



# Overview

A Program of The Justice Education Center, Inc.



# What is ECHO?

An innovative discipline - a system of rules of conduct - that encourages, trains and provides structured opportunities for adults to “connect” to children in their care by modeling and emulating positive character-building behaviors and attitudes.



# Brief History of ECHO

- ECHO was created in 2006 by The Justice Education Center, Inc. (TJEC) with support from the Connecticut General Assembly to address a critical community need for improvements in the way that teachers, coaches and other responsible adults convey positive and consistent core values of empathy, respect, honesty, caring and fairness to young people in school, on and off the field and at home.
- After developing a training program and curriculum targeted initially for coaches, The Center piloted ECHO in numerous CT sites including Bridgeport, Putnam and Hartford.
- In 2008, TJEC expanded ECHO beyond sports to meet a critical need expressed by school administrators and juvenile corrections officials.

# Goals of ECHO

1. To teach educators, coaches, administrators and parents to become positive role models in the classroom, on and off the field and at home using ECHO core values and strategies.
2. To create and support structured opportunities that introduce and empower young people to the myriad avenues available to them to become productive adults through internships, scholarships and performing community service.
3. To correct the negative behaviors of children and adults based on the concepts that winning at all costs is acceptable and that success is equated with material wealth and other superficial qualities.

# 10 ECHO Core Values

- Demonstrating **empathy** so that I will be supportive and understanding of others.
- Acting with **character** and **integrity** by being honest, courageous, sincere and trustworthy.
- Believing that through **hope** and **confidence in myself** I will achieve my goals and overcome any challenges in my life.
- Seeking and pursuing **opportunities** through education, employment, athletics and extra-curricular activities that will help me achieve my full potential.
- Developing **strong, positive relationships** with the important people in my life including teachers, coaches, parents, grandparents, siblings and friends.
- **Condemning bullying** and any other forms of hurtful behavior.
- **Achieving personal health and wellness** through daily exercise and proper nutrition and by making **positive and healthy choices** regarding drugs, sex, alcohol and tobacco.
- **Contributing to my community** by becoming involved in actions and projects that make the world better and resolving conflict in a positive and constructive manner.
- **Advocating for myself and for others** by speaking up and acting against injustices.
- Defining **winning** as competing fairly and giving 100% of my effort on and off the field and defining **success** as the way in which I conduct myself — with empathy, character and hope.

# ECHO in the Classroom

Core Values

Introduced and Reinforced Through:  
Daily Lessons and Teachable  
Moments

Positive Change Acknowledged  
Through: Moments of Greatness

On-Going Reinforcement of  
Positive Change  
Through:  
**Teacher Self Reflection**  
**Student Personal Goal Statements**  
**ECHO Honor Roll**  
**Community Service**

On-Going Resources For Student  
Growth  
Workshops in:  
**Health/Wellness**  
**Adventure Education**  
**Self-Esteem**  
**Sportsmanship**



# How is ECHO Different?

- ECHO focuses on the development of the adults that play a key role in the lives of children.
- ECHO is not only a collection of program strategies, but a discipline that provides a guiding philosophy for all interactions with children.
- ECHO program strategies are customized for the context in which they are delivered; while the core values are the same, the way they are delivered differs from the classroom setting to varsity and recreational sports and other extra-curricular activities.
- An integrated ECHO approach can be applied within an entire community and within schools, after-school programs and recreational leagues all reinforcing the core values.

# ECHO Sites

- **School-Based**

- **Bridgeport**

Bassick High School, 400 students

- **New Haven**

Roberto Clemente Leadership Academy (K-8), 400 students

- **Hartford**

Al Prince Technical School (varsity football only)

- **After-School and Community-Based**

- **South Windsor** Parks and Recreation, 1400 youth, entering 3<sup>rd</sup> year

- **Bridgeport** Summer League (7 sites, 1500 youth), entering 2<sup>nd</sup> year

- **Norwalk** Summer Basketball League, 120 youth, entering 3<sup>rd</sup> year

- **Stratford** Parks and Recreation, 1 Site, 130 youth, entering 2<sup>nd</sup> year



# Sites Under Development

- **School-Based**

- Caesar A. Batalla School (K-8), Bridgeport
- Alternative Education, New Haven

- **After-School and Community Based**

- Village for Families and Children (SAND, MD Fox, Martin Luther King, Burr - Four Sites)
- Lighthouse Program in Bridgeport (10 Sites)
- Partnership with St. Joseph's College (ECHO/Mentoring Program)
- Statewide Coaches Training Institute

# Health/Wellness

## Sample Energizers

### for Early Morning and After Lunch Period

- **Name of Activity: Morning Routine**

**Grade Level: 3-5**

**Equipment: None, Standing at desks**

*Rules/Directions:* Have students begin the day with a series of simple activities lasting 30 seconds or more:

~Jumping jacks ~ Knee lifts ~ Flap arms like a bird ~ Hopping ~ Scissors (feet apart then cross in front, feet apart then cross in back) Follow each activity with a basic stretching movement: ~Reach for the sky ~Runner's stretch ~ Butterfly stretch (sit with bottom of feet together) ~ Knee to chest ~Rotate ankles ~Scratch your back Hold stretches for 10 - 30 seconds. Repeat a different simple activity followed by a new basic stretch as many times as desired.

- **Name of Activity: Heart Smart**

**Grade Level: 3-5**

**Equipment: None, Standing at desks**

*Rules/Directions:* 1. Teacher will discuss the heart: ); Where is it located? Left side of the chest. ); What size is it? Size of a fist. ); Function? Deliver blood to the body. ); What strengthens the heart? Jumping, swimming, jogging. (Students will act out each activity) ); What weakens the heart? Inactivity, smoking, unhealthy diet. Teacher calls out a habit that strengthens or weakens the heart. If the habit strengthens the heart / students will respond by jumping. If the habit weakens the heart, students will respond by falling down or squatting. ); Riding a bike - jump ); Eating 4 pepperoni pizzas - fall ); Walking your dog - jump ); Smoking cigarettes - fall ); Never going outside to play and watching TV all the time - fall ); Dancing with your friends - jump ); Skating - jump ); Never eating fruits/vegetables - fall ); Riding a scooter - jump ); Shooting baskets - jump ); Playing PlayStation - fall ); Eating fast food - fall ); Raking the leaves - jump ); Washing the car - jump ); Taking the stairs - jump ); Taking the elevator - fall ); Swimming-jump ); Eating potato chips and Twinkies - fall *Variation:* 1. Have students think of their own habits.

# Evaluation Approach

- **Evaluation Design**

- The University of Connecticut's NEAG School of Education and the Charter Oak Group, LLC created and implemented an evaluation design to determine the effectiveness of the ECHO model.

- **Qualitative Data Collection**

- University of Connecticut collects data through group interviews and observation.

- **Quantitative Data Collection**

- The Charter Oak Group, LLC collects survey data from training participants on the quality of the training and survey data from students/athletes on changes in coaching behavior, self-esteem, and resiliency. COG is also beginning to collect data on student outcomes (attendance, suspension/expulsion, student performance, and staying in school).

# ECHO RBA Model

- **Result**  
Youth achieve optimal success in school and life
- **Population Indicators**  
% court involved, % graduating from HS, % employed
- **Strategies**  
Increasing resiliency and self esteem through involvement with caring adults who convey ECHO core messages
- **Performance measures**  
% participants with high resiliency, % participants with high self-esteem, % participants reporting positive changes in teaching or coaching behavior, % participants with good school attendance, % participants with no post-program suspensions/expulsions

# Preliminary Evaluation Findings

- Formative evaluation of ECHO program began in 2007
- Data collection instruments were piloted at cross-school coaches training in Berlin and at Putnam High School
- Focus groups were conducted following the cross-school coaches training, following coaches training in Putnam, and following Bridgeport Summer League and South Windsor Youth Basketball Recreation League implementations
- Early training evaluation and focus group results have been used to improve the training and overall design of the program
- Initial results have been positive; statistically significant results are expected as interventions become longer-term and more integrated
- Each pilot site experience to-date has been used to inform program improvements