

Denver Kids, Inc.

1. Description of the organization

Mission Statement

Denver Kids, Inc. helps students, grades K-12, who face the personal challenges of higher risk environments, successfully complete high school, pursue post-secondary options and become productive members of the community.

History

Sixty years ago, following WW II, the Denver Public Schools (DPS) and the Rotary Club of Denver founded a non-profit organization, Denver Boys, Inc., to address the problems being faced by boys from father-absent homes. In 1970, Denver Girls, Inc. was founded by the Denver Public Schools, the Rotary Club of Denver and the Zonta Club of Denver in response to an increasing number of teenage pregnancies and the increase in drug abuse and juvenile crime no longer being primarily male gender problems. The merger of Denver Boys, Inc. and Denver Girls, Inc. took place in 1993. The sponsoring organizations and the Boards of Directors believed the formation of Denver Kids, Inc. (DKI) to be practical and timely due to many similarities in services and resources.

Current Programs

Denver Kids, Inc. is a non-profit organization affiliated with Denver Public Schools. DKI is governed by a twenty-four member Board of Directors representative of the sponsoring organizations and the community at large. The program is designed to provide long-term support and guidance to students in Denver Public Schools who have been identified as being 'at-risk' for school failure. Lack of family support, little if any experience outside of their immediate neighborhood, and no early childhood education, place many of these children at a disadvantage as soon as they begin their formal education.

DKI provides counseling for each child striving to engage each of them with consistent interaction with positive role models. This process guides the child in helping them understand the value of education. The counseling takes place in the school and outside of school and are often the most stabilizing influences in the student's life. DKI works to provide opportunities for each student including the arts, culture, career, and other activities in order to further their appreciation of obtaining an education and succeeding in the community. In 2005-2006, DKI served 750 kids.

Specific Programs

Counseling Program
Mentoring Program

The Teen Mother Education Project (TMEP)
Family Support Project
SchoolWorks
College Prep

Goals and Objectives of DKI

The goals of Denver Kids, Inc. for each student include, but are not limited to:

- Development of strong character traits
- The positive influence of adult role models
- Encouragement of positive social and academic experiences in school
- Participation in community service
- Gaining an understanding and appreciation of the community and urban setting in which the students live
- Development of a positive vision for the future including continued education, careers and healthy relationships

Collaborations

Denver Kids, Inc. works closely with many area agencies, both public and private. The Department of Human Services, Denver Public Schools and other city agencies work cooperatively with DKI in pursuing services for our families and children. DKI founded the One-to-One Network where we coordinate training for organizations offering mentoring opportunities. The Florence Crittenton School works in close partnership with the DKI Teen Mother Education Project to assure high school graduation of teen mothers. In 2005 Denver Kids, Inc. became a part of the Youth Mentoring Collaborative, which is comprised of 15 mentoring agencies and 8 resource partners, including the Mile High United Way and the Denver Office of Strategic Partnerships.

Evaluation

By the very nature of our program, we evaluate each child enrolled as well as establish suitable objectives and implement a progress plan. If a child falls short of these objectives, counselors and volunteer mentors design and implement interventions. The program recognizes the need to deal with all aspects of the student's life. No two students have the same circumstances or the same solutions. Each child needs to be provided with the support and guidance that will most effectively minimize the effect of the factors that are impeding his or her development and/or creating his or her vulnerability. Every approach and intervention is evaluated on an on-going basis to assure its appropriateness.

Finally, the Board of Directors maintains an Evaluation Committee which meets with key staff regularly to ensure that programs achieve established

goals, employ sound protocols, implement the strategic plan, and maintain high professional standards.

2. Description of intern responsibilities

Commit to a 10 week internship (June, July and 2 weeks in August)

Routine daily responsibilities

Organize and coordinate student activities

Provide/organize transportation to distant activities

(Must have car)

Creative opportunities

Specific opportunities would necessarily have to be negotiated with the fulltime staff and integrated with the other responsibilities.

The following are a few examples:

Develop an educational program in reading or writing to support the Mentoring Program.

Work with the Teen Mother Education Project to develop innovative approaches that encourage these young women to value education and envision employment and careers that will lead to a better quality of life for them and their children.

Organize site visits to businesses to learn what skill sets are required to qualify for a position.

Conduct tutorials on what college is really like and how the experience enhances career opportunities.

3. Skills, background or qualities sought in an intern

The selected student will necessarily be in good standing academically, preferably in the second or third year of college, with an interest in working with disadvantaged male or female kids. Prior experience in this area or a related area would be desirable but not required. Demonstrated creative achievements, potential commitment to careers in education, social work or with non-profits are also desirable.

4. Compensation/ Expectations

Denver Kids, Inc. will provide the intern with \$300.00 per week for 10 weeks. The work week is 30 hours. The intern is expected to find his/her own lodging.

