



Pittsburgh
Community
Services, Inc.

*“If you and I don’t build a bridge back,
throw out some strong lifelines to our
children, youth and families
whom poverty, unemployment are engulfing,
they are going to drown...”*

Marian Wright Edelman



“To lessen the effects of poverty ... directly or indirectly, through the development, implementation, sponsorship or support of programs and activities designed to enhance and improve the lives of low income residents of the City, to reduce community tension, and to otherwise aid and assist the residents and the community.”

Our Mission

Pittsburgh Community Services, Inc. is the City of Pittsburgh's designated Community Action Agency. Although many other agencies and organizations choose to do so, we are the only agency in the City which is mandated by federal, state and local government to serve the poor.

We want to make a difference in the lives of the persons we serve, to help overcome obstacles toward independence, to provide options for self development that would not otherwise exist. We want to create opportunities for greater self worth and self esteem, to discover and tap hidden resources and creativity — so that individuals and families are enabled and empowered to make measurable progress on the continuum from impoverishment to self sufficiency and self fulfillment.

The Community Action motto is “people helping people,” and we do this in the City of Pittsburgh by providing timely and vital services to persons and families right where they live — by way of our Neighborhood Safety Program and through a network of community based organizations and agencies from whom we purchase services on behalf of our beneficiaries, in an attempt to respond to the whole person as comprehensively as possible.

Pittsburgh Community Services, Inc. is a team player by choice. For, in choosing to carry out our mission directly as well as by way of subcontracting for services, we acknowledge that the endeavor requires resources far greater than we are able to bring to the situation; and, our mode of operation also recognizes the absolutely essential role that our subcontractors play in addressing the needs of those we serve. All low-income persons are “at risk” from before birth until death; but we have decided to concentrate our limited resources on enabling and empowering youth at risk. Although there are pockets of poverty throughout the City of Pittsburgh, residents of public housing communities also have priority.

Likewise, although there are a wide range of vital services, we focus upon providing employment and training opportunities, health, education, public safety and housing support services. In addition, we have a strong commitment to providing emergency food and other nutritional services.

At one level then, we are engaged in carrying out an impossible mission. But, we strive with all that we have and all that we can mobilize to serve the poorest of the poor, the neediest of the needy...so that their dreams and aspirations might be more fully realized, so that they might more fully enjoy what the rest of us may take for granted.



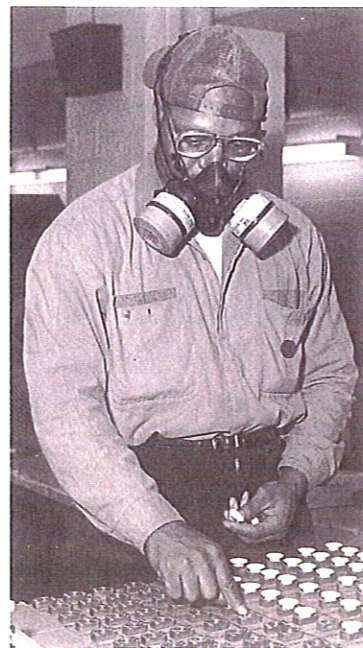
Program Services

Since our inception, CSI's model of purchasing services from other non-profit agencies has proven to be both cost effective and efficient. On an annual basis, we serve more than **63,000** city residents through our network of participating agencies and our own Neighborhood Safety Program. In addition, we have never had a material audit questioned cost.

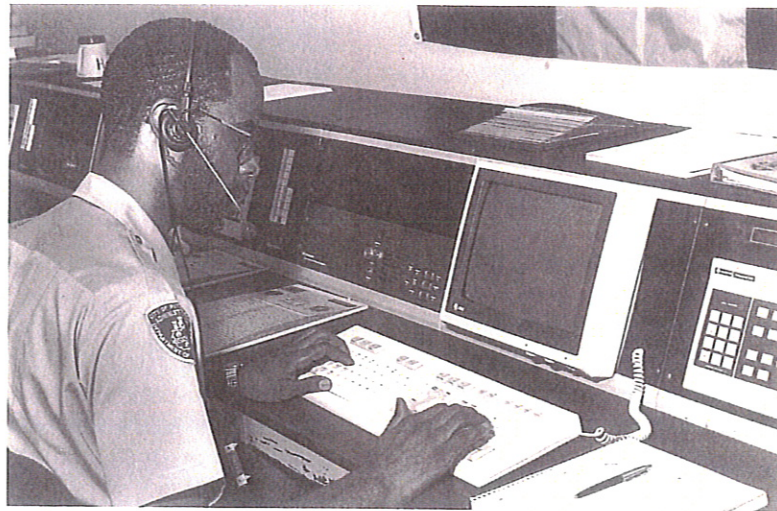
We provide opportunities for low income persons and families to stabilize their lives and serve as a bridge that connects them with vital services from which they would not otherwise benefit.

We are proud of what we are able to do with our limited resources. The illustrations below highlight measurable outcomes, program accomplishments and client success stories that are characteristic of our accomplishments during any given year.

Over **33,000** individuals and persons in families receive **Nutrition** services through pantry assistance, congregate feeding, home delivered meals and an emergency food hotline referral network — this results in over 1 million meals being served annually.



Genna contacted a local shelter's hotline. She was terrified that the abuse she had experienced before was going to start happening again. Genna and her children were accepted into shelter. During their stay, a medical history was done and Genna revealed that she was in the early stages of pregnancy. Pre-natal care was arranged through a local health center. Genna's counselor also discussed her housing situation and the available options. She decided that she was not going back to the abusive situation and moved to a new community to start over. She has a permanent Protection From Abuse Order and has begun divorce proceedings. Although she has not worked in four years, Genna is a registered nurse and plans to re-enter the work force. Genna is only one of over 2,000 individuals and persons in families assisted through **Housing-related** activities including emergency shelter, bridge and/or transitional housing and counseling services.



Over 4,100 persons participate in **Educational and/or Youth Development** activities such as day care, pre-school and after-school programs, computer literacy, tutoring, S.A.T. preparation classes, an after-school horticultural program, training in issue-oriented theater, self-esteem/personal growth workshops, therapeutic exercises for children in shelter, constructive activities for "at-risk" youth, community awareness projects and, world-of-work experience training for both high school students and homeless men.

Just before his unemployment compensation was about to run out, Melvin was referred to one of CSI's Job Placement programs by another satisfied client. Melvin had been job searching for nearly a year with no luck. He had a lot of work experience under his belt, having worked for many years in the steel industry. He was also a graduate of the Machine Shop Technologies Institute. A job order came into the Job Placement's office from Jessop Steel Company seeking minorities to help meet their Affirmative Action goals. Jessop was looking for machine operators, machinists, crane operators and millwrights with an hourly rate of \$12.34. Melvin was the perfect candidate for one of the positions. His resume was forwarded to Jessop Steel for the machinist position and an interview was arranged by the job developer. One week later, he was hired. Melvin is one of 1,000 individuals who receive **personnel counseling, job development and placement assistance**. Sixty-five percent of our clients are placed in jobs with the starting salary ranging from minimum wage to over \$12.00 per hour.



*Melissa is sixteen months old. She was recently examined by a physician at a health care station that provides medical check-ups, screenings and immunization shots for homeless children. She was diagnosed as having a cold. Follow-up visits led the physicians to determine that she was a "failure to thrive" baby which means that she was only two-thirds normal development for a child her age (weight, height, etc.). After consultation and follow-up appointments, Melissa's mother agreed to admit her in the hospital for further tests. Melissa is one of over 2,900 individuals who receive **Primary Health care and related services** which includes medical screenings/testings and follow-up; prescription services; eye examinations; drug/alcohol treatment and prevention counseling programs; adolescent and family counseling; in-home personal care and other health-related services.*



Through **Outreach/Referral** efforts over **13,000** city residents are helped through a crisis situation. These individuals may be given the information, assistance and the necessary follow-up procedures to access community resources or state/federal entitlement programs; or, they may be told where to turn for help and/or support in order to meet basic living standards.

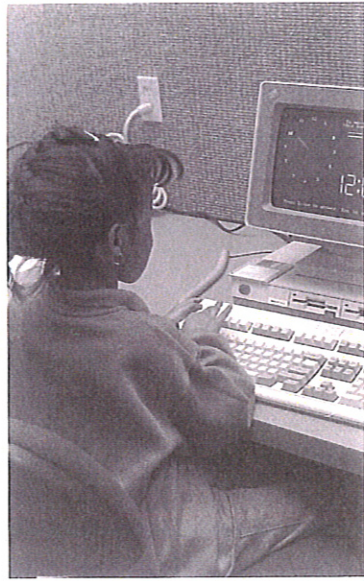


Over **7,000** city residents are able to feel more safe and secure in their homes and in their neighborhoods as a result of our Neighborhood Safety Program's **Crime Prevention/Home Security** efforts. Eligible city households receive free security hardware: deadbolt locks, peepholes/door viewers, window locks, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers and safety packets. Additional services include house numbering and installing "lifelines" — an emergency blinking switch which lets public safety personnel know the exact location of the house where a problem has occurred and can save valuable response time in an emergency or potentially life threatening situation.

While in her senior year of high school, Sherry was having great difficulty with her studies and had to face other obstacles associated with young parenthood. She enrolled her two children in a CSI supported program that provides child care and supportive services for young mothers. At the time, she was living in the Arlington Heights public housing community and had to take two buses daily to get to and from the center. Not only did the agency staff provide free child care, they arranged for a tutor to work with her, and they encouraged her to participate in the life skills/group support activities for the young mothers. She graduated from high school and enrolled in Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC). At first, her grades were poor, but with encouragement, determination and lots of tutoring, Sherry made the Dean's List. This past December, Sherry graduated from CCAC with an Associate Degree and is employed as a legal secretary. She is no longer on welfare, has moved out of public housing and plans to go on for her BA degree at the University of Pittsburgh.

Unfortunately, stories like Sherry, Genna, Melvin and Melissa are far too few. However, they represent the kinds of successes to which we are committed. We will continue building bridges and throwing out lifelines to help the persons we serve pull themselves out of poverty and move closer and closer to self-sufficiency.

History of the Agency



Pittsburgh Community Services, Inc. (CSI) was formed by The Hill House Association in 1983 for the purpose of administering Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) monies allocated to the City of Pittsburgh. These monies are used to fund vital programs and services which address the needs of our city's low-income population.

In those early days, we were Hill House Community Services and had much to accomplish in order to meet federal Community Action guidelines and to meet Community Services Block Grant funding requirements as established by the PA Department of Community Affairs.

1985 was a benchmark year in CSI's growth and development. We were designated the City of Pittsburgh's Community Action Agency thus mandated by federal, state and local government to serve the poor. Our name was changed from Hill House Community Services, Inc. to Pittsburgh Community Services, Inc. to underline our city-wide scope of activity and to reaffirm our responsibility to help people when they need it, right where they live.

That same year, we expanded our funding base by entering into two Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) contracts with the City of Pittsburgh, Department of City Planning. We began to administer the

Neighborhood Safety Program — our first provision of direct services — which was established to help city residents take a more active role in making their homes and neighborhoods safer.

Shortly thereafter, the Public Services component became operational. This enabled CSI to expand its service delivery system and to serve individuals and families with incomes above the poverty level but within HUD's Section 8 low/moderate income guidelines.

CSI's growth, development and reputation for effectively managing contracts continued to flourish. In 1988, the blueprints for two special projects became realities — the Next Step Program, which targets services to homeless individuals and families, and the Family Enhancement Project, a demonstration project for residents of St. Clair Village. The goal of both programs is to provide opportunities to develop life management skills and to improve the chance for economic self-sufficiency.

In that same year, we were asked to administer the Hunger Trust Fund which was established by the Mayor and City Council as a means to address and alleviate the problem of hunger throughout the city. Funded with CDBG monies, the Hunger Trust Fund provides emergency food/pantry assistance, congregate feeding, home-delivered meals and a city-wide food referral hotline service. During 1991, we began implementing our Long Range Strategic Plan. This meant instituting a set of service priorities: employment and training, health, education, housing, nutrition and public safety; and, targeting services to two at-risk populations — youth and residents of public housing. We also began to test the waters for a corporate fund raising campaign and formed a development committee who laid the groundwork for our annual "Gift of Pittsburgh Jazz" benefit concert.

We celebrated our first ten years of operations in 1993 by strongly reaffirming our commitment to serve the poor. During this second decade, we will stress even more than we have to date those service provision efforts that empower individuals and families to become more self-sufficient and self-fulfilled.

**Pittsburgh Community
Services, Inc. receives
funding from the
following sources:**

Pennsylvania Department of
Community Affairs —
Community Services Block Grant
Program, Emergency Community
Services Homeless Grant Program,
Employment and Community
Conservation Program

City of Pittsburgh, Department of
City Planning and City Council —
Community Development Block
Grant Program

The Pittsburgh Foundation -
Howard Heinz Endowment
Multicultural Arts Initiative

Pittsburgh Mercy Foundation

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