

# LCCAP YOUTH NEWSLETTER

## BACK TO SCHOOL EDITION



FALL 2019

# PREP Takes September by the Horns

Sixteen community youth sacrificed something that is very valuable to teenagers. So what did they sacrifice? TWO SATURDAYS IN SEPTEMBER! No worries, as the reward greatly overshadowed the sacrifice. The youth participated in the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP), a program that encouraged youth to make proud and responsible choices when it comes to their future and their physical and sexual health. The 12-hour program was held at Ben Franklin Early Learning Center and covered the Making Proud Choices! curriculum that provides adolescents with the knowledge, confidence and skills necessary to reduce

their risk of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), HIV and pregnancy by abstaining from sex or using condoms if they choose to have sex. The intervention is based on cognitive-behavioral theories, focus groups and the authors' extensive experience working with youth. Community Educator Specialist Susan McKinnis, of the Crisis Shelter of Lawrence County, presented programming from the HAPPY Project during the final workshop hours, covering healthy relationships, self-identity and increasing one's self-esteem. Thanks to this accelerated course, more youth in Lawrence County are armed with valuable information for making informed decisions about their health.



## Communicating with your Children about Healthy Relationships



Talking to your children about what it means to have a healthy relationship is a crucial step to ensuring they are prepared to have safe, respectful relationships throughout their lives. It is important to provide your children with examples of healthy relationships and point out examples of unhealthy behavior. Use examples from your own life, television, movies or music. Be sure to ask questions and encourage open discussion. Listen to your children, allowing them time to talk with no interruptions or lecturing. Be supportive and nonjudgmental so your children know they can come to you for help if their relationships ever become unhealthy.

# New Castle Students find a creative way to thank local first responders in honor of 9/11



Winston Churchill is quoted to have said “we make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” For students of New Castle Area School District Service Learning Classes, learning to be selfless and charitable are part of their curriculum. This year, Mrs. Francine Joseph partnered with Lawrence County Community Action Partnership’s Teen Outreach Program (TOP Club) to help create more opportunities for her service learning students to give back to the community. Students kicked off their semester of service with a project to honor our local first responders. Working as a team, students created “thank you bags” filled with a few simple items to show their appreciation for their service. On September 11, Corporal Buswell and Officer Finnin of the New Castle Police Department spoke to the students about their career of service and about their memories of 9/11. Students sent thank you bags back to NC Police headquarters with the officers to distribute within the department. TOP Club facilitators delivered the remaining thank you bags to the local fire department and ambulance service.

## Why are routines important?



We all know how stressful mornings can be, trying to get kids out of bed and off to school, while not forgetting anything. It can seem rushed and stressful for both you and your children. However, if you establish a routine to prepare for your morning, it will help to alleviate much of

the stress. In fact, creating routines for many different activities within your household WILL be helpful to eliminate stressful moments and will add some semblance of peace to your life. Routines help children understand time and time management, can help children get used to having chores, and can establish important habits such as brushing teeth and hair. Bedtime routines work best if you reserve the hour before bedtime for quiet play. This will lower your child’s activity level and prepare his or her nervous system for relaxation. Roughhousing, running, playing tickling games, and even watching action-packed TV shows or videos make peaceful transition to sleep pretty difficult. Routines can strengthen relationships by focusing on time together with their family. The goal of a good routine is they help you take control of your day and subsequently, your life.

### Some benefits/Tips of routines:

- **Write it down.** Once you’ve determined the steps in your morning routine, write them down in a list. Make the list not just in the order of the steps but include accompanying times and other notes or reminders if you want.
- **Start your day off right.** Figure out what time you need to leave the house each morning and set your alarm so you have plenty of time to accomplish your at-home tasks before you hit the road.
- **Sleep better.** A regular bedtime routine is essential to good sleep hygiene. Turn off your electronic devices an hour before bed and avoid stressful conversations in the evenings. Instead, pick up a light read or practice a few minutes of meditation. Brush your teeth and wash your face well before your set bedtime so you get to sleep on time and wake up feeling refreshed and ready to tackle your day.
- **Enjoy quality time with loved ones.** Even if your family’s schedule is busy, creating a weeknight family dinner routine is a great way to ensure you and your loved ones have time with each other at the end of the day
- **Set a specific time and stick to it.** Your child’s body clock will adjust much more quickly to the routine if the routine follows a natural and consistent pattern.

# A New Club for Youth Forms in the Community

The nationally recognized The Teen Outreach Program (TOP) finds its way to local students through a Department of Health grant administered in Lawrence County by Lawrence County Social Services, Inc. The program will engage youth at Cray and New Castle High Schools through a new kind of “Club.” Members of the TOP Club will learn about themselves, build their skills in emotional management, decision-making, problem solving, goal setting, and build

supportive relationships and connections with others, as well as creating and participating in community service learning opportunities in their school and community.

All Clubs meet once a week for the duration of the school year and meetings include activities that are both fun and engaging for the youth. Four LCSS staff have completed the three-day training of facilitators and are ready to kick-off Clubs in both schools. Meet the TOP Club Facilitators:



**David Ward-** I started my career with LCCAP in the fall of 2015 as an AmeriCorps member and eventually worked my way up to a full time staff member. The most enjoyable part of my career is building relationships with my clients and to be able to see how they are progressing in achieving their goals. I love giving back to my community by volunteering my time through community service. Fun fact about me is that I have started my own organization at Slippery Rock University called “Kings Org.” which is a mentoring organization for the freshman that come on campus.

**Kimberly Kliem-** Hello! I grew up here in New Castle, Pa. I have worked at Lawrence County Social Services for a little over three years. I have been in the social work field for seven years now. In my free time I enjoy hanging out with my dog, Fredo Corleone. He is a big Saint Bernard, we do everything together. Our favorite thing to do together is go for rides in the car on nice cool days because he does not like the heat. My favorite part about my job is seeing all the kids weekly that I work with. I am involved in several youth programs and each one of them I enjoy because I get to meet so many awesome students each year!



**Melissa Bestwick-** Hi there! I have been with LCSS for almost two years. I work with different populations in several programs, but really enjoy getting out to the schools and working with the youth. I love spending time with my family. My two little ones keep me very busy! Something you may not know about me is that I was a majorette in high school and twirled fire batons. I'm very excited to be working with the TOP Clubs in Lawrence County.

**Kristin Green-** Hi, I have been with LCSS for a little over six years. Of all of the hats I wear at my job, the most rewarding is working with the youth. My favorite hobby is flower arranging and I have won blue ribbons at the Fair for my arrangements! Something you may not know about me- I have been a Girl Scout for 23 years!



# Tips to Staying Healthy this School Year

The school year has started and our “to-do” lists continue to grow: school supplies, school clothes, immunization forms, carpool arrangements, and after school activities. As parents, we can quickly become overwhelmed with the stress of the transition back to school. So here are few tips to follow to help keep you and your children healthy during the school year!

## Tip 1: Wash hands frequently

Research has shown that the most effective way to prevent the spread of illness is to wash our hands. Good hand washing habits start at home. Make sure your children wash their hands often and with soap. They need to understand the importance of clean hands before eating, after using the bathroom, and arriving home from school. For kids, regularly washing their hands can be a fun and entertaining activity and it provides a chance for them to take an active role in their own self-care. Children should wash their hands for 20 seconds, or about how long it takes to sing the happy birthday song (foreverfreckled.com).

## Tip 3: Getting Enough Sleep

Making sure your child gets enough sleep is vital to their emotional, physical and mental health. Getting enough sleep helps children find the focus to learn. Put them to sleep at a reasonable hour. Help them have better sleep by giving them a nice warm bath and reading them books before bed. Limit the use of phones and television close to bed time.

How much sleep someone needs depends on their age. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine has recommended that children aged 6–12 years should regularly sleep 9–12 hours per 24 hours and teenagers aged 13–18 years should sleep 8–10 hours per 24 hours. Students who get enough sleep may have fewer attention and behavior problems (Sleepfoundtaion.org).

*Wishing everyone a healthy school year!*

## Tip 2: Choose foods that help to boost your immune system

Certain fruits and vegetables contain phytonutrients such as vitamin C and carotenoids, which can help to boost your child’s immune system. Strawberries, blueberries, oranges, green beans, and carrots contain antioxidants and phytonutrients that can help to increase your child’s production of infection-fighting white blood cells and interferons which will help them fight off illness. Children are more motivated to try new things when they are involved in the process. Let them go to the store with you and pick out their own snacks for the week. Allowing them to become involved in their own diet will motivate them to try new things.

## Tip 4: Exercise

Make time to play or be active with your kids. Set aside 60 minutes every day to play catch; go for a walk, jog, bike ride, or swim; or play tag. This is always beneficial to parents as well.

- Make sure your kids get enough activity to balance the calories they take in.
- Give them gifts that encourage activity such as sporting equipment, active games, or enroll them in community sports teams.
- Walk with your kids as much as possible to school, after dinner, or walk instead of watching TV.
- Move around at home with your kids – yard work, gardening, or work around the house. Spending quality time with your kids also increases your mood and makes your family feel closer (www.apa.org).

## Grocery Checklist.....

Fruits and vegetables (e.g., apples, bananas, oranges, peaches, strawberries, broccoli, carrots, spinach) Whole grains (e.g., brown rice, oatmeal, whole wheat bread or pasta) Lean proteins (e.g., chicken breast, turkey, fish, lean cuts of beef or pork, beans) Low or nonfat dairy (e.g., low-fat or skim milk, yogurt, and cheese) Healthy fats (e.g., get your fats from fish, nuts, or olive, soybean, or canola oils) Beverages (e.g., plenty of water, fresh juice, tea; limit soda, sweetened juices, and sugary iced tea) (www.apa.org).