School Practitioner Community of Practice
(A network for sharing & exchange)
November 6, 2019

Topics for discussion –

> **>** Broader understanding of attendance problems enhances interventions

What colleagues are sharing

Links to a few other relevant resources & other topics of concern

Note: Go to http://smhp.psych.ucla for links to other Center resources including
>Upcoming initiatives, conferences & workshops
>Calls for grant proposals, presentations, and papers
>Training and job opportunities
>Upcoming webcasts & other professional development opportunities

This resource is from the
Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports, UCLA

Given education budgets, we have been asked to increase our outreach to make our free resources more available (e.g., for planning, professional development, etc.).

So please feel free to share with anyone you think might benefit (e.g., forward our resources to individuals and share on listservs and websites).

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For those who have been forwarded this and want to receive resources directly, send an email to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

For previous postings of community of practice discussions, see http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm

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Topic for Discussion –

> **>** Broader understanding of attendance problems enhances interventions

Excerpt from: Risk Factors for School Absenteeism and Dropout: A Meta-Analytic Review,
Journal of Youth and Adolescence (2019) 48:1637–1667 https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10964-019-01072-5

School absenteeism and dropout are associated with many different life-course problems. To reduce the risk for these problems it is important to gain insight into risk factors for both school absenteeism and permanent school dropout. Until now, no quantitative overview of these risk factors and their effects was available. Therefore, this study was aimed at synthesizing the available evidence on risk factors for school absenteeism and dropout. In total, 75 studies were included....

For school absenteeism, 12 risk domains were found with large effects, including
> having a negative attitude towards school,
> substance abuse,
> externalizing and internalizing problems of the juvenile,
> a low parent-school involvement.

For dropout, the risk domains showing large effects
>having a history of grade retention,
>experiencing learning difficulties,
>a low academic achievement....

Concepts of school absenteeism are influenced by multiple child, parent, family, peer, school, and community factors. ... This view on how school absenteeism and dropout evolve is in line with the ecological perspective on child development. The child interacts with different social ecological

systems surrounding the child, such as the family, peers, and the school environment (microsystem), the extended family (exosystem), and the culture, laws, and social-political conditions (macrosystem). In each of these systems, risk factors can be present that increase the risk of negative child behavior, of which school absenteeism is an example. ...

Preventive interventions should also be based on the notion that school absenteeism and dropout results from the presence of multiple child-, family-, school-, and peer-related factors. This means that all these factors should be taken into account in order to effectively reduce or prevent school absenteeism and dropout. ..

A substantial number of risks contribute to school absenteeism and dropout. For school absenteeism, significant and substantial effects were found for risks that refer to: physical and mental problems of the child (e.g., having psychiatric symptoms or disorders), substance abuse (e.g., drug abuse), antisocial or risky behavior (e.g., showing anti-social behavior or having anti-social cognitions), problems at or with school (e.g., having a negative school attitude), characteristics of the school (e.g., low quality of the school or education), parenting problems and difficulties (e.g., low parental school involvement), and family problems (e.g., an ineffective family system).

As for school dropout, similar risks were identified next to risks related to peer group characteristics or social status in a peer group. The results imply that a multifactorial approach is needed in risk and needs assessment, and in interventions aimed at reducing or preventing school absenteeism and dropout. This review provides valuable insights for the development and improvement of both assessment and (preventive) intervention strategies.

For more on planning interventions to address these complex factors, see resources from our Center and from others through the links on the Center's Quick Finds. See, for example:

>*Attendance* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/attendance.html

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

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Please let us hear from you:
What's your take on addressing attendance problems?
Share your perspective and send any other comments to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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What colleagues are sharing

>From a school counselor

I just wanted to share one of the things that is working at my middle school. I have worked in schools which a "homework club" is offered. It is usually offered after school, and can be run by someone not invested. At my school, we offer a Guided Studies class built into the last period of the day. The teachers are hand selected. They are our top teachers who have a Growth Mindset mentality. In addition, we have 4-5 Peer Tutors in the classroom to help these students. These students are also hand selected and trained. Major behavior problems are kept out as to not throw the class. We incorporate other supports for those students. In the class, they are reviewing math, showing the kids how to effectively study and organize all subjects, and providing parent communication when gaps start to arise. On Fridays when there isn't homework, students are working on Executive Functioning Skills. Students that are still struggling are good candidates to bring up to the Student Study Team. We have found that a good 80% of students taking advantage of the Guided Studies class have found significant increases to their grades. As a counselor, I am also going into those classrooms to have conversations with students on a weekly basis. Our classrooms have become a model for how to do this right. Just wanted to share something that works.

>In response to the 10/17 Center commentary: *Why Aren't the Leading Advocates for School Improvement Talking About Transforming Student and Learning Supports?*

I really appreciate you saying this. I feel like I've been thinking this for a while now internally and saying this in some conversations with colleagues. I've served in one of the largest urban school districts in the country and now serve in a medium-sized suburban district and have found similar issues. Moving from different districts I've seen how work in areas of learning supports get pushed to the side and typically does not prompt the same priority as academic instructional areas. Until we really put all of these factors together and truly work on the WHOLE CHILD at ALL levels of our organizations not just focus on or target academic or instructional areas or choose to utilize academic leadership at most levels, we won't be able to truly bridge the gaps for some of our students. Often, in my district leaders in the areas of counseling, psychology, and other areas are not invited or just forgotten when it comes to district leadership meetings, budget planning, and professional development planning because we aren't "instructional leaders" and then these areas don't ever get addressed systematically in our districts. Instructional leaders are tasked with focusing on academics/ instruction and left with the responsibility to address why there is an academic gap in performance for specific students without a plan and without the expertise or guidance of subject matter experts in learning supports at the table at all levels. Efforts in student support are sidelined and then efforts end up being piecemeal and less efficient/less effective. I wholeheartedly agree that this needs to change in order to ensure that our efforts are more effective and our resources are used more efficiently. Thank you again for your continued efforts.

Kids designed a guidebook for immigrants, refugees new to the city

Reported in the *Dallas Morning News*
https://www.dallasnews.com/news/immigration/2019/10/08/dallas-kids-designed-coloring-guidebook-immigrants-refugees-new-city/

Dallas middle school students working with Vickery Meadow Youth Development Foundation helped design a coloring book called "Local" intended to be a guide for immigrants who are new to the city. The book contains contact information and lists the services offered by some 30 Dallas-area nonprofits. Groups like the Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services and Refugee Services of Texas are featured in the book. City services are also included. The students met for a class taught by artist Natalia Padilla. Each person in the 11-student class was assigned one or two nonprofits or services and designed artwork that represented the services. The project is trying to raise money to print copies and translate the book into multiple languages, make it available for download and pay for the project website's hosting fees. Said one student: "This book can hopefully bring a little bit of joy to people who are coming here. I hope it tells them that not everything is bad and that there is still joy here.

For more on *Welcoming at School*, see the Center's Quick Find on

>Transition Programs/Grade Articulation/Welcoming – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p2101_01.htm

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Please let us hear from you:

Share your perspective and send any other comments to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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Links to a few other relevant resources & other topics of concern

Resilience in Children: A Developmental Perspective – https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/30018217

Resiliency Theory: A Strengths-Based Approach to Research and Practice for Adolescent Health
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3966565/

Foundations for Young Adult Success –
https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/foundations-for-young-adult-success.aspx

The School to Prison Pipeline: Long-Run Impacts of School Suspensions on Adult Crime –
https://www.nber.org/papers/w26257.pdf?utm_campaign=Economic%20Studies&utm_source=hs_email&utm_
medium=email&utm_content=78146039

Explore SEL – http://exploresel.gse.harvard.edu/

Addressing a Crisis: Cross-Sector Strategies to Prevent Adolescent Substance Use and Suicide –
https://www.tfah.org/report-details/adsandadolescents/

How States Are Addressing the Student Vaping Epidemic –
https://ednote.ecs.org/how-states-are-addressing-the-student-vaping-epidemic/

What 12k Students Tell Us About Equity in Education: Infographic –
https://www.panoramaed.com/blog/student-voice-equity-in-education?utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=e
mail&utm_content=78629036&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-9OUVy4mRYfZrnXyZSVHgeKymDmJgqatt-3DN_nnuRx4
5Vpwq5LEGwj9Og5daGGjHrJTf0YqEvYBTIHfpCJSRIyVZZ3KQ&_hsmi=78629510

The Healthy Schools Toolkit 101 – https://healthyschoolstoolkit.wustl.edu/

A Few Upcoming Webinars:

11/7 - Dispelling Misconceptions About English Language Learners: Research-Based Ways to
Improve Instruction
11/13 - Understanding the Rights of Students Experiencing Homelessness
11/13 - Health in Rurural America
11/14 - The Investment case for PD education, and equity
11/14 - Healthy Schools Toolkit
11/19 - Career Exploration and Development with a Focus on Implicit Bias
11/19 - Understanding Doubled up
11/21 - School Selection Rights
11/26 - Student and Families' Attitudes about Career Technical Education
12/3 - Supporting the Education of Unaccompanied Students Experiencing Homelessness
12/11 - Paving the Way to College for Students Experiencing Homelessness
12/19 - Determining Eligibility for Mckinney-vento Rights and Services
12/18 - Emotional Poverty in All Demographics: How to Reduce Anger, Anxiety, and Violence
in the Classroom
1/8/20 - Absenteeism and Truancy: What Works in Schools and What Doesn't?

For links to register to the above and for other relevant webinars, see
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm

> *Equity of opportunity is fundamental to enabling civil rights;*
> *transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to*
> *enabling equity of opportunity, promoting whole child development,*
> *and enhancing school climate.*

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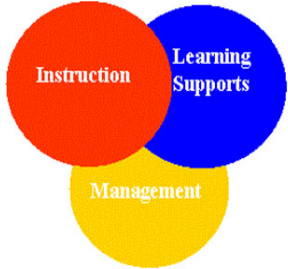
For information about the

National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports
go to http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html

Also online are two related free books

Improving School Improvement
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

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**THE MORE FOLKS SHARE, THE MORE USEFUL AND
INTERESTING THIS RESOURCE BECOMES!**

For new sign-ups – email Ltaylor@ucla.edu

**Also send resources ideas, requests, comments, and experiences for
sharing.**

**We post a broad range of issues and responses to the Net Exchange
on our website at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newnetexchange.htm
and on Facebook (access from the Center's home page
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/)**