September 16, 2011

DIRECTIVE: JOB CORPS INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 11-14

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: EDNA PRIMROSE
                  National Director
                  Office of Job Corps

SUBJECT: Violence Awareness and Prevention Recommendations

1.   Purpose. To increase staff and student knowledge and awareness of violence and prevention measures and resources.

2.   Background. Youth violence is a public health crisis in the United States. Based on the most recent statistics, approximately 20 percent of high school students report being bullied at school, and over 30 percent report being in a physical fight.[1] In 2008, more than 656,000 young people, ages 10 to 24, were treated in emergency departments for violence-related injuries. Homicide is the second-leading cause of death of young people, with an average of 16 youths murdered every day.[2] Those between the ages of 12 and 24 face the greatest risk of being victims of violence.

    What causes a student to punch, kick, stab or fire a gun at someone else? There is never an easy answer to that question, but people often commit violence for one or more of the following:

- **Expression**. Some students use violence to release feelings of anger or frustration. They think there are no answers to their problems and turn to violence to express their out of control emotions.

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1.   Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Youth risk behavioral surveillance—United States, 2009. MMWR 2010; 59 (No. SS–5).

2.   Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [Online]. (2007). National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (producer). [2010 Jun 14] Available from URL: www.cdc.gov/injury.

- **Manipulation.** Violence is used as a way to control others, or get something they want.

- **Retaliation.** Violence is used to retaliate against those who have hurt them or someone they care about.

Violence is a learned behavior. Like all learned behaviors, it can be changed, but this is not easy. Since there is no single cause of violence, there is no simple solution. Factors that can contribute to violent behavior include peer pressure, need for attention or respect, low self-worth, early childhood abuse, witnessing violence at home and in the community, and easy access to weapons.

3.   Recommendations. Addressing safety and violence prevention in Job Corps requires an integrated approach by staff across all phases of the Career Development Service (CDSS). This approach should include training for students and staff in recognizing the warning signs of violent behavior, conflict mediation skills, aggression replacement training, and how to promote emotional and social competencies to reduce aggression and behavior problems.

What Centers Can Do to Prevent Violence

- First and foremost, establish a safe center culture. Center contractors, agencies, and OA/CTS contractors should establish and consistently reinforce Center Standard Operating Procedures (CSOP) that include "Standards of Student Conduct Procedures and the Zero Tolerance Policy," as required per PRH Exhibit 5-1.

- Review your Significant Incident Reports (SIR) on a quarterly basis to discern upward or downward trends of violence.

- Provide violence prevention training to staff and students. Job Corps' staff and students should review the Job Corps' "**SafetyNet Toolkit"** in Simon which offers trainings, fact sheets, communication material, and resources on violence, bullying, suicide intervention-prevention, and injury prevention. The online trainings are currently mandatory for all staff, but can be useful for students as well. Staff who complete the training receive professional development certificates. In addition, staff are able to print Job Corps-specific brochures, handouts, and flyers related to violence prevention and safety. This toolkit also includes:

  o Information on special topics in violence prevention, including sexual assault prevention, relationship aggression, gang violence prevention, and preventing violence at sporting events;
  o A template to create an anti-bullying policy guide for crisis preparation and response; and
  o Safety-related documents, presentations, and resources.

- The first 30 days on center is critical for **all** students. Develop a "Transition to Job Corps" group for new students during the Career Preparation Period (CPP) that provides an opportunity to talk about issues or challenges of adjusting to center life. Give practical

suggestions to students on how to adapt to a new environment, and where to go for help, if needed.

- All centers should have an anger management group which includes conflict-resolution and/or anger replacement strategies for students. A free curriculum, "Anger Management for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Clients," which includes participant and leader workbooks, can be downloaded immediately from the following links:

  http://kap.samhsa.gov/products/manuals/pdfs/anger1.pdf
  http://kap.samhsa.gov/products/manuals/pdfs/anger2.pdf

- Students who are positive for drugs upon entry, and are trying to clean-up, may begin to experience more depression or anxiety not being masked by the use of drugs. TEAP Specialists should be aware of these students and provide support.

- Conduct environmental risk assessments to ensure that remote areas on center have limited access, adequate lighting, and are monitored consistently.

- Encourage students to report unusual behavior of other students, and rumors to staff immediately.

- Staff witnessing any form of violence should take it seriously, and intervene appropriately and immediately.

- Centers should send appropriate staff to the upcoming 2011 National Health and Wellness Conference. There will be several workshops that address violence, bullying, and social and emotional learning.

4. Resources. For examples of effective youth violence prevention programs, policies, and best practices, please review the following resources to help you build a violence prevention program that works for your center:

- **STRYVE**, or **Striving to Reduce Youth Violence Everywhere**, is a national initiative led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to prevent youth violence *before it starts*. STRYVE seeks to increase awareness that youth violence can and should be prevented, and to promote the use of prevention strategies based on the best available evidence.
  http://www.safeyouth.gov

- **Aggression Replacement Training: Curriculum and Evaluation**
  http://www.uscart.org/ART-Cirriculum-Eval.pdf

  Scenes from "**Aggression Replacement Training"** available from Research Press.
  http://www.researchpress.com/product/item/5004/#5215
  www.youtube.com/watch?v=jIB7e5FyEwk

- **Blueprints for Violence Prevention**, a project of the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado, provide answers to the question, "How do we know what works?" The Blueprints mission is to identify truly outstanding violence and drug prevention programs that meet a high scientific standard of effectiveness. In doing so, Blueprints serves as a resource for governments, foundations, businesses, and other organizations trying to make informed judgments about their investments in violence and drug prevention program.
http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/

- **The Violence Prevention Curriculum for Adolescents (VPC)** provides adolescents with information on risk factors for interpersonal violence and skills for choosing alternatives to fighting. The 10- to 18-session curriculum uses lectures, discussions, and interactive role-plays. Sessions generally last 40 minutes. VPC is part of the Teenage Health Teaching Modules program, a comprehensive school health education curriculum for adolescents. The goals of the curriculum are to 1) illustrate that violence is preventable; 2) teach students that anger is a normal part of life and that anger can be expressed and channeled in healthy, constructive ways; 3) help students understand that controlling anger and violence is part of maturing; 4) identify positive ways for students to express their anger; and 5) help them think about and use alternatives to violence in conflict situations.
http://www.thtm.org/vp.htm

- *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention*® **Training Program.** Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) is an international training organization committed to best practices and safe behavior management methods that focus on prevention. Through a variety of specialized offerings and innovative resources, CPI educates and empowers professionals to create safe and respectful work environments, and enrich the lives of the individuals they serve.
http://www.crisisprevention.com/

- **National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention**. The Departments of Justice and Education officially launched the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention (the Forum) along with participating localities and other federal agencies, including the Department of Labor, to provide evidence-based resources to prevent and/or reduce delinquency or other problem behaviors in young people.
http://www.findyouthinfo.gov/topic_preventingViolence_nationalForum.shtml

- **Warning Signs of Youth Violence**. The American Psychological Association and MTV have developed a guide to provide youth with information about identifying the warning signs of violent behavior, and how to get help if they recognize these signs in themselves or their peers.
http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/warning-signs.aspx

5.	Action. Addressees are to ensure this Information Notice is distributed to all appropriate staff.

6.   Expiration Date. Until superseded.

7.   Inquiries. Inquiries should be directed to Carol Abnathy, National Health and Wellness Manager, at (202) 693-3283 or abnathy.carol@dol.gov.