Happy October NRC,

As your Student Assistance Coordinator (SAC), my approach to substance use prevention and mental health support across New Roberto Clemente (NRC) is centered on continuous, age-appropriate, year-round education that builds on our students' knowledge year after year.

Rather than relying on isolated, one-time events or limiting our focus to a single awareness week, our students receive a structured continuum of evidence-based programming across the entire academic year:

- **Foundational Entry Year (6th Grade – Botvin LifeSkills Training):**

  When I joined NRC last year, we launched Botvin LifeSkills Training with our 6th-grade cohorts as our baseline prevention entry model. I truly enjoyed running all classroom lessons to establish foundational skills in decision-making, refusal techniques, peer pressure resistance, and substance awareness.

- **Expansion & Continuity (6th & 7th Grade – PE/Health Partnership):**

  This school year, we are sustaining and expanding Botvin LifeSkills by embedding it directly into the Physical Education/Health curriculum. Our PE teachers are continuing the program with both 6th and 7th graders to reinforce critical prevention concepts throughout middle school.

- **Advanced Skill-Building (Newly Launched COPE Cycle with Montclair State University):**

  Building directly on the foundation established in 6th grade, we are launching classroom-based sessions with Montclair State University's **C.O.P.E. program**. While C.O.P.E. visited our students in an assembly format last year, MSU facilitators will now come directly into 7th-grade classrooms across three dedicated cycles to deliver personalized, intentional lessons on coping mechanisms, stress regulation, decision-making, and emotional resilience.

- **Targeted Classroom Workshops (NJ4S Monthly Presentations):**

  In addition to Botvin and C.O.P.E., we are partnering with **NJ4S** throughout the year to deliver targeted, in-classroom presentations across all grade levels (6th–8th). These interactive workshops focus on key student wellness topics including Bullying & Cyberbullying, Healthy Relationships, Study Skills, Substance Use Prevention, Mental Health & Stress Management, and Internet Safety.

COPE Program Implementation Schedule (2026–2027)
To ensure full grade-level coverage without disrupting core academics, C.O.P.E. classroom sessions are structured across both morning and afternoon period blocks:

Cycle	Block	Date & Time
Cycle 1 (Dec 2026)	**Morning Block**	Monday, December 14 | Periods 2–5 (9:24 AM – 12:10 PM)
	Afternoon Block	Tuesday, December 15 | Periods 6–9 (12:12 PM – 3:00 PM)
Cycle 2 (Feb 2027)	**Morning Block**	Wednesday, February 10 | Periods 2–5 (9:24 AM – 12:10 PM)
	Afternoon Block	Wednesday, February 17 | Periods 6–9 (12:12 PM – 3:00 PM)
Cycle 3 (Apr 2027)	**Afternoon Block**	Monday, April 5 | Periods 6–9 (12:12 PM – 3:00 PM)
	Morning Block	Wednesday, April 7 | Periods 2–5 (9:24 AM – 12:10 PM)

NJ4S Classroom Workshop Schedule Highlights (2027)

Topic	Dates / Scope	Participating Classrooms
Bullying & Cyberbullying	Jan 5, 6, & 19	Rooms 2A210, 2A207, 1A229, 2B04
Healthy Relationships	Feb 8, 9, & 22	Rooms 2A210, 2A207, 1A229, 2B04
Study Skills	Mar 1, 15, & 22	Rooms 2A210, 2A207, 1A229, 2B04
Substance Use Prevention	Apr 21, 26, & 27	Rooms 2A210, 2A207, 1A229, 2B04
Mental Health, Stress & Self-Care	May 4, 11, & 17	Rooms 2A210, 2A207, 1A229, 2B04
Internet Safety	Jun 1, 2, & 7	Rooms 2A210, 2A207, 1A229, 2B04

(Note: Full classroom schedule details, including specific period breakdowns and language-adapted sessions in English, Spanish, and Bilingual options, will be uploaded at a closer date).

I hope this overview provides helpful insight into our year-round prevention framework. Rest assured that your SAC is actively working to ensure our prevention, mental health, and awareness efforts are embedded continuously throughout the entire school year.

Thank you all for your support and partnership!

Genesis Tejada, MA, SAC
Student Assistance Coordinator
NRC - Mondays , Tuesdays , Wednesdays
PTECH - Thursdays , Fridays
Email: gdtejada@paterson.k12.nj.us