ENEWS

A Monthly Forum for Sharing and Interchange

May, 2008 (Vol. 12 #8)

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

>Is It a Culture of Poverty or Social Inequities that Interfere with Succeeding at School?

**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

>May – Time to Help Students and Families Plan Successful Transitions
            to a New Grade or a New School

**Other helpful Internet resources

**Links to

>Upcoming initiatives, conferences, & workshops
>Calls for grants proposals, presentations & papers
>Training and job opportunities

**UCLA Center update

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

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**EMERGING ISSUE

>*Is It a Culture of Poverty or Social Inequities that Interfere with Succeeding at School?*

In the April (2008) issue of *Educational Leadership*, Paul Gorski argues that the concept of a "culture of poverty" is not only a myth, but a harmful one. He highlights the history of the concept and states that the concept "is constructed from a collection of smaller stereotypes which, however false, seem to have crept into mainstream thinking as unquestioned fact." The examples he discusses as smaller myths building into the larger one are that (a) poor people are unmotivated and have weak work ethics, (b) poor parents are uninvolved in their children's learning, largely because they do not value education, (c) poor people are linguistically deficient, and (d) poor people tend to abuse drugs and alcohol. He cites research to counter each of these myths and stresses that such myths distract from taking on "a dangerous culture that does exist — the culture of classicism." Classicism, he states, ignores systemic conditions that support the cycle of poverty, such as inequitable access to factors that enable success at school. He challenges everyone to look at how we perpetuate these conditions in schools and districts and how we can change attitudes and practices so all students have an equal opportunity to succeed.

What is your take on this? Let us here from you and we will share what is sent in.
Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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**NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

>ONE SCHOOL'S NEW RULE FOR PUPILS IN TROUBLE: NO FUN
In a far reaching experiment with disciplinary measure, Cheektowaga district this year began essentially grounding middle school students whose grade in any class falls below 65, or who show what educators describe as a lack of effort. Such students – more than a quarter of the 580 at the school – are excluded from all aspects of extracurricular life, including athletic contests, academic clubs, dances and plays, unless they demonstrate improvement on weekly progress reports filled out by their teachers. 4/4/08 *The New York Times*.
http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/04/education/04middle.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=+NEW+RULE+FOR+PUPILS+&st=nyt&oref=slogin

>LIFE AFTER SPECIAL ED HAS CHALLENGES
During their public school years, children with disabilities are entitled to a menu of special services. It's a comforting safety net that often ends abruptly when students leave school. The special education law covers about 7 million students with disabilities in public schools. The Education Department recently examined how well states have been implementing the special-Ed law and issued report cards to the states. More received poor grades for their efforts to assist students with the transition out of high school. 3/31/08. *Washington Post.*
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/31/AR200803310164.pf.html

>CATCHING PROBLEMS EARLY, SCHOOLS TRY TO AVOID SPECIAL ED
Districts are rapidly adopting early intervention programs, hoping that steering a child away from expensive special education classes later will pay off for them, too, in cost savings. Not everyone is pleased about the early help, known as "response to intervention" or RTI. Some parents worry that children will have to wait too long to get the intensive help they need. Academics and administrators fear the trend is taking off too quickly, without enough research to back up its surge. *Boston Globe*
http://www.boston.com/news/education/k_12/articles/2008/04/21/catching_problems_early_schools_try_to_avoid_special_ed/

>STATE WANTS ACHIEVEMENT, DRIVING LINKED
Governor Bill Richardson has a message for New Mexico's teenagers: If you want to be eligible for a driver's license, you better be attending class and getting decent grades. Starting next year, eighth-graders would have to be near proficient or better on state standardized tests to be eligible for a driver's license when they come of age, while ninth-graders would have to have an attendance rate of at least 90%. *Santa Fe New Mexican*
http://www.santafenewmexican.com/SantaFeNorthernNM/Education-State-wants-achievement--driving-linked2008-04-24T20-35-26

>REPORT: LOW GRAD RATES IN US CITIES
Seventeen of the nation's 50 largest cities had high school graduation rates lower than 50%. The report, issued by America's Promise Alliance, found that about half of the students served by public school systems in the nation's largest cities receive diplomas. 4/1/08.
http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2008/04/01/report_low_grad_rates_in_us_cities/

>U.S. TO REQUIRE STATES TO USE A SINGLE SCHOOL DROPOUT FORMULA
Moving to sweep away the tangle of inaccurate state data that has obscured the severity of the nation's high school dropout crisis, Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings will require all states to use one federal formula to calculate graduate and dropout rates. 4/1/08. *The New York Times*.
http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/01/education/01child.html?scp=1&sq=SINGLE+SCHOOL+DROPOUT&st=nyt

>RISE OF THE 'ROCK STAR' SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT
No Child Left Behind has created a demand for school administrators who can take the pressure, and some 20 percent of school districts are now seeking superintendents because of a shortage. Fewer qualified candidates, risking expectations, and a near impossible job description are creating a new breed of superintendents. 3/31/08 *Christian Science Monitor*.
http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/0331/p01s03-usgn.html

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> *When more than 1 million students a year drop out of high school, it's more than a problem, it's a catastrophe*.

Colin Powell

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Note: Each week the Center highlights 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.htm

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RECENT PUBLICATIONS (IN PRINT AND ON THE WEB)

***Children's Mental and Physical Health**

>Looking beyond psychopathology: The dual-factor model of mental health in youth (2008) S. Suldo & E. Shaffer, *School Psychology Review, 37*(1) 52-68.

>Special Issue: Evidence-based psychosocial treatments for children and adolescents: A ten year update. (2008) *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology. 37*(1) Includes treatments for autism, eating problems, depression, anxiety, OCD, trauma, AD/HD, disruptive behavior, substance abuse and effective treatment for minority youth.

>Relationship between physical disabilities or long-term health problems and health risk behaviors or conditions among US high school students. (2008) S. Jones & D. Lollar, *Journal of School Health 78*(5) 252-257. http://www.ashaweb.org

>Suicide attempt characteristics, diagnoses, and future attempts: Comparing multiple attempters to single attempters and ideators (2008) R. Miranda, et al.*, Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 47*(1) 32-40. Http://www.jaacap.com

>Fact Sheet: *State Policies Affecting the Assurance of Confidential Care for Adolescents* (2008) H. Fox and S. Limb. Incenter Strategies, The National Alliance to Advance Adolescent Health http://www.incenterstrategies.org/jan07/factsheet5.pdf

>Special Issue: Mental Health and Hurricanes Katrina and Rita (2008). *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 39(*1). Http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/07357028

>Youth gang membership and serious violent victimization: The importance of lifestyles and routine activities. (2008) T. Taylor, et al., *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, (eBpu) http://www.sagepublcom/journal.aspx?pid=108

>*Assessing and managing violence risk in juveniles* (2006). R. Borum & D. Verhaagen. New York: Guilford Press.

>*Adolescent self-injury: A comprehensive guide for counselors and health care professionals.* (2007). A. D'Onofrio. New York: Springer.

*Family, School & Community

>When mobility disrupts learning (2008), J. Smith, et al., *Educational Leadership, 65*(7) 59-63

>How effective are school bullying intervention programs? A meta-analysis of intervention research (2008), K. Merrell et al., *School Psychology Quarterly, 23*, 26-42.

>Strong communities for children: A community-wide approach to prevention of child abuse and neglect. (2008) R. Kimbrough-Melton & D. Campbell, *Family & Community Health, 31*(2) 100-12. http://www.familyandcommunityhealth.com

>Community violence victimization and depressed mood: The moderating effects of coping and social support (2008). S. Haden & A. Scarpa. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, ePub http://www.sagepub.com/journal.aspx?pid=108

>*School violence: Fears versus facts* (2006). D. Cornell. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

>A framework for community mobilization to promote healthy youth development (2008) J. Watson-Thompson, et al., *American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 34*(3Suppl) S72-81. http://sciencedirect.com/science/journal/07493797

>School-based disaster mental health services: clinical policy, and community challenges (2008) K. Dean, et al., *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 39*(1) 52-57. http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/07357028

>*Cities in Crisis: A special analytic report on high school graduation.* (2008) C. Swanson, http://www.americaspromise.org/

>*Assessing culturally and linguistically diverse students: A practical guide.* (2005), R. Rhodes, S. Ochoa, & S. Ortiz. New York: Guilford Press.

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

>Toward and Science of Community Intervention (2008) J. McDonnell & G. Melton. *Family & Community Health, 31*(2) 113-125. http://www.familyandcommunityhealth.com

>Evidence-based treatment and practice: New opportunities to bridge clinical research and practice, enhance the knowledge base, and improve patient care. (2008) A. Kazdin, *American Psychologist, 63*(3) 146-159. http://www.apa.org

>Bridging science and practice in violence prevention: Addressing ten key challenges. (2008) J. Saul, et al., *American Journal of Community Psychology* (ePub) http://www.springerlink.com/link.asp?id=104830

>*No Child Left Behind Act: Education actions could improve the targeting of school improvement funds to schools most in need of assistance* (2008). Government Accountability Office. GAO-08-380. http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d08380high.pdf

>*Disconnected Youth: Federal action could address some of the challenges faced by local programs that reconnect youth to education and employment* (2008). Government Accountability Office. GAO-08-313. http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d08313high.pdf

>*Quantity and frequency of alcohol use among underage drinkers* (2008). National Survey on Drug Use and Health, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration. http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k8/underage/underage.cfm

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25 Years Later -- Did The 1983 Report *a Nation at Risk* Create More Harm Than Good?

Richard Rothstein argues that the report misidentified what is wrong with United States public schools and consequently set the nation on a school reform crusade that has done more harm than good. He finds the analysis flawed because it wrongly concluded that student achievement was declining, placed blame on schools for national economic problems over which they have little influence and ignored the responsibility of the nation's other social and economic institutions for learning. The report's analysis of declining achievement was based on average SAT scores. However, Rothstein stresses that much of the decline was due to the changing demographics of test takers that shifted from mostly students planning to apply to the most selective colleges in the early 1960s to more general college-bound students in the 1980s. In addition, the report was issued a decade after the nation's narrowing of social and economic equality ended, which means income was being less evenly distributed. As research has shown, social and economic disadvantage contributes in important ways to poor student achievement, i.e., children in poor health attend quality schools less regularly and those with inadequate housing change schools frequently.
http://www.cato-unbound.org/2008/04/07/richard-rothstein/a-nation-at-risk-twenty-five-years-later/

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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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Student to teacher:
You know, if you didn't make so many rules there wouldn't be so many to break!

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**MONTHLY FOCUS FOR SCHOOLS TO ADDRESS BARRIERS TO LEARNING

>>May – Time to Help Students and Families Plan Successful Transitions to a
New Grade or a New School

Students and their families are regularly confronted with a variety of transitions – changing schools, changing grades, encountering a range of other daily hassles and major life demands. Many of these can interfere with productive school involvement. A comprehensive focus on transitions requires school-wide and classroom-based systems and programs designed to (a) enhance successful transitions, (b) prevent transition problems, and (c) use transition periods to reduce alienation and increase positive attitudes toward school and learning. Examples of programs include school-wide and classroom specific activities for welcoming new arrivals (students, their families, staff) and rendering ongoing social support; counseling and articulation strategies to support grade-to-grade and school-to-school transitions and moves to and from
special education, college, and post school living and work; and before and after-school and inter-session activities to enrich learning and provide recreation in a safe environment.
Anticipated overall outcomes are reduced alienation and enhanced motivation and increased involvement in school and learning activities.
Over time, articulation programs can reduce school avoidance and dropouts, as well as enhancing the number who make successful transitions to higher education and post school living and work. It is also likely that a caring school climate can play a significant role in reducing student transiency.
With specific respect to articulation programs, some are designed for all students; others target those seen as likely to have difficulty making the transition. Some are designed for a relatively short period just before the transition (e.g., 1-2 weeks). A few continue the process into the new setting. All approaches involve some form of activity to reduce anxiety by addressing concerns and enhancing ability.
Key elements of such transition programs include:
• providing information and transition counseling, including making orientation and "warm-up" visits when feasible;
• teaching "survival" skills;
• training and helping teachers and support staff identify potential transition problems quickly and redesign classroom and school-wide transition tasks so they are not barriers;
• ensuring social support, such as student-to-student and family-to-family "buddy" programs; (This may involve linking students who are making the transition and/or, in the case of transitions to middle or high school, providing an older peer buddy in the new setting. Also, for middle and high school transitions, home rooms have been used to provide support networks and supportive guidance and counseling.)
• ensuring the family is prepared to provide transition support for the student – including seeking assistance as soon as there is an indication that the transition is a problem.

An even broader approach involves working on the whole school environment to make it more welcoming, caring, and supportive of all newcomers and especially those who are having difficulty.

Finally, some efforts focus on priming new settings to accommodate the needs of specific students and monitoring transitions to detect transition problems and then providing special assistance.

For more on using the end of the school year to prepare students and their families for change, see our self study survey on transitions in *Transitions: Turning Risks into Opportunities for Student Support* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/transitions/transitions.pdf

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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Closing achievement gaps requires combining school improvement with reforms that narrow the vast socioeconomic inequalities in the United States.
Richard Rothstein
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**OTHER HELPFUL INTERNET RESOURCES

>Center for Human Motivation, Learning and Development, University of Denver
http://www.dri.du.edu/

>School Violence - http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/yvp/school_violence.htm

>Character Education Project Evaluation Findings -
http://www.cetac.org/documents/publications/mobilizing.pdf

>National Association of School Nurses: Smart Moves, Smart Choices
A program that responds to the growing rate of prescription drug abuse
http://www.nasn.org

>Resources for Military Families Coping with Trauma - http://www.samhsa.gov/vets/

>Effective practices for engaging at-risk youth in service - http://www.ysa.org

>After school practices and resources
www.afterschool.org -- The AED Center for Youth Development has a new look and feel with more resources, professional development listings, suggestions for funding and sustainability, webinars, webcasts, and a new system for accessing Promising Practices in Afterschool.

>Gauging success: Measurement and Evaluation. Assuring Better Child Health and Development
http://www.abcdresources.org/activities/guaging success/nashp_resources.php

>Building professional development systems for the after school field
U. S. Department of Health and Human Service's Administration for Children and Families
http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/afterschool/

>Gaining a voice after school: Why after-school programs are a powerful resource for English language learners
http://www.caceafterschool.org/publications/gaining_a_voice_after_school_r.pdf

>Advancing achievement: Findings for an independent evaluation of a major after school initiative. http://www.ppv.org

>The school climate challenge: Narrowing the gap between school climate research and school climate policy, practice guidelines and teacher education policy. http://www.ecs.org

>The Center for Benefit-Cost Studies of Education. http://www.cbcse.org/

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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    Parents want to know first whether the school cares about and respects their child.
                             Ruby Payne

    Communities treasure schools that hold all students and parents in high regard.
                             Donna Marie San Antonio

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**LINKS TO . . .

>Upcoming Initiatives, Conference & Workshops. Http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upconf.htm

>Calls for Grant Proposals, Presentations & Papers. 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 bases on our website. Just click on the indicated URL. If you would like to add information on these, please send it to ltaylor@ucla.edu

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**UCLA CENTER – BRIEF UPDATE

For the latest information on Center resources and activities, go to http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu and click on What's New

Highlighted below are a few items – all are online to make them immediately accessible at no cost and with no restrictions on use.

***New Resources**:

>*Toward Next Steps in School Improvement: Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching.* http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/systemic/towardnextstep.pdf

>*Diffusion: In Pursuit of Action (Information Resource)*
    http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/systemic/Diffusion.pdf 79kb; 1pp

Updated Resources

>>*School-Community Partnerships: A Guide*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/guides/schoolcomm.pdf

>>*Protective Factors (Resiliency)*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Sampler/Resiliency/resilien.pdf

>>*Autism Spectrum Disorders and Schools*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/autism/autism.pdf

>>*Thinking About and Accessing Policy Related to Addressing Barriers to Learning*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Sampler/Samp1a.pdf

>>*Behavioral Initiatives in Broad Perspective* (Technical Assistance Sampler)
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/behavioral/behini.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; Toll Free (866) 846-4843; Fax (310) 206-5895; 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, CSMH, 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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Instead of accepting myths that harm low-income students, we need to eradicate the system wide inequities that stand in their way.
                                                            Paul Gorski
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**COMMENTS, REQUESTS, INFO, QUESTIONS FROM THE FIELD

Colleagues have asked us to let you know specifically about the following:

>Center for Social and Emotional Education's Annual Summer Institute "Promoting Safe and Civil Schools: Creating the foundation for positive youth development and achievement in k-12 education." July 8-10, New York City.
http://www.csee.net/climate/programsservices/si2008/summer_institute.aspx

>Support Personnel Accountability Report Card. http://www.sparconline.net/inthenews.html

>The Nurtured Heart Approach. Strategies for children with ADHD and other challenging behaviors. http://difficultchild.com/

>In Our School: Building Community in Elementary Schools
http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/bookstore/inourschool.html

> A Conference Focused on Prevention and the Pathway to Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect
   June 10, 2008 - http://hhspp.csumb.edu/community/JuneConference2008.html

> Sustainable, Schoolwide Social and Emotional Learning Implementation Workshops
   July 24-25, & August 14-15, 2008, Chicago, IL - http://www.casel.org/

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THIS IS THE END OF THIS ISSUE OF E-NEWS
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.

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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