

Student Support Services-Mercer

Issue 1.2

Welcome Back to School!

In December 1953, Thurgood Marshall offered the following words, “There is no way you can repay lost school years.” He was arguing before the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Brown v. Board of Education*, as chief legal counsel of the NAACP. With these 11 words, Marshall emphasized the critical importance of education for all students. The extent to which a society values education is the extent to which they prosper; vital to the education of all peoples within a society is mental health and wellness.

Thursday, August 31st was Trenton’s Back to School Extravaganza. NJ4S Mercer was there with school supplies, and provided information on NJ4S programming.



Highlighting Our Areas of Focus

4 Areas of Focus for Prevention Consultants to be trained in evidence-based models:

- Mental Health and Wellness, with a focus on Suicide Prevention
- Anti-Bullying and Violence Prevention, with a focus on how social media manipulates emotions
- Substance Use Prevention
- Sexual Health

To make a referral for these services on behalf of a community organization or school, please contact our office at (609) 394-5157, and for further information on services provided through the NJ4S- Mercer hub, contact Program Director Michael Lovaglio at ext. 2149 or via email at MLovaglio@cctrenton.org.

Advisory Board Update

The NJ4S Advisory Board voted unanimously on the following Positive Action curricula:

- Bullying and drug prevention
- Conflict resolution
- Classroom management
- Climate education for elementary, middle, and high school students, parents, faculty, and staff

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Meet the Team

**Suzette Andre,
Prevention Consultant,**

worked as Instructional Assistant & Interpreter in Hamilton Township public schools for 5 years. She was afforded the awesome opportunity to serve as Internship Program Coordinator for the Environmental Stewards Program. Under the NJ Department of Health & Agriculture, Suzette worked with Trenton youth to study food scarcity and its effects in urban culture. She is excited to be a part of the NJ4S initiative.

**Lisbeth Orellana,
Scheduling Coordinator,**

recently graduated from Rider University with a major in Psychology. She is currently the youth leader at her church and previously worked as an after-school counselor for Princeton Young Achievers. Lisbeth is dedicated to providing support to her community. She looks forward to help advocate for mental health.

**Britni Dash,
Prevention Consultant,**

has worked in the social services field for 18 years. Over the course of this time, she has worked with at risk youth, adults within a Forensics program, and as a group home manager for dually diagnosed adults. Britni has dedicated her career to advocacy for those in need.

Resource Recommendation

Kate Woodsome, “American teens are unwell because American society in unwell”:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2023/02/15/teen-girls-mental-health-suicide/> &

“3 mental health wins light the way to wellness”:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2023/09/01/mental-health-wins/>.

Michael Azerrad, “My Time With Kurt Cobain”: <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/personal-history/my-time-with-kurt-cobain>.

Debby Waldman, “More obituaries acknowledge suicide as openness to mental health grows”:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/wellness/2023/08/20/suicide-obituary-grief-transparency/>.

Have a Resource Recommendation? Send Michael an email at MLovaqlio@cctrenton.org