



Supporting Student Mental Health Through Community Resource Navigation: How to Build a Resource Base in Your Service Region

August 5, 2025

Anita Sego, PhD, MCHES

*Illinois Campus Cares Technical Assistance Center and
Southern Illinois University School of Medicine*

asego99@siumed.edu

Welcome & Presentation Overview

Description:

This presentation will discuss how to identify common community resources to help students in higher education settings, utilizing a community organization framework. The presentation will provide practical strategies to support student needs related to housing, food, financial insecurities, and other challenges that may interfere with their academic success. Participants will learn how to identify community assets, resources, and programs in their service areas, as well as common best practices for informing students about local community resources and the referral process for accessing those resources.

Learning Objectives

- 1** By the end of the session, participants will be able to identify five sources of community resources.
- 2** By the end of the session, participants will be able to explain the importance of website design, search parameters, and list design on student access to resources.
- 3** By the end of the session, participants will be able to list and explain three best practices for referring students to community resources.
- 4** By the end of the session, participants will be able to list and explain three behavioral signs that a student may need help with socioeconomic barriers they have not mentioned.

Session Outline

- 1 Finding Resources Basics**
- 2 Sources of Help**
- 3 Social Services Search**
- 4 Think Like A Student**
- 5 Community Resources**

Finding Resources Basics



Local – City, Township, & County

Local resources are typically organized by city and recognized government bodies, social service organizations, and non-profits.

Region/State

Larger organizations may be regional (especially as non-profits consolidate) or be state agencies.

National

Hotlines and other similar resources may be national services. Funding may come from the federal government—low income housing would be an example.

Types of Organizations

Government Offices

City Hall
Township Offices
County Offices
State Agencies

Government Health Agencies

County Health Department
County Mental Health Dept
State Health Department

Other Resources

Coalitions
Churches
Legislative Offices
Legal Aid
Food Pantries
Sororities/Fraternities
Private Clubs (Lions, Elks, Moose, etc.)
Organizations (Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.)
Foundations
Hospitals

Non Profits

Homeless Shelters/Programs
Domestic Violence Centers
Sexual Assault Programs/Centers
Programs like [CEFS/ERBA](#) in your area

What to Know

1

Who They Help

Who does the agency/organization serve? Which population(s) do they prioritize to help? (Individuals, households, single parents, or children only?)

2

How They Help

What actual services do they provide? (Help with rent, emergency loan fund, food, clothing, prescription assistance, gas money, emergency housing, or what?)

3

How Often They Help

How often can their services be used? (Weekly, once a month, twice a year, or one time only? Is it per person or per household?)



Student
Needs:

Who
Are they
going to
call?

Search For Social Services

- 1 Search for Social Service Agencies in each city and county you serve (be aware of satellite offices, off-campus locations, and online students).**
- 2 Check the City Hall/County websites to see if there is a link to local community resources.**
- 3 Check at your most active social service agencies and non-profits to see if they have a list/link to services**
- 4 Try other search parameters such as Crisis & Community Services**
- 5 Put together a list/website of all the resources you find and remove as many barriers as possible**

Think Like A Student

- **Description of services at the agency:**
 - Can they tell what kind of services the agency provides?
 - Can they follow the requirements to apply?
 - Are they likely to qualify for those services?
 - Do they have the means to go in person if required?
- **Will they be able to find the resource guide or link to the organization's information again?**
 - Do you have a paper copy of the resource guide?
 - Is the website page designed in a way they can take a picture of the information they need?
 - How many clicks will they have to make to find the information that pertains to them?
 - How can they access the information if they are out of minutes?
- **Example: [Lake Land College Resource Page](https://www.lakelandcollege.edu/counseling-services/crisis-and-community-resources/)**

<https://www.lakelandcollege.edu/counseling-services/crisis-and-community-resources/>

What Does It Mean?



CEFS is a not-for-profit Community Action Agency incorporated in 1965 to help people achieve their full individual and economic potential. CEFS serves the counties of Christian, Clay, Effingham, Fayette, Montgomery, Moultrie, and Shelby by developing, implementing, and evaluating social service programs to assist economically and socially disadvantaged people in their quest for greater self-sufficiency.



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C.E.F.S. develops, implements, and evaluates social services programs to assist economically and socially disadvantaged people in their quest for greater self-sufficiency. We offer programs as diverse as the needs of the people in the communities we serve.

CEFS Outreach Offices

To access services, please contact your county's Outreach Office listed below. Counties with food pantries have an * next to the county name.

All Outreach Office hours are:

**Monday-Friday
8:30 am to 4:30 pm**

(Arrangements for appointments outside these Hours can be made upon request.)

Christian County Outreach

220 W Franklin
Taylorville, IL 62568
(217) 824-4712

Effingham County Outreach

1010 W Jefferson
Effingham, IL 62401
(217) 347-7514

Montgomery County Outreach*

8353 Route 127
Taylor Springs, IL 62089
(217) 532-5971

Clay County Outreach

835 West North
Flora, IL 62839
(618) 662-4024

Fayette County Outreach*

517 W Gallatin
Vandalia, IL 62471
(618) 283-2631

Moultrie County Outreach*

114 E Harrison
Sullivan, IL 61951
(217) 728-7721

Shelby County Outreach

515 N Cedar
Shelbyville, IL 62565
(217) 774-4541

CEFS Outreach Homeless, Rental Services, and Community Services Block Grant

All people experiencing homelessness should be referred to CEFS regardless if another agency is assisting them.

Services available:

- **Emergency Hotel Vouchers**— For people who have no where to stay, a hotel voucher can be provided. This program will require participation in case management and permanent housing search.
- **Supportive Services**—Supportive services can include clothing, household goods, life skills, mental health counseling, substance abuse treatment, health care and dental assistance, and transportation.
- **Housing Assistance**—Outreach offers rental and utility assistance to prevent people from becoming homeless or to assist those who are homeless obtain a safe and affordable place to live.
- **Rental Housing Support Program** provides rent assistance for low-income households. The rent subsidies are based on income and those receiving a subsidy cannot be receiving any other rental assistance.
- **Disaster Relief**—Meet immediate needs (food, shelter, clothing, or assistance with obtaining ID or birth certificate) after a family experiences a natural disaster (tornado, flood, earthquake) or a housefire.
- **Employment Training Assistance**—Assistance for low-income individuals to obtain training or education that will lead to a degree, certification, or skill to increase employability. This program will assist with tuition, book, and program required tools and clothing.

Housing Ideas

- **Campus Housing Offices**

- May have on and off-campus housing lists
- May know local landlords who tend to rent to students

- **Local Realtors**

- May manage rental properties for local landlords
- May know of unlisted housing opportunities
- May know of sub-leasing opportunities
- May know local landlords who tend to rent to students or families

- **City Hall and/or Zoning Offices**

- May have rental housing inspection services
- May have rental housing rehab funding
- Zoning enforcement
- May be able to help with animal control

Things to Watch Out For

- **Saying Yes to Everything**
 - May indicate a language barrier
 - May indicate a reading barrier
 - Dyslexia or other impacting condition
 - Needs glasses or contacts
 - Never learned to read (at any age)
- **Only Looking For Cash**
 - Doesn't accept any resource that would help them with their issue
 - Example: No where to stay tonight
 - Won't go to the homeless shelter/the domestic violence shelter
 - Won't call a friend
 - Won't go to the hospital to the ER when supposedly they were kicked out of the last place for a medical condition
 - May be a more serious problem
- **Non-Compliant or Doesn't Follow Through With Referrals**
 - Pride
 - Lack of gas money
 - Lack of phone minutes
 - Lack of clothing

Things to Watch Out For

- **Lack of Cell Phone**
 - Out of minutes or unpaid bill/service shutoff
 - Broken screen
- **Lack of Internet**
 - Restaurants/Coffee Shops
 - Hotels
- **Library Hours**
 - Limited weekend or night hours
 - Cost of printing
- **Lack of Access to Printer**
 - No printer/No paper/No Ink
- **Lack of Transportation**
 - No Gas Money
 - No Car/Bike
 - No Public Transportation or Uber/Lyft/Taxi Services
 - Limited hours if available

Ask For Help

- **Ask the students what else they know of that you don't have on your lists**
- **Ask the agencies you work with who updates the list(s) information at their agency**
- **Make sure to keep the information current (student help or intern to periodically call the agencies on the lists or check the websites)**
- **Develop relationships with the caseworkers/agencies that you refer students to the most**
- **Attend local coalition of social service meetings or groups**
- **Find out who schedules the local "bus" services like traveling dental services, mammograms, and etc. and share that information with students or become a site for those services**

Discussion Questions

What Works With Referrals?

What strategies have you found effective when working with students under stress to get them to follow through with referrals?

Identifying Need

What are signs you have noticed while meeting with students that they might be struggling with their mental health when discussing basic needs like food or housing?

Besides referring students to mental health professionals in your community, what are your biggest challenges in finding community resources for your students?

What methods do you use to identify students who may need help with basic needs but who may be too embarrassed or timid to ask for help?

Case Discussion

A student mentions having to move between a few different friends' houses lately and starts tearing up during your meeting. They mention feeling hopeless and not sure what the point of working with you on benefits would be. How would you respond?

Resources for Continued Learning

Community Online Resource Directory

[CORD](#)

<https://www.sarahbush.org/cord/>

Help is Here

[IDHS Services Website](#)

[IDHS Service Locator by County](#)

Other Resources

[Food Bank Locator](#)

[Laker Food Pantry](#)

[ERBA](#)

[LLC Cosmetology](#)

[LLC Dental](#)

[Rotary International](#)

[Kiwanis](#)

[Salvation Army](#)

[Catholic Charities](#)

Sample Resource Lists

[Coles County Resource Guide](#)

[Coles County Food Assistance](#)

[Crisis & Community Resources](#)

[CEFS Printer Friendly Resource Guide](#)

Thank You!

- Thank you for attending today. Please make sure to complete the session evaluation.
- Please remember that you can find additional resources on the ICC TAC website:

<https://icctac.org/>

- If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Segó at asego99@siumed.edu