School Practitioner Community of Practice
(A network for sharing & exchange)
September 4, 2019

Topics for discussion –

>*What's a positive way to help youth identify affinity groups?*

>*Achievement gap or opportunity gap?*

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

> **Given the frequency of community crisis events, we urge a review of the recent (7/17/19) practitioner discussion of *plans for schools after a crisis event.*
> http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/mhpractitioner/practitioner(7-17-19).pdf**

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 –

>*What's a positive way to help youth identify affinity groups in their community?*

Request: "I am reaching out because I found your resources on organizing and interpreting youth subculture and groupings. I am planning an activity centered around mapping out positive and negative environments that youth hang out in outside of school in our community. As part of the activity, I was hoping to have our Teen Advisory Board identify subgroups of teens that may hang out in these different spots. I was wondering if you had any further information on common classifications of youth subgroups, or ideas on ways to help the group of teens identify who is hanging out in each of these areas, without necessarily attaching negative stereotypes to these groups while going through this process? Anything that you can point me to is much appreciated."

Center Response: We think of this as a mapping activity that can be carried out by a wide range of young people. And the beginning of a school year is a great time to mobilize and guide students in working together to do affinity group mapping and then share the information with

students and staff. This is an opportunity for students to learn more and share their perceptions about their community. It also is a natural opportunity for enhancing social emotional development.

For a perspective on the importance of youth participation in such an activity, see

>*About Student Voice and Participation* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/voice.pdf

For a series of Information Resources on youth subcultures, see the Center Quick Find

>*Youth subcultures* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/youthculture.htm

In particular, see:

>>*What is Youth Culture? A Brief Introduction*

>>*Glossary of Terms Related to Youth Culture Subgroups*

>>*Youth Subcultures: Annotated Bibliography and Related References*

Here's a related 2019 research report from the *Journal of Adolescent Research*.

>Contemporary College Students' Reflections on Their High School Peer Crowds
https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0743558418809537

Excerpt from press release – https://emails.uofi.uic.edu/newsletter/202845.html

"Researchers have found that while many high school peer crowds and influences have remained constant over time, changing demographics, cultural influences and the increasing number of college-bound youth have led to the emergence of new peer groups and perceptions.

They identified 12 peer crowds and their positions in the social hierarchy. At the top of the social hierarchy are groups labeled "populars," "jocks," "floaters" and "good-ats." In the middle the "fine arts" kids, "brains," "normals" and "druggie/stoners." At the bottom of the social hierarchy are "emo/goths," a new group of "anime/manga" fans and "loners."

Academic anxiety is on the rise. Stress related to academic performance was expected, but it was amplified when compared with prior studies and reflects increasing competition for spots in top colleges. Participants identified academic anxiety in more specific terms, even suggesting that students in the ''brain'' peer crowd ''were less mentally healthy'' due to a fear of upsetting their parents.

Low social status adolescents reflect modern times, but high social status adolescents follow prior generations. The participants generally endorsed crowds that engaged in conventional activities valued by school and society, like getting good grades and participating in extracurricular activities, despite viewing "populars" and "jocks" negatively for their tendency to party and bully others. The "druggie/stoner" crowd was seen as gaining status by being in the orbit of these top crowds, due to supplying drugs for parties. Other groups were shaped by current events, popular culture and social media.

Researchers highlighted three examples from the study:
- the emergence of the "anime/magna" peer crowd, which she said is a modern incarnation of a classic "computer geek" crowd that is likely promoted by a sharing of cultures on the Internet;
- the "emo/goth" crowd, who share with past decades a focus on countercultural behaviors, but focus on today's music and aesthetics;
- the expressed fear of "loners" as potential perpetrators of violence, something that researchers described as "new and unique to adolescents today, potentially reflecting the prevalence of school shootings over the last 20 years."

Adolescent peer crowds play an important role in determining short-term and long-term life

trajectories on social, educational and psychological fronts. Understanding how adolescents navigate their environments and perceive themselves and others can help us advance research in many areas, from how we can successfully promote healthy behaviors, such as anti-smoking or safe sex messages, to how we develop effective curriculums or even mediate the effects of school shootings."

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Beside mapping affinity groups and community resources, here's an example of students mapping their schools with the specific aim of enhancing safety.

Students Identify 'Hot Spots' In Safety Mapping At Schools

From a news story on CBS Denver: https://denver.cbslocal.com/2018/02/16/school-safety-high-tech/

Schools across Colorado are participating in a program, which could help identify why students feel unsafe in the education environment. The survey is called the "Hot Spot Mapping" program.

Students identify where they feel unsafe in their school, by circling the locations on a map. They also fill out a questionnaire, which helps staff better understand what makes a students feel safe.

"One of the key features of this program is engaging young people, and building their voice and their agency for change," said Danielle Tuft, Sexual Violence Prevention Program Manager for the Department of Public Health and Environment.

Tuft said the survey has reached nearly one dozen schools in Colorado thus far, providing important feedback which the schools didn't have before....

With results in hand, some schools made changes to their buildings, by adding lights. ... Some even relocated locker rooms, to provide a better sense of safety...."

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For mapping resources, see the Center Quick Find
> *Mapping Resources –* http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/p2312_06.htm

And here are some organizations that focus on a variety of mapping concerns relevant to youth:

(1) **YPAR** – http://yparhub.berkeley.edu/

Youth-led Participatory Action Research is described as "an innovative approach to positive youth and community development based in social justice principles in which young people are trained to conduct systematic research to improve their lives, their communities, and the institutions intended to serve them.... YPAR is a cyclical process of learning and action — research is done not just for the sake of it but to inform solutions to problems that young people themselves care about."

YPAR stresses that mapping provides youth with the opportunity to visually represent their community and understand its current conditions. This can be helpful in determining assets and issues related to such matter as

> *What kinds of positive resources are there for youth in the community?*
> *Who in the community uses these resources?*
> *What do youth need that doesn't currently exist?*
> *What happens when there is a problem within the community?*
> *What about when something positive happens?*
> *Who is responsible for making changes?*
> > *http://yparhub.berkeley.edu/investigate-method/mapping/*

(2) **Gardner Center for Youth and their Communities** –
https://gardnercenter.stanford.edu/projects/youth-engaged-leadership-and-learning

> See the statement below from their report entitled: *Mapping Out-of-School Time Resources for East Palo Alto and Belle Haven Youth* –
> https://gardnercenter.stanford.edu/publications/mapping-out-school-time-resources-east-palo-alto-and-belle-haven-youth
>
> *Community leaders working with youth in the City of East Palo Alto (EPA) and the Belle Haven neighborhood of Menlo Park approached the Gardner Center with a need to better understand why many youth remain disconnected from the community's youth service programs and agencies. The Gardner Center collaborated with these leaders to gather and analyze data to answer the following questions: (1) What programs are available to youth in the EPA and Belle Haven communities, and where are there gaps or duplication in available services? (2) How do available programs overlap with the schedules and interests of youth? (3) What factors inhibit or facilitate accessing the services available to local youth? To answer these questions, interviews conducted with service providers to learn about available programming. In addition, youth was trained to survey their peers about out-of-school time practices, programmatic preferences, and barriers to participation. Finally, we compiled publicly available transit and crime data was completed to examine these potential barriers to accessing programs for youth. This report is a first step in exploring the relationships between program availability, youth preferences, and logistical factors.*

(3) **The Asset-Based Community Development Institute (ABCD)** –
https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/Pages/default.aspx

> This institute is described as being *at the center of a large and growing movement that considers local assets as the primary building blocks of sustainable community development. Building on the skills of local residents, the power of local associations, and the supportive functions of local institutions, asset-based community development draws upon existing community strengths to build stronger, more sustainable communities for the future...The Asset-Based Community Development Institute provides examples of asset-mapping tools.*
> See on the toolkit page:
> *>Mapping Community Assets Workbook*
> *>Welcoming Schools*
> https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/resources/Pages/tool-kit.aspx

(4) **New Orleans Children and Youth Planning Board's** *Community Resource Mapping Project: Youth as Mappers*
https://www.nolacypb.org/cypb-launches-community-resource-mapping-project-youth-as-mappers/

> As described, the project "provides training for teams of young people to research services/programs and organizations. The research is done via surveys, calls, visits, community walks where detailed information is gathered on available youth services. The data is reviewed by youth, their coaches to sort and categorize it by type of service, youth served, etc. Sorted data is used to create a resource guide, searchable database and an illustrated map that show what services exist and where."

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Please let us know:

How are local schools and communities promoting youth participation?

Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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Topic for Discussion –
>*Achievement gap or opportunity gap?*

From *Citizen Times* –
https://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/local/2019/08/12/asheville-city-schools-shifts-achievement-gap-focus-opportunity-gap/1969070001

Mind the (language) gap:
District shifts away from 'achievement gap' toward 'opportunity gap'

Echoing a nationwide trend, Evans, who will begin her second year leading Asheville Primary School instructs her staff to use "opportunity gap" instead of "achievement gap" when broadly discussing academic differences between groups of students...Evans heard "achievement gap" throughout her early career, often in the context of what schools could do better. She also began hearing an emerging term, "opportunity gap," which stressed a need for more equity in all societal sectors: health care, transportation, outdoor recreation and even the private sector, in addition to education.

"'Achievement gap' unfairly puts the onus on the students," Evans said. "'Opportunity gap' is a more intricate understanding that learning is the result of an entire system."... Melissa Hedt, executive director of curriculum and instruction at Asheville City Schools. "Over time, we've developed a better understanding that if you just say 'achievement gap,' it sounds like people may just have different abilities, but when you talk about 'opportunity gap,' you begin to be able to identify all the contributing factors." Hedt cited after-school activities, transportation and the ability to have a teacher of the same race as some of the opportunities black students lack more often than their white peers in Asheville...."

For more on the opportunity gap, see
https://www.marylandeducators.org/hot-issues/opportunity-gaps
http://plc.dpsk12.org/culturallyresponsiveeducation/opportunity-gap-cohorts/

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Please let us know your views about the above matters.

And send us any other comments you want to share!

Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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

About School Adjustment http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/adjust2.pdf

36 of [APA's] Best Back To School Psychology Resources
http://psychlearningcurve.org/back-to-school-psychology-resources/?utm_source=Psych+Learning+Curve&utm_campaign=8fc0a03c2b-Back+To+School&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_ff6044c3a5-8fc0a03c2b-174482877

Social & Emotional Development in Middle Childhood AGES 5—10 YEARS
https://www.brightfutures.org/tools/BFtoolsMC.pdf

Social & Emotional Development in Adolescence AGES 11—21 YEARS
https://www.brightfutures.org/tools/BFtoolsAD.pdf

Healthy Mental and Emotional Development
https://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/healthy-mental-and-emotional-development

New Teachers Need Emotional and Professional Support
http://www.ascd.org/ascd-express/vol14/num33/new-teachers-need-emotional-and-professional-support.aspx

'I Am a Fool to Do This Job': Half of Teachers Say They've Considered Quitting
   https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2019/08/05/half-of-teachers-considered-quitting.html

Using Learning Stations to Kick Off the Year
   https://www.edutopia.org/article/using-learning-stations-kick-year

Do grades matter? http://exclusive.multibriefs.com/content/do-grades-matter/education

What Matters for Urban Adolescents' Engagement and Disengagement in School: A Mixed-Methods Study https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0743558419830638

For resources to address school adjustment, see September's ENEWS at
   http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/sept19.pdf

A Few Upcoming Webinars:

9/10 – Rise to the Challenge: Designing Rigorous Learning That Maximizes Student Success

9/10 – A Place Where We Belong: Improving Conditions for Learning

9/11 – Key Practices That Shape School Leadership

9/12 – Data-Based Behavior Plans: What Do They Look Like

9/12 – Determining Eligibility For Mckinney-vento Rights And Services

9/13 – Supporting Youth and Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness Through Education and Workforce Partnerships

9/16 – Children's Mental Health and the Life Course Model

9/18 – Ignite Change for Equity and Inclusion

9/24 – Understanding Doubled up

9/25 – Aspiring Principals webinar

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
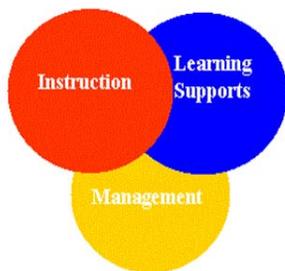   go to http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html

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/)