

School Practitioner Community of Practice
(A network for sharing & exchange)
(4/6/22)

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Note: Go to <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/> for links to other Center resources.

This resource is from the

Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports, UCLA

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).

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>

Students showing support for Ukraine

“Children, parents, and city officials gathered in the schoolyard of P.S. 145 (NYC) to rally support for people suffering in Ukraine, and for the Ukrainian students and families who attend the school. All around the schoolyard kids and their parents stood wearing the colors of the Ukrainian flag. Families stood holding handmade blue and yellow banners and signs that read “Stop the war.” Co-President of the Parent-Teacher Association and a Ukrainian American, kicked off the meeting by speaking about her connection to the cause through her Ukrainian roots. ... Community Education Council Member Naveed Hasan. Hasan, the CEC3 Multilingual Community Chair and a parent at the school, shared his connection to Ukraine through his wife. Hasan stressed the importance of deconstructing the stigmatization of speaking non-English languages in America.

‘The community is hurting these past few weeks, which is obvious from the meetings I have with parents from drop-off and pick-up every day,’ Hasan said, ‘This is why I felt it’s important to have a strong show of solidarity here with Ukraine and against all wars of aggression.’”

<https://www.westsiderag.com/2022/03/10/bloomingdale-school-students-show-support-for-ukraine-and-each-other-we-are-united-in-our-diversity>

Some Resources for Supporting Students in Response to the War in Ukraine

Talking to Kids About Ukraine: How Teachers Can Help Students

<https://www.teachstarter.com/us/blog/talking-to-kids-about-ukraine-teachers-students/>

Resources in Response to the War on Ukraine

<https://mailchi.mp/mi-aimh/ukrainian-russian-refugees-and-iecmmh-needs?e=e653e04848>

War on Ukraine: Resources to Support Children & Adolescents

<https://mhctnetwork.org/centers/mhct-network-coordinating-office/news/war-ukraine-resources-support-children-adolescents>

For discussion and interchange

A debate is going on about the following:

Coping and resilience in the time of COVID-19 and structural inequities

see <https://acamh.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/camh.12484>

Here's an excerpt:

“The hardships associated with COVID-19 have highlighted the importance of coping and resilience, and many mental health providers and organizations have responded by promoting the use of individual and familial coping tools. While individually oriented techniques benefit many, they can also disadvantage populations struggling the most. They exact a cost by placing a higher burden on those with fewer resources and thus risk widening structural inequities. Since community-level interventions can also enhance resiliency and are cheaper and more sustainable, more effort should be put into developing and deploying them. At a time in which hardship is widespread, parents are overwhelmed by multiple demands, structural inequities are rampant, and demand for services outpaces capacity, the mental health field must prioritize more equitable methods of assisting large numbers of children and families....

Many youths and adults benefit from using coping tools, but they do not advantage everyone equally. Negative effects have also been found. Over-reliance on active coping, especially when individuals can exert little control over their circumstances, can lead to depletion and dejection...

Researchers studying resilience find that protective factors extend beyond individual and familial traits and behaviors, into environmental domains. High-quality neighborhoods, schools, religious organizations, and medical facilities function as important levers of social support. Community cohesion reduces negative effects from violent and potentially traumatic exposures. Programs building neighborhood reciprocity and cooperation increase helping behaviors and the wellbeing of both giver and receiver...

At a time in which hardship is widespread, parents are overwhelmed by multiple demands, structural inequities are rampant, and demand for services outpaces capacity, the mental health field must grapple with the best ways of assisting large numbers of children and families. Absorbing more lessons from societies and programs focused on community resilience could be a start. Mental health providers can leverage their knowledge of how environments bolster resilience to influence public discourse and the creation of new programs. They can also seek to increase the nature, type, and frequency of community-level interventions they use in their own practices. Examples include engaging in advocacy aimed at procuring resources for clients, advising clients and communities on building new sources of social and material supports, helping create communal methods of making sense of, grieving, and healing from adversity, and exploring and making more accessible spiritual outlets. Practitioners should also consider when to recommend interventions aimed at individual coping and when doing so could overload vulnerable populations. Noticing when clients are physically and mentally exhausted and overwhelmed, as well as short on time and resources, can alert clinicians to the need to prioritize external supports. When mental health providers speak up about how cohesive communities and the provision of adequate social and material resources enable coping and resiliency, they can help stimulate the formation of new infrastructures that will benefit children and families..”

For discussion and interchange

Another controversy:

A colleague cautions about child behavioral health research

“My congressman sent me a letter about the local University taking over the campus of a closed college. ... here are some explanatory paragraphs from the letter:

‘... I am thrilled that the University ... announced plans to repurpose the former ...campus into the... Institute for Children’s Behavioral Health, a remarkable effort to advance research, training, and clinical

breakthroughs in children's behavioral health. This effort will help train a new generation of behavioral health providers equipped with the skills to help alleviate this crucial burden in our community....”

Here is my response:

“Thank you for the good news about the plans to convert the old campus to a youth behavioral health center! I'm confident a lot of good will come from that. I feel obliged to alert you to a potential "gotcha" in this plan. I'm a retired school psychologist who worked in three states over a 36 year career. This experience has taught me that not all of the problems that need fixing exist inside the children. The ancient industrial model of education as implemented in many areas not only creates some of students' problems, but can make existing problems worse and also prevent the proper implementation of even very simple efforts to provide treatment....

While we are researching cutting-edge new developments, we also need to clean house. We need to look at how schools actually damage students via various institutional procedures and structures and change them for the better....

*If our goal is positive youth development, why do we deny lunch to children from families that cannot afford to pay for it?

*If we know that on average about 1.6% of students have bi-polar symptoms, why do we use suspension and expulsion as our primary consequence for showing those symptoms at school? Shouldn't we build schools and daily schedules to prevent and treat a variety of conditions that result in class-disrupting outbursts?...

*Why do we overburden our secondary counselors with so many scheduling and quasi-administrative duties that there is little time left for behavioral health-style counseling? Why do we overburden our school psychologists with so much testing that there is little time left for behavioral health-style counseling?

It's the old 'go upstream and find out who is throwing children into the river' story. Breakthrough research in behavior health for children is a great step. But we need to look at how schools function to create behavioral problems because of the way we build and staff school buildings, and set inhumane procedures and rules for running them.

Our old schools are not designed for the kinds of instruction and the types of students we seeing nowadays. We need smaller schools, smaller classes, more educators of all kinds.

(Some days I wonder what would happen if we had hundreds of garage-sized schools sprinkled all around so we wouldn't need busses burning fossil fuels and we would have more flexibility when the next pandemic/earthquake/flood rolls around.) We need to stop trying to improve student performance by punishing teachers for being lazy. We need to give up standardized testing in favor of more authentic skills measurement. ...

Let's get started NOW repairing what is broken in the old way we organized our schools! Then, we will be really ready to add-in whatever future new developments arise...”.

Be a community of practice participant.

Share your experiences, views, comments

Send to ltaylor@ucla.edu

>Links to a few other relevant shared resources

The Character Strengths Helping Us Get Through the Pandemic

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/digital-alfuism/202112/the-character-strengths-helping-us-get-through-the-pandemic>

National Summer Learning Toolkit <https://www.summerlearning.org/>

Youth Supporting Youth: Expanding Peer-to-Peer Programs in Schools

https://cachildrenstrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/CaliforniaChildrensTrust_PeerToPeer_IssueBrief_February2022_Final.pdf

Young Adult Adaptability to the Social Challenges of the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Protective Role of Friendships <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10964-022-01573-w>

Guidelines for responding to the death of a student or school staff <https://www.schoolcrisiscenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Guidelines-Death-Student-or-Staff-Booklet-Format.pdf>

Transforming Student/Learning Supports: What We've Learned so Far <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/spring2022.pdf>

A Leadership Team for Transforming Student/Learning Supports <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/resource%20coord%20team.pdf>

School-Based Health Services — HHS Resources <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/secletter/school-based-health-services-resources.pdf>

Integrated SERVICES, MTSS, SEL, COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, and???
What is Widely Advocated is Too Limited but Can Be Built on in ways that Fundamentally Transform How Schools Address Barriers to Learning & Teaching <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/3-10-22.pdf>

How School Boards Can Pursue New Directions to Help Schools Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/boardrep2022.pdf>

Most State Policies That Address LGBTQ+ Students in Schools Are Affirming, Despite Recent Trends Toward Exclusion <https://www.childtrends.org/publications/most-state-policies-that-address-lgbtq-students-in-schools-are-affirming-despite-recent-trends-toward-exclusion>

3 States Share Efforts to Improve Kindergarten Transitions https://ednote.ecs.org/3-states-share-efforts-to-improve-kindergarten-transitions/?utm_source=ECS+Subscribers&utm_campaign=93ea4bfc33-Ed_Note_Daily&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1a2b00b930-93ea4bfc33-53599575

American's School Mental Health Report Card https://hopefulfutures.us/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/FINAL-EDITS-Master_022322.pdf

Time for Straight Talk about Mental Health Services and MH in Schools <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/mhinschools.pdf>

Blueprint for Youth Suicide Prevention <https://www.aap.org/suicideprevention>

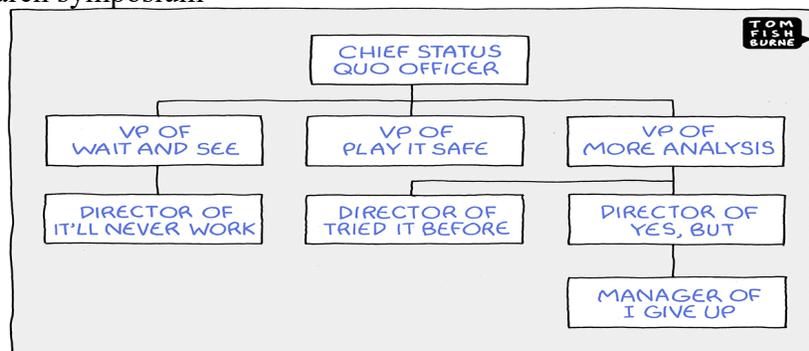
The Research on Life-Changing Teaching <https://www.edutopia.org/article/research-life-changing-teaching>

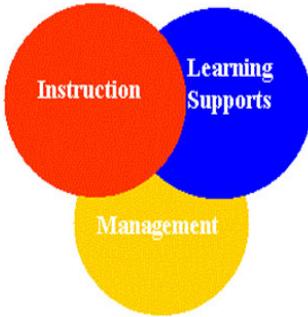
A Few Upcoming Webinars

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

- 4/6 Keep kids engaged
- 4/7 Reducing special educator stress and burnout
- 4/7 Equity Considerations for Collaborative, Comprehensive School-Based MH Systems
- 4/12 Supporting the Education of Unaccompanied Students Experiencing Homelessness
- 4/15: Building the Movement through Policy and Advocacy
- 4/19 Closing the Implementation Gap
- 4/20 How are states developing a stronger teacher workforce
- 4/28 Basic Requirements of the McKinley-Vento Act
- 4/28 Youth mentoring research symposium

**System Change:
It's a challenge!**





For information about the
National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports
go to <http://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.

Invitation to Listserv Participants:

Everyone has a stake in the future of public education. This is a critical time for action. Send this resource on to others. Think about sharing with the growing number who are receiving it. AND Let us know about what we should be including.

Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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/>)