

(8/20/25) This continuing education resource is from the national  
**Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports at UCLA**

### Featured

(1) **“Everyone’s Busy: So Make Access to Center Resources Easier”**

(2) **Promoting peer interactions in the classroom to enhance learning**

And, as always, you will find

(3) **Links to a few other resources relevant to continuing education**

**This community of practice Practitioner is designed  
for a screen bigger than an iPhone.**

### For discussion and interchange

**>“Everyone’s Busy: So Make Access to Center Resources Easier”**

A common concern among those involved with school improvement is that filtering out resources from the massive amount online can be an overwhelming task. As a school board member recently relayed to us:

*I went through the website and found a lot of great resources and topics that I feel are important. The issue I see is that being a school board member without an administrative assistant in a political world where everyday is an emergency creating a limited time to digest your research, my time is limited.*

>>With this in mind, we are experimenting with designating specific groups of folks and providing delimited sets of resources. On the Center’s homepage, see

**>Schools Boards >Superintendents >Principals >Student/Learning Support Staff**

**>Teachers**

**>Community Collaborative Stakeholders**

**>Family Members**

**>Students**

***Click on any of the above to see our first effort with this.***

Any suggestions for next steps with this strategy will be appreciated.

> Another way we organize the many resources from us and from a variety of other sources, is our online **Clearinghouse Quick Finds**. The menu offers over 130 specific topics.

> A third way designed for those involved in improving school systems is our **System Change Toolkit**.

If you think any of the folks we have grouped above would find the resources listed helpful, please forward this information to them.

## For discussion and interchange

### >Promoting peer interactions in the classroom to enhance learning

From: *The role of teachers in guiding student peer interactions*

“Peers strongly influence each other’s development and learning. Positive peer interactions are not only associated with an array of beneficial academic outcomes—such as enhanced engagement and achievement—but they also contribute to socioemotional well-being. Peer activities serve also as an essential platform for students to develop interaction and collaboration skills, which are increasingly important in today’s interconnected world...”

While peer interactions are essential, merely providing opportunities for such interactions is rarely sufficient to guarantee positive results for learning or group dynamics. This highlights the crucial role of teachers in guiding these interactions...

In peer interactions, both cognitive and emotional processes are inherently social, dynamically evolving, and closely intertwined within specific interpersonal contexts

- >Cognitive interactions allow peers to enhance each other’s learning through high-level actions such as questioning, explaining, reasoning, argumentation, and connecting ideas

- > In turn, socioemotional interactions establish a relational space conducive to productive interactions and group dynamics

For example, behaviors such as active listening, empathetic responses, and offering praise and comfort cultivate an inclusive, respectful, and mutually encouraging climate that promotes not only group cohesiveness but also a sense of “we-ness”, contributing to a psychologically safe environment where students feel secure expressing themselves ....

Ultimately, teachers’ successful guidance of peer interactions helps meet students’ basic psychological needs for autonomy, relatedness, and competence and equips them with the skills required to navigate their interactions and cope with and resolve their interaction challenges ...”

When teachers involve students in such activities as **cooperative learning**, project-based learning, group discussions, etc., a frequent challenge is to ensure students interact productively. Also as peer interactions generate **natural opportunities for promoting personal and social growth** everyday, school staff need to enhance their capacity for capitalizing on these teachable moments.

Given their psychological expertise, student support professionals represent a major resource for facilitating the on-the-job learning for teachers and other school personnel to enhance student motivation and capability to work and learn together.

For more on promoting peer interactions to enhance learning, see our Center Quick Find on:

>***Peer Relationships, Peer Support, and Peer Counseling***



## >Links to a few other relevant shared resources

- >>Teacher teams: A safe place to work on creating & maintaining a positive school climate
- >>Hope-Based Interventions to Address Student Well-Being
- >>Fostering Collaboration for Student Support
- >>Promising Practices of Out-of-School Time Programs for Low-Income Adolescents
- >>Interdisciplinary Approach for Addressing the Behavioral Health Needs
- >>Risk & Protective Factors for Systems Involvement for LGBTQ+ Youth
- >>“It’s Horrible to Live Like This”: Immigration Policy’s Real-Time Impact on Young Children
- >>About the Increase in Mental Disorder Diagnoses Among the Young
- >>After School Calls for Transition Supports

### A Few Upcoming Webinars

*For links to the following and for more webinars, go to the Center's Links to Upcoming/Archived Webcasts/Podcasts*

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

- 8/20 Mental health and special education
- 8/20 Understanding anxiety
- 8/20 Inviting yourself to the table
- 8/20 Building resilient teams
- 8/20 Review major K-12 policy changes and highlights from the fiscal 2026 budget
- 8/20 Classroom participation and engagement
- 8/21 From Classrooms to Careers: How Schools and Districts Can Prepare Students for a Changing Workforce
- 8/21 Making the case for prevention
- 8/25 Understanding anxiety in children and youth
- 8/26 Building strong prevention partnerships
- 8/27 Homeless youth: scenarios and solutions
- 8/27 Social media impact on youth
- 8/27 Understanding depression
- 9/4 Social media and teen mental health
- 9/9 Ensuring literacy success across the disciplines for students with disabilities
- 9/10 Rethinking attendance with AI
- 9/10 Theories of change
- 9/10 Homeless youth: McKinney-Vento basics
- 9/15 Responding to children in crisis
- 9/16 Creating a low stress environment
- 9/17 Helping families support their child's mental health needs
- 9/17 Understanding grief
- 9/17 Strategies to improve student engagement
- 9/17 Supporting Unaccompanied youth
- 9/18 How parents can help anxious children
- 9/18 Emotional regulation and academic performance
- 9/18 The power of emotion regulation to drive k12 wellbeing
- 9/24 Family Engagement is the Foundation for Attendance and Learning
- 9/29 De-escalating children in distress
- 10/1 Determining McKinney-Vento eligibility with care

*How Learning Happens* (Edutopia’s series of videos)

*Unpacking the Impacts of Structural Racism on Youth* (Webinar recording)

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### **To Listserv Participants**

- *Please share this resource with others. (Everyone has a stake in the future of public education and this is a critical time for action.)*
- *Let us know what's going on to improve how schools address barriers to learning & teaching and reengage disconnected students and families. (We can share the info with the over 130,000 on our listserv.)*

**For those who have been forwarded this and want to receive resources directly, send an email to [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)**

**Looking for information?** (We usually can help.)

**Have a suggestion for improving our efforts?** (We welcome your feedback.)

**We look forward to hearing from you! Contact: [ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:ltaylor@ucla.edu)**

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The work of the **National Initiative for Transforming Student/Learning Supports** emphasizes that:

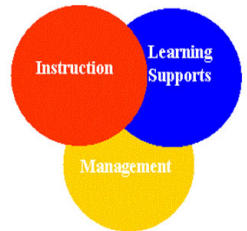
***Equity of opportunity is fundamental to enabling civil rights; transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to promoting whole child development, advancing social justice, and enhancing learning and a positive school climate.***

Our research indicates that transforming student/learning supports involves

- >moving school improvement policy from a 2 to a 3 component framework and
- >unifying and developing student/learning supports into a comprehensive and equitable intervention system

**See:**

- >***Student/Learning Supports: A Brief Guide for Moving in New Directions***



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

**For new sign-ups – email [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto: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>.**