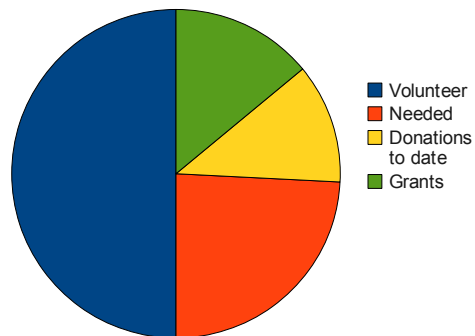


This volunteer investment ensures that donors' dollars are being maximized. In fact, our current fundraising efforts are inspired by the desire to **honor our volunteers** by making sure that our

Circles of Hope Resources



monetary donations come close to approximating their labors of love. This is a challenging goal when you consider the hours spent by our volunteers are valued at over \$100,000 this year.

So where do the monetary contributions go?

The annual budget for Circles is about \$150,000.

Those monies sustain a

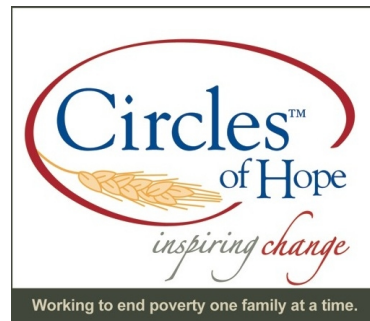
year-round program of Tuesday evening gatherings each week that include: Getting Ahead classes, matches that connect Circle Leaders with Allies (about three allies per circle leader), meetings for the community at large, volunteer training, and expanding outreach in our community and beyond.

Circles invests about \$7,000 per participant. Those who graduate from their Getting Ahead class and continue on to become a Circle Leader are usually involved for at least two years, for a total of about \$7,000. **More than twice this amount is saved each year** for every adult empowered to end dependency on public assistance programs like Medicaid and food stamps; for those with children, the impact increases.

Bottom line. Every dollar donated is **doubled in value by our volunteers** and the **return on investment doubles** when Circle Leaders get out of poverty, a benefit to the whole community.

Ensuring people move out of poverty is no longer just a humanitarian effort; it is an economic survival strategy.

Gifts for Circles of Hope should be made out to Peace Connections, a 501(c)(3) at 612 N. Main, Newton, KS 67114. Please note Circles as the recipient.



COMMUNITY BASED

RELATIONSHIP FOCUSED

VOLUNTEER DRIVEN

Making an impact

For the last three years, Circles of Hope has been building local relationships that **inspire and equip people to end poverty**. This visionary initiative empowers individuals and families in Harvey County to take practical steps to move from limited resources to greater stability and vitality in all areas of their lives.

Circles of Hope is part of a Circles® National Campaign and is the **first in Kansas**, joining efforts in 63 communities and 23 states. We are now State Training Center for Kansas, charged with supporting other communities to begin their own Circles initiatives.

***Circles of Hope is not a “handout” but a “hand up.”** The initiative represents the very best of what sustaining communities and advancing a high quality of life is all about. It centers on the intrinsic value of each person, resulting in a healthy sense of pride, conviction and accountability. And Circles provides our community hope that there is a method and a means to change our thinking and our actions regarding poverty.*

Jim Schwarzenberger

Executive Director, Newton Area Chamber of Commerce



Kansas Health Foundation



Circles
NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

Peace Connections, 612 N. Main, Newton, KS 67114, is the home of Circles of Hope. 316-284-0000 info@peaceconnections.org

Maximizing resources & relationships

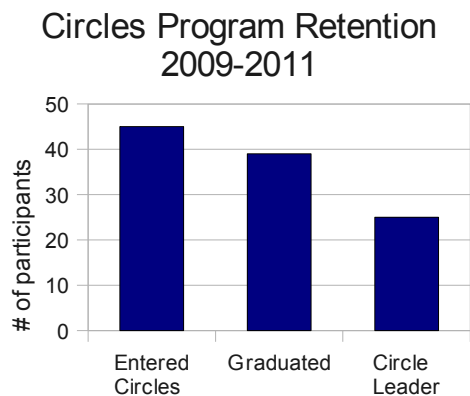
As a first step, Circles sponsors a **Getting Ahead** class in which participants set goals and make changes to build their lives on a stronger foundation. After completion, a graduate (Circle Leader) connects with several community volunteers (Allies) in a Matched Circle that provides ongoing accountability, support, networking and friendship. Everyone in the group is challenged and inspired to change.

This resource-based approach focuses on capitalizing on the gifts and strengths the person has to offer as they actively participate in their own transformation, rather than focusing on their disadvantages or deficiencies. Each meeting starts with sharing something **new and good** and ends with **appreciations** for one another.

Circles also works to **raise awareness and remove barriers** by building relationships across class lines. This happens in weekly Circles gatherings, monthly community meetings and ongoing collaboration with city and county government, area Chamber of Commercences and many non-profit groups and churches.

Measuring the impact

Circle Leaders & their families: Out of the 45 participants who have signed up for the Getting Ahead class since the program started in 2009, 84% have graduated and 66% have become Circle Leaders.



One of our earliest Circle Leaders, Jerica Hinshaw, has transitioned from minimum wage jobs to working as a paraprofessional in a Newton school and pursuing her bachelor's degree in education at Bethel College.

Another, Elmo Newman, is reinvesting in the program following his successful completion: he is now serving as an Ally to a new Circle Leader.

Circles has not only helped me to get out of poverty, it is also helping me to break the cycle of poverty for my children and grandchildren.

Sharon Freeby
Circle Leader

Volunteers: “Not only do I help Sharon with her goals, but she also helps me with mine,” said Gordon Houser, one of Sharon’s four Allies. “I am not here to fix Sharon. We have become friends.”

Within the Harvey County Community:

- *Circles has connected with the City of Newton* to solidify its comprehensive plan, Re-Newton, to build a better future for everyone.
- *Circles has helped to launch a round-table discussion* for landlords, tenants, community service professionals, builders, developers and City and Chamber representatives to tackle the issues that impede better housing for all citizens.
- *Circles has laid the groundwork for a CASH or Individual Development Account (IDA) program* that makes savings accounts available to low- to moderate-income families who put money aside to acquire a high-return asset. Participants saving \$1 in an IDA receive a \$2 match.

Leveraging community investment

The Circles of Hope initiative is particularly remarkable for its **high level of community investment**, especially from volunteers who can be found in the basement of First United Methodist Church every Tuesday evening throughout the year. These caring citizens participate in a variety of activities that make Circles both possible and meaningful.