School Practitioner Community of Practice
(A network for sharing & exchange)
(9/23/20)

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

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

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

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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

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For discussion and interchange:
>What's your view about Learning Pods?

As a stimulus for discussion, here are excerpts from sources discussing the controversy.

(1) From: *Learning Pods* https://www.adams12.org/2020-2021-school-year/learning-pods

> The Five Star District is located on the northern tier of the Denver metropolitan area... As Five Star Schools begins the year with remote learning for all students, the district recognizes our families, based on personal need or circumstances, may need a safe and productive environment for their child to independently engage in remote learning during standard school hours.
>
> **What is a Learning Pod?** Learning Pods are a cost-free, in-person option offered for students in grades K-8 at schools across the district. These pods are a place for students to independently engage in remote learning in a safe and productive environment during standard school hours. Staff members in these pods will not provide instruction to participating students. That responsibility will remain with the student's assigned teacher or teachers. ..."

(2) From: *Families Priced Out of 'Learning Pods' Seek Alternatives*
https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/14/us/covid-schools-learning-pods.html

> ...Whatever one calls them — learning pods, pandemic pods or microschools — the hiring of teachers to supplement or even replace the virtual instruction offered by public schools has become an obsession among many parents of means. Practically overnight, a virtual cottage industry of companies and consultants has emerged to help families organize pods and pair them with instructors, many of whom are marketing themselves on Facebook pages and neighborhood listservs. But the cost — often from $30 an hour per child to $100 or more — has put them out of reach for most families, generating concerns that the trend could make public education even more segregated and unequal.
>
> Debates over nascent pods — some of which will be taught by parents who don't need to work full time, instead of paid teachers or tutors — have consumed Facebook parents' groups and online forums. They have created rifts among friends, sparked accusations of "opportunity hoarding" by affluent whites, and compelled some parents to ponder whether and how to include lower-income children in their pods....
>
> Education experts say fund-raising efforts and "pod scholarships," however well-meaning, are

no solution for millions of low-income parents juggling the educational, child care and economic challenges of the pandemic. More useful, they say, would be if school districts or city governments created their own version of learning pods, especially for at-risk students or children of essential workers....

(3) From: *Learning Pods Aren't The Problem, They're Part Of The Solution*
https://www.forbes.com/sites/frederickhess/2020/08/24/learning-pods-arent-the-problem-theyre-part-of-the-solution/

Nine of the nation's ten biggest school systems have announced that they'll be operating remotely this fall. Given the lack of evidence that today's virtual learning works for many students and the reasons to fear that this fall's efforts won't be much better than last spring's, parents across the land have been turning to learning pods as an alternative to more months of haphazard, hapless remote learning.

These "pandemic pods" allow a group of local children to learn together, though the specific permutations are endless. Podding was catapulted into the national consciousness earlier this summer when an initial San Francisco-based Pandemic Pods Facebook group attracted inquiries from more than 40,000 interested parents and gave rise to more than 66 local chapters across the land. As word has spread, frustrated parents have organized their own pods via local networks, Facebook groups, and internet boards. Some pods are headed by parents, who take turns as they would in a carpool. Other pods hire tutors or teachers....

Listserv Participants: *What are* you hearing about learning pods?
What do you think about the practice?

Send your response for sharing with others to ltaylor@ucla.edu

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Millions of U.S. school children ended their academic year via remote learning, and this year many will continue to do so.

Excerpt from: **What did distance learning accomplish?**
https://www.apa.org/monitor/2020/09/distance-learning-accomplish

"...As schools kick off the 2020–21 school year, there are many unknowns. Some form of distance learning remains likely—either entirely remote, in combination with scaled-back in-person instruction or as a future possibility if new waves of COVID-19 outbreaks emerge.

As educators and administrators plan for that uncertain future, they must also assess how students fared. The pandemic has presented many new challenges in addition to school closures, including the death of loved ones and economic hardship.While some students have thrived and learned during the pandemic, others are likely to have fallen behind. Regardless of ZIP code or family background, schools are, in theory, places where all students can receive education and support. But the coronavirus shutdown has emphasized (and widened) existing disparities in education....

Even within a single district, student experiences are wide-ranging. Teachers and parents have reported that some kids are thriving with fewer social distractions, or have been energized by their newfound independence. Yet many other children lack devices or reliable access to the internet. And while some families have parents who can oversee their children's remote learning, many youths are caring for younger siblings while their parents work in essential jobs or living with the chaos of unemployment or homelessness.

The inequities are hard to overstate, Gill and other experts say. A survey of 1,500 U.S. families by advocacy group ParentsTogether released in late May found 83% of children in families in the highest income quartile were logging in to distance learning every day. Just 3.7% of those families reported their children were participating in distance learning once a week or less, compared with 38% of students from families in the lowest income quartile...

Students from low-income homes aren't the only ones at risk of slipping through the cracks. Families who speak other languages, undocumented immigrants and students with special needs are also at risk

of missing out on the services to which they're entitled. Children with disabilities or special needs are legally entitled to special education services, including speech-language therapy, autism interventions, occupational therapy and psychological services. But many of those don't translate easily to the remote platforms available.

The ParentsTogether survey painted a grim picture for special education students, with 40% of parents reporting they weren't receiving any support, and just 20% reporting their children were receiving all of the special education services they typically received in school....

"Remote learning is not the same as online learning," saic Aroutis Foster, PhD, a professor of learning technologies at Drexel University. True online learning happens on digital platforms designed for that purpose, often with personalized content for each student and options to use their choice of digital tools. "Online learning facilitates different types of learning preferences, provides learner flexibility and uses online quality metrics," Foster says. But for many students, distance learning during COVID-19 included none of those features, and instead involved tuning in at a set time to listen to teachers lecture on Zoom or Google Meet....

Connecting lessons to children's interests is especially important in remote settings where students don't have the classroom structure to guide them.... To stay motivated when learning at home, students need to feel competence, relatedness (a sense of belonging and connection with others) and autonomy, according to self-determination theory (Ryan, R.M., & Deci, E.L., American Psychologist, Vol. 55, No. 1, 2000), those needs are vital for self-motivation and well-being in many domains, including education...."

<p style="text-align:center; color:red">**</p>

>Links to a few other relevant shared resource

COVID-19 Indicators for School Decision-Making (from CDC)
   http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/indicators.html

Getting remote learning right
   http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/summer20/vol77/num10/toc.aspx

Students struggle to self-motivate online
   https://chicago.chalkbeat.org/2020/9/14/21435064/for-some-high-school-students-remote-learning-brings-a-new-school-struggle-motivation

5 ways teachers can connect with students during COVID-19
   https://www.smartbrief.com/original/2020/09/5-ways-teachers-can-connect-students-during-covid-19?utm_source=brief

Meeting the School-Age Child Care Needs of Working Parents Facing COVID-19 Distance Learning Policy Options to Consider
   https://bettercarenetwork.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/meeting-the-school-age-child-care-needs-of-working-parents-facing-covid-19-distance-learning.pdf

Embedding Mental Health as Schools Change
   http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

Responding to Crisis Within A Tiered Supports System
   https://turnaroundusa.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=33f1058d2a7eccfeb1a80b4b5&id=55596a9a6d&e=f36a930e71

Understanding Social Influencers of Health and Education: A Role for School-Based Health Centers and Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems
   https://app.getresponse.com/click.html?x=a62b&lc=S9Yn0b&mc=Ib&s=vN2JkR&u=SeOId&z=Et4z9EH&

Addressing Inequities in Education During the COVID-19 Pandemic: How Education Policy and Schools Can Support Historically and Currently Marginalized Children and Youth
   https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:https://www.srcd.org/research/addressing-inequities-education-during-covid-19-pandemic-how-education-policy-and-schools?utm_source=SRCD*General*Interest*List&utm_campaign=b2671f6040-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_09_09_02_11&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e4f67ee524-b2671f6040-293985273__;Kysr!!ODYTt7Uqo6LDP14!zdPfHJPO4--jK8pBLmNxfjbhye8xU_vXx9n55c6jQyYU97v76EZOpattP4kOl9wLjfHc-7s2ZzBt$

From a colleague from a state counseling association:

"I wanted to draw your attention to two resources:
>One outlines mental health related needs of students due to Covid and school reopening. This document was distributed to every school district and it was well received by Superintendents..
>The second has to do with a virtual conference on school-based mental health and race-based trauma." See https://covid19k12counseling.org/

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Invitation to Listserv Participants:
We hope you will share useful resources, experiences, and suggestions to help the wide range of colleagues who are part of this practitioner network.
Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu
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If you missed the recent quarterly ejournal from the Center, see:

>*Assisting Kids with Online Instruction*

>*Talking with Kids When Assisting with Learning*

>*To Push or Not To Push*

>*Common Tips from the Internet*

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/news.htm

A Few Upcoming Webinars

>9/29 *McKinney-Vento School Selection Rights*

>9/30 *Conversations with Kids During Times of Uncertainty*

>9/30 *Every Learning Opportunity Matters:Promising Strategies to Help Students Show Up*

>10/6 *Educating Your Child with Mental Health Needs: Special Education and Distance Learning*

>10/14 *Bold Action for Challenging Times: Intensify Your Leadership!*

>10/14 *Using a Data-Based Problem-Solving Process to Address Chronic Absenteeism and Attendance Challenges*

>10/15 *Paving the Way to College for Students Experiencing Homelessness*

>10/20 *Understanding Doubled up*

>10/29 *Supporting the Education of Unaccompanied Students Experiencing Homelessness*

>10/27 *Wait! Did I Sign up for This? Tips for Leading Your School Through COVID-19*

For more webinars, go to the our Center's links to Upcoming/Archived Webcasts/Podcasts –
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm

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For information about the

National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports
go to http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html
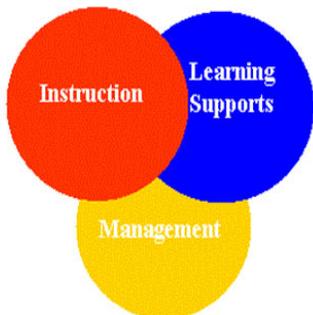
Also online are three related free books

>*Improving School Improvement*
>*Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide*
>*Embedding Mental Health as Schools Change*

All can be accessed at no cost at
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html

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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.

DEAR READER:

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.

For those who are employed by state and local education agencies and schools, we know you are busy. It would be great to share what actions you are taking to address immediate concerns and how you are anticipating the problems that will arise as schools reopen.

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/)