Cornerstone Connections Project

2015-2016
Program Handbook

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Welcome to the Cornerstone Connections Project
We are excited to be able to offer this program to your child after school! Our goal is to offer your child educational and enrichment activities that will help them connect their lives between education and careers. We have an exciting year of activities planned to build upon the foundation of education they have already received and many more activities that will stretch their thinking into their life as an adult.

This program is operated by The Southeast Youth Council, Inc. dba the Cornerstone Youth Center which is headquartered in Monroeville, IN. TSYC has been in existence since 2000 to serve 6-12 grade youth with education, physical, emotional and spiritual programming that is geared toward developing teens into successful adults. Here is our mission:

Our Mission Statement
Through a Christian environment that welcomes all, we provide opportunities for positive moral growth and sustainable life skills development for youth and families in Southeast Allen County.

Our Vision Statement
We see a community where:
- Youth feel empowered to make healthy decisions
- There are safe places for youth to come
- All people value young people
- Youth value and respect all people
- Young people become a productive part of society
- Families are strong
- There is a Christian environment that welcomes all

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (“CCLC”) program is a federally-funded program administered by the Indiana Department of Education. The purpose of the program is to provide low-cost and expanded academic services to students in high poverty areas. Expanded services include homework help and enrichment activities. In addition, parent enrichment/involvement activities are provided during the school year at no charge to parents.

It is our role to encourage and facilitate the learning of youth, parents, and one another. We are pleased to embrace this responsibility.

Community Partners
- East Allen County Schools
- L.E.A.R.N. Resource Center
- Junior Achievement of Northern Indiana
- Arts United of Greater Fort Wayne
- IPFW
  - College of Engineering, Technology, and Computer Science
  - Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs
  - College of Health & Human Services
  - Work Study Program
- Indiana Tech
  - Work Study Program
Program Mission and Outcomes
CCP has established outcomes (or goals) to achieve through activities the program provides. Presently, this program is working to achieve the following:

1. Improve Student Achievement;
2. Improve Student Behavior;
3. Increase Family Involvement;
4. Improve College and Career Readiness; and,
5. Increase Student Engagement.

Parent Involvement
The 21st CCLC CCP Program is built upon the philosophy that parents must be involved in the child’s education. Various parent involvement activities and parenting workshops will be available throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to attend all available activities, but expected to be engaged on at least two activities throughout the year.

Parents’ Responsibilities

- Respect and adhere to policies and procedures established by CCP and the school
- Pick-up child(ren) promptly at the end of the program
- Keep changes in personal information about the family and child current and communicate often with program staff [especially changes in phone number, email, home/mailing address & custody/guardianship]
- Inform staff of absences or schedule changes concerning your child. Please write a note or email to the Program Director if your child will attend another activity with specific dates they may have been scheduled.
- Custodial situations can cause confusion for the staff and the child(ren). CCP asks that the custodial parent communicate in detail with the staff about circumstances that relate directly to the care of the child in our program
- Relate any special information about your child that may affect his/her well-being in the program. This will be held in confidence.

Confidentiality
The privacy of the youth and parents whom we serve is important to CCP. All information given to CCP is considered private and will be held in confidence unless authorized by the parent for disclosure or a court order is issued requiring the release of stipulated information.
Attendance
The Cornerstone Connections Project has a requirement for your child to attend at least 30 days in a given school year, with the goal of having their attendance on a daily basis. Students are encouraged to attend daily, but some students might only be able to attend as schedules allow around sports or other extracurricular program. Our goal is to offer daily homework help/tutoring along with programming and club-like activities that will be offered in a series of sessions so students can choose to be a part of them. Students are expected to stay in the program until whichever activity they are participating is finished for the day. Only students who have permission from their registration form may leave the program before the 5:30 PM end dismissal arrives. All students riding the bus are expected to be engaged in programming until the bus arrives.

Students are not required to attend, but teachers and administrators of the school may strongly suggest your child participate for academic enrichment and remediation. The more your child participates, the better they will perform in their regular school work.

Sign-In and Sign-Out
Students are expected to sign into CCP no later than 10 minutes past the final school bell. If a student is attending another extracurricular activity with consent of a parent[ who has given written confirmation of the activity to CCP] is expected to sign in immediately following the other activity. Students are expected to sign out as they are dismissed from CCP at 5:30 PM. A parent needing to pick up a child prior to the regular dismissal time, are asked to inform the Program Director at least 24 hours in advance or come to the NHMS cafeteria to sign out the child the day of the early pick up. This is in place as a safety procedure.

Late Pick Up
Youth absolutely must be picked up at the designated closing time. From time to time, traffic and weather might delay pick up at the scheduled time; however, the following policy will be strictly enforced:

1) If you will be late, you must call the Program Director and advise staff of the situation.
2) Parents/guardians will be allowed 1 late pick up; no more than 10 minutes late.
3) The second late pick up will result in a fee of $1.00 per minute per child beginning at one minute past the designated pick up time (5:30 PM at New Haven Middle School).
4) The late fee must be paid within 1 week for your child(ren) to remain in the program. If a child has not been picked up within 5 minutes past the designated closing time and the program has not received a phone call from the parent/guardian responsible for pick up, the program will attempt to reach the emergency contact person on the emergency list.

Inclusiveness Statement
CCP is designed to provide out-of-school opportunities for youth grades 6-8 attending New Haven Middle School or other public/private schools in the district. All youth must consistently demonstrate appropriate social skills, follow adult direction, show readiness for program activities and follow the program’s basic safety rules. We recognize the value of a diverse participant base and will not discriminate in decision and actions involving participation on the basis of age, race, gender, color, national origin, disability, religion, or sexual orientation. We, however, reserve the right to separate genders and/or groups for particular program activities for education reasons, making sure that all activities are equitably available.
**Special Needs**
CCP is an inclusive program. Each child brings their own uniqueness to the program. If your child has special needs, please contact the Program Director. The program reserves the right to have appropriate staffing in place to accommodate youth who cannot be addressed in regular ratios.

**Staff**
Program staff is the key to the development of quality programming. Staff work together to provide the best possible environment for youth. All staff is required to participate in professional in-service training throughout the year and the site coordinator/program director is CPR and first aid certified.

**Snacks**
CCP will provide free snacks daily through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to all participants. If a child’s diet must be modified for health reasons, the parent must notify the program site in writing and it must be included in the child’s records. If a child’s diet is modified for cultural reasons, the parent must notify the site in writing and may be asked to help provide supplemental foods.

**Medication**
Program staff will not administer any medications. We do understand the need for some students to carry fast acting inhalers and epi pens. These items must be on the Authorization for Administration of Medication form. Children needing another dose of medication after school must see the school nurse before program sign in.

**Accidents/Incidents**
Any accidents or injuries will be recorded on an incident report sheet and recorded in the students file. Parents will be contacted when appropriate and medical authorities will be called in the case of extreme situations.

**Illness**
A youth should not attend the program with any of the following symptoms: fever, vomiting, or diarrhea (within 24 hours). Children also should not attend with any undiagnosed rashes, inflamed or matted eyes, severe cold or sore throat.

1) Any communicable disease should be reported and will, in turn, be reported to all children’s parents enrolled in the program.

2) Children with communicable disease/illness/rash or the like should not attend program until the child is considered no longer contagious.

If a youth becomes ill during the Cornerstone Connections Program, he/she will be isolated from other children. The parent/guardian will be notified and must arrange pick up of their child **within one hour**. Parents need to keep a current list of designated people who are authorized to pick up the child in the event of illness. These people will be contacted if the parent is not available.

**Dress Code**
Youth should be adequately dressed for both indoor and outdoor activities. The Cornerstone Connections Project follows the same dress code guidelines as East Allen County School District:

- No halter/tube tops, cut off shirts or bare midriffs
• Male youth must wear a shirt at all times
• Tank top straps must be two finger tips in width
• Shorts and skirts should be at a minimum of mid-thigh in length
• Pants must sit at the waist and not hang below their hips
• Clothing that advertises alcohol, drugs, sex, tobacco products or contains profanity, expresses any type of negative attitude or any other expression that may be considered offensive to others will not be allowed.
• No hats may be worn in the building.
• Youth MUST leave all personal toys at home, including MP3 players, DS games, etc.

**Discipline Policy**
The basic behavior expectations for all participants at the Cornerstone Connections Project are:

- We treat ourselves and others with RESPECT
  - (…physically...emotionally...with our language)
- We respect the property of NHMS, CCP and others
- We respect the CCP staff and volunteers
  - (…because deep down you know we care...)

**Unacceptable Behaviors**
Violations of the following rules will result in a misconduct slip. If circumstances arise, parents may be contacted to come and pick up their child for their misbehavior. A discipline contract will be issued in most circumstances and the Program Director will meet with the youth’s parents. At that time, disciplinary action(s) and the terms of the behavioral contract will be discussed. Examples of unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Physical aggression/or threatening behavior
- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco or weapons used or in possession of on the premises
- Vandalism or destruction of property
- Stealing
- Sexual Harassment
- Unsafe activities (such as leaving grounds without permission, endangering others, etc.)
- Bullying
- Behaviors that disrupt activities and/or other participants

**Consequences for Unacceptable Behaviors**
Any or all of the following actions may take place:

- Loss of program privileges/activities
- Meeting with staff/school administration/other youth involved
- Parental notification and/or conference
- Removal from the program for the remainder of the day
- Suspension from the program for 1-5 days
- Referral to police, juvenile authorities or community agency
- Disenrollment from the program

The CCP staff will notify participants and parents/guardians of any violations and resulting disciplinary action.