Overview

CSA was founded in 2012 by Christina Seix as her life-long dream to create a private school for underserved kids. CSA provides children from single-parent households, and their families, a safe and nurturing environment through academic and family programming.

Mission

"To provide young children living with a single adult caregiver, beset by acute economic needs, a strong education, critical core values, and a safe environment, enabling them to become future leaders in their communities and beyond. All graduates of the academy will be on a natural track to some of the best high schools and four-year colleges in the US." – CSA Website

Constituency

- Adult and youth (aged 0-65+)
- Multi-ethnic
- LGBTQ
- Foster children
- Relative caregivers
- Homeless
- Learning/physical/mental disabilities
- Immigrant
- Undocumented
- Formerly incarcerated

Local Conditions & Critical Issues Impacting 0-5 Childhood Health in Trenton

Education—As of 2016, the graduation rate in Trenton, NJ was 71.9%, which was lower than the 87.3% high school graduation rate in the county.[1]

Lack of Daycare—Only 9% of infant-toddler care need is being met in Trenton, NJ.[2]

"There's daycare and then there's the real care…from about 4:00 until about 7:30, [families] really struggle with finding a place. Then obviously in the summer…what to do with that time? [Kids are] tired and it affects their ability to attend school. We see a lot of exhausted kids who come to us. I think primarily it's due to the day and evening care issues. –Rob Connor, Ph.D., Head of School

Poverty—In 2016, about 38 % of residents in Trenton had an income below the poverty line.[3]

Food Environment—Trenton has been deemed a food desert, with only 3 super markets in the city as of 2012.[4] One in five (17%) Trenton families report that they sometimes or often do not have enough food to eat.[4]

Safety Concerns—Trenton has the highest violent crime rate in New Jersey, with 1,104 offenses per 100,000 residents, as well as the highest property crime rate, with 2,406 offenses.[5]

Key Indicators of Childhood Health in Mercer County

49%

of children 3-5 years old in Trenton were either **obese or overweight** and 19% were very obese in 2013.[4]

34%

of Trenton children met the recommended guidelines for **physical activity** in 2013.[4]

4.2%

of children under age 3 in Mercer County (compared to 2.62% statewide) had **elevated blood lead** levels in 2013.[6]

CSA's Accomplishments in Wellness & Safety

- **BMI screenings**

"I think that our BMI screening has been helpful because we take it a step further [than conventional approaches]…we have a follow up conversation with the family. Then there's support afterwards…we have a nutritionist…we have educational programs that help kids make decisions when they're home or when they're at other things. That's proven to be a successful program." – Sakeenah Boyd, MSN, Director of Health and Wellness

Current Wellness & Safety Efforts

Nutrition Programs—Provide breakfast, snacks, lunch, and dinner to students. Nutritious, healthy meals are prepared on site by the school chef and his team. Nutrition education is also included to teach students about making healthy choices when they are not in school.

Prevention Programs—Provide health screenings (dental, hearing, vision, and BMI) for all children (starting as young as age 2 ½) for health outcomes that impact student learning.

Integrated Health Advocacy & Support for Families
"We also practice health advocacy here, so if there's a specific issue with a parent or a student, we support the families by going to the appointments, transporting children to the appointments, talking with the physicians or nurse practitioners and working collaboratively on some treatment for the child that's going to work based off of the family's dynamic." –Sakeenah Boyd

Community Defined "Best Practices" to Improve Childhood Health

I. **Building Relationships With Parents**

"[Partnership with parents] echoes through, no matter what program or what initiative you're trying to accomplish. You definitely have to have the relationship with the parents. I would say our best practice is, really understanding the importance of relationships and their impact on successful outcomes." – Sakeenah Boyd

Allies/Partnerships Working on Children's Health

- Capital Health Hospitals – Trenton, NJ https://www.capitalhealth.org/
- Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey – Newark, NJ https://www.horizonblue.com/
- Children's Futures – Trenton, NJ https://childrensfutures.org/
- Home Front – Lawrenceville, NJ https://www.homefrontnj.org/
- Catholic Charities – Trenton, NJ https://www.catholiccharitiestrenton.org/
- Women's Space – Lawrenceville, NJ https://womanspace.org/

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Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ChristinaSeixAcademyNJ/timeline/
Tumblr: http://csatimes.tumblr.com/
Twitter: @CSeixAcademy
Instagram: @cseixacademy

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