

TEAMcorps Backgrounder



For 17 years, Jewish Council for Youth Services has provided Chicago Public High Schools with a free teen program that encourages self-esteem and confidence through mentorship and team building exercises. TEAMcorps, a comprehensive life skills and leadership development curriculum, was developed by JCYS facilitators and equips students with the tools they need to succeed academically in high school and beyond.

Currently working with teens at Mather High School, Ogden International High School, Sullivan High School, William Howard Taft High School and Disney II High School, TEAMcorps provides the following programs:

Life Skills Workshop

In cooperation with classroom teachers, TEAMcorps implements experiential challenge initiatives that build key social and life skills, including effective communication, leadership development, self-confidence, perseverance and goal-setting. Life Skills Workshop uses the framework of Social Emotional Learning (SEL), one of the key components of the Illinois State Board of Education's Comprehensive System of Learning.

At the end of every Life Skills Workshop, participants are asked to benchmark their goals. During the 2012/2013 school year, high school students rated their outcomes:

- 90% of students learned better communication and cooperation skills;
- 89% of students responded that TEAMcorps gave them effective problem-solving techniques;
- 88% learned value of patience and perseverance when trying to reach their goals;
- 70% of students said their schoolwork improved because of TEAMcorps; and
- 84% of students responded that lessons learned during the program will help them in college, jobs and beyond.

Life Skills Inventory

In this program, TEAMcorps helps students identify their own marketable life skills based on their academic achievements, service learning projects, volunteer activities and professional experience. Students enhance their professional skills, participate in mock interviews and are connected with valuable employment resources. The program culminates with students completing their own resume and cover letter for future employment opportunities.

Professional Development

TEAMcorps provides professional development workshops for school staff in topical subject areas that include bullying workshops, morale team building, diversity training and other related areas.

Freshman Orientation

The heart of TEAMcorps is their teambuilding exercises and workshops. Facilitators help with ice-breakers, get-to-know-you sessions and other break-out sessions during summer or freshman orientations.



180 W. Washington, Ste. 1100
Chicago, Illinois 60602

(312) 726.8891, ext. 114
emeyer@jcys.org

JCYS.ORG