than centralized training. State training was preferred by some because all participants are operating under the same regulations, which are recognized and addressed by the trainers. Proximity to training at the state (or regional) level also enables community programs to send more staff to training than is possible for training at Lehigh. This suggests a greater training role for regions and states may be appropriate. Alternatively, it may be desirable to provide centralized training at Lehigh that is tailored to participants from particular regions or states.

For the most part, CIS programs that entered the replication process after CIS' centralized training became available have adhered to the suggested replication process fairly closely. They have conducted most steps suggested, although not necessarily in the sequence recommended. Although most community program staff reported satisfaction with the support they received in the form of training and technical assistance (from all levels of CIS), more mature programs appear to be somewhat less satisfied than newer ones. It is perceived that the focus of support is directed toward programs that are not yet operational, or are still relatively new, which has largely been the case until very recently. Some regional staff members also expressed concern about their ability to serve both new and mature programs with existing resources. Efforts may be needed to develop forms of support targeted to mature programs, and to ensure that they are not overlooked by the demands associated with large numbers of developing programs. Since one of the new elective courses proposed for 1994 is targeted to mature programs, this may address this concern to some degree.

CIS has successfully promoted awareness of its model of service delivery, and provided leadership and support that have led to considerable expansion in the number of community level CIS programs in recent years. Development of centralized training in combination with creation of regional and state programs to provide training and technical assistance have been key

elements in CIS' expansion strategy. In a period of approximately five years (from March 1988 to December 1993), the number of community programs increased more than 200 percent (from 26 to 93 programs), and the number of school sites increased by over 375 percent (from 128 to 612 school projects). In addition to those programs that CIS recognizes as operational, there are generally larger numbers of programs in various stages of replicating the CIS process at any given point in time. In December 1993, for example, there were about 130 communities involved in replicating the CIS model. The development of regional office and state CIS programs appear to have contributed to the expansion in the number of community programs. Intensive involvement of regional and/or state staff seem to be a key factor in helping community programs get off to a strong start.

The increase in the size of the CIS national network, and the growth and development of CIS, Inc., in recent years can be seen as an organizational success story. However, some issues or areas of concern remain, as noted below. Several of these are related to the autonomous nature of state and community programs in the CIS network.

The role of regional offices with respect to the autonomous state CIS programs was still evolving during this evaluation, and appeared to be an area needing some attention. Since regions and states have similar mandates with respect to providing training and technical assistance to local programs, there was some role uncertainty on the part of regional and state staff. The national organization had started taking steps to clarify roles by instituting letters of agreement with state programs, which define the relationship between the states and CIS, Inc., as a non-legal, cooperative one. These letters also specify some requirements on the states' part, including submission of a yearly workplan (in some regions, these are developed jointly with regional staff) and quarterly reports. The issue of the respective roles of headquarters, regions and states was also expected to be addressed in the work of the Quality and Standards Committee.

Although regional offices generally have not experienced difficulty in working with state programs, some concern was expressed about the lack of regional office authority over them. Another concern related to state program autonomy is the possibility that state programs can discontinue their operations for a variety of reasons (as has occurred in a small number of cases), which would cause instability in support services provided to community programs, and leave regional offices to "fill in" for them. Although the experience with state programs has largely been satisfactory, when state programs do not function well, there are few avenues of recourse because of their autonomy.

If state programs are to play key roles in facilitating replication of local programs, it would seem desirable for CIS to promote development of additional state programs, particularly in regions where implementation of local programs has lagged. Regional staff may need additional support to develop state programs, perhaps in the form of technical assistance from regions that have had more experience with state program development. Given CIS' lack of authority to hire or fire state staff, it may be desirable for CIS, Inc., to develop mechanisms to strengthen state program management skills and encourage use of uniform procedures or standard

forms related to key management practices. In addition, development of training specifically for state directors appears to be appropriate (plans for 1994 included development of a training manual for state directors and inclusion of a roundtable "training" and information exchange session among CIS' centralized training events, discussed below).

Similarly, centralized development of training or technical assistance materials at the headquarters level for use by state programs would appear to be appropriate in terms of conserving resources of state programs and promoting quality control (by encouraging and facilitating provision of the same kind of information or training across states). Similarly, having headquarters serve as a kind of clearinghouse or library to promote cross-fertilization of training/technical assistance materials would assist those states less able to develop their own materials. Such materials may also be helpful to regional staff. Development of a training library, an objective in a recent CIS annual plan, may serve this purpose.

Based on experiences with the PIC/CIS initiative (noted previously), it appears that autonomous state programs may be preferable to those located in state agencies, although the Texas program, which functions as a program in a state agency, is one of the strongest and largest state programs. However, CIS programs operating within state agencies are vulnerable to potential changes within those agencies, including staff mobility, changes in administration, and vagaries of funding. The experiences with this initiative also suggest that it takes more than one year of support to develop a lasting program at the state level. Receipt of three-year grants from a private foundation led to development of several state programs that still exist in the southeast, which supports this point.

The autonomous nature of community programs also presents some concerns, although this autonomy has both positive and negative features. Program autonomy aids in promoting a sense of local ownership and control, and enables communities to identify needs in their area that they believe to be most critical, and/or that they feel able to address, and to shape programmatic responses to them in accordance with community values and preferences, using resources (funding, staff, etc.) secured locally. Local autonomy, and the associated "dotted line" relationship between CIS, Inc., and state and community programs, is consistent with CIS' views of itself as a movement built on relationships of mutual support and consultation, rather than directives more common to corporations and bureaucracies (CIS, 1993-a). However, the autonomous nature of local programs appears to present quality control and accountability concerns for federal agencies that provide funds to CIS, Inc., with the intent of achieving particular objectives at the community level.

In cases where problems are identified with community programs, CIS staff (generally at the regional or state level) may offer training or technical assistance, and/or persuasion, to effect change. This may be sufficient in many cases, but will not necessarily work in all cases. Community programs may have different priorities, or they may have to be responsive to demands of the political and/or educational arena in which they operate, more so than to the needs of CIS. The experience and/or capabilities of their staff, and the budget constraints they face, also may affect their ability or willingness to bring about change in their programs. (The

same observations can be made with reference to regional offices endeavoring to bring about change in autonomous state programs.)

Local autonomy can also lead to considerable variation in the nature and quality of CIS programs in different communities, which apparently was of sufficient concern to the national organization to establish the Quality and Standards Committee to look into this issue. The recommendations of this Committee (which were expected after the close of this evaluation) may resolve this area of concern. This initiative appears to be a needed step that should strengthen CIS' identity by leading to modifications in (or exclusion of) community programs that deviate excessively from the CIS model. However, this initiative may cause dissension within the network, since it seems contrary to the local autonomy traditionally espoused. Even programs willing to "upgrade" their practices to meet standards may feel some resentment, since this may be perceived as a new "requirement" in a relationship that has traditionally avoided imposing requirements. Careful introduction and application of standards will, of course, do much to affect community programs' reaction to them.

Modifications to the long-standing data collection practices of the national organization are also desirable to help address accountability concerns. Inclusion of student outcome-related data in community programs' regular reports to CIS, Inc., will provide greater accountability to supporters, such as the federal partners. Greater emphasis on collecting such data, and on evaluation of programs at the community level, will also promote accountability to local supporters of community programs. It will also enable better identification of program features that appear to be most successful in alleviating students' problems, to assist program managers in developing more effective programs.

Some other issues or areas of concern identified in this evaluation are related to the growth in the national organization and/or network. The considerable growth in the number of community and state programs in recent years may lead to competition for funds among various levels of the network. This might include competition among community programs in a given state (or those in proximity to each other, regardless of state boundaries); between state programs and community programs in their state; or between CIS, Inc., and state or local programs. Headquarters staff are aware of this concern and noted that this issue was under consideration.

Staff expansion may also create some short-term problems. It was anticipated that 20 new staff would be added to the national organization in 1994 (about a 60 percent increase in size). This may result in some internal issues as new staff may not share the same vision or philosophy as existing staff. The large number of new staff in combination with a number of new initiatives to be managed, and pressure to demonstrate their results, may serve to spread staff attention in too many directions, particularly for the "old" staff who may have to provide training and oversight to new staff while they are "learning the ropes," as well as performing their regular responsibilities.

Some of the planned initiatives seem to be somewhat "at odds" with existing philosophies or objectives, such as the projected emphasis on corporate academies, including the new sports

academies and JROTC/Career academies. On the one hand, this may be viewed as a return to CIS' roots in the street academies and the small school approach to education (with considerable amounts of personal attention) they reflected. On the other hand, academies generally serve relatively small numbers of students, thus emphasis on them seems inconsistent with CIS' goal to serve larger numbers of students overall. Since academies are often removed from the general school system (either as separate schools or as schools within schools), their emphasis also seems at odds with CIS' desire to restructure service delivery by providing services in public schools. These contradictions have been recognized by CIS staff, and have been the focus of internal discussion.

Similarly, the projected targeting of support and resources (including academies) to the 35 flagship cities represents a divergence from past practices. Since some of the communities targeted for this initiative did not yet have CIS programs, securing their participation will involve "selling" them on implementing CIS programs (perhaps gaining support, at least in part, because of resources offered, such as start-up funding for academies), rather than the more common CIS approach of working with communities after they have expressed interest in initiating a CIS program. It may also be the case that the replication process in these communities becomes truncated due to perceived or real pressure to make new flagship programs operational within a particular time period. Focusing resources on the 35 flagship cities may cause discontent among existing programs, and there may be some feeling that this initiative will create two "classes" of CIS programs. Some existing programs, particularly those struggling to raise resources, may feel slighted, or resentful about the resources allocated to the 35 flagship cities.

It is also possible that the combination of initiatives occurring at once may divert resources, such as technical assistance and staff attention, from existing and/or developing community programs, despite anticipated staff growth. Some regional staff were concerned about the potential conflict between assistance needs of existing versus developing programs, based on recent growth in the number of programs. The introduction of several new initiatives during a relatively short period of time would appear to compound this problem.

A summary of the major observations regarding the CIS national organization and network and replication activities was provided as Exhibit 1 in the Overview.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND RESULTS

The CIS approach to meeting the needs of at-risk youth is rooted in a process that involves developing community collaborations and partnerships to form a comprehensive safety net that permits effective use of local resources. The model involves (i) establishing one-on-one relationships with students in need of supportive academic and social services and (ii) relocating existing community services to school sites, to facilitate enhanced access by students. In effect, CIS encourages a personalized, "one-stop shopping" arrangement for service delivery.

Program Organization and Functions at the Community Level

The CIS national organization does not *require* that local programs adopt particular structures or provide particular services. This flexibility enables local programs to adopt approaches suited to their communities' needs, and to implement strategies based on available local resources. Despite the absence of required program components, some core elements that are stressed in CIS' training and philosophy are considered central to local operations. At the program level, these include: (i) establishing the CIS program as an independent, nonprofit organization; (ii) developing a Board of Directors or other Advisory Board/Committee; and (iii) constituting a management team. The community-level CIS organization performs the following key functions: strategic planning, building effective community networks and collaborations, services integration and coordination, fund raising, and program and project monitoring for accountability. (Note: community programs referenced in the following sections are good examples of points being made, however, the references do not identify all communities that exhibit such practices. See Rossman and Morley, 1995, and Morley and Rossman, 1995-b, for more detailed discussions of program characteristics.)

Structure and Staffing

Most of the programs visited had created independent nonprofit organizations with their own Boards of Directors; there were notably few exceptions to this. The Boards of the programs visited generally meet CIS' recommendations in terms of representing various segments of the community, including private-sector, school district, and human services agency support. However, some programs find it difficult to achieve the desired Board diversity. Particularly in some of the smaller communities, the relative lack of business and industry makes it difficult to secure more than a few Board members from the private sector. In some of these communities, there is strong competition from other nonprofit organizations for representatives from the same small set of firms.

CIS recommends the following "basic" management team members be employed for newly developed programs: (i) an executive director, who is responsible for overall management of the program; (ii) an agency coordinator/resource coordinator, who is responsible for developing and maintaining relationships between service agencies and CIS (e.g., arranging for repositioned staff); (iii) an administrative assistant, who performs administrative support functions; and (iv) a project director/coordinator, who is responsible for on-site management of the CIS project at

the school site. In the case of the project (school site) director, CIS recommends that the director for the first school site opened be a paid CIS employee (who might serve as director for more than one school project). As additional school sites are added to the local program, the project directors of these sites should be repositioned staff (CIS, 1993; CIS, 1989-b).

Programs with large numbers of staff are the exception, rather than the rule. Many programs follow CIS' recommendations regarding staffing, and have three or four program-level staff. In general, the Executive Directors serve full-time, although other staff are not necessarily full-time CIS employees. A substantial proportion of the visited programs (e.g., Marianna and Helena/West Helena, AR; Pinal County, AZ; Griffin-Spalding, GA; Philadelphia, PA; High Point, NC; and Greensville-Emporia and Richmond, VA) have fewer staff than recommended, and some have only one staff member.

In addition to CIS-employed staff, a number of programs (e.g., Pinal County, AZ; West Palm Beach, FL; Columbia, SC; Austin, TX) have secured VISTA volunteers. VISTAs are not volunteers in the traditional sense, since they are compensated for their services and assigned to particular organizations for specified periods of time. VISTAs, who were treated as CIS staff members, performed various duties, including: recruited members of the community to serve as volunteers at school sites (e.g., tutors, mentors); organized community-based projects, such as a food bank, mentorship program, or speakers' bureau; developed the program's training material for volunteers and other VISTAs; and developed and managed a parental involvement component for use in CIS alternative schools.

Programs (Austin, Columbia, High Point, New York City's Metropolitan Corporate Academy, West Palm Beach) that have developed school-based components (such as tutoring and/or mentoring) requiring substantial numbers of volunteers on a regular basis have also created staff positions to manage such components (e.g., recruitment, training and coordination of volunteers) since they recognize that availability of on-going support to volunteers is an important factor in success of such efforts. By contrast, Seattle forged an alliance with another organization, who now coordinates both its own and CIS' volunteer efforts.

Strategic Planning

While strategic planning may involve establishing a variety of short- and longer-term objectives, it should include conducting, and updating as necessary, a community needs assessment to identify the nature of the problems affecting the target area, as well as local resources and service gaps. The recommended CIS format includes the following items: (i) an economic, demographic and social profile of the community; (ii) a statistical profile of local youth; (iii) a description of available services relating to youth and the likelihood that the services can be repositioned to CIS; (iv) the existing partnerships in the educational arena; (v) a description of private-sector funding possibilities and a list of businesses, industries and local foundations; (vi) the potential problem areas that may affect project replication; and (vii) recommendations for the replication process.

The extent of information collected and analyzed varied widely across programs; most programs do not periodically update their communities' assessments or their planning strategies. Most programs indicated they performed such assessments prior to program implementation, indicating their programs were initially designed around the problems identified at that time. Nevertheless, in many of the sites visited the program strategy was driven more by opportunism, than by design: that is, services provided to students often were more closely related to what was available, than to what services were actually needed.

Once the program has established its management team, several key issues should be addressed and periodically reviewed, including:

- Determining whether the program will focus on early prevention (project implementation at elementary schools), intervention (at middle or high school levels), or some combination of the two. Seattle is probably the most unique example, as its managers decided to start at multiple sites at all school levels, and envision expanding CIS to all schools within the school district.

- Establishing a plan for program expansion. One approach used by several programs is to expand by using a feeder-school pattern (e.g, to locate CIS projects in middle schools that send their graduating students to high schools that have CIS projects). Another is to expand by increasing the number of school sites served at the same educational level (e.g., add new projects only at the high school level). Strategic planning for program growth and expansion has been employed by some programs (Adams County, Seattle). While many programs have expanded, most do not have formal advance plans for how this will be accomplished.

- Selecting the actual schools where projects will be implemented. Most programs indicated site selection was based on choosing schools that evidenced: (i) a large proportion of students with multiple at-risk characteristics that include truancy, academic failure, teen parenting, alcohol and drug use, and single-parent households; (ii) an above average dropout rate or a large number of students repeating a grade level; or (iii) a high poverty neighborhood school with a large proportion of students receiving free lunch. Adams County, uniquely, established a selection criteria based on choosing schools that are stable or have evidenced recent reforms, reasoning that schools that are "going downhill" make it virtually impossible for CIS programs to succeed. In addition, several programs (Adams County, Houston, Miami PIC, Seattle, West Palm Beach County) recognized the principal is a key consideration, since the heart of CIS operations occurs at the school level. Therefore, site selection was, in part, determined by whether the principal wanted the CIS program in his/her school, since this was deemed as critical to project success.

- Identifying eligibility criteria for student referral and enrollment in CIS. In some communities, this is established at the program level; in others, this is determined

by project staff at each school site. Regarding the eligibility criteria, most programs included one or more of the following characteristics: poor grades, retention in grade level; low achievement test scores; poor attendance; poor behavior; teen parent; or high-risk family environment.

Building Effective Community Networks and Collaborations

Since communities are unique, there are many different ways in which local collaborations can evolve and be structured. Nevertheless, early, and continued, involvement of the private sector appears to be a key factor in generating continued support (Columbia, High Point, Houston, Metropolitan Corporate Academy, Seattle). Similarly, a commitment to top-down reform on the part of the local government decision makers and school district leadership appear to be key factors in initiating CIS programs on a widespread community basis (Adams County, Seattle). Although this was rarely observed in the visited sites, local community collaborations should make an effort to involve not only public and private leaders, but also representatives of the population being served.

The composition and involvement of local program Boards of Directors are manifestations of community support. Occasionally programs reported difficulties in assembling Boards of Directors, although this generally was the case in small and/or rural communities where there were relatively few businesses and industries that could provide Board members representing the private sector. Most programs did not appear to have difficulty obtaining Board members from the school district or service agencies. Program staff generally reported that the level of involvement and support provided by the Board was satisfactory.

Some programs were able to obtain particularly strong levels of community support and/or Board involvement (Adams County, Columbia, High Point, Seattle) which appeared to help them build strong programs. In High Point, for example, a few well-respected and well-known community/business leaders were involved in developing the program, and have continued to serve as Board members or on the program's Trustee Advisory Board. Their presence has been important in terms of generating financial support and repositioned staff for the program (e.g., urging the County Commissioners to continue providing funding earmarked for repositioned social workers to the county social service agency; actively fund raising from their peers in other local businesses through pledge drives that seek commitments for three-year pledges for specific annual amounts; personally promoting continued support for CIS on the part of the school district when several school districts were recently consolidated into one, resulting in a new administration that was unfamiliar with CIS).

Adams County took a particularly strong stance that involvement of community leadership (e.g., school board members, principals, directors of social service agencies, etc.) in CIS training was crucial not only to generating enthusiasm for the CIS program, but also to facilitate early buy-in and commitment to free up the resources to accomplish repositioning of staff and for other needed in-kind supports. Therefore, some community leaders and potential CIS project staff (both assigned and repositioned) were enlisted to attend training at the South Central Regional

CIS office during program development, while several others attended Project Operations training at Lehigh University. The costs for these trips were borne by the school district.

Austin is another example of a program where there appeared to be more system-wide endorsement of collaborative efforts. It is not clear that CIS can be given credit for this, since the service agency community has been inclined toward cooperative ventures for a number of years, and city government agencies have encouraged collaborative responses to their requests for proposals to provide funding for services. The Austin CIS program has responded to several requests for proposals (at the local and federal level) as part of a consortium of service providers. These have been related to funding for specific projects. These collaborative efforts appear to spin off additional collaborations with the same agencies, and to encourage agencies to think in terms of cooperative efforts for future projects.

A particularly important form of "community" support for CIS programs is support of the school district and/or schools in which the program is located. CIS programs appear to work best (in terms of being more fully implemented, providing a wider range of services, and securing more support) in locations where there is strong top down support from the school district and/or principal. Strong school district and principal support enable CIS programs to be more than "add on" social service programs. Such support enables change to occur within the classroom, in terms of teaching techniques and/or curricula used for CIS students. CIS academies provide a good example of the impacts of support from school-level administration (the principal). By definition, principals in alternative schools are supportive of CIS, since the entire school is designed around it. Because of this support, teachers in CIS academies are given the flexibility to experiment with a variety of teaching techniques, and may be given flexibility in terms of class scheduling, etc. As a result, students in CIS academies benefit from different teaching approaches than used in regular schools, as well as obtaining other services provided by CIS and/or repositioned staff.

Developing good working relationships with the schools in which CIS programs are located helps ensure their survival. A variety of techniques are used to accomplish this. Houston and Austin survey principals and other school staff to determine their perceptions of the CIS programs in their school. CIS staff serve on school level management teams in Houston; in Adams County and Seattle, they serve on school-level teams that focus on identifying and responding to students' academic and social problems. Austin created a program level position to perform liaison functions between CIS and school staff, to facilitate communication between them, and provide training and assistance for teachers assigned to work with CIS students.

Several programs recognize that collaborations involve not only having community leaders support CIS initiatives, but having CIS staff members actively engage in various community efforts. Staff of some programs (Columbia, Houston) make an effort to serve on community-level committees and task forces, which further helps promote awareness of, and build support for, the CIS program. Similarly, several programs use media and publicity to inform community leaders and the general public on a regular basis, which also generates public awareness and support. Participation in periodic high profile activities (e.g., the "Christmas carousel" fund raiser

in Seattle and the Christmas bundling drive in Pinal County) also serve this purpose.

Services Integration and Coordination

One of the goals of the national organization is to institutionalize the CIS approach to human service delivery -- integrated service delivery at education sites. Development of on-going partnerships between public- and private-sector leadership and on-going coordination of service delivery among service agencies are desired outcomes of the CIS movement. These objectives are in line with increasing societal recognition of the limitations of fragmented delivery of services targeting only specific problems, and with growing acceptance of the concept of taking a holistic approach to address complex problems (Burt et al., 1992).

Services integration involves institutional arrangements to provide co-location of services and to ensure that clients referred are provided with services. Coordination should facilitate ready access to all appropriate services from any given service entry point. Ideally, such interagency collaboration also should reduce unnecessary duplication of intake (including multiple applications to establish eligibility for receiving services).

Services integration (or coordinated service delivery) and case management, discussed below, are closely related topics. Services integration usually involves case management components, such as needs assessments, service delivery plans, and follow-up on referrals to ensure that services integration occurs (Burt et al., 1992). Particularly in cases where co-location of services is involved, services integration can be seen as a variant of the "one-stop shopping" approach to delivery of government services. As Morrill and Gerry (1990) point out, co-location is more important in low-income and deteriorated communities, where lack of transportation, unsafe streets, and lack of familiarity with available services/providers make accessibility of services more difficult.

In the case of CIS programs, repositioning of staff from health and human service agencies is the primary mechanism for services integration. Ability to obtain repositioned staff was reported as a problem area by a number of programs. This was particularly the case in small communities that have relatively few human service agencies to begin with; in areas where agencies had suffered budget cutbacks and downsized their staff; or in those where a large proportion of the population are in need of such services. In the latter case, human service administrators often feel they are so "stretched" that they are unwilling to reposition any staff. Programs did not generally report that obtaining assigned staff from school districts was a problem, even though a few programs did not have any such staff.

Most programs are able to obtain at least some repositioned staff, but they generally represent only one or two agencies, rather than the spectrum of relevant service providers. In a number of programs visited, it turned out that repositioned staff were not really "repositioned" in the strict sense of the term (i.e., re-locations/"off-site detailing" of existing staff). For example, the Miami PIC CIS program enters contracts with service agencies to purchase the services of repositioned staff. In Columbia, SC, the CIS program pays a portion of the salary

of its repositioned social worker (the portion is negotiated each year, and varies according to the agency's financial condition). In High Point, NC, funding for the two social workers repositioned from the county's human services agency is earmarked by the County Commissioners for this purpose. Similarly, the repositioned social workers provided by that school district were specifically under contract for this purpose.

Few programs have been able to secure a sufficient diversity of repositioned staff to enable them to provide a comprehensive range of services at the school site. Of course, it is not necessary to provide all services on site; those that might be needed by relatively few students, for example, might be obtained more efficiently through referral. Often, referrals rely on personal connections between CIS staff (or repositioned staff) and staff of other service agencies. However, most off-site referrals are to entities that do not consider themselves part of the CIS "umbrella;" as such, transactions are not based on interagency agreements that ensure services will be provided to students or families referred by CIS. In cases where agencies had to limit the number of referrals they accepted, this generally translated into CIS staff deciding to only refer the most serious cases. As a result, some students who might have benefitted from particular services did not receive them.

In general, referring students off-site to other agencies seems to contradict CIS' general philosophy of bringing services to students. Also, it does not facilitate coordinated case management, where service providers work together to holistically deal with the student's spectrum of needs. Another unintended consequence of this inability to erect a comprehensive service network is that it often translates into all students receiving the same services (depending on the suite offered by the program at each specific school site), instead of receiving a personalized set of services geared to individual student/family needs and service plans.

Key considerations for successful integration of services include shared governance and common procedural practices across agencies, or at least consensual arrangements that remove turf barriers. A few programs placed strong emphasis on laying the foundation for seamless services integration through the use of formal agreements, believing that it is necessary to have formal contracts between the school district and the agencies, since informal agreements can fall apart. For example, in Adams County, formal agreements are individually established between school districts and each service agency. The agreements stipulate roles, responsibilities, and working conditions for repositioned staff; they eliminate potential issues of background checks, liability, and supervision, since the school board officially adopts repositioned staff as "independent subcontractors"; and they eliminate issues with confidentiality and sharing of information among organizations that are part of the service network.

Even where collaborative relations have been established, equity among "partners" is an issue; for example, CIS may have little or no input to the eligibility criteria or selection process for agency designation of "repositioned" staff. Although agency leadership may serve together on the CIS Board, aside from those interactions, joint inter-agency activities involving strategic planning and goal setting, resource development, information sharing, or conjoint funding are relatively rare occurrences. Co-location of inter-agency staff is relatively rare; staff of various

partner agencies may "sequentially" provide school-based services, but rarely do they come together as a team to jointly consider specific client cases (exceptions to this were noted in the teaming arrangements of Adams County, High Point, and Seattle).

A few programs (Adams County, Marianna, Philadelphia, Pinal County) evidenced some systemic changes as a result of collaborations and services integration. For example, the Philadelphia school system adopted a charter schools approach (e.g., a thematic magnet school-within-a-school) for all high schools, modeled after the CIS block scheduling approach.

Adams County noted that partially due to its affiliation with CIS, the Probation Department changed the way it assigns caseloads. Previously, probation officers (POs) carried both adults and juveniles on their caseloads. With the partnership of CIS and the Probation Department, some POs were assigned caseloads comprised solely of juvenile offenders; subsequently, instead of assigning juvenile cases to POs on a rotational basis (which resulted in geographically widespread caseloads), POs are now assigned to school districts, or even specific school sites, which facilitates more time on the premises and closer coordination with school and CIS staff. POs report:

- Enhanced coordination and information sharing through CIS. Probation officers write contracts, including permission for release of information, with students on their caseload in the presence of school and CIS staff. And, the teaming relationship provides an efficient mechanism for POs to check on students' grades and behavior, aside from what the clients self report.

- Increased youth compliance with probation requirements. Youth are required to attend school. Since they know POs will be monitoring their attendance, but do not know when POs will be on site, they are apparently more circumspect about attending classes -- thus, reducing truancy.

- Facilitated referrals of juveniles to other supportive services, such as mental health counseling or job placements that permit earnings for restitution.

Despite such indications of systemic change, for the most part, program staff at communities visited reported that they did not observe substantial differences in the way human service agencies provide services or interact with each other as a result of their involvement with CIS and its approach to service delivery. This finding is consistent with Burt et al.'s review of services integration efforts (1992), which also noted that only modest system change, at best, has typically been achieved.

Fund Raising and Program Cost Estimates

Fund raising is a key area of concern to many local programs, particularly those in smaller communities that have a limited number of businesses and industries to serve as potential funders in support of all local nonprofit organizations. An involved Board is important to raising

resources to support a program, including providing access to employees of Board members to serve as volunteers (Columbia, High Point, Houston). Houston helped ensure involvement of Board members by "assigning" each Board member to a school, while the Columbia program held Board meetings at school sites to promote familiarity with the various school projects, and had Board members participate in the student interview process.

One issue related to fund raising and community support is that growing numbers of CIS programs in the same general vicinity (e.g., within a state or particular geographic area) means that CIS programs may be in the position of competing with other CIS programs for support from a limited number of donors. As a result of increasing numbers of programs in some places, the existing "pie" of donations may be divided into smaller pieces. This appears to have occurred with state legislative funds for CIS in Florida, for example. When these funds were first made available, most of them were allocated to the West Palm Beach program. However, that program is receiving smaller amounts of this funding as the number of CIS programs in the state has increased.

Some program directors are moving toward more proposal writing in an effort to secure funds, but express frustration that most foundations and similar funders limit their support to seed monies that fund "demonstration" programs or components, while CIS programs have a continuing need for on-going, institutionalized support of existing initiatives. Program staff frequently cited their needs for additional training in fund raising and grant writing. At least one community program hired a professional development consultant to assist in this area (Adams County); another has sought similar expertise among Board members (Houston). Multiple sources of funding help local programs survive reductions in funding that are almost inevitable at some point in time. Having a financial department and data system that accommodate complex record keeping and facilitate providing feedback to funders and supporters are important to successful fund raising (Houston).

The amount of funding required is related to such considerations as: program size and program strategy (e.g., projected number of sites, anticipated number of students needing services per site); variety and intensity of service offerings; and success in generating collaborations that provide repositioned and assigned staff, pro bono services, and volunteer support at no cost to CIS. The national evaluation addressed the issues of program costs and cost-effectiveness; however, this effort was hampered by the lack of appropriate cost data or outcome measures suitable for cost-effectiveness analyses in most programs visited.

Five programs were able, or willing, to provide sufficient cost or budgetary data to enable their inclusion in the cost analysis component of the evaluation. Where data on student outcomes were available, we conducted cost-effectiveness analysis of the programs. Where outcome data were unavailable, we assessed unit costs (i.e., cost per student served). As a result of these various data limitations, the cost analysis performed here is considerably weaker than we would have liked.

The five programs (designated by letters to ensure confidentiality) included in this analysis were clearly not randomly selected, thus inferences to the larger population of CIS programs cannot be drawn. However, these sites are representative of several major kinds or stages of CIS programs. Thus, the cost data here can be seen as providing insights into costs associated with various types of programs. For example:

- Program A is a relatively small CIS program that only recently expanded from serving one school site to two. It can be seen as representative of costs of programs in the early stages of development, when they often serve only one or two school sites.

- Program O operates CIS programs in two alternative school settings (high schools), and can be seen as representative of programs using this model of service provision. CIS programs have recently been developed in two institutional settings in this community, although the focus of program services is the alternative schools.

- Programs L and J both have programs in a large number of school sites (approximately 28 and 23, respectively). Program L is a county-wide program includes school sites in urban and rural areas; program J is located in a large metropolitan area.

- Program C is also located in a large urban area, but operates CIS programs in only three schools.

Cost data are presented in Tables 7 and 8. While it is risky to draw conclusions from the small number of programs that were able to provide data for this element of the evaluation, several general observations are noted:

- Costs per student served varied considerably across programs (i.e., from close to $1,000 to over $7,000 at the program level for the program using alternative schools; excluding this program, costs per student served ranged from close to $1,000 to $2,600), in part reflecting variations in the number of CIS staff, repositioned staff and volunteers, the value of which were included in our cost and cost-effectiveness calculations.

- Costs were lower in programs with larger numbers of students, indicating there are some economies of scale associated with CIS programs.

- Costs per student were considerably higher in programs in CIS alternative schools. This is largely because the costs of such programs include the costs of providing basic education for the students (e.g., the teachers and other school staff assigned to the school), in addition to providing the ancillary services more typically associated with in-school CIS programs.

Table 7

COSTS PER CIS STUDENT FOR ALL LOCATIONS INCLUDING IN-KIND SUPPORT

	Program A			Program O				Program L		Program C		Program J		
	1992-93		1991-92	1991-92		1990-91		1992-93	1991-92	1992-93	1991-92	1992-93		1991-92
	Program	Selected School	Program	Program	Selected School	Program	Selected School	Program	Program	Program	Program	Program	Selected School	Program
Total Costs	$364,141	$250,800	$304,220	$991,529	$509,700	$907,367	$487,200	$3,273,158	$3,285,041	$518,822	$577,412	$2,561,183	$90,500	$1,820,107
Cost Per:														
Student Served	$2,117	$1,975	$2,600	$7,627	$7,842	$6,980	$7,495	$989	$962	$2,075	$2,310	$1,186	$754	$1,107
Number of Students	(172)	(127)	(117)	(130)	(65)	(130)	(65)	(3,308)	(3,416)	(250)	(250)	(2,160)	(120)	(1,564)
Student Completing Academic Year	$2,365		$3,011					$1,010	$1,012					
Number of Students	(154)		(101)					(3,242)	(3,245)					
Student Promoted	$2,290		$2,716											
Number of Students	(159)		(112)											
Student Maintaining/Improving Grades		$4,180	$5,069					$1,499	$1,658					
Number of Students		(60)	(60)					(2,183)	(1,981)					
Student Maintaining/Improving Discipline		$2,818	$3,950					$1,319	$1,717					
Number of Students		(89)	(77)					(2,481)	(1,913)					
Student Improving Attendance								$1,799	$1,923					
Number of Students								(1,819)	(1,708)					
Student Graduated		$13,200	$20,277	$39,661	$28,317	$34,899	$23,200							
Number of Students		(19)	(15)	(25)	(18)	(26)	(21)							

Table 8

COST PER CIS STUDENT FOR ALL LOCATIONS
EXCLUDING IN-KIND SUPPORT
(Dollar Expenses)

	Program A			Program O				Program L		Program C		Program J		
	1992-93		1991-92	1991-92		1990-91		1992-93	1991-92	1992-93	1991-92	1992-93		1991-92
	Program	Selected School	Program	Program	Selected School	Program	Selected School	Program	Program	Program	Program	Program	Selected School	Program
Total Expenses	$115,126	$76,500	$94,172	$308,138	$154,000	$286,576	$143,300	$864,898	$897,641	$221,722	$190,212	$1,861,983	$62,500	$1,246,907
Cost Per:														
Student Served	$669	$602	$805	$2,370	$2,369	$2,204	$2,205	$261	$263	$887	$761	$862	$520	$799
Number of Students	(172)	(127)	(117)	(130)	(65)	(130)	(65)	(3,308)	(3,416)	(250)	(250)	(2,160)	(120)	(1,560)
Student Completing Academic Year	$748		$932					$267	$277					
Number of Students	(154)		(101)					(3,242)	(3,245)					
Student Promoted	$724		$841											
Number of Students	(159)		(112)											
Student Maintaining/Improving Grades		$1,275	$1,569					$396	$453					
Number of Students		(60)	(60)					(2,183)	(1,981)					
Student Maintaining/Improving Discipline		$860	$1,223					$349	$469					
Number of Students		(89)	(77)					(2,481)	(1,913)					
Student Improving Attendance								$475	$526					
Number of Students								(1,819)	(1,708)					
Student Graduated		$6,059	$6,277	$12,326	$8,556	$11,022	$6,824							
Number of Students		(19)	(15)	(25)	(18)	(26)	(21)							

Program and Project Monitoring for Accountability

As Burt et al. (1992) point out, programs that provide coordinated service delivery for at-risk youth have varying degrees of capability to evaluate the effects of their services on their clients, and/or undertake steps to monitor service delivery to clients to varying degrees. This variation was also apparent in the programs visited. We found considerable diversity in terms of both tracking/monitoring and in collection of data that might be used for evaluative purposes.

Not surprisingly, programs that had few staff or other resources typically did little in the way of data collection for monitoring or evaluation. It should be noted that some programs had only rudimentary resources; for example, several of the smaller, more rural programs did not have personal computer capability. Thus, any data collection efforts they conduct would be limited. However, such programs typically serve relatively small numbers of students, so tracking data on them without computer assistance would not be overly difficult.

For many CIS programs, data collection and monitoring of program/project performance is in response to specific external requirements (e.g., the requirements of funders or the expectations of other entities with influence over the program). One program director noted they do not collect student outcome data "because no one asks them to do it." Conversely, some programs collect and report a fair amount of data because they recognize that current and potential funders want "proof" that the program works. For example, the High Point program collects and annually reports such data as percent of students who: stayed in school, were promoted (and percent promoted after attending summer school), maintained or improved grades, and maintained or improved attendance.

A few programs make efforts to obtain and report information on outcomes or customer (i.e., students', families', or public entities') satisfaction with the program. For example, the Griffin-Spalding program has sent survey forms to teachers, students, and parents, asking about whether participation in the program had helped the student; whether it had affected performance or attitude, etc. Similarly, the Austin CIS program annually surveys school staff (teachers and administrative staff) to obtain feedback on ratings of satisfaction with CIS services (excellent, satisfactory, unsatisfactory, unknown): things respondents like about the program; services they would like to see changed; and recommendations to strengthen the relationship between CIS and the school.

Very few programs were able to provide sufficient cost or budgetary data to enable their inclusion in the cost analysis component of the evaluation. Similarly, very few programs make an effort to track longer-term student outcomes by following clients after they leave the CIS program. High Point staff initiated the practice of making 30-day and 90-day follow-up contacts (generally by telephone) with program graduates. This provides staff with data on status of graduates with respect to higher education, employment, etc. The Columbia, SC, program obtained data along those lines when it attempted to contact graduates about holding a reunion, but it does not conduct regular follow-ups on graduates or former students.

In general, the quality and quantity of CIS program records varied widely across community programs; even within local programs, the nature and depth of recorded information varied over time. For example, some programs were unable to re-construct their roster of clients for a given timeframe. In some cases, projects have the goal of maintaining detailed records, but staff may only enter information sporadically; for example, in one site, a repositioned staff member noted that she kept notes from all of her meetings with students in a notebook, and planned to enter them in individual students' files during the summer, when she hoped to have more time. Failure to maintain records from year to year, or even to accomplish data entry during the course of a school year, compromises accountability in numerous ways. It obviously presents problems for tracking client progress and altering individual service plans to fit changing needs. Inadequate record keeping impedes the ability to routinely monitor program performance and to conduct special studies or program evaluations, as needed. From a management perspective, it presents problems if there is a change in staff, as has occurred unexpectedly in several programs. Absence of data regarding former or current students makes it exceedingly difficult for new staff to "take over" a program without considerable loss of continuity.

In some cases, limited management capabilities (or inclinations) on the part of program or project staff contribute to the lack of data collection and monitoring. Changes in personnel or location also took a toll on data availability: staff who left the program took records with them, or disposed of them. In one program, CIS teachers recorded student progress (in terms of absences, suspensions, and referrals to the principal for behavioral problems) on three-by-five cards, which were not turned over to the program for record keeping. One teacher pointed out that her classroom location had changed each year, so she no longer was able to retrieve whatever data she had collected in prior years. Although teachers apparently provided summary information to the program director, it was not retained over time by the program office as it re-located; therefore, staff were unable to retrieve much student data from earlier years.

Some CIS program files were quite extensive, recording overt and subtle reasons for referral; intake information explicitly stating individual service needs; and detailed case notes on each contact with the youth, family members, or other service providers (both those repositioned to the program or those encountered through referrals). In cases where social workers perform the record keeping function, files tend to be very complete (nevertheless, it is often difficult to develop indicators of student progress or status at a particular point of time from such records).

However, most visited programs had records that were considerably more limited in data quantity and quality. For example, only 114 CIS program files noted that the students' were behind grade for their age (or over age for their grade level) as a reason for referral; however, further review of records of 500 students for whom some school information was available suggested that 293 students had been retained in grade prior to CIS entry (although this was not cited as a referral reason).

Program records also varied in terms of the extent to which service delivery was documented; most did not record the nature, frequency, duration, or intensity of various services. It was virtually impossible to determine whether an entry noting "individual counseling" referred

to a personal discussion between a student and a CIS staff member who might have no professional credentials as a counselor, or whether the service was provided by a repositioned staff member with specific training or experience in counseling. Similarly, it was often difficult to determine whether services were delivered on a weekly basis for the entire year, for a prescribed course of treatment (e.g., a 12-week cycle), or on a one-time-only basis.

In most of the visited sites, CIS program/project files did not include students' complete school transcripts either before, or subsequent to, enrollment in CIS projects. Although many of the programs extracted information from school records on a sporadic basis or as needed (e.g., to provide specific services for a particular youth, or to report information to a potential program sponsor), in some communities information sharing between CIS and the school was not in place. In such situations, CIS staff and service providers have no reliable means of determining whether their efforts are fruitful in terms of facilitating school-based progress and dropout prevention.

In general, data collection and assessment of program and project performance appear to be very low priorities among most of the programs visited. This would seem to be at odds with CIS' emphasis on accountability as a key element of the CIS philosophy. However, CIS' has primarily emphasized accountability in terms of responsibility for actions taken regarding service provision. It would appear desirable to broaden the organization's view of accountability to include maintaining data related to various student characteristics and outcome indicators (e.g., grades, attendance, behaviors), and tracking changes in these indicators to assess the effect of program participation.

School-Based CIS Projects

At the school level, the CIS model involves bringing together a team of professionals to provide services, coordinated by a case manager, to youth identified as being at risk of dropping out. Case management, a key site-based activity, is commonly associated with programs that use services integration to address the multiple needs of clients; and it is particularly important to successful service coordination in cases where there are high levels of community and/or family disorganization (Morrill and Gerry, 1990).

The primary emphasis of CIS projects is on services intended to encourage students to stay in school. This commonly translates into an emphasis on assistance with academic subjects, attendance monitoring, and activities to promote self-esteem and team building. Although not required, the national organization also recommends the inclusion of a "CIS class."

As autonomous entities, CIS local programs select the kinds of activities and services they provide to students, based on the needs and characteristics of their client base and the resources they are able to secure to support service provision. Services may vary across schools within the same community due to variations in needs or resources. Tutoring and/or mentoring programs for CIS students are among the most commonly provided services.

Most programs provide periodic field trips, which serve a variety of purposes, including use as motivational tools/rewards for students who attain particular levels of academic or behavioral performance (Long Beach, CA; West Palm Beach, FL). Field trips also are used to broaden students' horizons and awareness of the world outside of their communities, and to foster social skills and experiences that enable students to better "fit" in the workplace.

In some cases, CIS programs at the school site serve as a mechanism for bringing services provided by other agencies into the schools. Grants are often used to provide this special programming. For example, the Austin CIS program developed a multi-agency collaborative Violence Prevention Project. Agencies participating in the project had previously provided preventive educational presentations related to specific issues their agency focused on (e.g., child abuse) at schools. CIS arranged for a coordinated series of educational presentations related to various kinds of violence at selected schools. The entire school was able to participate in these presentations, not just CIS students.

Project Structure

CIS projects generally serve relatively small proportions of the student body of the schools in which they are located; although some of the newer programs (e.g., Adams County, Seattle) are implementing "whole school" models. Some CIS school projects enroll only 20 to 30 students as CIS clients; others serve several hundred students.

Becoming a CIS student generally involves meeting the program's criteria; agreeing to participate, and receiving parental permission to participate, in the program; and being assigned to a case manager, who may be the CIS project director or another service provider. In addition to serving students formally enrolled in CIS, CIS projects generally provide emergency service or advice to non-CIS students, and some sponsor programs or occasional events in which non-CIS students may participate.

A major variation on the CIS school-level model is the academy or corporate academy. Academies include the basic elements of the CIS school model, but are often organized as separate, "alternative" schools, where all students are part of the CIS program. A "school within a school" approach is also used for academies; this involves designating a particular wing or portion of a school for the academy, and block-scheduling CIS students so they attend all, or most, classes together.

The "corporate academy" nomenclature refers to the private-sector sponsorship of particular school projects. The number of corporate academies has expanded considerably in recent years as a result of a partnership between CIS and the Burger King Corporation, which provides financial support to underwrite the costs of developing and operating numerous Burger King Academies across the country. Similar arrangements with other corporations have also been developed.

Development of academies (alternative schools, as in Columbia, New York City's

Metropolitan Corporate Academy, Houston) for CIS students enables use of innovative teaching methods and curricula structured to meet the special needs of CIS students in addition to providing ancillary services typically associated with CIS programs in regular schools. In alternative schools, principal support for such innovations is virtually guaranteed, since the entire school is developed for CIS. It is important to select or train teachers willing to be creative and to modify their teaching techniques for such settings. In some cases, non-traditional teaching styles are used in CIS classes in regular schools (High Point).

Staffing

CIS school-based activities are overseen by project directors or coordinators, who frequently are employed by the local CIS program. Occasionally, project directors are school district employees. Other team members may include, on a full- or part-time basis: (i) staff repositioned to CIS from various service agencies (e.g., counselors from social service or substance abuse agencies; specialists from local employment commissions; nurses from public health agencies); (ii) teachers or other school personnel assigned to CIS (e.g., teaching CIS life-skills classes, conducting remedial education, or providing guidance counseling); and (iii) local volunteers, who provide a variety of services, most commonly tutoring or mentoring.

Repositioned and assigned staff are important to the success of CIS programs. Most projects have some repositioned and/or assigned staff, although the numbers of such staff vary considerably across programs. Repositioned staff most commonly are social workers or counselors who perform general individual or group counseling and case management functions.

A potential problem area regarding repositioned or assigned staff is the program's relative lack of control over them. In most cases, program or project staff do not play a part in selecting staff that are repositioned or assigned to them, nor is their input generally sought for employee evaluations of these staff. A number of program or project directors reported that it would be desirable to have input into selecting and evaluating these staff members. In a small number of sites, it was reported that CIS was sometimes used as a "dumping ground" for agency or school personnel with inadequate skills.

Some programs (Miami PIC, Palm Beach County) have chosen to ensure the stability and skills of such staff by subcontracting their services. Some CIS programs opt to hire particular kinds of employees as CIS staff to avoid the uncertainties of securing the desired level of staffing through repositioning agreements. This is also done to ensure that CIS has adequate control over staff (e.g., the ability to hire those with desired skills and experience, or to fire those who don't work out). Other programs (Columbia, High Point) have reached agreements with schools or service agencies that enable CIS to have input in the selection and evaluation of staff repositioned or assigned to CIS school sites.

Despite the relative lack of input or control in selecting such staff, the relationship between CIS staff and repositioned or assigned staff was generally reported as working well. In some cases where program directors were not satisfied with staff provided, they had been able

to arrange to make replacements with the agencies involved, although this may have taken longer than if CIS had direct control over the staff involved.

As noted, many CIS communities encounter difficulty in obtaining sufficient numbers and diversity of repositioned staff. Some sites that lack repositioned and/or assigned staff have been resourceful in making other arrangements to compensate for this. For example, the Greensville-Emporia, VA, program did not have any repositioned staff or assigned staff at the time of our site visit, and only had one staff member in the community, the project director. The project director uses the program's Advisory Board, which included representatives of a number of human service agencies, to perform some of the case management and referral functions that are typically performed by repositioned staff. The project director raises problems and needs of students during Advisory Committee meetings, and members make recommendations regarding referrals or other courses of action. They frequently recommend referring students to their own agency. This project director also was able to get a high school teacher to volunteer to teach a CIS elective class at the middle school (where the CIS program is located) during his free period, since the school district did not assign a teacher for this purpose.

Other sites also are able to obtain "pro bono" professional services in lieu of repositioned staff for some functions. In Griffin-Spalding, a doctor comes to the CIS Academy one half-day per week to provide health counseling and referrals to clinics or other health services. In Marianna, AR, the school nurse and one of the guidance counselors serve as CIS case managers on a voluntary basis. In Helena/West Helena, one of the middle school's Chapter 1 teachers provides after-school tutoring on a voluntary basis (along with two teachers assigned to this service).

One of the problems that occurs in programs that do not have repositioned staff is that the project director, in effect, takes on the role of counselor and primary service provider. Where CIS project directors are required to have social work or similar backgrounds (e.g., Austin and San Antonio), this is not a particular shortcoming. However, where project directors have professional credentials unrelated to social work (e.g., teaching foreign languages or employment training), they are not really qualified to perform counseling or other supportive social services. In such cases, project directors may function along the lines of the "caring adult" described in CIS' philosophy, but they require guidance in identifying and securing services appropriate to individual student needs. For example, one teacher serving as project director, at a school site with minimal repositioned staff, noted that she seeks the school counselor's advice about how to handle potentially serious situations (e.g., students that sound as if they may be suicidal, or situations that may involve abuse or neglect).

A related problem in programs without at least some repositioned staff with social work backgrounds is that they typically do not have an adequate case management system. As a result, student needs may not be adequately assessed, and appropriate service delivery plans may not be developed.

CIS staff appear to be diligent in their efforts to locate and obtain services for students. For example, all of the program-level staff at one site visited became involved in trying to resolve a housing crisis for one student's family that occurred at the time of our visit. The family was about to be evicted because of dangerous conditions in their home. Program staff members spent considerable time on the telephone, both with housing and social service agencies and with personal friends and contacts, to try to locate housing so that the family would not have to go to the community's emergency shelter. Staff wanted to avoid that alternative because it was very close to Christmas, and they felt it would be upsetting to the student and family to be in a shelter during the holidays.

Similarly, several of the teachers assigned to the CIS alternative high school in another community have occasionally allowed CIS students to stay in their homes for a period of time when there was a family crisis (e.g., when the student was "kicked out" of the house). Some staff in this community noted it would be desirable to have short-term living accommodations at the school for such situations.

CIS projects that were visited do appear to refer students to a variety of existing services or agencies in the community, and feel that they are able to address the needs of most students satisfactorily through the combination of repositioned staff and referrals. CIS staff or repositioned staff often take the responsibility of transporting students to their appointments with outside agencies, often due to lack of other transportation alternatives. This also ensures that students receive these services, but it does not appear to be the best use of staff time. However, some staff members note that conversations with students while driving to appointments enables them to discuss the status of the student's problem and the effects of the service provided; and to provide informal counseling/guidance.

In addition to project staff and referrals, CIS programs use volunteers to expand their service offerings on both a regular (e.g., tutors or mentors) and intermittent basis (e.g., volunteers who serve as "chaperons" for field trips, help develop and implement special events/activities, or provide sporadic assistance as needed). In addition, student interns (generally college or graduate school students) also are included in the volunteer category. For example, the Austin and San Antonio CIS programs have agreements with schools of social work in local universities to enable their graduate students to provide case management and/or counseling services under supervision of CIS project directors (who generally have MSWs).

Case Management

The nature and intensity of CIS case management efforts varies by location. Case management may include some or all of the following components: assessment of student needs; development of individualized service delivery plans; actual delivery of services to students on site or by referral to off-site resources; outreach to family members, such as siblings and parents; and monitoring of student or family progress.

Somewhat less than half of the programs visited can be considered as providing case management services as defined above. The programs that provided the strongest levels of case management (those that provided all, or almost all, of the listed case management procedures) are generally those that use social workers as project directors (e.g., San Antonio and Austin), or those where social workers are a strong component of the program's repositioned staff (e.g., High Point and Rocky Mount).

Although case management per se is not practiced in a substantial number of programs visited, some elements of case management are present in many of those programs. For example, all programs visited make referrals to service agencies (e.g., for counseling) or other sources of assistance (e.g., local clothing banks or to the Lions' Club for free eyeglasses). All students may not receive referrals, but this is a commonly provided service.

In most sites, case managers serve as "linchpins" or "brokers" -- communication among service providers is accomplished indirectly, with the case manager serving as middleman. However, several programs (Adams County, Columbia, High Point, Metropolitan Corporate Academy, Seattle) have integrated holistic "team management" at the school level, to share decision-making in general, and/or for discussing the status and service needs of students. In addition, a few programs (Austin, Houston) have implemented team management or otherwise developed structures to involve staff from the various schools at the program level.

The case management components most frequently missing or weak included: conducting a needs assessment; developing individualized plans for service delivery; following up on whether services were provided; maintaining case notes or other monitoring information regarding students served; and outreach to families. The issue of outreach to families, particularly parent involvement, is detailed below, since this is of interest to a wide audience of service providers and educators.

Family Outreach Services and Parental Involvement

The CIS model stresses the importance of a holistic approach that includes involvement of the family and provision of services to address family needs. Burt et al. (1992) note that programs seeking to make a real difference for youth should directly involve parents and other family members, since family dysfunction is one of the major antecedents of problem behaviors. Parents may also be instrumental in identifying service needs of their child. Morrill et. al. (1991) similarly note that parental involvement should be required in collaborations providing service for children and families, although even programs that understand the importance of parental involvement do not always provide services to them, or treat them as part of the primary target group.

Typically, staff indicate that the student is their primary target, particularly in cases of limited resources. Provision of services to parents or other family members is generally a lower priority than providing services to students. As a result, programs rarely provide many services to family members, and the service most commonly provided is referrals to other agencies. In

some cases, family counseling services are provided by CIS counselors or case managers because that is the service needed by the student, as well as the family. Although most programs provide relatively few services to family members, a few have developed special programs or services for families. For example, the Coolidge Family Resource Center (Pinal County CIS) started a support group for adults who were abusing their children (at least one parent attended this under court order); subsequently, several participants from this group started a second group (focused on women's issues), which was facilitated by a counselor from a private social service agency. Similarly, Adams County offers support services to dysfunctional families. In Long Beach, CA, a family support group was developed to bring in speakers on a variety of issues related to parenting skills and/or dealing with children's problems (e.g., children's response to divorce). Parents participating in this group (a core group of eight to ten parents generally attends the meetings) also serve as an informal support network for each other during and between meetings of the group.

For the most part, the CIS programs visited stress the importance of involving parents, over the goal of providing actual services to families. Nevertheless, most either make limited efforts to involve parents, or report that they have not found a way to successfully do so. Parental involvement appears to be a source of frustration for many programs for this reason.

Although relatively few programs had significant parental involvement components, most programs made efforts to involve parents on a periodic basis. Some programs (Columbia, Metropolitan Corporate Academy, Houston) required parents to participate in interviews with CIS staff before their child could be enrolled in CIS. In some cases, parents have to agree to further involvement as a condition of their child's enrollment (e.g., to participate in a specified number of meetings with CIS staff, and agree to participate in home visits or calls to the home or at work on an as-needed basis). Some programs (Columbia) create PTA-like organizations or invite parents to periodic "open houses," which may be timed to coincide with parents' nights or other school events that involve parents, or other special events (e.g., holiday parties, appreciation dinners or other ceremonies). For example, in Southwest Pennsylvania, parents are invited to participate in two "parent involvement nights": one teaches parents how to support math and reading skills, the other teaches them to use the newspaper to stimulate student interest during the summer. Also, the CIS project sponsors a series of Parent Awareness Days workshops, in collaboration with the Chapter 1 school psychologist. Parents receive information concerning appropriate disciplinary methods, self-esteem building, forging relationships with teachers, and supporting/reinforcing academics at home. The workshops provide information about community resources located near their neighborhoods and in the wider metropolitan area.

In general, projects at the elementary school level seemed to place greater emphasis on parental involvement, and appeared to have greater success in involving parents. To some extent, this may be because schools also place greater emphasis on parental involvement at lower grade levels, and because there seems to be a general decline in such involvement as students enter adolescence and become more independent of their parents.

Home visits are another mechanism for parental involvement, although these are not performed by all programs, or may only be done on an as-needed basis. Home visits provide an opportunity for staff to meet the parent and develop support for the child's involvement in CIS (High Point, Marianna, Palm Beach County). Home visits also serve as a mechanism to assess family needs for other services, and to make referrals to such services. Programs that involve multiple home visits for all families (instead of an annual visit, which is fairly common) are in a better position to identify family needs (e.g., for clothing, shelter, other services), and may provide more referrals or other services as a result.

The West Palm Beach County program, for example, places particular emphasis on home visits; it receives grant funds to pay for this service. In general, the grant supports one part-time home visitor at each school site. Home visitors are required to conduct a minimum of two home visits per student per year. They function as a liaison between the school and the family, as well as a liaison between the CIS program and students and their families. As the number of repositioned staff in this program has decreased in recent years, home visitors have taken on additional roles. For example, they provide informal counseling, make telephone contacts with parents, and make referrals to local service providers for students and their families. They also transport emergency supplies from the program office's food and clothing closet to students and families.

Telephone contact with parents is a commonly used form of parental involvement. This is used in some programs in lieu of home visits. In others, telephone contact supplements regularly scheduled visits. Staff in some programs call parents in conjunction with their attendance monitoring functions. If a student is absent for more than a specified number of days (sometimes only one day), a CIS staff member calls the parent to determine whether s/he knows the child is not in school.

CIS Class and Tutoring/Mentoring

Slightly more than half of the programs visited provide some form of CIS class (in some or all school sites). Few of the visited programs used block scheduling in place of, or in addition to, CIS classes. CIS classes differ considerably in focus across programs; they are generally elective classes in middle and high schools.

There is no standard "curriculum" for CIS classes, although many focus on life-skills education, often with a strong concern for building students' self-esteem and encouraging pro-social attitudes and behaviors (e.g., avoidance of drug or alcohol use, resistance to peer pressures and gang involvement). For example, the Georgia CIS "Success Seminar" curriculum and the High Point, NC, program provide CIS classes for middle and high schoolers, respectively, focusing on self-esteem, goal setting, study skills, anger management, adjusting to high school (including organization and time management skills), taking initiative through community service projects, and behaviors relevant to employment (e.g., resume writing, interviewing skills, punctuality, and courtesy toward others). Similarly, in West Palm Beach County, the CIS program used a grant to purchase the WAVE (Work, Achievement, Values in Education)

competency-based curriculum that addresses substance abuse, job skills, career exploration, job preparation, and development of personal and interpersonal skills.

In some cases, CIS classes are not special life-skills classes, but are regular academic classes taught by teachers assigned to the CIS program, and are often modified in some way for CIS students. In such cases, class size is often smaller than in regular classes, enabling teachers to provide more one-on-one support. This approach offers considerable flexibility in adapting to student needs and competencies; such classes might emphasize hands-on learning techniques, and may involve practical applications of core subjects (e.g., learning to balance checking accounts or understand consumer loan interest as part of math; learning to write job application letters as part of English). In Long Beach, CA, for example, the CIS class was once a science class, but recently became an English class (after a different teacher was assigned to CIS). In Austin, CIS received JTPA funds to provide basic skills or employment training to JTPA eligible students in some schools. The local PIC also provided computers to these schools for use in self-paced learning for these students. In these schools, "lab classes" were established, generally as regular academic classes (e.g., math, English) as a forum for providing the computer-assisted learning. CIS project coordinators in some schools used these classes as forums for other CIS activities (e.g., working with small groups of CIS students on a rotating basis to provide group counseling or outside speakers on special topics, such as substance abuse, HIV/AIDS awareness, etc. while other students worked on the computers).

As used here, tutoring refers to academic assistance provided on a regular basis through the CIS program (as opposed to referring CIS students to existing tutoring programs operated by the school or other agencies). Tutoring programs might be conducted by adult volunteers, including college students; by teachers; or by other students (peer tutoring, or tutoring by students in more advanced grades). Many CIS programs provide occasional tutoring to selected students without having a specific tutoring program; in some cases, the project director, CIS teacher, or other staff member (e.g., student interns) provides this as-needed assistance. In other cases, a limited number of volunteer tutors are sought for a few students with strong needs for tutoring. This might be a relatively short-term arrangement, as opposed to continuing over the course of the school year.

Mentoring usually involves pairing a student with an adult who serves as a role model and caring adult/friend. Mentors often expose students to a variety of enrichment opportunities and social situations, and often function in "big brother/sister" capacities, providing guidance and informal counseling. In some cases, programs blur the distinction between tutoring and mentoring services. The term "mentor" is used in some programs for individuals who primarily provide tutoring/academic assistance. Some of the variations on approaches to tutoring and mentoring observed in the programs visited are described below:

- The High Point program calls its tutors/mentors "partners." All ninth and tenth grade students in the CIS class are assigned to a partner. Students are pulled out of CIS class one day a week (on a regular schedule) to meet with their partners, who provide tutoring by helping students with their class assignments or working

on particular problem areas. CIS teachers also have prepared exercises that partners and students can work on when students do not have an assignment (e.g., reading a newspaper article about gang violence or substance abuse, and discussing questions/issues the teacher has identified. Some partners also occasionally meet with their student after school or on weekends for social or enrichment activities (e.g., attending a concert, going to a museum).

- High Point and Rocky Mount are both using police officers as tutors or mentors for some students. In one community in the West Palm Beach County CIS program, several police officers are assigned to spend one day per week (on a rotating basis) at three different schools to serve as guest speakers and mentors to CIS students.

- In Helena/West Helena, AR, tutoring is provided to middle school students by three of the school's Chapter 1 teachers (two of whom are assigned to CIS for this purpose, while the third provides tutoring as a volunteer). The teachers are available for one hour after school, four days a week. Students participate in tutoring on a drop-in basis, as opposed to being assigned on a regular schedule. Tutoring is provided on a one-on-one basis or in small groups, depending on the number of students present and the number that need similar kinds of assistance. The teachers also provide informal counseling to students in addition to tutoring assistance.

- The Columbia, SC, program arranges for mentors for interested CIS students, as opposed to providing them for all students. In contrast to High Point, mentors meet with students after school or on weekends. Mentors are asked to provide a minimum of eight hours per month of service. Mentors and students arrange the frequency and length of meetings. Program staff encourage mentors to expose students to a variety of opportunities, such as visiting different neighborhood or cultural attractions, attending sporting events, "hanging out" together, etc.

- The Philadelphia CIS program has tutoring or mentoring in some schools; in some cases, partnerships developed between businesses and particular schools include this component. For example, about 50 volunteers from a major accounting firm serve as mentors to CIS students in a nearby high school. Mentors meet with students during lunch hour every other week (different groups of mentors go to the school on different days). Each mentor is matched with a group of three to six students. Mentors and students discuss school and career related issues and problems, and mentors focus on encouraging students to stay in school. Mentors occasionally meet with students after school or on weekends, and sometimes take them on "field trips," e.g., to museums or local attractions, or to visit a college campus, and occasionally bring them to their office. In another Philadelphia school site, eleventh grade CIS students are assigned as peer mentors for ninth grade CIS students.

- The Greensville-Emporia, VA, CIS program has a mentoring component focused on employment exposure (job shadowing) and employment related skills. This is provided during the second half of the school year, and about half of the CIS students participate, spending about one hour per week with their mentor at the mentor's workplace. Students observe their mentors (and other employees) at work, and, in some cases, are given the opportunity to develop employment related skills (e.g., working on personal computers, filing, answering telephones). Some mentors also provide informal tutoring or homework assistance. Mentors also typically meet with students occasionally outside of the mentoring setting (e.g., to attend a church supper).

- The West Palm Beach County program recently initiated a mentoring program, which actually combines both tutoring and mentoring components, called The Leadership Connection (TLC). The program recently developed a partnership with a nearby community college to provide students from the educational psychology department to serve as mentors. The program also expects to recruit mentors from the business community.

The basic components of the prototype discussed above do not capture the wide range of services and activities conducted by CIS programs outside of CIS classes or tutoring and mentoring programs. All programs visited provide some form of individual or group counseling for CIS students. This may be informal counseling or guidance, rather than therapeutic counseling, in that it is not always provided by individuals with social work or similar professional backgrounds. In cases where these individuals do not have backgrounds appropriate to provide professional counseling, they function as caring adults in terms of the counseling or guidance role. In addition, a number of programs provide services after school, or have developed special in-school programs or services such as conflict resolution and violence abatement, community service activities, transition to work, pregnancy or teen parenting supports. These are briefly described below.

Conflict Resolution and Violence Abatement

A variety of activities are used to promote leadership skills in an effort to mitigate youth violence and other illegal activities by promoting pro-social attitudes and behaviors. Several programs used periodic Ropes courses for these purposes; in Philadelphia, one site received a grant to provide a peer leadership elective class.

- In Adams County, an extraordinarily diverse mix and intensive involvement of law-related professionals, including D.A.R.E. officers, probation officers, and juvenile diversion counselors, support CIS. Police officers are involved in mentoring students, and in a school-based "Adopt a Cop" program, whereby they spend lunch hours or other down time at the school assisting with courses, eating lunches with students or playing pick-up games on the playground, and otherwise relating one-on-one to youth. In addition to teaching the D.A.R.E. curriculum at

the elementary and middle school, they teach Law-Related Education curricula at high schools. Five officers serve as CIS police advisors, teaching conflict management and violence prevention modules as part of school health curriculum and involving students in police activities, such as a sports night at the local recreation center or the Police Explorers program. Since gang activities are a growing concern in the local area, gang task force meetings were held to develop solutions, and a special one-week class, taught by police officers, was piloted with nine students who were handpicked from two middle schools due to gang-related problems.

- In Austin, the project coordinator of a CIS middle school site developed a multi-stage program focused on decreasing violence and improving race relations. She (i) operated a counseling group for ten students and their parents who had been victims of race-related violence; (ii) developed a presentation related to stereotyping followed by discussions with that group and an expanded group of about 25 other students; (iii) brought in a theatrical group that makes presentation on diversity for a group of about 150 students; and (iv)implemented a weekly conflict resolution/counseling group for several girls who frequently were referred to school authorities for fighting. Also, selected students worked as a group to develop a video on drug and gang prevention.

- In Seattle, two CIS high school sites have focused on gang control. In one, a Gang Council meets every two weeks to engage in conflict resolution and peer mediation activities. Meetings also are held before dances and other events to ensure that no problems are festering that might erupt. Gang council activities are augmented by a one-semester, weekly Anger Management class that has been designed to provide students with basic skills to avoid acting out anger in an aggressive or self-destructive manner. Adult leaders have received the school support to implement an entrepreneurial approach to empowering the students: the Council will engage in legitimate enterprises for profit (e.g., selling Stop the Violence t-shirts), and Council members will be shareholders, each shareholders each receive his/her share of profits provided he/she has (i) improved attendance at school; (ii) increased individual Grade Point Average (GPA) by at least .5 point if the GPA was below 2.5; and by 1.0 point, if the GPA was below 1.0; and (iii) decreased the number of behavioral referrals.

Community Service Activities

Several programs have developed community service components as mechanisms for developing (i) self-esteem by "giving back" to the community, (ii) leadership skills, and (iii) employment-related skills. Sample community service initiatives include:

- In Philadelphia, a high school project for CIS students permits them to earn elective credit for providing specified number of hours of community service as

volunteers in such organizations as hospitals, libraries, YM/WCA, or the day care center at the high school.

- In Columbia, the CIS program recently expanded and formalized its community service component. Previously, students had provided periodic volunteer services (e.g., occasionally helping at a food bank or in the VA hospital), and the students of one of the alternative high schools had "adopted" two miles of highway near their school, which they kept litter-free. In 1993, Friday mornings were set aside so all students could participate in community service activities; the resource coordinator polled students and teachers about the kinds of activities they wanted to perform, and invited representatives of various nonprofit organizations to make presentations at the school. Students and teachers selected the group of agencies at which community services are performed.

- In Pinal County, one local high school re-designed its disciplinary policy, designating the CIS Family Resource Center as one of the accepted locations where students can fulfill community service responsibilities as an alternative to out-of-school suspension. Six hours of community service equates to one day of assigned suspension (e.g., the school's disciplinary policy for fighting is to permit 18 hours of community service in lieu of a three-day suspension). CIS also oversees offenders for the Police Department's community service, diversionary alternative to court adjudication for (i) minor offenses, such as curfew violations, underage drinking, and shoplifting involving younger kids and victims who concur with the alternative sanction, and for (ii) first-time offenders who are obviously repentant, and show a willingness to straighten out.

Transition to Work

Programs use a variety of mechanisms to promote awareness of opportunities for higher education, career paths, and employment skills. A number of programs have periodic job shadowing days, where CIS students are assigned to follow a specific employee at his/her job for a day. Guest speakers representing various kinds of career options are often brought in to make presentations during CIS classes; such speakers also may emphasize the importance of staying in school and/or higher education; appropriate workplace behaviors, etc. In recent years, some CIS programs received small grants through the CIS national organization to support development of student-run enterprises (e.g., button or t-shirt manufacturing).

- In Chicago, the CIS program developed "college bound" clubs in four high schools; activities associated each club differed based on the needs and circumstances of the school. In general, the clubs focused on increasing students' commitment to higher education; removing barriers that keep minority students from pursuing higher education; helping students set goals; and helping students apply for college/financial aid. A local college provided assistance with club meetings.

- The West Palm Beach County program provides a number of two-year scholarships for CIS students. These scholarships are provided through partnerships with various corporations and organizations.

- In the Miami PIC CIS, the program contracts with two community colleges to provide activities (e.g., counseling and advisory services; career exploration activities; exposure to college climates; a Saturday program of SAT preparation and computer skills, such as word processing; and support for securing college admission) to orient students to post-high school educational opportunities. The program also uses summer jobs as an incentive to keep students in school: only students who are enrolled in high school and who attend 60 hours of summer class (a JTPA summer employment program that provides instruction in writing skills; speaking skills oriented toward employment interviews and job success; and math/consumer math) are eligible for summer jobs. The Miami program also provides vouchers for students who graduate to enable students to receive additional training in a program of studies most appropriate to their needs (based on results of objective assessments and the student's individualized service strategy). Vouchers, which cover costs of tuition, matriculation and related fees, books, and supplies, may only be used to fund two-year programs providing an AS degree (a technical degree preparing students for the workplace).

Teen Pregnancy or Parenting Services

A few of the CIS programs visited had special programs for pregnant and/or parenting teens:

- In Marianna, AR, the local health department used grant funding to reposition a social worker and public health educators to CIS to offer: (i) a class on prenatal issues for pregnant teens; (ii) parenting classes for teen mothers (grouped by the age of their children), focusing on development and behavioral issues; (iii) individual counseling; (iv) home visits; and (v) referrals for services (e.g., medical care) and assurance that the mothers and children are signed up for various services (e.g., WIC, Medicaid, etc.).

- A Philadelphia CIS site assigned parenting teens to a special "human development" science class that focused on child development. Grant funds were used to provide on-site day care services for the children of these students.

- A Southwestern Pennsylvania CIS site partnered with community-based organizations (the Methodist Union of Social Agencies, MUSA, and a county Family Resources agency) to serve teen parents from the high school, as well as some young mothers enrolled in GED programs through MUSA. The group meets twice weekly for 45 minute periods to discuss children/parenting, using a curricula called "Baby and Me." The program touches on a variety of other support issues,

such as: safety for infants; child abuse; nutrition for babies; "safe sex" practices; and resources available in the community. The classes are co-facilitated by a CIS life skills coordinator (case manager) and a MUSA social worker.

The At-Risk Profile of Students Served by CIS

One of the key issues regarding CIS programs involves whether they are serving the targeted population of at-risk students. To assess whether CIS students fit the profile of at-risk youth, we applied the conceptual framework, presented in Exhibit 7, that posits:

> The presence of negative antecedent conditions (risky environments) which create vulnerabilities, combined with the presence of specific negative behaviors, define a youth's level of risk for incurring more serious consequences (risk outcomes). (Burt et al., 1992: 13.)

Using this model, youth are candidates for prevention efforts, and are considered at: (i) high risk if they grew up under any of the antecedent conditions, and are currently displaying at least one of the risk markers; (ii) moderate risk if they either are living under any of the antecedent conditions or are currently displaying at least one risk marker; and (iii) low risk if they are neither living under negative antecedent conditions, nor displaying negative behaviors identified as risk markers. Clearly implied by this model is the notion that those who have progressed beyond "at-riskiness" into exhibiting seriously risky behaviors or experiencing negative outcomes require not just prevention, but focused intervention and treatment to both resolve the existing problems and limit future adverse consequences.

Indicators of risk antecedents of poverty, neighborhood, and family dysfunction, cited in the literature include: (i) racial and ethnic minority status, since minority youth are more likely, than Caucasian, non-Hispanic youth, to be living in poor or near-poor families; (ii) youth in single-parent families headed by females are more likely to be living in poor or near-poverty homes, than those in two-parent households or those living only with fathers; (iii) "underclass" neighborhoods, which are characterized by high levels of multiple social problems, including family dysfunction, high unemployment, and high dependence on public assistance; and (iv) family dysfunction as evidenced by parental substance abuse, family violence, and abuse or negligence of children. Applying these indicators to data derived from CIS/school records:

- CIS programs appear to serve considerably more racial and ethnic minority students than non-Hispanic Caucasian students.

- 48.2 percent of the sampled students lived in single-parent households (most often with a female head of household); 3.4 percent are living with non-relatives or on their own (see Figure 1).

- Families' socio-economic status at the time youth entered CIS were largely undocumented; based on discussions with CIS staff, and interviews with students

Exhibit 7: RISK ANTECEDENTS, MARKERS, BEHAVIORS, AND OUTCOMES

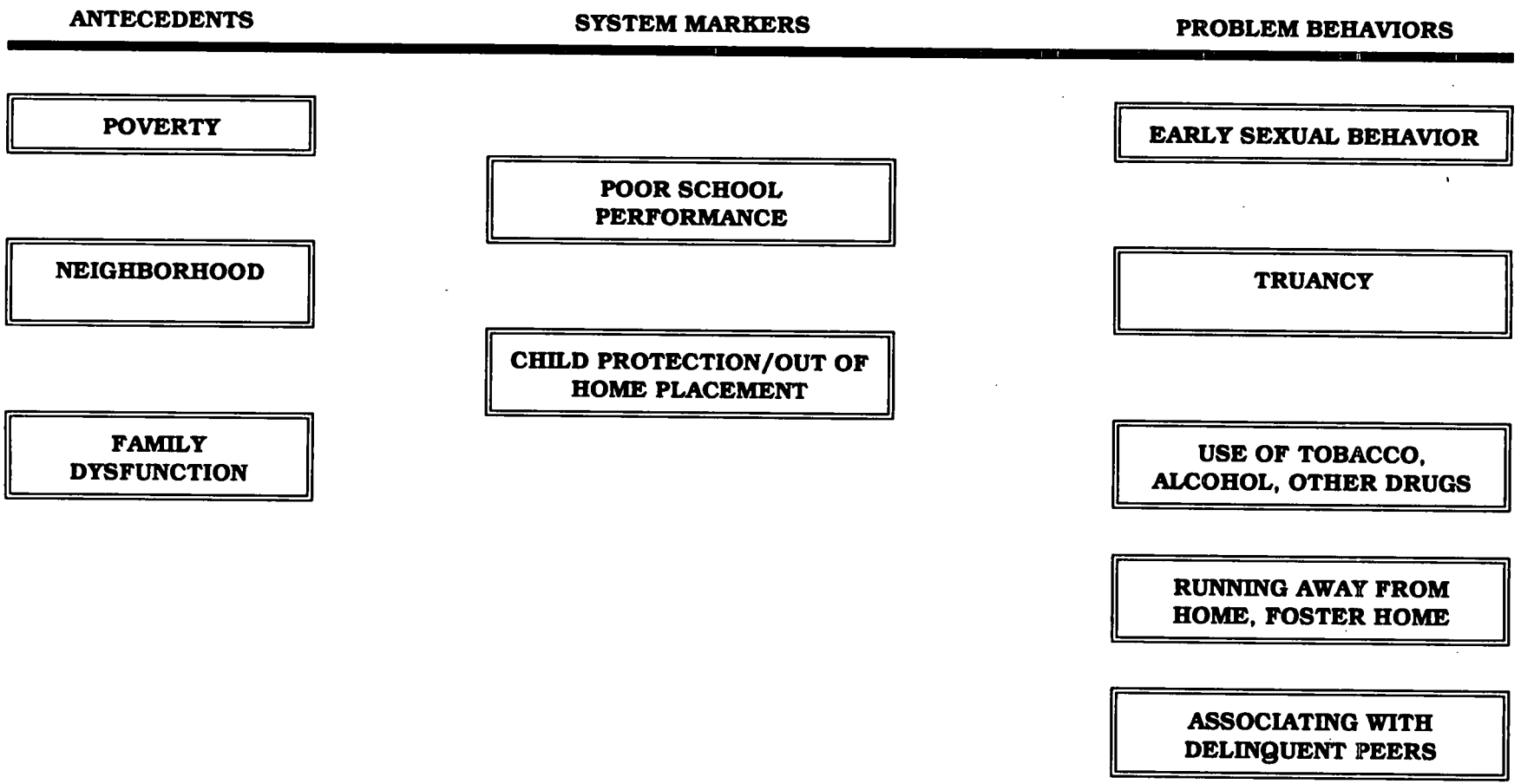


Exhibit 7 (Cont'd)

OUTCOMES

Pregnancy, too-early parenthood, poor pregnancy outcomes
Homelessness
Prostitution
Abuse of or addiction to alcohol or other drugs, and associated health problems
Sexually-transmitted diseases, including chlamydia and AIDS
Dropping out of school, poor credentials for economic self-sufficiency
Commission of felonies
Low self-esteem, depression, suicidal thoughts, attempts, and suicide itself
Physical abuse, battering
Sexual abuse, rape, incest
Death or permanent injury from guns, knives, and other violent behavior, automobile accidents, other accidents
Other morbidity/mortality outcomes (e.g., hepatitis, tuberculosis, pneumonia, AIDS complications)

Source: Burt et al., 1992: 14 - 16.

Figure 1: Family/Household Structure

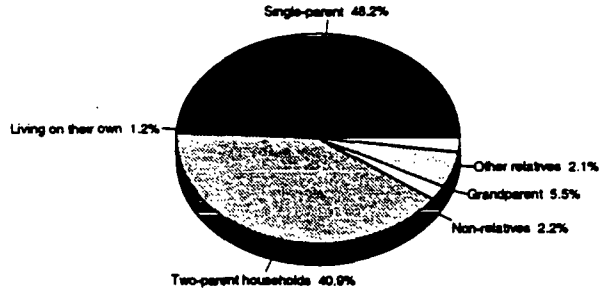


Figure 2: Standardized Testing Results

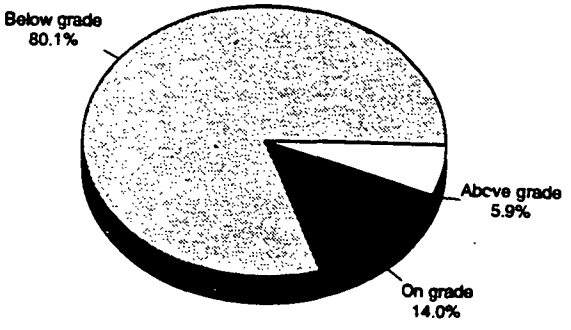
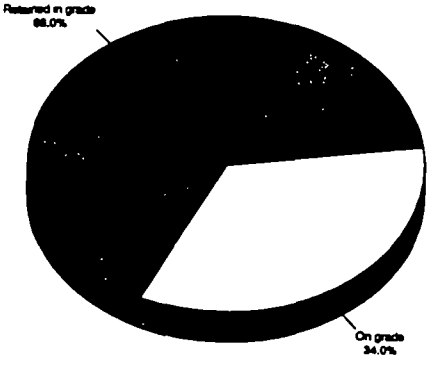


Figure 3: Promotion/Retention in Grade



and a small sample of parents, we believe the recorded data heavily under-report the extent to which CIS participants reside in poor or near-poor families with strong needs for socio-economic assistance. Nevertheless, as presented in Table 9, 17.5 percent reported incomes under $30,000; 20 percent were reportedly JTPA eligible; nearly 12 percent were reported as receiving food stamps.

- Approximately 11 percent of the sample included family dysfunction as a reason for referral. In addition, a small percentage of records indicated family problems with child abuse or neglect (2.0 percent), or with parental substance abuse (1.5 percent), during the students' participation in CIS. Also, nearly 5 percent of the students reportedly had difficulties with family transience, including frequent relocations and/or divorces that re-structured the youths' immediate circumstances.

CIS/school records were also applied to risk markers of poor school performance, using reasons for referral, standardized test results, and school progress; system markers in terms of official child protection/out-of-home placement records were beyond the purview of this study:

- 37 percent of CIS participants had poor or inconsistent grades cited as at least one reason for referral.

- Standardized test results (e.g., CAT, MAT, COGAT, TABE, CTBS, CWT) which had been primarily documented just prior to or shortly after students' entry into CIS, were available for 37 percent of the 659 records sampled. Of these, 80.1 tested below grade: 69.2 percent of those students for whom results were accessible tested below grade on all test components; another 10.9 percent tested on grade for one test component, but at least two grade levels behind on one or more other components, as depicted in Figure 2.

- With respect to school progress in terms of promotion or retention in grade, of the 500 students for whom data were available: (i) 34.0 percent were on grade at the time of this study; (ii) 58.6 percent had been retained in grade prior to entering CIS; and (iii) the remaining 7.4 percent were retained in grade either during their tenure in CIS (2.6 percent), after leaving CIS (.4 percent), both before and after CIS participation (3.6 percent), or at some unspecified time (.8 percent), as depicted in Figure 3.

It bears repeating that not all problems experienced by CIS students were recorded in the records. Therefore, the data cited here underestimate not only the extent of risk antecedents and risk markers, but also the nature and frequency of risky behaviors engaged in by CIS students. Nevertheless, the records documented that:

Table 9.

Percentage of Cases for Which Family Socio-Economic Status (SES) at CIS Entry Was Captured in CIS or School Records

SES Information	Known Percentage of Total Sample
Receiving AFDC	8.0
Receiving JTPA	20.0
Receiving Food Stamps	11.7
Eligible for Free or Reduced Lunches	9.7
Receiving County Assistance	1.5
Receiving Supplemental Security Income	2.4
Participating in Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	.5
Other Public Assistance	2.0
Family Income Under $30,000:	17.5
1,000-5,000	(4.3%)
5,001-10,000	(5.8%)
10,001-15,000	(5.5%)
15,001-20,000	(1.0%)
20,001-30,000	(.9%)
N = 659	

- To the extent that high absenteeism constitutes truancy, then a fair proportion of CIS students qualify as truants since nearly 30.0 percent entered CIS programs based on referrals that included excessive absenteeism as a condition requiring attention and improvement. Based on 277 cases for whom number of days absent was recorded, the average number of days missed the year prior to CIS enrollment was 16.77 (with a standard deviation of 18.25 days, and a range of absenteeism from 0 to 89 days). Furthermore, the most frequently recorded problems once students were enrolled in CIS were those associated with continuing absenteeism or tardiness.

- More than 10 percent of the total sample (i.e., 69 students) are "teen" parents. Of these: 17 were parents prior to CIS enrollment; 32 became parents during their participation in CIS (although it is unknown what proportion of these, if any, had already conceived by the time they were referred to or started receiving CIS services); 5 became parents on more than one occasion, both before and after their enrollment in CIS; the timing of parenthood is unknown for the 15 remaining students. Approximately, 23.0 percent (16 students) of this cohort withdrew from school as a result of these pregnancies or the need to care for the children once they were born.

Table 10 identifies the type and frequency of problem behaviors recorded as reasons for referral to CIS, as well as those documented in the CIS records subsequent to students' enrollment in the program. Based on these data, it seems reasonable to conclude that at-risk students are a central focus of CIS efforts. It is possible that if sufficiently detailed and accurate records were available, they might demonstrate that most, if not all, of CIS participants meet Burt's test of "high-risk" youth.

Data derived from the self-report survey administered to 391 students lend further credence to this conclusion. Table 11 presents the percentages of students who retrospectively reported they had problems when they first entered CIS, by the severity of the problems.

A second approach clustered the self-reported problems into four domains: (i) school performance: grades, homework, absenteeism, tardiness, and relationships with teachers and other students; (ii) school disciplinary: suspensions, fighting in school, and gang membership/association (included here since school disciplinary codes often stipulate that gang symbols or other indications of gang involvement are prohibited); (iii) legal: excessive drinking, use of drugs, and problems with the police or law; and (iv) family: relationships with family/household members, pregnancy, and child care needs. Table 12 illustrated that 16.3 percent of students who completed the survey reported problems in various combinations of three of the four clusters, while 13.8 percent reported problems across all four clusters.

Taken together, both the official records and the students' self-report lend credence to the conclusion that CIS programs are serving both:

Table 10.
Frequency of Problems Recorded as Reasons for Referral or Problems During CIS*

	Presenting Problems Recorded	Problems Recorded While Enrolled
Absenteeism	191 (29.2)	96 (14.6)
Poor/Inconsistent Grades	245 (37.2)	
Dropped Out of School	26 (3.9)	
At-Risk	19 (2.9)	
School Suspensions	30 (4.6)	38 (5.7)
Over Age for Grade Level	114 (17.3)	
Inappropriate School Behavior	117 (17.8)	45 (6.8)
Fighting	34 (5.2)	22 (3.3)
Low Self-Esteem	75 (11.4)	
Suicidal	4 (0.6)	
Weapons Use	4 (0.6)	
Suspected/Known Substance Use	34 (5.2)	27 (4.1)
Gang Involvement	17 (2.6)	12 (1.8)
Law Breaking	33 (5.0)	29 (4.4)
Pregnancy	3 (0.5)	32 (4.8)
Teen Parent	15 (2.3)	
Health Problems	24 (3.6)	
Mental Health Problems	22 (3.3)	11 (1.7)
Dysfunctional Family	72 (10.9)	53 (8.1)
Poor Attitude	42 (6.4)	
At-Risk Siblings	11 (1.7)	

* Official records under report the frequency of problems.

Table 11.
Percentage of Students Retrospectively Reporting Problems When They First Joined CIS

Problem Areas	Reported Problem Severity			
	Big Problem	Medium Problem	Small Problem	No Problem
Grades	21.1	20.5	25.8	32.7
Completing Homework	18.2	20.4	24.9	36.6
Absenteeism	16.4	14.5	13.4	55.7
Tardiness	11.0	11.3	16.1	61.5
Relationships with Teachers	16.3	10.1	26.1	47.5
Relationships with Students	10.6	6.2	23.9	59.3
Relationships with Family	9.8	7.4	20.6	62.2
Suspensions	12.4	6.3	10.3	71.0
Excessive Drinking	5.3	3.9	7.8	83.0
School Fights	11.1	5.5	17.5	65.8
Police/Legal Involvement	5.8	2.5	5.5	86.2
Excessive Use of Drugs	3.9	2.8	3.9	89.4
Gang Membership or Association	4.7	5.0	7.4	82.9
Pregnancy or Child Care Needs	3.9	2.2	5.9	88.0

* Percentages are valid percents, excluding missing responses.

Table 12.
Distribution of Students by Pattern of Reported Problems

Clustered Pattern of Self-Reported Problems	Number and Percent of Students	
	Number	Percent
Single-Problem Cluster		
1. School Performance Only	115	33.0
2. School Disciplinary Only	4	1.1
3. Family Only	4	1.1
Subtotal	123	35.2
Two-Problem Cluster		
4. School Performance and School Disciplinary	61	17.5
5. School Performance and Family	50	14.3
6. School Performance and Legal	10	2.9
Subtotal	121	34.7
Three-Problem Cluster		
7. School Performance, School Disciplinary, and Family	35	10.2
8. School Performance, School Disciplinary, and Legal	14	4.0
9. School Performance, Legal, and Family	8	2.3
Subtotal	57	16.3
Four-Problem Cluster		
10. School Performance, School Disciplinary, Legal, and Family	48	13.8
Subtotal	48	13.8
Total	349	100.0

- Youth at-risk, who should be exposed to prevention efforts designed to avoid future harms.

- Youth who have already crossed the line into risky behaviors and consequences that require treatment to mitigate and resolve existing problems, as well as interventive efforts focused on prevention of other negative experiences and outcomes.

Program Effects on Students

The student outcome component of the national evaluation assessed the program's effects in terms of:

- Students' Self-Esteem.

- Academic outcomes, such as attendance, grades, and school progress/status (graduation, school enrollment, dropped out); data were obtained from CIS and/or school records, and from students' self-report.

- Behavioral outcomes, including effects on risky behaviors or problems, data were primarily obtained from student self-reports, using self-administered surveys and interviews.

- Students' Perceptions of CIS Helpfulness.

- Students' Perceptions of Future Outcomes

In order to measure the impact of CIS on the problems self-reported by participants, analyses were performed to assess improvement relative to the reported severity of the original problem for each item. In general, we observed strong positive relationships between reported problems and improvements for each of the 14 items, i.e., students who reported the most severe problems also reported the greatest improvements. These reported relationships between participants' perceptions of problems and improvements are, in fact, corroborated by the quantitative analyses of those student outcomes for which we were able to obtain records-based data, such as grades and attendance. The self-report data for risky behaviors are described below and detailed in Tables A-1 through A-6 (presented in Appendix A).

Students' Self-Esteem

At-risk students are frequently assumed to suffer from low self-esteem. For this reason, the student self-report instrument included a short ten-item self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965). More than 90 percent of the 356 respondents who completed this portion of the instrument, scored within the positive range, most at a level indicating strong positive self-esteem. Only 3.9 percent of respondents demonstrated low (negative) self-esteem. No significant relationships

were found between self-esteem and age, gender, race, school type, family structure, or CIS community program.

Since the research captured information on length of CIS participation, analyses were performed to ascertain whether self-esteem increased with elongated exposure to CIS services and activities. No significant relationship was found, indicating that self-esteem did not increase with longer periods of participation in CIS; that is, self-esteem was virtually the same for the 43 percent of students who had been in CIS for under one year, as for those who had participated for several years.

Unfortunately, these data represent only post-enrollment scores; no accessible records offered reasonably comparable information for drawing comparisons to self-esteem prior to involvement with CIS programs. Therefore, it is not possible to determine whether these students entered CIS with low self-esteem and then dramatically improved in under one year's time (at which point, they attained such a satisfactory level of self-esteem that little room for future improvement remained) or whether they entered with relatively high self-esteem (and it was virtually unaffected during their tenure in CIS).

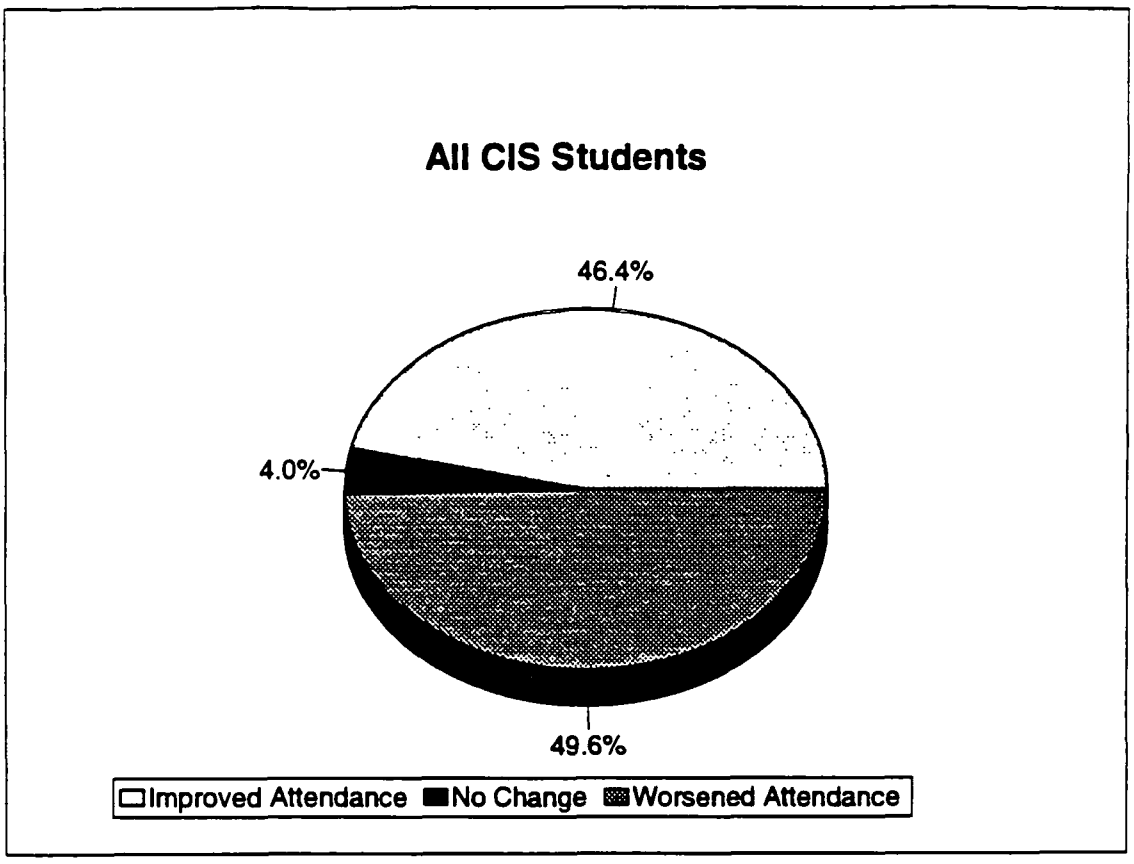
Despite this unknown, many CIS programs anticipate that the students they serve will exhibit low self-esteem at the time of program entry. As a consequence, program resources and services often are designed to focus on building esteem. We recommend that CIS programs not assume students enter with such problems, thereby devoting limited resources to mitigation; instead, we suggest that programs use accessible standardized measures of self-esteem, which are easy to administer and interpret, to establish the incoming profile of their constituency. Such an approach could have several potential benefits. If students do not exhibit low self-esteem, valuable resources, now focused on self-esteem, can be diverted to other compelling problems. On the other hand, for students who do exhibit low self-esteem, such measures will provide a baseline against which to measure both the students' improvement and the program's outcomes in this area. Such measures also can be used as a management tool to re-allocate program resources according to actual need, to determine which intervention modalities are most effective, and to modify or improve those that are not yielding adequate results.

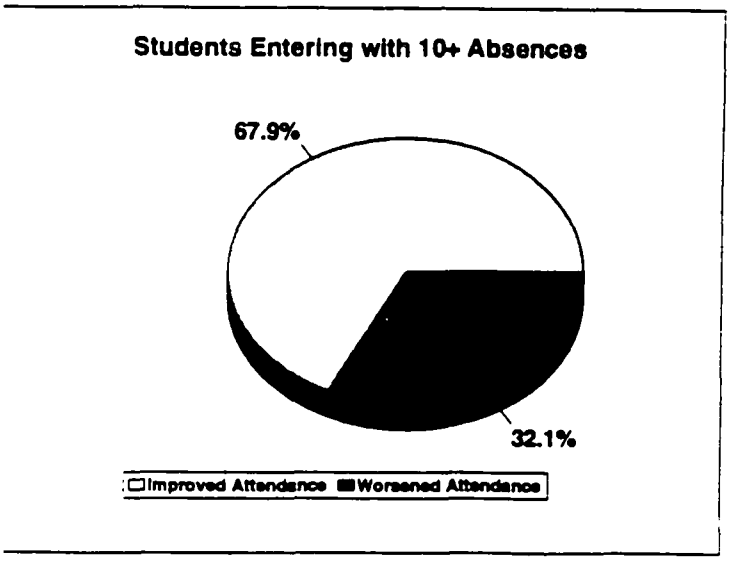
Academic Outcomes

Attendance. Comparisons were made between students' absenteeism in the year prior to enrolling in CIS and the CIS entry year. Slightly more than 50 percent of CIS enrollees for whom school attendance records were available (N=224) improved or maintained their attendance. However, not all students entered CIS with histories of absenteeism problems; 48.7 percent of this sample had attendance problems, defined as at least 10 days of absence in a school year. Of the 109 students who entered CIS programs with 10 or more days of absence the previous year, 70 percent (N=74) demonstrated improved attendance. Further, for the 50 students who had severe absenteeism (i.e., exceeding 21 days or more than 10 percent of the school year) prior to CIS enrollment, the average improvement was 6.6 days of increased attendance. Figure 4 presents records-based attendance data; Table 13 presents the percentages

Figure 4

Attendance - Comparison: CIS Entry Year With Year Before





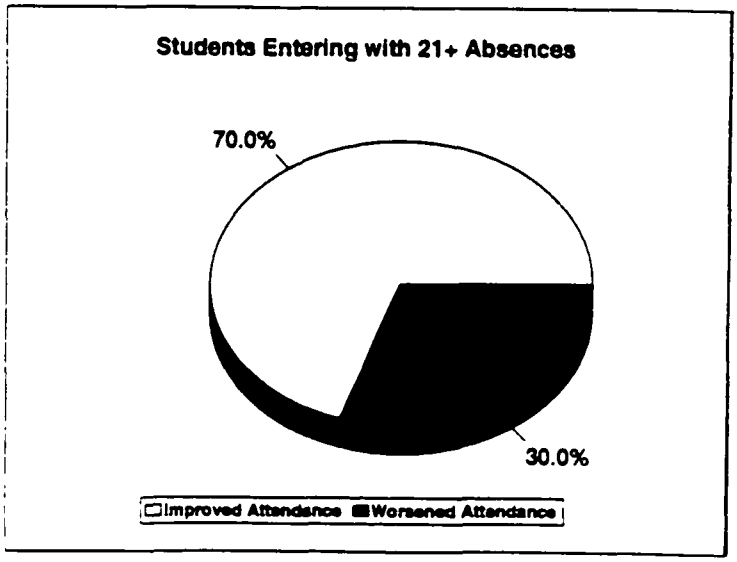


Table 13.
Percentage of Students Reporting Improvements Subsequent to Participating in CIS

Areas of Improvement	Reported Improvements			
	Big Improvement	Improvement	No Change	Worsened
Grades	38.5	40.2	17.5	3.8
Completing Homework	29.0	39.7	28.6	2.8
Absenteeism	24.6	22.5	49.3	3.6
Tardiness	22.3	23.0	51.2	3.5
Relationships With Teachers	25.6	23.5	45.9	5.0
Relationships With Students	20.7	21.8	53.6	3.9
Relationships With Family	20.1	20.1	56.5	3.2
Suspensions	20.4	16.4	60.2	2.9
Excessive Drinking	17.4	8.9	71.9	1.8
School Fights	19.9	16.2	62.1	1.8
Police/Legal Involvement	14.5	10.1	73.9	1.4
Excessive Use of Drugs	12.9	7.9	77.8	1.4
Gang Membership or Association	14.7	9.0	74.6	1.8
Pregnancy or Child Care Needs	13.9	7.3	76.9	1.8

* Percentages are valid percents, excluding missing responses.

of students reporting improvements after participating in CIS. For example, nearly 47.1 percent of respondents reported some improvement in attendance, while 49.3 percent reported no change, and 3.6 percent reported their absenteeism had worsened.

Grades. Grade point averages (GPAs) were used to assess outcomes of academic performance, comparing students' CIS entry year final grades with those for the prior year. Based on 289 students for whom academic records were available, 52.6 percent improved their GPAs from baseline to the CIS entry year. Again, not all CIS students were viewed as having academic problems; those who achieved GPAs of 2.0 or higher (on a 4-point scale) were regarded as demonstrating satisfactory academic performance. Slightly less than one-half of the students (45.3 percent) entered CIS with GPAs of 1.99 or lower; 60.3 percent of these students improved their GPAs during their CIS entry year. For students exhibiting the most severe academic problems (i.e., GPAs less than or equal to 1.0), the average improvement in GPA was 1.0 grade point. Figure 5 presents records-based data; Table 13 presents self-reported improvements in grades.

School Progress/Status. This study tracked longitudinal, as opposed to annual, dropout statistics for CIS students. Longitudinal dropout rates are typically significantly higher than annual rates because they track the cumulative student loss over a period of years. The longitudinal data on CIS student retention in, and graduation from, school were based on a sample of 488 students, who had entered CIS programs during the 1989/90 and 1990/91 school years. Students' records, which were tracked as closely as possible up to the date of field visitation during the 1992/93 school year, documented that 68.4 percent of CIS participants were still in school; 8.6 percent had graduated, which represents 68.9 percent of those estimated to be eligible to graduate by this time (or 31.1 percent of the eligible graduation cohort had dropped out of school); and 20.7 percent have dropped out of school.

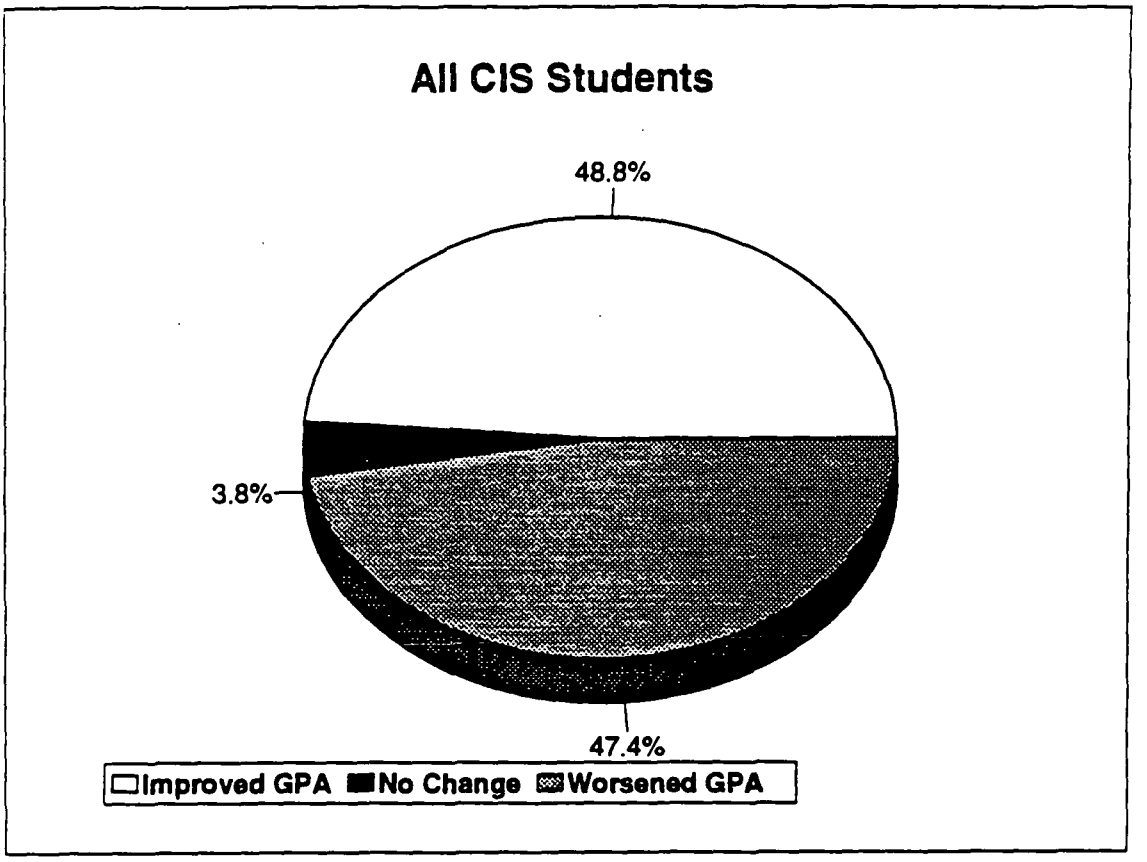
This dropout rate probably should not be compared to longitudinal rates for all students, since the CIS cohort is clearly comprised of at-risk youth. However, it compares favorably with dropout rates cited for at-risk cohorts, for example:

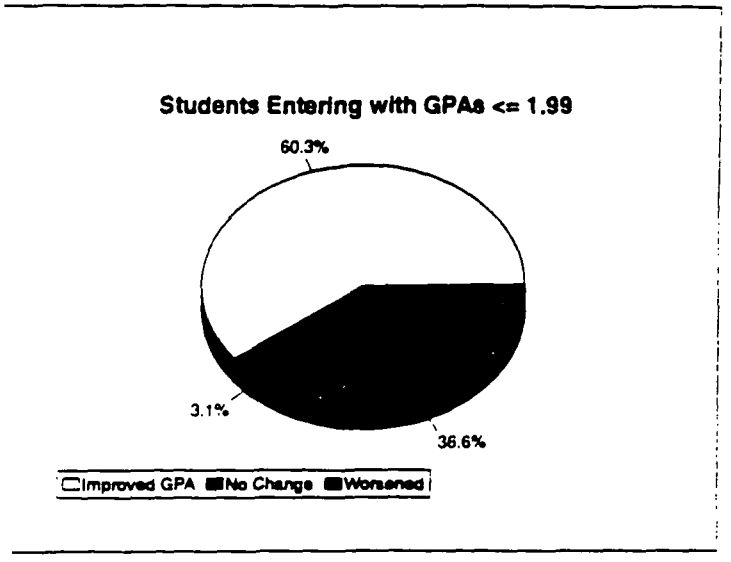
> The Boston Compact is designed to guarantee at-risk students a job or college admission if they graduate from high school with good academic and attendance records....A survey in 1986 shows that significant improvement had been made toward the first two goals -- more graduates were either working full time or in college, and reading and math scores were higher -- but the dropout rate had increased from *36 percent to 43 percent* [italics added]....(Jacksonville Community Council, Inc., 1988: 14.)

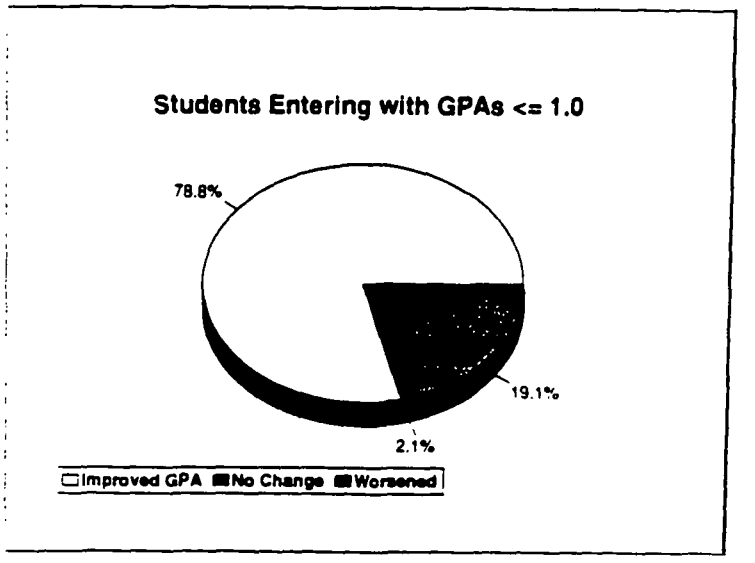
> Actually, the *overall* dropout rate in New Jersey's public schools is of a moderate nature, around *20 percent* [italics added]....But this, it should be stressed, is a misleading figure, for there are really *two* school systems in New Jersey -- one consisting of most suburban and rural districts, which have relatively low dropout rates and few major academic problems; the other consisting of a much smaller number of big, needy urban districts,

Figure 5

Academic Performance - Comparison: CIS Entry Year With Year Before







many of which have dropout rates from *40 to 60 percent* [italics added]. (Burch, 1992: ix.)

Taken together, analyses of the academic outcomes suggested the following:

- Although CIS programs do not achieve stated objectives for all participants, attendance and academic performance are improved for students with serious problems, as evidenced by 21 or more days absenteeism per year or grade point averages of 1.0 or less (and also for students with moderately severe problems, defined as 10 to 20 days absenteeism or grade point averages of 1.01 to 1.99) in these areas.

- For students with serious (and those with moderately severe) attendance or academic problems, improvement is associated with longer periods of participation in CIS activities.

- Students enrolled in CIS alternative school programs demonstrated greater improvements than students in other types of CIS sites.

- Students who entered CIS programs as high schoolers tended to demonstrate greater initial improvements than middle or elementary school students.

- Based on limited numbers of students whose records reflected service interventions, interventions such as individual counseling, mentoring, block scheduling of students, and, to a lesser extent, attendance monitoring were associated with reductions in absenteeism and increased attendance. Similarly, interventions such as group counseling, tutoring, CIS Life Skills classes, block scheduling of students, and home visits were associated with improvements in students' Grade Point Averages (GPAs).

- Given the at-risk characteristics of the students served, CIS programs' cumulative dropout rates compare reasonably well with other systems that serve the same type of student population.

Behavioral Outcomes

This section presents bivariate analyses for selected self-reported problem-improvement items:

School Suspension. Nearly 72 percent of responses indicated suspensions were not a problem. Of those who indicated a big problem with suspensions prior to CIS entry, 71 percent reported a big improvement. However, nearly 58 percent of those reporting the picture had worsened had not previously reported any problem with respect to their record of suspensions, as noted in Table A-1. We have included school suspension in our discussion of risky behaviors

because suspensions are frequently associated with disruptive behavior in school (including fighting with other students, aggressive behavior toward teachers, etc.) and/or with violations of school disciplinary codes.

Alcohol Consumption. Most students (82.6 percent) did not report a problem with drinking of beer, wine, or hard liquor, to begin with. For those who did report a big initial problem with drinking, 75.0 percent reported an improvement (25.0 percent indicated some improvement, while 50.0 percent indicated a big improvement). No one initially reporting a big problem subsequently reported the problem had worsened. At the same time, 80.0 percent (four out of five students) of those reporting that their drinking behavior had worsened had originally reported no problem or only a little problem. This is detailed in Table A-2.

School Fighting. The majority of students (66.8 percent) did not report that getting involved in school fights was a problem for them pre-CIS. For those who did report a big initial problem with school fighting, most reported an improvement (20.0 percent indicated some improvement, while 64.0 percent indicated a big improvement). At the same time, 40.0 percent (two of five students) of those reporting that school fights had become a bigger problem over time had not previously reported any problem; while another 40 percent experiencing bigger problems had originally reported school fighting was a big problem for them. These data are presented in Table A-3.

Trouble With the Police/Law. The majority of respondents (87.3 percent) reported this area was not a problem for them. However, of the nearly six percent of respondents who reported a big initial problem, 73.3 percent also reported a big improvement. Less than two percent of respondents reported worsening situations with respect to getting into legal trouble. Table A-4 details these relationships.

Use of Drugs. As was the case with excessive drinking, most students (90.8 percent) did not report a problem with drug abuse to begin with; and 78.2 percent reported no change in status regardless of their pre-CIS experience with drug use. For those who did report a problem, most reported some improvement. Fewer than two percent reported their use of drugs had worsened. Table A-5 details these relationships.

Gang Membership or Association With Gang Members. Most students (82.0 percent) reported gang associations were not a problem to begin with, which is not synonymous with reporting that they did not belong to gangs or socialize with gang members. For those who did report they had a problem belonging to a gang or associating with gang members, nearly 85 percent reported some improvement. These data are presented in Table A-6.

After looking at the relationships between problem and improvement for each item, we assessed whether these relationships were affected by gender, race/ethnicity, or type of school (i.e., middle, high, alternative). The basic finding from the preceding section was that, in general, students who reported the biggest problems also reported the biggest improvements. The focus of our assessment of these additional variables was on the extent to which they affected this basic

relationship. Little to no change in the basic relationship was found when looking at the effect of gender. Some differences between males and females were noted, however. For example, for three items, that is, relationships with other students, relationships with family members, and fighting, the relationships were stronger for males and weaker for females, as compared to the total sample. With regard to the problem of suspension from school, the relationship was stronger for females, and weaker for males.

In terms of race/ethnicity, with the exception of two items (i.e., problems with other students and use of drugs), African American students demonstrated a stronger relationship, while all other race/ethnic groupings either remained the same or decreased, as compared to the sample as a whole. For problems with other students and drug use, African American students demonstrated the same relationship as the whole sample.

With respect to type of school, participants in middle and high schools showed either no change or some decrease in the strength of the basic relationship, while alternative school students (almost without exception) showed a stronger relationship than the sample as a whole. The only exception was with regard to the item on use of drugs, where high school students demonstrated a slight increase, and alternative schoolers demonstrated a slight decrease, in the strength of relationship when compared to the total sample.

Students' Perceptions of CIS Helpfulness

Students were asked to indicate their relative agreement with a set of statements describing four areas in which CIS provides assistance to students:

- Affective items, such as feeling better about oneself, or improved relationships with teachers, peers, or family members.
- Academic items, such as improved attendance, grades, and classroom behavior.
- Prevention education on such topics as HIV/AIDS and substance abuse.
- Physical well-being, including general health improvements, as well as those related to reduced involvement with drugs or alcohol.

The instrument permitted students to indicate agreement/disagreement with each statement, or that the item was not salient to them ("I did not need help with this" or "Not applicable"). Table 14, therefore, presents two types of information:

- The distribution of student responses for each item for those students who responded along the four-point, agreement/disagreement Likert continuum (i.e., valid percentages).

Table 14.
Student Assessments of Assistance Provided by CIS

"The CIS Program helped me..."	Percentage Response for Students who Rated the Items as Salient				Non-Salient Responses	
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Number Reporting Non-Salience	Percentage of Total Respondent Sample*
1. Feel better about myself	53.5	36.8	8.2	1.5	48	12.3
2. Improve my health	30.7	48.1	16.4	4.9	86	22.0
3. Get along better with other students	36.8	46.9	10.7	5.5	67	17.1
4. Get along better with my family	39.3	38.9	16.4	5.4	79	20.2
5. Reduce drug or alcohol use	39.9	21.3	27.0	11.8	188	48.1
6. Become drug or alcohol free	38.7	28.3	20.9	12.0	179	45.8
7. Improve my attendance at school	42.8	39.6	13.1	4.6	88	22.5
8. Get better grades	44.6	43.7	9.0	2.4	38	9.7
9. Stop skipping school or classes	39.8	37.2	16.8	6.2	128	32.7
10. Improve my classroom behavior	35.4	46.9	14.8	3.0	84	21.5
11. Like school more	36.2	39.0	16.5	8.3	60	15.3
12. Learn job skills	48.6	38.4	9.4	3.6	42	10.7
13. Learn about preventing HIV/AIDS	50.2	39.1	8.2	2.5	68	17.4
14. Learn about prevention of substance abuse	42.8	40.2	14.0	3.0	87	32.3
15. Talk about my family's problems	38.8	36.9	18.3	6.1	91	23.3
16. Talk with someone about pregnancy or teen parenting	38.7	30.0	25.3	6.0	134	34.3

* N = 391 students

- The number of students who indicated an item was not salient to them (i.e., did not apply to them) and the percentage of the total sample represented by the non-salient responses.

In general, the students perceived CIS as being helpful in addressing their needs. Students' responses were less favorable in their view of CIS's help in drug and alcohol use. To begin with, 48.1 percent of the sample indicated that reducing drug use was not applicable to them or they did not need help in this area; 45.8 percent indicated non-salience for the statement about CIS helpfulness in becoming drug or alcohol free. However, for those who did respond to these statements along the continuum of agreement-disagreement:

- Nearly 39 percent disagreed that CIS had helped them reduce drug or alcohol use; 11.8 percent indicated strong disagreement.

- Nearly 33 percent disagreed that CIS had helped them become drug or alcohol free.

Students' Perceptions of Future Outcomes

Students were also asked to respond to a small set of items expressing their future plans. Table 15 presents the distribution of valid responses to statements about: (i) desire to stay in school until graduation from high school; (ii) likelihood of staying out of legal trouble due to CIS experiences; (iii) likelihood of completing school work on time, given CIS experiences; and (iv) anticipation of attending post-secondary school.

As can be seen from Table 15, the majority (70.2 percent) of students agreed or strongly agreed that they are less likely to get into trouble with the law due to their experiences with CIS. Caution should be used in interpreting responses indicating disagreement with this statement, however, since they may reflect not only the program's lack of effect in this area, but also non-salience of the question.

No relationships were found between any of the four items and gender or length of participation in CIS programs. Slightly over half (54.8 percent) of alternative school students, as compared to only 39.3 percent of middle schoolers and 36.4 percent of high schoolers, strongly agreed that they are less likely to get in trouble with the law because of the CIS program. The difference remains strong when all positive responses are collapsed: 77.4 percent of alternative schoolers agree/strongly agree with that statement, as compared to only 69.0 of high schoolers and 65.5 percent of middle schoolers.

Table 15.
Student Perception of Future Outcomes

Future Outcomes	Percentage Responses			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Want to stay in school until graduation	79.2	17.7	2.2	0.8
Less likely to get into trouble with the law	41.5	28.7	17.9	11.9
More likely to do school work on time	38.4	40.4	16.4	4.8
Plan to go to college or technical school	64.8	22.3	8.7	4.2

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY, PRACTICE, AND FUTURE EVALUATION

Lessons Learned: Issues for Policy and Practice

The evaluation of the national Cities in Schools program identified a number of policy and practical issues surrounding the intent to establish community collaboratives or partnerships, particularly with respect to services integration and systemic change. To begin with, community services integration initiatives probably should not be viewed as fix-it programs, but rather as a process that requires considerable work to re-tool systems and individuals to take on different roles and responsibilities. It may be possible to integrate some services, but it proves very difficult to achieve the full spectrum of supportive services that might be envisioned by proponents of holistic service delivery systems.

Several challenges exist to systemic reform of this kind. CIS, and other programs that endorse collaborative efforts, often assert that system integration of services can be accomplished without new or additional resources; that is, that needed services exist, but may require shifting or enhanced coordination to facilitate more efficient access by those who depend on such supports. This belief is often combined with a second assertion, namely, that existing systems incorporate duplication of services, which can be streamlined through services integration, thereby freeing up resources for allocation elsewhere.

Field visits to nearly two dozen CIS community programs did not support these assertions; both public and private service agencies repeatedly articulated compelling concerns about reducing their office staff (through repositioning or outstationing) at a time when agencies are already downsizing. Communities did not appear to have the comprehensive set of services required by at-risk youth and their families, nor were there documented instances of duplicative services. Particularly in small or rural communities, we noted an overall scarcity of resources, and considerable creativity and personal involvement on the part of CIS and other agency staff in trying to plug significant gaps in the continuum of care (such as the lack of emergency housing or food for destitute youth and families).

Based on the strongest CIS community programs, it appears that coalition building is key to services integration initiatives. Among the critical factors is establishing an ongoing dialogue with top public and private leaders. The process needs to develop a shared vision that change is desirable, while building consensus on the shape the anticipated system ought to assume. Successful community programs have underscored the importance of establishing such buy-in early on, because considerable support is necessary for both the public and the private sector to free up resources. Evolving partnerships need to focus on: (i) defining agency missions, boundaries, services currently provided, and existing agency linkages; (ii) assessing strengths and weaknesses to identify opportunities for developing a more efficient and effective approach that is mutually beneficial; (iii) mitigating misunderstandings or misperceptions about agency purposes and capacities to be flexible; and (iv) ensuring interagency confidentiality and information sharing. Also, it is important for potential partners to explore and resolve core differences in philosophy about the underlying causes of the social problems, and quite possibly the solutions,

the program is being designed to address. For example, in some communities, potential CIS partners took the position that youth who did not overtly evidence an interest in academic scholarship should not be retained in school, because their presence adversely affects other students. Clearly, this stance is antithetical to major tenets of CIS policy and practice, and needs to be resolved before effective partnerships can emerge.

However, even where organizations or their representatives jointly share a vision of what can and should be accomplished, they may encounter very real obstacles. Agencies that are central to establishing a comprehensive continuum of services may have very specific missions. Often these play out in terms of limitations and disjunctures (self-imposed, as well as legally stipulated) between agencies' boundaries and expectations. Some agencies are inherently more flexible than others; for example, some can be proactive and engage in prevention or outreach efforts, while others are mandated to be reactive and only provide services after individuals have experienced a particular social problem (e.g., child abuse and neglect). If comprehensive coordination of services is to be achieved, it becomes necessary to figure out how to surmount turfism and discontinuities in mission, lining up the various agencies to generate a seamless continuum of care.

CIS programs noted several issues of importance for establishing viable interagency working relationships:

- Although informal agreements between agencies have the advantage of being more flexible, most of the strong CIS community programs emphasized formal interagency agreements. Based on their experiences, informal agreements have a higher chance of falling apart due to changes in personnel or misunderstandings regarding the nature of the agreement. Formal agreements, on the other hand, appear to clarify the expectations, facilitate understandings and quality control among various organizations, and pave the way for renegotiation of terms based on lessons learned.

- Parity among organizations is difficult to achieve, but critical to ensure. For example, where CIS felt like a "guest in schools," rather than a full partner, the program operated as an outsider, lacking access to needed resources and information that could have facilitated improved service delivery mechanisms. In some locations, CIS staff could not access students' attendance or grades, therefore they had no way of discerning whether tutorial efforts were achieving objectives or whether changes in school-based activities were desirable.

- Parity among partners depends, to some degree, on shared governance and common procedural practices. Often, this has been achieved through top-down leadership that has permitted decision makers to re-structure the way agencies approached routine activities, such as developing joint intake applications and procedures.

- When outstationing or repositioning staff, agreements have been reached that ensure those selected to participate in interagency initiatives (i) are capable of excelling in the new role and (ii) are excited by the opportunity. Lead agencies should not be permitted to view this collaborative assignment as a dumping ground to move dead wood.

- Often agencies focus on the issue of "reduced staffing" associated with repositioning to "satellite" locations; however, successful initiatives have emphasized the benefits of such efforts, including: (i) increased professional development and growth for staff who are exposed to other agencies and resources; (ii) increased networking and understanding of local service capacities, as well as service limitations, of other agencies; (iii) enhanced knowledge of how to access local resources for one's own clientele; (iv) reduced bureaucratic barriers to collaboration; and (v) both formal and informal information sharing, which can equate to more effective matching of client needs to available services.

Apparently the communities that have achieved the greatest success in overcoming obstacles to coalition building have heavily relied on strategic planning as a blueprint for action. They have developed clearly identified and realistic visions of where agencies and the community are starting the process, identifying what can be accomplished at the outset, and what changes likely are not feasible in the short run. Significantly, such programs have incorporated the practice of investing in expertise for specialized tasks, such as development strategies and fund raising, grant writing, and public relations. From the beginning, they have looked for ways to leverage their early accomplishments and successes -- in part, this has meant consciously monitoring program outcomes to identify progress, build credibility, and fine tune program strategies and management.

The issue of accountability can be addressed at both the program (community) and project (school-based) levels. At the program level, accountability may include occasional formal evaluations conducted by "outsiders," but minimally requires program staff tracking sufficient client outcome data on an on-going basis to provide at least some sense of the overall effects of the program on key indicators (in the case of at-risk youth, this might include grades, attendance, promotion, and resolution of other problems identified at intake), to provide feedback about how well the program is working. Such tracking would preferably include data on longer-term impacts, including time periods after clients are no longer directly served by the program.

At the project (school site) level, accountability requires tracking or monitoring what happens to individual students/families served by the program in terms of both service delivery and changes in conditions/needs as a result of service provision. This can be seen as part of the case management function, and may involve checking to see whether clients actually receive services from outside agencies to which they are referred. It also should include determining whether services provided are having the desired effect in terms of individual client outcomes (e.g., reduction in specific problems, such as substance abuse, gang involvement, inappropriate classroom behavior); more positive feelings about self and others; improved grades or attendance,

and so forth. If improvements are not seen within a reasonable length of time, changes in the individual's service delivery plan may be needed. For example, some projects have periodic meetings between CIS staff and their teams of repositioned and assigned staff, which serves this tracking function. Projects that do not have teams of service providers, or that do not hold such "staffings," often lose this opportunity to monitor student progress.

Given the level of interest in prevention and intervention programs for at-risk youth, and the growing interest in the cost of operating such programs and their cost effectiveness, it would be highly desirable for CIS, and programs similarly oriented, to maintain cost data, as well as outcome data. This should include costs of staff employed at the community-program and school-site levels, as well as costs (or estimates of the costs) associated with repositioned staff. It also is important to track volunteer or in-kind services, particularly if these are heavily implicated in program/project operations and results. While programs may not wish to attribute values to such in-kind services as time provided by volunteers, close estimates of the amount of volunteer service provided (e.g., hours per week or month per volunteer, and the number of volunteers) can be used to estimate the value of these services in terms of minimum wages, for example. Further, it is probably desirable for programs to calculate such data at the project or school level, as well as at the program level, since there is often considerable variation in the types of services provided at different sites. Site-level data would enable comparison of cost-effectiveness of different service delivery models, which could provide guidance regarding effective and cost-effective program models to inform decision making and training.

Finally, even where programs are able to demonstrate success in achieving stipulated objectives, stability and institutionalization of best practices are not foregone conclusions. Funding appears to be as big a concern for successful programs, as it is for those that are unable to document achievement of their objectives. From the outset, programs like CIS recognize they are dealing with clients who have complex, often intergenerational problems, that are not likely to be eradicated on a society- or community-wide basis in a few scant years. Nevertheless, most funding is designed to cover program activities for a brief period, typically less than five years. Further, such funding is most often set aside to support demonstrations, not on-going program or project efforts.

Often programs implemented particular services or activities that were well received and seemingly successful in reaching stipulated goals, but those components were not institutionalized because as the funding period ended, the next source of support had a different agenda or desired to be associated with an "innovative" approach, rather than a proven track record. Even strong programs often do not survive the vagaries of funding capriciousness. It appears that collaborative efforts would benefit from the development of coalitions of funders who will commit to long-term (possibly sequential) support. Such coordinated funding would enhance the likelihood of program stability and institutionalization of beneficial features, permitting successful efforts to continue beyond three to five years.

Evaluation Issues and Recommendations for the Future

Some pragmatic lessons were learned in the process of undertaking this national evaluation, and its component parts. The following discussion provides information on obstacles encountered, as well as practical recommendations for enhancing (i) the quality of data and (ii) future cooperation with program evaluations.

CIS programs are dynamic -- services are expanded or deleted due to a variety of reasons (e.g., assessments that showed needed changes, external events such as service providers having reductions in force, or loss of funding). However, because staff members have personal contact with partners and clients, they often try to rely on institutional memory, rather than documenting program services and outcomes as these occur. Also, program or school staff may consider some information too sensitive to record in official files that may be left in unsecured facilities. For example, in some communities, CIS project staff made the earliest identification of incidents of familial abuse or neglect. Having reported the information to the appropriate authorities, CIS did not record such events in an individual's file, even though the project may be delivering services specifically designed to mitigate those particular difficulties -- so the problem and the program's contribution to resolving it, existed only in the form of personal recollections, not as a matter of record.

In general, record keeping practices need to be bolstered; it is not only time consuming to reconstruct events after the fact, it may yield erroneous information. The national organization, through its training and technical assistance functions might encourage local programs to annually document their program configuration (i.e., detailed descriptions of program components, together with the time periods of their availability and descriptions of eligible clients (possibly even demographics of actual users and uses). Such documentation should describe all services offered through the partnerships that have been established. In addition, local programs probably would benefit from assistance in developing quality assurance/control procedures with respect to record keeping; at a minimum, this would include constructing annual rosters of CIS participants (by name, student number, and other unique system identifiers) and their program entry and exit dates.

As noted earlier, programs need guidance in terms of developing procedures to monitor client and system outcomes. Even where record keeping is copious, certain information is less likely to find its way into official CIS or school files. For example, official records often do not track students beyond promotion to the next school level or graduation from high school; thus, the records likely do not reflect longer-term outcomes (like success in completing higher education or in achieving stable employment). Also, unless specific care has been taken to establish interagency agreements for the sharing of information, program records are not likely to reflect juvenile law breaking (although many CIS programs are specifically interested in preventing such incidents, and this could certainly be considered as an indicator of program success). Lastly, systemic changes, such as agency reforms in client intake practices, are probably not documented unless advance thought has gone in to developing procedures for tracking such bureaucratic changes.

CIS operates within the larger context of the school district/school site, and also interfaces with other service providers; therefore CIS staff are justifiably concerned with establishing and maintaining good relationships with these entities. In some communities, this led to a wariness of evaluation and its potential to upset the applecart; program staff were concerned that evaluators might endanger fragile relationships or that evaluation results might reflect unfavorably on either the program's or its partners' efforts.

Those programs that participated in this research did so voluntarily, and with the understanding that they would have significant control over the flow of information. Random selection of programs/sites and quasi-experimental comparison groups no doubt would have provided a significantly more robust design. However, this was not possible at the outset since local CIS programs are autonomous, and unlike the national CIS organization, the local affiliates typically do not receive Federal Partnership funding. Consequently, local community programs could not be required to participate in the national evaluation, nor was it required that they comply with requests for information.

Despite efforts to achieve a utilization-focused evaluation that included input from those being evaluated, both the national organization and the local programs were uneasy about participation in the "local implementation and outcome" portion of the study. Some programs were resistent to being held "accountable" for students' academic outcomes, which they view as the school systems' purview. Others have fragile relationships with the school districts in which they operate, or with other agencies with whom they have partnered; hence, they were reluctant to risk scrutiny over which they had little control. In addition, both national and local program staff were particularly concerned with issues -- which were generally not well understood -- surrounding confidentiality and local responsibility for ensuring such protection.

As a result, program directors retained the right to facilitate or limit our access to records or individuals to ensure that community-based networks they had already established or were pursuing were not jeopardized, in any way, by the research. As site visits progressed, program staff were generally cooperative. Nevertheless, some sites did limit access, particularly to school records (and, in some cases, to clients), and this constrained the research and its findings.

In future, if federal partnership agencies supporting the national CIS organization wish to have more robust outcome data from local affiliates, we recommend they clearly establish that intent as part of their agreement with CIS. The national organization, in turn, could then stipulate that local participation in national evaluations is a condition that may be attached to communities requesting and receiving CIS training and technical assistance. In addition, guidance could be provided to both the national organization and the local community programs to clarify the issues involved in ensuring confidentiality and facilitate information sharing among agencies and with the research community. Such guidance might model approaches that can be implemented to offer adequate protection, such as informed consent procedures for students and parents, and formal information-sharing agreements that would guarantee research access to official records for reasonably long periods of time (e.g., to permit longitudinal analysis for five years).

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APPENDIX A

Table A-1.
Reported Problems with School Suspensions at CIS Entry, by Improvements Reported Subsequent to CIS

COUNT ROW % COLUMN % TOTAL %	WORSE THAN BEFORE	NO CHANGE	IMPROVED	IMPROVED A LOT	TOTAL
NOT A PROBLEM	4 2.1 57.1 1.5	151 78.6 93.8 56.6	15 7.8 33.3 5.6	22 11.5 40.7 8.2	192 71.9
SMALL PROBLEM	1 3.8 14.3 0.4	5 19.2 3.1 1.9	16 61.5 35.6 6.0	4 15.4 7.4 1.5	26 9.7
PROBLEM	1 6.7 14.3 0.4	1 6.7 .6 0.4	9 60.0 20.0 3.4	4 26.7 7.4 1.5	15 5.6
BIG PROBLEM	1 2.9 14.3 0.4	4 11.8 2.5 1.5	5 14.7 11.1 1.9	24 70.6 44.4 9.0	34 12.7
COLUMN TOTAL	7 2.6	161 60.3	45 16.9	54 20.2	267 100.0

Table A-2.
Reported Problems with Alcohol Comsumption at CIS Entry, by Improvements Reported Subsequent to CIS

COUNT ROW % COLUMN % TOTAL %	WORSE THAN BEFORE	NO CHANGE	IMPROVED	IMPROVED A LOT	TOTAL
NOT A PROBLEM	2 0.9 40.0 0.7	181 81.2 92.3 67.0	12 5.4 50.0 4.4	28 12.6 62.2 10.4	223 82.6
SMALL PROBLEM	2 7.7 40.0 0.7	10 38.5 5.1 3.7	5 19.2 20.8 1.9	9 34.6 20.0 3.3	26 9.6
PROBLEM	1 11.1 20.0 0.4	2 22.2 1.0 0.7	4 44.4 16.7 1.5	2 22.2 4.4 0.7	9 3.3
BIG PROBLEM		3 25.0 1.5 1.1	3 25.0 12.5 1.1	6 50.0 13.3 2.2	12 4.4
COLUMN TOTAL	5 1.9	196 72.6	24 8.9	45 16.7	270 100.0

Table A-3.
Reported Problems with School Fighting at CIS Entry, by Improvements Reported Subsequent to CIS

COUNT ROW % COLUMN % TOTAL %	WORSE THAN BEFORE	NO CHANGE	IMPROVED	IMPROVED A LOT	TOTAL
NOT A PROBLEM	2 1.1 40.0 0.7	151 84.4 90.4 56.3	9 5.0 20.0 3.4	17 9.5 33.3 6.3	179 66.8
SMALL PROBLEM	1 2.0 20.0 0.4	12 24.5 7.2 4.5	21 42.9 46.7 7.8	15 30.6 29.4 5.6	49 18.3
PROBLEM		2 13.3 1.2 0.7	10 66.7 22.2 3.7	3 20.0 5.9 1.1	15 5.6
BIG PROBLEM	2 8.0 40.0 0.7	2 8.0 1.2 0.7	5 20.0 11.1 1.9	16 64.0 31.4 6.0	25 9.3
COLUMN TOTAL	5 1.9	167 62.3	45 16.8	51 19.0	268 100.0

Table A-4.
Reported Problems with Police/Law at CIS Entry, by Improvements Reported Subsequent to CIS

COUNT ROW % COLUMN % TOTAL %	WORSE THAN BEFORE	NO CHANGE	IMPROVED	IMPROVED A LOT	TOTAL
NOT A PROBLEM	2 0.9 50.0 0.7	193 82.5 97.0 72.0	16 6.8 57.1 6.0	23 9.8 62.2 8.6	234 87.3
SMALL PROBLEM	1 8.3 25.0 0.4	4 33.3 2.0 1.5	6 50.0 21.4 2.2	1 8.3 2.7 0.4	12 4.5
PROBLEM		2 28.6 1.0 0.7	3 42.9 10.7 1.1	2 28.6 5.4 0.7	7 2.6
BIG PROBLEM	1 6.7 25.0 0.4		3 20.0 10.7 1.1	11 73.3 29.7 4.1	15 5.6
COLUMN TOTAL	4 1.5	199 74.3	28 10.4	37 13.8	268 100.0

Table A-5.
Reported Problems with Substance Abuse at CIS Entry, by Improvements Reported Subsequent to CIS

COUNT ROW % COLUMN % TOTAL %	WORSE THAN BEFORE	NO CHANGE	IMPROVED	IMPROVED A LOT	TOTAL
NOT A PROBLEM	1 0.4 25.0 0.4	207 84.1 97.6 76.4	14 5.7 66.7 5.2	24 9.8 70.6 8.9	246 90.8
SMALL PROBLEM	1 8.3 25.0 0.4	3 25.0 1.4 1.1	4 33.3 19.0 1.5	4 33.3 11.8 1.5	12 4.4
PROBLEM	1 20.0 25.0 0.4	1 20.0 0.5 0.4	2 40.0 9.5 0.7	1 20.0 2.9 0.4	5 1.8
BIG PROBLEM	1 12.5 25.0 0.4	1 12.5 0.5 0.4	1 12.5 4.8 0.4	5 62.5 14.7 1.8	8 3.0
COLUMN TOTAL	4 1.5	212 78.2	21 7.7	34 12.5	271 100.0

Table A-6.
Reported Gang Involvement at CIS Entry, by Improvements Reported Subsequent to CIS

COUNT ROW % COLUMN % TOTAL %	WORSE THAN BEFORE	NO CHANGE	IMPROVED	IMPROVED A LOT	TOTAL
NOT A PROBLEM	1 0.4 25.0 0.4	191 85.7 93.6 70.2	10 4.5 41.7 3.7	21 9.4 52.5 7.7	223 82.0
SMALL PROBLEM	3 12.5 75.0 1.1	7 29.2 3.4 2.6	7 29.2 29.2 2.6	7 29.2 17.5 2.6	24 8.8
PROBLEM		4 33.3 2.0 1.5	4 33.3 16.7 1.5	4 33.3 10.0 1.5	12 4.4
BIG PROBLEM		2 15.4 1.0 0.7	3 23.1 12.5 1.1	8 61.5 20.0 2.9	13 4.8
COLUMN TOTAL	4 1.5	204 75.0	24 8.8	40 14.7	272 100.0

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