

October 29, 2003

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| DIRECTIVE: JOB CORPS INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 03-14 |
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TO: ALL JOB CORPS NATIONAL OFFICE SENIOR STAFF
 ALL JOB CORPS REGIONAL DIRECTORS
 ALL JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS
 ALL JOB CORPS CENTER OPERATORS
 ALL NATIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT CONTRACTORS
 ALL OUTREACH, ADMISSIONS AND CTS CONTRACTORS

FROM: RICHARD C. TRIGG
 National Director
 Office of Job Corps

SUBJECT: Cardiovascular Disease and Youth

1. Purpose. To make center staff aware of the incidence of cardiovascular disease, risk factors, and the dramatic increase in the prevalence of risk factors among Job Corps-aged youth.

2. Background. Everyone is affected by heart disease—people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds, men and women, all age groups. Some facts:¹

- Cardiovascular disease is the number one killer of women and men for nearly every racial and ethnic group.
- Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death for people age 65 and older; second among age groups 0-14 and 25-64; and, fourth for ages 15-24.
- Cardiovascular disease affects 1 in 5 females.
- Congenital cardiovascular defects claim the lives of more babies than any other type of birth defect.

The risk factors—tobacco smoke, high cholesterol, physical inactivity, overweight/obesity and diabetes—are well known. What is not so well known, is that the prevalence of these risk factors, especially diabetes and obesity, have increased dramatically among young people. The Job Corps population reflects national trends; the number of students

¹ All statistics are from the American Heart Association's statistical fact sheets and their publication, *Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics-2003 Update*.

entering the program with cardiac problems and associated risk factors is increasing. During the past two program years, two students have died from a heart attack.

Some facts about the prevalence of risk factors among youths:

- White youths ages 18-24, with less than 12 years of education, report substantially higher smoking rates than black and Mexican-American youths with the same educational attainment. Among these youth, 77 percent of young white men and 61 percent of young white women are current smokers, compared with 35 percent of minority youth.
- The prevalence of overweight adolescents has increased from 4.6 percent to 15.5 percent over the past 30 years.
- By the age of 16 or 17, 56 percent of black females and 31 percent of white females report no habitual physical activity.
- A growing number of children and adolescents are developing type 2 diabetes, a form of diabetes that is generally diagnosed among adults.²
- About 10 percent of adolescents have total cholesterol levels exceeding 200 mg/dL (considered high).

An alarming increase in unattended risk factors in the younger generations will continue to fuel the cardiovascular epidemic for years to come.³

3. Reference. Additional information on heart health education, heart disease prevention, and healthy lifestyle choices can be obtained from the following websites:

GENERAL

- **American Diabetes Association**
Contains information and tools to encourage a healthy lifestyle. Information topics include nutrition, exercise, and stress.
www.diabetes.org
- **American Heart Association**
Contains detailed information on heart diseases and conditions, healthy lifestyles, and resource information.
www.americanheart.org
- **Heart Information Network**
Contains information on nutrition, fitness, and heart health and wellness.

² American Diabetes Association, 2003.

³Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics-2003 Update, American Heart Association.

www.heartinfo.com

- **National Heart Lung and Blood Institute**
Contains information on heart disease and associated risk factors. *The Heart Healthy Handbook for Women*, an easy to use booklet with information on women's heart disease, heart health, and reducing risk factors can be downloaded from this site.
www.nhlbi.nih.gov

EXERCISE/WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

- **American Dietetic Society**
Provides information on food, nutrition, obesity, and healthy lifestyles tips.
www.eatright.org/public
- **Choose to Move**
Offers physical activity programs created especially for women, designed to meet the American Heart Association's requirements for physical activity.
www.choosetomove.org
- **Delicious Decisions**
Provides information on delicious and nutritious eating.
www.deliciousdecisions.org
- **Just Move**
Provides information on fitness and an online exercise diary.
www.justmove.org

TOBACCO USE PREVENTION

- **American Cancer Society**
Provides information on health issues, tips for quitting, and smoking legislation.
http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/ped_10.asp
- **American Lung Association**
Provides information on a variety of smoking control and prevention programs targeted to specific groups.
www.lungusa.org
- **Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids**
Provides information on public policy at the federal, state, and local levels; supports advocacy programs and events.
<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/>
- **National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion- Tobacco Information and Prevention Source (TIPS)**

Provides information about preventing tobacco use among youth, smoking cessation, and environmental tobacco smoke.

<http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/>

The promising practices section of the Job Corps Health and Wellness website, http://www.jobcorpshealth.com/html/promising_practices.htm, contains information on innovative center healthy lifestyles programs and additional resource information.

4. Action. Each center should evaluate current required health-related programs (e.g., tobacco use prevention) and develop additional programs (e.g., nutritious eating, weight improvement, exercise) that focus on reducing risk factors and making lifestyle changes for a healthy heart.
5. Expiration Date. Until superseded.
6. Inquiries. Direct any inquiries to Barbara Grove, RN, at 202-693-3116, or email to grove.barbara@dol.gov.