



April 28, 2023

DIRECTIVE:	JOB CORPS INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 22-09
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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
ALL CENTER USERS

FROM: RACHEL TORRES
National Director
Office of Job Corps

SUBJECT: Enhancing Students' Mental Health through Mental Health First Aid
Training and Celebrating Mental Health Awareness Month

1. Purpose. To provide Job Corps centers with tools to enhance students' mental health, including ideas for mental health awareness activities in honor of Mental Health Awareness Month and information on Mental Health First Aid training.
2. Background. Each May, Job Corps honors Mental Health Awareness Month. [Mental Health America](#) (MHA) began Mental Health Awareness Month in 1949 to raise awareness and educate the public about mental illness, reduce the stigma associated with mental illness, and raise awareness about treatment and recovery.

Each year, MHA releases a *toolkit of materials* for Mental Health Awareness Month to guide outreach activities based on a different theme. MHA's 2023 Mental Health Month theme focuses on how the surroundings impact mental health and calls for individuals to ***look around, look within.*** Topics specifically addressed include:

- Safe and Stable Housing
- Healthy Home Environments
- Neighborhoods and Towns
- The Outdoors and Nature

The *toolkit* will help individuals understand how these factors impact mental health and will provide actions that can be taken to change their surroundings in favor of their well-being and suggestions for coping if the change is not realistic.¹

In sync with MHA's 2023 theme of *look around, look within*, [Mental Health First Aid](https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/) (MHFA) is an evidence-based training program administered by the National Council for Mental Wellbeing that teaches youth and adults how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges. The training imparts the skills to reach out and provide initial support to someone experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge or crisis. There are sessions for youth and adults that cover the following:

- Common signs and symptoms of mental health challenges
- Common signs and symptoms of substance use challenges
- How to interact with a person in crisis
- How to connect a person with help
- Expanded content on trauma, substance use and self-care²

3. Action. Job Corps centers are encouraged to:

- Join in promoting positive mental health and well-being by downloading the MHA Toolkit at <https://mhanational.org/mental-health-month>. Centers should share newsletter articles, social media images, fact sheets, worksheets, posters, tip calendar, and more with students and staff.
- Find resources in their communities that provide MHFA training and arrange training for all staff and students. Attachment A - *Mental Health First Aid Training Resources* provides a listing of potential resources for each state and Puerto Rico.
- Host center-wide mental health awareness activities in May for Mental Health Awareness Month.
- Distribute this Information Notice to all appropriate center staff, particularly Center Mental Health Consultants, Trainee Employment Assistance Specialists, Disability Coordinators, Safety Personnel, Career Counselors, Residential Living Staff, Health and Wellness Directors, and Admissions Services staff.

4. Effective Date. Effective immediately until rescinded or superseded.

5. Inquiries. Inquiries about this Information Notice should be directed to Lesley Nesmith at Nesmith.Lesley@dol.gov.

Attachment A - *Mental Health First Aid Training Resources*

¹ <https://www.mhanational.org/mental-health-month>

² <https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org>