



# I. GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

Date 1/?/2026

**Contact Information**

Organization Name: Compass Mark  
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**Organization Information:**

**Field/s of Interest:**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Arts, Culture, Heritage	<input type="checkbox"/>	Education, Library	<input type="checkbox"/>	Environment, Animals
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Human Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social Justice, Civic Engagement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion	<input type="checkbox"/>	If other, please describe:		

**Mission:**

Compass Mark’s mission is to prevent addiction through education, skill-building, and community mobilization.

**Geographic Area Served** (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served):

All of Chester County

**Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served.** (Include Chester County # &/or % served.)

<b>Annual Budget</b> \$ <u>2,561,986</u>	<u>22</u>	# of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>87</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>16</u>	# of Board Volunteers
<u>10</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>0</u>	# of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>3</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>0</u>	# of Volunteer Hours

*100% = total*

**Top 3-5 funding sources:** Chester County Department of Drug & Alcohol; Ametek Foundation

**This grant proposal is for:** X Direct Service Programs & General Operating &/or      Capacity Building

**Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation:**     \$ 5,000

**Proposal Summary:** (a few sentences, please): This proposal is to request funding to expand our school-based addiction prevention programs in Chester County Schools. We currently serve 2,740 students in the county, but there are more requests every year than our funding can provide.

## II. GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

### 1. Nonprofit's overall aims, key initiatives, key achievements & distinctiveness

Compass Mark is a nonprofit dedicated to guiding and empowering children, youth, and families to lead healthy, fulfilling lives free from addiction. Since 1966, we've evolved from treatment-focused education to a prevention-centered, public health approach.

Using evidence-based programs based on science, Compass Mark reduces risk factors and strengthens protective factors by teaching skills, building resiliency, and promoting healthy decision-making in schools and communities. Our work changes knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors, supporting long-term wellbeing and stronger families, schools, and communities. Prevention is a cost-effective investment, reducing future substance use and its social and economic costs.

Last year, Compass Mark reached more than 12,000 students across Lancaster, Lebanon, and Chester Counties. Our distinctive approach emphasizes skill-building, positive social development, and life-long resiliency.

In recognition of this impact, Compass Mark was one of only two recipients of the 2024 Prevention Impact in Action Award from the Pennsylvania Department of Drug & Alcohol Programs.

### 2. Funding request

- **What specific needs & issues are being addressed, via what programs and services?**

The Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS) is a comprehensive, anonymous, biennial survey for 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th-grade students in PA.

Risk factors for addiction are characteristics or conditions that increase a person's likelihood of using drugs or developing a substance use disorder. The more risk factors a person has, the greater their overall risk.

The top three risk factors for Chester Count shown in the most recent 2023 PAYS were:

- Low commitment toward school – 52% of students
- Parental attitudes favorable toward antisocial behavior – 50% of students
- Student attitudes favorable toward antisocial behavior – 42% of students

By investing in prevention programs, we address these risk factors and help strengthen youth commitment to school, improve parental engagement, and increase the perceived risk of using harmful substances. The result is that we can effectively reduce the likelihood of youth experiencing a future substance use disorder or other mental health conditions.

To address this data and strengthen Compass Mark's capacity, we propose using a grant from the Chester County Community Foundation to expand the following programs:

### **Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)**

PATHS is an evidence-based program that builds social and emotional skills while reducing behavior problems in elementary-aged children. Compass Mark delivers PATHS to students in Grades K–2 through 10–20 sessions in small group or full classroom settings. The program strengthens problem-solving, communication, coping skills, and positive relationship-building, supporting both student wellbeing and classroom learning.

In evaluations of the program, PATHS has been shown to:

- Reduce teachers' reports of students exhibiting aggressive behavior by 32%
- Increase teachers' reports of students exhibiting self-control by 36%
- Increase students' vocabulary for emotions by 68%
- Significantly improve students' ability to tolerate frustration and use effective conflict resolution strategies
- Reduce depression and sadness among special-needs students

Last year, Compass Mark provided the PATHS program to 2,741 students in Chester County.

### **Positive Action**

Positive Action is an evidence-based prevention program that promotes social-emotional learning and character development, supporting healthy childhood and adolescent development. Grounded in the philosophy that positive actions lead to positive self-concept, the program helps students build skills that reduce risk behaviors and improve overall well-being.

Compass Mark delivers Positive Action to students in Grades 3–12 through 10–20 lessons, each approximately 40 minutes. The program addresses critical issues such as school engagement, bullying, substance use and peer pressure, and physical, mental, and family health.

Research shows Positive Action leads to improved academic achievement and significant reductions in problem behaviors. Students develop core skills including:

- Positive self-concept
  - Responsible self-management
  - Healthy decision-making
  - Respectful treatment of others
  - Honesty with themselves and peers.
- **Why is it important to fund this now?**

Evidence-based prevention programs demonstrate strong, measurable impact and cost-effectiveness. These programs typically generate a return on investment of \$11–\$23/student for every dollar spent. A 2024 University of Washington study found that Positive Action significantly exceeds this benchmark, producing an estimated \$182/student in community savings for every dollar invested.

Documented outcomes include reductions in disciplinary incidents, grade repetition, and early substance use, as well as increases in test scores, attendance, and social-emotional skills.

By implementing Compass Mark’s program today, we equip students with the skills to make healthy choices, strengthen relationships, and stay engaged in school. This reduces future costs to the community in healthcare, criminal justice, and social services. Immediate support ensures that more students benefit from our work, maximizing both short-term and long-term impact.

- **How will results & impact be demonstrated?**

Compass Mark measures the success of its school prevention programs by asking students to complete surveys before and after the program. These surveys look at things like how well students manage their emotions, make decisions, communicate with others, and more. By comparing the results from before and after, we can see how much students have learned and grown. The surveys provide clear evidence of the programs’ effectiveness in promoting healthy behaviors and reducing risk factors for substance use. This data-driven approach helps us show the real difference the programs make in students’ lives.

For example, the following graph shows the increased positive change in behaviors and attitudes by students after the Positive Action program:

