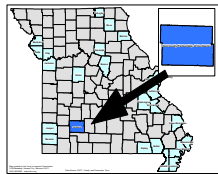
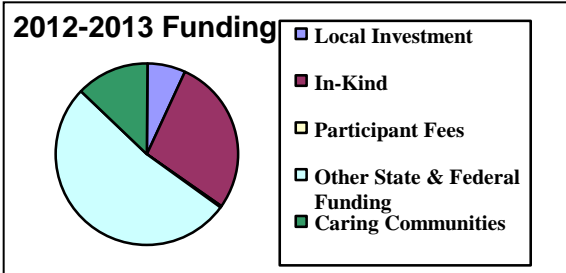


# Community Partnership of the Ozarks, Inc.

**Established: 1995**



**2012-2013 Funding**



## **FY13 Result Achievement: After-School Clubs & Academic Enrichment Activities**

**December 2013**

### **Community Profile:**

Community Partnership of the Ozarks is located in the City of Springfield. Although the city's population currently stands at 151,823, its economic impact influences 27 counties and over 936,000 individuals. While the City of Springfield and Greene County serve as the geographic base of our service area, our programming efforts reach 20 other counties in Southwest Missouri.

Community Partnership of the Ozarks is governed by a 33-member Board of Directors, which is comprised of community leaders from local government, the faith, health care, and education communities, local businesses, civic organizations, the media, and other non-profit organizations. We also have the Ozarks Fighting Back Advisory Board, which oversees our substance abuse and violence prevention services, and a talented and committed staff and volunteers that work to facilitate and implement our tremendous diversity of programming and collaborative efforts.

### **Major Collaborative Accomplishment:**

After school clubs and enrichment activities are key strategies for keeping kids safe, engaged and supervised. Research shows that the after-school hours can be dangerous ones for children. After school activities are an opportunity to further engage students in academic, social and physical activities.

In 2013, Community Partnership's Caring Communities Initiative supported after-school clubs and academic enrichment activities in 17 elementary and middle schools in Springfield and Willard. These clubs were facilitated by teachers, Community Partnership staff, student interns and community partners. Approximately 1,800 students participated in 75 different clubs. These clubs improve student skills and behaviors, encourage daily attendance, and improve academic success. On average, students who participated in our after-school programming averaged an attendance rate that was 0.5% to 1.5% higher than students who did not participate in Caring Communities sponsored clubs. 62% of students surveyed said after school clubs help them to do better in school. 75% of students surveyed said that after school clubs made them feel good about themselves and 81% of students said that their after school club helped them to make friends.

Some of the topics offered were gardening, music, science, art, reading, and ballet. One specific program that has shown great success and continues to grow is Girltalk. Girltalk is a peer-to-peer mentoring

program for 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls. This program provides a safe place for students to talk about their concerns, fears, hopes and dreams. Each Girltalk session is 6-8 weeks. Weekly discussion topics are chosen by the participating girls and typically include topics such as hygiene, self-esteem, bullying and friendship. Girltalk has resulted in better self-care and higher self-confidence among the girls who participated, and it is highly effective at helping girls connect with each other. A 7<sup>th</sup> grader said, "Girltalk has helped me see that I am not alone and that other girls have the same problems."

Another example of successful enrichment programming is our Peer-to-Peer Drug Prevention Program, which was created in 2009 after a discussion with an elementary school principal regarding her 5<sup>th</sup> graders admitting to smoking cigarettes. The pilot was funded by the Foundation for the Springfield Public Schools and was offered in partnership with Williams Elementary, Reed Middle School, and Hillcrest High School. The purpose of the program was to offer the opportunity for 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students from Reed Middle School to provide drug awareness education to 5<sup>th</sup> grade Williams Elementary students while also creating a campaign that promoted substance abuse prevention. A secondary goal of the pilot was to help the middle school students build leadership skills.

The theme of the pilot year was "Natural High," using the concept that it is healthier and more productive for kids to do things that give them a natural high instead of turning to drugs or alcohol. The students shared with each other their favorite ways to get a natural high and then with the help of Hillcrest High School students they created a "Natural High" video in which they were filmed doing those activities, such as skateboarding, running, swimming, playing basketball, and hanging out with friends. The students also created "drug free" themed posters for a contest. The winning poster was signed by all participating students and is now proudly displayed at all 3 schools.

Since 2010, we have continued the program, making small changes each year to respond to each school's needs. In 2012, we moved the program to Robberson Elementary and continued the monthly peer-to-peer focus with Reed Middle School students. The program's large project was creating Public Service Announcements (PSA's) focused on alcohol, tobacco and prescription drug prevention. Hillcrest High School students filmed the PSA's and helped to organize a Premiere at each school at the end of the year.

The benefits of the Peer-to-Peer Drug Prevention Program include building positive relationships between elementary,

middle and high school students, helping students with the transition from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school, and decreasing the risk factors young students face in today's society. The impressive outcomes documented by the 2012-13 Robberson-Reed Program definitely confirm that:

- 91.5% of students agreed or strongly agreed that their knowledge regarding the dangers of alcohol increased
- 85.8% of students agreed or strongly agreed that their knowledge regarding the dangers of tobacco increased
- 82.8% of students increased knowledge regarding the dangers of prescription drug use
- 82.8% of students increased knowledge on how to resist peer pressure related to drugs and alcohol
- 77.1% of students reported that the program helped them feel comfortable and prepared to enter middle/high school
- 100% of teachers surveyed reported that the program was beneficial for their students
- 100% of teachers surveyed want to see the program grow in their school

Last year, because of the outcomes demonstrated, the GFWC Sorosis Club of Springfield provided funding to expand the program to two new schools--Weaver Elementary and Pipkin Middle School. The goal of the expansion is to have 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students from Pipkin provide drug prevention education for at least two 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes at Weaver.

Of course, we couldn't offer these important programs and activities without the collaborative support and involvement from the following partners, who provided funding, staff and volunteer support, in-kind donations of time, food, materials, and space.

**Collaborative Partners:**

- Drury University
- Springfield Ballet
- Missouri State University
- J. Howard Fisk Limousines
- Marvel Comics
- Neighborhood Associations
- Convoy of Hope
- Victory Mission
- Evangel University
- Springfield Public Schools
- Askinosie Chocolate
- SPS Early Childhood Development Center
- Triad Graphics
- Springfield Art Museum
- City of Springfield Public Works

- PTA/PTSA
- Springfield Urban Agriculture Coalition (SUAC)
- GFWC Sorosis Club
- Springfield-Greene County Parks Board
- The Gathering Place Salon
- Springfield-Greene County Library
- Springfield Police Department
- Mary Kay
- Willard Cosmetology School
- Dickerson Park Zoo
- LifeQuest Church
- Junior League (Plaid Door)
- Twisted Hair Salon