



2025 Needs Assessment Report

Community Needs Assessment
School Needs Assessment



CFS CORP

EDUCATE. ASSIST. ADVOCATE

MISSION:

Improving quality of life for disenfranchised communities using prevention driven education, advocacy, and assistance.



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DATA SNAPSHOT

52%

of Participants were Community Members or Parents

85%

Ranked Suicide Prevention and Warning Signs, as well as Signs of Anxiety and Depression as the top Mental Health priority.

76%

Ranked Bullying Prevention and Intervention as “Very Important” in the Violence Prevention Category

64%

Ranked Peer Pressure and Decision Making Skills as the Most Important under Substance Use Topics

68%

Ranked Healthy Relationship and Sexual Health Education as the Most Important under Physical Health

Executive Summary

CFS Corp conducted a comprehensive community prevention services needs assessment in fall 2025 to identify the most critical prevention topics and inform future programming decisions. The assessment gathered input from both community stakeholders and local schools to ensure a holistic understanding of prevention needs across the region.

Mental health emerged as the top community concern, while schools prioritized violence prevention. Stakeholders consistently identified significant barriers to accessing services, including limited mental health professionals, transportation challenges, and insufficient youth programming.

Participant Overview

Twenty-seven participants completed the community survey. Of those, 52% were community members or parents, 26% were representing community-based organizations, 11% were representing criminal justice agencies, and the remaining 11% were local media or school employees.

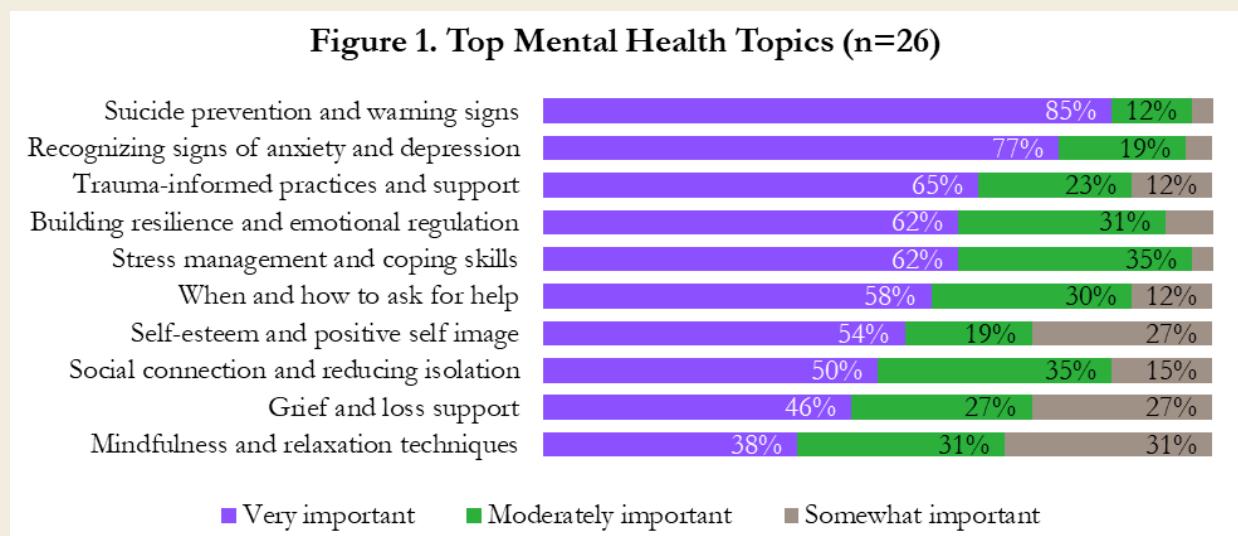
In addition to the community prevention services needs assessment survey, CFS Corp collected information from schools on top prevention needs. Nine schools participated, including:

- Flaget Elementary School
- George Rogers Clark Middle School
- Vigo Elementary School
- North Knox Intermediate
- North Knox Jr-Sr High School
- South Knox Middle/High School
- Tecumseh Harrison Elementary
- Washington Learning Academy

All school respondents expressed interest in partnering with external organizations to provide prevention services.

Mental Health

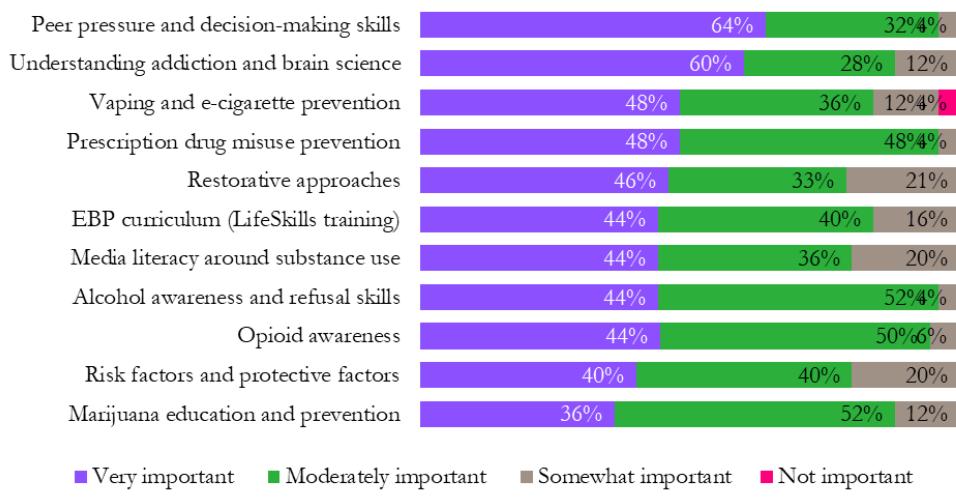
CFS Corp offers several mental health training programs that can be implemented in community and school settings, including suicide prevention, trauma-informed practices, emotional regulation, and promoting positive self-image. All respondents overwhelmingly agreed that these topics are critically important to address in the community, with suicide prevention and warning signs, as well as recognizing signs of anxiety and depression, identified as the highest priorities (Figure 1).



- One participant noted that there are not enough services to meet the needs of youth in the community, stating, "the emotional maturity seems to get worse each new school year with their transition from middle school to high school. Students have a huge lack of impulse control, emotion regulation, problem solving, and conflict resolution."
- Another participant indicated barriers to accessing resources for the community, stating, "while we have several resources available for many things like mental health access to these can be difficult for people. Barriers include insurance or lack of, cost of services, and transportation."

Nearly two-thirds of participants (64%) ranked peer pressure and decision-making skills as the most important topic areas needed in the community (Figure 2). As one participant emphasized, "generational trauma, substance use, and violence are hard to combat. Prevention is so important."

Figure 2. Top Substance Use Topics (n=25)

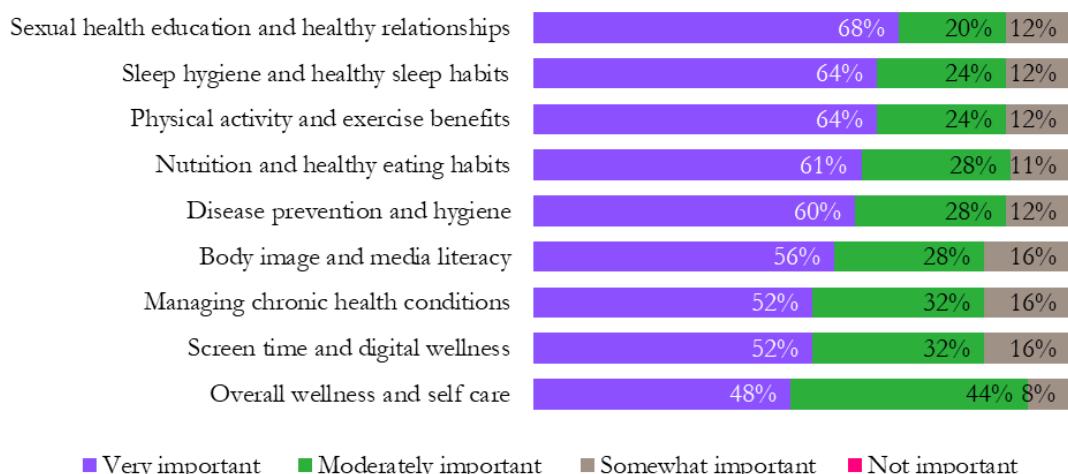


Participants overwhelmingly ranked cyberbullying awareness and response as a top need in the community. As one participant emphasized, "social media is TOXIC to our youth's brains and this is a huge issue that needs to be addressed." More than three-quarters of participants (76%) ranked bullying prevention and intervention and boundaries and consent education as other very important topical areas that need to be addressed.

Physical Health

While physical health was ranked as the least pressing area of concern compared to mental health, substance use, and violence prevention, participants still identified important needs that CFS Corp can address. Participants noted that sexual health education and healthy relationships, along with sleep hygiene and healthy sleeping habits, were very important topics to be discussed (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Top Physical Health Topics (n=25)



School-Specific Needs

In addition to the community prevention services needs assessment survey, CFS Corp collected information from schools on top prevention needs. Violence prevention was reported as the top prevention service needed, followed by mental health, substance use, and health promotion. Factors that influenced ranking included recent incidents at school and staff observations and concerns.

School staff indicated that bullying prevention and intervention and cyberbullying awareness and response were topics that needed to be addressed. Additionally, peer pressure and decision-making skills, as well as building resilience and emotional regulation were also highly ranked. Notably, all respondents expressed interest in partnering with an external organization to provide prevention services, positioning CFS Corp as an ideal partner to fill this gap. CFS Corp's expertise in delivering comprehensive, evidence-based prevention programming directly aligns with schools' identified needs while allowing school staff to focus on their core educational mission.

Respondents indicated some evidence-based programs that they are familiar with or interested in learning more about. These included:

- QPR Suicide Prevention Training
- Teen Safety Matters
- CATCH My Breath Program
- American Lung Association's INDEPTH
- Childhelp Speak Up Be Safe
- Botvin Life Skills

When asked what could help make programming successful, one participant noted that not taking away from classroom time would be ideal. Additionally, another participant noted, "we are open to learning all types of prevention but we are trying to meet the state's standards as well. Convocations, parent education, or after school workshops would be extremely helpful."

Conclusion

This comprehensive needs assessment reveals a community at a critical juncture. Stakeholders across the area have clearly articulated an urgent need for preventative supports, particularly for youth who are navigating increasingly complex mental health challenges, substance use pressures, and digital environments that amplify risks like cyberbullying. The convergence of findings from both community members and school personnel underscores a shared understanding: prevention is not merely important, it is essential to breaking cycles of generational trauma and building a healthier, more resilient community.

The barriers identified throughout this assessment are significant but not insurmountable. CFS Corp is uniquely positioned to address these obstacles through accessible, evidence-based programming delivered directly in schools and community settings. By meeting youth where they are and eliminating common barriers to support, CFS Corp serves as a vital bridge between identified needs and tangible solutions.

Participants emphasized the value of "outside agencies speaking to students in the classroom" and "more first hand knowledge provided from professionals to young adults" to spread awareness and equip youth with essential life skills. This call for external expertise, coupled with the universal interest from schools in partnering with organizations like CFS Corp, represents a clear opportunity for collaborative action. Schools cannot and should not bear the burden of prevention education alone—they need partners who can complement their educational mission while bringing specialized knowledge and resources.

The emphasis on mental health, substance use prevention, violence prevention, and healthy relationships reflects the multifaceted nature of youth wellbeing. These issues are interconnected, and addressing them requires a holistic, comprehensive approach that CFS Corp is prepared to deliver through flexible programming options including classroom curricula, convocations, after-school workshops, and parent education sessions.



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McKenzie was born in Wyoming but grew up in Vincennes, Indiana. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Indiana University-Bloomington and a Master of Public Administration in Community and Public Health from Murray State University.

McKenzie and her family lived in Pennsylvania from 2009 - 2018, returning to Indiana in the Spring of 2018. In 2021, McKenzie re-entered the workforce and joined CFS, Corp. in 2022, where she is now focused on developing community-driven projects and programs. She is passionate about building initiatives that positively impact the community where she was raised and where she and her husband are now raising their daughter.

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Krystal is a dedicated social work professional and evaluator based in Indianapolis whose career focuses on justice, equity, and systems-level change. With her MSW degree, she specializes in mixed methods research and evaluation design. Krystal has extensive experience with community-based organizations, educational institutions, and government agencies to create evaluations that center community voice and measure outcomes. Her approach combines evaluation rigor with empathy, helping organizations use data for accountability, storytelling, and advocacy while building evaluation infrastructure that supports learning and continuous improvement.

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