25 Years & Counting

ENEWS

A Monthly Forum for Sharing and Interchange

Mental Health in Schools
UCLA Center
Program and Policy Analysis

April, 2011 (Vol. 15 #7)

ENEWS is one of the many resources provided by the School Mental Health Project/Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA. This electronic newsletter is sent to those concerned with enhancing policies, programs, and practices related to addressing barriers to student learning and to promoting mental health in schools.

For more on what our national Center offers, see http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

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**We encourage you to forward this to others. If you have been forwarded this ENEWS and want to sign up to receive it directly, please let us know.
Contact smhp@ucla.edu**
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WHAT'S HERE THIS MONTH

**Emerging Concern:

>**Connecting Schools to Strengthen Supports for Student Transitions and Other Needs**

**News from around the country

**Recent publications relevant to

>**Child and adolescent mental and physical health**

>**School, family, & community**

>**Policy, systems, law, ethics, finances & statistics**

**This month's focus for schools to address barriers to learning

>**April – Spring can be a high risk time for students**

**Other helpful Internet resources

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EMERGING CONCERN:

>**Connecting Schools to Strengthen Supports for Student Transitions and Other Needs**

With the end of the school year in sight, there is little time and energy left for anticipating the transitions students will be making into new classrooms and new schools. While research shows students often have problems moving from elementary to middle and from middle to high school, supporting success in these transitions is often limited to a brief orientation (generally with an overemphasis on rules and regs). Needed is a well-designed approach to welcoming and providing ongoing social and academic supports to facilitate successful adjustment and performance in the new situation. This, of course, is easier to do in districts where school feeder patterns are cohesive. And it works best where schools have developed a comprehensive system of student and learning supports and connected them across the family of schools.

>Related to all this, see the Center's Online Clearinghouse Quick Find on
>*Transition Programs/Grade Articulation/Welcome*
>http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p2101_01.htm

>Also see the Recent Center brief entitled:

>*Connecting Schools in Ways that Strengthen Learning Supports*

Abstract: Given dwindling budgets, collaborations that can enhance effective and efficient use of resources increase in importance. This is particularly important with respect to efforts at schools to provide student and learning supports. Schools that formally connect to work together can be more effective, realize economies of scale, and enhance the way sparse resources are used for intervention and capacity building. This brief (1) discusses the concept of a family of schools and the type of operational infrastructure that enables schools to connect formally and on a regular basis, (2) highlights examples of how a family of schools can enhance student and learning supports, and (3) suggests key policy implications
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/connectingschools.pdf

If you would like to discuss any of this further, send an email to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

Most Public Schools May Miss Targets, Education Secretary Says
More than 80,000 of the nation's 100,000 public schools could be labeled as failing under No Child Left Behind, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan told Congress. In virtually every state, schools designated as needing improvement include chaotic ones that may need a total overhaul but also many others where only one or two groups' scores have fallen short. 3/9/11.
(http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/10/education/10education.html)

Study Finds High Dropout Rates for Black Males in KIPP Charter Schools
KIPP charter middle schools enroll a significantly higher proportion of African-American students than the districts they draw from, but 40% of the black

males leave between grades 6 and 8, says a new study. The report also says the KIPP schools are considerably better funded on a per-pupil basis than their surrounding districts. Some researchers are questioning the study's methodology. (Education Week, 03/31/11) http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2011/03/31/27kipp_ep.h30.html

School Budget Cuts – another big barrier to learning and teaching, re-engaging disconnected students, & school improvement in general:

>**School district votes to drastically cut budget** – The Fontana school district approved drastic cuts to the school budget, including eliminating every one of the counselors in the district. Protestors picketed the meeting, in an attempt to keep the counselors on staff. 3/9/11.
(http://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/Fontana-School-District-Votes-to-Drastically-Cut-Budget-117631328.html)

>**As Sweeping Layoffs Loom, Schools Gird for Turmoil** – School authorities across the nation are warning thousands of teachers that they could lose their jobs in June, raising the possibility that schools may see the most extensive layoffs in decades. Much of the debate over teacher layoffs has concerned how they are decided, with sharp divisions between politicians and unions over the seniority-based layoff methods stipulated in contracts. (New York Times, 03/30/11)
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/31/education/31layoffs.html

>**Report shows extent of budget cuts on high schools** – Budget cuts have left California high school students with fewer critical learning opportunities and have intensified the inequality between schools serving low and high income communities, according to a new UCLA Institute for Democracy, Education, and Access report, "Free Fall: Educational Opportunities." Researchers surveyed a quarter of the state's 1,200 public high school principals. Principals reported that their schools had decreased instructional time from shorter school years to less after-school instruction and summer school. A high proportion of principals reported layoffs and noted that these cuts have negatively impacted the amount of personal attention students receive from teachers and counselors and have made schools less safe. Principals also reported growing need among their students as incidences of homelessness and food insecurity rise. 3/16/11.
(http://newsroom.ucla.edu/portal/ucla/new-ucla-report-shows-extent-of-197687.aspx)

>**Tight budgets mean squeeze in classrooms** – Millions of public school students across the nation are seeing their class sizes swell because of budget cuts and teacher layoffs, undermining a decades long push by parents, administrators and policy makers to shrink class sizes. 3/6/11.
(http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/07/education/07classrooms.html)

One in Three College Students Receive Mental Health Counseling, with Anxiety and Stress as Top Concerns

According to a recently released survey of 25,000 college students (i.e., the "Consortium Mental Health and Counseling Study"), about a third of college students have sought mental-health counseling. The majority of students who reported using mental health services name anxiety and stress as primary reasons for their use of

counseling. Violence or substance abuse problems constituted a small proportion of reported behavioral problems. Other findings revealed that social anxiety and academic distress were among top concerns for students who reported highest ratings for statements related to anxiety and academic distress. For example, around 5% of students said that the statement "I am shy around others" was extremely like them. As for academic distress, more than 70% of students reported a positive attitude about their academic ability, but 21% agreed that "I am not able to concentrate as well as usual" and 25% agreed that "It's hard to stay motivated for my classes." http://chronicle.com/article/Nearly-a-Third-of-College/126726/?sid=at&utm_source= at&utm_medium=en

Increase in Emergency Visits Related to "Ecstasy"

A new national study indicates that the number of hospital emergency visits involving the illicit drug Ecstasy increased from 10,220 in 2004 to 17,865 visits in 2008 – a 74.8 percent increase. According to this new study by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) most of these Ecstasy-related visits (69.3 percent) involved patients aged 18 to 29, but notably 17.9 percent involved adolescents aged 12 to 17. This SAMHSA study indicates that 77.8 percent of the emergency department visits involving Ecstasy use also involve the use of at least one or more other substances of abuse. http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k11/dawn027/ecstasy.cfm

And across the world, we see the lingering impact that major crisis events can have on schools, students, and their families – school crisis planners take note.

> **>Diplomas, and an Uncertain Future, for Japanese Pupils** – Schools in Japan begin in April and hold graduation ceremonies in March. In a school meeting hall in the tsunami ravaged seaport of Kesennuma, two solemn and often tearful crowds met to award diplomas to the sixth and ninth grade classes. Inside the junior high auditorium, hundreds of refugees from the March 11 tsunami rolled up their blankets and moved to the rear to make way for a graduation ceremony. One junior high graduate is still missing, another recovering from injuries, staff and families have lost homes and relatives. Whereas past classes generally stayed together, the disaster already has scattered students to evacuation centers, and many may wind up in other towns. 3/23/11. (http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/23/world/asia/23graduate.html)

National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day is May 3rd

SAMHSA designates this as a day for communities, organizations, agencies, and individuals nationwide to raise awareness that positive mental health is essential to a child's healthy development from birth. This year, the national theme focuses on building resilience in young children dealing with trauma.

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"We've cut as much at my school as we can, quite frankly, without giving blood."
Paula Hanzel, Principal

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Note: Each week the Center highlights newsworthy stories online at
   http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/whatsnew/newsitems.htm
Also access other news stories relevant to improving addressing barriers to learning
through links at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/whatsnew/linkstolatest.htm

Among the sources used in gathering the above items are
   The ECS e-clip at http://www.ecs.org/e-clips
   The Public Education Network (PEN) Newsblast at
   http://www.publiceducation.org/newsblast_current.asp
   The Update from the American Orthopsychiatric Association at
   http://www.aoatoday.com/news.php

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RECENT PUBLICATIONS (in print and on the web)

Child, Adolescent, Young Adult Mental and Physical Health

Older and newer media: Patterns of use and effects on adolescents' health and well-being
(2011) J. Brown & P. Bobkowski. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 21*(1) 95-113.
http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1532-7795.2010.00717.x/abstract

The Transition Years (April, 2011). Entire issue of *Education Leadership, 68.*
http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/apr11/vol68/num07/Getting-So
mewhere.aspx

Interventions to reduce teen violence and alcohol use (2011) J. Singh. *American Journal
of Nursing, 111*(2) 67.
http://journals.lww.com/ajnonline/Abstract/2011/02000/Interventions_to_Reduce_Teen_
Violence_and_Alcohol.36.aspx

What works for acting-out (externalzing) behavior: Lessons from experimental
evaluations of social interventions. *Child Trends Fact Sheet*, March 2011.
http://www.childtrends.org/Files//Child_Trends-2011_03_03_RB_WWExternalizing.pdf

Fear of in-school victimization: contextual, gendered, and developmental considerations
(2011) K. Swartz, et al. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice, 9*(1) 59-78.
http://yvj.sagepub.com/content/9/1/59.short

Social anxiety and aggression in early adolescents: Examining the moderating roles of
empathic concern and perspective taking. (2011) M. Batanova & A. Loukas. *Journal of
Youth and Adolescence*. ePpub.
http://www.springerlink.com/content/k757nl1127wt7622/

Role model behavior and youth violence: A study of positive and negative effects (2011)
N. Hurd, et al., *Journal of Early Adolescence, 31*(2) 323-354.
http://jea.sagepub.com/content/31/2/323.abstract

Schools, Family & Community

Fresh start: A multilevel community mobilization plan to promote youth development
and prevent violence (2011) *American Journal of Community Psychology*, ePub.
http://www.springerlink.com/content/xw31406538lgv7m2/

Enhancing parent leadership through building social and intellectual capital (2011) J. Bolivar & J. Chrispeels. *American Educational Research Journal, 48*, 4-38. http://aer.sagepub.com/content/48/1/4.short?rss=1&ssource=mfr

Teacher-child relationship and behavior problem trajectories in elementary school (2011) *American Educational Research Journal, 48*, 120-162. http://aer.sagepub.com/content/48/1/120.abstract?rss=1

Examining perceptions of school safety strategies, school climate, and violence (2011) L. Booren, et al., *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice, 9*(2) 171-187. http://yvj.sagepub.com/content/9/2/171.abstract

Parents as moderators of the impact of school norms and peer influences on aggression in middle school students (2011) A. Farrell, et al., *Child Development 82*(1) 146-161. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01546.x/abstract

Student perceptions of high-security school environments (2011) N. Bracy. *Youth and Society, 43*(1) 365-395. http://yas.sagepub.com/content/early/2010/04/15/0044118X10365082.abstract

Policy, Systems, Law, Ethics, Finances & Statistics

The implementation of a statewide bullying prevention program: Preliminary findings from the field and the importance of coalitions. (2011) B. Schroeder, et al., *Health Promotion,* ePub. http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21422258

Special issue on "Criminal Outcomes of Children Involved in School Bullying" based on Longitudinal studies, published in *Criminal Behavior and Mental Health, 21.* http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1002/(ISSN)1471-2857

Do schools influence student risk-taking behaviors and emotional health symptoms? (2011) S. Denny, et al., *Journal of Adolescent Health, 48*(3) 259-267. http://jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X%2810%2900312-5/abstract

Broken schools + broken homes + broken neighborhoods = street gangs? (2011) J. Bliss-Holtz. *Issues in Comprehensive Pediatric Nursing, 34*(1) 1-3. http://www.deepdyve.com/lp/taylor-francis/broken-schools-broken-homes-broken-neighborhoods-street-gangs-zV0YNGlG0C

Preventing the link between SES and high-risk behaviors: "Value-added" education, drug use and delinquency in high-risk urban schools (2011) A. Tobler, et al., *Prevention Science*, ePub. http://www.springerlink.com/content/hxlu845t7t157323/

FYI: Safety Lit is a useful resource for abstracts related to injury prevention policy and practices http://www.safetylit.org

> **Note:** The Quick Find online clearinghouse at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu is updated regularly with new reports and publications such as those listed above. Currently there are over 130 alphabetized topic pages with direct links to Center materials and to other online resources and related centers. Let us know about publications and reports that should be included in this dedicated online clearinghouse. Smhp@ucla.edu

"How is it possible to have a *civil* war?"

George Carlin

THIS MONTH'S FOCUS FOR SCHOOLS TO ADDRESS BARRIERS TO LEARNING

April – Spring can be a high risk time for students

Time is running out for catching up;
decisions are made about who passes and who fails . . . ;

"Most late high school dropouts (83%) listed a school-related (versus a family or employment related) reason for leaving. These reasons included missing too many school days, thinking it would be easier to get a GED, getting poor grades, and not liking school."

National Center for Education Statistics, Late High Schools Dropouts (2009)

... and parties and proms to celebrate the end of the year
can have some negative side effects.

"More than one-third of youth under the age of 21 killed in alcohol related fatalities died during the months prior to graduation season, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. ..1,012 died during the months of April, May and June."

Dangerous Season for Teens: Prom and Graduation Time Increase Alcohol Fatalities
http://alcoholism.about.com/cs/teens/a/blcc030514,htm

(1) *Springtime Focus on Student and Learning Supports.* In addition to transition concerns at the beginning of the year, it also is essential to identify a workgroup (e.g., of student support staff) to plan specific and regular catch up activities (e.g., homework help, tutoring, peer to peer support). And special attention needs to be paid to addressing any underlying factors interfering with school learning and performance.

We asked our young adult advisors group what they would advise schools to do to support students during this high risk end of year period. Here is one excerpt:

"Schools and teachers need to become a bit more flexible and encouraging towards students who seem as if they are losing gusto and falling behind. Sometimes its towards the end of the year that the pressure that has been building up ... becomes too much. Many teachers are rigid ... and don't offer make-up assignments or seem to relate to students and understand that this is a very stressful time; it almost becomes more a bureaucratic battle than an academic pursuit.
     After AP testing and state testing I know I felt like I needed a break, and it just doesn't come. I would really suggest schools outreach to kids who seem to be having trouble, talk to them, make them feel important and connected and provide them with a plan to get back on their feet. Things like make-up assignments, make-up tests, tutoring opportunities, etc., should all be made available. If this has been implemented, and it doesn't help, get parents involved."

>For more on this facet of springtime concerns, see the Center's Online Clearinghouse Quick Finds. For example:
     >>*Transitions* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p2101_01.htm

>>*Dropout Prevention* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/dropout.html
>>*School Avoidance* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/schoolavoidance.htm

(2) *Safe End of the Year Celebrations.* Most schools try to address this concern. If a workgroup has not developed a set of ideas for countering problems, it is time to do so. And it can help to ask some recent graduates to participate with planning work groups.

With this in mind, we also asked our young adult advisors what they thought school staff might do to enhance end of the year safety. Here are excerpts from two responses as examples:

(1) "... what my high school did toward the end of the year that was different than many other schools was the type of 'grad night' we had. Whereas many schools rent out [a local entertainment center] and have dances there and go on rides and many students get intoxicated before attending, at my school grad night was held on campus. The parents worked it and there were different activities like fake gambling, craps tables, dancing, a smoothie bar, food, and "crash room" to sleep since it went until 5am, rock climbing, a palm reader, inflatable jumper obstacle course, face painting, kareoke and much more. When I tell friends from other high schools/friends I made at college, the majority give me positive feedback saying that it sounds like a lot more fun than what they did. I think this is because instead of having the whole [entertainment center] where groups can get separated and remain in cliques ..., it was in our gym and outside in what was called "senior park;" So it remained tight knit, so to speak, making it easier to spend time with a a lot of different students and not get lost in a large area. Also, because parents worked the booths, students did not show up intoxicated. There was no re-entry allowed and because it was on campus, even if a few students did decide to drink before the event, it lessened the danger of driving on a freeway to get there because it is possible that they could simply walk over to the school. ... It was a night that I will never forget and one of my greatest memories and it was in a positive setting and a good way to have safe fun."

(2) "In my own experience, I remember one of my teachers speaking in class about two weeks before prom and trying to give us some perspective on the event. She wanted us to have a good time, but also acknowledged the enormous stress that it caused for some people. My teacher encouraged us to view it as just another dance and to focus on graduating instead. She had chaperoned so many proms over the years and shared with us some of the very negative things she saw happen when students weren't using their best judgment. While trying to downplay the event may seem like being a killjoy to some, many of my friends and I found it reassuring to hear from an adult that life indeed does goes on past these high school celebrations because most students were very much caught up in a prom and end-of-the-year craze.
    I think teachers and/or counselors should engage students in conversations like these months before prom to temper the frenzy that can accompany the event and possibly prevent the unwise decisions students make at prom and post-prom parties. It is of course perfectly acceptable to be happy and excited about prom, but I think there is much potential for danger when students blow it into epic proportions. Another thing that my high school did, which looking back I now view as a wise decision, was to not have a prom queen or king. The end of the year was just too filled with other anxiety-inducing events to have so much stress and energy expended on that. We simply had a homecoming king and queen in the fall, and I think that greatly reduced the tension around prom time."

For a range of ideas about safe end of year celebrations, see such websites as:
>*Student Against Destructive Decisions (SADD)* at http://www.sadd.org

Note: Anticipating major concerns (such as the above) that arise with regularity over the course of the school year is imperative. Such awareness points to natural

opportunities to strengthen schools and minimize problems. For a calendar of monthly concerns and themes, see Ideas for Enhancing Support at Your School this Month on the home page at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/

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Life is not about how fast you run, or high you climb, but how well you bounce.

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OTHER HELPFUL INTERNET RESOURCES

Safe and Supportive Schools – http://safesupportiveschools.ed.gov

Teaching empathy: Evidence-based tips for fostering empathy in children – http://www.parentingscience.com/teaching-empathy-tips.html

Safe and Caring Schools – http://www.safeandcaringschools.com

Caring School Community – http://www.devstu.org/caring-school-community

Measuring bullying victimization, perpetration, and bystander experiences: a compendium of assessment tools – http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pub/measuring_bullying.html

Workbook for improving school climate and closing the achievement gap – http://www.wested.org/cs/we/view/rs/1010

Addressing the needs of the whole child: What public health can do to answer the education sector's call for a stronger partnership – http://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2011/mar/10_0014.htm

What works for promoting and enhancing positive social skills -- http://www.childtrends.org/files/child_trends_2011_03_02_RB_WWSocialSkills.pdf

Promise Neighborhoods Research Consortium – http://promiseneighborhoods.org

The White House Council for Community Solutions – http://www.serve.gov/council_home.asp

Note: For a wide range of relevant websites see our Gateway to a World of Resources at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/gateway/gateway_sites.htm

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Sign in store window:
   "Unaccompanied children will be given a cup of espresso and a free puppy"

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LINKS TO:

Upcoming initiative, conferences & workshops
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upconf.htm

Calls for grant proposals, presentations, and papers
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upcall.htm

Training and job opportunities
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/job.htm

Upcoming and archived webcasts and other professional development opportunities
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm

Note: Information on each of these is updated on an ongoing basis on our website. Just click on the indicated URL or on What's New on our website at
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

If you would like to add information to these send it to ltaylor@ucla.edu

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UCLA Center Update

New Center Policy Briefs:

>*Understanding community schools as collaboratives for system building to address barriers and promote well-being –*
  Http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/communitycollab.pdf

>*Connecting schools in ways that strengthen learning supports –*
  http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/connectingschools.pdf

>*About short-term outcome indicators for school use and the need for an expanded policy framework –* Http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/outind.pdf

>*Immigrant Children and Youth: Enabling their success at school –*
  http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/immigrant.pdf

New Hot Topic

>*Moving Beyond the Three Tier Intervention Framework –*
 See comments from colleagues, and if you have comments you would like to add, send them to us at smhp@ucla.edu

Center Website

We continuously strive to enhance the website and are pleased to see how well it is used. For example:
>Last week, we had 71,676 hits on our website.
>There were an average of 1,189 visitors per day.
>Last month's total was 41,210 visitors and 53,935 pdf downloads.

Please let others know about the site; they can get a quick sense of what's there by clicking on *First Visit* on the homepage.

Our intent is always to make the site as useful and responsive as we can. So, if you need resources and don't find them, let us know at smhp@ucla.edu and we will see what we can do to fill the gap. Remember that the Center has a broad and systemic focus on enhancing what is done to enable all students to have an equal opportunity to succeed at school.

For more information on the national Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA and its many resources, go to the website at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu .

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REQUESTS & COMMENTS FROM THE FIELD

As always, we want to be a conduit for information about resources. Here are a couple of requests to be shared we received this month.

(1) *About Bridging Cultures:* "Teachers in the U.S. serve increasingly diverse populations of students; yet most have little preparation for understanding important cultural differences that affect how children develop and learn. The Bridging Cultures Project has applied theory and basic research on two major pathways of human development to the problem of cross-cultural value conflicts experienced by immigrant Latino students and their parents.
      The findings of the Project illustrate richly not only how the collectivistic or familistic value orientation of Latino immigrants conflicts with the individualistic orientation of the U.S. and its schools, but also the ways that teachers can address those conflicts. Bridging Cultures arose in 1996 from the work of UCLA Distinguished Professor of Psychology Patricia M. Greenfield as a collaboration among UCLA, WestEd (San Francisco), California State University Northridge (CSUN), and seven bilingual teachers. The Project has entailed teacher professional development, teacher action research, ongoing research with students and faculty at UCLA and CSUN, and continuous documentation through publications for educators and researchers."
      For more information and links to publications, go to
      http://greenfieldlab.psych.ucla.edu/Bridging_Cultures.html

(2) *An upcoming summer institute*: "CSEE's 14th Annual Summer Institute, New York City, July 12-14, 2011. *Creating the Foundation for Comprehensive School Climate Reform: Promoting Safe, Healthy, Engaged and Democratic K-12 School Communities*. Special Keynote Address by Kevin Jennings, Assistant Deputy Secretary of the US Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools. Learn more at http://www.schoolclimate.org/programs/si.php

If you have any reactions you would like to share related to Center resources, please let us know. Send to smhp@ucla.edu

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THIS IS THE END OF THIS ISSUE OF E-NEWS

Who Are We? The national Center for Mental Health in Schools was established in 1995 under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project (which was established in 1986). We are part of the Department of Psychology at UCLA. The Project and Center are co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor.

For more information about the Center or about ENEWS, contact us at:

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