



# Health & Wellness



Winter/December 2021

Newsletter for Job Corps Health & Wellness Staff

## Solutions

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### One Center/One Team — Long Beach JCC

*Submitted by: Joseph Grillo, PhD, Center Mental Health Consultant*

The holidays can be complicated! It's a time that's supposed to be joyous but is often marked by mixed feelings. At a recent event on center, students were asked about the positive and negative emotions they experience during the holidays. Even though an overwhelming number of participants indicated they enjoy the holidays, results showed they experience positive and negative emotions equally. Several students commented on how the exercise reflected what has been their reality at holiday time: remembering those they have lost; feeling frustrated by not having the means to get gifts for loved ones; going home to a family or neighborhood that is not what they want it to be; and longing for that special someone in their lives.

The holiday season often means partying, and this can provide its own stress as students deal with the risk of relapse. Those who go home may find themselves surrounded by peers who have not made sobriety a part of their lives. This can trigger a relapse into drinking, drug use, overeating, and other excesses.

With COVID-19 still around, this year is even more complicated! For those fortunate enough to have a home to go to at the holidays, there are the lingering restrictions of distancing and masking so that everyone can be safe. A new year is upon us, but there is no end in sight to the pandemic, and there is more and more division in the country over how to move forward.

No wonder the holidays can bring some difficult thoughts and feelings. What we refer to as the Holiday Blues are just a collection of various different symptoms. Depression and anxiety are common features, as are feelings of worthlessness and hopelessness. Vague physical aches and pains and sleep problems can develop. People may also report difficulty concentrating and a general loss of motivation. These are the blues indeed!

When there is any change in our routine, it's really important to remember to use common stress busters to counter the inevitable feeling of loss that comes with change. Simple activities, such as exercise, meditation, and deep breathing are generally effective ways to counter the blues at holiday time (and all year long). At this time of year especially, helping others can be a great antidote to feelings of isolation and depression. As always, talking to someone we trust is critical to keep from bottling up our emotions. For students who get a case of the Holiday Blues, this is especially true. Staff can assist them in acknowledging their feelings and remembering to engage in self-care which is so important not only for the holidays but for success in the program and for employability.

For staff and students, should the Holiday Blues deepen into a mental health crisis, it is important to get help immediately.



[Ho Ho Uh Oh! How to Cope with the Holiday Blues](#) — Dr. Grillo

#### Resources

- [Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#)  
(800) 273-TALK (8255)
- [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)
- Check state and local county Departments of Mental Health for additional resources

# Job Corps Center Happenings

## Health & Wellness Fair — Albuquerque JCC

Submitted by: N. Phoenix Anderson, PhD, Center Mental Health Consultant  
Pictures: Melodee Saiz, OA/CTS Director

The Albuquerque JCC organized a health fair for the students on center. The students were engaged and loved the Suicide Awareness Semicolon water tattoos, inspirational bracelets and journals, stress balls, dental and COVID supplies, pencil bags from Disability, and healthy snacks. In addition, students really loved the root beer floats provided by TEAP!



## Red Ribbon Week — Blue Ridge JCC

Submitted by: Luther Havens, TEAP Specialist

Celebrated annually from October 23rd to 31st, Red Ribbon Week is the country's oldest and largest drug prevention and awareness program. It began in 1985 to mobilize communities to educate youth and encourage participation in drug prevention activities. During this week, Luther Havens, TEAP Specialist, and Karen Edwards, CMHC, set up an information booth during lunch. They shared Red Ribbon FAQs, word searches, and material detailing the detrimental effects of drug use. Students were offered pledge cards they could sign stating they would remain drug free. On October 25th, in a show of solidarity, everyone on center wore red and posed for a photo in the shape of a ribbon.



## Red Ribbon Week Activities — Delaware Valley JCC

Submitted by: Rose-mary Sforza, BS, CASAC-Advanced Counselor, TEAP Specialist

The Delaware Valley JCC’s Red Ribbon Week activities included a students and staff drug-free pledge, Frisbee toss, virtual recovery bingo, ACE points for participation, bracelets for pledging to stay off drugs, and prizes!



**Red Ribbon Week  
October 23 to 31**

Red ribbon Week is the Nation’s Oldest and Largest Drug Prevention Awareness Program.

It started in 1985 when DEA special Agent Enrique “Kiki” Camarena was brutally murdered in Mexico by drug traffickers. People began wearing red ribbons to honor his sacrifice. Today we support Red Ribbon Week by participating in anti-drug events and by pledging to live drug-free Lives.

These activities are meant to demonstrate the importance of making healthy and smart decisions throughout life so your dreams and goals can be achieved.

## Suicide Prevention Awareness Month — Delaware Valley JCC

Submitted by: Diane Baynon, Center Mental Health Consultant

The Delaware Valley JCC organized a special student activity for Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. The event included a discussion on the importance of daily stress management, and techniques (such as making stress balls) to avoid anxiety escalating to panic attacks, depression, and suicidal thoughts when not managed. The students made and decorated their own stress balls. Not only was it fun, but it provided students a forum to talk about their experiences and what to do if they observe suicide warning signs.



## October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month — Gary JCC

Submitted by Dr. Hildy Dinkins, Center Mental Health Consultant

The Gary JCC was thrilled to secure two guest speakers during the month of October in observance of and to raise awareness about DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. The first speaker was Gemma Medina from [Hays-Caldwell Women’s Center](#). On October 19th, she presented a virtual workshop to Week 1 Career Preparation Period students.

The second speaker was [Valerie Williams](#), a former Job Corps employee. She was shot in the head by her husband while on her lunch break. She is now an advocate for survivors of domestic violence, and a writer and speaker. On October 29th, she presented an inspiring talk in the gym. A Career Counselor beautifully decorated the gym, and students were invited to the presentation. The turnout was great! Participants received Ms. Williams’ books – her personal testimony, a self-care daily log, and her workbook entitled *Becoming The Best I Can Be*. There was lunch, a raffle, and lots of learning.



## Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) — Gary JCC

Submitted by: Martina Cisneros, MSW, LCSW, Center Mental Health Consultant

The Gary JCC provided information about [Seasonal Affective Disorder \(SAD\)](#) for students.



## National Gratitude Month — Gary JCC

Submitted by: Heather Blankenship, MSW, LCSW, Center Mental Health Consultant

The Gary JCC CMHCs facilitated a student activity in observance of National Gratitude Month in November. Gary students sent letters to family and friends to express their appreciation and gratitude. The Gary Job Corps students photographed are Ame and Lacee.



## Great American Smokeout — Gerald R. Ford JCC

Submitted by: Yvette Mabins, BA, CADC-M, TEAP Coordinator

The Great American Smokeout was an amazing day to provide an opportunity for people who smoke to commit to a healthy, smoke-free life, not just for a day, but year-round. The TEAP Coordinator and Wellness Clerk educated students and staff on the dangers surrounding smoking, whether it be cigarettes, marijuana, hookah, vaping, etc.

Displays included the physical effects of “Putting a cigarette out” versus the harmful effects of “smoking, inhaling, and blowing a cigarette out!”



## Anti-Bullying, Domestic Violence, and Mental Health Screening Awareness — Gerald R. Ford JCC

Submitted by: Cynthia Gladyness, Center Mental Health Consultant

Ms. Cynthia Gladyness, CMHC, raised awareness by providing materials on three mental health topics: Anti-Bullying, Domestic Violence, and Mental Health Screening Awareness. Students and staff were given information including a variety of coping skills, stress balls, and a flyer for several mental health apps that offered QR codes for easy access.

All students were given donated handmade blankets from [Project Linus](#), whose motto is “each child needs a hug.” It is important to encourage our students to explore and connect with healthy coping skills and supports as we continue to adapt in response to COVID-19, and the transition and isolation that it has forced upon our communities and nation. The CMHC focuses on mental health work/life balance.





## Suicide Prevention Month — Ottumwa JCC

Submitted by: Caren Roth, Center Mental Health Consultant

For Suicide Prevention Month, the Ottumwa JCC had an online trivia/Jeopardy game, followed by a video, and ended the event with a Heart Wall Installation. Students and staff were given a blue post-it note and four prompts to write about:

1. Leave a positive message to brighten someone's day.
2. What is the best thing someone could say to you when you need support?
3. Why is it important to speak openly about Suicide Prevention and Recovery?
4. What is one thing that is most important to you and worth living for?

Post-it notes were then walked to the entryway of the Education Building and a heart was created.



## Bullying Prevention Month: Be Brave — Ottumwa JCC

Submitted by: Caren Roth, LISW, Center Mental Health Consultant

On October 20th, the Ottumwa JCC organized an event for Unity Day and Bullying Prevention Month.

The event was mostly an outdoor event that included rock painting, students making inspirational signs, and students and staff dancing to some choreographed moves. The song in the video is *Be Brave* by Sara Bareilles.

Click here to see the [Be Brave video](#).



## Health Newsletter — Phoenix JCC

Submitted by: Nancy Dean, Health & Wellness Director

The Health & Wellness News Connection (December 2021 issue) spotlighted the following:

- National Handwashing Awareness Week December 5–11, 2021
- Dental Care at Holiday Time — Holiday Dental Tips to Keep Your Teeth Healthy
- International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2021 — December 3
- HEALS – 4 Steps to Food Safety
- Tie One on For Safety®
- What are the Holiday Blues?



## Red Ribbon Week 2021 — Pinellas County JCC

Submitted by: Cate Courtney, CAP, TEAP Specialist

The Pinellas County JCC organized Red Ribbon Week activities that included mini pumpkin decorating and “Drug Free Looks Like Me” student picture sessions.



## Dia de los Muertos — Pinellas County JCC

Submitted by: Cate Courtney, CAP, TEAP Specialist

The Pinellas County JCC organized a Dia de los Muertos Mask-Making event. The procession is a celebration of the lives of those we have lost. The students had river stones on which they put the name or some marker of a lost loved one. The stones were placed on a shrine to welcome them back for the Dia de los Muertos.



## Breast Cancer Awareness Month — Pinellas County JCC

Submitted by: Cate Courtney, CAP, TEAP Specialist

Pinellas County JCC Buyer, Angelia Richardson, dressed as “Boo-bee” our Breast Cancer Awareness Month (BCAM) mascot. She distributed pink ribbon support pins throughout the campus. The center also had a Twist-a-Thon for BCAM Group — students had to twist for 45 consecutive minutes. We had four students who went the duration.



## Angel Card Project — Pinellas County JCC

Submitted by: Cate Courtney, CAP, TEAP Specialist

The [Angel Card Project](#) is an internet-wide charity event designed to send greeting cards to those in need. This year the Pinellas County students volunteered their time and prepared 65 holiday cards to folks in need of holiday cheer.



## Great American Smokeout: Nothing BUTT LIES! — South Bronx JCC

Submitted by: *George Cabrera, TEAP Specialist*

The goal of the Great American Smokeout is to educate and encourage smokers to consider quitting and select a quit date, and to urge non-smokers not to start. TEAP organized several events leading up to the main event.

1. November 2: Stay Healthy – Benefits of Quitting
2. November 6: Risk Factors – The Importance of Not Starting to Smoke Cigarettes
3. November 9: Social Smoking and Peer Pressure – The smoking Trap!
4. November 16: Main Event — Nothing Butt Cigarette Lies. An information table provided material on nicotine and the negative impact on the brain, who is most likely to become addicted, and how to quit.

A total of 38 students completed a nicotine assessment, CAGE Substance Abuse Screening Tool questionnaire modified for smoking behavior, and placed in TEAP section of the SHR for follow-up. The center had music and snacks, and MASK and SOCIAL DISTANCING practices were followed throughout the events.



## Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month — Whitney M. Young JCC

Submitted by: *Amy Worthington, Center Mental Health Consultant*

In September, the Whitney M. Young JCC put the spotlight on Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month. The center organized a virtual scavenger hunt for students and staff that was submitted via email or in person to the health and wellness center. The scavenger hunt consisted of six questions designed to increase participants' understanding of the impact of suicide, warning signs, ways to support themselves and others, and how to access support and help. Everyone who completed the virtual scavenger hunt received a handcrafted bar of soap and lavender essential oil rollerball. The items were provided with the hopes of promoting increased self-care.



## 2022 Health Observances

### January

- [National Birth Defects Prevention Month](#)

### February

- [National Eating Disorder Awareness Week](#)  
February 21- 27
- [National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#)  
February 7

### March

- [Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month](#)
- [National Nutrition Month](#)
- [National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day](#)  
March 10
- [Sleep Awareness Week](#)  
March 14-20
- [National Poison Prevention Week](#)  
March 21-27
- [National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week](#)  
March 21-27

## Do you have a ...

Topic idea or want to highlight your center activity. You can submit your suggestions to:

Julie Luht, MPH  
Email: [julie.luht@humanitas.com](mailto:julie.luht@humanitas.com)

The submissions deadline for the Spring 2022 issue is March 4, 2022.



## Job Corps Webinars

### Upcoming 2022 Webinars



- Trauma Informed Approach- Train the Trainer — January 5
- CMHC Orientation Part 1 — January 12
- CMHC Orientation Part 2 — January 13
- Successful Family Planning — January 20
- Medication Management Part 1 — January 26
- Medication Management Part 2 — February 2
- Sexual Assault Awareness, Management, After Effects and Treatment — February 8
- Transgender Awareness — March TBD
- Evidence Based Mental Health Assessment Tools — March 23

As new webinars are scheduled, they are announced in the *JCDC News* newsletter. [Click here to register for an upcoming webinar.](#)

### Past Webinars

- Oral Health Protocol Update — November 17
- Formalized Assessment Measures for TEAP — November 16 & 17
- HEALs: Ingredients for Program Success — November 10
- CMHC Orientation Part 2 — November 10
- CMHC Orientation Part 1 — November 9
- TEAP Documentation — October 26 & 27

Webinars are available to [print/download](#) on the health and wellness website.