

Quarter 4 2026



hello
SUMMER



**Teamwork
Makes The
Dream Work!**

JJC Newsletter

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Since 1976, JJC provided several thousands of children and youth programming through an array of in-home, out of home, community and school based services focusing on intervention, prevention, and community based services. JJC is a non-profit, multi-service organization dedicated to the safety and welfare of vulnerable children, youth and families in Philadelphia.

OUR MISSION
To prevent children and youth from entering the child welfare and juvenile justice system through supportive services in their homes, community and in schools.



WELCOME NEW EMPLOYEES



Welcome to our newest members of the JJC community:

03/09/2026 - Arianna Blaylock IPS-NW Case Manager

03/09/2026 - Ashley Woods IPS-SW Trauma Coordinator

04/09/2026 - Kyia Davis Truancy Case Manager

05/05/2026 - Charlene Holmes IHD Case Worker

05/13/2026 - Ray Styles, AERC Supervisor

06/16/2026 - Kadeem Montgomery, AERC Youth Engagement Specialist



BE INSPIRED!

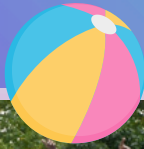


Huge kudos to these employees celebrating anniversaries:

Stacey Cassidy (Adoption-Social Worker) 7-year work anniversary
Thursday, May 14th

Keysha Smith (IPS-SW- Counselor) 4-year work anniversary
Sunday, May 17th

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Message from the Executive Director Jeanine Glasgow

As I reflected on the stories throughout this newsletter, I realized they all have one thing in common. They are not simply stories about our programs—they are stories about people. They are about young people who found hope, families who found support, and staff who chose to show up each day believing that one caring adult can make a difference. Whether it's a youth joining the military, becoming the first in their family to attend college, or simply taking the next positive step forward, these successes remind me why I continue to do this work. My "why" has always been the belief that every child deserves someone who refuses to give up on them.

As we begin a new fiscal year, I encourage each of you to take a moment and reflect on your own "why." What inspired you to choose a career of service? What keeps you coming back, even on the difficult days? I also hope this newsletter serves as a reminder that, while many of our staff work in schools, homes, courtrooms, and communities across Philadelphia, we are all part of one JJC family. Every program has a unique role, but we share one mission. My hope is that we continue to break down silos, learn from one another, celebrate each other's successes, and ensure that every employee—whether at our main office or an off-site location—feels connected, valued, and proud to be part of something bigger than themselves.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to our mission and to the children and families we have the privilege to serve. As we move into this new fiscal year together, let us continue to lead with compassion, work as one team, and remember that the greatest impact we make isn't found in what we accomplish—it's found in the lives we help transform.

Jeanine
Executive Director





JJC PROGRAMS



AERC: JJC's Aftercare Evening Reporting Center, launched in March 2020, serves justice-involved youth ages 16-20 who are completing probation requirements or working to prevent re-placement in the juvenile justice system. Operating Monday-Friday from 4-8 p.m. (with community service on select Saturdays), the program provides case management, life skills, education and employment coaching, pro-social activities, and behavioral health linkages to help participants remain arrest-free and successfully transition forward, with referrals made through probation officers, judges, public defenders, or district attorneys.

Behavioral Health Services: JJC's Behavioral Health Program provides children and adolescents in Philadelphia County with psychiatric and psychological services, including evaluations, therapy, and behavioral rehabilitation, using trauma-informed, evidence-based practices such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. For nearly 20 years, as a licensed outpatient provider, JJC has offered comprehensive supports including medication management, group and individual therapy, and family psychotherapy.

CERC: JJC's Community Evening Resource Center in Germantown serves youth ages 10-17 from 6 p.m.-2 a.m., providing a safe space with structured activities that promote positive development through creative, educational, and wellness programming while addressing violence prevention and life skills. It also supports curfew-violating youth referred by Philadelphia Police in the 5th, 14th, 35th, and 39th districts, offering guidance, safe transport, and resources for families to help youth make healthier choices.

The Juvenile Justice Center (JJC) Community Schools Program at Edmonds School is committed to supporting students, families, and faculty by removing barriers to learning and strengthening the connection between home, school, and community. Through intentional collaboration with school leadership and staff, JJC provides both Attendance and General Case Management programs that support and promote student engagement, family involvement, and academic success. Our presence at Edmonds extends beyond case management, as we actively create opportunities for families to feel informed, supported, and connected to their child's educational experience.

JJC's Department of Permanency Planning (DOPP) has been facilitating child adoptions since 1994 through the Pennsylvania Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network (SWAN).

Foster Care: JJC's Foster Care Program licenses and certifies resource homes to provide temporary, supportive care for children and youth from birth to age 21 who cannot remain with their birth parents or guardians due to circumstances such as loss, incarceration, or poverty. The program's primary goal is permanency—whether through reunification, kinship care, adoption, or legal custodianship—and JJC is currently seeking resource parents for older youth, LGBTQIA youth, and youth with specialized behavioral and emotional health needs.

Home Based Detention Services: JJC's In-Home Detention (IHD) program, in partnership with Philadelphia Family Court, has served justice-involved youth for over 30 years by providing intensive home-based case management and mentorship. Youth spend up to 22.5 hours per week with a dedicated case worker, engaging in one-on-one and group sessions focused on goal setting, life skills, leadership, education, employment readiness, cultural awareness, community service, and character building to address underlying issues and support positive development.

Intensive Prevention Services in Southwest and Northwest Philadelphia: JJC's Intensive Prevention Services (IPS), launched in 2011, serves youth ages 10–19 who are at risk of drifting into delinquency by providing in-home family counseling, site-based programming, and community service engagement. Offered four times a week, the program partners with schools, diversionary programs, and police districts to reduce the school-to-prison pipeline, while teaching life skills, character development, and the 7 C's curriculum—competency, connections, coping, compassion, character, control, and confidence.

Parent Empowerment Program: JJC's Parent Empowerment Program is designed to empower parents of all ages to build their confidence and competency skills as parents.

The mission of the program is to help parents recognize and respond lovingly and appropriately to their children's developmental needs at various ages and stages of child development. Our classes are designed to strengthen the relationship between parents and their children and reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect.

Truancy Intervention and Prevention Services: JJC provides a rapid three tier intervention and prevention service to children and youth that have been identified as being truant or at risk of being truant from school. JJC provides case management services to families whose children are experiencing problems with attending school on a regular and consistent basis. Our case managers work within schools in the Northwest region of Philadelphia. JJC truancy case managers work in collaboration with the identified schools, the Department of Human Services, and Regional Truancy Court to help eliminate the barriers impacting school attendance and adhering to Pennsylvania's Act 138.



Staff Spotlight

La-Toya Burton



Please join us in recognizing and celebrating Latoya Burton for her 9 years of dedicated service as the Truancy Administrative Assistant with our TIPS program.

Over the years, Latoya has provided tremendous support not only to the TIPS team, but also to our administrative team. Through her hard work, consistency, she has built meaningful relationships and made a lasting impact on so many people she has worked alongside. Throughout her time in this role, we have had the opportunity to watch Latoya grow both professionally and personally, and we are proud of all she has accomplished.

While her presence between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. in the Truancy Department will truly be missed, we are fortunate that Latoya will continue to be part of the JJC family in her role as the CERC Receptionist and Administrative Assistant.

Please join us in wishing Latoya continued success as she spreads her wings and begins this next chapter. We thank her for her years of service, commitment, and the impact she has had on JJC and the many staff and families she has supported along the way.



Congratulations, Latoya, and best wishes in your new position!





CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

MIKKAIL EVANS - IPS NORTHWEST



Mikkaill Evans' story is a powerful example of how one poor decision does not have to define a young person's future. Less than a year ago, when Mikkaill entered the IPS Program after a retail theft incident, he already possessed many strengths, including strong academic abilities, leadership potential, and a desire to succeed. During his time in the program, Mikkaill maintained excellent attendance, remained actively engaged in group activities, and consistently demonstrated respect toward staff and peers. He embraced opportunities to develop his communication and leadership skills, often serving as a positive role model for other youth in the program. His dedication to personal growth, combined with his strong academic performance and commitment to his future goals, made him stand out as a young man determined to move forward in a positive direction.

Instead of allowing one mistake to hold him back, Mikkaill used the experience as motivation to become a better version of himself. Through the support of the IPS Program, his family, and his own hard work, he strengthened important life skills such as discipline, accountability, time management, responsibility, and decision-making. He learned the value of structure, perseverance, and staying focused on long-term goals. Today, Mikkaill is serving in the United States Marine Corps and is currently stationed in Cuba. His success reflects not only his personal determination but also his ability to learn from challenges and turn setbacks into opportunities for growth. Mikkaill's journey serves as a reminder that with the right support, guidance, and mindset, young people can overcome obstacles and achieve great things.





PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

IPS SOUTHWEST



Special Thanks to IPS Southwest by Tykeyah Guinn, Program Director

I would like to take this moment to highlight the small but mighty IPS Southwest Team. This year brought its share of challenges, but with a team like mine, we pushed through, stood strong, and came out on top. Our commitment to the community never wavered.

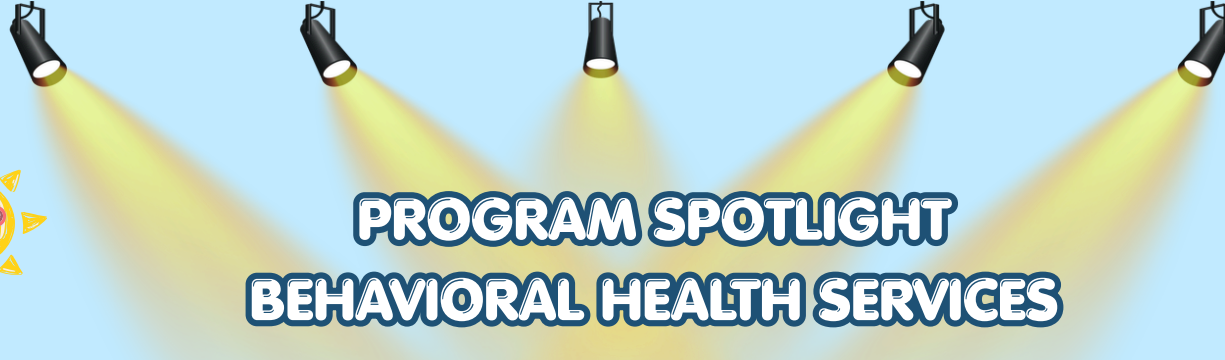
Together, we raised funds and provided support to families for both Thanksgiving and Christmas, ensuring that those in need felt seen, valued, and cared for.

Throughout the year, we touched the lives of countless children and young people who will forever remember the support, love, and nurturing they received from our staff not only on program days, but long after. Our impact extends beyond the walls of our building; it lives in the confidence, stability, and hope we help cultivate in every youth we encounter.

On March 26th, 2026, the IPS Southwest Team once again stood united—this time to raise awareness for Epilepsy. By proudly wearing purple for Purple Day, we joined the global effort to reduce stigma, educate our community, and show solidarity with those affected.

To my team: Walida, Keysha, Wayne, Canaan, Shaila, James, and Ashley your dedication, compassion, and unwavering commitment make all the difference. Small but mighty doesn't just describe our size, it describes our heart, our impact, and our purpose. My Galaxy is bright because I'm surrounded by STARS!!





PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

An Open Letter to IBHS (and BHRS): BY BHS PROGRAM DIRECTOR, AMY TRASK

After 30 years of this service and a very difficult decision for JJC to end this service line, it is most timely for me to share my reflections on providing behavioral health services that “wrap around” children and families.

IBHS - you have been like an angry toddler. Pushing through the terrible twos (3s, 4s and 5s) and making everyone equally miserable and joyous. The way we have to write out the services per month, comply with authorizations, know new regulations, merge with our old BHRS knowledge and work with CBH gatekeeping were definitely completely miserable. Meeting the kids, working with consistent school staff, making clinical recommendations that matter and supporting kids and families with the areas most important to them were totally joyous.

You are a system that began as a free-for-all for each provider, with kids all over the city, serving many schools. I remember specific staff who had preferences to “pick up” the kids in Southwest or West Philly or the far Northeast. TSS services were abundant. Everyone did all they could. This went on for 20+ years.

Then the shift...first to IBHS in January 2020 then to the regionalized system in September 2020. Causing headaches and heartache as we transferred kids and families to new providers, departed some professional collaborations and started all over with our best professional and engagement skills.

Let’s not forget COVID-19 that came in with impeccable timing. We learned we are “essential” workers and our services must continue. We set up telehealth for 7 -year-olds with ADHD, sent BHTs to the homes to support during virtual school hours, distributed go-bags and ran a virtual support group for staff. Nothing would ever be the same.

Through it all, there was a difference in the lives of children and families. Old and new IBHS staff rose to the occasion. Behavioral Health hired 4 staff in 2020-2021-all staying two or more years. Our veteran staff remained here at JJC as steadfast and diligent as ever.



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The IBHS program had the absolute best staff. The staff pushed this program forward. The staff provided services and supports. The staff supplied letters and progress summaries. The staff researched resources for novel interventions/strategies, housing, food and summer camps. The time, the effort, the energy. All for one reason - the kids. Tireless hours of work and worry, paperwork, planning and connections.

IBHS brought with it in its six years of life at JJC endless changes, updates and shifts. Medicaid requirements have changed. CBH (the insurance funder) changed. Documentation changed. Authorizations changed. Everyone worked to keep up. Throwing in everything, including the kitchen sink to make it work, give quality care and sustain therapeutic relationships.

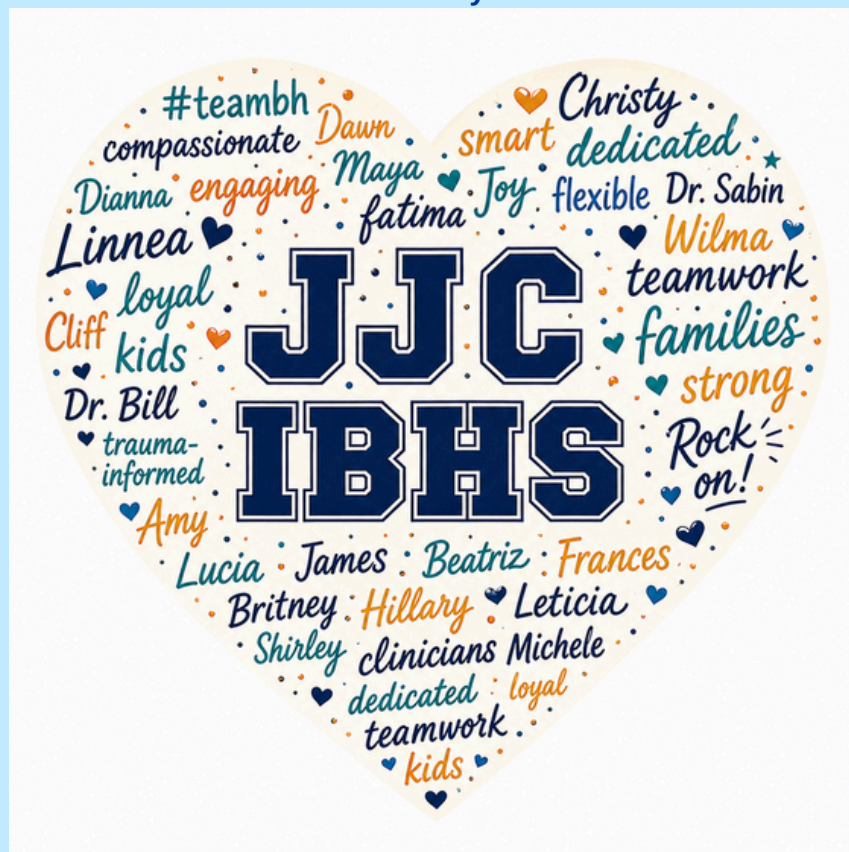
IBHS created new licensing, audits and credentialing. The back-end nonsense no one seems to care about. Continuous requests to submit an updated policy, staff roster or title the submission packets differently.

IBHS, it is bittersweet to see you go from JJC. We won't miss the claims processing, the authorization denials or constant red tape changes; however, we will miss the opportunity to get out there into the world of kids and families and provide this service across all their settings. The staff have been truly magnificent throughout the almost 30 years. Facing challenges with grace and supporting kids and families like ultimate heroes. To each of you, best of all the things in what's to come...always. Your work was appreciated and you were cared for.

Goodbye, IBHS.

Love from,

Amy



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CLIENT SPOTLIGHT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

Najah, is a part of the JJC outpatient program. She graduated with honors from Philadelphia High School for Girls. She was accepted and will attend the prestigious HBCU, Xavier University located in New Orleans, Louisiana this fall 2026. Najah is the first generation in her family to attend college. Her family is very proud of her accomplishments.





WE'RE HIRING!

OUTPATIENT THERAPIST

Make a Difference in the Lives of Youth & Families

Join the Juvenile Justice Center of Philadelphia and be part of a compassionate team dedicated to providing therapy and support to youth and families. Together, we heal, empower, and build stronger futures.

WHY JOIN JJC?



MEANINGFUL WORK

Impact the lives of youth and families every day.



SUPPORTIVE TEAM

Collaborate with a caring and dedicated team.



PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Opportunities for learning, supervision, and development.



COMMUNITY IMPACT

Strengthen our community through compassionate care.



FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING

In-person sessions at Coulter Street and virtual options.



WE'RE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE WHO:

- ✓ Has strong clinical and communication skills
- ✓ Values empathy, teamwork, and community impact
- ✓ Is experienced working with youth and families
- ✓ Holds a Master's degree in Counseling, Social Work, Psychology, or related field
- ✓ At least two (2) years verified experience in the mental health field
- ✓ One year post Master's degree experience providing therapy/counseling to children and youth preferred
- ✓ Willing to provide in person sessions at Coulter Street and virtual sessions



RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- Providing therapy and support to youth and families
- Collaborating with community partners and treatment teams
- Maintaining documentation and treatment planning
- Participating in supervision and crisis response
- Building strong therapeutic relationships through engagement and outreach



READY TO JOIN OUR TEAM?

Send your resume and cover letter to:



jjchr@juvenilejustice.org



Serving children and families
in Philadelphia since 1976



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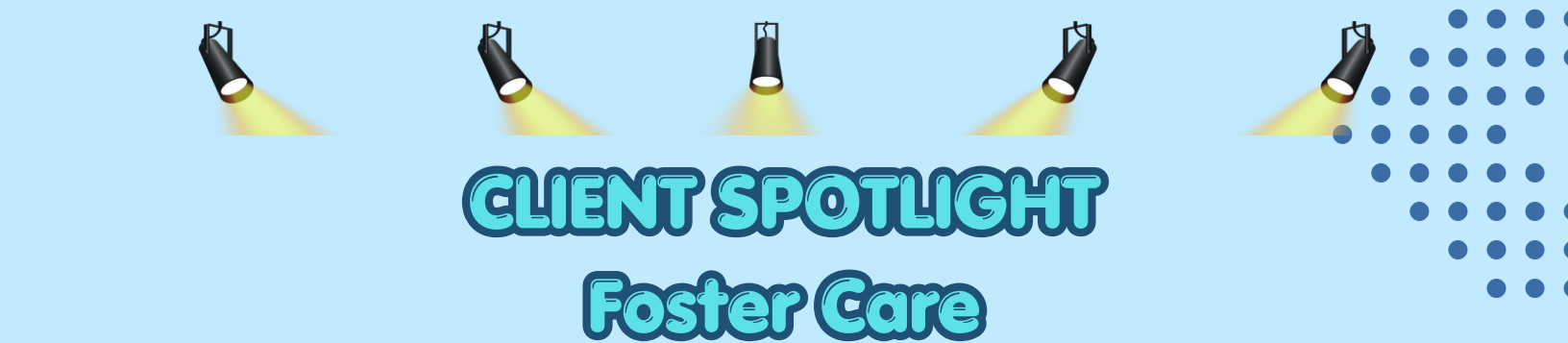


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Healing today.
**Building stronger
futures tomorrow.**



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CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

Foster Care



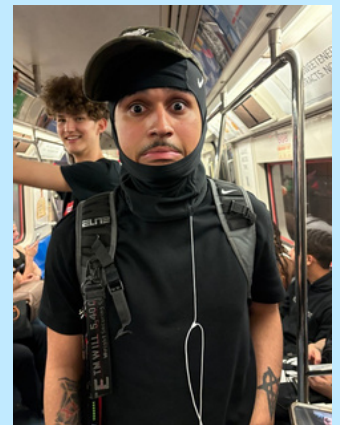
Celebrating Hex's Journey

Hex has spent nearly the past year in a JJC foster home, and during that time, he has achieved some truly meaningful milestones. Since moving in with his resource parent, Mr. Terrence Weeks, he graduated high school, secured vital documents from the island where he was born, obtained his state ID, and gained employment—all while working toward building a stable and independent future. Like many youth in care, Hex felt the pressure of turning 18 and needing to have his life figured out, often without the guidance or support to navigate those expectations. Through this, our JJC resource parent played a key role in helping Hex find his footing. By providing structure, consistency, and encouragement in his daily routine, they helped him grow more confident and focused in his day-to-day life. They also supported him as he explored different career paths, considered furthering his education, and ultimately made the decision to enlist in the U.S. Army.

Today marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter for Hex. He has left our JJC foster home and traveled to North Carolina, where he will complete boot camp before moving on to job training as an Army Private.

As he moves forward, Hex carries with him a year full of growth, accomplishments, and memories. He expressed gratitude for the support and care he received from his resource parent as he developed into a young adult.

While we will greatly miss his sense of humor and the lighthearted energy he brought to our program, we are incredibly proud of all he has achieved and the path he has chosen. We wish him continued success and hope he stays connected as he navigates this next stage of his journey.





PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

JJC Community School

Athletes & Excellence Event Celebrates Student Success

The JJC Community School at Franklin S. Edmonds recently hosted its Athletes & Excellence Family Forum, bringing together students, families, coaches, and staff for an afternoon of celebration, community engagement, and school pride.

The event honored our PYB (Philadelphia Youth Basketball) Silver Champion Basketball Team and provided families with an opportunity to connect with coaches, learn about program opportunities, and celebrate the accomplishments of our student-athletes. A highlight of the event was the unveiling of the team's new basketball uniforms, followed by a special photo session recognizing the hard work and dedication of the players throughout the season. Families participated in a coaches' presentation and question-and-answer session, where students received encouragement about the importance of commitment, teamwork, sportsmanship, and personal growth both on and off the court. Staff also shared information about available resources and opportunities to support students during the summer months, including tutoring and basketball camp opportunities.

The event concluded with a fun and engaging Coaches vs. Coaches basketball game that brought excitement, laughter, and community spirit to the gymnasium. Families enjoyed refreshments while celebrating the achievements of the team and the positive culture being built within the program. The success of the event reflects the dedication of our students, families, coaches, school staff, and the CS team members (Darell Reid, Iyana Odums, Tynesha Thomas) who worked together to create a meaningful experience for all involved. We are proud of our student-athletes and look forward to continuing to support their growth, leadership, and success both in the classroom and in extracurricular activities.



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PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

AERC

AERC Continues to Empower Youth Through Growth, Opportunity, and Engagement

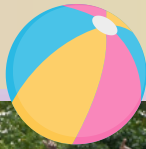
The Aftercare Evening Reporting Center (AERC) continues to provide youth with meaningful opportunities to build skills, explore career pathways, and strengthen their overall well-being.

Throughout the year, participants have achieved important milestones, including securing employment opportunities, advancing educational goals, obtaining learner's permits, and demonstrating growth in communication, accountability, and self-advocacy. These accomplishments reflect the hard work of AERC youth and the ongoing support of staff and community partners.

AERC offers a variety of evidence-based programs and life skills activities focused on workforce development, financial literacy, conflict resolution, driver's education, employability training, and personal growth. Through partnerships with organizations such as JEVS Career Connected Learning, Maleek Jackson Boxing Gym, Rock to the Future, The Reawakening Agency, and others, youth gain access to valuable resources that support their development both inside and outside the classroom. Career readiness remains a key focus of the program. Youth have participated in resume-building workshops, interview preparation, job search assistance, apprenticeship exploration, and community job fairs. Several participants successfully enrolled in summer employment opportunities through JEVS Career Connected Learning.

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PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT AERC

In addition to educational and workforce programming, youth have enjoyed recreational and enrichment experiences including sporting events, fitness activities, community outings, music production, cooking classes, and mentoring opportunities such as Makeover Mondays.

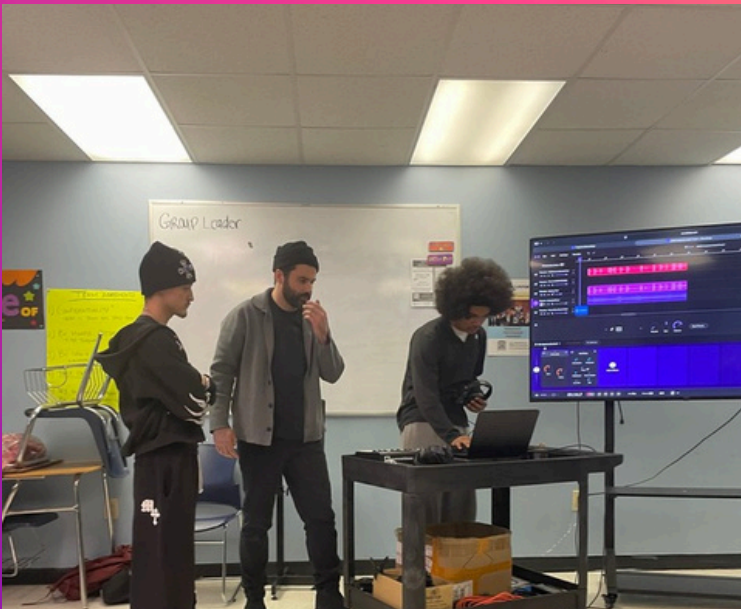
As AERC prepares for its 3rd Annual AERC-Que on June 30, the program remains committed to helping youth build confidence, develop life skills, and create pathways to long-term success. Together with community partners, families, and staff, AERC continues to create opportunities that empower young people to reach their goals.

AERC By the Numbers

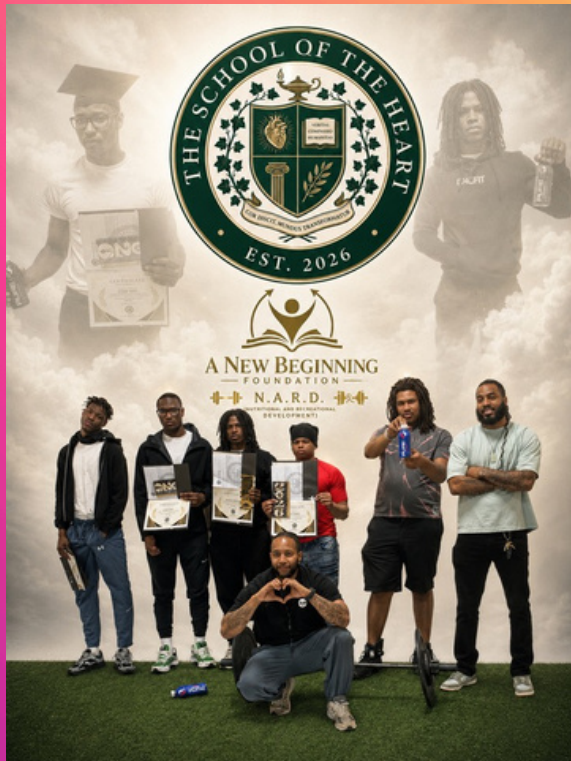
- 5 youth enrolled in JEVS summer employment
- Multiple youth secured jobs
- New staff additions
- 3rd Annual AERC-Que on June 30

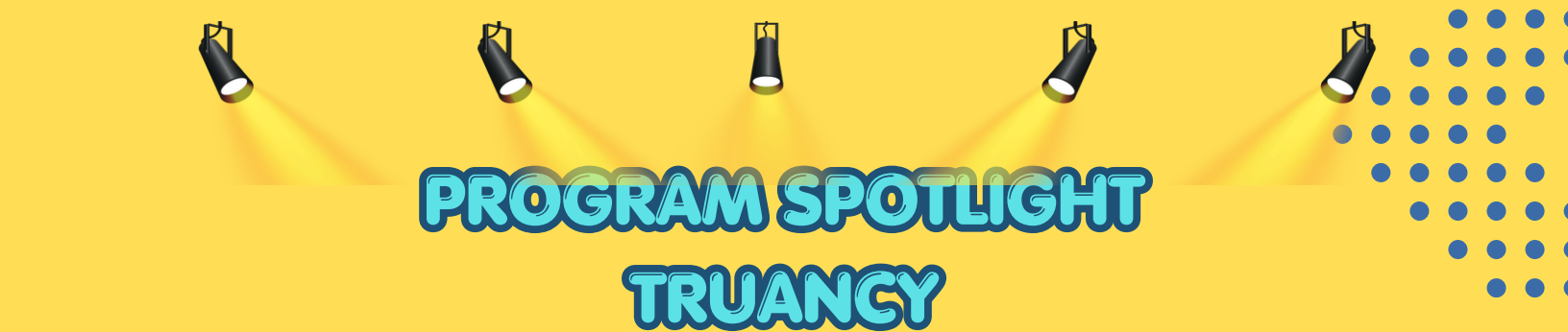


AERC Photo Gallery



AERC Photo Gallery





PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

TRUANCY

JJC's Truancy Program Celebrates Positive Outcomes for Youth and Families, by John Alicea, Program Director

Since April, the Truancy Department has been working diligently alongside families whose cases were referred to JJC through the court system. Each family faces unique challenges that contribute to school attendance concerns, including transportation difficulties, housing instability, behavioral challenges, health concerns, pregnancies, educational barriers, and, in some cases, a lack of communication with schools regarding absences.

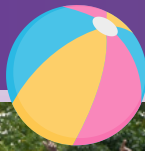
Our Truancy Case Managers have worked closely with parents, schools, and community partners to address these barriers and develop solutions that support students in returning to school consistently. Through ongoing collaboration, advocacy, and support, families have been connected to valuable resources and services designed to promote educational success.

We are proud to share that since April, 25 truancy cases have been successfully discharged due to substantial improvement in school attendance and academic engagement. This is a significant achievement, as discharge from Truancy Court requires students to demonstrate consistent school attendance and progress toward their educational goals.

Behind every successful case is a dedicated team working tirelessly to support children and families. Our Case Managers and Supervisor conduct home visits, school visits, meetings with teachers and school counselors, and ongoing communication with families to identify and address barriers to attendance. They also coordinate referrals for services such as therapy, medical appointments, and other community-based supports to help meet the unique needs of each family. As Director, I would like to recognize the outstanding commitment of our Truancy Team. Their dedication, compassion, and persistence, combined with the active participation of parents and school personnel, have made these successes possible. Together, we help students overcome challenges, reconnect with their education, and build a stronger foundation for their future. We thank our staff, families, and community partners for their continued collaboration and commitment to student success.



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Fiscal Updates by Kathy Seibert, CFO

The first-floor renovations at the Coulter Street building are nearing completion, with a tentative Open House scheduled for July 1, 2026. This project marks Phase One of a four-phase renovation plan that will be completed over the coming years. Within the next five years, the Coulter Street office will benefit from fully updated electrical systems and HVAC infrastructure. These improvements will greatly enhance the comfort, efficiency, and functionality of the building for both staff and clients. JJC recently launched a new client database designed to capture and manage client information across all JJC programs. The initiative began in January and continues to be customized to meet program-specific needs. One valuable insight from this project is the realization that many individuals and families utilize multiple JJC services. This database will help strengthen coordination across programs, improve referrals, and ensure families have greater access to the full range of support services JJC provides.

Staff Recognition



A special thank you and shout-out to Retna Slater, Fiscal Manager. While she may work quietly behind the scenes, her kindness and generosity are felt throughout the building. Staff and clients alike appreciate the homemade desserts she thoughtfully provides each day. Many of our CERC youth look forward to these treats, which bring a little extra warmth and joy to their day. Retna's thoughtfulness has become a bright spot for many, and we are grateful for all she does. Thank you, Retna—we truly appreciate you and, of course, your delicious baked goods!

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JJC In the Community

Photos from the Stenton Park
Job and Resource Fair



Photos from the DHS Parent and
Youth Resource Fair





CERC



COMMUNITY EVENING RESOURCE CENTER

SUMMER NIGHTS

AT CERC



The Day Ends. We Begin.



FREE

**SUMMER EVENING
YOUTH PROGRAM**

FOR AGES 10-17

**SERVING YOUTH IN THE
14TH, 35TH, & 39TH
POLICE DISTRICTS
IN NW PHILADELPHIA**

WHAT YOUTH CAN EXPECT



HOME COOKED MEAL



FREE TRANSPORTATION HOME



**FUN & EDUCATIONAL
ACTIVITIES**



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6-9 PM**

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PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

CERC

JJC Family Services Awarded Second Community Evening Resource Center (CERC) in North Central Philadelphia

JJC Family Services is proud to announce that we have been awarded the opportunity to operate a second Community Evening Resource Center (CERC), expanding our commitment to Philadelphia's youth and families with a new location at 1601 Cecil B. Moore Avenue in North Central Philadelphia. This exciting expansion marks a significant milestone for our organization and reflects the confidence placed in JJC Family Services to continue providing safe, engaging, and empowering spaces where young people can thrive.

The new CERC will build upon the success of our Germantown location by offering youth a welcoming environment filled with mentorship, educational enrichment, life skills development, recreation, family engagement, and violence prevention programming. Preparation of the new facility is already underway, and the site will undergo a complete transformation similar to the recent renovation of the first floor at JJC's Coulter Street location, creating a vibrant, youth-centered space designed to inspire learning, creativity, and personal growth.

This achievement reflects the passion, dedication, and hard work of the entire JJC Family Services team, whose unwavering commitment to Philadelphia's youth continues to make a lasting impact. It also would not have been possible without the support and collaboration of our community partners, whose shared vision and investment in our mission have helped make this exciting expansion a reality. We are deeply grateful for the trust placed in our organization and look forward to extending our services to even more youth and families in North Central Philadelphia.

Site preparations are expected to continue throughout the summer, with an anticipated opening in August 2026. This expansion represents more than the opening of a new facility—it is an investment in the future of our city's youth. We look forward to welcoming young people, families, and community members into this exciting new space as JJC Family Services continues its mission of strengthening families, empowering youth, and building safer, healthier communities throughout Philadelphia.





PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

CERC

SUMMER



Healing, Hope, and Youth Voice: CERC Youth Participate in Peace Walk and Essay Contest

This spring, youth from JJC's Community Evening Resource Center (CERC) participated in two meaningful opportunities focused on healing, community engagement, and violence prevention.

On May 5, CERC youth joined community members, partners, and advocates for the annual Peace Walk. The event brought together individuals from across Philadelphia to promote peace, honor lives impacted by violence, and encourage unity throughout our neighborhoods. Youth participants walked alongside community leaders and residents while reflecting on the importance of creating safer, stronger communities for everyone.

Building on the themes of hope and healing, CERC once again partnered with the Show Me The Way Foundation for the "I Have a Suggestion" Essay Contest. Over the course of six weeks, youth participated in workshops led by Ms. Tina Collins, Founder of the Show Me The Way Foundation. This year's workshops focused on healing from trauma, including the effects of gun violence and other life challenges that impact young people and families.





Through thoughtful discussions, writing exercises, and personal reflection, participants explored ways to overcome adversity, support one another, and contribute to positive change within their communities. The essays demonstrated remarkable growth, insight, and resilience as youth shared their perspectives on healing and hope.

Congratulations to this year's essay contest winners: Mekhi (1st Place), Kyair (2nd Place), and Zyhaire (3rd Place). We are incredibly proud of their accomplishments and the dedication shown by all participants throughout the program.

As a result of their hard work, participants will have the opportunity to travel to Harrisburg to meet with lawmakers and share their ideas for creating safer and healthier communities.

JJC Family Services extends its gratitude to Ms. Tina Collins and the Show Me The Way Foundation for their continued partnership and commitment to empowering youth voices. Together, these experiences helped our young people recognize that healing is possible, their voices matter, and they have the power to make a difference in their communities.





PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

CERC



JJC Youth Visit the Pennsylvania State Capitol

On June 16, JJC Family Services CERC and IPS youth traveled to Harrisburg for an exciting and educational visit to the Pennsylvania State Capitol. The day provided our youth with an opportunity to engage directly with state lawmakers, learn more about government, and celebrate the accomplishments of participants in the Show Me The Way Foundation Essay Contest.

During the visit, our group met with Pennsylvania State Representatives, Roni Green, 190 District, who hosted our trip. Youth also met with Carol Kazeem, Darisha Parker and Andre Carroll. The legislators took time to speak with our youth and hear their perspectives on issues affecting their communities, particularly gun violence and its impact on young people. Essay contest winners Mekhi and Zyhaire were among those who shared their thoughts and experiences, offering heartfelt and articulate responses that impressed everyone in attendance.

The group also enjoyed a guided tour of the Capitol Building, where youth were fascinated by the building's history, architecture, and artwork. One of the highlights of the day was being formally recognized on the House floor during session, an honor that made the experience even more memorable. The youth also had the opportunity to take photos with Representative Ronnie Green and other elected officials.

We are incredibly proud of our young people for their behavior, engagement, and willingness to participate throughout the day. Despite an early morning departure, they remained attentive, respectful, and eager to learn from the various speakers and experiences offered during the trip. We would also like to express our sincere gratitude to Tina Collins and The Show Me The Way Foundation for their dedication to addressing gun violence, trauma, and healing within our communities. Through the essay contest and related activities, our youth have gained a deeper understanding of trauma, how it affects individuals and communities, and the importance of healing. We have witnessed tremendous growth in our participants as they explored these topics and reflected on their own experiences.

As we move forward, the next phase of this work will focus on civic education and helping youth better understand the legislative process. Through continued learning opportunities, our participants will gain knowledge about laws, bills, and how ideas become public policy, empowering them to become informed and engaged citizens.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this meaningful experience possible.



CERC Photo Gallery

Photos from our 2nd Annual Peace Walk that was held on May 5th, as well as from the essay contest awards ceremony that followed.



CERC Photo Gallery

Photos from our trip to the state capitol in Harrisburg, PA



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About CERC



The Evening Resource Center (CERC), provides a safe, supportive space where youth can connect, learn and grow through academic support, recreation, enrichment activities, mentorship, meals, and life skills development.



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**SITE
MANAGER**



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MENTOR**

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IMPACT*



**MUST PASS
BACKGROUND CHECKS**

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**MUST BE
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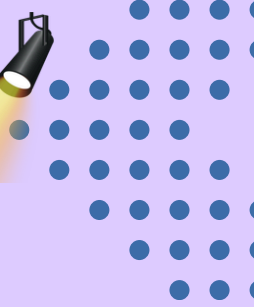


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PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Parent Empowerment

Parenting Classes Are More Than Court Mandates

How connection, empathy, and community are helping Latino fathers rebuild relationships with their children in a Spanish parenting enrichment group centered on healing and hope.

by Migdalia Hernandez Perez, Program Director

There is a common misconception that parenting classes only exist because the court system requires them. Many people assume that the fathers who attend these groups are simply there because they have no other choice. After working closely with Latino fathers in a Spanish parenting enrichment group on Girard Avenue, I have learned something very different.

Parenting classes are not simply about compliance. They are about connection, healing, accountability, and hope. Every Wednesday, I walk into a room filled with fathers between the ages of nineteen and their late fifties. Some have experienced hardship, trauma, incarceration, family separation, or personal struggles that caused them to feel as though they had fallen through the cracks of society.

Yet despite their challenges, they continue showing up. And when I arrive, they are waiting.

Some of the fathers ask the nurse in the lobby if I am coming that day. They look forward to our groups, not because they are forced to attend, but because they know they are entering a space where they are seen, heard, and valued.

One of the most important lessons we discuss in our parenting groups is that communication with children does not begin with talking. It begins with connection.

Many parents believe they can simply ask their children questions and expect them to open up emotionally. However, children communicate more naturally when they feel emotionally safe, understood, and connected to their parents first. Connection creates trust, and trust creates communication.

In our groups, the fathers share their testimonies openly. We discuss empathy, emotional regulation, accountability, family relationships, and parenting styles that meet both the parent's and child's emotional needs. The conversations are honest and deeply personal. Many fathers reflect on how they were raised and how they want something different for their own children.

Continued on the next page



What makes these moments powerful is that healing often begins when people no longer feel judged.

Over time, the fathers begin recognizing the value of family in new ways. They begin understanding how love, patience, empathy, and consistency can strengthen relationships with their children. They speak openly about wanting to “fix themselves,” not out of shame, but out of hope for becoming better fathers and better men.

The group itself has become more than a parenting class. It has become a community. Each week, I try to create an environment that feels welcoming and human. I organize raffles that include hygiene products such as soap, shampoo, body wash, toothbrushes, cologne, and other everyday necessities. Sometimes I bring clothing donations or purchase items the fathers truly need. I also bring donuts, fruit punch, cafecito, and occasionally rotisserie chicken with hot buns for the group to share.

These may seem like small gestures, but they communicate something important: dignity matters.

When people feel cared for, they are more willing to trust, open up, and grow.

I do not show up every Wednesday simply because it is part of my job. I show up because I care deeply about the fathers I serve and the families connected to them. I believe parenting education can transform lives when it is rooted in empathy rather than punishment.

Too often, society focuses only on what men have done wrong. Rarely do we pause to acknowledge their efforts to heal, reconnect, and become more emotionally present for their children.

The fathers in our parenting enrichment program remind me every week that people are capable of growth when they are met with compassion, consistency, and understanding. Parenting classes are not about creating perfect parents. They are about helping parents build healthier relationships with their children and with themselves.

And sometimes, healing an entire family begins with one conversation in a room full of fathers who simply needed someone to believe in them.



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