# Relationship of a Healthy Lifestyle to Successful Job Retention and Consumer Health

## Introduction

The activities will provide students with strategies to remain healthy during the Career Development Period (CDP), Career Transition Period (CTP), and after they leave Job Corps. They contain discussion topics, classroom lessons, and worksheets.

## Activity Order

This curriculum will work best if all activities are implemented; however, not all activities must be implemented. Centers may use activities in any order they feel is appropriate.

## Getting Ready

Before completing these activities:

* Brief the class or group on issues of confidentiality and respect. Ensure that everyone understands that discussions do not leave the room and that this should be a safe place to explore questions and differing views.
* Read through the activities as many of the activities require materials and preparation.

## Outline of this Curriculum

* Module 1: Wellness and Employability
* Module 2: Finishing Strong: CTP as a Recipe for Lifelong Success
* Module 3: Accessing Services After Job Corps

### Module 1: Wellness and Employability

## Instructor Overview

Chronic health conditions are on the rise across all age groups, and these conditions create a significant cost to employers in medical benefits for employees, sick days, and long- and short-term disability. In some cases, more than 80 percent of medical spending goes toward the care of chronic conditions. Employers are the ultimate purchasers of health care for the majority of Americans, spending approximately $13,000 per employee per year on total direct and indirect health-related cost.

A recent study conducted by the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) and the Integrated Benefits Institute (IBI) found that the top ten health conditions driving costs in companies studied were cancer (other than skin cancer), back/neck pain, coronary heart disease, chronic pain, high cholesterol, GERD, diabetes, sleeping problems, hypertension, and arthritis. Many of these are preventable conditions; in fact, it is estimated that 40 percent of cancer, 80 percent of heart disease and 80 percent of type 2 diabetes are preventable.

Work-site health promotion programs have been shown to reduce health risks, improve productivity, and lower total health-related costs. Employees who participate in health promotion programs are often use less sick days and are more productive when on the job.

## Activity: Chronic Illnesses and Work

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| **Overview** | In this activity students will use their own experiences to learn about the connection between health and employment. |
| **Learning Objectives** | Students will be able to:   * List preventable health conditions and strategies to prevent these conditions |
| **Materials** | * Whiteboard/chalkboard * *Goal Setting Worksheet* |
| **Getting Ready** | * Print worksheets |
| **Pre-Activity Discussion** | Share with students: Chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease result in a lot of missed time from work. Workers who are sick often get less done when they are at work.  Ask for comments and feedback. |
| **Activity** | Ask students the following questions and write the answers on a whiteboard/ chalkboard:   * Do you know any friends or family members who have missed a lot of time from work because they were sick? Tell us about it. * What kinds of diseases can you prevent? Which are not preventable?   Possible answers include: Preventable—heart disease, type 2 diabetes, some types of cancers; Not preventable—Many cancers, type 1 diabetes * What are the best ways to avoid common diseases like diabetes, heart disease, and cancer?   Possible answers include: Eating healthy, exercising, getting enough sleep, managing stress, quitting smoking |
| **Post-Activity Discussion** | Discuss the importance of setting goals to make small, gradual changes. Introduce the homework assignment. |
| **Homework**  **and Closing** | Using *Goal Setting Worksheets*, have students create a plan to change one behavior that can lead to disease. |

## Activity: Physical Activity in the Workplace

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| **Overview** | Many students’ future occupations will be physically demanding. It is important that part of the Job Corps program focuses on physically preparing students for challenging careers. |
| **Learning Objectives** | Students will be able to:   * Discuss how positive health behaviors will help them excel in their trades |
| **Materials** | * *Physical Activity in the Workplace Worksheet* |
| **Getting Ready** | * Print worksheet |
| **Pre-Activity Discussion** | Emphasize the importance of physical fitness in the workplace. Lead a discussion on activities that will help students meet the physical demands of their careers. Consider asking:   * What is your trade? * What types of physical activities does your trade require? * What exercises might prepare you for your trade? * Resources can be found on the HEALs webpage. |
| **Activity** | Have students complete the *Physical Activity in the Workplace Worksheet*. |
| **Post-Activity Discussion** | Review answers to the worksheet. |
| **Homework**  **and Closing** | Encourage students to visit recreation to discuss trade-specific exercises. |

## Activity: What Might Hold You Back?

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| **Overview** | Positive health habits play a large role in employability. In this activity, students will learn general suggestions for health. |
| **Learning Objectives** | Students will be able to:   * Articulate strategies to stay healthy. * Discuss the connection between wellness and employability. |
| **Materials** | * *Employability Plan Worksheet* |
| **Getting Ready** | * Print worksheet |
| **Pre-Activity Discussion** | Share the following with students:   * Most people need 6-8 hours of sleep a night to be productive on the job. Many people do not get enough sleep for a lot of different reasons. Workers who do not get enough sleep are also more likely to get injured. * More and more companies are no longer hiring smokers. Some companies have even started testing employees’ saliva for nicotine. * Most companies drug test. Most often, if someone tests positive for drugs, a company either will not hire that person or will fire them. * Since Americans are increasingly overweight and out of shape, many young people who want to join the military are found to be not fit for service. * Mental health issues, like anxiety and depression, often affect whether an employee can show up for work and how much they get done are when they get there. |
| **Activity** | Ask students the following:   * If you owned a business, what kind of business would it be? * Would you care if your employees were healthy? What health issues would be most important for you? * What do you think an employee should do to keep him or herself healthy? * What type of work ethic would they want their employees to have? * What health behaviors would make you more employable? |
| **Homework**  **and Closing** | Have students complete the *Employability Plan Worksheet* to help them start thinking about healthy behaviors. |

## Activity: Drug Testing in the Workplace

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| **Overview** | Drug testing laws vary from state to state and policies vary between companies. After Job Corps, some students will be tested for drugs as a condition of employment and some will be subject to random testing or testing after an accident.  This activity is designed to help students think about the ramifications of drug use and the potential effects drug use may have on their lives. |
| **Learning Objectives** | Students will be able to:   * Describe the need to abstain from drugs to remain employable |
| **Materials** | * None |
| **Getting Ready** | * Review state laws regarding drug testing in the workplace. The American Civil Liberties Union provides a downloadable PDF at <http://www.aclu.org/drug-law-reform/state-state-workplace-drug-testing-laws>. |
| **Pre-Activity Discussion** | * Introduce state laws surrounding workplace drug testing. |
| **Activity** | * Have students break into small groups of two or three. * Have students discuss the following questions:   + What might happen if you tested positive for drugs on a job interview?   + How might this affect your future? |
| **Post-Activity Discussion** | * Bring students back and ask them to share their answers. * Offer encouragement. They have come this far! |
| **Homework**  **and Closing** | None |

**Worksheet: Physical Activity in the Workplace**

Many careers are physically demanding. Some jobs, like construction, require a very high level of fitness. You might not think that some trades, like office support, are very physically demanding, but being in good shape is helpful in all work situations. In this activity, you will think about how you can get ready for the physical demands of your trade.

1. What is your trade?
2. Complete the following chart.

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| **Physical demand of your trade** | **How can you prepare for this demand?** |
| Example: Carrying equipment | Example: Walking up stairs carrying dumbbells |
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1. If someone is not fit enough to meet the physical demands of their career, what might happen to them?
2. What is the most important thing you can do to get ready for the physical demands of your trade?

**Worksheet: Employability Plan**

As you prepare to leave Job Corps, it becomes very important to identify those behaviors that you will need to continue practicing to be successful. It may also be necessary to identify those areas of your life where you still have to change certain behaviors. Your family may also need to be involved in these decisions if you plan to share a home with them.

The following exercise asks you to outline important behaviors you will need to continue working on and to identify a plan for making these changes.

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| **Behavior I Will Work On** | **How I Will Make These Changes** |
| **Example:** Not using drugs | 1. Attend a 12-step group twice a week. 2. Continue to develop friendships with other non-using peers I have met. 3. Avoid situations where drugs and alcohol may look attractive to me. |

1)

2)

3)

### Module 2: Finishing Strong: CTP as a Recipe for Lifelong Success

## Instructor Overview

This section is designed to create a feeling of competence and success in students by reminding them that they have successfully completed the first three phases of Job Corps.

These activities are meant to be delivered near the end of a student’s time in Job Corps.

## Activity: Recap of Time at Job Corps

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| **Overview** | Students in CTP have made tremendous strides so far. This activity is designed to help students reflect on what has made them successful so far. |
| **Learning Objectives** | Students will be able to:   * Identify three common challenges experienced during CTP * Identify ways to cope with common challenges * Develop a plan for how to overcome these challenges * Identify one or two specific concerns and related goals they have during CTP |
| **Materials** | * Chalkboard or whiteboard * Worksheet |
| **Getting Ready** | * Review all portions of activity * Print worksheets |
| **Pre-Activity Discussion** | Congratulate students for making it this far in the program. |
| **Activity** | ***Part I***  Have students brainstorm the factors that have helped them to be successful during the first two phases of Job Corps and write these on the whiteboard or chalkboard. If students have difficulty with this, it might help to discuss general groupings of factors as listed below.   * Personal/individual strengths: high motivation, focus on goals and better future, love of trade * External structure and routine: waking up at set time, set daily schedule and expectations * Support/mentoring: helpful and supportive instructors, independent living advisors, counselors, health and wellness staff * Access to healthcare services: support with not using drugs/alcohol, medication for mental health and/or health problems, etc.   ***Part II***  As a group, have students identify common challenges and worries they have during the CTP phase. What are the potential challenges they may have transitioning to work and leaving Job Corps? (List these on the whiteboard.) If students have difficulty with this, it might be helpful to raise some of the following issues:   * Access to healthcare (e.g., access to medication and medications) * Conflict with family members/challenges of moving back home (e.g., how to have adult relationships with parents) * Sleeping (e.g., problems getting to sleep, staying asleep, or getting up in morning) * Healthy living (e.g., eating well/regularly, access to gym/recreation/exercise, avoiding drugs/alcohol) * Developing healthy relationships, setting boundaries * Conflict with supervisors * Conflict with coworkers * Parenting challenges (e.g., kids sick, feeling isolated as parent, not knowing how to parent)   ***Optional additional activity:***  You may provide students with specific information on how to cope with several areas that are frequently challenging during this period on your center. You may decide to brainstorm and problem solve around this collaboratively as a group, or provide students with written information with ideas on how to cope with particular challenges, or you may provide an additional brief presentation on several areas, as time allows.  ***Part III***  Provide each student with a pen and one or two *Overcoming Barriers* worksheets.   1. Ask students to take a few minutes to identify one or two challenges they feel they may have during CTP. Write each area on top of the *Overcoming Barriers Worksheet*. 2. Provide an example of how to complete the *Overcoming Barriers Worksheet*. Ideally, elicit challenge from a group member or use one raised during general discussion. 3. Allow ten minutes for students to complete their own *Overcoming Barriers Worksheet*. Walk around and assist students as needed. If the group is cohesive and open with each other, students could complete this activity in pairs to assist each other. |
| **Post-Activity Discussion** | Discuss that transitioning to work and life after Job Corps is a process. Encourage students to keep a copy of the *Overcoming Barriers* worksheet to use later. Discuss your availability to assist students with any particular challenges they might want to explore further (this could be done individually or in a group). |
| **Homework**  **and Closing** | None |

**Worksheet: Overcoming Barriers**

1. What are you worried might hold you back during CTP? That is, what stresses you out about completing Job Corps?
2. What is your goal for CTP?
3. List at least three reasons why meeting this goal is important to you.
4. List three things you can do to meet your goal:
5. What is the first step you will take in meeting your goal?
6. Some things that could get in the way of meeting your goal. Give two possible obstacles to meeting your goal and ways to handle the obstacles.

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| **Possible Obstacles** | **How will you handle the obstacles?** |
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1. Support from others is very important. How can others help you meet your goal?

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| **Who will help you meet**  **your goal?** | **How will they help you?** |
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1. How will you know if your plan to meet your goal is working?
2. What will you do if your plan is not working?
3. If you are struggling during CTP, who will you contact for help (e.g., Job Corps staff member you trust, family member, friend, crisis support phone line)?

## Activity: Discussion Topics for CTP

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| **Overview** | As students prepare to leave Job Corps, they may be apprehensive about the impending changes in their lives. Below is a partial listing of discussion topics. You may choose to focus on a few or touch on most or all of all. |
| **Learning Objectives** | Students will be able to:   * List strategies to deal with common issues |
| **Materials** | * None |
| **Getting Ready** | * Review topics and solutions * Add any additional topics |
| **Pre-Activity Discussion** | * None |
| **Activity** | Discuss the following topics with students:   * Conflict with parents, supervisors, peers   + Assertive communication skills   + Distress reduction strategies   + Coping with different communication styles   + Anger management * Sleep problems   + Sleep hygiene/strategies to get to sleep and stay asleep   + Issues with sleeping medication * Stress   + Stress reduction strategies   + Controlling responses to stress * Developing healthy relationships   + Boundaries, relationship building skills   + Education regarding dating violence/healthy romantic relationships * Parenting Challenges   + Parenting styles, behavior management * Access to healthcare   + How to find/access health resources * Relapsing on drugs/alcohol   + Access to resources, developing relapse prevention plan prior to leaving Job Corps * Housing/living resources   + How to access resources in area * Returning to violent community   + Realistic safety planning * Increasing mental health symptoms   + Recognizing mental health problems * Continuing healthy behaviors initiated in Job Corps |
| **Post-Activity Discussion** | Ask students if they have any other topics they would like to discuss. |
| **Homework**  **and Closing** | None |

### Module 3: Accessing Services After Job Corps

## Instructor Overview

Students receive a lot of services, including medical, mental health, oral health, and substance-abuse related services while in Job Corps. These services can be tricky to navigate in the real world.

Many Job Corps students have relied on emergency services for access to care. Ideally, after Job Corps, more students will be able to secure employment that offers medical and dental benefits. For many students, this will be the first time they will navigate insurance. Many of them are unsure of various plans, copayments, how to make an appointment, etc.

Many workplaces offer mental health and substance abuse services in the form of an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) program. There are also services available in the community to help people cope with mental health and substance-abuse issues.

## Activity: Wading Through the Health Insurance Lingo

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| **Overview** | It is important for students to understand how health care is delivered and how to pay for health insurance. |
| **Learning Objectives** | Students will be able to:   * Identify various types of health benefits offered commonly by employers |
| **Materials** | * *Decisions About Health Insurance* handout |
| **Getting Ready** | * Print handouts |
| **Pre-Activity Discussion** | Share with students:  Buying or choosing health insurance can be scary and health insurance can be expensive, especially if your employer does not offer health insurance. There is a range of types of health insurance available and every plan is different. No single plan will cover all costs associated with medical care, but some cover more than others. |
| **Activity** | Share and discuss the handout: *Decisions About Health Insurance* |
| **Post-Activity Discussion** | None |
| **Homework**  **and Closing** | None |

**Handout: Decisions about Health Insurance**

Chances are you will start a new job soon and hopefully this job will provide you with health insurance. Health insurance can be confusing, but it is very important that you sign up for an employer’s health insurance plan if it is offered.

There are many different types of health insurance. The most popular types of plans offered by employers are:

* **Fee for Service:** With this plan, you can make an appointment with almost any doctor. After your visit, you or your doctor sends your claim to the insurance company. If you have met your deductible for the year, then the insurance will pay a percentage of the bill—usually 80%. You pay for the other 20%. These plans tend to be expensive.
* **Health Maintenance Organizations (or HMO):**  With an HMO, you receive a lot of health benefits for a set fee. Generally, there are no deductibles, but most plans require a small payment at each office visit (around $10-25). You must choose a primary care physician from the plan’s list. This doctor becomes your gatekeeper for all your medical needs. This is the doctor you call or see when you are sick, and he or she may refer you to a specialist.
* **Preferred Provider Organizations (PPO):**  In this plan, you may see a doctor from an approved network of providers, or may see other providers outside the network. Usually, you will pay a small amount at each visit and will have to meet a deductible before benefits are paid. Then you’ll pay a set amount. It is less expensive to visit one of the providers on the list plan’s list. You can go outside the plan’s list, but your share of the bill will be higher.

Some employers let you choose between plans. Often some are more expensive than others. There are some things to think about when you are faced with a choice between plans:

* **How much is the premium?** This is how much you will pay every month (or how much your employer will deduct from your check.
* **How much is the deductible?** Usually a plan is cheaper when a deductible is high. You will probably pay less money every month, but if you have to see a doctor, you might get stuck with a $1,000 bill. You will have to pay the amount of the deductible before your benefits kick in.
* **Does it cover doctor’s appointments**? Some cheaper plans only cover major illnesses and accidents. These plans are called “catastrophic coverage.”

If your employer does not offer health insurance, there are some government-sponsored options:

* **Health Insurance Marketplace:** Each state is required to offer a marketplace to help people find affordable health coverage. Information can be found at: <https://www.healthcare.gov/marketplace/individual/>.
* **Medicaid:** This government program provides care for people with low incomes.
* **State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP):** This is a program for families not eligible for Medicaid who cannot afford private health insurance. This program may provide coverage for your children.

## Activity: Navigating the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA)

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| **Overview** | The PPACA provides Americans with many insurance options. This activity will introduce students to their health insurance options. |
| **Learning Objectives** | Students will be able to:   * Describe the importance of health insurance * Discuss how the PPACA effects them |
| **Materials** | * Copy of discussion questions (in activity section below) |
| **Getting Ready** | * Review potential answers to discussion questions |
| **Pre-Activity Discussion** | Tell students that you will be discussing the importance of health insurance and various health insurance options. |
| **Activity** | Pose the following questions:   1. Why is it important to have health insurance?  Answers: Medical care is expensive, it is not fair to receive services if you cannot pay for them, many people go bankrupt if they cannot pay their medical bills 2. What do you know about the PPACA? What parts might help you?  Answers: More people are eligible for Medicaid, young people can stay on their parents health insurance until they are 26, the Health Insurance Marketplace makes buying health insurance more affordable 3. Where can you obtain health insurance?  Answers: From an employer, young adults can stay on their parents health insurance until they are 26, Medicaid, buy insurance through the Health Insurance Marketplace 4. What will happen if you do not have health insurance after you leave Job Corps? Answers: May not be able to receive services or stay on medications, may have to pay a fee under PPACA |
| **Post-Activity Discussion** | Review the *Health Insurance Resources* fact sheet that students received when they arrived on center. Review the Health Insurance Marketplace website below as a resource to find health insurance. |
| **Homework**  **and Closing** | Optional: Have students visit the Health Insurance Marketplace to learn more about their options: <https://www.healthcare.gov/marketplace/individual/> |

## Activity: Free Clinic, Urgent Care, Emergency Room, or Doctor’s Office

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| **Overview** | This section will help to better define several types of community resources that can be used to access health care and what qualifications are needed to gain access. |
| **Learning Objectives** | Students will be able to:   * Discuss how to access community services after Job Corps |
| **Materials** | * *Free Clinic, Urgent Care, Emergency Room, or Doctor’s Office* worksheet |
| **Getting Ready** | * Print worksheet |
| **Pre-Activity Discussion** | * Review the different places to receive medical care as outlined on the worksheet: *Free Clinic, Urgent Care, Emergency Room, or Doctor’s Office*. |
| **Activity** | Have students work independently to identify where they would go if they had a health issue. |
| **Post-Activity Discussion** | Review the worksheet as a class. There are not right or wrong answers to the worksheet; however, students should be steered away from using the emergency room for non-emergency issues. |
| **Homework**  **and Closing** | None |

**Worksheet: Free Clinic, Urgent Care, Emergency Room, or Doctor’s Office**

**Part 1: Places to go for Medical Treatment**

You have many options for where to go if you are sick, injured, or are looking for medical testing services.

* A **free clinic** offers care on for free or very low-cost. Care is generally provided in these clinics to people who have low income and no health insurance. Almost all free clinics provide care for conditions that are serious, but not emergencies. Many also provide a full range of other services, like testing for sexually transmitted diseases, and care for chronic conditions like asthma. Some free clinics include pharmacies and dental services.
* **Urgent care centers** are alternatives to hospitals for treatment of illnesses and injuries. You can go to an urgent care center for simple issues like an ear ache and for more serious problems like an asthma attack, broken bones, or deep cuts. No appointment is necessary. Urgent care centers accept most major insurances and sometimes accept Medicaid. They also provide school and work physicals at a reduced cost. Many of these centers also provide care for employees who are injured at work. They can often deal with most issues that are not life threatening.
* **Hospital emergency departments/rooms** should be used only for serious, life-threatening emergencies. Emergency services are very expensive and there is usually a very long wait time.
* **Doctor’s offices provide a full range of services.** Many insurance plans are accepted and are required in order to be seen. Providers may be physicians, physician assistants or nurse practitioners. These offices usually require appointments. Most people see doctors for colds, flus, minor injuries, screening and testing, and all other non-life threatening health problems.

**Part 2: Where Would You Go?**

For each health issue write whether you would go to a free clinic (FC), urgent care center (UCC), emergency room (ER), doctor (D), or manage at home (H). Be prepared to say why you would go to each place.

1. Head cold
2. Chest pain
3. Painful urination
4. Broken toe
5. Asthma attack
6. Migraine
7. Serious car crash
8. Lump that doesn’t go away
9. Itchy, red eye
10. Girlfriend/boyfriend told you they had an STD
11. Sore throat
12. Deep cut with a kitchen knife

## Activity: Accessing a Company’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

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| **Overview** | Many employees offer EAP programs to help employees with mental health and substance abuse issues. These services are similar to Job Corps’ TEAP program. |
| **Learning Objectives** | Students will be able to:   * Articulate how to access an EAP program |
| **Materials** | * Computer |
| **Getting Ready** | * Research your own EAP program or an EAP program from a local company |
| **Pre-Activity Discussion** | * Introduce the concept of an EAP program. * Share about your EAP program’s offerings or the offerings of a local company. |
| **Activity** | * Have students research a company’s EAP program. This could be for a company for which they plan to work or for a random company. |
| **Post-Activity Discussion** | Have students share what they found. |
| **Homework**  **and Closing** | None |