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# CJCF celebrates 40 days of peace

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Posted: Wednesday, April 1, 2015 8:00 am

By Sarah Reed Staff Reporter

This month, 50 young people celebrated the completion of 40 days of peace at the Circleville Juvenile Correctional Facility (CJCF) for their first Power of Peace Project.

These CJCF students signed a pledge to commit to the project and those who participated did so voluntarily.

"It's really about having kids there that wanted to be there," said Kim Jump, communications chief at the Ohio Department of Youth Services (DYS).

This was the first Power of Peace Project in the state of Ohio and was piloted at CJCF. Another program will begin soon at Cuyahoga Hills Juvenile Correctional Facility (CHJCF) in Cleveland.

## Power of Peace

On March 21, family members were invited to attend a celebration at CJCF for those who

Power of Peace Project president and founder Kit



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by for 40 days.

"These include being a peacemaker wherever they go; treating their adversaries with respect; when provoked, not retaliating but finding a better way and when cursed, not to curse back but to use deliberate language," said Jump.

Various activities such as daily readings, daily journal writings and discussions served as exercises to promote the project's message.

"What that helps the youth do is to work through the emotions they're having," Jump said. "It helps them process before they react."

Program participants read about famous peacemakers throughout history such as Nelson Mandela, Mahatma

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Ghandi and Mother Theresa, and were encouraged to meditate on quotes from these peacemakers and to visualize themselves as peaceful individuals.

Cummings would also present 10-minute video lessons to the included CJCF participants and, after watching, they would break into groups to discuss the messages from the videos.

Five CJCF staff members served as program facilitators and would conduct discussions with participants about their journal entries, readings and talk about the videos.

It was estimated that a 40-percent reduction in violent activities has been seen at CJCF due to project participation.

On March 21, family members were invited to attend a "41st Day Celebration" at CJCF for those who participated in the project.

During this graduation-like ceremony, certificates were awarded for program completion, Cummings spoke about why and how he started the program, two participants told the crowd what the program meant to them and several read reports they had written about famous peacemakers.

Lunch was provided to families and students and an extra hour of visitation time was granted.

One of the juveniles at CJCF who had joined the project is serving a juvenile life sentence and was a gang leader inside the facility.

At the 41st Day Celebration, this juvenile approached Cummings and told him that, due to the influence of the Power of Peace Project, he and another rival gang member had become friends, are now living in the same unit and are using their leadership influence to promote peace.

Another juvenile who spoke before the celebration crowd came from behind the podium and hugged his mother saying, "Mom, I just want to tell you I'm sorry for all the pain I caused you. I want you to know that you don't have to worry about me anymore, because I am changing my life. I'm gonna come home this time for good. I want to come home and do the right thing."

Jump stated it was a very emotional time.

Now that the initial program has concluded, former participants are encouraged to continue to write in their journals and to live by and promote peaceful practices.

Jump stated that another Power of Peace Project is in the works for CJCF.

"This wasn't intended to be a 40-day project, but to make a permanent impression so they can become the best young men they can be," said Jump.

To learn more about the Power of Peace Project, visit [www.powerofpeaceproject.com](http://www.powerofpeaceproject.com).

Email [sreed@circlevilleherald.com](mailto:sreed@circlevilleherald.com). Follow on Twitter @Reed\_Herald

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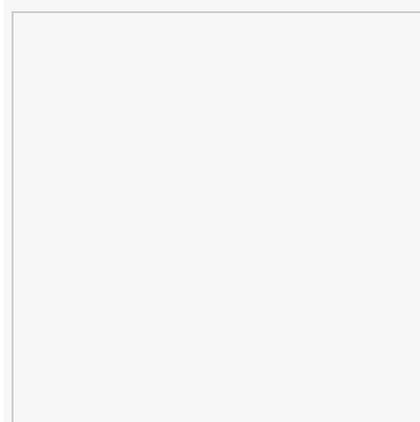
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