

Read Across America

National Education Association's Read Across America program is an annual reading motivation and awareness program that calls for every child in every community to celebrate reading on March 2, the birthday of beloved children's author Dr. Seuss. Motivating children to read is an important factor in student achievement and creating lifelong successful readers. Research has shown that children who are motivated and spend more time reading do better in school. MJCPC's own Mrs. Terry Bennett joined in the celebration at Smith Elementary School where she read Dr. Seuss' *An Amazing Alphabet Book!* to Ms. Susan Martinez's kindergarten class. After the children were finished with story time, they invited Mrs. Bennett to enjoy green eggs and ham with them in celebration of the day. Mrs. Bennett was able to reach 70 students, and over 370 students were exposed to the program.



Above: Prevention Specialist Terry Bennett and students from Smith Elementary School

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Upcoming Events

April 21, 2017—MJCPC will host an Underage Drinking Prevention Rally at Wingfield High School in conjunction with staff from the Mississippi Office of Highway Safety, MDOT, and Jackson Police Department. Students will learn about the dangers of underage drinking from Police Chief Lee Vance, as well as De'Marco Fomby and Tawni Basden from the Mississippi Office of Highway Safety. Students will then be able to see those dangers for themselves through simulators provided by MDOT.

April 24-29, 2017—MJCPC staff will attend the 10th Annual Mississippi School for Addiction Professionals in Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

June 19-22, 2017—MJCPC will host its annual Summer Teen Camp. This camp is designed to educate students about the dangers of drug use and the importance of making healthy life choices. These sessions have been designed to help students develop resistance skills, to detour the peer pressure of using illicit substances; to develop positive self-images; to develop strong decision making and problem solving skills and build healthy relationships fostering a healthy self-confidence in social situations. This camp is for students ages 12-17. Parents can register their students through the JSU Marketplace at www.jsums.edu/summercamps.



How To Get Connected

**Metro Jackson Community
Prevention Coalition**

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www.jsums.edu/mjcpc/



Volume 17, Issue 2

April 2017

JACKSON STATE UNIVERSITY

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 resiliency factors of adolescents, children and families in high-risk environments in Mississippi.

CALENDAR

**Underage Drinking
Prevention Rally at
Wingfield High School**
April 21, 2017 10:00 am

**Mississippi School for
Addiction Professionals**
April 25-29, 2017
Hattiesburg, MS

**MJCPC Coalition
Meeting**
June 12, 2017—12:00 pm

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Wingfield Health Fair



Left: Wingfield High School students experiencing impaired vision with DUI Simulation goggles; **Middle:** Senior Prevention Specialist Henry Thompson, Prevention Specialist Terry Bennett, and Director Dr. Melinda Todd; **Right:** Hind Behavioral Health's Jeffrey Harvey with Wingfield High School students discussing the dangers of impaired driving

Metro Jackson Community Prevention Coalition hosted a Health Fair and Prevention Education Day at Wingfield High School on Wednesday, February 15, 2017. MJCPC was joined by staff from other local prevention agencies including Hinds Behavioral Health, Alcohol Services Center, and the AIDS Healthcare Foundation. These agencies, along with MJCPC, provided Wingfield High School students with literature about prevention topics such as underage drinking, marijuana use, synthetic drug use, and prescription drug abuse. MJCPC provided a DUI simulation booth where students were exposed to a mock Field Sobriety Test while wearing goggles that emulate vision impairment from alcohol use. The AIDS Healthcare Foundation provided students with information about prevention and treatment of HIV and AIDS. MJCPC was also joined by many other public health and healthcare agencies. Jackson State University's own Communicative Disorders depart-

ment under the School of Public Health conducted audiology exams with many students. Dr. Nathan Freeman, a pediatric resident from Blair E. Batson's Children's Hospital and MJCPC volunteer, taught students proper CPR technique and basic lifesaving skills. Paramedics from American Medical Response/Medical Transportation showed students the contents of an ambulance as well as how much equipment and hard work is required to get patients to the hospital safely and effectively. MJCPC would like to thank Wingfield High School, Ms. Tracey Archie, and our other prevention and healthcare partners for their support in providing the school and community with prevention and health information. This event successfully served over 300 students as well as approximately 50 staff and adults.

Another Successful Semester of Prevention Implementation

This spring 2017 semester, Mr. Henry C. Thompson Jr., senior prevention specialist completed the fifteen week LifeSkills prevention curriculum with the 9th- 12th grade students from Mrs. Mabry's class at Jim Hill High School. Mrs. Brittany Freeman, prevention specialist, is completing the final sessions of the seven unit LifeSkills High School prevention curriculum with Mr. Brandon Crowley's health classes at Murrah High School as well as the eleven unit Project ALERT curriculum with Coach Griffin's 6th, 7th, and 8th grade boys' health classes at Chastain Middle School in the coming weeks. Mrs. Terry Bennett, prevention specialist, is also completing the final sessions of the fifteen week LifeSkills prevention curriculum with Mrs. Amos' students at Hardy Middle School. Several students had reflections of the sessions that they wanted to share. One student from Jim Hill stated that, "For the most part, I have learned a lot about life. There were things I didn't understand and these sessions broke them down to me. I learned that you have to always stay positive even at my weakest moments. Mr. Henry really broke the topics down, and I am very glad I got a chance to hear him out. I would love for him to come back. I honestly don't want him to leave, but at the end of it all I have learned to be patient, and to stop having attitudes. Now I can stand tall for myself." One student from Murrah stated on behalf of her class that, "This program has been so beneficial to the students here at Murrah. I wish that every high school could have this program. I think that it would prevent a lot of students from taking the wrong path in life." Another student stated that he "was glad that the topic of drinking and driving was covered just in time for prom season at many local high schools so that maybe accidents can be avoided." Overall, Metro Jackson Community Prevention Coalition staff served nearly 500 students at four schools during this semester.

Youth Mental Health First Aid Training

Just as CPR helps you assist an individual having a heart attack – even if you have no clinical training – The Youth Mental Health First Aid helps you assist someone experiencing a mental health related crisis. On February 17, 2017, MJCPC staff received training that addresses common health challenges for youth, including anxiety, depression, substance use, disruptive behavior disorders (AD/HD), and eating disorders. Youth Mental Health First Aid is designed to teach parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge or is in crisis. Youth Mental Health First Aid is primarily designed for adults who regularly interact with young people. The course introduces common mental health challenges for youth, reviews typical adolescent development, and teaches a 5-step action plan for how to help young people in both crisis and non-crisis situations. Topics covered include anxiety, depression, substance use, disorders in which psychosis may occur, disruptive behavior disorders (including AD/HD), and eating disorders. The facilitators, Mr. Willis O. Garrison and Ms. Natasha Griffin with the Mississippi Department of Mental Health did an outstanding job. MJCPC hopes to host more training events such as this one in order to disseminate more information to our community, partners, and students. A total of 27 students, community members, and mental health professionals were trained at this session.



Students, community members, and mental health professionals in attendance at the Youth Mental Health First Aid Training

Community Synar Program Trainings

On Thursday, March 30, 2017, Metro Jackson Community Prevention Coalition hosted a Synar Program Merchant Training Education Workshop from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Local convenience store merchants were invited to receive training on Mississippi state laws regarding the sale of tobacco products. The guest speaker was Jackson Police Department Officer, LaKeith Williams. He spoke to the merchants about the importance of following state laws to avoid the sale of tobacco to minors. This training is held each year in compliance with Mississippi Department of Mental Health's Substance Abuse Block Grant requirements to educate merchants and to keep them informed about the laws regarding sales of tobacco to minors. The information provided to merchants comes from The Mississippi Juvenile Tobacco Access Prevention Act of 1997. This act prohibits the sale or transfer of tobacco products to persons under 18 years old (§ 97-32-5) and states consequences for merchants who do not adhere. Any merchant who violates this section is subject to a fine of up to \$150, citation from law enforcement, completion of a "Retailer Tobacco Education Program," and revocation of retailer's permit by the Mississippi Tax Commission. Per this act, merchants are also required to educate their employees on state laws regarding tobacco sales, post point of sale warning signs informing customers of the state laws regarding tobacco, and ask customers for proper identification when selling tobacco products (§ 97-32-7, § 97-32-9, § 97-32-11). According to an evaluation by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the percentage of youth smokers who reported retail sources as their primary source of tobacco products has declined from 38.7% in 1995 to just 14% in 2014. This success has been attributed to the Synar Program's efforts to provide merchants with adequate information as well as the restriction of tobacco vending machines, state law enforcement inspections, required licensing for tobacco retailers, and youth compliance checks with supervision from law enforcement. A total of 13 local convenience store merchants from the Jackson Metropolitan area were trained.

Campus Events: Underage Drinking Prevention

Metro Jackson Community Prevention Coalition hosts underage drinking prevention events with the assistance of senior peer educators on Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day annually. These events, much like our annual Bowling Night Out, teach students that they can find fun things to do that don't include alcohol and other drugs. The focus of the Valentine's Day event, titled "U've Been Tagged," is to encourage students to enjoy Valentine's Day festivities with their significant others or friends without alcohol. At the event this year, students were served Valentine's Day themed cookies and punch. Students were also provided with literature containing statistics on the dangers of drunk driving, the potential for risky behavior while under the influence of alcohol, and the effects of alcohol on the brain. The focus of the St. Patrick's Day event, titled "Remember the Fun," reminds students that alcohol consumption is illegal if they are under the age of 21. At the event this year, students were served mock margaritas and cosmopolitans with fruit garnish. This shows students that they can have a non-alcoholic beverage that looks just as festive as one that contains alcohol. Students were also provided literature about binge drinking and drunk driving as well as the consequences of both. MJCPC was able to reach and educate over 120 students through these events.



Senior Peer Educator Danyel Lee and Jackson State University Students