OUR PROMISE TO THE COMMUNITY

ICAN's mission is to provide free, comprehensive programs that empower youth to be productive, self-confident, and responsible members of the community.

ICAN was founded in 1991 by a concerned citizen in Chandler, AZ. Henry Salinas was a humble man who saw gang violence taking over his Chandler neighborhood and decided to do something about it. Henry's initial investment of time and compassion to area teens has blossomed into a full-service youth center whose programs are still free to the Chandler community whom Henry held so dear, and now impacts youth, teens and their families.

ICAN serves 2,500 youth and 1,665 parents and families annually.

ICAN PROGRAMS

- School-based Life Skills Training
- Afterschool Program
- School-based Substance Abuse Education
- Family Events
- Parenting Classes
- Chandler Coalition on Youth Substance Abuse
A COMMUNITY IN NEED

Over 80% of youth who attend ICAN live below the poverty level

ICAN serves an area of downtown Chandler that is shadowed by the growth & vitality along Arizona Ave.

The area that ICAN serves is home to more than 10,000 youth who could qualify for the program.

The poverty rate in the service area is nearly twice that of the rest of the City of Chandler.

70% of youth in the area of focus will be using alcohol or drugs by age 12.

The primary population that ICAN serves are at-risk minorities (90%).

100,000 Meals were served to youth last year.
ICAN's goal is to break the cycle of poverty, paving a new pathway for success

ICAN stands apart from other afterschool programs, which are mostly recreational in nature, by taking a holistic approach that changes youth behavior. Prevention techniques that are taught to youth include social and emotional skill building that focuses on the 5 C's of Positive Youth Development:

- Connection
- Confidence
- Character
- Competence
- Contribution

Academic support, recreation, parenting classes and community education on substance abuse complete ICAN's commitment to the community. Program effectiveness is measured by a structured evaluation system. The 2017-18 evaluations reported the following positive responses from ICAN youth as a result of their participation in ICAN's program:

- 81% improved their grades
- 87% feel better about themselves
- 82% are better at making friends
- 82% are better at making friends

ICAN is one of only 21 nonprofits in AZ to be accredited, meeting over 400 standards of excellence.

ICAN was named “Outstanding Afterschool Program” for AZ in 2009 and 2013.

ICAN is recognized nationally as an Exemplary Substance Abuse Prevention Program.
ICAN has been blessed with a group of amazing volunteers who run the library program. They are lovingly referred to as the “library ladies.” They are retired school teachers with over 30 years of combined teaching experience.

They recently shared an incredible success story. They had started an incentive program to encourage youth to read by offering prizes. They had a fourth grade boy come by the library because he heard about the prizes. He was a below-grade-level reader, which is common for youth at ICAN. The Library Ladies challenged him to read 200 pages from books that were at his level. He started slow, reading aloud at a second grade level, and came to library every day it was open. It took him a month to read the 200 pages and win his first prize, and in that time he moved up to third grade level books. Twice a week, month after month, he came and read aloud and logged his pages and collected more prizes. By the end of the year, his reading had greatly improved.

That summer he went to Mexico with his family and he was worried about keeping up with his reading. The Library Ladies sent him off with a stack of books that he could work on alone. Once summer was over and school started back, he came back to ICAN and proudly told the ladies that he had tested into a higher reading level. He is still a frequent visitor to the library and an avid reader!