

▶ SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL DISABILITIES ...1
▶ SUBMITTING RECOMMENDATIONS OF DENIAL.....4
▶ SPOTLIGHT ON ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY.....5
▶ CENTER HIGHLIGHTS.....6



Supporting Students with Emotional Disabilities

What is an Emotional Disability?

When we talk about “Emotional Disabilities,” what do we mean? Although Job Corps does not generally fall under the regulations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the program does receive many Individualized Education Plan (IEP) documents as documentation of an individual’s disability. Job Corps is using IDEA’s definition for emotional disabilities. Generally, IDEA states that the individual has characteristics that are exhibited or occur over a long period of time to a marked degree and those characteristics adversely impact/affect the individual’s educational performance. An IEP may show a classification of Emotional Disorder (ED) or an Emotional Behavioral Disorder (EBD). Individuals who have an Emotional Disability may exhibit functional limitations because of multiple disorders including (but not limited to) mental health disorders, ADHD, autism spectrum disorder, brain traumas or intellectual disabilities.

Common Functional Limitations for Individuals with an Emotional Disability

Functional limitation manifestations for individuals with Emotional Disabilities may include emotional, behavioral, and learning-related functional limitations as well as physical limitations. Some examples of commonly experienced functional limitations include the following:

- Self-regulation
- Difficulty with change/transitions
- Avoidance
- Difficulty with focus/concentration
- Memory issues
- Difficulty completing tasks, assignments, etc.
- Anxiety/stress tolerance

Remember how a disability manifests (and its resulting functional limitations) may look different for individuals with the same disability diagnosis.

Behavior is Communication!

Behavior serves a purpose for the individual and/or is telling a story of how they are managing. So, our first thought should be what is the function of that behavior? Is it related to:

- Sensory overload - This might include some environmental factors like lighting, smells, noise levels, etc.
- Cognitive overload - Does the individual need a break? Consider presenting the information in a different format and/or try chunking information into smaller components.
- Anxiety or fear - When an environmental situation activates a person’s fight or flight mode, the body is only concerned about protecting itself. Learning really cannot occur when in this mode.

Supporting Students with Disabilities (cont.)

- Insecurity or lack of confidence or self-esteem - The student may demonstrate behaviors to avoid tasks that are difficult for them or because there are social demands beyond their comfort levels.
- Attention seeking - Sometimes a student displays attention seeking behaviors (e.g., telling jokes, being playful, etc.) because they do not know how to successfully engage in class or with their peers.
- Trauma or stress triggers - Sometimes proximity to others, certain sounds, smells, etc. may trigger a student's anxiety or increase their stress levels if it is related to a previous trauma or they lack confidence in how to engage or proceed.

Strategic Foundations – Building Relationships

Building positive relationships with students, especially those who have emotional disabilities, is essential. When there are challenging moments, especially related to behavior management, those relationships will matter more than ever. Staff can build relationships by showing interest in the student and their areas of interest, hobbies, by inquiring about how they are doing or feeling, etc. Showing them that you “see” them and that they matter to you often helps with behavioral management. For example, if there is a student who is demonstrating nonconforming behaviors, behaviorally rigid, etc., quietly slip them a note that says, “I am here to help you.” Sometimes just a simple statement or a calmly and softly spoken statement is enough to de-escalate the situation.

What are some of the benefits of building relationships with our students who have emotional disabilities?

- Builds trust and rapport
- Develops mutual respect

For example, a student who is struggling with compliance in the classroom, begins to show disruptive behaviors in the classroom, and the instructor wants them to come outside the classroom to talk. A student in this frame of mind may not be compliant with the instructor's request; however, if the instructor has a strong relationship with them, it is MORE likely that they will comply with the request.

From there we can use those relationships to help build self-confidence, teach persistence, and hopefully facilitate the development of resiliency.

General Behavioral Considerations

- Do not force the student with ED/EBD to look directly at your face when addressing behavioral concerns.
- Ask the student to re-state their own understanding of a behavioral expectation.
- If there are behavioral concerns, speak with student privately (away from peers). In this scenario, building a relationship with your students may be critically important. See *Building Relationships*.
- Give “cool down” time if needed. None of us are productive or think as clearly as we should when we are amid feeling stress, being angry, distraught, or experiencing sensory overload. Give the student some time to self-regulate before engaging.

Use Center Resources/Expertise! Use the available center resources and staff expertise! Perhaps the student would benefit from having a trusted staff mentor, an additional session with the Center Mental Health Consultant (CMHC) to discuss some area of struggle and ideas for managing it, working with the career counselor on organizational and planning skills or social interactions, etc.

Supporting Students with Disabilities (cont.)





Calming and De-Escalation Strategies

If adverse behavioral manifestations become evident or begin to escalate, it is critically important to attempt to take actions to de-escalate and/or calm the individual, if possible. Try the following:

- Keep things LOW and SLOW – Keep your voice low and talk slowly. Walk slowly and keep your hands forward and open. Get on their physical level (if necessary). For example, if a student on the autism spectrum is experiencing sensory overload and having a meltdown, the staff person could be supportive from a physical level that is not towering over the student.
- NAME it to TAME it – Affirm the individual’s feelings (i.e., it is okay to feel angry as long as you stay safe). Ask them to tell you what they are feeling as saying it can take some of the power away from the emotion.
- REGULATE over EDUCATE – Do not attempt to “teach” a lesson on behavior or anything else during difficult behavioral management moments/events. Provide the individual with adequate time for de-escalation (preferably in quiet but monitored space and for 20 to 30 minutes).

Behaviorally Related Disability Accommodations

Remember that student accommodation plans should consider supports for all current functional limitations including behavioral ones. Some behavioral disability accommodations suggestions are provided below.

<p>Disability Accommodation</p> <p>Clearly Defined Routines</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Notify or alert the student when changes to the schedule or routine are pending ➤ Use video modeling to help maintain routines or help with step-by-step routines ➤ Use a timer to indicate a transition ➤ Outline schedules in a written and picture format ➤ Use a calendar or planner to keep track of schedules 	<p>Disability Accommodation</p> <p>Proximity Control</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Maintain a non-threatening posture and stay at least two arm lengths away when student is agitated or anxious ➤ Determine seating location in a classroom - near instructor, away from traffic flow ➤ Allow student to attend large group activities via video, when possible ➤ Allow student to leave class 5 minutes early to avoid crowded hallways
<p>Disability Accommodation</p> <p>Pre-arranged Signals</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Create a pre-arranged gesture, sign, or card that can be used discretely to signal a behavior need ➤ Allow student to sign "time out" for a break ➤ Provide a fidget discretely to a student who is struggling with focus ➤ Present a card to go see staff mentor 	<p>Disability Accommodation</p> <p>Provide Positive Feedback</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide timely positive feedback when student displays a desired behavior ➤ Use positive phrasing such as “Thank you for getting started right away,” “I see how hard you are trying – Good job!”, or I am impressed that you did not quit even when the work was difficult

Submitting Recommendations of Denial to the Regional Office

JCDC Change of Procedure for Submitting Recommendations of Denial

Recently JCDC implemented a change in the process for submitting applicant files as recommendations of denial. Below are the steps to notify the Regional Office that the center has an applicant file to be reviewed as a recommendation of denial along with a graphic representation of the submission process.

Step 1 – The Health and Wellness Director (HWD) selects *Notify Regional Review* within Health E-Folder in CIS and selects a student on the Student Lookup Screen. The *Notify Regional Review* box displays. The HWD selects only one category as the “type” of denial and saves the entry.

Step 2 – The HWD informs Records staff that a file is being submitted for Regional Review. Records staff changes the status to “Regional Review” in OASIS Pending Arrivals.

Applicant File Review

How to Notify the Regional Office of Recommendations of Denial

Notify Regional Review

Regional Review Health E-Folder

Select	Category	Flagged For Review
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health Care Needs (applicant)	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health Care Needs (student)	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health Care Needs (appeal)	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Direct Threat (applicant)	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Direct Threat (student)	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Direct Threat (appeal)	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	Disability Status	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Information	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	HCNA or DTA Updated in Regional Review	No

View 1 - 9 of 9

1 Initiating a Notification

Select "Notify Regional Review" under Health E-Folder.

Select a student on the Student Lookup screen. The **Notify Regional Review** will display.

Select only **ONE** category!

Enrollment Type	Anticipated Arrival	Application Status	Arrival Date
New Student		Pending Center Review	
Re-enrollment		Pending Center Review	
New Student		Pending Center Review	
New Student		Delayed	
New Student		Pending Center Review	
New Student		Regional Review	
New Student		Pending Center Review	
New Student		Pending Center Review	
New Student		Pending Arrival Date Assign	
New Student		Delayed	

2 Changing Status in OASIS

The HWD **MUST** inform Records that a file is being submitted for Regional Review.

Then Records **MUST** change the status to "Regional Review" in OASIS Pending Arrivals.

Both steps **MUST** be completed. If only Step 2 is completed, then the Regional Office will **NOT** be notified via email that an applicant file is ready for review.

April 3, 2023 Contact your Regional Disability Coordinator if you have questions.

If “Notify Regional Review” is not an option under the Health E-Folder sub-menu, contact the center’s IT/POC to determine if individual rights/access needs updating, then contact JCDC if issue persists.

Spotlight on Assistive Technology

Happify

The [Happify](#) app is designed to help people overcome stress and negative thoughts and build resilience. The app helps users to identify patterns, become conscious of their thoughts and feelings, and begins to steer their mind and behaviors towards happiness. The app offers exercises, activities, and games that help train the user's mind to practice patterns that generate positive feelings.



PTSD Coach

The [PTSD Coach](#) app was created by the US Department of Veterans Affairs and is designed for those who have or may have PTSD. The app provides users with education about PTSD and includes tools to help track symptoms, measure distress, levels, create positive imagery, positive self-talk, and help with anger management.



Student Success

The [Student Success](#) app helps measure lifestyle, habits, and attitudes related to academic and exam stress, learning styles, study habits, concentration levels, attitudes, and overall student wellbeing. The app provides a “coach” that recommends daily activities including guided meditations, positive affirmations, gratitude prompts, and over 200 relaxation techniques.



Bookshare

Job Corps has a long-standing relationship with [Bookshare](#), a great FREE resource to help students access reading material in a variety of ways. Once an account is created, it is important to make sure a staff member (typically a Disability Coordinator) keeps an active account, so students maintain access to Bookshare and their books. *If there is a change in the staff member who is on the Bookshare account, please email Lara Rondberg at larar@benetech.org with the updated contact information.*



Move It

[Move It](#) is a Google extension that prompts movement breaks and provides reminders at set intervals.



Regional Disability Coordinators

- Boston: Kristen Philbrook (philbrook.kristen@jobcorps.org)
- Philadelphia: Angela Jenkins (jenkins.angelak@jobcorps.org)
- Atlanta and San Francisco: Stephanie Karras (karras.stephanie@jobcorps.org)
- Dallas: Alyssa Purificacion Olivas (purificacion.alyssa@jobcorps.org)
- Chicago: Sharon Hong (hong.sharon@jobcorps.org)

Center Highlights

Health and Wellness Coping Skills Coloring Corner

To create the center’s *Health and Wellness Coping Skills Coloring Corner*, Collbran’s CMHC purchased a large coloring poster and had the Office Administration trade students make banners to hang. Staff and students color the posters during their breaks or while students wait to be seen by Wellness.



Collbran JCC Health and Wellness Coping Skills Coloring Corner

Disability Awareness Fair

Ottumwa held a two-day Disability Awareness Fair with activities at different stations around the center. Activities simulated experiences of people with various disabilities, including physical/mobility impairments, visual impairments, and learning disabilities. For example, to simulate a person with a vision impairment, students completed tasks wearing glasses with petroleum jelly on the lens or completed a puzzle blindfolded. There were also disability inclusion pictures to color and a pledge for supporting disability inclusion that was sponsored by a partnership with Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

Mental Health Awareness

Students at Sierra Nevada used sidewalk chalk to draw pictures and write positive messages around campus to celebrate Mental Health Awareness Month. Students also participated in gardening, reading, and artwork projects that educated on Mental Health topics. The center also started a “Socks for Smiles” donation program where members of the community donate socks in support of students at the center.



Sierra Nevada JCC Mental Health Awareness Month

Newsletter topic idea or want to highlight a Disability Program-related center activity? Submit content or suggestions to Alyssa Purificacion Olivas (purificacion.alyssa@jobcorps.org)

Upcoming Webinars
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Disability Coordinator Orientation Part 3 (June)➤ Service and Assistance Animals in the Job Corps Program (June)➤ Maintaining and Managing Applicant File Review (AFR) Tracking (July)➤ CIS Data Quality Control Strategies (July)
To register:
➤ Visit WebEx