

Metro Jackson Community Prevention Coalition



QUARTERLY ALERT

Prevention News to Use

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Metro Jackson Community Prevention Coalition is to reduce factors that lead to alcohol, tobacco and other drug use and increase increase resiliency factors of adolescents, children and families in high-risk environments in Jackson, Miss.

CALENDAR

- Bi-Monthly Coalition Meeting August 14
- Region 8 Fun Day June 28
- Summer Camp July 10-14 - Eagle Ridge

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Metro Jackson Community Prevention Coalition attacks drug abuse

What is prevention? For those who work in the drug prevention field, prevention is defined as a process that involves interacting with people, communities and systems to promote the programs aimed at substantially preventing alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse. To this end, the Metro Jackson Community Prevention Coalition (MJCPC) at Jackson State University's Mississippi Urban Research Center has established a mission to reduce factors that lead to alcohol, tobacco and other drug use and increase resiliency factors of adolescents, children and their families in high-risk environments in Jackson, Miss.



Bennett teaches drug prevention class.

Why prevention? According to the Mississippi Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Services, 9.5 percent of Mississippi's 9th -12th grade students have used marijuana before the age of 13; 31.9 percent of those same students had their first drink of alcohol, other than a few sips, before age 13 and 23.5 percent of those students had smoked a whole cigarette before the age of 13. Additionally, major cigarette manufacturers spent \$15.15 billion on advertising and promotional expenditures in 2003 (Source: Federal Trade Commission [FTC] 2005-08-09). If substance manufacturers continue to entice children to use before age 13, then the problem of substance abuse will only grow if not attacked.

Who is conducting prevention? MJCPC is attacking these substance abuse problems with programs and activities that empower children and their families to initiate strategies in their homes that help prevent, reduce and/or eliminate alcohol, tobacco and/or other drug use in their families and communities. The LifeSkills Training Program, Summer Teen Camps, Peer Educator Program, Project ALERT Program, and Adolescent Prevention/ Intervention Program are the tools used to increase the resiliency of area youth.

How is prevention being conducted? Working as a coalition, the MJCPC staff and community-based organizations are collaborating effectively through bi-monthly public meetings, quarterly board meeting, community town hall meetings, and one-on-one conferences to organize and mobilize Jacksonians to strategize ways to link residents with needed services and enhance the life skills of area residents. Therefore, MJCPC staff: Velesha P. Williams, project director; Alvin L. Clark, program manager; Brenda Lexing Gilmore, administrative assistant; Terry Bennett, outreach worker; and Dorlisa L. Hutton, training specialist; and its partners invite you to join us in "bridging the gap between needs and services" for a drug-free community in the metropolitan Jackson area.

Goals, prevention efforts set**\$400,000 SAMSHA grant helps Metro Jackson CPC Drug-Free Communities Support Program**

Metro Jackson Community Prevention Coalition (MJCPC) received an initial Drug-Free Communities Support Program grant in 2004. In 2005, MJCPC was awarded a renewal grant for \$400,000 over the next four years. The Drug-Free Communities Support Program grant is administered by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

The Drug-Free Communities Support Program grant is guided by two goals. Goal one is to reduce substance abuse among youth and, over time among adults, by addressing the factors in the Metro Jackson community that serve to increase the risk of substance abuse and promote the factors that serve to minimize the risk of substance abuse. These substances include, but are not limited to, narcotics, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, cannabis, inhalants, alcohol and tobacco.

The second goal is to strengthen collaboration among communities, private nonprofit agencies and

federal, state and local governments to support the efforts of MJCPC to reduce substance use among youth.

Project ALERT, an exemplary model, science-based program that is designed to reduce both the onset and regular use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and inhalants has been selected. The program consists of a two-year prevention curriculum intended for middle school students. Project ALERT contains 11 sessions during the first year and three booster sessions during the second year.

In addition to the Drug-Free Communities Support Program grant providing the community the opportunity to benefit from Project ALERT, MJCPC has also been able to create and maintain a prevention resource center. The center contains videos, pamphlets, brochures, alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (ATOD) activity books and has computer access. Community members are able to check out the videos, take the pamphlets and brochures as needed, make copies of the activity books and utilize the computer for finding additional prevention research and resource material. The prevention resource center is continually being upgraded to meet the needs of the community.

Parents and community members also have the opportunity to join MJCPC's Parent Advisory Team (PAT). The PAT will assist the Coalition in identifying, training and assisting at-risk youth and their families through effective alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (ATOD) prevention approaches. Nominees must meet the following criteria:

1. Parent/guardian of middle/high school student in Jackson, Miss.

2. Participate in a two-day training workshop provided by MJCPC (Project ALERT, LifeSkills and other pertinent ATOD-related information will be provided.)
3. Assist MJCPC in identifying and assisting at-risk youth and their families in Jackson, Miss.
4. Provide Project ALERT and LifeSkills training sessions to at-risk youths.
5. Notify MJCPC before conducting training sessions.

For more information, call MJCPC at: 601-982-0861.

LikeSkills Training Program implemented at JPS since 2001

Metro Jackson Community Prevention Coalition has implemented the LifeSkills Training (LST) Program in Jackson Public Schools (JPS) since 2001, specifically, Powell, Rowan, Peebles and Hardy middle schools. Hardy Middle School was selected as the JPS site for administering the LST Program. Coach Linda Lewanika's Schedule A and Schedule B 6th grade girls gym class was the target group for the 2005-06 school year.

The LST Program is a science-based health and personal development curriculum that consists of three separate phases. LST has been selected for top honors by the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), U.S. Department of Mental Health, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice and by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy.

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Velesha P. Williams: Executive Editor

Dorlisa Hutton: Managing Editor

Pamela McCoy: Copy Editor

Terry Bennett, Alvin L. Clark: Staff Writers

Sabrina Howard: Graphic Artist

Exemplary peer educator

Provine graduate Meeks spotlighted in *The Quarterly Alert*

Each issue of *The Quarterly Alert* will highlight the profile of a participant in Metro Jackson Community Prevention Coalition's (MJCPC) Peer Educator Program which is designed to train "drug-free" youth ages 13-20 to conduct trainings/presentations on life skills utilizing MJCPC resources.

Carlos Meeks garnered many honors at Provide High School, including, Mr. Provine, 2005-06; Venture Scholar; Top 25 Seniors in the State (2005 Football Season); Command Sergeant Major, ROTC; and Top Ten Percentile of the '06 Graduating Class.

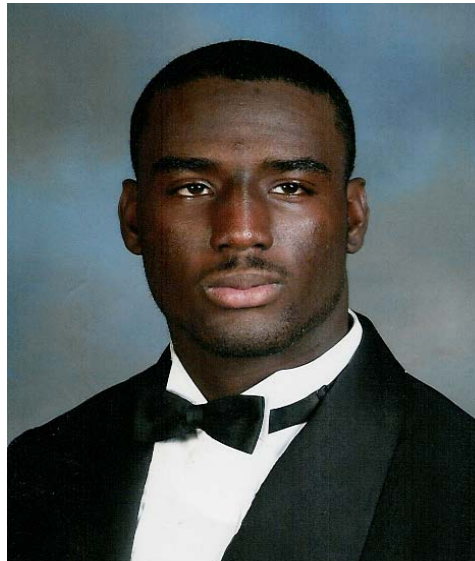
"It has been a great pleasure working with Carlos and watching him grow up from boyhood to being a man. I remember when Carlos first became a Peer Educator in 1998. He was very bashful, said Terry Bennett, MJCPC outreach worker.

"After meeting with him, we told him he had to talk and mingle with the others. I'm glad we had the opportunity to work with him. Carlos, I encourage you to never stop dreaming! Congratulations again on being Mr. Provine 2005-06. Keep on playing football if that's what you like," Bennett added.

"This program helped me a lot. It also gave me lifelong friends. I would like to say thank you for

allowing me in this program," Carlos Meeks said.

"Actually, we want to thank Carlos for living up to our expectations of a Peer Educator. We have no doubt that he will represent Metro Jackson Community Prevention Coalition, Jackson, Mississippi, Provine High School and most importantly, himself, well



Carlos Meeks

at Hinds Community College," said Alvin L. Clark, MJCPC program manager. "We all, at MJCPC, echo Mrs. Bennett's sentiments that it's been a pleasure and congratulations Mr. Provine 2005-06 and Peer Educator Carlos Meeks," Clark added.

Continued from page 2

LifeSkills Training Program implemented at JPS since 2001

The first phase of the LST training at Hardy started in January with a total of 95 female students concluded in April. The first phase of the curriculum consisted of 17 45-minute sessions. Topics covered during phase one included the following: *Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention, Making Decisions, Coping with Anxiety, Coping with Anger, Resolving Conflicts and Resisting Peer Pressure.* MJCPC staff Terry Bennett, outreach worker, and Dorlisa Hutton, training specialist, conducted the daily training sessions.

"We enjoyed working with the young ladies and were receptive of their viewpoints concerning topics covered in the class and everyday issues they faced at home and at school," said Bennett.

"The students were very comfortable with the MJCPC staff and often pulled us to the side after sessions to vent their frustrations about personal issues and ask for advice. We usually ended the conversations with words of encouragement," added Hutton.



(Photo at left) This large sign was prepared by girls in Coach Linda Lewanika's Schedule A and Schedule B 6th grade gym class at Hardy Middle School who participated in the LifeSkills Training Program. They presented the sign to Metro Jackson Community Prevention Coalition staff during the program's closing ceremony to show appreciation for the important lessons learned during the 2005-06 school year.

MJCPC STAFF

**Metro Jackson Community Prevention Coalition staff attended the
Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA)
National Leadership Forum, Washington, D.C., February 2006**



(Left to right) Alvin L. Clark, Dorlisa Hutton and Terry Bennett met with U. S. Rep. Bennie Thompson (far right) during a visit to Capitol Hill as part of CADCA's conference agenda to educate the nation's congressional leaders about drug abuse among youths and to solicit program funding support.



(Left to right) Alvin L. Clark, Kareemah Abdullah, deputy director, Training and Technical Assistance, CADCA National Coalition Institute; Terry Bennett and Dan Jones, assistant supervisor, School District of the City of Erie (Pa.); networked about issues surrounding drug abuse and youths.

Velesha P. Williams
Project Director
601-979-1402

Alvin L. Clark
Program Manager
601-982-0861

Terry Bennett
Outreach Worker
601-982-0861

Dorlisa L. Hutton
Training Specialist
601-979-1173

Brenda Lexing Gilmore
Administrative Assistant
601-982-0861



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Jackson State University
Mississippi Urban Research Center
JSU Box 17309 • Jackson, MS 39217

