

School Practitioner Community of Practice
(A network for sharing & exchange)
(3/10/21)

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(Scroll down to read about the above and for hotlinks to resources)

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

This resource is from the
Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports, UCLA

So please feel free to share with anyone you think might benefit (e.g., forward our resources to individuals and share on listservs and websites).

For those who have been forwarded this and want to receive resources directly,
send an email to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

For previous postings of community of practice discussions, see
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm>

For discussion and interchange:

- > **What's being done about substance abuse during the pandemic?**

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) continues to highlight concerns and offer resources.

NIDA asked us to share information about:

National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week
(March 22-28, 2021)

<https://teens.drugabuse.gov/national-drug-alcohol-facts-week>

Go to the above link for adaptable promotional content and social media graphics that align to the National Health Ed. Standards.

In preparation for National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week® (NDAFW), NIDA created an activity to help students support their mental health and find strategies to cope with stress. It includes ideas that teens can practice right away to enhance their emotional well-being. The activity is designed to be delivered virtually, although it can be adapted for in-person classes. See

- > *Nurturing My Mental and Emotional Health*

https://teens.drugabuse.gov/teachers/lessonplans/nurturing-my-mental-emotional-health?utm_source=ndafweblast&utm_medium=email&utm_content=nf&utm_term=NPnp&utm_campaign=ndafw-NDAFW2021

NIDA's request led us wonder whether the pandemic has increased student substance use/abuse.

Here's a couple of related articles:

From: *What Does Adolescent Substance Use Look Like During the COVID-19 Pandemic? Examining Changes in Frequency, Social Contexts, and Pandemic-Related Predictors*
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7368647/>

“For most substances, the percentage of users decreased; however, the frequency of both alcohol and cannabis use increased. Although the greatest percentage of adolescents was engaging in solitary substance use (49.3%), many were still using substances with peers via technology (31.6%) and even face to face (23.6%). Concerns for how social distancing would affect peer reputation was a significant predictor of face-to-face substance use with friends among adolescents with low self-reported popularity, and a significant predictor of solitary substance use among average and high popularity teens. Finally, adjustment predictors, including depression and fear of the infectivity of COVID-19, predicted using solitary substance use during the pandemic. Our results provide preliminary evidence that adolescent substance use, including that which occurs face to face with peers, thereby putting adolescents at risk for contracting COVID-19, may be of particular concern during the pandemic. Further, solitary adolescent substance use during the pandemic, which is associated with poorer mental health and coping, may also be a notable concern worthy of further investigation.”

From: *The Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Risk of Youth Substance Use*
[https://www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X\(20\)30412-2/fulltext](https://www.jahonline.org/article/S1054-139X(20)30412-2/fulltext)

“The pandemic has brought incalculable suffering to many families in terms of stress, economic devastation, severe illness, and loss of life. Even for those less hard hit, family life has been completely upended—schools are closed, socializing is limited, and many parents are juggling childcare with working from home or are out of work. It is safe to assume that many young people are experiencing significant hardship during this time because of social isolation, overexposure to family members who may be unsupportive or even abusive, lack of athletics and other healthy outlets, broken ties to school and community supports, and severe restrictions on the much-needed freedom to express independence and take healthy risks.... Although the pandemic might very well increase substance use as a means of coping, self-medication, or even social enhancement in vulnerable children, the full effects of the pandemic on youth substance use might not be all negative.

Although it is difficult and even somewhat unseemly to look for a possible bright side to this crisis, it is important to examine the totality of its effects on young people. Certain conditions or “factors” are known to increase the risk of unhealthy behaviors in youth, whereas others serve to protect them, even in the face of considerable challenges. A reduction in some well-documented risk factors for substance use undoubtedly has taken place during this period, potentially benefitting some youth by reducing their likelihood of initiating substance use.

The virtually universal stay-at-home orders that have closed schools throughout the country and the social distancing measures instituted in many states have increased the time that young people are spending with family while decreasing time spent in the physical company of peers. This presents an opportunity to test some of the core principles of effective substance use prevention.

For example, decades of research have shown that children and teens benefit from more time spent with their parents, whether by having meals together, engaging in shared activities, or having more opportunities for open communication. At the same time, despite it being developmentally appropriate for children to increase their reliance on peers as they age, time spent with peers who engage in unhealthy behaviors is one of the strongest risk factors for substance use. School also presents challenging academic and social pressures that leave many young people feeling stressed and anxious. For children whose home is not an adverse environment, remote learning has allowed many to be relieved of this stress...”

For more resources related to youth drug and alcohol use, see the Center's Quick Find on:

Substance Abuse
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/quickfind/p3001_03.htm

Examples of Center resources listed there:

>*Substance abuse and mental health: what's a school to do?*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/substabus.pdf>

>*Substance Abuse*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/substance/substance.pdf>

>*Substance Abuse Prevention: Toward Comprehensive, Multifaceted Approaches*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newsletter/summer00.pdf>

Are concerns about substance abuse being discussed by your local schools?

Please let us know so we can share the info widely. Send to ltaylor@ucla.edu

COVID-19 Prevention via the Science of Habit Formation

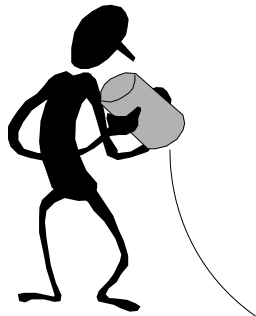
<https://www.psychologicalscience.org/sage?ru=https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0963721421992028>

As schools reopen, research such as the following may provide additional guidance on how to keep students and staff safe.

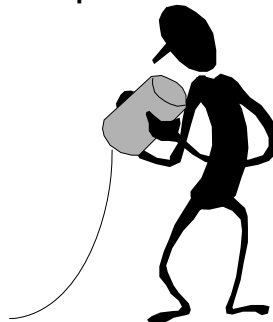
Excerpt

"The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) continues to claim lives worldwide. We propose that the science of habit formation offers strategies to increase adherence to COVID-19 prevention behaviors and has the potential to be lifesaving, particularly for high-risk groups. Eight elements of habit formation are highlighted here: addressing incorrect beliefs, setting goals, devising an action plan, establishing contextual cues, adding reinforcement, engaging in repetition, aiming for automaticity, and recognizing that change is difficult. In addition, we offer a set of strategies for forming new habits and eliminating existing habits to contain the spread of COVID-19. These strategies are derived from habit-formation principles and behavior-change techniques and can inform future research on treatment development. With the COVID-19 pandemic still raging, there is currently an urgent need to jump-start the state of knowledge on habit-formation processes and interventions."

**Did I hear you say you're giving up
all your good habits?**



Yep! I find that's easier than stopping the bad ones.



For discussion and interchange:

>New Directions for Student/Learning Support Staff

Last month we asked:

What changes do you see as needed in how student support professionals work at school and what are the implications for their pre- and in-service professional development?

We received a variety of responses (a sample is appended to this *Practitioner*) and have generated a new report entitled:

>New Directions for School Counselors, Psychologists, & Social Workers
Online at -- <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/report/framingnewdir.pdf>

Part I:

Ending the Marginalization and Fragmentation of Student/Learning Supports

Part II:

Reworking Operational Infrastructure for Student/Learning Supports

Part III:

New Roles and Functions for Student/Learning Support Staff

NOTE: While our focus in this report is on school counselors, psychologists, and social workers, we know the work of nurses and other student support personnel are an essential facet of what is proposed in this report, and we hope they will see the implications for changes in their roles and functions.

An unfortunate reality is that schools have never had and are unlikely to ever have the numbers advocated as needed by student support professionals' guilds.

Given this reality, it is time for education policymakers and planners to rethink student and learning supports.

The report highlights the current state of affairs with respect to how schools address barriers to student learning and proposes new directions for moving forward to establish a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student and learning supports. Developing and sustaining such a system requires reframing the roles and functions of student/learning support staff. With changing roles and functions comes the need for changes in preservice preparation, certification, and continuing professional development. Thus, the report concludes with a series of frameworks to suggest ways to rethink these matters.

We invite comments about the report and will appreciate it if you would share examples of how the roles and functions of student/learning supports are being changed to provide support for all students?
Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

>Links to a few other relevant shared resources

Addressing Unfinished Learning After COVID-19 School Closures

https://www.cgcs.org/CMS/LIB/DC00001581/CENTRICITY/DOMAIN/313/CGCS_UNFINISHED%20LEARNING.PDF

K-12 funding policy responses to covid 19

<https://www.ecs.org/k-12-funding-policy-responses-to-covid-19/>

Kids under pressure

<https://www.challengesuccess.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/CS-NBC-Study-Kids-Under-Pressure-PUBLISHED.pdf>

COVID-19 shifts mortality salience, activities, and values: Big data analysis of online adaptation

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/hbe2.251>

School Resource Officers and Racial Disparities in School Discipline and Juvenile Justice Referrals
<https://www.npscoalition.org/post/school-resource-officers-and-racial-disparities-in-school-discipline-and-juvenile-justice-referrals?emci=878f98f4-ab77-eb11-9889-00155d43c992&emdi=13536c84-7278-eb11-85aa-00155d43c992&ceid=4257920>

School shooting simulation studies should not inform policymakers' safety responses
<https://mailchi.mp/81fa2a33b81b/school-shooting-simulation-studies-should-not-inform-policymakers-safety-responses?e=ad5ca476dc>

How the Pandemic is Changing Children's Friendships
<https://www.psychologicalscience.org/news/how-the-pandemic-is-changing-childrens-friendships.html>

Screen Time During the Coronavirus Crisis
https://childmind.org/article/screen-time-during-the-coronavirus-crisis/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Screen%20Time%20During%20the%20Coronavirus%20Crisis&utm_campaign=Public-Ed-Newsletter

How to Help Kids Deal With Cyberbullying
https://childmind.org/article/help-kids-deal-cyberbullying/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=How%20to%20Help%20Kids%20Deal%20With%20Cyberbullying&utm_campaign=Public-Ed-Newsletter

Action Pack for Responding to Crisis Within A Tiered Supports System
<https://turnaroundusa.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=33f1058d2a7eccfeb1a80b4b5&id=7836cf1253&e=f36a930e71>

From Australia – Building Connections: Schools as Community Hubs
<https://sites.research.unimelb.edu.au/learn-network/projects/building-connections>

A Few Upcoming Webinars

For links to the following as well as more listings of webinars, go to the our Center's links to Upcoming/Archived Webcasts/Podcasts – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm>

3/11 Supporting the Education of Unaccompanied Students Experiencing Homelessness

3/16 Creating a Culture of Equity: School Social Workers, Advocacy, and Professional Ethics

3/17 Access and Accommodations: Reimagining Places and Spaces for Students and Staff

3/19 Working with Culturally or Linguistically Diverse Families

3/23 Basic Requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act

3/30 The ABCs of the IEP: Making the Individualized Education Program (IEP)

3/31 Transform the Norm: Rethinking How Teachers Teach & Principals Lead

4/8 Stay Sleep or Get Woke: Leading Anti-Racist Assessment & Action in Schools

4/12 Inquiry as a caring act

How Learning Happens (Edutopia's updated series of videos explores how educators can guide all students, regardless of their developmental starting points, to become productive and engaged learners. <https://www.edutopia.org/how-learning-happens>

Webinar recording: Unpacking the Impacts of Structural Racism on Youth
<https://preventioninstitute.us17.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5f4bf5a36bd9f72789255d49a&id=17f472fea9&e=b6757fd9d7>

For brief outlines about meeting the challenges ahead, see the following recent resources:

> *Restructuring California Schools to Address Barriers to Learning and Teaching in the COVID 19 Context and Beyond*

> https://edpolicyinca.org/sites/default/files/2020-11/pb_adelman_nov2020.pdf

> *Have Districts and Schools Established a Leadership Team to Meet the Challenge of the Increased Number of Students Manifesting Learning, Behavior, and Emotional Problems?*

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

> *Finding and Reengaging Students who Went Missing During the COVID Pandemic*

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

For in-depth presentations, see the following books provided by the Center at no cost:

> *Improving School Improvement*

> *Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide*

> *Embedding Mental Health as Schools Change*

(all three can be accessed at - http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.htm)

> **Comments and sharing from the field**

- (1) From a district leader: “Performance outcomes challenge negative thoughts and beliefs to support transformational goals for social emotional learning. In working for almost twenty years ‘interrupting the cradle to the prison pipeline,’ I am seeing and noting the current increased needs for both students and adults who work with students for mental health/social emotional wellness support. I am recommending ‘Ripple Effects.’ This is an evidence based online curriculum that provides support for therapists/social workers, teachers and students. It also gives support for one to one therapy by engaging the student in online activities directed by a therapist.”
- (2) “I am the director of school mental health and behavioral services for a Public School district and the founder and director of our state a state School Mental Health Consortium, an organization of over 140 districts in the state dedicated to supporting the implementation of school mental health across the state. I am writing to you today because I appreciate greatly your work to inform what school-based supports should look like. I am a proponent of leveraging school mental health professionals to facilitate early identification of emerging mental health concerns through universal mental health screening and responding to those data with evidence-based therapeutic supports. Schools are the prevention arm of the mental health system writ large and are uniquely positioned to ensure students receive care before crisis, diagnosis, and the need for tier III services. I appreciate community-based mental health greatly, but this system is reactive. We need to take a more proactive stance to MH problems and look for emerging concerns rather than waiting for crisis and diagnosis....”
- (3) From a state department of education leader’s team: “While we appreciate the premise of ensuring that the professionals in schools are up to date in knowledge and practice regarding mental health issues, we must point out that it is putting the cart before the horse. In our state schools are not required to employ school psychologists, social workers or school nurses (nurses are not being mentioned as a option in your documents and should be. A nurse with a BSN has as much training as a school counselor in mental health).

In our state school counselors are the only PPS personnel mandated for schools to employ, but their case loads are often too large for them to be able to manage any mental health issues. They spend the majority of their time on scheduling and college and career counseling. Additionally, they don’t have the training to treat serious mental health issues and are then referring the child. Whether the child gets help at that point depends on the willingness or ability of the parent/guardian to obtain it.

The other PPS personnel are not mandated to be employed. This year the nurses are overwhelmed with the requirements of COVID-19 (testing, contact tracing, and vaccines) and also cannot address mental health issues. School psychologists spend the majority of their time on

testing students who are part of or referred to the CSE/CPSE. That leaves the social workers to handle mental health, if they are present.

Until we as a country place values on the growth and development of the whole child by seriously addressing their need for these types of professionals, their training good or bad does not impact students when they aren't there."

Center Response: With respect to nurses, we have a long-standing appreciation and collaboration with school nurses. See, for example, the work with did for NASN:
>*Mental Health in Schools: Expanded opportunities for school nurses* by Howard S. Adelman, PhD. Linda Taylor, PhD. Beverly Bradley, RN, PhD. Keeta DeStefano Lewis, RN, in the Journal of School Nursing

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/publications/07%20mental%20health%20in%20schools%20expanded%20opportunities%20for%20school%20nurses.pdf>

Also see the units for professional development NASN asked us to develop:

>*Mental Health in Schools: New Roles for School Nurses*
<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/nurses/unit1.pdf>

As you will note from our website, much of what we do stresses the transition of all student and learning supports in ways that enables schools to better address barriers to learning and teaching and reengage disconnected students. Our concern is for a whole student/whole school approach that weaves together school and community resources.

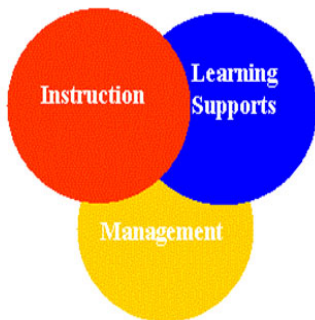
An essential focus at this time is system (re)building so that the sparse resources available can be deployed in more potent ways to address the wide range of factors interfering with school learning and teaching.

We would love to have your group of school nurses join in advancing the *National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports* (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>). If your team has some ideas for how to move forward to unify and then develop a comprehensive system of student/learning supports, please send them along.

Invitation to Listserv Participants:

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

Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu



For information about the

National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports

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

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

From: Miguel Cardona
U.S. Secretary of Education

My career experiences have taught me that education is primarily a state and local endeavor, and I know students, educators, administrators, staff, and families have performed heroically under these difficult circumstances to take steps toward reopening and to support students wherever they are learning. From a federal perspective, our role is to provide support, guidance, and directions on how to do it safely.

I also know that leadership and support from the federal government is needed in the immediate and long-term – so you have the funds, facts and guidance to make the best decisions for your students and communities. As part of this effort, the Department has released our COVID-19 Handbook Volume 1: Strategies for Safely Reopening Elementary and Secondary Schools, to help you implement the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s K-12 operational strategy. We’re working on the second volume, which will provide schools with practical implementation plans to address the extraordinary disruption created by COVID-19 for students, educators, and parents — especially for historically underserved students and communities that have been hit hardest by the pandemic.

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

For new sign-ups – email Ltaylor@ucla.edu

Also send resources ideas, requests, comments, and experiences for sharing.

**We post a broad range of issues and responses to the Net Exchange
on our website at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newnetexchange.htm>
and on Facebook (access from the Center’s home page <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/>)**