



Promoting emotional health and preventing suicide

PRESS RELEASE

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New Partnership To Support Mental Health Of College Students Of Color

Collaboration to provide a framework for improving support for the mental health of college students of color

NEW YORK, Jan. 13, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- Today, The Jed Foundation (JED) and the Steve Fund, two leading mental health organizations, announced a joint plan to provide colleges and universities with recommended practices for improving support for the mental health and emotional well-being of America's college students of color. The announcement is accompanied by the release of new data showing the urgency of improving mental health support for this population.

Newly analyzed data from a 2015 national survey conducted by JED, Partnership for Drug Free Kids and The Jordan Porco Foundation reveals an unmet need in providing mental health support, education and programming that caters to the unique challenges faced by America's college students of color. Based on current research, evidence and expert input, JED and the Steve Fund will develop a comprehensive set of guidelines to enable college decision-makers, administrators, professionals, students and families to offer more effective support for the mental health and emotional well-being of students of color, and help them take action to reduce the shame, prejudice, secrecy and stigma surrounding mental health challenges, and prevent suicide among this student population.

"The partnership between the Steve Fund and The Jed Foundation will allow us to make significant progress in addressing an alarming deficit in effective, culturally relevant and broadly-adopted mental health programming for students of color in our nation's colleges and universities," said Evan Rose, President of the Steve Fund. "Together, we will provide practical, actionable recommendations to stimulate dialogue and best practices that reduce stigma, build knowledge, and support assistance so that young people of color can thrive in higher education environments."

"We are excited to be collaborating with the Steve Fund to help school communities best support the well-being and mental health of students through specific actions and programs that are meaningful, relevant and effective," said John MacPhee, Executive Director, The JED Foundation.

New data show the discrepancies in the first year college experiences of students of color and their peers.

- Caucasian students are more likely than African American and Hispanic students to say they feel more academically prepared than their peers during their first term of college (50% vs. 36% and 39%).
- Caucasian students also are more likely than African American students to feel more emotionally prepared than their peers (35% vs. 23%).
- African American students are more likely than Caucasian students to say that college is not living up to their expectations (57% vs. 46%).
- African American and Hispanic students are more likely than Caucasian students to say that it seems like everyone has college figured out but them (52% and 49% vs. 41%).
- African American students are more likely than Caucasian students to say they tend to keep their feelings about the difficulty of college to themselves (75% vs. 61%).

Over the coming months, the teams will be conducting new research, analyzing existing studies and programming, and working closely with college leaders and mental health practitioners with the goal of developing an integrated and comprehensive set of recommended practices to support the mental health needs of college students of color.

The Steve Fund and The Jed Foundation have also co-produced an infographic illustrating the new data. It can be downloaded at <http://settogo.org/the-research>.

About the Survey

The survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Poll between March 25 and April 17, 2015 among 1,502 students who met the following criteria: 17-20 years old, graduated from high school, currently attends a 2-year or 4-year college in the U.S., currently a first year student/freshman in their second term, and currently attending at least some of their college classes in-person. Data are weighted where necessary by age within gender, race/ethnicity, and region to bring them in line with their actual proportions in the population.

About the Steve Fund

The Steve Fund is the nation's only philanthropic organization focused on promoting the mental health and emotional well-being of young people of color. It prioritizes students transitioning into college, those enrolled in college, and young people transitioning from college into emerging adulthood. The Steve Fund uses programs, research, thought leadership, strategic partnerships, technology innovations and communications to stimulate dialogue and best practices that reduce stigma, build knowledge, and support assistance to its target group of young people. Enhancing the effectiveness of higher education institutions around the emotional and mental health of students from diverse families and communities is critical to the mission of the Steve Fund. Visit <http://www.stevelfund.org/programs/> to view the JED and Steve Fund webinar series for college mental health and student services providers on a set of critical themes related to the mental health of college students of color. Learn more at <http://www.stevelfund.org>. Follow us on social media: [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

About The Jed Foundation

JED is a national nonprofit that exists to protect the emotional health of our country's 40 million high school and college students and reduce the risks of substance abuse and suicide. We collaborate with schools to enhance their mental health and suicide prevention programming and systems; develop expert resources and create powerful partnerships so that students have the support they need, when and how they need it; and educate and empower young adults, families and the community to take action for the cause. Together, we're ensuring America's students grow into thriving adults.

Learn more at www.jedfoundation.org. Check out our programs including: ULifeline (www.ulifeline.org), Half of Us (www.halfofus.com), Love is Louder (www.loveislouder.com), JED Campus Program (www.thecampusprogram.org), and Set to Go (www.settogo.org).

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