ENEWS

A Monthly Forum for Sharing and Interchange

February, 2008 (Vol. 12 #5)

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 federally supported 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 Issue

>Has the Emphasis on School Security and Student Safety Overwhelmed Efforts to Enhance a Caring and Supportive School Climate?

**News from around the country

**Recent Publications Relevant to
>Children's mental and physical health
>Family, school & community
>Policy, systems, law, ethics, finances & statistics

**This month's focus for schools to address barriers to learning
>February: The Mid-point of a school year – report cards & conferences
Another barrier or a challenging opportunity?

**Other helpful Internet resources

**Links to
>Upcoming initiatives, conferences & workshops
>Calls for grant proposals, presentations & papgers
>Training and job opportunities

**UCLA Center update

**Comments, requests, information, questions from the field

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**EMERGING ISSUE

>Has the Emphasis on School Security and Student Safety Overwhelmed Efforts to Enhance a Caring and Supportive School Climate?

A recent inquiry to our Center raised concerns about the psychological impact on students (and staff) of frequent emergency drills. And, the recent Annenberg report on "Beating the Odds" notes that schools that had brought low-performing ninth-graders to timely graduation and college enrollment: " ...had consistently refused metal detectors or other screening devices on their campuses. Several administrators viewed screening devices as antithetical to the respectful, high-achieving academic environment they were working so hard to develop...."

Underlying all this is an unanswered empirical question: What is the impact of school security measures on student and staff perceptions of the school climate? See the Center's Hot Topic on this matter at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/hottopic.htm

Also see, Surveillance Cameras in Schools: An Ethical Analysis (2007) B. Warnick, *Harvard Educational Review, 77*(3). Http://www.edreview.org/harvard07/2007/fa07/f07front.htm

What data or observations do you have on the psychological impact of school security measures on students? Please share with us so we can share information and views widely. Send to
 ltaylor@ucla.edu

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**NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

In reading the news related to young people, we are always struck by how many stories deal with matters that have major implications for mental health in general and mental health in schools in particular – even though the stories don't discuss these matters specifically. Here's a sample:

>**Reducing Teenage Risks: What Works and What Doesn't**
Traditional programs that appeal to teenagers' rationality "are inherently flawed, not because teens fail to weigh risks against benefits," but because "teens tend to weight benefits more heavily than risks when making decisions." Young teenagers need to be protected from themselves by removing opportunities for risk-taking – for example, by filling their time with positive activities and protecting them from risky situations that are likely to be tempting or that require "behavioral inhibition." 1/18/07. The New York Times. Http://www.nytimes.com

>**Resegregation of U. S. Schools Deepening**
Two-thirds of black and Latino students in big cities attend schools with less than 10 percent white students; in rural areas, about one-seventh of black and Latino students do. The data for suburbs are not encouraging, showing emerging segregation. Some integration advocates say this shows a need for more diversity training for teachers and students and for policies that encourage integrated housing, not just schools. 1/25/08. Christian Science Monitor.
Http://www.csmonitor.com

>**Poor Neighborhoods Hurt Students More Than Low Income**
The isolation and limitations imposed by a poor neighborhood do more damage to a child's verbal and cognitive skills than does a family's low income. Living in a disadvantaged community for at least two years lowered verbal test scores by about four IQ points, roughly the equivalent of one year of school. The new research is one of the first to tie the performance not to poverty, but to the corrosive nature of at-risk communities. 12/19/07. Chicago Tribune.
http://www.chicagotribune.com

>**Soup Kitchen's Saturday School Offers Classes to Homeless, Poor Kids**
The Stewpot is known mostly for serving hundreds of meals every day to the homeless. But the nonprofit agency provides many other services, including the Saturday School program for homeless and low-income elementary school children in the surrounding area. Saturday School is designed to prevent students from dropping out down the road and to create stability in their lives. There are also programs for junior high and high school students that include help planning for college scholarships. l/2/08. The Dallas Morning News.
Http://www.dallasnews.com

>**Rise in Stimulant Use: Another Problem from Baseball**
Amid discussion of steroids and human growth hormone, everyone's attention was caught by the question of why the number of major leaguers claiming therapeutic-use exemptions for attention deficit disorder had mushroomed to 103 this past season from 28 in 2006. The implication of the sharp increase was clear. Players were brazenly getting around the ban on amphetamines by making attention deficit disorder claims that allowed them to use stimulants like Ritalin and Adderall. Based on the 2007 numbers the use of such stimulants among major leaguers was almost eight times the adult use in the population. 1/16/08. The New York Times.
Http://www.nytimes.com

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Note: Each week the Center highlights one or more newsworthy stories online at
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/whatsnew/newsitems.htm

Also access other news stories relevant to mental health in schools through links at
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/whatsnew/linkstolatest.him

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"New knowledge is the most valuable commodity on earth. The more truth we have to work with, the richer we become."

Kurt Vonnegut

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**RECENT PUBLICATIONS (IN PRINT AND ON THE WEB)

*Children's Mental and Physical Health

>Children's Social Competence in Cultural Context (2008). X. Chen and D. French. *Annual Review of Psychology, 59*, 591-616

>Children's beliefs about substance use: An examination of age differences in implicit and explicit cognitive precursors of substance use initiation. (2007) R. O'Connor, et al., *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors, 21*, 525-533. http://www.apa.org/journals/adb.html

>Cultural Considerations in Adolescent Suicide prevention and Psychosocial Treatment (2008) D. Goldston, et al., American Psychologist, 63, 14-31.

>School-based Interventions for Students with or At-risk for Depression (2007) A. Hilt-Panahon, et al., *Advances in School Mental Health Promotion, 1*(1).
Http://www.schoolmentalhealth.co.uk/

>Investigating and Understanding Self-Mutilation: The Student Voice. (2007) *Professional School Counseling, 11*, 1-9.

>Evidence-based Suicide Prevention Screening in Schools (2007) S. Joe, *Children & Schools, 29*, 219-227.

*Family, School & Community

>The Role of Schools in Combating Illicit Substance Abuse. (2007) C. Mears & J. Knight. *Pediatrics, 120*, 1379-1384. http://www.pediatrics.org/

>Motivational Interventions that Work (2007) K. Wentzel & A. Wigfield, *Educational Psychologist, 42,* 261-271. http://www.leaonline.com/toc/ep/42/4

>Service Delivery Systems for Response to Intervention. (2007) Special Series, *School*

Psychology Review, Vol 36(4)

>Community Monitoring Systems: Tracking and Improving the Well-being of America's Children and Adolescents (2007) National Institute on Drug Abuse. Http://www.drugabuse.gov/pubs/cms/

>Adolescent Bullying Involvement and Perceived Family, Peer and School Relations (2007) A. Spriggs, et al., *Journal of Adolescent Health, 41*, 283-293. http://www.jahonline.org/

>Negative impacts of starting middle school in sixth grade (2008) P. Cook, et al., *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, 27*, 104-121.

*Policy, Systems, Law, Ethics, Finances & Statistics

>A CDC Review of School Laws and Policies Concerning Child and Adolescent Health (2008). Prepared by the Centers for Law and the Public's Health. *Journal of School Health, 78,* Entire February issue. http://www.ashaweb.org/journal_schoolhealth.html#legalissue.

>The Federal Case for School-based Mental Health Services and Supports. (2008). J. Cooper, *American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 47*(1) 4-8. http://www.jaacap.com

>The World Youth Report 2007 summarizes trends in youth development and provides recommendations. Http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/wyr07.htm

>Youth Violence Prevention Comes of Age: Research, Training and Future Directions (2007) K. Williams, et al., *Annual Review of Public Health, 28*, 195-211.

>State Children's Cabinets and Councils: Getting Results for Children and Youth (2008) Forum for Youth Investment. http://www.forumfyi.org/Files//State_Childrens_Cabinets_Getting_Results.pdf

>Evaluating Programs for At-Risk Adolescents (2007) E. Sloat, et al., *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 12*, 459-476. Http://www.leaonline.com/toc/espr/12/4

>Surveillance Cameras in Schools: An Ethical Analysis (2007) B. Warnick, *Harvard Educational Review, 77*(3). Http://www.edreview.org/harvard07/2007/fa07/f07front.htm
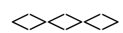
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Note: The quick Find online clearinghouse at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu is updated regularly with new reports and publications such as those listed above. Currently there are over 130 alphabetized topic pages with direct links to Center materials and to other online resources and related centers. Let us know about publications and reports that should be included in this dedicated online clearinghouse. Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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"America believes in education: the average professor earns more money in a year than a professional athlete earns in a whole week."

Evan Esar
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>>**February – The Mid-point of a school year – report cards and conferences
                    Another barrier or a challenging opportunity?**

Look at most school calendars for the month of February. They say...
>   End of a Semester; Start of a New One
>   Report Cards
>   Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences

About First Semester Report Cards and Conferences
     What happens at this point is critical in either cementing or altering teacher, parent, and student relationships. This is an especially crucial time for students who have learning, behavior, or emotional problems. Most data on school depression and suicide attempts show an increase in the spring semester. Is this seasonal pattern linked to the experience of school failure and hopelessness?

Changing negative patterns and cycles is what support for learning is all about. And, school support staff can play a key role in all this by introducing new approaches and partnering with teachers.

In planning what to do, we need to remember the following:
     >For some students and their parents, report cards and conferences affirm how well things are going. Students are succeeding; parents are proud; teachers feel successful. (When we talk with teachers in urban districts and poor rural areas, they estimate about 10% fit this category.)
     >For another group of students and parents, the news is a surprise. "*Last year's teacher said things were going all right, and we thought that was so this year until we saw these grades.... No one told us.... We were hoping there was time to make up missing work . ..*"
     >For still others, the report card repeats negative interactions with the school. "*My child doesn't do well in school ... the report card only confirms this, and school conferences only make it sound like our fault. . . .*"

Guess which parents don't like to come to school?

The dilemma: If a student isn't doing well, parents need to be informed. The problem is how to do it in ways that first and foremost don't alienate the family and hopefully mobilize them to work with the school to make things better. How do we balance a focus on the strengths and assets of students and their families when the report card conveys a negative picture?

Rethinking parent conferences: It's time to rethink end of semester conferences for those students who need support. In redesigning what is done, the objectives are to counter tendencies for students and parents to see the reported grades as a reason to give up but instead enhance student, parent, and staff motivation to do better.

*One New Strategy: Student Led Conferences***:** Many schools are recognizing the counterproductive impact of their interactions with parents of students who are not doing well. Student led conferences are an emerging strategy some schools are using in hopes of addressing the problem. Such student-led meetings can be an effective strategy for engaging parents related to counseling, intervention programs, planning for supplementary services, etc. There is a good deal of information on student led conferences in our "Ideas for Enhancing Support at Your School This Month" online at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

For other resources related to enhancing student, family (and teacher) motivation, see Quick Find online clearinghouse topic pages:
>   >Motivation – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/motiv.htm
>   >Parent/Home Involvement in Schools – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/homework.htm

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Note: You can anticipate major concerns that arise over the course of the school year that provide natural opportunities to strengthen support for learning. To see the "calendar" of monthly concerns and themes, see "Ideas for Enhancing Support at Your School this Month" on the Center's home page at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

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"Thinking in or out of the box is not the issue; both kinds of thinking end up as little more than a box lunch if we merely consume it ourselves and do not move it forward in a way that leads to action."

Alan Kazdin

**OTHER HELPFUL INTERNET RESOURCES

>Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation: An Evaluation Tool Kit – http://www.rtc.pdx.edu/pgECMHCToolKit.shtml

>Student Health and Academic Achievement -- http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/health_and_academics/index.htm

>SAMHSA's Co-Occurring Center for Excellence – http://coce.samhsa.gov

>Mobilizing for Evidence-based Character Education – http://www.ed.gov/programs/charactered/resources.html

>Building a System of Excellent High Schools – http://scs.aed.org/publications/43730AED.pdf

>National Adolescent Health Information Center, Health Care Access and Utilization Fact Sheet – http://nahic.ucsf.edu/index.php/data/article/briefs_fact_sheets/

>Peer Initiation Strategies for Students with Autism – http://www.teachervision.fen.com/autism/teaching-methods/8203.html

>Misuse of over the counter cough and cold medications among persons aged 12 to 25 – http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k8/cough/cough.cfm

>Achieving the Promise of Authentic Community-Higher Education Partnerships: Community Partners Speak Out! – Http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/cps-summit.html#Products

>National Research Center on Learning Disabilities – http://www.nrcld.org

>The Community Guide – http://www.thecommunityguide.org

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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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"Frankly, I'm suspicious of anyone what has a strong opinion on a complicated issue."
Scott Adams
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**LINK TO UPDATED INFORMATION ON

>Upcoming Initiatives, Conferences and Workshops
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upconf.htm

>Calls for Grant Proposals, Presentations & Pagers
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upcall.htm

>Training and Job Opportunities
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/job.htm

Information on each of these is updated on an ongoing basis on our website. Just click on the indicated Internet address. If you would like to add information on these please send it to ltaylor@ucla.edu

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**UCLA CENTER UPDATE

For the latest information on Center resources and activities, go to http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu and click on What's New. Or contact us (see contact info below).

Highlighted below are a few resources.

*New Resources
>New Hot Topic: Security Measures at Schools: Mental Health Considerations
>New Quick Find: Learning Problems and Learning Disabilities
>Quarterly online journal: *Addressing Barriers to Learning* (Winter, 2008 Vol. 13, # 1)
    Featured Article: *Challenges and Opportunities in the Classroom
    Practice Notes:
            >>Turning Big Classes into Smaller Units
            >>Volunteers as an Invaluable Resource

*Updated Resources
>Assessing to Address Barriers to Learning
        http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/barriers/barriers.pdf
>Cultural Concerns in Addressing Barriers to Learning
        http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/cultural/culture.pdf
>Working Collaboratively: From School-based Teams to School-Community-Higher
        Education Connections
        http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/worktogether/worktogether.pdf
>Quick Training Aid: Suicide Prevention
        http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/suicide_qt/
        http://www.smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/quicktraining/suicideprevention.pdf

For more information on the UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools, go to the Website at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu or contact Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor, Co-directors at the School Mental Health Project/Center for Mental Health in Schools, UCLA Department of

Psychology, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563. Phone: 310-825-3634: Tool Free 866-846-4843: Fax: 310-206-8716. Email smhp@ucla.edu.

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And check out our sister center – Center for School Mental Health at http://csmh.umaryland.edu or contact Mark Weist, Director, University of Maryland at Baltimore, Department of Psychiatry, 737 W. Lombard St. 4th floor, Baltimore, MD 21202. Toll free: 888-706-0980. Email csmh@psych.umaryland.edu

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"There is great audacity in the willingness to change, more than a little optimism, and a serious dose of courage."

<div align="center">Robert Crais</div>
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COMMENTS, REQUESTS, INFO, QUESTIONS FROM THE FIELD

>>Colleagues comments related to last month's Emerging Issue:
Pernicious Funding Related to Student and Learning Supports at School

(1) "I have to take issue with your reference to Medicaid as "pernicious funding" in your latest newsletter. Medicaid is a HUGELY important funding for school-based medical services for students with disabilities. The newly enacted Medicaid reg will literally remove close to a billion dollars in badly needed funding for special education. To substitute those funds, communities will have to take the money from somewhere else -- maybe community-based services for children and families? Other school-based programs? The Medicaid reg represents a huge shift in funding from the federal government to state and local government. NASDSE intends to continue its work with many other national organizations to restore the Medicaid cuts. I really feel that you guys missed the boat on this one."

(2) "My experience has been similar to your statement in the pernicious funding article. I am a program manager for a school based mental health program funded by Safe Schools Healthy Students. The program consists of 8 providers who are employed by a community based mental health agency and we are located in four middle schools in our district. Mental health services have previously been provided as grant money was available or providing billable services only. Although school personnel have recognized the shortcoming of providing billable services only or living from one funding stream to another. It was my goal to provide services on a continuum from universal mental health promotion activities to treatment. But we are now faced with the final year of funding and the race is on for sustainability. Schools are reticent about formalizing or integrating relationships with providers who may not be sustained, the district has not made viable efforts to share the expenses of the mental health programming, the mental health agency sees our program as a fiscal loss due to the way the federal funding impacts the medicaid reimbursement across the agency and so on. I would love to talk more about these issues."

(3) "I have had experience with providing fee-based services (I am a Licensed School Counselor, but also a Licensed Mental Health Counselor), and was told I can not provide clinical or mental health svs in the schools as a school employee, but they wanted me to bill Medicaid. I was unable to get any clear definition of my role beyond that, and due to what I felt to be ethical concerns, immediately stopped billing Medicaid. I still have not received clarification on this issue from my employers, though I have requested it more than once. It's been very frustrating..."

(4) "... everything within school systems are random acts of improvement and rarely tied to the

big picture of what school is all about. The things that a focused vision on where we need to go include: leadership, how we can spend money, human resources, and random programs that may run one year, but not the next.

Leadership in education must surely be in crisis...finding good leaders and keeping them seems to be a huge problem. I assume we are not the only ones in Hawaii that feel this. Has anyone ever really looked at the transition of principles in schools? I know there is some legislative initiative in Hawaii to provide some incentives to Principals who make long term commitments to schools (5 years)... however, with upper level openings and difficulty managing schools with unions etc., principals move on to other schools maintaining status quo and demands of districts without being able to be change agents. Problems such as leadership coming from the pool of teachers only compounds the issue, making it hard for good leaders to be running schools to support those who are good teachers.

When I think of how we spend money, it also runs into human resources and random programs... many of the funding sources like Title I or 21st Century have limits on how you hire... It is great if you can recruit teachers for tutors, but the bottom line is that the pool of personnel that comes in to run after school programs is as transient as the blowing winds... this is further compounded by the fact that those running after school programs sometimes are not associated with the school, and therefore do not participate in school mission or policy making boards etc.... you see we are just trying to make a program run! (Again consistent, long-range leadership would fix this). You can't say this enough and you get frustrated cuz with personnel turnover, it has to happen over and over again... but, there has to be some kind of orientation to the school like a 4 hour retreat... that include an intro to the school, the vision and mission of the school, the interrelatedness with the community, the need for team building, ... it seems that these are impossibilities that we can have as an ideal, but rarely attain... so we continue to act in a way that is very close to this "industrial model" of education where the teacher is in charge of disseminating information and assessing the acquisition of it.

People have to work collaboratively... there has to be some kind of intrinsic realization that we cannot do it in isolation... however the complexity and difficulty of working together when you have been "god" of your classroom, is almost impossible and teachers are not motivated to change...”

>>Request for Sharing

We were asked to share the following:

    (1) Making your School Safe – http://www.csee.net/climate/seeae/volume7.aspx
    (2) The National School Climate Center – http://nscc.csee.net/
    (3) Collaborating with parents for early school success: The Achieving, Behavior, Caring Program. (2008) S. McConaughy, et al., Guilford Press. http://www.guilford.com

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THIS IS THE END OF THIS ISSUE OF ENEWS
See below for source identifying information

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

As sister Centers, the Center at UCLA and the one at the University of Maryland focus on advancing efforts to enhance how schools address mental health and psychosocial concerns. A description and evaluation of the Center's work and impact is available at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

For more information about the Center or about ENEWS, contact Center Coordinator Perry Nelson or Center Co-Directors Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor at:
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