

AWARD: Teacher of the Year  
NAME: Judy Koch, Teacher at the Central Counties Youth Center  
EMPLOYED FOR: 4 Years  
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Ms. Judy Koch is the teacher at the Central Counties Youth Center and is in her 4<sup>th</sup> year at the Center. Judy provides excellent instruction, a friendly disposition and an educational setting which encourages the students to want to improve their educational opportunities.

Judy is the only Educational Professional in our facility. It is her responsibility to plan and provide the educational opportunities for our students who have a wide range of educational experiences. She accomplishes this through her knowledge, experience and a positive learning environment. She utilizes traditional classroom learning through books and the internet. She teaches current events through use of news reports and fun games of "Jeopardy". She encourages critical thinking by having the students research and write reports on subjects or books of interest, then weaves public speaking by having the students give a presentation of their report to the rest of the class and the staff. During the week, you can see the students making some type of food item utilizing their reading skills by reading the recipes, utilizing their math skills to measure ingredients and gaining life skills by cooking, baking and cleaning up afterward and the crucial life component of working with others. Judy will also incorporate art projects into her classroom, allowing the kids to express their thoughts and feelings into art and these are displayed on the walls, making it a very colorful classroom.

Weekly, Judy incorporates a Family and Consumer Science Curriculum into her classroom. This life skill curriculum allows students to set personal goals to succeed in school, learn how to reach out for outside help to improve their behaviors, learn practices and behaviors that will increase success and reduce recidivism. These classes are well received by the students and they will positively talk about their future after these classes.

This past Spring, Judy and the students wanted to paint the classroom. They were tired of the dull walls on three (3) sides of the room and the bright yellow wall that they faced each day. Judy had the students create an outline of why they felt that the room needed to be refreshed and how that would help with the learning environment in the classroom. She had them verbally present this to the Administration and it was approved. Next, Judy led the students through the process of planning on what materials would be needed and a timeline for having the work completed. They researched the materials and came up with a cost for the project and submitted it to the Administration for approval. Once approved, different paint samples were obtained by Judy, allowing the students to voice their preference on colors that they could paint the classroom. Once the color scheme was decided on, the students used their math skills to figure out how much of each color would be needed based on the square footage of the walls and the coverage area of the paint. Finally, when everything was in place, she had the students learn how to cover areas for splatters or drops, taught them how to properly tape off areas that would be different colors and taught them how to use paint rollers and brushes. The students and Judy did a great job with this project and we are proud to show the classroom to visitors and tours. This project allowed the students to utilize all the skills they have been learning in the classroom in a fun and enjoyable way and allowed them to be proud of their finished project and know that future students will have a classroom that will be more conducive to learning. This is just one example of the alternative methods that Judy will utilize in the classroom to reach her students.

It is my honor to nominate Ms. Judy Koch as JDCAP Teacher of the Year.