



ENEWS

A Monthly Forum for Sharing and Interchange



December, 2008 (Vol. 13 #3)

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

>Do School Improvement and Restructuring Policies Generate a Disconnect with What's Needed?

**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 school to address barriers to learning

>December – Re-engaging students: Using a student's time off in ways that pay off

**Other helpful Internet resources

**Links to

>Upcoming initiatives, conferences & workshops

>Calls for grant proposals, presentations & papers

>Training and job opportunities

**UCLA Center update

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



Emerging Issue

>Do School Improvement and Restructuring Policies Generate a Disconnect with What's Needed?

With so many targeted schools not meeting the No Child Left Behind accountability requirements, issues about the right course of action are moving to the forefront. While there will be continuing arguments about the designated options for pursuing corrective action, the even more fundamental emerging issue is what needs to be different in designing practices to ensure all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school.

Some argue that the solution lies in enhancing quality teaching. *Clearly good teaching is essential. So is good governance and management of schools.* The issue, however, is sufficiency. There are those who stress that much more needs to be put in place both in the classroom *and* schoolwide so that schools and teachers can do more to (a) enhance student engagement, (b) address barriers to learning and teaching, and (c) re-engage students who have become disengaged from classroom learning. (All these matters are seen as critical to closing the achievement gap, reducing school violence, stemming the tide of dropouts, and shutting down the school to prison pipeline.)

From this perspective, it is argued that prevailing school improvement designs are too limited in nature and scope to counter factors that interfere with effective school learning and teaching. More specifically, it is stressed that the dominating emphasis in school improvement policy and planning is on instructional and governance/management concerns and this *marginalizes* systemic efforts to address barriers to learning and teaching. To correct the resulting disconnect between what is planned and what is needed, an immediate shift in policy and practice has been suggested to promote development of a comprehensive system of student and learning supports through redeployment of existing school resources allocated for student and learning supports and outreach to a wide range of community resources to fill gaps.

As the reauthorization process for the ESEA resumes, this issue warrants a fuller discussion than has been the case so far. What are your ideas for expanding the focus for school improvement? How do you feel these matters can best be conveyed to those who will be shaping the future of education at the national, state, and local levels? In this time of change, we have an opportunity to make needed improvements. Send your ideas to ltaylor@ucla.edu



**NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

>MA. Governor establishes *Child and Youth Readiness Cabinet*

The Massachusetts Readiness Cabinet is a state leadership team focused on streamlining state efforts to improve services for children, youth and families. “The Readiness Cabinet will put into action our goals to build a strong foundation of health and nutrition, support safe and nurturing home environments and provide access to high-quality teaching and learning.” The Readiness Cabinet is jointly chaired by the Secretary of Education and the Secretary of Health and Human Services and includes the state secretaries of Administration and Finance, Housing and Economic Development, Labor

and Workforce Development, Public Safety and the Child Advocate. 10/28/08
<http://www.mass.gov/>

>New Jersey interagency plans for cutting dropout rate

Graduation rates in New Jersey and elsewhere have become a measure of the larger community outside the school and whether its politicians, civic leaders, business executives and even police officers are doing their job as well. Gov. Corzine and state officials announced a multiagency initiative to boost the graduate rates. It will be led by the state attorney general's office and will be financed by donations from foundations, businesses and civic groups. 10/26/08 <http://www.nytimes.com>

>Parents seen as missing from school reform discussions

Among parents with students in low-performing high schools, fewer than half said the schools did a fairly good job communicating about their child's academic progress. The Civic Enterprises report is aimed at bringing the voice of parents of high-schoolers into the dialogue on education reform. The report indicates a number of steps schools could take, including a single point of contact for parents. 10/27/08 Christian Science Monitor <http://www.csmonitor.com/>

>Needed: Enhanced teacher and peer supports for new students

A longitudinal study found that moving during 2nd to 5th grade can lead to declines in academic performance and classroom participation. The study expands understanding of how moving during elementary school may contribute to disengagement with school. "Teacher can play a role in mitigating the negative effects of mobility through their own caring response and by addressing the peer acceptance of newcomers in the classroom. 11/14/08 - <http://www.sciencedaily.com/>

>Too little warning about risks of using antipsychotics with children

Powerful antipsychotic medicines are being used far too cavalierly in children, and federal drug regulators must do more to warn doctors of their substantial risks, a panel of federal drug experts said. Committee members said far more needed to be done to discourage the medicines' growing use in children, particularly to treat conditions for which the medicines have not been approved. Panelists said the current warnings were not enough. The growing use of the medicines has been driven partly by the sudden popularity of the diagnosis of pediatric bipolar disorder. 11/19/08 - <http://www.nytimes.com>

>Another state where education is taking a major hit

Slightly more than half of the \$79.8 million in cutbacks the Gov. of Maine plans for state government this fiscal year target education related programs. The cuts range for \$27 million subtracted from aid to local school districts to \$8.4 million the University of Maine System will have to do without. The Commission of Education said school districts might have to make layoffs on the local level. 11/20/08 Kennebec Journal Morning Sentinel - <http://www.centralmaine.com/>

>Enhancing how many students use school breakfast programs

Breakfast at students desks, handed to students in bags as they stampede through the doors of the school, are meant to increase the number of children who eat what nutritionists consider the most important meal of the day. New York city offers free

breakfast to all students; about 1 in 5 eat it. Among students from low-income families who qualify, 21% participate. Some educators attribute this low number to the stigma associated with showing up early for breakfast in the cafeteria. Studies have shown students who eat breakfast perform better on exams. Similar programs in other locales have shown improved attendance. The program is now in 48 schools. 11/17/08 - <http://www.nytimes.com>

>New study suggests time spent online is important for teen development

Results from a study on teens and their use of digital media show that youth are developing social and technical skills online. Researchers identified two categories of teen engagement with digital media: friendship-driven and interest-driven. Among the findings: youth understand the social value of online activity and are generally highly motivated to participate; youth are navigating complex social and technical world by participating online; young people are motivated to learn from their peers online. 11/20/08 - <http://www.macfound.org>

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“Kids learn on the Internet in a self-directed way, by looking around for information they are interested in, or connecting with others who can help them. This is a big departure from how they are asked to learn in most schools, where the teacher is the expert and there is a fixed set of content to master.”

Mizuko Ito

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

Also access other news stories relevant to improving addressing barriers to learning through links at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/whatsnew/linkstolatest.htm>



****RECENT PUBLICATIONS (IN PRINT AND ON THE WEB)**

Children’s Mental and Physical Health

>Developmental changes and individual differences in risk and perspective taking in adolescence. (2008) E. Crone, et al., *Development and Psychopathology*, 20(4) 1213-29. <http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayJournal?jid=DPP>

>Person-environment transactions in youth drinking and driving (2008) S. Pedersen & D. McCarthy. *Psychological of Addictive Behavior*, 22(3) 340-8. <Http://www.apa.org/journals/adb.html>

>Activity spaces and urban adolescent substance use and emotional health (2008) M. Mason & K. Korpela, *Journal of Adolescence*. <http://www.elsevier.com/>

>Public health, safety and educational risks associated with bullying behaviors in American adolescents (2008) J. Srabstein & T. Piazza. *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health*, 20(2) 223-33. <Http://www.freundpublishing.com/>

>Clinicians' description of factors influencing their reporting of suspected child abuse (2008) R. Jones, et al., *Pediatrics*, 122(2) 259-66. <http://www.pediatrics.org/>

>School-based interventions for anxious children (2008) G. Bernstein, et al., *Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 47(9) 1039-47. <http://www.jaacap.com>

Family, School and Community

>*Ensuring opportunities for disadvantaged children and families* (2008) Government Accountability Office. <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d0918sphigh.pdf>

>Longitudinal effects of student mobility on three dimensions of elementary school engagement (2008) D. Gruman, et al., *Child Development*, 79 (6)
http://www.srkd.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=192&Itemid=507

>Altering school climate through school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports: findings from a group-randomized effectiveness trial. (2008) C.P. Bradshaw, C.W. Koth, L.A. Thornton, & P.J. Leaf *Prev Sci ePub*
<http://www.springerlink.com/content/281572n4m7565805/>.

>Associations between peer victimization, fear of future victimization and disrupted concentration on class work among junior high school pupils. (2008) M. Boulton, et al., *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 78(3) 473-89.
http://www.bps.org.uk/publications/jep_1.cfm

>Creating postsecondary pathways to good jobs for young high school dropouts (2008) *Center for American Progress*. <http://clasp.org/publications/postsecpathyouth.pdf>

>*Early childhood assessment: Why, what, and how?* (2008) National Academy of Sciences. http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12446

>Measuring neighborhood connection and the association with violence in young adolescents (2008) R. Widome, et al., *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 43(5) 482-9.
<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/1054139X>

Policy, Systems, Law, Ethics, Finances & Statistics

>*The enduring challenge of concentrated poverty in America* (2008) Brookings, http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2008/1024_concentrated_poverty.aspx

>*Tough choices, tough times: The report of the new Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce* (2008) National Center on Education and the Economy.
<http://www.skillscommission.org/executive.htm>

>*Racial disparities in education finance: Going beyond equal revenues* (2008) Urban Institute <http://www.urban.org/publications/411785.html>

>*Keeping adolescents out of prison* (2008) Brookings.
http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2008/fall_juvenile_justice_haskins.aspx

>*Who are America's Poor Children?* (2008) National Center for Children in Poverty.
[Http://www.nccp.org](http://www.nccp.org)

>Adolescent development and the regulation of youth crime (2008) E. Scott & L. Steinberg. *The Future of Children*, 18(2) <http://www.futureofchildren.org>

>Health-related quality of life and behaviors risky to health among adults aged 18-24 years in secondary or higher education-United States, 2003-2005. (2007) H.S. Zahran, M.M.. Zack, M.E.Vernon-Smiley, & M.F. Hertz, *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 41(4): 389-97. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/1054139X>

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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“There is so much power in what happens in schools with the connection between learning and social and emotional development. If we can get it right, we can change the lives of kids forever.”

Kimberly Hoagwood

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****THIS MONTH'S FOCUS FOR SCHOOLS TO ADDRESS BARRIERS TO LEARNING**

December – Re-engaging students: Using a student's time off in ways that pay off

For school staff and students, the winter break is a welcome time for rest and relaxation. It is also a valuable opportunity for (a) appreciating what has been accomplished in the first part of the school year, (b) facing the fact that there are some problems that need to be addressed, and (c) anticipating a fresh start in the new year.

By December, school staff and students know that for some students “it isn't working.” Since giving up is not an option, the need is to focus on re-engagement.

Remember: “Burn out” of school staff and students can be understood in terms of an undermining of intrinsic motivation. For example, staff and students feel discouraged when they experience a lack of success at school. It threatens feelings of competence, breeds feelings of disconnectedness from significant others at school, and can lead to feelings of lack of control over what happens at school.

In working on re-engaging students who have disengaged from classroom learning, the central focus is on factors that have a negative impact on intrinsic motivation and practices that can enhance such motivation. Of particular importance is establishing a positive working relationship designed to (a) understand the causes for a student's lack of engagement and (b) develop a plan together for pursuing things anew (different medium, content, grouping for learning, etc.).

For resources, go to the Center homepage <<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>> and click on December's “Ideas for Enhancing Support at your school this month.” There you will

find strategies for turning things around before winter break and for follow-up immediately after students return. Included are practices related to individual conferencing to re-establish working relationships, suggestions for special roles for students who are not engaged, outreach to increase the support in classrooms through mentors and volunteers, suggestions for enrichment activities over the winter break, and resolutions for starting the new year right.

While the initial focus may be on a particular student, it is easy to move toward thinking more generally about the student as one of many who are experiencing learning or relationship problems. Strategies learned for one student usually can be generalized into strategies that can benefit many, and this makes for a greater pay off.

>For additional ideas, see the online Quick Find resources related to

>>Environments that Support Learning –

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

>>Learning Supports: Addressing Barriers to Learning --

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/qf_enabling.htm

>>Mentoring – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/mentoring.htm>

>>Volunteers in schools – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/volunteers.html>

>>Youth Development – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/youthdev.htm>

Note: It is important to anticipate major concerns that arise with regularity over the course of the school year. These provide natural opportunities to strengthen support for learning. For a “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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“If we really want our children to become the great inventors and problem solvers of tomorrow, our schools shouldn’t stifle innovation, they should let it thrive.”

Barack Obama

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****OTHER HELPFUL INTERNET RESOURCES**

>Ensuring successful student transitions from the middle grades to high school

<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/78/91/7891.pdf>

>Social and Emotional Learning and student benefits: Implications for the Safe Schools/Healthy Students core elements

http://www.casel.org/downloads/EDC_CASELSELResearchBrief.pdf

>Co-occurrence of substance use behaviors in youth

<http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/publications/pubabstract.asp?pubi=241031>

>Resources for families in the military

<http://www.aap.org/sections/uniformedservices/deployment/index.html>

<http://www.nmfa.org> <http://www.afterdeployment.org>

>Guidelines for school-community partnership: Addressing the unmet mental health needs of school-aged youth

<http://www.icmhp.org/icmhpproducts/gdlnsclemnty.html>

- >A meta-analysis of school-based social skills interventions for children with autism spectrum disorders
<http://www.nichcy.org/Research/Summaries/Pages/Abstract75.aspx>
- >Afterschool and students with special needs
http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/issue_1_needs.cfm
- >Assessing school engagement: A guide for out-of-school time program practitioners
http://www.childtrends.org/files/child_trends-2008_10_29_RB_schoolengage.pdf
- >Principles of working with traumatized children
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/professional/bruceperry/index.htm>
- >Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment Services Knowledge Path
http://www.mchlibrary.info/knowledgepaths/kp_EPSDT.html
- >Student mental health and the law
<http://jedfoundation.org/assets/tjlegalresource.pdf>
- >Marketing in schools
<http://www.commercialfreechildhood.org/issues/inschools.html>
- >Parents Speak Up National Campaign
<http://www.4parents.gov>
- >Strategies for success: A plan to align out-of-school time initiatives with high school reform
[Http://tascorp.org/content/codument/detail/2231](http://tascorp.org/content/codument/detail/2231)
- >Pediatric perspectives and practices on transitioning adolescents with special needs to adult health care
<http://www.incenterstrategies.org/jan07/factsheet6.pdf>
- >Quick Stats: Percentage of deaths from leading causes among teen aged 15-19 years
<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5745a7.htm>

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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“Superintendents and principal complain about the “being nibbled to death by ducks” phenomenon. This is the accumulation of federal, state, and local mandates that make bureaucracy and red tape overwhelming.”

Jean Johnson

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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>

>**Upcoming/Archived Webcasts**

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm>

Note: Information on each of these is updated on an ongoing basis on our website. Just click on the indicated URL or on What's New on our website at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>. If you would like to add information on these, please send it to ltaylor@ucla.edu



****UCLA CENTER – BRIEF UPDATE**

The following are a few highlights. The Center continuously develops and updates resources; see What's New at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/review.htm>

>**New Feature:** *Links to Upcoming and Archived Webcasts* of interest

As funds for travel to conferences contracts and the use of electronic communications increases, we have created a site to link to webcasts so professional development and capacity building can occur on an as needed basis. See

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm>

If you have recommendations for additional links, let us know. Contact ltaylor@ucla.edu

>**New Policy and Practices Analysis**

>>*Prevention and Early Intervention in California's Mental Health Services Act: A Summary of School-based Programs in Ten County Plans*

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/peiinca.pdf>

>**New Guidance Note:** *Enhancing a School Board's Focus on Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching*

Most school boards do not have a standing committee that gives full attention to the problem of how schools address barriers to learning and teaching. This is not to suggest that boards are ignoring such matters. As this time of decisions about budget cuts, it is essential that schools boards have a broad vision of the importance of a comprehensive approach to learning supports.

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/schoolboardfocus.pdf>

>>*Follow up on Rebuilding for Learning Initiative with Scholastic, Inc.*

We have received a great many responses indicating interest in the expansion of the national initiative. We are following up, first, with leaders in state departments of education who express their interest in integrating this work into state planning for school improvement. Let us know of leaders who should be contacted.

Note: We continually update the resources on our website. A convenient way to access information is through the Quick Find online clearinghouse. Alphabetized by topic, you can access information on 130 topics relevant to addressing barriers to learning. Each includes links to Center Resources, online reports, other centers focusing on the topic, and relevant publications. Go to <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu> and click on Quick Find. If you would like to add a resource, let us know.
Ltaylor@ucla.edu

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



Check out our sister center, the 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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“Martin’s Money Maxim: It takes a lot of borrowing to live within your income.”

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

**>Re. last month’s emerging issue:
Unique Treatments or Common Intervention Principles?**

“I was very pleased to see this posting ... because it is a significant issue in all fields of ‘change agency’ today. In our work, we are continuously feeling the administrative and funding pressures to implement Evidence Based Practices (EBPs) yet in the field as action researchers we finesse individualized approaches to achieve results with unique children and families in the context of their culture and our community. This has given rise to what many are calling Practice Based Evidence (PBEs). As a private nonprofit involved with the national System of Care we have had great success with youth referred to us from Special Education, Juvenile Justice, Mental Health and Child Welfare. We also took our approach to serve homeless adults with co-occurring disorders of mental health and addictions and for that received a national exemplary program award from SAMHSA/CMHS/Homeless programs branch. Our approach encompasses much of the 7 modules mentioned below however our premiere intervention was to complete an advanced Strength Based Discovery (assessment) with those we served. Additionally, we established a list of our guiding principles for treatment or service that we called the ‘Phrases That Pay’ and developed training around those. We have since started a blog to give more exposure to those Phrases That Pay (PTP) and you can link to it at <http://www.needsarentservices.org> There you will see the first few writings about the PTP and can access the entire list of them.”



We were asked to share this information:

>“I and several colleagues have put together an online course for educators on educating traumatized children. It is being offered this spring through the Center for the Advancement of Mental Health Practices in Schools at the University of Missouri. Here is a description of the class from the university catalogue: The goal of this class is to ensure that children exposed to traumatic, chronic adverse circumstances succeed in school. Resilient and trauma sensitive classroom environments benefit all children, those whose traumatic events are obviously impacting education, those whose trauma is not impacting education, and those children that are impacted by their traumatized classmates. Teachers are a major determinate of whether children learn at their highest levels despite whatever traumatic circumstances they may have endured. I have enclosed the link that describes the class.”

http://mudirect.missouri.edu/_catalog/_cat_course_detail.asp?CourseID=209180&SectionID=211511



THIS IS THE END OF THIS ISSUE OF E-NEWS

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.

As sister Centers, the Center at UCLA and the one at the University of Maryland focus on advancing efforts to enhance how schools address mental health and psychosocial concerns.

A description and evaluation of the Center's work and impact is available at
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu>

For more information about the Center or about ENEWS, contact Center Coordinator Perry Nelson or Center Co-Directors Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor at: UCLA School Mental Health Project/Center for Mental Health in Schools Box 951563, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563 Phone (310) 825-3634; Toll Free (866) 846-4843; Fax (310) 206-5895; email: smhp@ucla.edu