

May 7, 2007

DIRECTIVE:	JOB CORPS INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 06-31
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TO: ALL JOB CORPS NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF
ALL JOB CORPS REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER OPERATORS
ALL NATIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT CONTRACTORS
ALL OUTREACH, ADMISSIONS, AND CTS CONTRACTORS

FROM: ESTHER R. JOHNSON, Ed.D.
National Director
Office of Job Corps

SUBJECT: Talking to Students About the Tragedy at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech)

1. Purpose. To provide Job Corps center staff with tools to assist them in talking with students about the recent Virginia Tech shootings.
2. Background. On Monday, April 16, 2007, a Virginia Tech student shot and killed 32 students and staff and injured 29 others. This has been called the deadliest mass shooting in modern United States history. Job Corps students may be directly or indirectly affected by this tragedy.
3. Action. Center staff should proactively address this issue with students. Staff should take the following steps to help students through this tragedy:
 - a. Job Corps staff should talk honestly with students about the Virginia Tech shootings. Staff should listen carefully to what students have to say. Students should be directed to appropriate staff persons on center to talk about the feelings they may have regarding the Virginia Tech shootings. When staff talk to students about this tragedy, the following points should be considered:
 - (1) Find out if any of our students have family or friends affected by the shootings and develop a support plan for those students.

- (2) Discuss how difficult this event may be for students and how it is often hard to cope with painful feelings. Give students permission to talk freely about how they feel.
 - (3) Express compassion for the Virginia Tech students and their families.
 - (4) Ask the students if they feel safe while on center. Reassure them that Job Corps is a safe environment.
 - (5) Remind students that they can help keep centers safe by letting staff know if a student talks or writes excessively about violence, or threatens violence to themselves or others.
 - (6) Ask students to notify staff if a student is bullied or picked on.
 - (7) Talk about the social forces that cause violence such as gun policy, violence in media, and music lyrics. Ask students' opinions about what may have caused the shootings.
 - (8) Encourage students to respond actively to this tragedy and be receptive to activities that will help students cope (e.g., moments of silence, signing posters).
- b. Review the following Program Instruction and Information Notices for more information on gun violence, student safety, suicidal behavior, and managing traumatic stress:
- (1) Program Instruction No. 06-16, Suggestions for Increasing Student Safety and Suicide Prevention (released 12/1/06)
 - (2) Information Notice No. 05-09, Managing Traumatic Stress in the Wake of Hurricane Katrina (released 9/9/05)
 - (3) Information Notice No. 02-22, Gun Violence Awareness and Prevention (released 4/21/03)
 - (4) Information Notice No. 02-21, Job Corps Emergency Management Plans (released 4/16/03), update forthcoming
 - (5) Information Notice No. 02-13, Reducing the Risk of Suicidal Behavior in Job Corps (released 11/13/02)

4 Expiration Date. Until superseded.

5. Inquiries. Inquiries should be directed to Carol Abnathy at (202) 693-3283 or abnathy.carol@dol.gov.

Attachment

School Violence Resources