



ENEWS

A Monthly Forum for Sharing and Interchange



May, 2010 (Vol. 14 #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>



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



WHAT'S HERE THIS MONTH

****Emerging Concern:**

>Linking Funds for Low Performing Schools to Four Turnaround Models: Reactions to the U.S. Department of Education Grants to Improve Low Performing Schools

****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**

>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**
- >Upcoming and archived webcasts, vidoe, and online professional development**
- >Calls for grant proposals, presentations & papers**
- >Training and job opportunities**

****UCLA Center's Latest Reports**

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



EMERGING CONCERN

>Linking Funds for Low Performing Schools to Four Turnaround Models: Reactions to the U.S. Department of Education Grants to Improve Low Performing Schools

The reality that funds for low performing schools are linked to the federal administration's four turnaround models is eliciting a range of reactions. Below are excerpts from a news report from a paper in the capital city of a midwestern state. The report indicates that a significant proportion of the lowest rated schools in the state will not apply for funds "because their leaders are skeptical of federal reform strategies." Some indicate they will not apply "because they refuse to replace principals, believe mandatory negotiations with teacher unions limit their options, or believe the amount of money they might receive isn't worth the trouble." Here are some quotes from superintendents in the state:

"Philosophically, I have an issue with what would appear to be more federal intrusion into what I thought was a state that prided itself on local control."

"Principals deserve better treatment. I just object to the concept of being forced to make personnel decisions like that in exchange for a few dollars."

"We don't view this lightly at all...we simply don't need all the strings of the grant."

"Our town is only 2,200 people, and we've got 751 kids in our district. You can't just go close a school building. What are you going to do with them?"

For more on this issue, see our Center's new report entitled: "Turning Around, Transforming, and Continuously Improving Schools: Federal Proposals are Still Based on a Two- Rather than a Three Component Blueprint" – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/turning.pdf>

And let us know how this is playing out in your state and districts. Send comments to ltaylor@ucla.edu We will compile what we learn and circulate the information.

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NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

Maryland's Center for School Mental Health Director Moves to New Position

After 15 years as director of the Maryland Center, Mark Weist is moving to a new position as professor in psychology at the University of South Carolina. During the past 15 years, Mark has played a major role in advocating for mental health in schools. In moving on to new opportunities, he will continue to play such a role. So we aren't saying goodbye; we are looking ahead to ongoing interactions with him. See letter on the Maryland Center's website: <http://csmh.umaryland.edu/who/AdvisoryBoard/Members/Updates/Transition%20mdw%202.pdf>

As of July 1st, 2010, leadership of the Maryland Center is transitioning to Nancy Lever and Sharon Stephan who will be co-directors. We look forward to working with them on our many overlapping concerns.

SAMHSA, Ad Council, and Inspire USA Foundation launch National Suicide Prevention Campaign for Teens

In an effort to provide support for teens who may be contemplating suicide, the "We Can Help Us" effort includes television, radio, print and interactive public service announcements, as well as in-school and mall posters, directed at 13-17 year olds. Young people seeking help are urged to visit <http://www.reachout.com> where they can hear success stories and strategies from teens. 3/31/10 <http://www.samhsa.gov/newsroom>

New York Pushes Shift for Special Education

The Bloomberg administration, struggling to address the needs of a growing number of students with learning disabilities, is overhauling special education by asking every principal to take in more of the students and giving them greater flexibility in deciding how to teach them. This fall, more than 250 schools will be asked to accept more students with disabilities.... By September 2011, principals at each of the system's 1,500 schools will be expected to enroll all but the most severely disabled students.... The shift echoes one of the central philosophies of the administration, giving principals more responsibility and control over their schools. It is also an effort to bring New York more in line with the nationwide trend of allowing special education students to benefit from regular classroom settings. But some special education advocates and principals worry that the changes could be too difficult for principals with little knowledge of special education, who are already strained by day-to-day issues and impending budget cuts. (*The New York Times*, April 28, 2010)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/29/education/29schools.html>

Community Leaders, Students Gather to Discuss Youth Violence

Youth violence in Chicago is often described as an epidemic. Students, advocates and community members met to propose strategies hoping to curb the trend. School officials and police have a conference call every morning to discuss overnight violence that could produce aftershocks in the schools. 4/25/10

<http://www.chicagobreakingnews.com/2010/04/community-leaders-students-gather-to-discuss-youth-violence.html>

Alabama Schools Face Bullying Issue; Policies Required by July 1

Technology has transformed the traditional schoolyard bully into a much more complicated and sophisticated beast, prompting lawmakers throughout the country to pass anti-harassment laws for school students. Alabama is the most recent of 44 states to pass an anti-bullying law, which makes it illegal for students to harass, bully, intimidate, harm or threaten to harm fellow students. The law requires districts to pass anti-bullying and harassment policies by July 1. (Birmingham News, 04/18/10)

http://blog.al.com/spotnews/2010/04/alabama_schools_face_bullying.html

Needs of 'Whole Child' May Factor in ESEA Renewal

As Congress gears up for renewal of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), lawmakers and the Obama administration are seeking to address a complaint that the current version of the law, No Child Left Behind, places too much emphasis on students' test scores and pays little attention to their health, social and other needs. At a recent hearing, lawmakers agreed that the idea of educating "the whole child" encompasses a wide range of support services, which advocates are hoping could be reflected in the rewrite of the ESEA. (*Education Week*, 04/28/10)

http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2010/04/28/30esea_ep.h29.html

Retooling Laid-Off teachers for Special Education

The California teacher corps, the statewide organization representing alternative certification programs, has announced that its programs are reaching out to school districts to provide pink-slipped and laid-off teachers retraining to move into the high-need field of special education. The announcement follows the state's notification in March, when more than 26,000 teachers received notices of potential lay-offs. <http://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr10/yr10rel36.asp>

Field Trips for Students Decline: Another Narrowing of Whole Child Development

To make up for the decline in school field trips, many museums are taking their lessons to the classroom, through traveling programs, videoconferencing or computer-based lessons that use their collections as a teaching tool. 4/21/10

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/22/us/22fieldtrips.html?scp=1&sq=Field%20Trips%20for%20Students%20Decline&st=cse>

Kansas City Schools to Make All Principals Re-apply for Jobs

Here's a school mental health problem: A month after approving closure of 26 of the district's schools, the school board voted to make all principals and vice principals re-apply for their jobs after the current school year. The right sizing plan means half of the principals in the district have to be cut. The re-application is intended to enable the district to choose administrators by merit instead of seniority.

<http://www.kansascity.com/2010/04/14/1878110/kc-school-principals-must-reapply.html>

U.S. Department of Education Opens Competition for Promise Neighborhoods

The U.S. Department of Education today launched the Promise Neighborhood program, the first federal initiative to put education at the center of comprehensive efforts to fight poverty in urban and rural areas. The \$10 million available in fiscal 2010 will support up to 20 organizations with one year of funding to plan for the implementation of cradle-to-career services designed to improve educational outcomes for students in distressed neighborhoods. 4/30/10 Press Release, US Dept of Education - <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/index.html>

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 <http://www.ecs.org/e-clips> and the Public Education Network (PEN) Newsblast http://www.publiceducation.org/newsblast_current.asp

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“For the last decade, the No Child Left Behind mentality has hijacked much of our creativity. ... Examining how we think about kids, their learning, our teaching, and leadership is at the heart of making our schools better places for children.”

Joanne Rooney

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RECENT PUBLICATIONS (in print and on the Web)

Child, Adolescent, Young Adult Mental and Physical Health

>Sexual orientation and bullying among adolescents in the Growing Up Today study (2010). Berlan, E., et al. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 46(4) 366-371. [Http://www.jahonline.org](http://www.jahonline.org)

>Preventing adolescent suicide (2010). Pirruccello, L. *Journal of Psychosocial Nursing Mental Health Services*, ePub. [Http://www.psychurse.org](http://www.psychurse.org)

>Positive and negative reinforcement underlying risk behavior in early adolescents (2010). Macpherson, L. et al., *Prevention Science*, ePub. [Http://www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com)

>School functioning in youth with and without anxiety disorders: Comparisons by diagnosis and comorbidity (2010). M. Mychailyszyn, et al., *School Psychology Review*, 39(1) 106-121.

>Depressive symptoms and their social contexts: A qualitative systematic literature review of contextual interventions (2010). L. Gottlieb, et al., *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, ePub. [Http://isp.sagepub.com](http://isp.sagepub.com)

>Depression as a moderator of sociocultural influences on eating disorder symptoms in adolescent females and males (2010). Rodgers, R. et al. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 39(4) 393-401. [Http://springerlink.com](http://springerlink.com)

>A meta analytic study of predictors of anger in adolescents (2010). Mahon, N. et al., *Nursing Research*, ePub. [Http://www.nursingresearchonline.com](http://www.nursingresearchonline.com)

School, Family & Community

>Prejudice in schools: Promotion of an inclusive culture and climate (2010). Dessel, A., *Education and Urban Society*, 42(4) 407-429. [Http://eus.sagepub.com](http://eus.sagepub.com)

>School transitions among military adolescents: A qualitative study of stress and coping (2010). Bradshaw, C., et al. *School Psychology Review*, 39(1) 84-105.

>Community violence, protective factors, and adolescent mental health: A profile analysis (2010). Copeland-Linder, N, et al. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 39(2) 176-186. [Http://www.leaonline.com](http://www.leaonline.com)

>Suicidal behavior among youth in five public sectors of care. (2010) Chavira, D., et al., *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 15(1) 44-51. [Http://www3.interscience.wiley.com](http://www3.interscience.wiley.com)

>The after school needs and resources of a low income urban community: Surveying youth and parents for community change (2010). Sanderson, R. & Richards, M. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, ePub. [Http://www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com)

>Engagement in after school programs as a predictor of social competence and academic performance (2010). Sernoff, D. *American Journal of Community Psychology*. ePub. [Http://www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com)

>Influences of neighborhood context, individual history and parenting behavior on recidivism among juvenile offenders (2010). Grunwald, H. et al. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*. ePub. [Http://www.springerlink.com](http://www.springerlink.com)

Policy, Systems, Law, Ethics, Finances & Statistics

>*Turning around, transforming and continuously improving schools: Federal proposals are still based on a two- rather than a tree-component blueprint* (2010). Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA. <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/turning.pdf>

>U.S. Department of Education (2010). *Achieving dramatic school improvement: An exploratory study*. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, Policy and Program Studies Service. www.wested.org/cs/schturn/print/docs/schturn/research.htm

>U.S. Department of Education(2010). *A blueprint for reform: The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act*. Washington, DC: Author.

>*The connection between health and high school dropout* (2010). Breslau, J. University of California, Davis – http://cdrp.ucsb.edu/dropouts/pubs_reports.htm

>*School climate challenge: Narrowing the gap between school climate research and school climate policy, practice guidelines and teacher education policy* (2010). National School Climate Council. Center for Emotional and Social Education and the Education Commission of the States. <http://www.schoolclimate.org/climate/policy.php>

>In the eyes of the beholder: Urban student perceptions of Zero Tolerance Policy (2010). L. McNeal & C. Dunbar. *Urban Education*, 45(3) 293-311. [Http://uex.sagepub.com](http://uex.sagepub.com)

>A multilevel exploration of the influence of teacher efficacy and burnout on response to student problem behavior and school based service use (2010). Pas, E. et al., *School Psychology Quarterly*, 25(1) 13-27. [Http://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/spq](http://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/spq)

>A strengths based group program on self-harm: A feasibility study (2010). McAllister, M. et al., *Journal of School Nursing* ePub. <http://jsn.sagepub.com/>

>Adolescents' suicidal thinking and reluctance to consult general medical practitioners (2010). Wilson, C., et al., *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 39(4) 343-356. [Http://springerlink.com](http://springerlink.com)

FYI: SafetyLit is a useful resource for abstracts to articles related to injury prevention policy and practice <http://www.safetylit.org>

Note: The Quick Find online clearinghouse at [Http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu](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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“A community centered approach to reform underscores the need for school systems to develop “community” within schools, among schools, and in relationship to the neighborhoods and cities they rely on to support students’ learning and development...”

Warren Simmons

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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

The end of a school year, celebrating success, anticipating what's next. For many students and families planning for the next school year is something to think about ... *next year*. Why worry about it now? For teachers receiving newly arriving middle school students, for students moving from middle to high school, *planning* for a successful transition *now* can make a world of difference. And much more is involved than simply providing a traditional orientation.

Introduction to the new level (usually larger in physical size as well as in number of students and staff) takes some getting used to – new teachers, new students, new space, lockers, locations of rooms, new students from multiple feeder schools. Ideally, a summer “bridge” program provides students a chance to attend the new facility and become comfortable.

However, with budgets tight (and getting tighter), schools must establish a range of alternatives in order to do what they know helps students succeed in making key transitions. More and more schools are looking to the social capital of the community for resources. Can older students be engaged in a welcoming program for incoming students? Are family members available to orient new families to the school? Can mentors be recruited from the community to provide tutoring and recreational opportunities at the school over the summer months to help new students become acclimated at the new school? Can teachers and support staff plan a new student and family induction program for the first weeks of the new school year? Can community-based organizations, service clubs, agencies, etc. help cover facility costs? Mobilizing resources to keep schools open during the summer for the community can have multiple benefits, especially in low income communities.

What are your strategies for using the summer and first weeks of schools to help students prepare for the transition to the new school year?

>>For a range of ideas and online resources from our Center and from others related to support for transitions (organized in sections for elementary, middle, and high school), see Transition Programs/Grade Articulation/Welcome – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p2101_01.htm

>>For ideas and models of students welcoming, supporting, and mentoring other students, see Peer Support – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/peersupport.htm>

Note: Anticipating major concerns that arise with regularity over the course of the school year is imperative. These provide natural opportunities to strengthen support for learning. 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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“The hardest things about my new school? Do you remember the middle school gym locker room? The cafeteria line? Losing your locker combination? Being the shortest kid? The rules nobody tells you about? It ain’t easy.”

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OTHER HELPFUL INTERNET RESOURCES

>Highlights of the 2008 National Youth Gang Survey
<http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/229249.pdf>

>Youth development: Disconnected youth
http://www.nlc.org/iyef/youthdevelopment/disconnected_youth/index.aspx

>Rural schools: Diverse needs call for flexible policies
<http://www.mcrel.org/topics/ruraleducation/products/97/>

>Engaging parents in education
<http://www2.ed.gov/admins/comm/parents/parentinvolve/index.html>

>Campus attacks: Targeted violence affecting institutions of higher education.
<http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/campus-attacks.pdf>

>*This Emotional Life* -- <http://www.pbs.org/thisemotionallife>

>Youth’s needs and services: Findings from the survey of youth in residential placement
<http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/publications/pubabstract.asp?pubi=249735>

>Putting kids on the pathway to college – <http://www.annenberginstitute.org/products/bto.php>

>Transitions to Adulthood – <http://futureofchildren.org/>

>Teen age pregnancy prevention: Programs for replication
<http://www.hhs.gov/ophs/oah/prevention/research/programs/index.html>

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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We Have Met the Enemy and He Is Powerpoint

Several high ranking military officers commented on the military's use of powerpoint in a recent NY Times article (4/26/10).

One stated: "It's dangerous because it can create the illusion of understanding and the illusion of control. Some problems in the world are not bullet-izable."

Some officers say the program does come in handy when the goal is not imparting information, as in briefings for reporters. The news media sessions often last 25 minutes, with 5 minutes left at the end for questions from anyone still awake. Those types of PowerPoint presentations are known as "hypnotizing chickens."

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LINKS TO

>Upcoming initiatives, conferences & 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>

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

Note: Information on each of these is updated on an ongoing bases 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 on these, please send it to ltaylor@ucla.edu

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UCLA CENTER UPDATE

New Policy Report

Turning Around, Transforming and Continuously Improving Schools: Federal Proposals Are Still Based on a Two- Rather than a Three-component Blueprint
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/turning.pdf>

This report begins with a discussion of school turnaround models to illustrate the dilemma confronting efforts to enable equity of opportunity. Then, the analysis focuses on current priorities as reflected in the Race to the Top and School Improvement grant proposals and the U.S. Department of Education's Blueprint for the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Findings highlight ongoing marginalization of practices (e.g., student and learning supports) for directly addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students. The problem is viewed as stemming from the two-component framework that dominates school improvement thinking. The analyses highlight the need for federal school improvement policy to shift from a two- to a three-component framework. The intent is to provide a unifying concept and umbrella under which all resources currently expended for student and learning supports are woven together. To illustrate the point, the third component is defined as focused on addressing barriers to learning and teaching and designated as an enabling or learning supports component. It is stressed that the three component framework does nothing to detract from the fact that a strong academic program is the foundation from which all other school-based interventions must flow.

The report concludes that only by unifying student and learning supports will it be feasible to develop a comprehensive system to directly address many of the complex factors interfering with schools accomplishing their mission. And only by developing such a system will it be feasible to facilitate the emergence of a school environment that fosters successful, safe, and healthy students and staff. It is emphasized that school climate is an emergent quality that stems from how schools provide and coalesce on a daily basis components dedicated not only to instruction and management/governance, but to learning supports as well.

We hope you can share this resource widely. With the reauthorization of Elementary and Secondary Education Act in progress, it is essential that we include a comprehensive system of learning support so all student can succeed. If there is anyone you would like us to send the report to in hard copy, let us know. Ltaylor@ucla.edu

New Quick Find

School Turnaround and Transformation
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/turnaround.htm>

Includes links to related Center resources, other online reports, and Center focusing on this concern. If there is a resource you think should be included, let us know. Ltaylor@ucla.edu

Additions to the series on Youth Culture & Subgroups

>About “Mean Girls” as a youth culture subgroup
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/youth/meangirls.pdf>

>About the Cheerleading Youth Subculture
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/youth/cheerleading.pdf>

This series is up to 12 resources online; others are in process. To see all of the briefs in the series, go to the Quick Find on Youth Culture and Subgroups
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/youthculture.htm>

For more information on the UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools and its many resources, 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 for Mental Health in Schools, UCLA, Department of Psychology, Los Angeles, CA 90095. Phone(310) 825-3634. Toll Free (866) 846-4843. Fax (310) 206-5895. Email: smhp@ucla.edu

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Check out our sister center, the Center for School Mental Health at <http://csmh.umaryland.edu> 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

CSMH announcements:

>Related to a move and new position as professor in psychology at the University of South Carolina, as of July 1st, 2010, Mark Weist will be transitioning leadership of the Center for School Mental Health to Nancy Lever and Sharon Stephan, who have significant experience in school mental health. Nancy and Sharon will become co-directors of the center

>The 15th Annual Conference on Advancing School Mental Health October 7-9, 2010. Hyatt Regency Albuquerque, Albuquerque, New Mexico. The conference is conducted by the Center for School Mental Health (CSMH) University of Maryland School of Medicine, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in partnership with The IDEA partnership, funded by the Office of Special Education Programs, sponsored by the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE).

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COMMENTS, REQUESTS, INFORMATION, QUESTIONS FROM THE FIELD

We have been asked to share the following information:

(1) May 21st – “a conference on Academic-Public Collaborations for Research on Mental Health Recovery and Wellness. This conference is supported by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health and the UCLA Center for the Study of Public Mental Health. This is an all day event held in Covell Commons and the Northwest Campus Auditorium at UCLA. This event is offering CME and CEU credits. Registration is \$150 and students are free with a valid ID. To register go to: <http://www.hsrcenter.org/MHRW/>”

(2) “I am writing to you to draw your attention to the non-profit organization Peace One Day, and our FREE online USA Peace Education Resource. The Resource contains 21 lesson plans with accompanying teaching materials. Topics covered include, ending-bullying, conflict resolution, sustainability, intercultural cooperation and global citizenship. Launched in association with Scholastic and with the support of Ben & Jerry's, POD Education is going from strength to strength.

Jeremy Gilley founded Peace One Day in 1999 to document his journey to establish an annual global Peace Day. As a result of our work, in September 2001 the member states of the United Nations unanimously adopted September 21 as the first ever day of global ceasefire and non-violence; Peace Day. In 2009, driven by Peace One Day and championed by Senator Menendez (D-NJ), a US resolution was passed to recognize this day and to support Peace One Day's work in the field of education.

Working in conjunction with the DVD The Day After Peace, the Resource includes a variety of embedded media, student centered and engaging activities as well as printer-friendly worksheets. From May of this year, our Global Education Resource will be available in all six official languages of the UN, including Spanish.

The online accessibility and use of film to engage young people in this positive and constructive cause, make it ideal for use in After-School programmes, Summer Camps as well as Youth and Community projects. Please visit our website <http://www.peaceday.org/en/education> to complete the short registration process, from there you can access the Resource as well as view the 32 minute version of the documentary.”

(3) “The Spring 2010 Tutor/Mentor Leadership and Networking Conference will be held at Loyola University, Chicago, on May 27 and 28. I hope you'll encourage people in the Midwest to send representatives to the conference.” <http://www.tutormentorconference.org/>.

(4) About Findings on the Mental Health Education Program “Breaking the Silence”

“BREAKING THE SILENCE” PROVEN TO BE EFFECTIVE; MENTAL ILLNESS EDUCATION DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Long Island, N.Y., March 2010- A two year study sponsored by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) to assess change in knowledge, attitudes, and behavior relating to mental illness in middle school students through instruction with “Breaking the Silence” (BTS) lessons has concluded that the BTS program is effective in promoting growth in these areas.

“Results of our study show that even brief instruction (2 ½-3 hours) can produce change in how students understand mental illnesses. BTS is a very promising approach to improving the way children perceive and respond to mental illnesses,” stated Dr. Otto Wahl, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology, University of Hartford and Principal Research Investigator. Dr. Wahl added, “Although the BTS program has been around for many years and has received much praise, it has not previously received a careful empirical assessment of its effectiveness. It was important to address the question of whether this widely used program is accomplishing its goals. Middle school students from different parts of the U.S. were the focus of the research and we can now statistically document that instruction in BTS does result in improvements in knowledge, attitudes, and/or behavior related to mental illnesses.”

As Janet Susin, President NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Queens/Nassau and NAMI New York State observes,

“Substantial research has established that the public holds inaccurate negative beliefs about those with mental illnesses, seeing them as dangerous, unpredictable, unattractive, unworthy, and unlikely ever to be productive members of society; creating an environment that impedes both treatment seeking and recovery. Children and adolescents are particularly sensitive to public opinion and attitudes. Ostracism, rejection, teasing, and damage to self-esteem, as well as reluctance to seek or accept mental health treatment, are among the possible consequences. The results of this study establish that, by educating children about mental illnesses, we can change attitudes and foster more accurate understanding and acceptance of people with psychiatric disorders.”

Research methodology included the development and pilot testing of questionnaires about mental illnesses, in middle schools in Connecticut and South Carolina. Following revision of the questionnaires, two groups of students from middle schools in New York, Florida, South Carolina and New Mexico were administered questionnaires; one group received BTS instruction, the other (control group) did not; both groups received the questionnaires a second time after BTS instruction for the first group; both groups completed questionnaires a third time, six weeks post instruction.

Students in the groups that received BTS instruction showed a statistically significant increase in accurate knowledge of mental illness and improved attitudes toward mental illness after receiving the BTS instruction. Those in control groups showed no significant improvement. Improvements were maintained through the six-week follow-up period.

BTS is an innovative teaching package which includes lesson plans, games, and posters on mental illness for three grade levels -upper elementary, middle school, and high school. Students learn the warning signs of mental illnesses, learn that mental illness can be treated successfully, and learn how to recognize and combat stigma. The BTS program also has the relatively unique feature that it is delivered by the school’s own teachers rather than by outside experts.

NAMI is a nationwide grassroots, self-help and advocacy organization dedicated to improving the lives of all those affected by severe mental illness. For more information on BTS visit www.btslessonplans.org . For NAMI Queens/Nassau call 516-326-0797, 718-347-7284 or visit www.nami.org .



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>

