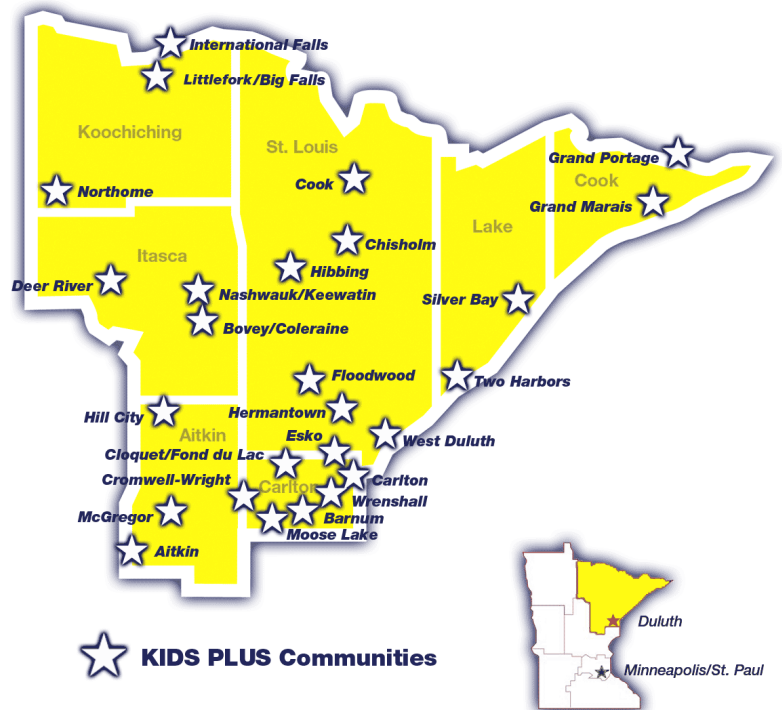


## The first KIDS PLUS Initiative

Beginning in 1992, 26 sites in northeastern Minnesota were established as KIDS PLUS Communities with the goal of helping rural communities create better, more nurturing environments for their children and young people.

Through a community planning process developed and honed over time by the Northland Foundation, participating sites have received technical assistance and support to help them identify the needs of young people and find creative ways to meet them. This guided process joins all ages and sectors of the community together to identify the resources that are already available locally to support children

and youth, gather input about unmet needs and ideas for making improvements, and galvanize the community into action. In addition, a regional learning community was created, meeting twice a year for 20 years, enabling community coordinators to share ideas and support one another's work.



## Kids + Caring Adults + Resources = Results

The results have been incredible. KIDS PLUS Communities maintain a strong focus on serving the needs of their young people, establishing creative ways for children to have positive out-of-school time experiences and connect with caring adults. Communities have leveraged their KIDS PLUS status and Northland Foundation grant support to raise millions of additional, outside dollars to support their work.

Countless projects and programs have been carried out in the 26 KIDS PLUS Communities through the years, touching the lives of thousands of young people. They include:



- Volunteer service projects,
- Homework help and tutoring,
- Health and wellness opportunities,
- School and community beautification,
- Peer-to-peer and adult mentoring,
- Youth-run business ventures,
- Reading programs, and many others.