

(9/9/26) This continuing education resource is from the national
Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports at UCLA

Featured

**(1) Beyond the Harm Narrative: Using Social Media
to Support Youth Development**

(2) Among those 18-24, 14% aren't working or participating in education

(3) The Next Frontier in School Improvement

And, as always, you will find

(4) Links to more resources

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

For discussion and interchange:

**>Beyond the Harm Narrative:
Using Social Media to Support Youth Development**

From: ***Positive Social Media Use and Positive Outcomes Across Adolescence***

"Approximately 95% of adolescents in the United States use social media, with the majority engaging every day. Most research on adolescent use of social media has focused on negative effects, including depression and anxiety, and many states have passed laws in attempt to curb social media use to improve adolescent mental health. Despite the speculation that digital spaces have exclusively negative effects on adolescents, there is research to suggest that digital contexts are a continuation of the in-person context for young people and may have positive elements and outcomes....

When used in certain ways, social media can be used to promote autonomy, competence, connection, and contribution—encouraging positive behaviors in youth rather than contributing to harm. Such behavior is diverse, with examples including actively writing supportive comments on others' posts, self-creating and self-expression through posts, connecting with others, joining supportive online communities, or seeking out information to encourage better mental health...

Overall, this study finds that using social media in positive ways was related to higher levels of positive outcomes for adolescents over time.... These findings suggest that certain patterns of social media engagement, particularly those that foster connection, reflection, and support, may potentially be linked to the development of key strengths during adolescence. Learning how to use social media in these ways is not necessarily inherent in the design; thus, we encourage educators, parents, those involved in the social media industry themselves, politicians, and those who work with youth, to have open conversations about the ways that social media might be both negative and positive for development."

Center Comment: Clearly there are real concerns about social networking sites. However, focusing only on the risks can obscure important opportunities. Socially interactive technologies offer schools powerful tools for enhancing learning, strengthening relationships, fostering student voice, and promoting positive development. At the same time, they bring significant challenges that require education, supervision, and support. The emerging evidence suggests that discussions about young people's use of social media should not just focus on preventing problems; it should also be about teaching how to use online spaces in ways that promote competence, connection, contribution, and well-being. Rather than asking whether schools should be for or against social media, a more useful question is: How can schools help students maximize the benefits while minimizing the harms?

For more on social media and youth development, see our Center Quick Find on:

>[*Social Networks and Social & Emotional Development*](#)

And see the Center's discussion on:

>[*Youth and Socially Interactive Technologies*](#)

- Use of Socially Interactive Technologies
- Some Data on Youth Use of Technology to Connect
- What's Good About Using Technology to Facilitate Social Networking?
- What are the Concerns?
- How Do Current Policies and Practices Address the Concerns?
- Implications of Socially Interactive Technologies for Schools

Here are some thoughts from two students:

>[*A Student's Proposal for Using an Online Chat Room to Facilitate Student Discussion*](#)

>[*The Good and Bad of Social Networking use by Children and Adolescent*](#)

For discussion and interchange:

>**Among those 18-24, 14% aren't working or participating in education**

From: [*Mapping Disconnection Among American Youth*](#)

"At any point in time, about one out of every seven young people (aged 18 to 24) across the United States neither works nor participates in education or training. These disconnected youth (sometimes called opportunity youth) often lack a path to economic success....

The costs of disconnection are high, falling both on the young people and on society as a whole
Youth Disconnection Varies Across Individuals and Across Communities

Rates of disconnection vary by race/ethnicity, veteran status, and disability status. Young men who experience school suspensions face increased risk of later disconnection, as do young women who experience early pregnancy...

Research across multiple disciplines shows that living in a poor household or a poor community has long-lasting, negative effects on children. Lack of resources affects many aspects of children's lives, including school quality, health outcomes, recreational opportunities, and, later in life, employment options. Poorer communities may suffer from geographic isolation, high levels of pollution, and high levels of violence; each of these also harms young people.

Research also shows that low levels of social capital and weak social networks are harmful to children and young... Social capital or social networks include resources in the community that can be accessed through relationships, such as information about job opportunities....

Programs that increase connections across socioeconomic groups within communities have the potential to lower rates of youth disconnection. Such programs could include mentoring programs focused on youth, as well as any community-based programs, activities, or clubs that serve to increase ties across the socioeconomic spectrum. Connecting young people to opportunities is a recognized goal in youth mentoring programs. But our results indicate that other community-based programs—including neighborhood associations, volunteer or service programs within the community, continuing education classes, cultural programs, faith-based groups, and leadership development programs—may also serve to decrease rates of youth disconnection. Our results provide an additional reason for supporting such programs, as well as a new measure of their potential impact within communities."

Center Comment: Schools can play an important role in reducing youth disconnection by helping graduating students, as well as those who leave school before graduating, expand

their social networks and strengthen their connections to community resources and opportunities. One effective strategy is service learning. While there are many definitions of service learning, at its core is the integration of structured, authentic, hands-on community experiences with formal education.

High-quality service learning provides meaningful real-world experiences that connect students with community organizations, employers, mentors, and other adults who can serve as sources of information, support, and opportunity. In addition to enhancing learning and civic engagement, such experiences help students develop social capital, broaden their awareness of educational and career pathways, and establish relationships that can ease their transition into adulthood.

From the perspective of dropout prevention and successful transition planning, service learning should be viewed not simply as an instructional strategy, but as a mechanism for connecting young people to the social networks and community opportunities that foster long-term engagement in education, work, and civic life.

For more Center resources on this, see:

[*>College Mentors for High School Students*](#)

[*>Transition from Adolescence*](#)

[*>Supports for Students Deemed At-Risk*](#)

[*>Service Learning in Schools*](#)

There also is a Center Quick Find on [*Mentoring*](#)

For discussion and interchange:

>The Next Frontier in School Improvement

Hopefully, by now you have seen the Center's recent report: *New Directions for Student and Learning Supports: Moving From Fragmented Initiatives to System Transformation*
<https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Newdirs.pdf>

The report declares that, the next frontier of school improvement is the transformation of existing resources into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student and learning supports. It highlights that schools traditionally focus on two primary components of school improvement: Instruction and Management/Governance. To address barriers to learning and teaching more effectively, the report proposes a third essential component that directly addresses barriers to learning and teaching. Such a component provides the foundation for developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student and learning supports.

We have now developed a Discussion Guide to accompany the report.

The Guide is designed to support conversations among educators, administrators, policymakers, student support staff, higher education faculty, community partners, family leaders, and others concerned with strengthening supports for learning and development. Its purpose is to facilitate reflection and discussion about local priorities, current practices, and opportunities for strengthening student and learning supports. The guide is available at
<https://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Discguiderep.pdf>

Our hope is that the guide will help stakeholders assess where they are now, envision where they want to be, and identify concrete next steps toward building a more unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student and learning supports.

>Links to a few other relevant shared resources

- >>Positive Peer Group Affiliation, Puberty, and Social and Emotional Development: A Strength-Based Approach
- >>A Systematic Review of School Connectedness in Middle School Students
- >>A Socioecological Approach to Adolescent Suicide Risk: The Roles of Social Bonds and Recognition
- >>The State of School Discipline: Examining the Variation in Suspensions Across the United States
- >>Redefining Our Future: School Psychologists as Leaders for Social Change
- >>States See Spike In Special Ed Complaints
- >>Are Universal Digital Mental Health Interventions Effective?
- >>Dismantling the Dyslexia Industrial Complex
- >>3 special education funding strategies states can use to support districts

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>

- 9/14 Supporting emotional regulation in kids
- 9/14 Technology innovations in schools
- 9/16 Rethink Classroom Management
- 9/16 Communicating with the IEP team
- 9/16 Hosting great meetings: planning and preparation
- 9/17 Helping students deal with image based abuse
- 9/17 Special education advisory councils
- 9/21 Discovering the best in you and your team
- 9/23 Navigating IEP disagreements
- 9/24 Adapting programs to fit the local need
- 9/24 Building school partnerships
- 9/29 The Principal's role in student outcomes
- 9/29 Leading Teams: Building Capacity for Teacher Leaders
- 9/30 Family engagement to promote attendance
- 10/7 Understanding special educations: the IEP
- 10/7 How AI can help you build flexible options for diverse learners

How Learning Happens (Edutopia's series of videos explores guiding all students, regardless of their developmental starting points, to become engaged learners).
Unpacking the Impacts of Structural Racism on Youth (Webinar recording)



Our teacher says computers make us smarter.

If that's so, my PC must still be downloading.



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To Listserv Participants

We hope you will share this resource with others who may find it helpful.

And 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 140,000 on our listserv.)

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

**Send resources ideas, requests, comments,
and experiences for sharing to Ltaylor@ucla.edu**

@#@#@#@#

*For those who have been forwarded this and want to receive resources directly,
send an email to 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

THIS IS THE END OF THIS ISSUE OF THE PRACTITIONER

Who Are We? Our national Center was established in 1995 under the auspices of the School Mental Health Project (which was established in 1986). We are part of the Department of Psychology at UCLA. The Center is co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor and now is named the

Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports.