

Featured

- >School board member asks: ***Why can't all students be mentors?***
- >***How are schools welcoming immigrant & other newcomer students and families?***
- >***Links to a few other relevant shared resources***

For discussion and interchange:

- >School board member asks: ***Why can't all students be mentors?***

What I see happening in our schools is that when students are seen having some skills, they are recruited into helping and this seems to really rocket up their confidence. The thing is, when a student does not have the early skill set to be chosen, they end up in a position where they continue to mainly have only formal interactions with instructors and a lot of interaction with other students. Peer interactions, although meaningful, are still lacking in some levels of maturity and insight. Having a situation where all students serve expands all students' experiences and could help them feel self-worth that is not measured by peers who are more likely to bully. I know that adding character development or service projects for all students seems to steal from other classes and is likely to be a faculty heavy endeavor, and is likely to involve community agencies BUT, we lose the battle to educate [those] students struggling ... anyway...

From: ***Building Effective Peer Mentoring Programs in Schools***

Cross-age peer mentoring programs are an increasingly popular choice for educators and youth development professionals hoping to create positive outcomes for youth. These programs, in which older youth befriend and mentor younger children in a structured environment, are growing in popularity for a number of reasons:

- > They can produce a number of positive outcomes for both sets of participants. Cross-age peer programs provide growth and learning opportunities for both mentors and mentees, resulting in a "double impact" that is appealing to schools and districts attempting to support students with limited financial and community resources
- >Fewer resources are needed for recruiting mentors. Peer mentors are recruited from student populations within participating schools, which cuts down on the amount of marketing and outreach usually needed to recruit adult mentors. Since most cross-age peer mentoring programs are based at the school site, fewer financial resources may be needed for recruitment staff or facilities. These programs tend to take advantage of existing resources and school infrastructure.
- > They capitalize on the importance of peer relationships for adolescents. Cross-age peer programs take advantage of adolescents' increasing interest in peer friendships as they enter the teenage years. Mentees' natural tendency to look up to slightly older youth means that they view their mentor as a role model and someone worth listening to. Peer mentors also benefit from interacting with each other in positive ways through the volunteer experience, often building new relationships beyond their normal circle of friends.
- >They can help with transition points in participants' lives. Mentees in elementary or middle school benefit from having an older student help them through the challenges of moving to a new school and the accompanying changes in social relationships that brings.
- >High school mentors build personal skills and confidence that can help prepare them for their lives after high school. Their involvement in the program can also be a meaningful addition to applications for colleges and future jobs....

From: *Cross-Age Peer Mentorship Programs in Schools*

Peer mentorships have the potential benefit of generating a double impact (i.e., both mentors and mentees can benefit). While research is limited, positive results are reported for cross-age mentoring. Examples for mentees are feelings of connectedness to school, competency, grades, prosocial behaviors and attitudes, and self-efficacy. Positive results reported for mentors include enhanced personal and interpersonal skills and connectedness to school, increased confidence, self-esteem, empathy and moral reasoning, intrapersonal communication and conflict resolution skills, and relationships with parents. Mentor preparation is an added value to their education. And, for high school peer mentors, the activity can strengthen their college and work applications. With respect to costs, the expenses needed for recruitment, operational infrastructure, and facilities of cross-age peers are relatively low.

For more on this, see

>*About Student Peer Mentoring*

>*Service Learning Can Enhance Social Emotional Development*

For discussion and interchange:

>**How are schools welcoming immigrant and other newcomer students and families?**

All schools have an influx of newcomers. In some schools, many newcomers are from another country. Newcomers vary in the type and amount of supports they need to enable a successful transition and adjustment to school and neighborhood. Beyond initial supports, schools receiving students from other countries need to develop a full continuum of interventions to address immigrant concerns and a multicultural student body. See:

From: Our Center

>*Immigrant Youth: Some Implications for Schools*

>*Immigrant Children and Youth: Enabling Their Success at School*

From the U. S. Department of Education: *Educational Services for Immigrant Children and Those Recently Arrived to the United States*

Schools in the United States have always welcomed new immigrant children to their classrooms – according to the most recent data, there were more than 840,000 immigrant students in the United States, and more than 4.6 million English learners. We have begun to receive inquiries regarding educational services for a specific group of immigrant children who have been in the news – children from Central America who have recently crossed the U.S. - Mexico border. This fact sheet provides information to help education leaders better understand the responsibilities of States and local educational agencies (LEAs) in connection with such students, and the existing resources available to help educate all immigrant students – including children who recently arrived in the United States....

From: *Support for Immigrant and Refugee Students*

...The goal of the Support for Immigrant and Refugee Students... is to provide teachers with a resource to support their undocumented students and students experiencing emotional distress due to their families' immigration status. To that end, lessons focus on (1) building community and empathy among students so that they can feel safe to communicate their thoughts and feelings, knowing they will be recognized and supported, and (2) participating in literature-based discussions centered on key socio-emotional themes experienced by this group of students.

From: ***A Guide to Safe and Welcoming Schools for Immigrant and Refugee Students***

...Across the country, school districts, schools, and school staff are taking affirmative and proactive steps to ensure that immigrant students and families feel safe and welcome within their schools and communities...

A growing number of schools and districts have realized that their engagement with students and their families—including those who are immigrants and refugees—must go beyond academics if they want to create a safe and inclusive environment for all learners. And in today's political climate, schools must address fears and concerns related to immigration status in order to achieve this goal....

There are many things that educational systems can do to create environments in which students can thrive socially, emotionally, and academically. Teachers, in particular, can create inclusive and safe learning environments for all students by incorporating lesson plans and classroom activities that are designed to cultivate empathy and trusting relationships, create a sense of belonging, and reduce discriminatory stereotypes and actions....

From: ***For Children, the Immigrant Experience Begins in School***

Young immigrants to this country – legal and illegal – often have one common experience: attending an American public school. That experience is often catalytic. The right set of supports in and around that school can mean that a newcomer is put on a path to self-sufficiency, academic success, and options for the future. And, of course, the converse is true as well. ...

There is no one right answer about how to best support newcomer students, but it is clear that schools must provide more than English language skills to help these students achieve academic success and self-sufficiency in their new country. Strong school leaders who value understanding immigrant students, who use data to measure progress, and who engage the community broadly are essential. ...

From: ***Public Schools Struggle to Accommodate Unaccompanied Migrant Children***

...The San Francisco city council passed a resolution to provide emergency humanitarian assistance specifically to unaccompanied children seeking refuge in the United States. The San Francisco Unified School District has followed suit, with members of their Board of Education urging the district to add teachers, expand services, and dedicate funding to meet the needs of these children.

These proactive measures typify what the school district has done for many years – welcome new students with open arms. Each year, hundreds of newcomer students arrive in the district and need intensive services in order to be successful....

The hallmark of the district's immigrant student services is the Pathway Program. This program involves intensive English language learning coursework, as well as wraparound services that meet the social, emotional, psychological, and legal needs of immigrant children, many of whom have come to this country to escape abject poverty and violence back home. When adding to the mix that this new wave of children is coming in without their parents, expanding these services makes the most sense. In fact, the district is working with other agencies in the city to coordinate programs so the diverse needs of each immigrant student are met. Social service agencies, churches, and local charities are just a few of the entities involved in the effort.

City and school district officials believe that providing comprehensive services to these children will not just benefit students, but will benefit the community in the long run. Ensuring supports are in place to help children receive services to meet their immediate medical and mental health needs, and as they age, finish high school, procure employment, attend college, and find suitable housing, will negate much of the financial burden the city would face if these children fell through the cracks and came to rely upon social service programs to get by. ...

From: ***Immigrants and Refugees Are Solving Teacher Shortages***

According to the Migration Policy Institute, more than one in three educators, or 34 percent, are unemployed or not using their degree. Yet, thousands of teacher vacancies across the country persist — with more than 160,000 jobs filled by under-qualified teachers. In the next year, the

Asian Community and Cultural Center in Lincoln, Nebraska; the Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity in Tulsa, Oklahoma; and Richard J. Daley College in Chicago, Illinois will place more than 150 teachers trained in their home countries at schools in their communities.

For more on this concern, see the Center's Quick Find:

>[*International Students, Immigrant Students, and Mental Health*](#)

Resource:

[*What Schools Can Do to Welcome and Meet the Needs of All Students and Families*](#)

>[**Links to a few other relevant shared resources**](#)

[**Students Are Bringing Up the Israel-Hamas War in Class. Here's How Teachers Are Responding**](#)

[**Talking to Children and Teens About the Israel-Gaza War**](#)

[**Teaching about the events happening in Israel and Gaza in the Classroom**](#)

[**Is Social Media Addictive? Here's What the Science Says.**](#)

[**"After the School Day, What's Next?": Exploring Refugee Youths' Engagement in After-School Programs**](#)

[**Narratives of Language, Culture, and Identity Negotiation by Immigrant High School Students**](#)

[**Social inclusion of immigrant children at school**](#)

[**The role of engagement in immigrant students' academic resilience**](#)

[**District plan to address equity, diversity, and inclusion**](#)

[**6 ways to better communicate complex school issues**](#)

[**Put your money on the table": Interagency Coordination to Address the Crisis in Student Mental and Behavioral Health**](#)

Do you like going to school?



A Few Upcoming Webinars

For links to the following and for more webinars, go to the Center's Links to Upcoming/Archived Webcasts/Podcasts – <https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm>

- 11/8 Addressing the Needs of Immigrant and Refugee Students: Inclusive Mental Health Interventions in Diverse School Settings
- 11/14 Mental wellness support
- 11/16 Improving staff morale
- 11/16 Fostering Student Well-Being Through School-Based Peer-to-Peer Support Programs
- 11/16 Paving the Way to College for Students Experiencing Homelessness
- 11/20 Elementary students thinking about college
- 11/21 Basic Requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act
- 11/28 Worry and anxiety
- 11/29 Effective communication with the IEP team

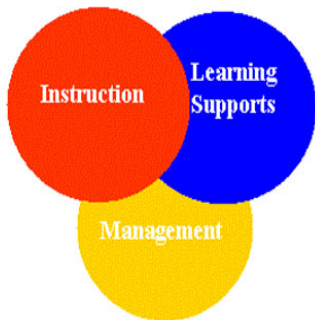
To Listserv Participants

- **Please share this resource with others. (Everyone has a stake in the future of public education and this is a critical time for action.)**
- **Let us know your views about the topics shared and about what's going on to improve how schools address barriers to learning & teaching and reengage disconnected students and families. (We can share the info with the over 130,000 on our listserv.)**
- **For those who have been forwarded this and want to receive resources directly, send an email to Ltaylor@ucla.edu**
- **Looking for information? (We usually can help.)**
- **Have a suggestion for improving our efforts? (We welcome your feedback.)**

We look forward to hearing from you!

Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity. – Martin Luther King, Jr.



For information about the

***National Initiative for Transforming
Student and Learning Supports***

go to <https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>

Equity of opportunity is fundamental to enabling civil rights; transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to promoting whole child development, advancing social justice, and enhancing learning and a positive school climate.

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

For new sign-ups –Send to 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 <https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newnetexchange.htm>
and on Facebook (access from the Center's home page <https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/>)**