



ENEWS

A Monthly Forum for Sharing and Interchange



April, 2008 (Vol. 12 #7)

ENEWS is one of the many resources provided by the School Mental Health Project/ Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA. This electronic newsletter is sent to those concerned with enhancing policies, programs, and practices related to addressing barriers to student learning and to promoting mental health in schools. For more on what our federally supported national Center offers, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>



We encourage you to forward this to others. If you have been forwarded this ENEWS and want to sign up to receive it directly, please let us know. Contact smhp@ucla.edu



WHAT'S HERE THIS MONTH

**Emerging Issue

>Who's Attending to the Negative Impact of the Nation's Economic Problems on Students and Schools?

**News from around the country

**Recent publications relevant to

- >Children's mental and physical health
- >Family, school & community
- >Policy, systems, law, ethics, finances & statistics

**This month's focus for schools to address barriers to learning

>April – Spring can be a high risk time for students

**Other helpful Internet resources

**Links to

- >Upcoming initiatives, conference & workshops
- >Calls for grant proposals, presentations & papers
- >Training and job opportunities

**UCLA Center update

**Comments, requests, information, questions from the field

- >Follow up to previous emerging issues
 - >> Pernicious Funding related to Student Learning Supports
 - >>A New Investment Metaphor for Education



****EMERGING ISSUE**

>Who's Attending to the Negative Impact of the Nation's Economic Problems on Students and Schools?

It is a poignant and ironic reality that, despite escalating demands on schools to deliver better outcomes for students, the economic downturn is causing every state to cut school budgets. This means layoffs and cuts in programs. As the superintendent of one large state has noted: "School districts up and down this state are sending out pink slips to tens of thousands of hard-working, dedicated ... staff, not because our state faces a spending problem, but because we face a priorities problem."

It seems likely that among the repercussions of the economic problems will be families and school staff under greater stress, and this will exacerbate the factors that result in student behavior, learning, and emotional problems. In turn, one can expect high-stakes test scores, dropout rates, and the achievement gap all to be affected negatively.

In the past, among the first laid off by districts have been student support staff and most programs that are part of the effort to address barriers to learning and teaching with a view to ensuring all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school. When this happens, the question arises: Who's going to be available to help teachers and schools effectively respond to and work toward preventing behavior, learning, and emotional problems?

This is an issue that must not be marginalized as decision makers discuss budget cuts and layoffs.

In this connection, we wonder what is being presented to school boards and district administrators about: *What student supports must be maintained to ensure all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school?*

Related to this is the question of: *What information should be provided decision makers so they will understand how these essential supports can be used to help many students in need (and not just a few with the most severe problems)?*

Please let us hear from you so we can share with others. We hope to get enough information to send out as a resource aid to help counter some of the emerging negative impact.

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****NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY**

>AFTER CAMPUS SHOOTINGS, U.S. TO EASE PRIVACY RULES

The Federal Education Department proposed on Monday new regulations to clarify when universities may release confidential student information and, after the Virginia Tech shootings last year, reassure college officials that they will not face penalties for reporting fears about mentally ill students. 3/25/08. The New York Times.

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/25/us/25privacy.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=ease+privacy+rules&st=nyt&oref=slogin

>IN AN ERA OF SCHOOL SHOOTINGS, A NEW DRILL

Gone are the days of the traditional fire drill where students dutifully line up in hallways and proceed to the playground, then return a few minutes later. Now, in a ritual reminiscent of the 1950s, when students ducked under desks and covered their heads in anticipation of nuclear

blasts, many schools are preparing for among other emergencies, bomb threats, hazardous material spills, shelter-in-place preparation, and armed, roaming sociopaths. 3/25/08. The New York Times.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/25/nyregion/25drills.html?scp=1&sq=ERA+OF+SCHOOL+S HOOTINGS&st=nyt>

>STATES' DATA OBSCURE HOW FEW FINISH HIGH SCHOOL

Many states use an inflated graduation rate for federal reporting requirements under the No Child Left Behind law and a different one at home. As a result, researchers say, federal figures obscure a dropout epidemic so severe that only about 70 percent of the one million American students who start ninth grade each year graduate four years later. 3/20/08. The New York Times.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/20/education/20graduation.html?scp=7&sq=No+Child+Left+Behind&st=nyt>

>LOW GRADUATION RATE DRAWS FLORIDA LAWSUIT

Amid mounting national frustration over high school graduation rates, the Palm Beach County school district in Florida has been thrust onto center stage. In a class-action lawsuit, the American Civil Liberties Union is demanding that the district boost its graduation rates and reduce the gaps in those rates between racial and socioeconomic groups. The lawsuit is the first in the United States to make such demands of a district, the ACLU and other sources say.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR. <http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/0326/p03s01-usju.html>

>BUSING TO SUBURBS DIDN'T BOOST TEST SCORES

For the second straight year, low-income students in the Minneapolis Public Schools fared better than the ones who were bused to suburban schools under the Choice is Yours, a voluntary desegregation program. 3/3/08. Star Tribune. <http://www.startribune.com/local/16183752.html>

>IS REMOVING STAFF AT POOR-PERFORMING SCHOOLS EFFECTIVE?

Often called the Clint Eastwood solution for low-performing schools, reconstitution – all the rage in the mid 1990s – seems to be making a comeback. Critics of reconstitution say it puts too much of the blame for academic failure on teachers. But supporters say it's often the only way to break a cycle of failure and despair. While reconstitution is a tempting tool for success-starved districts, experts warn that it cannot work in a vacuum. Other changes – more resources, a safer environment, relaxed union work rules – are necessary for real transformation. 3/7/08. Cleveland Plain Dealer.

<http://www.cleveland.com/news/plaindealer/index.ssf?/base/news/1204882324289590.xml&coll=2>

>FREE LUNCH ISN'T COOL, SO SOME STUDENT GO HUNGRY

Only 37% of eligible high school students in San Francisco take advantage of the subsidized meal program. The stigma of accepting a government lunch, while others are paying for food from a different menu, is not unique to San Francisco. The director of nutrition in Berkeley, CA, said the separation of students who pay and those who receive free meals is a “social justice issue.” Most of the separation came into being in response to a federal requirement that food of minimal nutritional value not be sold in the same place as subsidized meals which have to meet certain nutritional standards. 3/1/08. The New York Times.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/01/education/01lunch.html>

>SPECIALITY HIGH SCHOOLS PART OF SYSTEM OVERHAUL

New Orleans largest school district plans to reshape its high schools, partly by introducing speciality programs in areas such as public safety or health at each of the schools. In the past decade, urban high school reform has centered largely on one premise: Smaller is better. Studies have reported mixed results. Community leaders have said they wan to move at their own pace and according to their own school community's vision. 3/19/08. Times Picayune.
http://www.nola.com/news/index.ssf/2008/03/specialty_high_schools_part_of.html

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Re: Reconstitution:

“It really hurt me. I really liked the faculty that was there. It was my first teaching gig. We had a veteran group, and a lot of teachers took me under their wing. It really shook us to the foundation.”

David Erdelyi

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Note: Each week the Center highlights more newsworthy stories online at
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/whatsnew/newsitems.htm>

Also access other news stories relevant to mental health in schools through links at
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/whatsnew/linkstolatest.htm>

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RECENT PUBLICATIONS (IN PRINT AND ON THE WEB)

*Children's Mental and Physical Health

>Identifying social mechanisms for the prevention of adolescent drinking and driving (2008) J. Chen, et al., *Accident Analysis and Prevention*, 40(2) 576-85.
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/00014575>

>What explains the relation between family poverty and childhood depressive symptoms? (2008) T. Zimmerman, et al. *Journal of Psychiatric Research* epub.
<Http://www.elsevier.com/locate/issn/00223956>

>Substance use behavior and suicide indicators among rural middle school students. (2008) M. Dunn, et al., *Journal of School Health*, 78(1) 26-31. <Http://www.ashaweb.org>

>Adolescent suicide: Risk factors and prevention strategies (2008) J. Waldvogel., et al., *Current Problems in Pediatric and Adolescent Health Care*, 38(4) 110-25.
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/15385442>

>A case-control study of antidepressants and attempted suicide during early phase treatment of major depressive episodes. (2008) M. Olfson & S. Marcus. *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, ePub.
<Http://www.psychiatrist.com/>

>Younger onset of depression is associated with greater suicidal intent. (2008) A. Thompson. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, ePub.
<http://www.springer.com/medicine/psychiatry/journal/127>

***Family, School & Community**

- >Nurturing hostile environments: The problem of school violence (2008) N. Fredland. *Family and Community Health*, 31 (Suppl 1): S32-41. [Http://www.familyandcommunityhealth.com](http://www.familyandcommunityhealth.com)
- >*Organized communities, stronger schools* (2008) K. Mediratta, et al., Annenberg Institute for School Reform. <http://www.annenberginstitute.org/products/mott.php>
- >Reframing school dropout as a public health issue (2007). N. Freudenberg, & J. Ruglis *Prevention of Chronic Diseases* 4(4). http://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2007/oct/07_0063.htm.
- >Enduring consequences of parenting for risk behaviors from adolescence into early adulthood. (2008) K. Roche, et al., *Social Science and Medicine*, ePub. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/02779536>
- >Community mobilization for the prevention on youth violence (2008) *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, Supplement. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/07493797>
- >*Family and neighborhood risks: How they relate to involvement in out of school time activities* (2008) K. Moore & J. Kahn. Child Trends. <http://www.childtrends.org/>
- >Family perceptions of participation in education planning (2008) P. Jivanjee, et al., *School Social Work Journal*, 32(1) 75-92. <http://www.rtc.pdx.edu/pgPublications.php>
- >*Building a 21st Century U.S. Education System* (2008). published by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. http://nctaf.org/resources/research_and_reports/nctaf_research_reports/Buildinga21stcenturyu.s.educationsystem.htm

***Policy, Systems, Law, Ethics, Finances & Statistics**

- >A midcourse review of the Healthy People 2010: 21 critical health objectives for adolescents and young adults (2008) M. Park, et al., *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 42(4) 329-34. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/1054139X>
- >*The mental health of adolescents: A national profile*, 2008. D. Knopf, et al., National Adolescent Health Information Center, http://nahic.ucsf.edu/index.php/data/article/briefs_fact_sheets/
- >*Towards better behavioral health for children, youth and their families: Financing that supports knowledge.* (2008) National Center for Children in Poverty. Http://www.nccp.org/publications/pdf/text_804.pdf
- >*Federal efforts help state prepare for and respond to psychological consequences, but FEMA's Crisis Counseling program needs improvements* (2008) United States Government Accountability Office. <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d0822.pdf>
- >Which Public? Whose Interest? (2008) A review of Education research in the public interest: Social justice, action, and policy. P. Shannon and D. Mertens. *Educational Researcher*, 37(2) 101-105. <http://www.aera.net/publications/?id=317>
- >Digest of Education Statistics, 2007 (2008) *The National Center for Education Statistics*. <Http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2008022>



Note: The Quick Find online clearinghouse at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu> is updated regularly with new reports and publications such as those listed above. Currently there are over 130 alphabetized topic pages with direct links to Center materials and to other online resources and related centers. Let us know about publications and reports that should be included in this dedicated online clearinghouse. Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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“Spring is when you feel like whistling even with a shoe full of slush.”

Doug Larson

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****MONTHLY FOCUS FOR SCHOOLS TO ADDRESS BARRIERS TO LEARNING**

>>April -- Spring can be a high risk time for students

For many students the approaching end of the school year is anticipated with increasing dread. Not enough time to catch up. Too many assignments overdue. Teachers indicating the possibility of not passing a course, not passing a grade.

In “Grade Retention: Achievement and Mental Health Outcomes” (National Association for School Psychologists website) the authors note:

“...retention at any grade level is associated with later high school dropout, as well as other deleterious long-term effects. ...Analysis of multiple studies of retention indicate that retained students experience lower self esteem and lower rates of school attendance, relate to promoted peers...

Alternative Actions ... Most important is to advocate for implementation of educational interventions that are supported by research first, continue monitoring the child’s achievement trajectory, and then revisit the progress made. A coordinated system of comprehensive support services aimed at addressing the academic, socio-emotional, behavioral and psychological needs of the child will help promote healthy adjustment and achievement among children at risk for grade retention. ...”

For some students, the sense of celebrating the end of the school year leads to high risk behaviors in motor vehicle crashes, often with substance use as a contributing factor. In some high schools, senioritis sets in as students are finished with school long before the school year ends.

For a few students the risks are much higher. “Temporal variations in school-associated student homicide and suicide events” MMWR, 2001, 10:50 (31) 657-60 notes:

“Programs designed to prevent suicide and suicidal behavior among students should recognize that the spring semester is the period of highest risk. ...Effective programs often focus on both individual risk factors and environmental conditions that may predispose young persons toward violent behavior.”

The current focus on the importance of each student having someone at the school they feel connected to, someone they can talk to, someone who cares about them is a good remedy. If you don’t have such small groupings of students with adults, this might be a good time to help set one up. Teaming a student with an out-of-class staff member (e.g., student support staff, school support staff, administrators, district personnel, other teachers) is one model.

For more ideas about special opportunities to promote learning supports during spring, see Quick Find online clearinghouse resources related to

>Classroom Climate/Culture <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/environments.htm>

- >Dropout Prevention <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/dropout.html>
- >Learning Supports http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/qf_enabling.htm
- >Mentoring <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/mentoring.htm>
- >Prevention for Students At Risk <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/prevention.html>

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Note: You can anticipate major concerns that arise over the course of the school year that provide natural opportunities to strengthen support for learning. To see the “calendar” of monthly concerns and themes, see “Ideas for Enhancing Support at Your School this Month” on the Center’s home page at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>

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“Real education should consist of drawing the goodness and the best out of our own students. What better books can there be than the book of humanity?”

Cesar Chavez

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****OTHER HELPFUL INTERNET RESOURCES**

- >Consortium to Prevent School Violence has fact sheets on “Bullying Prevention” and “Overview of School Violence Prevention” www.preventschoolviolence.org
- >Eyes on Bullying...What can you do? <http://www.eyesonbullying.org/pdfs/toolkit.pdf>
- >Inhalant Use across the Adolescent Years
<http://www.oas.samhsa.gov/2k8/inhalants/inhalants.htm>
- >Kids Matter: Australian Primary Schools Mental Health Initiative
<http://www.apapdc.edu.au/kidsmatter/>
- >Advancing achievement: findings from an independent evaluation of a major after school initiative. <http://www.irvine.org/assets/pdf/pubs/evaluation/advancing.pdf>
- >Operation Healthy Reunions <http://www.nmha.org/reunions/>
- >Transition Planning: A Team Effort <http://www.nichcy.org/pubs/transum/ts10txt.htm>
- >Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making us Sick? [Http://www.unnaturalcauses.org](http://www.unnaturalcauses.org)
- >Maryland Association of Local Management Boards FY 2007 Annual Report. Local interagency service delivery system for children, youth and families with emphasis on prevention, early intervention and community based services.
http://www.flbcinc.org/rp/lmb%20annual%20rpt.%20to%20MD%20Gen.%20Assembly%2010.07_sm.pdf
- >School linkage protocol technical assistance guide: Expanded school improvement through enhancement of the learning support continuum. <http://www.csw.ohio-state.edu/ocmsi/usdoe/01-10-07%20linkage%20protocol%20with%20appendix.pdf>
- >Use Community Development Block Grant Funds to Support Youth Programs and Services.
<http://www.financeproject.org>
- >Communities in Schools <http://www.cisnet.org>

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Note: For a wide range of relevant websites see our Gateway to a World of Resources at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/gateway/gateway_sites.htm

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“The inevitable result of improved communications between different levels in a hierarchy is a vastly increased area of misunderstanding
Law of Hierarchical Communications

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****LINKS TO**

>Upcoming Initiatives, Conferences & Workshops <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upconf.htm>

>Calls for Grant Proposals, Presentations & Papers <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upcall.htm>

>Training and Job Opportunities <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/job.htm>

Information of each of these is updated on an ongoing bases on our website. Just click on the indicated URL. If you would like to add information on these, please send it to ltaylor@ucla.edu

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****UCLA CENTER – BRIEF UPDATE**

For the latest information on Cente4 resources and activities go to <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu> and click on What’s New

Highlighted below are a few items – all are online to make them immediately accessible at no cost and with restrictions on use.

****New Resources:***

>Integration of Schools and Mental Health Systems: An Overview of the State Grants for the U. S. Department of Education Program
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/integrationofschoolsandmhsystems.pdf>

>Turning a Project or Pilot into a Catalyst for Systemic Change and Sustainability
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/catalyst.pdf>

>Notes on Transition Planning for College (Practice Notes)
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/practicenotes/transitiontocollege.pdf>

****Spring 2008 Journal/Newsletter*** <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/news.htm>

Featured in the current edition are:

>**Rethinking How Schools Address Student Misbehavior & Disengagement**

>**Security Measures in Schools: Mental Health Considerations**

>**About Framing the Continuum of Intervention**

****Updated Resources:***

>Introductory Packets

- >>Affect and Mood Problems related to School Aged Youth – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/affect/affect.pdf>
- >>Anxiety, Fears, Phobias, and Related Problems: Interventions and Resources for School Aged Youth – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/anxiety/anxiety.pdf>
- >>Attention Problems: Interventions and Resources – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/attention/attention.pdf>
- >>Conduct and Behavior Problems in School Aged Youth – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/conduct/conduct.pdf>
- >>Social and Interpersonal Problems Related to School Aged Youth – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/socialProblems/socialprobs.pdf>
- >>Teen Pregnancy Prevention and Support – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/teenpreg/teenpreg.pdf>

>Resource Aid Packets

- >>Responding to a Crisis at a School – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/crisis/crisis.pdf>
- >>Students and Psychotropic Medication: The School's Role -- <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/psymeds/med1.pdf>
- >>Substance Abuse – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/substance/substance.pdf>
- >>Where to Access Statistical Information Relevant to Addressing Barriers to Learning: An Annotated Reference List – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/stats/stats.pdf>

****Website Addition***

- > ***Practitioner Toolkit and Networks*** – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/netexch.htm>



For more information on the UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools, go to the website at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu> or contact Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor, Co-directors at the School Mental Health Project/Center for Mental Health in Schools, UCLA, Department of Psychology, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563. Phone: (310) 825-3634; Toll Free (866) 846-4843; Fax (310) 206-8716; Email: smhp@ucla.edu



And, check out our sister center — Center for School Mental Health at <http://csmh.umaryland.edu> or contact Mark Weist, Director, CSMH, University of Maryland at Baltimore, Department of Psychiatry, 737 W. Lombard St 4th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21202. Toll Free: (888) 706-0980. Email: csmh@psych.umaryland.edu

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“Creativity is allowing yourself to make mistakes. Art is knowing which ones to keep.”
Scott Adams

****COMMENTS, REQUESTS, INFO, QUESTIONS FROM THE FIELD**

>Follow up on Emerging Issue: Pernicious Funding related to Student Learning Supports

(1) Making the Case for School-Based Health: Where Do We Stand? (2008) M. Silberberg & J. Cantor *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*, 33(1) 3-37.

Excerpt:

“The case against a reimbursement-based financing strategy goes beyond its limited potential for resource generation to its incompatibility with what many SBHCs do. The NASBHC report notes that “the population-based approach, a foundation of many school-based health centers is not compatible with the illness/episodic insurance model.”

(2) *Towards Better Behavioral Health for Children, Youth and their Families: Financing that Supports Knowledge*, January, 2008: Janice Cooper explores "a broad overview of sources of funding (and their policy roots) that underwrite children's behavioral health services illuminating the flaws and prospects of various policy choices." For the complete 70+ page report see <http://www.nccp.org> Here is a very brief excerpt:

“How well does funding support a balanced set of services that address prevention, early intervention and treatment? Recent research suggests that funding for children’s mental health services and supports should cover not only treatment for children and youth but also prevention, early recognition and early intervention strategies. Moreover, for a range of adult mental health problems with their onset during childhood and adolescence, treating children and youth *represents* prevention and early intervention. The evidence is clear that children and youth with behavioral health problems who access services and supports earlier fare better than those who do not. This latter factor is largely absent in mental health fiscal policy. Further, spending on children’s mental health is not consistent with what has been termed a public mental health paradigm. It neglects to take a universal approach to mental health that is more prevalent in other forms of health care, with specific targeting for those most at-risk and those with identified problems....

Policymakers in substance abuse, largely through the provisions of the block grant, have embedded a heavy emphasis on prevention. Twenty-per cent for the block grant must be spent on prevention...There is no comparable language in the mental health block grant.

Medicaid and Other Funding of Mental Health Services in the Schools and Early Childhood Settings – School-linked mental health funding falls into two categories: funding for services to children without diagnosed problems, often called preventive services, and funding for children with identified problems. Despite widespread calls for more funding for early childhood and school-based mental health, calculating the total current expenditures for school-based mental health services and support has proved difficult. Funding from education and in partnership with other organizations, Title IV and Safe and Drug Free Schools of the federal Department of Education’s budget represent the most common way most schools (57%) report that they support mental health-related prevention services. State and local revenues and special education funds also support prevention related activities in the schools (32% to 43%). Medicaid represents the least used funding source for prevention activities. Increasingly, schools have refined their ability to tap into Medicaid financing.

Almost two-fifths of schools report that Medicaid is a significant source of funding. This has called into question the delineation of services funded by Medicaid that are essential to the school’s programming and those specific to the functioning of a student with mental health problems...

Current fiscal practices, particularly through Medicaid, are inconsistent with the knowledge base about effective children' mental health services, and sometimes make it impossible to use that knowledge base. There is a wide gulf between the knowledge base in children's behavioral

health practice and a traditional medical model that Medicaid supports. The latter primarily reflects narrow, clinical, even office-based services delivered by psychiatrists and psychologists....

Efforts to pay only for evidence-based practices may prove counter-productive. A vastly different concern about states' efforts to advance evidence-based practice is a danger that there will be pressure to pay for only evidence-based treatment. In preliminary results from the UCR: SCMHD Survey 2006 nine states report that they have legislation that mandates using evidence-based treatments. Some states are trying to steer a responsive course recognizing that evidence-based practices are an important tool, but not the only tool among a range of strategies to improve mental health outcomes...

Fiscal policies remain largely unresponsive to prevention and early intervention and the supporting knowledge base: The major federal funding streams, particularly Medicaid and the Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and their Families target only children and youth who have diagnoses. ...While concentrating on this vulnerable population is important...the failure to provide services to young children and children and youth who are at risk of serious problems, even as knowledge about the role of risk and protective factors increases, is shortsighted. It is also inconsistent with the calls for a public mental health paradigm as the guiding framework reflected in the President's New Freedom Commission report....

Medicaid's expanded role in behavioral health financing has led to many positive improvements for children and youth with emotional and behavioral problems. There have also been some serious unanticipated negative system management consequences that must be addressed. These include a vacuum in child mental health input in fiscal policy. One particular concern is that the payment structure in many states is largely divorced from any consensus on the most appropriate service array, or any strategic planning regarding service needs."

>Feedback on Emerging Issue: A New Investment Metaphor for Education

"A good book on this is Bess Altwerger's book: "Reading for Profit, How the Bottom Line Leaves Children Behind." It shows the twisted conflicts of interest. Additionally, the companies that publish the tests and the "wrap-arounds" also now charge extra for the company representatives to come into the schools and "train" the staff on how to use the materials. It is not enough that the materials and tests themselves are vastly overpriced. The school where I teach has only 60 students using a specific program for English language learners. The use of the program is a mandate. Teachers who don't use it face disciplinary action. The final cost for the materials and the "training" was well over \$10,000. This is money that might have been spent on real books. As it is, our students have no books for independent reading because, as I was told, "there isn't enough money to buy library books." Our state has the lowest per-pupil spending in the whole nation (out of 51), but wastes money on this trash. It won't give good test results either. I have asked the district over and over again for the research on this program. I have asked the publishers. I have searched the internet for any scholarly research showing that this is effective. There is none. None. It even flies in the face of the questionable mandates of the NCLB. See Elaine Garan, (2004), "In Defense of Our Children." When one tries to speak up against this, one is vilified and in danger of disciplinary action. It is now not limited to testing, though that accounts for billions \$, but is also in the charter school "market." In our state, state legislators are voting for charter school funding and then giving themselves the building contracts on no-bid contracts to build the buildings. Our school district has recently started purchasing "professional development" packages from a local company. Now even we, the teachers, get canned curricula delivered via video. How many thousands of dollars are spent on this? Why are the so-called specialists with the advanced degrees still employed by the school district, if only to be present when the video runs? These needless expenditures MUST be brought to the attention of the public. The big corporations will not easily give up these profits, not even under a new administration."

>Comment regarding dropout prevention news stories:

“We need to find ways to show the connection between money wasted on testing and NCLB, the research on drop out issues and solutions, to workforce development and diversity goals of the business community. Schools won't force changes that are needed, and the educational testing companies have no reason to want change to occur, thus, it is business, who understands the global workforce crisis and its impact on the US economy, to take the lead in funding and innovating ways to reach kids in non-school channels, which can be more responsive to innovations caused by market forces.”

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THIS IS THE END OF THIS ISSUE OF ENEWS

See below for source identifying information

Who Are We? Under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project in the Department of Psychology at UCLA, the national Center for Mental Health in Schools was established in 1995. The Project and Center are co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor.

For more information about the Center or about ENEWS, contact Center Coordinator Perry Nelson or Center Co-Directors Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor at:
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