

Carlisle Barracks holds annual High School Welcome Jam

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Pens, binders, backpacks are all part of the back to school shopping list. One thing you cannot buy is companionship on that first day of school. Who will I sit with at lunch? Will I have friends to hang out with after school? These are what parents worry about and children dread.

At Carlisle Barracks the Youth Services hosted its annual High School Welcome Jam July 31. The Welcome Jam helps break the ice and introduce new high school-aged students to their peers and neighbors in an attempt to ease the transition to a new environment.

Around 100 high school students from freshmen all the way to seniors attended the event at the pool pavilion. The new students have varied and unique backgrounds, with each coming from a different part of the country, or even the world.

Jessi O'Steen, a new addition to the sophomore class at Cumberland Valley, moved to Carlisle from Germany.

“Since I just moved here the Welcome Jam is really helping me meet new people,” said **O'Steen**. “I won't be going to Carlisle high school but it's nice to know some of my neighbors.”

“This is very cool,” said **Janie Haseman**, a new junior at Carlisle High School. “I wasn't expecting to see this many people.”

Janie and her family moved to Carlisle Barracks from Belgium and the transition, as it is for many, has not been easy.

“It’s always nice to meet new people,” said **Haseman**. “And it’s nice to know I might not be sitting alone on the first day of lunch.”

The Welcome Jam included pizza dinner with snacks, drinks and “junk” food. Included with dinner were

plenty of events to get the kids interacting with each other such as people bingo, frozen shirt unraveling and dancing.

Mixed in with the new students were some Carlisle residents who have been in the area for a few years.

John Flynn, a junior at Carlisle High School, has lived on Post for five years and decided that attending the Welcome Jam would help him make some additions to his group of friends.

“This is my first welcome jam actually,” said **Flynn**. “I came because it seemed like a cool way to introduce new kids to Carlisle and make some new friends.”

