

Recommendations for CIS Programs

1. **Encourage affiliates to address multiple risk factors where possible.** Research was clear that the risk for dropping out increases with multiple risk factors that may snowball in effect over time. Programs should take this into account and target as many as possible.
2. **Discourage partial implementation of model programs or the mixing of strategies drawn from different quality programs.** When local Affiliates want to adopt an existing model program, encourage them to implement all elements of a program and implement them as designed.
3. **Encourage the development of local strategies based on proven practices.** If Affiliates develop their own strategies, encourage them to use strategies proven to impact the risk factors they are addressing and develop strategies based on best practice. Consider requiring documentation in annual reports to address these concerns.
4. **Encourage the development of evidence-based strategies to evaluate programs to assure effectiveness and include documentation of results in annual reports.** Program evaluation is always an important part of program implementation, whether the program is an adopted model program or a locally developed one. Evaluation is particularly crucial for Affiliates developing their own strategies to make sure that the most effective strategies were selected and that they effectively address identified risk factors.
5. **Develop a uniform reporting system for local Affiliates that includes risk factors, strategies, and program outcome results.** To best assess nationwide CIS efforts, local Affiliates should be required to report on a uniform set of elements that can be analyzed across programs.
6. **Periodically update the risk factor, program, and strategy lists to keep up-to-date with current research.** Research in the area of dropout is ongoing and could receive renewed interest, given the recent publications on school dropouts from *Education Week (Diplomas count*, June 26, 2006) and the Gates Foundation-funded study, *The silent epidemic: Perspectives of high school dropouts*. Updates to the lists can assure that local Affiliates have the best available information.
7. **Consider disseminating this helpful resource on selection and implementation of quality, evidence-based programs and strategies:** the Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy's document, *Identifying and implementing educational practices supported by rigorous evidence: A user friendly guide* published by the U.S. Department of Education in 2003, which discusses this and other issues related to selecting and implementing evidence-based practices.

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