



Excerpt From:

*From the Center's  
Clearinghouse ...\**

An introductory packet on

## Dropout Prevention



This document is a hardcopy version of a resource that can be downloaded at no cost from the Center's website (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>).

The Center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor and operates under the auspice of the School Mental Health Project, Dept. of Psychology, UCLA. Center for Mental Health in Schools, Box 951563, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563 (310) 825-3634 Fax: (310) 206-8716; E-mail: [smhp@ucla.edu](mailto:smhp@ucla.edu)

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Copies may be downloaded from: <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>

If needed, copies may be ordered from:  
Center for Mental Health in Schools  
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The Center encourages widespread sharing of all resources.



## ***UCLA CENTER FOR MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS\****

Under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project in the Department of Psychology at UCLA, our center approaches mental health and psychosocial concerns from the broad perspective of addressing barriers to learning and promoting healthy development. Specific attention is given policies and strategies that can counter fragmentation and enhance collaboration between school and community programs.

**MIS S I O N:** *To improve outcomes for young people by enhancing policies, programs, and practices relevant to mental health in schools.*

**Through collaboration, the center will**

- # enhance practitioner roles, functions and competence**
- # interface with systemic reform movements to strengthen mental health in schools**
- # assist localities in building and maintaining their own infrastructure for training, support, and continuing education that fosters integration of mental health in schools**

***Consultation Cadre***

***Newsletter***

***Electronic Networking***

***Guidebooks***

***Clearinghouse***

***National & Regional Meetings***

***Policy Analyses***

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\*In 1996, two national training and technical assistance centers focused on mental health in schools were established with partial support from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Office of Adolescent Health. As indicated, one center is located at UCLA; the other is at the University of Maryland at Baltimore and can be contacted toll free at 1-(888) 706-0980.



# What is the Center's Clearinghouse?

The scope of the Center's Clearinghouse reflects the School Mental Health Project's mission -- to enhance the ability of schools and their surrounding communities to address mental health and psychosocial barriers to student learning and promote healthy development. Those of you working so hard to address these concerns need ready access to resource materials. The Center's Clearinghouse is your link to specialized resources, materials, and information. The staff supplements, compiles, and disseminates resources on topics fundamental to our mission. As we identify what is available across the country, we are building systems to connect you with a wide variety of resources. Whether your focus is on an individual, a family, a classroom, a school, or a school system, we intend to be of service to you. Our evolving catalogue is available on request; and available for searching from our website.

## What kinds of resources, materials, and information are available?

We can provide or direct you to a variety of resources, materials, and information that we have categorized under three areas of concern:

- Specific psychosocial problems
- Programs and processes
- System and policy concerns

Among the various ways we package resources are our *Introductory Packets*, *Resource Aid Packets*, *special reports*, *guidebooks*, and *continuing education units*. These encompass overview discussions of major topics, descriptions of model programs, references to publications, access information to other relevant centers, organizations, advocacy groups, and Internet links, and specific tools that can guide and assist with training activity and student/family interventions (such as outlines, checklists, instruments, and other resources that can be copied and used as information handouts and aids for practice).

## Accessing the Clearinghouse

- E-mail us at **smhp@ucla.edu**
- FAX us at (310) 206-8716
- Phone (310) 825-3634
- Write School Mental Health Project/Center for Mental Health in Schools,  
Dept. of Psychology, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563

Check out recent additions to the Clearinghouse on our Web site

**<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>**

All materials from the Center's Clearinghouse are available for order for a minimal fee to cover the cost of copying, handling, and postage. Most materials are available for free downloading from our website.

*If you know of something we should have in the clearinghouse, let us know.*





The *Center for Mental Health in Schools* operates under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project at UCLA.\* It is one of two *national centers* concerned with mental health in schools that are funded in part by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Office of Adolescent Health.

The UCLA Center approaches mental health and psychosocial concerns from the broad perspective of addressing barriers to learning and promoting healthy development. In particular, it focuses on comprehensive, multifaceted models and practices to deal with the many external and internal barriers that interfere with development, learning, and teaching. Specific attention is given policies and strategies that can counter marginalization and fragmentation of essential interventions and enhance collaboration between school and community programs. In this respect, a major emphasis is on enhancing the interface between efforts to address barriers to learning and prevailing approaches to school and community reforms.



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# Dropout Prevention



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-Anonymous

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Excerpted from the National Center for Education Statistics.....

## **Dropout Rates in the United States**

In October 1998, nearly 5 out of every 100 young adults enrolled in high school in October 1997 had left high school without successfully completing a high school program. In total, these dropouts accounted for approximately one-half million of the 10 million 15-through 24-year-olds enrolled in high school in the previous October. These numbers have not changed appreciably in recent years.

The cumulative effect of hundreds of thousands of young adults leaving school each year short of finishing a high school program translates into several million young adults who are out of school, yet lacking a high school credential. In 1998, there were 3.9 million 16-through 24-year-olds who, although not enrolled in school, had not yet completed a high school program. Overall, 11.8 percent of the 33 million 16- through 24-year-olds in the United States were dropouts. Although there have been a number of year-to-year fluctuations in this rate, over the past 27 years, there has been a gradual pattern of decline that amounts to an average annual percentage change of 0.1 percentage points per year.

The goal of reducing the dropout rate is to increase the percentage of young adults who complete a high school education. Despite the increased importance of a high school education, the high school completion rate has shown limited gains over the last quarter of a century and has been stable throughout most of the 1990s. In 1998, approximately three-quarters of the 18- through 24-year-olds not still in high school were reported as being high school graduates (74.7 percent); another 10.1 percent of these youths were reported as having completed by an alternative route such as the GED.

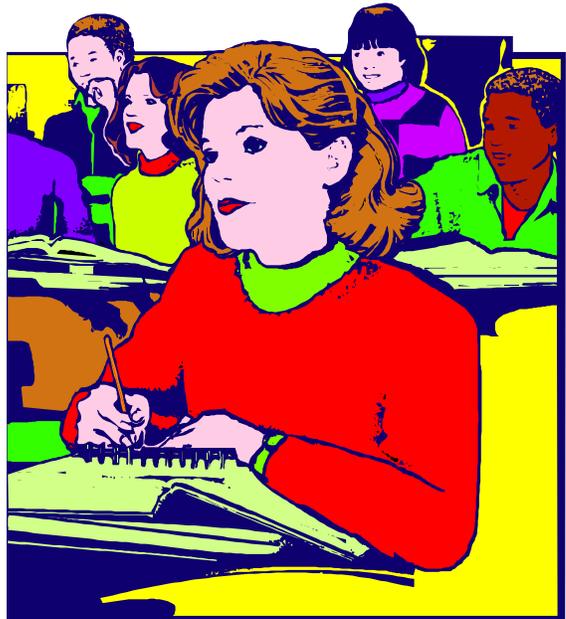
Over the last 9 years, the percentage of young adults completing high school has been relatively stable for whites and blacks. During the same period, the percentage completing high school through an alternative test has increased, with 1998 alternative completion rates of about 10 percent for white, black, Hispanic, and Asian young adults.

The net effect of these recent changes has been stable dropout and high school completion rates for young adults in the 1990s. These findings suggest that the emphasis in recent years on decreasing dropout rates as well as revising standards and high school graduation requirements may have translated into increased use of alternative methods of high school completion, rather than an overall decrease in dropout rates or increase in the proportion of young adults holding a high school diploma.

*National Center for Education Statistics, 2000*

# I. Understanding Dropouts & Dropout Prevention

- ◆ Definition
- ◆ Dropout Reasons
- ◆ Addressing the Problem
- ◆ Reaching the Goals: Goals 2 High School Completion
- ◆ Dropout Statistics
- ◆ Gay & Lesbian Youth at Risk
- ◆ Quick Facts: Economic Impact
- ◆ Dropout "At-Risk" Checklist



# What is Dropout Prevention?

## Who are America's Dropouts?

*A Definition excerpted From the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory*

Who are America's dropouts? Different definitions of dropouts, different time periods during the school year when dropout data are collected, different data collection methods, different ways of tracking youth no longer in school, and different methods used by school districts and states to calculate the dropout rate, result in unreliable aggregated national dropout figures.

Various ways of calculating the dropout rate reveal different ways of thinking about the issue. Event rate indicates the number of students who leave high school each year and is compared with previous years. Status rate, a cumulative rate much higher than the event rate, denotes the proportion of all individuals in the population who have not completed high school and were not enrolled at a given point in time. Cohort rate describes the number of dropouts from a single age group or specific grade (or cohort) of students over a period of time. The high school completion rate indicates the percentage of all persons ages 21 and 22 who have completed high school by receiving a high school diploma or equivalency certificate.

*For more information visit: <http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/9/c017.html>*



## From the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network

Percentage of NELS:88 8th to 10th grade dropouts who reported that various reasons for dropping out of school applied to them. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, First Followup Study, 1990.

REASONS	Total	Male	Female
<b>School related:</b>			
Did not like school	51.2	57.8	44.2
Could not get along with teachers	35.0	51.6	17.2
Could not get along with students	20.1	18.3	21.9
Was suspended too often	16.1	19.2	12.7
Did not feel safe at school	12.1	11.5	12.8
Was expelled	13.4	17.6	8.9
Felt I didn't belong	23.2	31.5	14.4
Could not keep up with school work	31.3	37.6	24.7
Was failing school	39.9	46.2	33.1
Changed school, didn't like new one	13.2	10.8	15.8
<b>Job related:</b>			
Couldn't work and go to school at same time	14.1	20.0	7.8
Had to get a job	15.3	14.7	16.0
Found a job	15.3	18.6	
<b>Family related:</b>			
Had to support family	9.2	4.8	14.0
Wanted to have family	6.2	4.2	8.4
Was pregnant	31.0		31.0
Became parent	13.6	5.1	22.6
Got married	13.1	3.4	23.6
Had to care for family member	8.3	4.6	12.2
<b>Other:</b>			
Wanted to travel	2.1	2.5	1.7
Friends dropped out	14.1	16.8	11.3

# Dropout Reasons

## Addressing the Problem

Young adults who leave school short of high school graduation face a number of potential hardships. Past research has shown that, compared with high school graduates, relatively more dropouts are unemployed and those dropouts who do succeed in finding work earn less money than high school graduates. High school dropouts are also more likely to receive public assistance than high school graduates who do not go on to college. This increased reliance on public assistance is likely due, at least in part, to the fact that young women who drop out of school are more likely to have children at younger ages and more likely to be single parents.

Secondary schools in today's society are faced with the challenge of increasing curricular rigor to strengthen the knowledge base of high school graduates, while at the same time increasing the proportion of all students who successfully complete a high school program. Reform advocates call for more effort devoted to linking schooling to the future, with an emphasis placed on high school

graduates as skilled learners with the ability to continue their education and skills acquisition in college, technical school, or work-based programs.

The pressures placed on the education system to turn out increasingly larger numbers of qualified lifelong learners have led to an increased interest in the role that alternative methods of high school completion may play in helping some students meet these goals. At this point, most students pursuing an alternative to a regular diploma take the General Educational Development (GED) tests, with the goal of earning a high school equivalency credential.

*For more information visit: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/dropout/98250-04.html#AdP>*

*NCES, 2000*

 [http://oeri3.ed.gov/pubs/ReachingGoals/Goal\\_2/index.html](http://oeri3.ed.gov/pubs/ReachingGoals/Goal_2/index.html)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT

*March 1994*

## Reaching the Goals: Goal 2 -- High School Completion

“...While most of the nation's attention has been directed at the identification, support, and retention of at-risk students, it remains true that the majority of dropouts are not those who seem to be most at risk. That is, although the dropout rate for blacks is 50 percent higher than for whites, and twice as high for Hispanics, 66 percent of the actual dropouts are white, while just 17 percent are black and 13 percent are Hispanic. Moreover, most dropouts are not from broken homes, not poor, and not pregnant. Consequently, if our graduation rate is to climb to 90 percent, it will have to be achieved by putting greater emphasis on retaining students whose background and behavior are not generally thought of as the defining characteristics of students who drop out...”

## Dropout Statistics

### DROPOUT RATES REMAIN STABLE OVER LAST DECADE

While nearly half-a-million young adults enrolled in 1995 left school by October 1996 without successfully completing a high school program, a new report shows that high school dropout rates have remained stable over the past decade.

"The dropout rate is holding at around five percent," said U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley. "This means that some 500,000 young people are still short-changing their lives and dropping out." According to the report, Hispanics continue to drop out at higher rates than other groups. In 1996, nine percent of Hispanics left school before completing a high school program, compared to 6.7 percent for blacks and 4.1 percent for whites. The cumulative impact of higher annual dropout rates for Hispanics, coupled with the fact that one-third of the Hispanic immigrants who came to the U.S. without a high school credential had not entered U.S. schools by 1995, results in an even larger disparity in the percentage of Hispanic adults out of school without high school credentials.

In 1996, four times more Hispanic than white young adults were in this group -- 29.4 percent compared to 7.3 percent. Also, a lower percentage of Hispanics complete high school, 62 percent, compared to 91.5 percent for whites and 83 percent for blacks. "The president and I are particularly concerned about the number of Hispanic Americans who are dropping out. I am working with the White House and the President's Initiative on Race to develop a series of steps that we can take to better address this troubling problem," Riley said.

Dropout Rates in the United States: 1996, released today by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics, provides state and regional data, examines high school completion rates, and also provides data on how income levels affect the number of dropouts.

Young adults living in families with incomes in the lowest 20 percent of all family incomes were five times as likely as their peers from families in the top 20 percent of the income distribution to drop out of high school, according to the report. Two thirds of this gap was due to differences between students in the lowest and middle income groups.

The report also found that more young adults are completing high school through alternative methods, such as the GED. The percent of young adults who are out of school without a high school credential has decreased, indicating that although the percentage leaving has not changed, some of the young adults who dropped out have subsequently earned a high school credential.

"Alternative programs that give young people a second chance are a growing phenomena. We need to develop more high quality alternative programs that meet this rising demand. Young people at risk shouldn't just be left on their own to hang out on the street. New attention needs to be paid to finding ways to encourage many more dropouts to drop back in to school so that they have a real chance at living a decent life. When young people drop out they do more than just give up their education, they are too often giving up on themselves," Riley said.

The reports says that in 1996 two million young adults 18 through 24 years of age had earned high school credentials by passing an exam such as the GED test. Data on this were first collected in 1988. Between 1988 and 1993, the graduation rate fluctuated between 80 and 81 percent, and the alternative completion rate fluctuated between four and five percent. Since 1993, the graduation rate decreased nearly five percentage points to the 1996 rate of 76.4 percent, and the alternative completion rate increased by the same amount (4.9 percent).

**Other findings from the report include:**

- Five out of every 100 young adults enrolled in high school in 1995 left school before October 1996 without successfully completing a high school program. This is on par with other estimates over the past 10 years
- During the 1990s, the percent of young adults, not still enrolled, holding a high school credential has remained relatively unchanged; however, the percent holding an alternative certification has doubled from 4.9 percent in 1990 to 9.8 percent in 1996
- In 1996, just over three-quarters of the 18- through 24-year-olds not still in high school were reported as high school graduates (76.4 percent); however, another 10 percent of these youths were reported as having completed high school by an alternative route, such as the GED
- Thirteen states currently have high school completion rates of 90 percent or better. Connecticut showed the greatest increase during the 1990s, from 90.9 percent to 96.1 percent (table 15)
- In October 1996, 1 out of every 10 youths ages 15-24 enrolled in school was over 18, but dropouts from this older group of students accounted for 1 out of every 4 high school dropouts in 1996. Thus, students who pursue a high school program beyond the traditional ages are at an increased risk of dropping out
- High cumulative dropout rates in the South of 13 percent and 13.9 percent in the West are greater than the dropout rates of 8.3 percent in the Northeast and 7.7 percent in the Midwest (table 5)
- When the above cumulative dropout rates are reviewed across regions for each racial-ethnic group, Hispanics exceed the national dropout rates in each region (table 10)
- The South is the only region in which the dropout rate for white youths exceeds the national dropout rate for white youths (10 percent versus 7.3 percent).

For ordering information, call the National Library of Education, (800) 424-1616. Copies of *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1996* will be also be available on the National Center for Education Statistics Web site at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/dropout/index.html>.

## *Who drops out/risk factors*

Every aspect of children's lives affects their ability to learn and succeed in school. Wells (1990) identified a variety of circumstances that often place students at risk. She listed individual-related, family-related, school-related, and community-related factors. While any one factor, or even several factors, do not necessarily place students at risk, combinations of circumstances identify the potential to drop out (Frymier & Gansneder, 1989). Some of the factors identified by Wells are listed below.

### *➤School Related*

Conflict between home/school culture  
Ineffective discipline system  
Lack of adequate counseling  
Negative school climate  
Lack of relevant curriculum  
Passive instructional strategies  
Inappropriate use of technology  
Disregard of student learning styles  
Retentions/Suspensions  
Low expectations  
Lack of language instruction

### *➤Student Related*

Poor school attitude  
Low ability level  
Attendance/truancy  
Behavior/discipline problems  
Pregnancy  
Drug abuse  
Poor peer relationships  
Nonparticipation  
Friends have dropped out  
Illness/disability  
Low self-esteem/self-efficacy

### *➤Community Related*

Lack of community support services or response  
Lack of community support for schools  
High incidences of criminal activities  
Lack of school/community linkages

### *➤Family Related*

Low SES  
Dysfunctional homelife  
No parental involvement  
Low parental expectations  
Non-English-speaking home  
Ineffective parenting/abuse  
High mobility

### References

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2. Wells, S.E. (1990). At-risk youth: Identification, programs, and recommendations. Englewood, Colorado: Teacher Idea Press

## *Other facts about dropout*

- In 1993, over 12 million persons 18-years-of-age and older had less than a 9th grade education (Bureau of the Census, 1994).
- 20% of adults over the age of 25 in the United States have not completed high school (Bureau of the Census, 1994).
- By third grade, students who eventually drop out of high school are significantly different in behavior, grades, retentions, and achievement scores from those who eventually graduate (Finn, 1989).
- 12% of the entire eighth grade class in 1988 had dropped out of school by 1992 (NCES, 1994).
- 82% of America's prisoners are high school dropouts (The demographics of school reform, 1990).
- 25% of all poor, urban high schools have dropout rates of 50% or higher (Braddock & McPartland, 1992).
- 40.9% of the 16- to 24-year-olds who dropped out of school reported being retained in grade more than once (NCES, 1994).
- 3.4 million persons between the ages of 16 and 24 in 1993 dropped out of school before earning a high school diploma (NCES, 1994).
- Non-Hispanic whites make up the largest percentage (52.9%) of all dropouts (black, non-Hispanic, 15.6%; Hispanic, 29.3%) (NCES, 1991).

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# Gay and Lesbian Youth At Risk

by Patricia Cloud Duttweiler

<http://www.dropoutprevention.org/2levelpages/statistics/31vlStFactsWho'sAtRiskMenu.htm>

## **The Journal of At-Risk Issues Winter/Spring 1997, Volume 3, Number 2**

Jamie Nabozny dropped out of school in the 11th grade after suffering from repeated humiliation and physical attacks. After one especially degrading incident, Jamie complained to the principal. Jamie was told, "Well, you know, Jamie, boys will be boys. And if you're going to be so openly gay, you have to expect that kind of stuff."

On November 19, 1996, Jamie Nabozny won the first ever federal court judgment (for nearly one million dollars) against school administrators for failing to provide equal protection for a gay student suffering from violence within the school (Price, 1996). The following facts and references (with the exception of the Price reference) came from a publication, *Just the facts on gay, lesbian, and bisexual students and schools*, of the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Teachers Network (GLSTN), 122 W. 26th Street, Suite 1100, New York, NY 10001 (212-727-0135).

- ▲ 53% of students reported hearing homophobic comments made by school staff (Report of the Massachusetts Governor's Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth, 1993).
- ▲ 80% of prospective teachers reported negative attitudes toward gay and lesbian people (Sears, 1992).
- ▲ 66% of guidance counselors harbored negative feelings toward gay and lesbian people (Sears, 1992)
- ▲ 34% of self-identified gay or bisexual teenagers are the targets of anti-gay harassment or violence at or on their way to school (Price, 1996).
- ▲ "Homosexuals are probably the most frequent victims [of hate crimes]" (U.S. Department of Justice, 1987).
- ▲ 80% of gay and lesbian youth reported feeling severe social isolation (Hetrick & Damien, 1987).
- ▲ 30% of gay and bisexual adolescent males attempt suicide at least once (Remafedi, 1991).
- ▲ Gay and lesbian youth represent 30% of all completed teen suicides (Gibson, 1989).

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# National Dropout Prevention Center/Network

## Quick Facts

### *Economic Impact*

- High school graduates, on the average, earn \$6,415 more per year than high school dropouts. (Bureau of the Census, 1994).
- Each year's class of dropouts will cost the country over \$200 billion during their lifetimes in lost earnings and unrealized tax revenue (Catterall, 1985).
- 82% of America's prisoners are high school dropouts (The demographics of school reform, 1990).
- In October of 1989, 35% of those who had dropped out of school were not employed—only about one-half of those who had dropped out in the previous 12 months were employed (OERI, 1991).
- Students from low-income families are 2.4 times more likely to drop out of school than are children from middle-income families, and 10.5 times more likely than students from high-income families (NCES, 1993).

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OERI. (1991). Youth indicators 1991: Trends in the well-being of American youth. Washington, DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U. S. Department of Education.

# DROPOUT "AT RISK" CHECKLIST

*This is a dropout "at-risk" checklist assessing personal, family and school factors.  
Supplied by Balboa Teen Health Center, 1000 Cayuga Ave., San Francisco, CA 94112*

(Check all that apply)

## Personal

1.  Low self esteem
2.  Low expectations of self
3.  Boredom
4.  Social isolation (few friends)
5.  Negative peer influence
6.  Runaway
7.  Resentful of authority
8.  Behavior problems at home (in community)
9.  Lack of involvement in community activities
10.  Substance abuse
11.  Perceived need to work
12.  Emotional problems
13.  Frequent or chronic health problems
14.  Lack of goals or unrealistic goals
15.  Lack of belief in the benefit of "The System" for the future
16.  Difficulty relating to adults
17.  Pregnancy/Parenting (lacks child care)

## Family

18.  Lack of family support for school/learning
19.  School (before 12th grade) dropout of family member(s)
20.  Parental separation/divorce/ split home
21.  Stressful home life
22.  Frequent family moves
23.  Inadequate housing
24.  Homeless
25.  Economic need-not enough income to support family (incl. unemployment)
26.  Victim of abuse
27.  Family substance abuse
28.  Low educational attainment levels of parents as models
29.  Communication problems with the school
30.  Communication problems with the school due to language barriers
31.  Severe illness in family
32.  Death of immediate family member
33.  Care of younger siblings (family need for child care)

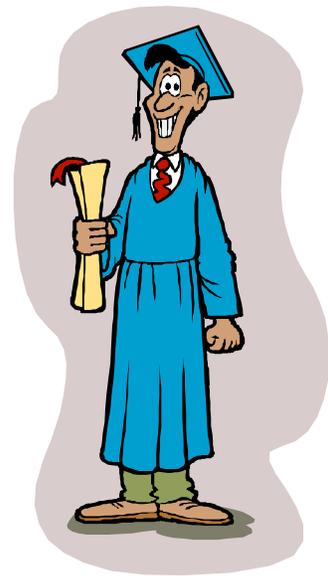
## School Factors

34.  Academic failure (fails one or more courses per semester)
35.  Behind in credits for graduation (20 more units)
36.  Excessive absences/ trancies
37.  Failure in one or more schools
38.  One or more retentions
39.  Over age for grade due to excessive failures in courses
40.  Lack of involvement in school activities
41.  Behavior problems at school (suspensions, etc.) including conflict with teachers
42.  Low CTBS scores
43.  Failed minimum standards
44.  Unmet special educational needs/learning difficulties
45.  Lack of continuity in educational programs-attended many schools
46.  Climate of the school (including violence on campus)
47.  Perceived lack of caring and personalization from the school
48.  Perceived negative messages from school of student
49.  Perceived lack of support for language/acclturation process/needs

Totals:

## II. Strategic Empirical Research related to Dropout Prevention

- ◆ When can Schools Affect Dropout Behavior? A Longitudinal Multilevel Analysis
- ◆ Reducing the Dropout Rate
- ◆ Plans for Dropout Prevention and Special School Support for American Indian and Alaskan Native Students



"High school dropouts earn about one-third less than high school graduates and comprise nearly half of the heads of households on welfare and a similar percentage of the prison population, according to the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education, based in New York."

*[http://www.sacbee.com/news/projects/nobodys\\_kids/index.html](http://www.sacbee.com/news/projects/nobodys_kids/index.html)  
When many kids drop out, state loses track (Published Sept. 6, 1998)  
By Deb Kollars*

## **When Can Schools Affect Dropout Behavior? A Longitudinal Multilevel Analysis**

*Pete Goldschmidt, University of California, Riverside*  
*Jia Wang, University of California, Los Angeles*

### **abstract:**

The National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS) database was used to examine student and school factors associated with students dropping out in different grades. Specifically, a hierarchical logistic model was used to address three issues. First, are early (middle school) and late (high school) dropouts equally affected by traditionally defined risk factors? Second, do school-level factors, after controlling for differences in enrollment, account for between-school differences in school dropout rates, and can these school factors mediate individual student risk factors? Third, what impact does early predicted risk have on the likelihood of dropping out late? Results showed that the mix of student risk factors changes between early and late dropouts, while family characteristics are more important for late dropouts. Consistent with previous research, the results also indicated that being held back is the single strongest predictor of dropping out and that its effect is consistent for both early and late dropouts. School factors can account for approximately two thirds of the differences in mean school dropout rates, but they do a poor job of mediating specific student risk factors. The results indicate as well that early predicted risk, at both the student level and the school level, significantly affects the odds of a student dropping out late.

<http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/9/c017.html>

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory  
School Improvement Research Series

## Reducing the Dropout Rate

*E. Gregory Woods*

### Conclusions

“There is no one magical, quick fix solution to the dropout problem. The problem is complex and requires a complex array of solutions. Dropouts have dissimilar characteristics and therefore need different kinds of programs which respond to their individual circumstances and needs. Programs, to be effective, need to provide one-on-one intensive attention to at-risk students, who often must be convinced that they are competent and can be successful in school. The curriculum should include basic educational skills, social skills, and experiential education. In addition, the interrelated causes and multiple problems associated with dropping out call for comprehensive communitywide, multi-service approaches and multi-component programs if Goal 2 is to be achieved.

Children at-risk need to be identified at a young age (as early as preschool) so that early sustained intervention can be applied. Success in the elementary grades diminishes the possibility of later dropping out in high school. The key to reducing the dropout rate is helping youth to overcome their sense of disconnectedness. It is imperative not to isolate or alienate any students from the school.

Not all factors related to dropout reduction are school controllable, and solutions to the complex problem of dropouts cannot be achieved by the schools alone. It is a national problem which must be addressed by the whole society. It requires resources that go beyond the school, and solutions require a team approach--the combined efforts of students, parents, teachers, administrators, community-based organizations, and business, as well as the federal, state, and local governments.”

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Full text available from "Teaching Indigenous Languages"  
<http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jar/INAR.html>

*Journal of American Indian Education*  
January 1992, Volume 31, Number 2

## ***Plans for Dropout Prevention and Special School Support Services for American Indian and Alaska Native Students***

*Jon Reyhner, Eastern Montana College*

American Indian and Alaska Native students have a dropout rate twice the national average; the highest dropout rate of any United States ethnic or racial group. About three out of every ten Native students drop out of school before graduating from high school both on reservations and in cities. Academically capable Native students often drop out of school because their needs are not being met while others are pushed out because they protest in a variety of ways how they are treated in school.

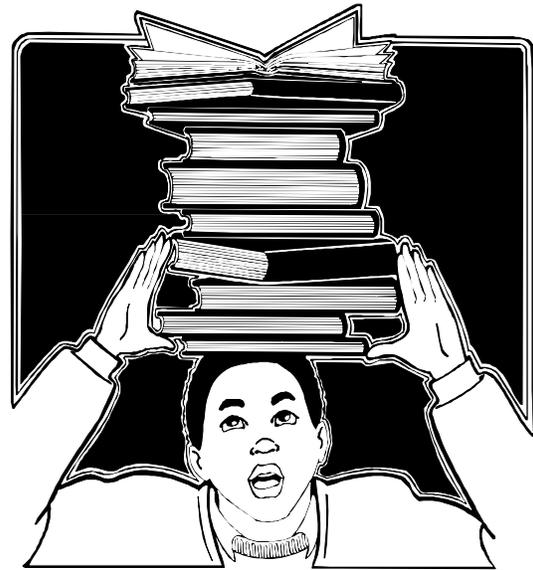
The lack of an appropriate education is a major contributing factor to the high dropout rate. Many schools lack teachers sensitive to Native students' needs, use a curriculum that does not include Native heritage, use culturally biased tests, and teaching methods that are not suited to the way Native student learn best.

Current efforts to prevent dropout and improve Native education have only had limited success. Add-on programs such as the Indian Education Act, Bilingual Education, and Special Education should only be viewed as a first step towards improving the education of Native students. Both Native education and dropout prevention should be viewed holistically. Rather than adding a single class on Native studies, or a program focused on a single cause of dropout, such as drug or alcohol abuse, remedial efforts should be made that view the system holistically.

In addition to dropout prevention, more work needs to be done to help current dropouts. Community-based programs focused on drug prevention and retrieval programs such as the GED should be employed, as well as vocational programs in which the Native communities are provided with job opportunities and partnerships with labor unions, business, and the government.

# III. Dropout Prevention Program Models

- ◆ How Can We Help? Understanding Dropout Prevention Programs
- ◆ The Shriver Center: The Choice Middle Schools Program
- ◆ Model Programs
- ◆ Learn & Serve America
- ◆ Alternative Education
- ◆ Hispanic Dropout Project



Each year school got harder and I got more behind- I went to school less and less so when I stopped going hardly anyone noticed.



## Understanding Dropout Prevention Programs

A series of five reports from the largest study of dropout prevention programs funded by the federal government sheds light on how programs operate, what kinds of students attend, and whether programs improve outcomes. Results show that some programs improved outcomes, and point to the need to explore more individualized diagnostics and better predictors of who will drop out.

Articles are now available on the web site of Mathematica Policy Research. For printed copies, please contact Publications, Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., P.O. Box 2393, Princeton, NJ 08543-2393, 609-275-2350, email: [library-nj@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:library-nj@mathematica-mpr.com).

**1. 'How Can We Help? What We Have Learned from Evaluations of Federal Dropout Prevention Programs.'**

Mark Dynarski and Philip Gleason. June 1998.  
<http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/dod-syn.pdf>

**2. 'Impacts of Dropout Prevention Programs.'**

Mark Dynarski, Philip Gleason, Anu Rangarajan, Robert Wood. June 1998.  
<http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/dod-fr.pdf>

**3. 'Impacts of School Restructuring Initiatives.'**

Mark Dynarski, Philip Gleason, Anu Rangarajan, Robert Wood.  
<http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/restruct.pdf>

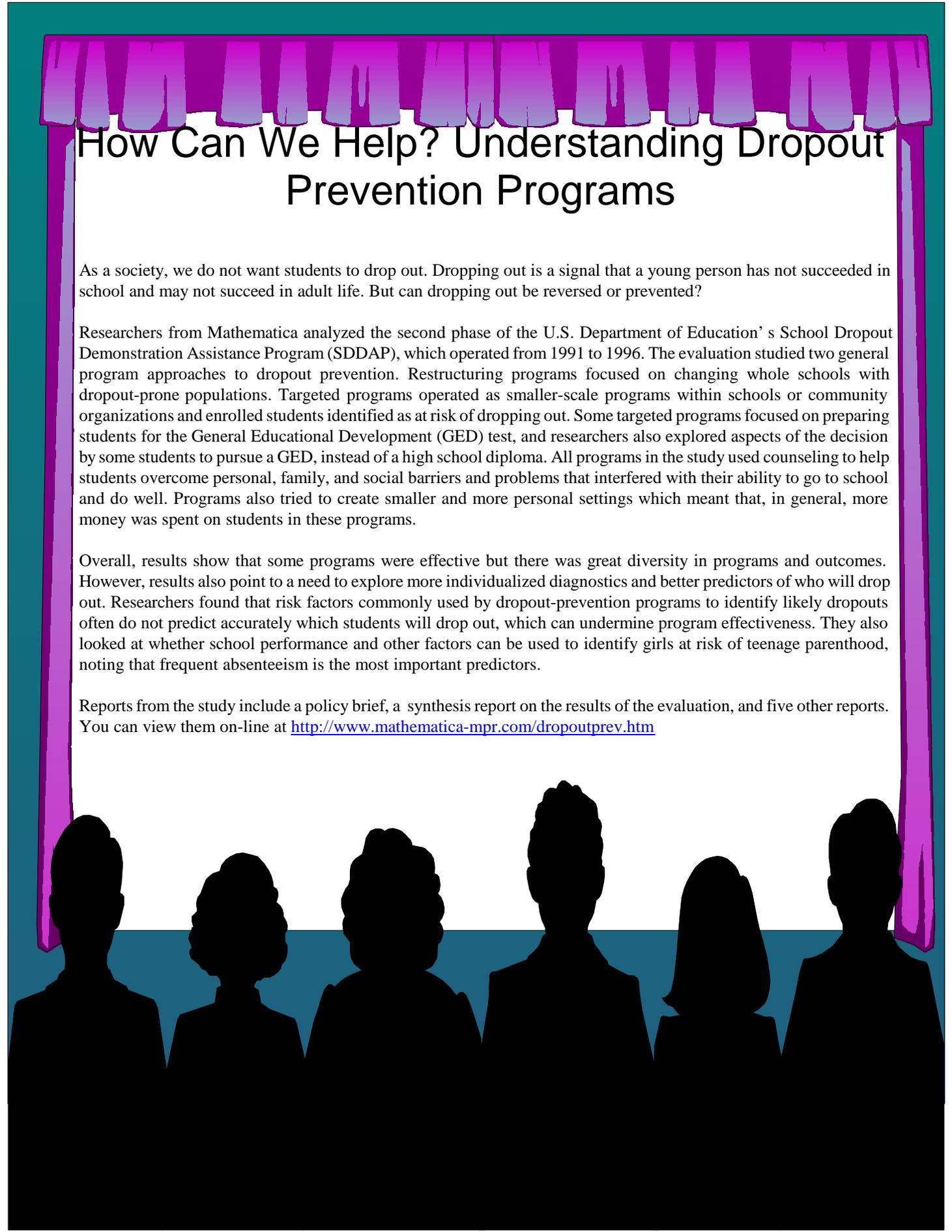
**4. 'Do We Know Whom to Serve? Issues in Using Risk Factors to Identify Dropouts.'**

Philip Gleason and Mark Dynarski. June 1998.  
<http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/dod-risk.pdf>

**5. 'Understanding the Trend Toward Alternative High School Certification.'**

Roberto Agodini and Mark Dynarski. June 1998.  
<http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/dod-ged.pdf>





# How Can We Help? Understanding Dropout Prevention Programs

As a society, we do not want students to drop out. Dropping out is a signal that a young person has not succeeded in school and may not succeed in adult life. But can dropping out be reversed or prevented?

Researchers from Mathematica analyzed the second phase of the U.S. Department of Education's School Dropout Demonstration Assistance Program (SDDAP), which operated from 1991 to 1996. The evaluation studied two general program approaches to dropout prevention. Restructuring programs focused on changing whole schools with dropout-prone populations. Targeted programs operated as smaller-scale programs within schools or community organizations and enrolled students identified as at risk of dropping out. Some targeted programs focused on preparing students for the General Educational Development (GED) test, and researchers also explored aspects of the decision by some students to pursue a GED, instead of a high school diploma. All programs in the study used counseling to help students overcome personal, family, and social barriers and problems that interfered with their ability to go to school and do well. Programs also tried to create smaller and more personal settings which meant that, in general, more money was spent on students in these programs.

Overall, results show that some programs were effective but there was great diversity in programs and outcomes. However, results also point to a need to explore more individualized diagnostics and better predictors of who will drop out. Researchers found that risk factors commonly used by dropout-prevention programs to identify likely dropouts often do not predict accurately which students will drop out, which can undermine program effectiveness. They also looked at whether school performance and other factors can be used to identify girls at risk of teenage parenthood, noting that frequent absenteeism is the most important predictors.

Reports from the study include a policy brief, a synthesis report on the results of the evaluation, and five other reports. You can view them on-line at <http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/dropoutprev.htm>



*Excerpted From.....*

*The National Drop Prevention Center/Network' sModel Program of the Month*

## **The Shriver Center: The Choice Middle Schools Program**

### **Grade Level**

6th grade students

### **Abstract**

The program is designed to stabilize students' behavior and increase students' academic achievement while simultaneously providing support and advocacy services to the students and their families. The major goals of the program are to: 1/ increase school attendance, 2/ decrease office referrals, 3/ decrease out of school suspensions, 4/ and improve grade point averages in core subjects. Services for students and their families are provided by casework teams who perform outreach and individualized case management based on a model used by The Choice Program for delinquent youth. The services these teams provide consist of

multiple daily contacts with each student and his/her family to implement and support a program of consistent behavioral guidelines, as well as a strong presence in the schools to increase communication and accountability regarding the child' s educational progress. Work with the students' in their communities consists of daily home visits, family meetings, curfew monitoring, informal counseling, crisis intervention and one-on-one tutoring in the homes. In addition to services provided during the school day and at home, various student development programs are conducted. These include: 1/ after -school homework completion/tutoring sessions 2/ thematic, performance-based summer program, 3/ recreational and cultural activities and trips, 3/ service-learning experiences 4/ and life skills activities. The student development programs are designed to boost students' academic skills while providing them with a wide range of experiences and activities to increase their engagement in school and learning.

### ***For more information Contact:***

Tanya Featherston, Assistant Director  
University of Maryland  
Baltimore County  
1605 Leland Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21220  
(410) 391-7378

# Model Programs

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The following list of model programs is taken from the National Dropout Prevention Center's searchable database, FOCUS, <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/programs>. This database is regularly updated and contains hundreds of programs and contact information.

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**Program:** Integrated Initiative: Attendance Improvement and Dropout Prevention

**Participation:** For K-12, Emphasis 6-12.

**Overview:** The Attendance Improvement and Dropout Prevention Unit's mission includes generating strategic plans to achieve aggressive new systemwide outcomes, to develop comprehensive services in both target areas, and to verify activities for which resources should be increased. A second focus of the Initiative is development of local school plans. After school student centers offer a variety of activities. The main goal is to promote student success with classwork and to influence the development of strong positive attitudes about school. Specialized curriculum will be used by classroom teachers to assist in developing concepts and precepts to increase the value for learning by students. Attendance Support and Dropout Prevention Centers do tracking and record keeping on students at risk of dropping out and provide service delivery and assessment as related to improving attendance. Other strategies include: 1) A Hotline for receiving information on youth. 2) An Awards program for attendance personnel. 3) A Reading/research and information center; 4) An Advisory council; and 5) Distribution to local schools of instructional materials focused on the rewards of gaining a quality education. Evaluation not yet available.

**Contact:** Mrs. Essie G. Page, Director, Attendance Improvement & Dropout Prevention Unit, District of Columbia Public Schools - Presidential Bldg., 415 12th Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20004 202-724-4222

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**Program:** Dropout Prevention Program

**Participation:** Students (Grades 7-12) who are previous dropouts and other students at risk.

**Overview:** Several programs are established in the school system to assist with the problem of dropouts: (1) In-school suspension is provided in grades 7-12 where the students complete their work in study booths rather than getting suspended and missing school. (2) Contact is made with parents (either by phone, letter or in person) when a student accumulates absences. (3) Project SAVE is an alternative to at-risk students ages 16 through 18. Project SAVE offers GED test preparation through self-paced computer-assisted instruction for half the school day and vocational training the other half of the school day as an alternative to the traditional diploma program at the high school level. This program is first offered to students who dropped out the preceding school year then as a recovery program as students drop out throughout the year. Evaluation not yet available.

**Contact:** Mrs. Elizabeth W. Harrison, Attendance Supervisor, 319 South Dargan Street, Florence, South Carolina 29506 (843) 669-4141 Fax: 843-673-1165

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**Program:** Families in Action

**Participation:** Parent/Guardians and family of students who have been identified to have characteristics identifying them as at-risk for dropping out. Program director, educational specialists, parenting class instructors,

family resource center personnel.

**Overview:** The program focus is on maintaining the low dropout rate in the district while responding to new safe school legislation and continued effort to maintain high standards in the classroom. Continuing and enhancing current dropout reduction efforts are combined with additional emphasis on elementary family involvement and a new cross-age tutoring program. Families In Action provides families the opportunity to learn more about healthy child development, ways to support their child's social skills and academic effort at home and through active school participation. Monthly evening or weekend social/instructional gatherings, including a family meal, that includes 4-6 families per groups. Skits, role play, presentations and participation activities are used both with the entire group and in separate child and adult groups. Leaders include local family specialists, school administrators, teachers, counselors, psychologists, and program specialists. In addition families are assisted in attending at least one of a bimonthly series of parenting workshops offered by the local collaborative interagency service program. These workshops offer 12 pre-scheduled topics of interest to families with children preschool through high school age. Reminder notices, transportation, childcare, and participation by the DOP coordinator help increase family participation at these additional meetings.

**Contact:** Ronnie Walker or Pat Elwell, Coordinator DOP, PO Box 800, Murray, KY 42071, (502) 762-7317

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**Program:** Teenage Parent Program (TAP)

**Participation:** Must meet one of the following: female student medically diagnosed as pregnant and/or expectant father, teenage parent (mother or father) and their children ages 0 – 5. A program completer is entitled to child care

**Overview:** The Teenage Parent Program (TAP) has been developed in order to help teenage parents and expectant teenage parents to remain in school. The program provides the basic academic program, nutrition and health classes, child care, health services, social services, and transportation. The goals by the end of the school year for the program include 80% of the students participating will remain in school or graduate, 100% of the students will continue an academic program while enrolled in the TAP, 80% of the students will improve parenting skills by 5% as measured by a pre/post test, 90% of the students will not have a repeat pregnancy, and 80% of the pregnant students who enter the program before the end of the second trimester will have infants weighing at or above 5.5 pounds.

**Contact:** For more information visit <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/programs/>

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**Program:** The Brevard Compact

**Participation:** Grades 9 & 10. Students qualify to participate by meeting one or more of these school-related criteria:(1) excessive absences, truancy; (2) failing grades; (3) below grade-level achievement on basic skills tests; (4) deficient in basic skills performance more than one year below grade level; and (5) students who have been retained more than once. Participation is voluntary and parents must give written permission.

**Overview:** The Brevard Compact is a county-wide dropout prevention and dropout retrieval effort with program partnership agreements with each of the three Brevard Chambers of Commerce. Chamber member business people volunteer to mentor Compact students. All Compact students attend a peer counseling class one hour each day, earning ½ elective credit each semester. Each mentor is assigned one student and meets with that student at school each week of the school year. The goal of the mentor is to develop a friendship with the student and, within the relationship, assist the student in developing and achieving goals. Benefits for the students include higher grades, fewer absences, career exploration, and the caring, support and encouragement of a significant adult. The key ingredient in the Brevard Compact is the relationship between the mentor and the student and consistency in meeting regularly is stressed. Written parental permission is required for students to participate in off-campus

activities such as visiting their mentor' s place of business. Summative evaluation is available.

**Contact:** Coordinator, The Brevard Compact School Board of Brevard County, 2700 St. Johns Street Melbourne, FL 32940-6699, (407) 631-1911

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**Program:** Dropout Recovery Tracking

**Participation:** Rising 9th graders

**Overview:** In the Dropout Recovery Tracking, upcoming ninth graders are tracked for all four years of high school and placed into categories. The categories are still enrolled, graduate, dropout, and transferred out of district. The students still enrolled after four years are then categorized by grade level for retention rates. The data for the dropout rate is not calculated or reported until October of the following year. The objective of Dropout Recovery Tracking is to analyze the current dropout rate and determine what other programs to implement geared toward dropout prevention and recovery.

**Contact:** Karen Wendt-Keswick, Evaluation Associate, [kwendt@staff.austin.isd.tenet.edu](mailto:kwendt@staff.austin.isd.tenet.edu)

Ralph Smith, Evaluation Supervisor, [rjasmith@admin.austin.isd.tenet.edu](mailto:rjasmith@admin.austin.isd.tenet.edu), Austin Independent School District, 111 West 6th Street, Suite D-350, Austin, TX 78703, (512) 414-3661, (512) 414-3541, FAX: (512) 414-1707

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**Program:** Brentwood Dropout Prevention Program

**Participation:** 600 Elementary and Secondary students at risk but not enrolled in other dropout prevention programs.

**Overview:** The Brentwood Dropout Prevention Program is a comprehensive dropout prevention program. The purposes include reducing the number of students dropping out, identifying and providing services, and increasing the number of reentering students. The program emphasizes early intervention and parental involvement. A major aspect of the program is the process of collecting, analyzing and reporting dropout data including an exit interview of dropouts regarding reasons for leaving. The components of the program include: 1) Counseling Services, 2) Community Outreach Services, 3) Alternative High School Equivalency Program, 4) Contact Teacher Services with in-service training, 5) Work Experience Program and 6) Early Intervention. Administration officials, contact teachers, attendance teachers, guidance counselors, community outreach workers and parents help coordinate services according to specific programs. Elementary and secondary teachers are offered workshops on how to effectively meet special needs. All staff submit monthly reports and attend monthly dropout prevention staff meetings. Data are collected, compiled, and analyzed by an independent evaluator. Data is used to provide measurable and clearly defined accomplishment of objectives.

**Contact:** Grace Deriggi, Project Director, Ross High School, 15th Avenue, Brentwood, New York 11717, (516) 434-2583

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**Program:** Students in Action

**Participation:** Middle school students at-risk for dropping out due to academic and social skills needs. High school students trained as mentor/tutors, program director, and Youth Services Center personnel.

**Overview:** The program focus is on maintaining the low dropout rate in the district while responding to new safe school legislation and continued effort to maintain high standards in the classroom. Continuing and enhancing

current dropout reduction efforts are combined with additional emphasis on elementary family involvement and a new cross-age tutoring program. Students in Action provides tutoring to struggling middle school students by utilizing high school age mentors. These mentors receive a short training to help them include social and decision making skills into their tutoring sessions. Transportation is provided for those who remain after school. Some mentoring takes place during the day as part of their high school service learning program. Mentors are paid minimum wage for their efforts. They keep timecards and are responsible for typical work responsibilities such as calling in when sick, appropriate dress and behavior, etc.

**Contact:** Ronnie Walker or Pat Elwell, Coordinator DOP, PO Box 800, Murray, KY 42071, (502) 762-7317

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**Program:** Proviso Dropout Reduction Partnership Project

**Participation:** Grades 9-12. 320 in school and 80 reentering youth with emphasis on early secondary school identification residing in areas with high dropout or potential dropout rates.

**Overview:** The Proviso Dropout Reduction Partnership Project utilizes college and school to attack the dropout prevention problems in a Metropolitan system. Emphasis is placed on early intervention with elementary feeders and secondary identification. The purposes include: identification and retrieval, prevention and appropriate intervention, expansion of data management system, and development of a dropout information service. A management information system linking characteristics and needs with appropriate intervention serves as an identification tool. Illinois State Board of Education, Proviso Township and Triton College provide data and analysis. The Project has several components which include Structured Studied Program (SSP); Late Afternoon Program (LAP); Evening High School (EHS); Bridge Program, and Individualized Intervention Services (IIS). The components address the academic and remedial needs of secondary and reentering students providing academic support and assistance. For details of each component, search FOCUS under specific program name. The staff includes the Project Director, Secretary, Social Workers/ Counselors and Project Faculty. Other facilitators include a System Analyst or MIS Consultant, trained Parent Advisory Board of parental involvement, and three committees: funding, program development and technical assistance, and parent awareness and community relations. Evaluation available.

**Contact:** Melanie M. Lamonica, Associate Dean, Grants Triton College, 2000 Fifth Avenue, River Grove, Illinois 60171, (708) 456-0300

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**Program:** Integrated Initiative: Attendance Improvement and Dropout Prevention

**Participation:** Grade K-12, Emphasis 6-12. This Integrated Initiative is designed to improve attendance systemwide and decrease the number of students who drop out of school prior to graduation.

**Overview:** The Attendance Improvement and Dropout Prevention Unit's mission includes generating strategic plans to achieve aggressive new systemwide outcomes, to develop comprehensive services in both target areas, and to verify activities for which resources should be increased. A second focus of the Initiative is development of local school plans. After school student centers offer a variety of activities. The main goal is to promote student success with classwork and to influence the development of strong positive attitudes about school. Specialized curriculum will be used by classroom teachers to assist in developing concepts and precepts to increase the value for learning by students. Attendance Support and Dropout Prevention Centers do tracking and record keeping on students at risk of dropping out and provide service delivery and assessment as related to improving attendance. Other strategies include: 1) A Hotline for receiving information on youth. 2) An Awards program for attendance personnel. 3) A Reading/research and information center; 4) An Advisory council; and 5) Distribution to local schools of instructional materials focused on the rewards of gaining a quality education. Evaluation not yet available.

**Contact:** Mrs. Essie G. Page, Director, Attendance Improvement & Dropout Prevention Unit, District of Columbia Public Schools - Presidential Bldg., 415 12th Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20004 202-724-4222

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**Program:** Dropout Prevention

**Participation:** Parents, teen parents, and former dropouts

**Overview:** This Dropout Prevention component is part of the Cushing Public School's comprehensive dropout prevention program, Project Advantage. The purposes are to provide services to parents of at-risk students, teen parents, and former dropouts. The strategies include GED preparation, adult basic education, effective parenting and teen parenting classes, drug and alcohol abuse seminars, and vocational training. The Parent-Child Study Skills Program allows for more parental involvement and trains parents to assist their children in school. The staff used to facilitate this component include: Project Coordinator, Project Director, Materials Developer, Elementary and Secondary School Counselors; along with local adult education, community and alcohol and drug abuse agencies. Progress is assessed monthly. Quarterly progress reports are completed by the Project Director. Local speakers are available to classrooms to tell students about their occupations and how they use the information and skills being studied in school.

**Contact:** For more information visit <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/programs/>

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**Program:** The Tutoring Project

**Participation:** At-risk students who have experienced failure in one or more school subjects.

**Overview:** The goals of the Tutoring Project are to reduce the number of subjects failed by students; to increase the amount of homework completed by students; to increase the number of contacts between school staff and parents; to increase the number of community volunteers within the school system; and to publish a guidebook for other school districts to use in developing local programs. The project is designed to provide supervision during study time in order to increase the amount of homework completed and to decrease the number of subjects failed. Under the leadership of a tutoring coordinator, the project focuses on identifying, utilizing, and combining existing resources to supply extra academic aid to at-risk youth. In addition to tutoring during in-school suspension periods, the coordinator schedules weekly after school sessions. Adult volunteers, teacher cadets, college students, peers conduct these sessions. If appropriate, the coordinator assigns a volunteer to tutor in a home setting where parental supervision does not exist. Classroom teacher involvement combined with regular parental contact enhances the success of the tutoring project. Incentives are provided by local businesses for attendance effort. The guidebook, "Tutoring Success", is available from the National Dropout Prevention Center. A summative evaluation is available.

**Contact:** Roger Wolfe, Anderson School District One, P.O. Box 99, Williamston, South Carolina 29697 (864) 947-9311 Fax: (864) 947-1160

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**Program:** Extended School Day Program

**Participation:** At-risk youth and dropouts, ages 16-21, who need alternative educational opportunities, students who have been suspended, working youth.

**Overview:** The Extended School Day Program, part of the comprehensive dropout prevention program of McDowell County School, provides students with alternative means of completing requirements for high school graduation. There is an open enrollment policy throughout the school year. Classes are scheduled in late afternoon and evening to accommodate the working student. The program emphasizes individualized instruction with a low

teacher-student ratio. Vocational course offerings are available which emphasize job preparation skills. Assistance is provided in job placement and credits can be earned from successful employment. Participation in extracurricular activities is encouraged. Students have access to courses at a nearby community college. Regular school day students are also assisted at the Extended Day Program and a summer school program is now available. Staff includes an extended day coordinator, job placement counselor, student assessment counselor, and sufficient instructional staff. Summative evaluation is available.

**Contact:** Debbie Ledford, Dropout Prevention Coordinator, McDowell County Schools, P. O. Box 130, Marion, NC 28752, (828) 652-7920

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**Program:** WAVE In Schools/WAVE In Communities

**Participation:** Predominantly at-risk youth aged 16-21 from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. Dropout prevention program is available to any student, depending on local funding source. In programs, dropout recovery referrals are made from schools, human services agencies, courts, friends, and parents. WAVE programs are also available to adults, ex-offenders, and other targeted groups.

**Overview:** The goal of WAVE is to help school systems design and implement dropout prevention programs via staff training; and to provide pre-employment training and related services to at-risk youth. The WAVE model is made up of the following components: competency based pre-employment training, remedial education instruction, motivational development services, job placement, and follow-up services. Instructional activities are individualized and competency-based. Educational instruction emphasized both basic skills and life skills relevant to the needs of youth. Computer-assisted instruction is available at most WAVE sites. The motivational component, an affiliation group called the Leadership Association, is designed to develop self-confidence, social skills, and personal responsibility. Achievement in workshops, competitive events, and other activities, is acknowledged with recognition, reinforcement, and rewards. The WAVE model operates programs in 30 states. Approximately 7,000 students enroll each year in the model and 100,000 students have completed the model over the last 23 years. Summative evaluation is available.

**Contact:** Ms. Alta J. Cannady, Vice President of Program Development, WAVE, Inc., 501 School Street, SW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20024 202-484-0103

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**Program:** Florida Dropout Prevention Programs

**Participation:** At-risk students

**Overview:** The Florida Dropout Prevention Act of 1986, Section 230.2316, was enacted to encourage school districts to establish comprehensive dropout prevention programs. These programs are designed to meet the needs of students who are not effectively served by traditional education programs in the public school system. The Act established programs for students in grades four through twelve identified as being a potential dropout based upon one of the following criteria:

-Students who are unmotivated or unsuccessful in the traditional school setting based on criteria such as retained in grade, high absenteeism, falling grades, or low achievement test scores,

-Students who are pregnant or parenting. Programs designed for these students offer academic as well as parenting classes. Service include health care, social services, childcare, and transportation.

-Students who have personal or family-related drug or alcohol problems. Programs offer educational services while students receive substance abuse treatment or counseling.

-Students who are disruptive in the regular school environment. These programs offer positive alternatives to out-of-school suspension and expulsion.

In 1995-96, there were 1,419,424 students in grades four through twelve in Florida Public Schools. Dropout Prevention Programs served 233,667 students. Of those, 52% of the students were overage for grade.

**Contact:** Dr. Nancy Romain, Florida Department of Education, 1400 United Street, Key West, FL 33040, 1-305-293-6315

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**Program:** Bilingual Vocational Instructional Program

**Participation:** Limited English Proficient students enrolled in a vocational program who meet criteria listed on the distributed Dropout Profile are eligible to participate. These students are identified by teachers, student service personnel and/or administrators to the program.

**Overview:** The Bilingual Vocational Instructional Program (BVIP) is a comprehensive interventional model to reduce the high school dropout rate for Limited English Proficient (LEP) students who are learning a marketable skill. The program is designed to meet the academic, language, skill, behavioral and social needs of students at selected secondary models. The program provides at risk, LEP students the linguistic assistance they need to learn a marketable skill while achieving academic success. A major emphasis is placed on personalized instruction; in class translation; necessary safety procedures and vocabulary; and peer tutoring and career counseling. The staff of each of the sites of the program is composed of four certified teachers, one lead teacher for comprehensive program, one coordinator, and one paraprofessional. This program is available at five sites. A summative evaluation for the 1988-89 school year is available.

**Contact:** Ms. Miriam P. Padreda, Miami Dade County Public Schools, Office of Alternative Education and Dropout Prevention, 1500 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 325, Miami, Florida 33132, (305) 995-2036

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The following model programs for dropout prevention were taken from *Educational Programs That Work*, the annual National Diffusion Network catalog of exemplary educational programs. *Educational Programs that Work* is an overview of all educational programs approved for national dissemination by the Department of Education's Program Effectiveness Panel. The complete catalog can be viewed online at <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/EPTW/>

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**Program:** City-As-School (CAS)

**Participation:** For at-risk and gifted/talented adolescents in grades 9 through 12.

**Overview:** A high school program which links students with hundreds of learning experiences throughout the community. Students spend up to 30-40 hours per week in learning experiences utilizing community resources of business, civic, cultural, social or political nature. Academic credit is granted for each learning experience successfully completed. Structured, student-centered Learning Experience Activity Packet (LEAP helps to identify and evaluate discrete areas of instruction in each resource. Students attend resources for one cycle (9 weeks) or two cycles and receive credit or no credit rather than letter or numerical grades. Specialized, small classes support

activities at community resources. Weekly seminar groups serve as forum for discussions of guidance, academic and social issues. May be a stand-alone school, or a program within a school.

**Contact:** William Weinstein, City-As-School, 16 Clarkson Street, New York, NY 10014. (212) 645-6121, (212) 691-7801, or FAX (212) 675-2858. E-Mail: [bill.weinstein@nycenet.nycps.edu](mailto:bill.weinstein@nycenet.nycps.edu)

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**Program:** The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program

**Participation:** For students in grades 7-8 who are limited English proficient and at risk of leaving school..

**Overview:** The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is unique in that tutors are limited-English-proficient students at risk of dropping out of school. When placed in a responsible tutoring role and supported in their efforts, tutors gain significant social and economic benefits. The program has three levels that incorporate all the major features of the model--philosophy, instruction, and support. The philosophical base consists of tenets such as all students can learn; all students, parents and teachers have a right to participate fully in creating and maintaining excellent schools; excellence in schools contributes to individual and collective economic growth, stability and advancement; and commitment to educational excellence is created by including students, parents and teachers in setting goals, making decisions, monitoring progress, and evaluating outcomes. The instructional strategy incorporates five major components including classes for tutors; tutoring sessions; field trips; role-modeling; and student recognition. The support strategy involves curriculum, coordination, staff enrichment, family involvement, and evaluation activities. In 1992, the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program was recognized by the Secretary of Education as a model dropout prevention program, meeting the National Goal for Education 2 of increasing the high school graduation rate to at least 90%.

**Contact:** Linda Cantu, Intercultural Development Research Association, 5835 Callaghan Road, Suite 350, San Antonio, TX 78228. (210) 684-8180, FAX (210) 684-5389. Also see <http://www.idra.org/ccvyp/default.htm>.

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**Program:** DeLasalle Model

**Participation:** For populations fitting the high school level (grades 9-12), with most students between the ages of 14 and 18. Students for whom the DeLaSalle Model is appropriate are those who have typically had poor or sporadic school attendance and low academic performance in their previous schooling.

**Overview:** DeLaSalle Education Center is a private not-for-profit agency which has served the greater Kansas City area since 1971. The goals of the fully accredited program are to increase school attendance, improve academic skills, and enhance self-esteem and educational attitudes in students who have dropped out of high school and have no other chance for completing an education. DeLaSalle employs a variety of programming features and services within a comprehensive model to allow every youngster to be successful in his or her education. These include a supportive non-traditional school structure, a small student-teacher ratio, individualized learning, student contracting, intensive counseling, vocational skill training, and a diagnostic prescriptive teaching process. The DeLaSalle Model provides a design for replication of educational strategies which reinforce the efforts called for by the National Goals for Education. Using the Model, any alternative school can develop an appropriate program within the framework of local needs and resources.

**Contact:** Regina Hansen, DeLaSalle Education Center, 3740 Forest, Kansas City, MO 64109-3200. (816) 561-3312, FAX (816) 561-6106.

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**Program:** Graduation, Reality, and Dual-Role Skills (GRADS)

**Participation:** For all pregnant and parenting teens, male and female, in grades 7-12 from city, exempted village,

local, and joint vocational school districts in urban, suburban, and rural communities.

**Overview:** Graduation, Reality, And Dual-Role Skills (GRADS) is a family and consumer-sciences instructional and intervention program. Regular GRADS classes are supplemented with seminars and individual projects. Teachers trained in the program serve one school or travel among three or four. The instructional component focuses on use of the 1300+ page teacher-written Adolescent Parent Resource Guide, which provides the practical problems, concepts, and strategies which guide the development of skills in teenage parents. The guide discusses communication and skills necessary for effective problem solving in the teen family. It recognizes the stresses affecting pregnant teens, focusing on management skills required for teen family wellness. Central themes of the guide and the curriculum (which emphasizes practical problem solving) are the perennial and practical problems of the adolescent parent at home, school, and work; and the development of knowledge and skills to solve problems in real life, including identifying alternatives, examining consequences, considering personal goals and values, scrutinizing decisions, and taking morally defensible actions. The four content areas include positive self, pregnancy, parenting, and economic independence. Audio visuals, supplemental texts, and other materials are also part of the program. The advisory committee component and home and community outreach component seek to build strong relationships with students through home visits and/or contacts with family. Collaboration and agency linkages are necessary for addressing the obstacles teen parents face to being able to remain in school until graduation. The evaluation/research component seeks to identify and report student and program outcomes. All programs report outcomes, and a state and national report is published annually.

**Contact:** Sharon G. Enright, Ohio Department of Education, Division of Vocational and Adult Education, Room 909, 65 South Front Street, Columbus, OH 43215-4183. (614) 466-3046, FAX (614) 644-5702. E-Mail: [ve\\_enright@odevax.ode.ohio.gov](mailto:ve_enright@odevax.ode.ohio.gov)

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**Program:** Score for College (SCORE).

**Participation:** Underachieving youth, especially high-risk students from language minority and diverse ethnic backgrounds, grades 7-12.

**Overview:** SCORE provides a comprehensive, holistic approach, training schools to institute a program incorporating appropriate placement, study skills, academic support, multiple modality teaching techniques, counseling, and mentoring. SCORE trainers work with schools to design a customized program for accelerating the achievement of high-risk youth, train staff, and provide follow-through support with a set of materials, workbooks, videotapes, and consultation. Students are heterogeneously grouped in a college core curriculum leading to university eligibility upon graduation. The program has five major components: (1) Tutoring and Study Skills; (2) Guidance; (3) Parents; (4) Motivational Activities; and (5) Summer Acceleration. Local trainers can be developed to inservice new staff and serve as program consultants. SCORE addresses National Educational Goals 3 and 8.

**Contact:** Sharon Johnson, Director, Orange County Department of Education, 200 Kalmus, P.O. Box 9050, Costa Mesa, CA 92628-9050 (714) 966-4394, FAX (714) 662-3148.

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**Program:** Cooperative Federation For Educational Experiences (COFFEE)

**Participation:** For adolescents with histories of academic failure, truancy, poor self-concept, family problems, and social misconduct.

**Overview:** Cooperative Federation For Educational Experiences (COFFEE) is a regional, instructional, occupational training and counseling program for at-risk youth from seventeen school districts. The characteristics of this student population are as follows: histories of academic failure, truancy, poor self-concept, family problems, and social misconduct. The program integrates five components: an academic component-- which provides

relevant basic skills instruction based on an individualized education plan; an occupational component--which provides hands-on educational experiences in an adult-like work environment preparing students for the high-demand jobs of the 90's; a counseling component--which provides character building, occupational and emotional support utilizing existing state, regional, and local service organizations; a preemployment education component--designed to enhance the employability of at-risk students through classroom instruction and student internships; and a physical education component--which offers a program of recreational activities adapted to enable students to develop a sense of self-accomplishment and group cooperation. The occupational component includes training programs in the following areas: Computer Maintenance and Repair, Word Processing, Building and Grounds Maintenance, and Horticulture/Agriculture.

**Contact:** Edward Sikonski, Executive Director, Oxford High School Annex, Main Street, Oxford, MA 01540. (508) 987-6090.

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**Program:** Diversified Educational Experiences Program (DEEP).

**Participation:** For grades 9-12

**Overview:** The major goal of DEEP is to develop an instructional process for secondary school classrooms that allows instructors to create an academic environment emphasizing success for every learner while decreasing learner hostility to educational institutions. DEEP offers students and instructors a method of organizing and managing an academic classroom that differs from the usual classroom model. Students in the DEEP classroom identify needs, formulate objectives, develop tasks based upon these objectives, present group and individual projects based upon fulfillment of objectives, receive teacher debriefing following presentation of the projects, and participate in their own evaluations. DEEP offers learners in academic subjects alternative ways to create, gather, develop and display information. Extensive use is made of electronic and nonelectronic media. The role of the teacher is that of advisor, consultant, and learning-systems manager. The classroom is a workshop where students work cooperatively to complete tasks. Community resources are utilized. The DEEP classroom is highly structured, but the structure is not the same as in the typical academic classroom. Teachers who demonstrate the ability and desire to change their methods of instruction are trained in the use of these new management techniques. They must be willing to teach one or more DEEP classes along with their regular classes. The teachers are trained as learning facilitators, and the conflict-management process is based on human relations and peer group interaction as well as on teacher-student interaction. Once the training has been accomplished, students can be enrolled in the program as part of the normal scheduling procedure. The program provides management charts and materials along with evaluation procedures.

**Contact:** J. Connett, Director, DEEP, KEDDS/Link, 412-18 South Main, Wichita, KS 67202. (316) 833-5100, FAX (316) 833-5103.

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**Program:** Focus Dissemination Project

**Participation:** For disaffected secondary students and all secondary educators, school board members, and community members who have an interest in developing local programs to meet the needs of the disaffected students in their settings.

**Overview:** Focus provides an alternative education plan for students who have been identified as disaffected, showing a lack of motivation, lack of confidence, and low self-esteem. The program effects responsible institutional change and positive student attitude and performance by helping students learn responsibility to self, school, and society. Through a group counseling experience, the peer group is guided to deal with the problems causing disaffection. Focus is a "school within a school" for secondary students who are not achieving or functioning in a way beneficial to themselves and/or those around them. The Focus program seeks to reduce student disaffection with school and learning, to improve each student's ability to relate effectively with peers and

adults, and to give each student a reason to be optimistic about the future. Focus is a highly structured program offering courses in English, social studies, and math. Instruction in Focus classes is based on ability and need. Focus students take such classes as science, physical education, health, and electives in the regular school program. All Focus students are involved in a group counseling experience called Family. Each Family consists of 8 to 10 students and one teacher who meet together one hour daily throughout the year. Family attempts to help the student develop feelings of caring, self-worth, and concern for others. It includes examination of one's own behavior in relation to the reactions of others within an atmosphere of positive support from the group. Program effectiveness is measured in grade equivalency gains on standard achievement tests, reductions in negative behaviors and improved attendance and grades.

**Contact:** Don May, Focus Dissemination Project, Human Resource Associates, Inc., Suite 200, 201 North Concord Exchange, South Saint Paul, MN 55075. (612) 451-6840 or (800) 345-5285

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**Program:** Project Intercept

**Participation:** For students in grades 9-12 who are considered high risk due to chronic academic failure, disruptive behavior, truancy, suspension, and dropout. Also used successfully for students in grades 4 through 8.

**Overview:** The basic premise of Project Intercept training is to restructure a school's teaching philosophies and to provide more effective techniques to deal with the at-risk student. The Intercept program is highly individualized and goals for each individual school are developed in concert with the participants of the project. Teachers, counselors, and administrators are trained as a team to approach all problems that affect at-risk students. Project Intercept is a two-part program: one-half theoretical, one-half process. The program consists of a one-week training by Intercept master trainers followed by week-long visits throughout the year for on-line critiquing and demonstration teaching. One of the goals is to develop turnkey trainers for maintenance of the program at the original training site with possible expansion of the program to other schools in the system.

**Contact:** James E. Loan, M.A., Project Intercept, 1101 South Race Street, Denver, CO 80210. (303) 777-5870

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**Program:** Public and Private School Collaboration.

**Participation:** For students in grades 10 and 11

**Overview:** Public Private School Collaboration makes connections and makes connections work. Where public and private schools have not traditionally joined forces, they do so within a collaborative framework. This allows them to apply their finest resources to meet significant needs. It also allows them to gain the support of leading corporations and foundations as well as research institutions and museums as they seek to respond to those needs. The developer demonstrator has engaged in this work for over ten years. In Connecticut, Choate Rosemary Hall (a private boarding school) and the Connecticut Association of Urban Superintendents sponsor a five-week program of advanced residential study for students from Connecticut's 13 urban school districts. They have been joined by distinguished corporations (from AT&T to Xerox) and noted research institutions (from Brown University to the federal Star Schools Program). Students study topics ranging from Advanced Astronomy to Vectors and Matrices. They return to their schools encouraged by their accomplishments. Many other collaborative activities have flowed from this initiative and include programs for students and teachers alike. Importantly, a collaboration does not have to involve a boarding school, urban schools, or huge foundation grants. It does require the full participation of public and private school partners, definition of genuine need, and the commitment to work together to find and apply resources to meet that need. After three and a half years, adoptions are now under way from Maine to California. They can be found in boarding schools, urban public high schools, day schools, elementary schools, and more.

**Contact:** Howard Hand, Director, Summer Programs, Office of Public Private Collaboration, Choate Rosemary Hall, Box 788, 333 Christian Street, Wallingford, CT 06492. (203) 284-5365

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The following model programs for dropout prevention were taken from *A World of Prevention*, a searchable directory of programs, research, references and resources dedicated to the prevention of child and adolescent problems and the promotion of youth development in families, schools and communities. *A World of Prevention* can be accessed at <http://www.tyc.state.tx.us/prevention/>

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**Program:** The Alternative Education Program

**Participation:** For grade 9

**Overview:** The Alternative Education Program is a promising model at Minnie Howard School in Alexandria, Virginia. The program teaches students using a high degree of individualization while addressing skill development gaps. In addition, the program instills violence prevention into the curriculum, provides a welcoming climate to improve student motivation to attend school, and provides genuine school-to-work opportunities for each student. Regular home visits deliver parent education and support. This program is currently being evaluated.

**Contact:** Margaret Walsh, Principal, Minnie Howard School, 3801 West Braddock Road, Alexandria, VA 22302. Telephone: 703-824-6750.

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**Program:** Help One Student to Succeed (HOSTS)

**Participation:** For grades 1-10

**Overview:** HOSTS is a promising dropout prevention program in which students who are one year (or more) behind in their reading skills are mentored by trained adult volunteers. An evaluation involving 6,621 students during the 1995-96 school year found an overall gain of two reading levels and reported that 51 percent of students met the exit criteria.

**Contact:** Bill Gibbons, HOSTS Corporation, 8000 NE Parkway Drive, Suite 201, Vancouver, WA 98662-6459. Telephone: 800-833-4678. Fax: 360-260-1783.

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**Program:** Project Helping Hand

**Participation:** For grades K-8

**Overview:** Project Helping Hand is a promising model to reduce truancy. Key components include referring youth who have 5 to 15 days of unexcused absences to a community-wide center, up to eight sessions of family counseling, home visits if the family does not show up for sessions, and three follow-up sessions to ensure that truancy does not start again. Child study teams and tutoring are also available. Project staff reported that 84 percent of youth were not truant after participating in the program.

**Contact:** Atlantic County Division of Intergenerational Services, 101 South Shore Road, Northfield, NJ 08225. Telephone: 609-645-5862.

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**Program:** Reconnecting Youth

**Participation:** For grades 9-12

**Overview:** Reconnecting Youth is a demonstrated model for students showing signs of poor school achievement, multiple problem behaviors, and the potential for dropping out of high school. Key elements include social support and skills training, personal growth classes, and social activities to promote school bonding. Two studies have found improvements in school performances and reductions in substance use and suicide risk. In addition, the Texas Education Agency has recently approved Reconnecting Youth for use as a for-credit class in Texas public schools.

**Contact:** Derek Richey, National Education Service, P.O. Box 8, Bloomington, IN 47402-0008.  
Telephone: 800-733-6786. Web site: <http://www.nes.org>

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**Program:** The Stafford County Alternative Education Program

**Participation:** For high schools

**Overview:** The Stafford County Alternative Education Program is a promising initiative that gives students two options for successfully completing high school. Option one is a regional education center for violent, weapons-carrying, or controlled-substance-carrying students that offers academic, counseling, family, and transportation services to help students complete the school year and successfully return to their regular schools. Option two, Turning Point, is a school for members of the community (primarily ages 17-21) who have not completed high school and for high school students with a very high risk of dropping out. No evaluation data are available.

**Contact:** G. Scott Walker, Director of Alternative and Adult Education, Stafford County Public Schools, 35 Potomac Creek Drive, #97, Falmouth, VA 22405. Telephone: 540-659-9899.

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The following model programs for dropout prevention were taken from the document, *School-to Work Opportunities for Out-of-School Youth*, available at <http://icdl.uncg.edu>. Additional information on these types of programs can also be obtained from The National School-To-Work Learning and Information Center, 400 Virginia Avenue, Room 210, Washington, DC 20024, Phone: 1-800-251-7236, Fax: 202-401-6211, E-mail: [stw-lc@ed.gov](mailto:stw-lc@ed.gov), Internet: <http://www.stw.ed.gov>.

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**Program:** The Milwaukee Public School System's Division of Alternative Program

**Participation:** Serves a wide range of at-risk and out-of-school youth. Its alternative schools are designed to support middle- and high school-aged youth who have dropped out of school, are behind their peers academically, have high rates of absenteeism, or fit a variety of other at-risk characteristics.

**Overview:** These schools act as "learning communities," with small class sizes and a specific occupational, occupational, and/or cultural identity. For example, one school offers bilingual classes to assist Hispanic youth in adapting to the demands of the workplace. Another school is designed to address the needs of pregnant women and young mothers, providing extensive social supports not present in the regular educational system and giving these young women the ability to return to or stay in school. Curricula in many schools are designed to incorporate the interests and goals of each student. These curricula are reinforced by substantive work experiences that allow youth to apply skills used in the classroom. Several schools offer half-day academic programs that provide

classroom instruction in the morning and schedule work-based learning experiences in the afternoon. This approach demonstrates to students how school relates to work, fostering improved academic achievement and workplace performance.

**Contact:** Milwaukee Public School System, Alternative Program Information Center, 609 North 8th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53233-2445, 414-276-0599.

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**Program:** YouthBuild USA

**Participation:** Unemployed high school dropouts

**Overview:** YouthBuild USA is a comprehensive youth and community development program that provides unemployed high school dropouts with the opportunity to serve their communities as they develop job skills and prepare for their future. Participants build housing for the homeless and other low-income persons while attending a YouthBuild-operated school to earn a high-school equivalency degree and perhaps prepare to continue into postsecondary education. Programming includes intensive group counseling and peer support networks. YouthBuild USA also provides technical assistance to local organizations either operating or planning to implement a YouthBuild program.

**Contact:** 58 Day Street, Third Floor, West Somerville, MA 02144, 617-623-9900

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**Program:** The Young Adult Learning Academy (YALA)

**Participation:** High school dropouts and others with low achievement levels

**Overview:** YALA is a school dedicated to youth who have dropped out of the New York City schools or completed high school with very low academic achievement levels. In order to help young people complete their high school education and enter employment, YALA provides an integrated program of education, occupational preparation (child care, health, computers), and support services which include family support, health services, and programs in the arts and culture. YALA works closely with New York City community organizations to recruit youth and provide support services.

**Contact:** 320 East 96th Street, New York, NY 10128, 212-348-7006, [kleinbardp@aol.com](mailto:kleinbardp@aol.com)

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**Program:** New Ways Workers

**Participation:** In-school and out-of-school youth

**Overview:** New Ways to Work is a non-profit organization dedicated to identifying innovative workplace practices, such as the integration of school-based and work-based learning. Its New Ways Workers program collaborates with schools and community-based organizations to ensure that the needs of both in-school and out-of-school youth are met. It also incorporates businesses into the development process in order to identify employer demands more effectively and foster more receptive workplace environments.

**Contact:** 785 Market Street, Suite 950, San Francisco, CA 94103, 415-995-9860

*Excerpted from the Corporation for National Service....*

*Improved engagement through community service is often found to keep at-risk students in school. This is a model program.*

## **Learn & Serve America**

**Learn and Serve America supports service-learning programs that address local needs in education, public safety, human services, and the environment. Service-learning involves students in service to communities as part of their academic experience. Learn and Serve America has two components:**

- ⇒ *School and Community-based programs for elementary & high school students*
- ⇒ *Higher Education programs for college-age youth.*

### ***What is service learning?***

Service learning is a teaching methodology which integrates community service into the academic curriculum. This hands-on approach to learning has shown major benefits in promoting improved academic performance for all students and is particularly effective with youth from at-risk situations

### ***What are examples of Service-learning programs?***

Service-learning programs engage young people in community activities that show them how academic skills can be used to solve real-life problems. While doing so, service-learning programs help students understand the meaning of citizenship and their ability to determine and affect the quality of life in their communities.

To address needs of homeless people for example, elementary school students might plan, prepare and serve lunch in a shelter on a weekly basis as part of health education class. By creating and serving balanced meals, students not only learn nutrition basics, they also establish relationships with people different from themselves and gain an understanding of the conditions that lead to homelessness. In higher education, nursing students might help operate a community health center serving low-income people. While the students acquire practical experience in their field of study, they also help meet health needs that local budgets cannot afford.

## ***Learn and Serve America: Getting Youth Started in America's Tradition of Service***

More than 780,000 students currently provide vitally needed services to their communities through Learn and Serve America. For many, this is their first exposure to evaluating and addressing community needs. Statistics show that a meaningful service experience instills a lifelong desire to contribute to society. This desire, along with the skills and knowledge participants gain through service, builds a strong future generation of citizens and community leaders.

Last year, over 190,000 young people provided nearly 3 million hours of service to their communities through Learn and Serve America. The service ranged from tutoring disadvantaged youth to rehabilitating public housing to helping single mothers strengthen job skills. In addition, 45,000 volunteers from the communities served assisted in the operation of those programs, contributing over 605,000 hours of service.

Students who participate in service-learning programs show increased interest in school and improved academic performance. For example, following a service-learning program that combined science lessons with meeting local environmental needs, students placed in the 97<sup>th</sup> percentile in science knowledge and were the first group of Indiana students ever to unanimously choose science as their favorite subject; this school is in a county that previously had ranked lowest on the state's education attainment scale.

Learn and Serve America programs encourage youth to pursue service-oriented careers. Said one pre-med student involved in service-learning at a free health clinic, "I had always planned to be an academic after I got my degree, a professor focused on research. But now I know I want to become a doctor who works with underserved people. It would be the ultimate contribution I could make to society."

Local support for service-learning programs is strong: Institutions and organizations that receive Learn and Serve America grants for higher education programs find local matching funds in cash or in-kind, dollar for dollar. Organizations and schools that receive Learn and Serve America grants for K-12 initiatives also match funds, 10% the first year, 20% the second, and 30% the third.

**If you would like more information, call: 202-606-5000  
or visit: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/WH/EOP/cns/html/learn.html>**

*Excerpted from the School District of Escambia County, Florida...*

# **Alternative Education**

## **What is alternative education?**

Educational Alternative Programs provide a non-traditional approach to curriculum by utilizing alternative teaching strategies. These programs are designed to provide opportunities for students to maximize their potential for success in life. Programs focus upon the needs and interests of students by offering positive school experiences which are geared for achievement, enhancement of positive self-concept, motivation, reduction of truancy, reduction of disruptive behavior, and reduction of teenage pregnancy.

## **Alternative education programs used for dropout prevention:**

- ★ REACH- The model dropout prevention educational alternative program Reading Enhances Academic and Career Horizons is designed to increase the academic performance of students reading below grade level. Project REACH is implemented in feeder schools to provide a continuum of strategies to students and the elementary, middle, and high school level. Instruction in reading is emphasized through the use of appropriate technology.
- ★ Beggs Education Center- Beggs Educational Center is a self-contained alternative school that uses non-traditional methods of instruction, counseling, and a competency-based curriculum.
- ★ Help One Student To Succeed (HOSTS)- HOSTS is a structured mentoring program in language/ reading and mathematics. Students are provided one-on-one mentoring in a tutorial setting following a diagnosis of remediation needs. The mentors are volunteers from the community and meet with students a minimum of twice weekly.
- ★ The Home Expulsion Learning Program (HELP)- Expelled students that qualify for continuing services will be given access to a computer at their home with a prescribed curriculum. Progress will be monitored via modem and voice telephone. A limited number of students will be served initially as we pilot this program.

**For additional programs and information on Alternative Education:**

**Alternative Education Department  
School District of Escambia County, Florida**

<http://www.escambia.k12.fl.us/instres/alted/aemain.html>

## ***Hispanic Dropout Rate Becoming a National Crisis***

WCER Highlights, published by the Wisconsin Center for Education Research, UW-Madison School of Education. <http://ericps.ed.uiuc.edu/npin/pnews/pnewo96/pnewo96d.html>

The school dropout rate for Hispanic students has remained a consistent problem over the past 40 years and, as recently as 1993, about 30 percent of the United States' Hispanic population ages 16 to 24 had dropped out of school. This is in comparison to an overall rate of 11 percent, an 8 percent rate for white non-Hispanics, and a 13 percent rate for African-Americans.

Nevertheless, in spite of their improved educational attainment rates over the last 10 years, Hispanics continue to enter school later, leave school earlier, and receive proportionally fewer high school diplomas and college degrees than other Americans. In fact, Hispanics are still among the most undereducated segment of the US population.

This is causing increasing concern among many educators as the Hispanic population grows dramatically, and it will be a disaster for a large percentage of the labor force to lack a high school education. According to Dr. Walter Secada, director of the Hispanic Dropout Project (HDP), "An undereducated and underskilled Hispanic workforce is harmful not only to Hispanics who drop out, but to the American economy and larger non-Hispanic population as well."

The HDP has published a *Data Book*, which shows the scope of the Hispanic dropout problem, its causes, and its consequences. According to the *Data Book*, social and economic costs are escalating for many reasons:

- ! the Hispanic population is rapidly growing, in both absolute numbers and as a proportion of US students
- ! fewer dropouts will find employment in future workplaces
- ! upgraded workforce skills are critical for an individual's and the nation's successes in the global economy
- ! people need increasingly more advanced knowledge and skills to participate in this society, to vote intelligently, and to make intelligent consumer decisions
- ! labor force productivity and income must expand to help meet the needs of senior citizens as they continue to make up a larger segment of our population
- ! children of the future will be strongly affected by their parents' income and education levels

The purpose of the HDP is to increase awareness of the nature and scope of Hispanic dropout problem, to produce concrete analyses of the issues and integrate research on intervention, and to recommend federal, state, and local level actions

which can be taken to reduce the dropout rate of Hispanic youth.

In one paper written for the HDP, it has been argued that many Hispanic youth drop out because they realize that, no matter how hard they work, they will still get funneled into low-paying jobs, or even no jobs at all. These beliefs become such actions as: withdrawing from academic pursuits, acting up in class, ignoring assignments and homework, cutting class, and eventually dropping out. These behaviors have been attributed to students' lack of self-discipline, dullness, laziness, or an inability to project themselves into the future.

However, studies of these students' beliefs show that their unwillingness to participate comes from their assessment of the costs and benefits of "playing the game." That is, they think that their chances are too low that school will propel them to success to make the effort worthwhile. In addition, parents of many Hispanic students have argued that the facilities used by these students are aging and inadequate.

The Hispanic Dropout Project has found some signs of success with dropout prevention programs. Retention efforts for junior high and high school students use out-of-school efforts such as tutoring, mentoring, career advising, and arranging for older students (who might otherwise drop-out) to work with younger ones. Other in-school efforts include school restructuring and eliminating ability tracking. Elementary schools have focused on increased academic achievement for Hispanics.

For the sites that have been successful, high academic standards and strong social support for students to achieve are common characteristics. In addition, for students still in school with friends who had dropped out, a distinguishing characteristic was that someone--parent, family member, teacher, coach, counselor--had taken an individual interest in their finishing school.

For more information about the Hispanic Dropout Project, contact:

Josefina Velasco

Special Assistant to the OBEMLA Director

(202) 205-8706

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## Hispanic Dropout Project

[http://www.senate.gov/~bingaman/bingaman/hispanic\\_dropout\\_prevention.html](http://www.senate.gov/~bingaman/bingaman/hispanic_dropout_prevention.html)