

Mancelona Michigan

A Case-study in Collaborative Community Care

Improving adolescent health, academic success, and hope for the future – with a unique comprehensive collaborative care model.



We've all heard the expression "It takes a village...", and in Mancelona, Michigan those words have been brought to life – quite literally. And – as with any great success – the beginning of the story is as important as the end...

In the early '90s, residents of this northern Michigan town faced the challenges common to many rural communities: limited access to healthcare, social services, higher education, and sparse employment opportunities. With the lowest per capita income in the area – most families lived in poverty, and were underinsured, uninsured altogether, or enrolled in Medicaid. These challenges extended to the youngest members of the community – with the state's highest rates of youth physical and sexual abuse, teen pregnancies, drinking and drug use. And as could be expected, these health risks also had a significant impact on academic performance – with behavioral problems in the classroom, low grades, and high drop-out rates. In 1994–95, the dropout rate was 39.1% and only 64% of Mancelona's seniors actually graduated from high school. The Mancelona schools were housed in three buildings within walking proximity of each other (Elementary, Middle and High Schools) – but the nearest health department was located in Bellaire, Michigan – fifteen miles away. And despite the hard work of the dedicated health department team to close these gaps-in-care, for the impoverished residents of Mancelona the distance was unbridgeable. It was time for a change.





Terry McCleod the Middle School Principle at the time, recognized the critical role of student health and wellness in academic success—and he led the charge for change in Mancelona, bringing together a grassroots network of public and private service providers to form a solution. A three year grant from the Kellogg Foundation: Project S.H.A.R.E. (School Home Alliance for Restructured Education) provided critical funding for a comprehensive assessment and evaluation of the gaps and needs in Mancelona. While improving the health and wellness of children was paramount for this team, the results of the needs assessment made it clear that any successful, lasting intervention must extend to the environment and the children’s families to address the underlying, interconnected issues of poverty. The layout of the schools allowed for a unique solution: building a dedicated family resource center right next to the Mancelona school grounds. With thoughtful outreach, community advocates and the public health administration were engaged in the cause, and the land for this building was secured at the steep price of one U.S. dollar.

A generous grant from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) funded the start up of this building, and the “Mancelona Family Resource Center” (MFRC) officially opened to the community in 1996. With health, social, daycare, educational, and economic services all under one roof, the MFRC offered a unique and comprehensive suite of services to support Mancelona’s students and their families. Staffing and programs were brought in with

continued support from Project S.H.A.R.E., including the Michigan Works! Association — which resided in a dedicated wing of the MFRC. Michigan Works! played a critical role in turning the tide of poverty — strengthening the employability of adults with workforce development services and mobilization of local businesses. Of course, quality health delivery was at the very heart of the MFRC, and the Health Department (now occupying a location within the building) provided the students and community with access to previously unattainable care — including a Dental Health Clinic.

With one of the highest teen pregnancy rates in the state, reproductive healthcare was one of the first priorities of the MFRC team. Convenient and confidential, family planning, reproductive health services, and education were provided through the Health Department and the Women’s Resource Center of Northern Michigan. And working closely with the school, this innovative approach included the development of a dedicated class for pregnant mothers to help improve the health of future Mancelona generations.

Over time, partnerships and additional resources were added within the center, the school and the community. In 2001, Communities In Schools (CIS) began providing programs and services in Mancelona. Founded on the national CIS model, this non-profit organization provided new programs for before/after school activities, mentoring and tutoring, and an onsite presence within the schools with a

An Unprecedented Coalition of Public and Private Partners:

“Many of the Mancelona core team and partners have been working here from the beginning. We have a deep understanding of the needs of the community and a personal commitment to making a meaningful difference.” Pat Fralick - Director of Family and Community Health, Health Department of Northwest Michigan

A diverse and dedicated team of service providers have contributed to creating sustainable change in Mancelona – from the inception of the Mancelona Family Resource Center to the evolution of the comprehensive safety net of services that now encompass the school and the community. These partners have included:

- Catholic Human Services
- Child & Family Services of Northwest Michigan
- Communities In Schools of Mancelona
- Community Resource Development, Inc.
- Dental Clinics North
- Family Support Coordination
- Health Department of Northwest Michigan
- Ironmen Health Center (school-linked health center)
- Kellogg Foundation
- Mancelona Public Schools
- Michigan Works! Association
- Northern Health Foundation
- Planned Parenthood–West and Northern Michigan
- Village of Mancelona
- Women’s Resource Center of Northern Michigan

dedicated Site Coordinator. (In 2009, CIS expanded to include a Site Coordinator located within each school building.) The CIS team worked in collaboration with the MFRC, providing care coordination and referrals for students and their families. And when the state of Michigan expanded school-linked health center qualification requirements to include not just urban centers, but also areas with rural status, the MFRC leadership were among the first applicants in line. Mancelona was included with the first round of funded centers under this new qualification.

Proudly named the Ironmen Health Center, the Mancelona school-linked health center opened in the summer of 2006, offering services to students aged 10–21 regardless of health insurance status. In addition, social work and behavioral health services were provided in the Ironmen Health Center by the experienced team at the Women’s Resource Center. The Ironmen Health Center had an immediate and significant impact on the health and wellness of students – with one unexpected outcome that was especially appreciated by the community... In the fall of 2006, with access to free sports physicals in the Ironmen Health Center, the Mancelona football team had more players than ever before on their roster. And for the first time in many years, the team made the playoffs – providing a much-needed boost to community spirit and pride!

While the exact make-up of services offered within the MFRC and

throughout the extended community has changed over the last twenty years (due to changes in funding and in organizational structure), the core team at Mancelona has remained largely the same. Having been there from the beginning, **this team has been passionate in their dedication to the Mancelona community and – in partnership with the schools, families, and students – they have achieved significant outcomes.**

The outcomes achieved have been broad and far-reaching – including rates of teen pregnancy, drug and tobacco use, and child abuse that are all down. One of the most striking outcomes – and as high school graduation is the number one predictor of health later in life, perhaps the most important – **Mancelona High School now boasts a graduation rate of 91%**! This impressive statistic is actually higher than surrounding (and higher income) school districts – and it represents a **42% increase from the inception of this innovative model of community-based collaborative care.** While that might be considered by many to be a pinnacle of achievement, the impact of this innovative care model doesn’t stop there – 60% of the 2013 graduating class enrolled in college that fall. And nearly 100% of this year’s 2015 seniors are making plans to pursue some form of higher education or technical skills training post-graduation. Instead of an ending – that’s a very happy beginning for the future of the Mancelona story.



Innovative Programs for Comprehensive Care:

Challenging conventional approaches to programming, the Mancelona coalition of care providers have gone “outside the box” to provide the services that are really needed.

“Senior Visit” Program — gives graduating students the necessary skills to navigate the healthcare system as an adult — everything from signing consents and the importance of knowing your family health history, to personal advocacy and the value of being an active, engaged member of your healthcare team.

Working on Wellness: “WOW” — a comprehensive wellness program that includes obesity prevention, nutrition education, and physical activity — but is delivered in a unique format that allows students to select and participate in the elements that interest them the most — increasing engagement and sustainable behavior change.

Ironmen College Network Access or “ICAN” — an initiative of CIS, designed to increase rates of post-graduation education with support for college applications and visits, FAFSA assistance, and career exploration; the program encourages pursuit of continuing education — whether at colleges or alternative education such as technical schools, or apprenticeships.

“Sex Ed and Healthy Relationships” — offered in affiliation with Planned Parenthood of West and Northern Michigan, this program provides age-appropriate sexual education in the classroom for grades 7, 9, 11, and 12 — including education on STI prevention (not just abstinence messaging) and referrals for confidential STI screenings in the MFRC.



Why the Mancelona Model Works so Well...

“Our collaboration works because we’re dedicated to building long-term relationships and trust with the community, and we all recognize the relationship between academic success and the health and wellness of students and their families.”

Linda Yaroch - Health Officer, Health Department of Northwest Michigan

- True grassroots community partnerships and collaboration
- Strong leadership from within the school — administrators who are proactive about change
- Staff longevity, often 30+ years of commitment to the community
- Recognition, among everyone involved, of the link between academic success and health/wellness
- A comprehensive approach that includes students — as well as their families and community
- Dedicated building bringing all services under one roof — “a one-stop shop”
- Centrally located right next to campus — easy access for students and families
- “Feet on the street” — onsite school liaisons who can facilitate early identification of issues and coordinate communication
- Excellent care coordination and collaboration between services and service providers



To learn more about transformational care models in the state of Michigan and the work of the MDHHS, please visit:

www.transformadolhealthcare.com

The Mancelona Story: A Timeline of Tenacity and Triumph

Early 1990's Inequity in Mancelona

Lowest per capita income (\$16,344) in the region and a lack of adequate health/social services; highest rate of sexual abuse (1 in 5 Elementary School children), teen pregnancies, and marijuana use in Michigan; behavioral & disciplinary issues in the classroom.

1994 Mancelona graduation rate is only 64%

A Middle School Principal with a Mission: The principal of Mancelona Middle School initiated a grassroots coalition for change: a collaboration which secured the location and funding for a family resource center located adjacent to the school grounds.

1995 The Birth of the Mancelona Family Resource Center (MFRC)

Including partnerships with local resources, local government, and a host of service organizations, plans commenced to build the fully dedicated, one-stop health and social services center within walking distance from all three of Mancelona's public schools.

1996 MFRC's Doors Opened to the Public

MFRC began offering Health Department services along with related support services, such as Michigan Works! Services that were previously located in separate buildings throughout the county were now easily coordinated under one roof.



Women's Resource Center
of Northern Michigan

Spotlight on Women's Resource Center of Northern Michigan:

Equality for Mancelona's Women & Children

The Women's Resource Center of Northern Michigan (WRCNM) — founded in 1977 and originally housed within North Central Michigan College in Petoskey, Michigan — was one of the first organizations in the state to provide state-funded services for victims of domestic violence. In the early days they not only provided crisis service for domestic abuse, they also offered educational support for women, a drop in center for non-traditional students, counseling and community based support groups on various topics. Later, department-of-education funding provided programs for special needs populations and child care. As the agency grew, a relationship with Health Department of Northwest Michigan was forged. In doing so, WRCNM began providing social work services for Michigan's Maternal Infant Health Program.

"There's no 'wrong door'...wherever someone starts in the Mancelona system they will be able to get the necessary resources. Our system is built around the individual – instead of making the individual work the system."

Jan Mancinelli - Executive Director, Women's Resource Center of Northern Michigan

When the newly formed Ironmen Center needed social work services, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan's strong connection with WRCNM presented a natural partnership for providing services and support to students and families of Mancelona. Within the MFRC building today, WRCNM offers free counseling by appointment on issues including domestic abuse and related services, rape/sexual abuse, child abuse, and child sexual assault.



Spotlight on Communities In Schools of Mancelona:

Connecting Students with the Tools for Academic Success

When the Mancelona Family Health Center brought centralized services to campus in 1996, another challenge became apparent — finding a way to efficiently coordinate all of MFRC’s services and to bolster in-school service offerings in order to keep kids in school and help them succeed. Communities In Schools (CIS) of Mancelona, modeled after the national CIS non-profit organization, was founded in 2001 to fill this need.

CIS’s mission is to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. CIS is guided by five basic principles:

1. A one-on-one relationship with a caring adult
2. A safe place to learn and grow
3. A healthy start and a healthy future
4. A marketable skill to use upon graduation
5. A chance to give back to peers and community

The CIS site coordinators work with school administrators and students at all three of Mancelona’s schools to build custom plans that coordinate integrated services like mentors, tutors, food banks, family counseling, health services, job shadowing, college visits and applications, and service learning. As needs change, services are adjusted.

“You can put any program in place, but programs don’t make changes – it’s the relationships with people that do. While the programs offered at Mancelona may have changed over the years, the legacy and philosophy of working together to coordinate and eliminate barriers remains. We do whatever it takes to help kids succeed.”

Amy Burk - Executive Director, Community in Schools of Mancelona

2001 Communities In Schools (CIS) of Mancelona

Communities In Schools of Mancelona was founded to provide prevention and intervention services to students and families with a goal of increasing graduation rates. In-school services include a Site Coordinator and before/after-school mentoring and tutoring.

2002 62% Graduation Rate from Mancelona High School

2004 Funding for a School-linked Health Center

Mancelona’s Health Department team applied for and received funding to establish a school-linked health center within the MFRC building. Plans commenced for creating the new Ironmen Health Center.



2006 The Ironmen Health Center in the MFRC Became Operational

The Ironmen Health Center opened as a school-linked health facility of The Health Department of Northwest Michigan in collaboration with Mancelona Public Schools, offering services for individuals ages 10 – 21 regardless of health insurance status.



Spotlight on The Ironmen Health Center: *A Student-linked Health Facility for Mancelona's Youth*

2009
CIS of Mancelona Expands to Include a Site Coordinator within Each School



2013
91 percent graduation rate from Mancelona High School!
60% of the 2013 graduating class enrolled in college.

This graduation rate is higher than surrounding (and higher income) school districts and it represents a 42% increase from the inception of this innovative model of community-based collaborative care.

2014
The HUB: Community Connections Launched

A collaboration of the Health Department, IHC, CIS, the School District, and community designed to transform school-based health care for families and adolescents at highest risk — with improved family independence, health status, school connectedness and engagement.

2015
— Ironman Health Center expands services to include 5–9 year olds
— Nearly 100% of this year's seniors have made plans to pursue post-graduation higher education.

“It’s one thing to get information in a pamphlet – and something totally different to have a face-to-face interaction. Being able to offer immunizations, physicals, and general primary care services within walking distance of the schools has been the ‘ticket that opens the door’ and enables us to address a host of other critical mental and physical health issues.”

Tammy Hickman – Nurse Practitioner, Clinician and Coordinator, IHC

Established in 2005, the Ironmen Health Center (IHC) is a school-linked health facility of The Health Department of Northwest Michigan, in collaboration with Mancelona Public Schools, conveniently located at the Mancelona Family Resource Center. The IHC mission is to offer students primary health care services with a focus on preventive health and reduction of risk behaviors, removing barriers to students’ academic success, and promoting health and fitness now and in the future.

With guidance from community and teen advisory committees, the IHC offers an adolescent-friendly, safe, and engaging space for Mancelona’s youth. Open five days a week with a full-time nurse practitioner, appointments are available year-round (not just during the academic calendar), and drop-ins are welcome. Offering a broad range of primary care services (from everyday sick visits, to help in tackling MI Child and Healthy Kids insurance applications), the IHC team is innovating an integrated health delivery system between physical health and mental health services.

Free annual immunizations and sports physicals have been a big draw for students, and help to “initiate a conversation” — opening up lines of communication around critical youth-related health and emotional issues. And to ensure potentially “hidden” risks (such as depression, sexual abuse, or dating violence) are identified and addressed — students are screened with an adolescent-specific risk assessment (the Rapid Assessment for Adolescent Preventive Services — or “RAAPS”). The IHC team is also realizing the full potential of expanding the model of integration beyond the clinic’s walls into the school building and the community. Ironmen coordinates with school liaisons to build awareness for teachers, coaches, staff, and students about the importance of a healthy lifestyle. To further the focus on prevention and respond to community needs, the IHC recently expanded services to include children ages 5 through 21.