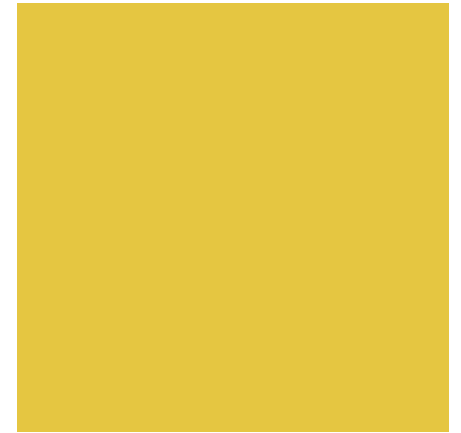
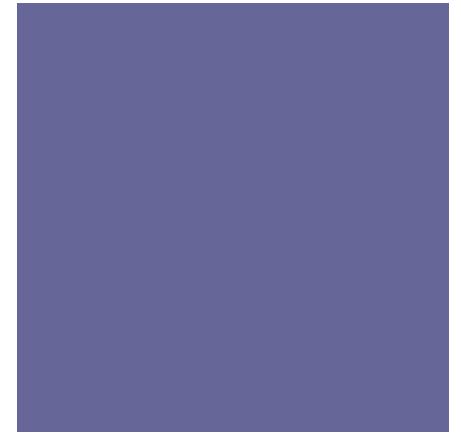




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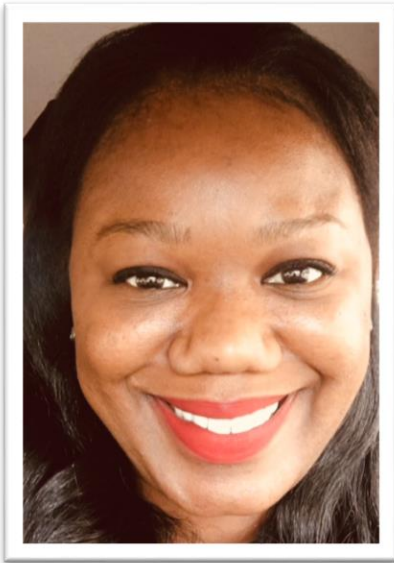


Chronic Absenteeism: What is it and How Can we Combat it Through Authentic Family Engagement?

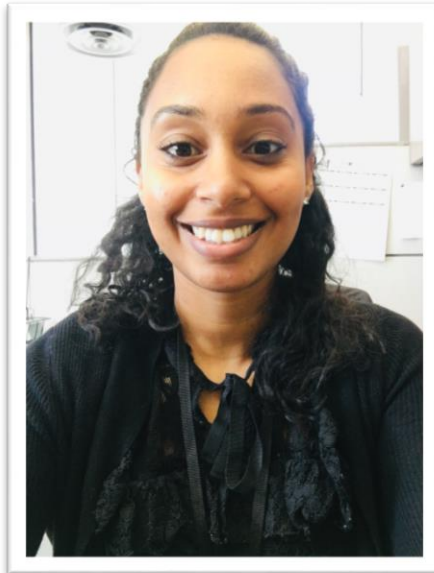
North Lawndale Community Connections



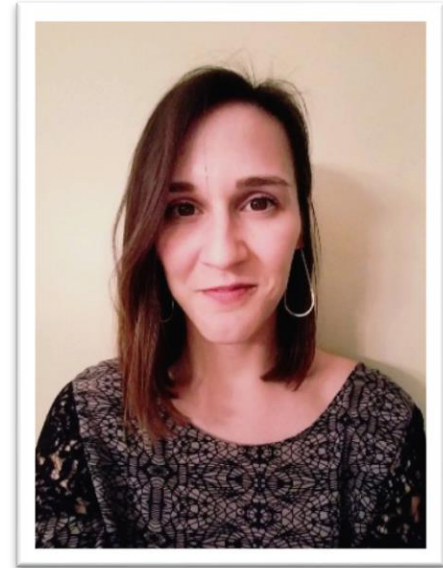
North Lawndale Community Connections' Team



Rarzail Jones
Program
Manager



Saret Beraki
Case Manager



Kristina Rogers
Senior
Associate



Illinois Action for Children



■ **Mission:** Illinois Action for Children is a catalyst for organizing, developing and supporting strong families and powerful communities where children matter most.

■ **Programs and Services:**

- Public Policy & Advocacy
- Early Learning Programs
- Resource and Referrals



Today's Learning Objectives

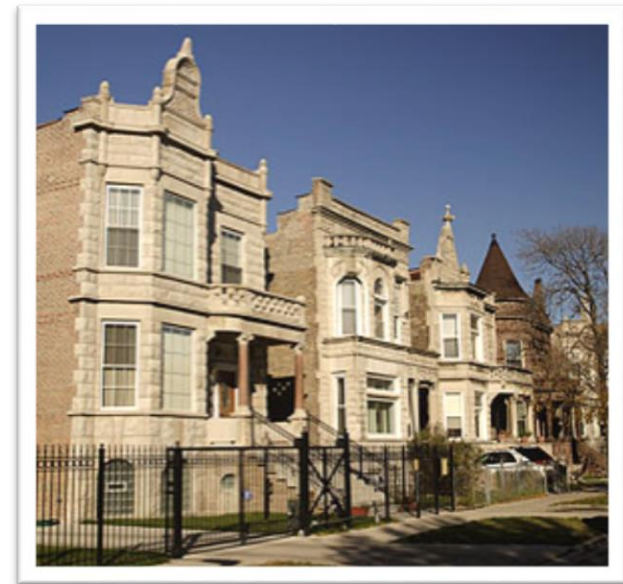


1. Understand the North Lawndale Attendance work
2. Be able to define Chronic Absenteeism and understand key barriers to daily attendance
3. Learn ways to engage schools around chronic absenteeism
4. Learn ways to engage families around chronic absenteeism



History of Work in North Lawndale

- **2012-** launched North Lawndale Community Connections Program through Steans Family Foundation grant
 - Focus on social capital /Family goal-setting
- **2013-** launched early childhood collaboration (North Lawndale Innovation Zone)
 - Funded through Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge Grant / Focus on Enrollment of Priority children
- **2015-** Steans Family Foundation launched NL READS
 - 4 schools and 7 partners/ Focus on 3rd Grade Literacy



+ Project Strategy

■ Who We Target:

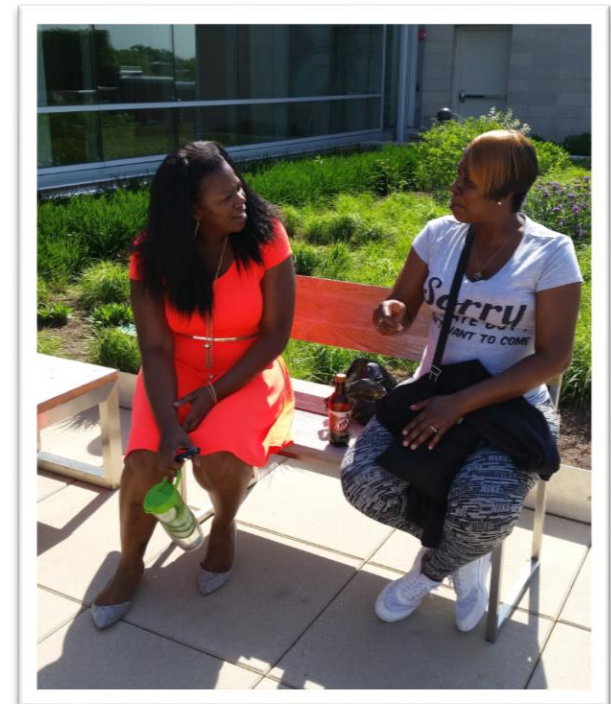
- Families of Children who are chronically absent

■ What We Do:

- Provide case management

■ How We Do It:

- Looking at Attendance Data
- Providing Authentic Family Engagement
- Implementing School initiatives





- What do you think the difference is between Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy?



Truancy Vs. Chronic Absenteeism



TRUANCY

Counts only unexcused absences.
Emphasizes compliance with school rules.
Relies on legal and administrative solutions.

VS.

CHRONIC ABSENCE

Counts all absences: excused,
unexcused, and suspensions.
Emphasizes academic impact of missed days.
Uses community-based, positive strategies.



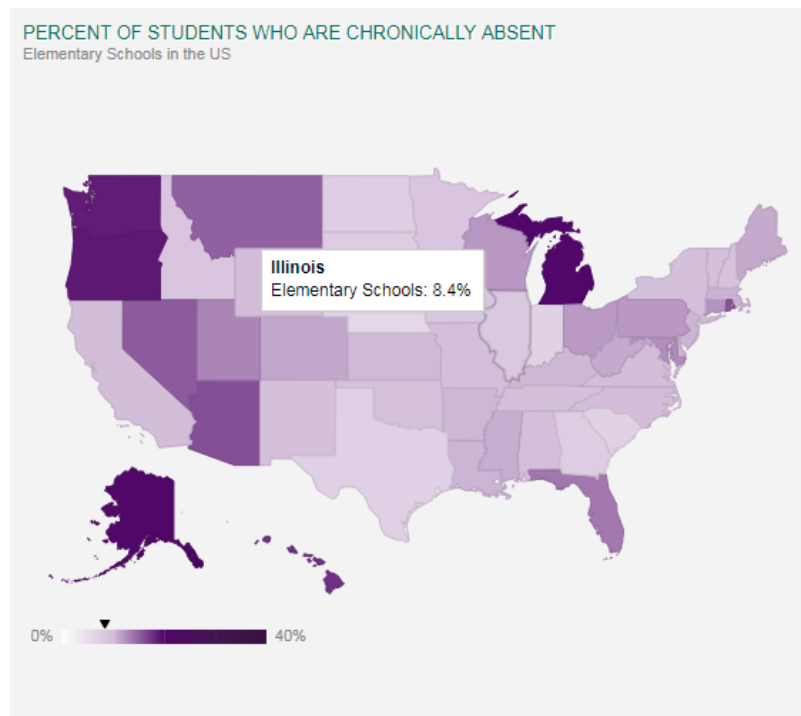
Chronic Absenteeism- What is it?



- Child has missed 10% of school year (18 days in CPS calendar)
 - Including excused and unexcused absences
- A lot of times, school attendance data looks great overall, but a few students may still be missing 10% of school year. This can affect the child's:
 - Behavior
 - Academics

+ Current Landscape

- 8.4% of Illinois elementary school students are chronically absent (15+ days)
- Nearly all schools have some level of chronic absenteeism
 - Only 8.5% of elementary schools report that 0% of their students are chronically absent



(The Hamilton Project, 2016.)



Cause I Ain't Got a Pencil

By Joshua T. Dickerson



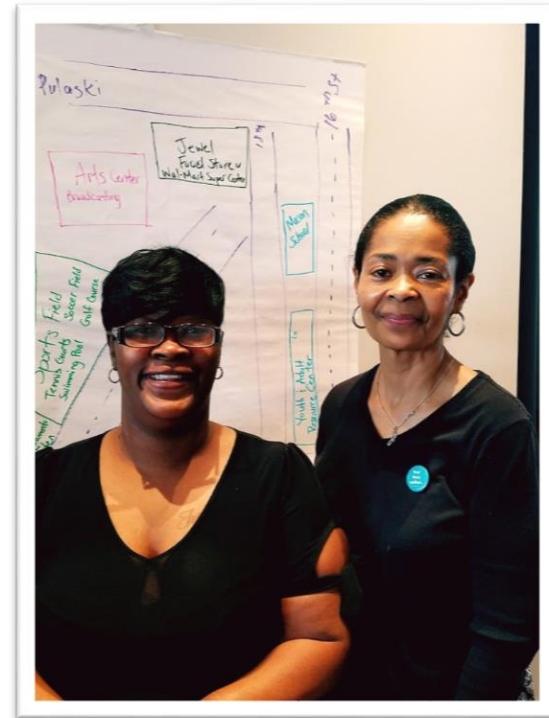
*I woke myself up
Because we ain't got an alarm clock
Dug in the dirty clothes basket,
Cause ain't nobody washed my uniform
Brushed my hair and teeth in the dark,
Cause the lights ain't on
Even got my baby sister ready,
Cause my mama wasn't home.
Got us both to school on time,
To eat us a good breakfast.
Then when I got to class the teacher fussed
Cause I ain't got no pencil*





Barriers that Parents Face:

- Work hours
- Awareness
- Lack of School/Parent Relationship
- Appointments





Barriers that Children Face:

- Anxiety
- Behavioral Issues
- Illness/chronic illness
 - Asthma
 - How Sick is Too Sick?





Barriers that Vulnerable Families Face:

- Transportation/ Mobility Issues
- Domestic Violence
- Unstable Housing
- Lack of Quality Support Systems





Connections to Resources

- Early Learning Programs
 - Preschool
 - Early Intervention
 - Home-visiting/Doula
- Job Assistance
 - Send out job postings
 - Assist with resumes
- Housing
- Adult Education
- Transportation
- Community/School Events
- Advocacy





School Initiatives: Nudge Letters



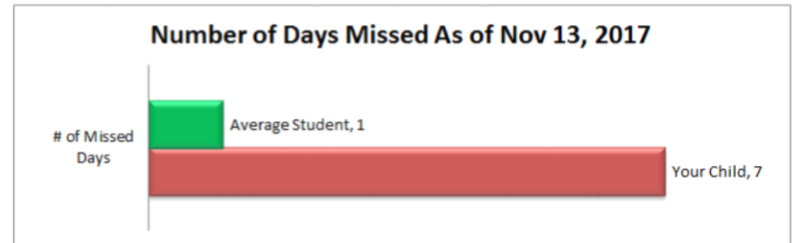
- CPS Letter was wordy and sounded punitive rather than encouraging/supportive
- Introduced Nudge Letters to visually show how many days a student has missed compared to his peers
- Provide these each quarter to children on our caseloads

In Joseph Kellman Corporate Community Elementary School, we strive to improve the attendance of all our students. Each minute of the school day provides opportunities for learning and when children miss, it is much easier for them to fall behind academically.

Kellman strives for 96% overall attendance. In order to achieve this goal, we must work together collectively to assure our students do not miss any more days. Let's be united with helping Kellman achieve this goal!

Since the beginning of the school year, your child has missed 7 days.

The average Kellman student has only missed 1 day since the beginning of the school year.



We are concerned that if your child continues to miss school days, he/she will struggle to keep up in the classroom. Please reach out to the office if you have any questions regarding your child's attendance, or if you need support getting your child to school. We are committed to assisting families as much as we possibly can.



School Initiatives: Meeting with Teachers/Admin

- Meet with teachers during grade band meetings
- Changing school culture to understand barriers for families
- Becoming a resource for our schools





School Initiatives: Classroom Celebrations



- Monthly “Mini-celebrations” based on best classroom attendance
 - Try to steer clear of honoring single students
- Include Preschool
- Include families in celebration!





School Initiatives: Classroom Activities

- Provide activities teachers can do with children to promote attendance
 - Why I Show Up
 - Attendance Star Activity
 - Dice Activity





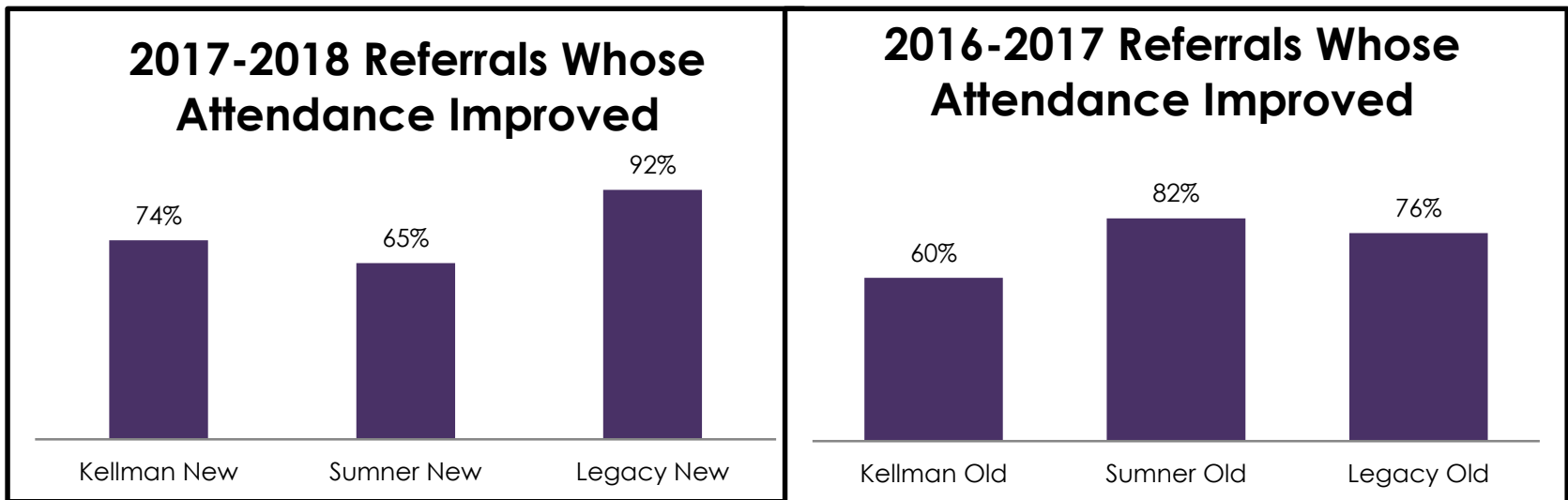
Victories



- Worked with 248 families
- 76% of families have improved their child's attendance
- All schools recognized an improvement in their overall attendance
- Outstanding Stories:
 - Connected many families to STLS program
 - Assisted many parents with adult education
 - Provided families with resources experiencing unstable housing
 - Several parents received jobs
 - Parents built relationships with other parents to help assist each other's children to school

+ Data Outcomes

- 76% of referred children improved their average daily attendance rate
 - We compared 2017-2018 referred students' current attendance rate to their attendance rate at the time of their referral and we compared 2016-2017 referred students' current attendance rate to their attendance rate last year.





Resources to Check Out



- [Attendanceworks.org](https://www.attendanceworks.org)
- [Attendanceinstitute.org](https://www.attendanceinstitute.org)
- The Hamilton Project





Contact Us!



- Rarzail Jones, Rarzail.Jones@actforchildren.org
- Kristina Rogers, Kristina.rogers@actforchildren.org
- Saret Beraki, Saret.beraki@actforchildren.org