



Department of Community  
and Human Services

# YOUTH TOPICS NEWSLETTER

IN THE MAY 11 EDITION:

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## EVENTS

### FACE Center May Workshops

In addition to a number of [workshops](#) for families, STEAMtivity @ Beatley Central Library offers fun, hands-on activities and cool new technology such as iPad Minis, Lego Mindstorms robots, Arduinos, MaKey MaKeys, and littleBits snap circuits.

### Second Thursday Art Night – Pets! (May 12)

Join the Torpedo Factory in a [celebration](#) of pets. The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria will be available from 6 – 9 p.m. to discuss pet adoptions and how to care for cherished pets. Four-legged visitors will also help create a paw-print mural using pup-friendly paint.

### ALIVE! Sidewalk Sale (May 14)

The [event](#) will begin at 8 a.m. on South Payne Street between Commerce and Prince Streets. All funds support the ALIVE! House Shelter.

### Third Annual Community BBQ (May 16)

The ACT for Alexandria [event](#) will take place from 6 – 8:30 p.m. at Vola's Dockside Grill & High Tide Lounge (7 King Street). Tickets are \$50 per guest.

### Text, Talk, Act (May 21)

Across the country, young people are having a nationwide conversation on mental health and how to help a friend in need. Through text messaging, small groups receive discussion questions to lead them through a conversation about mental health. [Join](#) the National Hook-Up of Black Women in this nationwide conversation to help end the silence.

### Wine on the Water (May 21)

The event in celebration of the Alexandria Seaport Foundation will feature fabulous wines, food pairings, live and silent auction, and steel drums. Enjoy the views of the Potomac and tour the Seaport Center, where at-risk youth are working to change their lives. [Tickets](#) are \$60 before midnight May 13 and \$70 after.

### RTI Policy Forum on Mental Health and Violence (May 26)

The [forum](#) in the Holeman Lounge at the National Press Club (529 14<sup>th</sup> Street N.W.) will provide an opportunity to discuss the causes of violent behavior to help demystify the role of mental illness in violent events and clarify its scope. A panel of experts will draw from their research, policy, and clinical expertise to shed light on the link between mental illness and violence. The panel will also recommend steps for moving from identifying those at risk of violence to effectively managing and reducing violence risk through evidence-based assessments, interventions and services, and policies. The forum is from 12:30 – 2 p.m. and will also be live streamed and recorded.

## **Virginia Cooperative Extension Spring Open House & Program Showcase (May 26)**

Learn how partnering with Virginia Cooperative Extension in Alexandria can provide valuable educational resources to organizations, clients and the community by attending a [Meet & Greet](#) from 4-6:30 p.m. at Lee Center (1108 Jefferson Street).

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## **CAREERS/VOLUNTEERISM**

### **Hearst Fellowship for Minority Students**

The Aspen Institute Program on Philanthropy and Social Innovation in Washington, D.C., is accepting applications for the fall session of its William Randolph Hearst Endowed Fellowship program. The [fellowship](#) is open to both undergraduate and graduate students of color. The Hearst Fellow serves as an intern with PSI in the Washington, D.C. office of the Aspen Institute. Selected fellows must be able to work as an intern for twelve to fifteen weeks in Washington, D.C., during the academic semester in which the fellowship is awarded. Fall and spring interns will work part-time (fifteen to twenty hours per week) while summer interns will be full-time. Fellows will be compensated on an hourly basis in the fall, spring, and summer, but all travel and housing costs must be covered by the student. The deadline to apply for the fall session is July 18.

### **Phoenix Society for Burn Victims Education Grants**

Applications are being accepted from burn survivors who are attending college or a technical school for [scholarships](#) ranging from \$500 - \$4,000. Applicants must be a burn survivor; be a high school senior, GED holder, or currently enrolled in a college, university, or trade school, and have applied and been accepted to an accredited two-year or four-year college/university or trade/vocational school. Applications are due June 30.

### **Expeditions Council Grants**

National Geographic Society is accepting [applications](#) for editorially driven exploration and adventure projects through its Expeditions Council grants program. The proposed project must have the potential to yield compelling stories and images. Grants of \$15,000 to \$35,000 will be awarded to cover direct field expenses, including transportation, supplies, subsistence, and permit costs, as well as other related fees (e.g., interpreters, guides, and porters) tied to the project. There is no deadline for pre-applications.

### **Johnson Prize**

The Johnson Prize is awarded annually to an early-career African-American artist working in the area of painting, photography, sculpture, printmaking, installation, or a new genre. Age is not determinative, and artists who have not earned a BFA or MFA are eligible as long as they have not been working as an artist for more than twelve years. The prize recipient will receive \$25,000. [Applications](#) must be received by November 10.

### **Emerging Artists Fellowship**

The Harpo Foundation's Emerging Artists Fellowship at the Santa Fe Art Institute provides an annual opportunity for an emerging visual artist age 25 and older who needs time and space to explore ideas and start new projects. Artist fellows will receive a one-month residency at the Santa Fe Art Institute that includes a well-appointed room with private bath, a well-lit studio space, and a \$500 travel stipend. One [fellowship](#) is awarded annually to an emerging artist who demonstrates strong artistic ability and promise. The deadline to apply is October 1.

### **Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Grants**

The program provides [grants](#) of up to \$2,000 to innovative visual and performing artists who have unanticipated, sudden opportunities to present their work to the public when there is insufficient time to seek other sources of funding; or who incur unexpected or unbudgeted expenses for projects close to completion with committed exhibition or performance dates. Applications are reviewed monthly by a volunteer committee of established artists. FCA recommends applying within six to eight weeks of the performance or exhibition date.

### **Dexter Jones Award**

The National Sculpture Society is accepting submissions for its annual competition that awards an unrestricted prize of \$5,000 to a sculptor for an outstanding work of sculpture in bas-relief. Preference will be given to figurative or realist sculpture and applicants must be between the ages of 18 and 39. The deadline to [apply](#) is October 3.

### **Children's Prize Foundation Award**

The Children's Prize Foundation is accepting online proposals from individuals, organizations, and teams detailing an intervention or solution that will save children's lives. The [prize](#) is not focused on funding a specific type of health intervention; rather, all types of under-five child interventions are eligible. All proposals must include a science-based approach to measuring and evaluating the impact of the lives saved. One winner will be awarded \$250,000 to directly execute the proposed project. Applicants from diverse backgrounds and disciplines are encouraged to apply. First-round applications must be received no later than May 14. Upon review, selected applicants will be invited to submit a second-round application.

### **Roslyn S. Jaffe Awards**

The nonprofit program of the Ascena Foundation provides financial awards to everyday heroes who are making the world a better place for women and children in the areas of health, education, social reform, and esteem. The [awards program](#) chooses a grand-prize winner to receive \$100,000 and two runners up to receive \$25,000 based on the high-impact work they do to empower women and children. Nominees must be legal residents of the United States; at least 18 years old on the date of nomination; and the creator or founder of a social impact organization with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service. The nominee also must be the organization's principal decision maker in management and development matters. Nominations are due June 17.

### **Kenneth B. and Mamie P. Clark**

The American Psychological Foundation will award a single [grant](#) of \$10,000 to an early-career psychologist in support of research and demonstration activities that promote the understanding of the relationship between self-identity and academic achievement with an emphasis on children in grades K-8. Applicants must be an early-career psychologist (no more than ten years postdoctoral). Applications are due June 15.

### **Paul P. Fidler Research Grant Program**

The National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition is accepting [applications](#) from research projects aimed at improving the experiences of college students transitioning into and through higher education. The center will award a stipend of \$5,000, plus travel to two national conferences, and a presentation slot at a national conference. Topics may include but are not limited to underrepresented student populations, community colleges, the advising system, transfer and articulation, career development, and other issues related to college-student transitions. Applicants must be a faculty or staff member or a graduate student at an institution of higher education in the United States. The deadline is July 1.

### **School-Justice Partnerships Certificate Program**

The [program](#) (a partnership between the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform and the American Institutes for Research) prepares school and district staff, juvenile justice and court professionals, law enforcement, and child-serving leaders to address the needs of youth involved in (or at risk of entering) the juvenile justice system. Scheduled for September 26–30 in Washington, DC, the deadline to apply is June 17.

### **Bureau of Justice Statistics Visiting Fellows: Criminal Justice Statistics Programs**

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, in collaboration with the Bureau of Justice Statistics, is seeking [Visiting Fellows](#) to enhance its capacity to analyze and report critical data regarding juvenile justice populations. There is a particular interest in hosting a fellow to expand OJJDP's capability to analyze and report data on youth in adult prisons and jails, the needs of youth in custody and availability of services, and youth victimization and offending. Three awards are anticipated. A maximum of \$200,000 will be allocated per Visiting Fellowship. Applications are due by May 23.

### **NLN Foundation for Nursing Education Scholarship Awards**

The program supports the goal of attracting more seasoned and ethnically diverse nurses to become nurse educators. [Scholarships](#) of up to \$8,000 will be awarded to assist nurses in the completion of their graduate education, which could include tuition, support for a dissertation or thesis, or travel for an onsite internship or classes. Applicants must be nurses pursuing an advanced degree in preparation for a career as a full-time academic nurse educator. In addition, applicants must be a member of NLN, either as an individual dues payer or through their school's NLN membership. Proposals are due May 31.

### **The Oncology Nursing Society Foundation Fellowship Program**

The annual [program](#) provides financial support to students enrolled in an MSN or DNP program for work in the areas of cancer prevention, care, or control (as outlined in the ONS Research Agenda). Grants of up to \$5,000 will

be awarded to assist with costs to complete the master's or DNP capstone or thesis project. The fellowship is not intended to support tuition expenses, and it is expected that projects would require a minimum of sixty hours of work for completion. The application deadline is June 15.

#### **Sigma Theta Tau International/Doris Bloch Research Award**

Grants of up to \$5,000 will be [awarded](#) to encourage nurses to contribute to the advancement of nursing through research. The allocation of funds is based on the quality of the proposed research, the future promise of the applicant, and the applicant's research budget. Applications from novice researchers who have received no other national research funds are encouraged and will receive preference. Applicants must be a registered nurse with current license and hold a master's or doctoral degree or be enrolled in a doctoral program. Preference will be given to STTI members, other qualifications being equal. The deadline is July 1.

#### **Distinguished Contributions Award**

The American Psychological Association is accepting nominations for the 2016 Award for Distinguished Contributions to Independent Practice. Nominations of psychologists working in any area of clinical specialization, health services provision, or consulting for services provided to any patient population or professional clientele in an independent setting will be considered. To be eligible, services should have been provided to diverse client groups or patient populations, including but not limited to children/adolescents/adults/older adults; urban/rural/frontier populations; minority populations; and persons with serious mental illness. [Nominations](#) are due June 1.

#### **Amelia Earhart Fellowship**

Zonta Anchorage is inviting applications from women of any nationality who are pursuing a Ph.D. in the typically male-dominated fields aerospace-related sciences or engineering. [Fellowships](#) of \$10,000 are awarded to thirty-five women annually, and the funds may be used at any university or college offering accredited postgraduate courses and degrees in those fields. Applicants must be registered in a full-time Ph.D./doctoral program when funds are received in September and must not graduate before April. The deadline is November 15.

#### **ProInspire Leadership Fellowship**

Applications are being accepted for a competitive one-year fellowship that places business professionals in targeted positions at leading nonprofit, public, and social enterprise organizations. Fellows work full-time for a ProInspire partner and participate in its professional development program. Annual compensation and health benefits are provided by the hiring organization. Compensation is \$46,500 in Washington, D.C., and \$49,000 in the San Francisco Bay Area. Applicants should have a minimum of two years of business or fundraising experience as of June 2016. The program is only open to U.S. citizens or individuals with work authorization. [Applications](#) are due June 4.

#### **Kathy Goldfarb-Findling Leadership Award**

The Gifford Foundation is accepting nominations for an [award](#) that honors a nonprofit professional who best exemplifies the leadership approach of the foundation's former executive director. The monetary prize can be used for professional development opportunities, personal needs, or just to recharge one's batteries. The deadline for nominations is May 31.

#### **Council on Foreign Relations International Affairs Fellowships**

Approximately ten twelve-month [fellowships](#) are awarded annually to highly accomplished individuals who have a capacity for independent work and who are eager to undertake serious foreign policy analysis. The program is only open to mid-career professionals who have a demonstrated commitment to a career in foreign policy, but welcomes applicants from a broad range of professional, academic, and personal backgrounds. While a Ph.D. is not a requirement, selected fellows generally hold an advanced degree and possess a strong record of work experience as well as a firm grounding in the field of foreign policy. The program awards a stipend of \$95,000. The deadlines are July 1 and October 31.

#### **Society of Professional Journalists First Amendment Award**

The annual [award](#) honors an individual, group of individuals, or organization that has fought to protect and preserve one or more of the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment with a \$10,000 cash award, an engraved crystal, and transportation and lodging (airfare and two-night hotel stay) to the society's national convention. Nominations are open to any person, persons, or organization in the U.S. or its territories that has worked to protect the basic rights provided by the First Amendment. Nominations, which may be made by anyone, inside or outside the journalism profession, must be received by June 22.

### **Advancement of Knowledge Award**

The Conference on College Composition and Communication, which supports and promotes the teaching and study of college composition and communication, is accepting nominations for an [award](#) for empirical research published in the previous two years that most advances the teaching and study of writing. To be eligible for the award, a nominee must be a member of CCCC and/or the National Council of Teachers of English at the time of nomination. The deadline for nominations is July 15.

### **Guangzhou International Award for Urban Innovation**

The [award](#) is presented biennially to encourage and recognize outstanding innovative projects and practices in the public sector. Applicants can submit innovative achievements in such thematic fields as Public Services, Organization and Administration, Partnership and Citizen Involvement, Smart City, and Sustainable City. The award is open to all cities and local governments and will be granted to up to five cities, each of which will receive a \$20,000 award. The application deadline is July 30; applicants are encouraged to submit the registration form before May 31.

### **Ruderman Best in Business Award**

The annual [award](#) of the Ruderman Family Foundation recognizes businesses with a demonstrated history of employing people with disabilities, training and supporting those employees, and developing innovative approaches to maximizing their abilities. Eighteen businesses from the United States and Canada will be recognized with an award, with the winners to be featured in a special supplement in the print and online edition of *Jewish Week* to be published on September 15, 2016. Nominations are due May 25.

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## **GRANTSMANSHIP**

### **DCHS Office of Youth Services Listing of Grant Opportunities**

The DCHS Office of Youth Services compiled a listing of grant opportunities on [April 15](#), [April 25](#), [May 2](#) and [May 6](#).

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## **RESEARCH & RESOURCES**

### **Special Education Video Series: Agency Linkages**

The ACPS Special Education Parent Resource Center has compiled a series of videos about topics of interest to parents of students with special educational needs: [Building Flexibility and Resilience in Children and Teens with Autism Spectrum Disorders](#); [Children and Teens with Dyslexia and Other Reading Disorders](#); [Agency Linkages](#); and [Managing Sibling Conflict](#). The series is available in English, Spanish, Amharic and Arabic.

### **Teachers Give ACPS Overwhelming Positive Endorsement of Working Conditions**

All eight areas linked to teacher retention and student achievement in a [survey](#) of ACPS educators and administrators saw increases – some as much as 14 percentage points. The number of teachers who felt that their school is a good place to work and learn was 81% at the elementary level, 83% at the middle school level and 72% at the high school level. A total of 86% of teachers said that this was the reason they chose to stay at their current school.

### **Lyles Brothers Focus on the Olympics**

Noah, 18, and Josephus, 17, are two of the most dominant sprinters in the world in their age groups. Noah runs the 60m, 100m and 200m distances, while Josephus runs the 400m and 500m and sometimes shorter distances. Noah has already met the [Olympic standard](#) to take part in the trials. Josephus is not far off doing the same.

### **Titans Team Advances to Final in Boat Design Competition**

T.C. Williams High School Titans STEMX team has been named as one of the four [finalists](#) in the 2016 Society for Naval Architects and Marine Engineers High School Boat Design Competition. All the finalists see their boats built by a shipyard in Newport News.

### **Student Composer Wins Second Place in National PTA Reflections**

George Washington Middle School student Jonathan Morgan Petrini has won [second place](#) in the National PTA Reflections Awards. His classical composition for piano, ‘Sonata in E Major, Movement 1: The Hummingbird Sonata’ won the national Award of Excellence after winning first place awards at the school, city, Northern Virginia District and state levels.

### **T.C. Williams High School Senior Wins Salute to Women Award**

The Alexandria Commission for Women has recognized Isabella Lovain, a T.C. Williams High School senior, with a Salute to Women Youth Community Services Award for the [significant impact](#) of her volunteer service. Lovain, a student representative on the School Board, comes from a volunteering family — her parents met at what is now Volunteer Alexandria. She and her two younger siblings have volunteered with her parents as a family activity. In her sophomore year, Lovain began to explore volunteer opportunities on her own.

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## **EDUCATION**

### **FBI Urged to Dump Extremism Website Aimed at Schools**

A coalition of groups, including the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee and the American Civil Liberties Union, asked the FBI to [dismantle](#) its “Don’t Be a Puppet” [website](#), which the agency created to educate youth about violent extremism but has been criticized as targeting American Muslims and encouraging the policing of thoughts in schools.

### **Protecting Student-Data Privacy: Advice from an Expert (Video)**

The vast amount of data being collected in public schools has raised concerns about who will get to see it and how that data might be used. A [video](#) accompanied an *Education Week* report on student-data privacy that aired on *PBS Newshour*.

### **How Do States Use Data Collected on Millions of Students?**

According to the latest in a series of annual reports by the Data Quality Campaign, state longitudinal student-data systems have [evolved](#), but collecting data alone is not enough to help teachers and researchers use the information to make meaningful improvements for students.

### **Group Probes Ed-Tech Pricing, Buying**

A new nonprofit organization has set out to help school districts [compare the prices](#) they pay for education technology as well as examine the fairness and logic of their procurement practices and contracts with vendors. The [Technology for Education Consortium](#) has released data that questions the prices that Apple is charging districts for a popular model of iPads. The consortium says its research, based on surveys of 40 districts, shows that the prices those systems paid for iPads with the same features and design ranged from \$367 to \$499, a gap cannot be explained by the volume of the purchases or related factors.

### **Can Ed Tech Power a Social-Justice Approach to ‘Disruption’?**

Educational technology is often discussed in terms of its transformative potential: To personalize teaching, to put students in control of their own learning, to take schools out of the industrial age, to better prepare young people for a rapidly changing economy. But [new research](#) presented as part of the annual conference of the American Educational Research Association outlines a more radical vision: By leveraging the ubiquity of mobile devices and the power of new digital tools for everything from mapping to media creation, students at the bottom of America’s social and economic ladder can be empowered to change the policies and conditions that limit their opportunities for success.

### **Why Online Gradebooks Are Changing Education**

New [software](#) better connects parents with what is happening in their children’s classrooms—but it can also lead to heightened surveillance and less risk-taking.

### **Virtual, Blended Schools Growing Despite Struggles, Analysis Finds**

According to a new [analysis](#) from the National Education Policy Center, virtual and blended schools continue to grow at a rapid pace despite persistently “dismal” academic outcomes and little knowledge about their internal

workings. In 2013-14, 262,000 students in 33 states were enrolled in 447 full-time virtual schools that deliver all instruction online. Another 26,155 students across 16 states were enrolled in 87 blended schools (which combine traditional face-to-face and online instruction). Despite rising enrollment numbers, virtual and blended schools fared poorly when compared to traditional public schools on a host of academic measures. One glaring example: the 4-year graduation rate in 2014-15 was 40.6% for full-time virtual schools and 37.4% for blended schools, compared to 81% for the nation as a whole, according to NEPC.

### **Charter, Alternative, Virtual Schools are Drivers of Low Grad Rates, Study Finds**

Charter, virtual, and alternative schools account for a [disproportionate share](#) of U.S. high schools with low graduation rates. "[Building a Grad Nation](#)" concluded that regular district high schools make up 41% of those that did not surpass the 67% threshold in 2013-14. Charter, virtual, and alternative schools (which represent only 14% of the country's high schools and 8% of its high school students) account for 52% of the schools that fell short of that mark.

### **Charter School Graduates More Likely to Stay in College, Earn Higher Salaries.**

According to [study](#) published in the *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, charter school graduates in Florida were more likely stay in college and earn higher salaries than their district school peers, even though attending charter schools did not have a significant impact on student test scores.

### **More Military Families Embrace Home Schooling**

For active-duty military families juggling frequent moves and long deployments that may take a parent away for more than a year at a time, [home schooling](#) appears to be growing in popularity as a means of providing stability in their children's education. But parents who choose that route face a patchwork of home schooling laws across states.

### **Students in Online Credit Recovery Fare Worse than Peers, Research Finds**

High school students who took an online makeup course after failing Algebra I had lower scores, grades, and credit-recovery rates than their peers who took the same course in a traditional face-to-face setting, according to [new research](#) from the American Institutes of Research. However, while students benefited from the face-to-face credit-recovery course in the short term, the long-term impact appeared to be minimal.

### **New Online Tool Expands Access to School Climate Measurements**

The U.S. Department of Education has [released](#) a free, online survey tool that will allow schools, districts, and states to administer regular, anonymous school climate surveys. The [survey](#), developed by a panel of school climate experts, uses questions from existing surveys that were tested with panels of students to ensure their validity. The site creates an instant analysis of a school's results, and administrators can save the data in existing local data systems so they can track results over time.

### **Students Gain Real-World Experience Creating Websites Through WebSLAMS**

A [tech center](#) based in Baltimore, Md., is providing students with an opportunity to create websites for small businesses and nonprofits. The students primarily work after school through what the Digital Harbor Foundation calls a WebSLAM, or Student Learning Apprenticeship Model. For five days, they receive intensive training on WordPress software and learn basic HTML. This culminates in a weekend hackathon where the students meet with a client and develop a website.

### **Robot Designed to Help Schools Teach Coding Unveiled by Harvard Group**

The [robot](#)—called "Root" and developed by Harvard's Wyss Institute for Biologically Inspired Engineering—is a magnetic, hexagonal device about 5 or 6 inches in diameter that travels across a white board in response to students' digital commands. Basically, students use an iPad app to program Root's actions, which—according to a Wired piece—include drawing and erasing figures, accelerating down "racetracks," and responding in prescribed ways to different colors on the board. When released, the accompanying software is expected to guide students through three different coding levels.

### **How Prince Used Coding to Help Uplift African-American Boys**

Prince helped launch and fund #YesWeCode, which was [established](#) two years ago with a mission of helping 100,000 urban youth work toward high-paying careers in the technology sector. The Oakland, Calif.-

based organization connects people with local opportunities to learn coding, gathers coding practitioners, and hosts hackathons for young African-American men and boys.

### **After School is ‘Sweet Spot’ to Draw Girls to STEM**

The biggest [predictor](#) of which students go into science and math fields is not how well they do in those subjects in school or how much they are interested in the subject. It is whether they identify themselves as “scientist” or “engineer” or “mathematician”. Identity influences who ends up in the sciences more than performance and engagement.

### **New Partnership to Provide Kids with More After-School STEM Learning**

A \$2.5 million expansion of STEM learning opportunities was announced as part of the White House Science Fair. The [partnership](#) is bringing together the Afterschool Alliance with the Corporation for National and Community Service, (CNCS), and the STEM Funders Network, a group of education-focused corporate and private foundations interested in investments in STEM. This partnership is supporting STEM Ecosystems, an initiative through which CNCS is placing up to 28 AmeriCorps VISTA members on the ground full-time to support STEM-learning programs in as many as 14 communities across the nation. They will be working to increase partnerships with community organizations to provide more opportunities for STEM learning.

### **Amazon Faces Judgment in Case Over In-App Fees for Children**

A judge has ruled [in favor](#) of the Federal Trade Commission in a case brought against Amazon alleging that the online retailer has improperly billed parents and other users of apps for charges incurred by children. The case originates from a [complaint](#) brought by the FTC in 2014, in which the consumer-focused agency pointed to Amazon’s collection of “in-app charges” associated with the selection of apps and games that children like to play, from its app stores. Amazon failed to obtain parents’ and other users’ informed consent for those charges, the FTC said, despite widespread consumer complaints.

### **Technology Addiction: Concern, Controversy, and Finding Balance**

According to a new [report](#) by Common Sense Media, parents are increasingly concerned about their children’s technology and media usage. Among the findings: 59% of parents feel teens are addicted to their mobile devices, but just 27% of teens agree; 78% of teens check their devices at least hourly, compared to 69% of their parents; and device usage is a source of regular family conflict.

### **The Maker Movement in K-12 Education: A Guide to Emerging Research**

Typically, "Making" involves attempting to solve a particular problem, creating a physical or digital artifact, and sharing that product with a larger audience. Ed Week compiled a [roundup](#) of nine recent books, essays, and research studies exploring Maker education in K-12.

### **Zuckerberg, Chan Tap James Shelton to Lead Huge Education Giving Effort**

Former U.S. Deputy Secretary of Education James Shelton will [head](#) the education efforts of the multi-billion dollar philanthropic organization created by Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg and his wife, pediatrician Priscilla Chan.

### **First ‘Educator Equity Lab’ Hosted by Mississippi, U.S. Education Departments**

The first "[educator equity lab](#)" that is designed to show how states can ensure equitable access to high-quality teachers across schools was hosted at Jackson State University in Jackson, Miss. The lab is part of the U.S. Education Department's effort to close what it called "existing equity gaps" when it comes to teacher distribution. The department has been calling on states to submit plans for ensuring that disadvantaged students are not taught by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers at higher rates than other children.

### **Arne Duncan Joins Brookings Institution as a Fellow**

Former U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has [joined](#) the Brookings Institution as a nonresident senior fellow in the Governance Studies program at the Brown Center on Education Policy.

### **Arne Duncan: School Spending Disparities Between Rich, Poor Should Spur Action**

The huge disparities in money spent on rich and poor students across the country are little known but tremendously [damaging](#), and more must be done to get parents and the public more involved in spending decisions, former U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said.

### **Map: How Per Pupil Spending Compares Across U.S. School Districts**

The Education Week Research Center conducted an [analysis](#) of spending levels per student in most U.S. school districts for fiscal year 2013.

### **NPR Ed's 'School Money' Project Examines Finance Inequities**

NPR has launched a [major report](#) on K-12 school finance in the United States, focused on disparities such as two Illinois school districts where per-pupil spending is \$9,794 for one and \$28,639 for the other. The project, "School Money," includes radio reports, collaboration with 20 education reporters at member stations, detailed spending data, and extensive Web stories and features.

### **Most Bonus-Winning Teachers Work at Schools in More Affluent Areas**

An Orlando Sentinel [analysis](#) found Florida teachers who benefited from the state's controversial "best and brightest" bonus plan are more than twice as likely to work with students from more affluent families than students living in poverty.

### **John B. King Jr. Advocates for Racially, Socioeconomically Diverse Schools.**

During a keynote speech, U.S. Secretary of Education John B. King Jr said the intersection of decades of education, housing, and transportation policy has left the nation's schools at a [crossroads](#). Even as the nation's population of students is increasingly diverse, public schools are becoming more segregated, with a majority of black and Latino students attending poor-performing, racially isolated schools with high concentrations of poverty. While acknowledging the past, King said policies that isolate children in poor-performing schools are not etched in stone.

### **Can an Increase in Empathy Lead to a Drop in Suspensions?**

A [study](#) by Stanford University researchers concluded a simple exercise can build teachers' sense of empathy for their students, an effect that may lead to a drop in suspensions without any formal changes in policy. The study states when teachers develop a greater sensitivity to their students' experiences and intentions, students sense the change, which can help break a "self-perpetuating cycle of punishment and misbehavior" that occurs in some classrooms. Researchers suggest if teachers change their mindsets while disciplining students, it may lead to less of a need for such discipline in the future by changing the classroom's climate.

### **Black, Latino, Native American Boys Face Barriers From Birth, Report Argues**

Black, Latino, and Native American males face a complex web of circumstances that can explain why they are overrepresented among students with low grades, low test scores, and disciplinary problems. A new [report](#) by the Urban Institute titled "Aiming Higher Together" makes the case that boys and young men of color face a systemic predicament, beginning at birth, that places them at "risk for underperformance in school and life," writes the report's author, Ronald Ferguson, the director of Harvard's Achievement Gap Initiative and a national expert on improving learning opportunities for disadvantaged children.

### **White Teachers and Black Teachers Have Different Expectations for Black Students**

A new [study](#) suggests that race plays a big role in influencing how teachers see their students' potential for academic success, raising questions about whether teachers' biases could be holding back black students and contributing to the nation's yawning achievement gap. When a white (or other non-black) teacher and a black teacher evaluate the same black student, the study found, the white teacher is 30% less likely to believe that the student will graduate from a four-year college — and 40% less likely to believe the student will graduate from high school. The discrepancy was even greater for black male students.

### **Black, Latino Parents Say Expectation for Poor Children Too Low in Public Schools**

According to a new [national poll](#), a majority of African-American and Latino parents report that they want higher expectations for their children and better teachers in public schools, where they believe there are racial inequalities and funding disparities.

### **U.S. Ed Dept. Report Finds Decreasing Diversity Across Teacher Pipeline**

A new report by the U.S. Department of Education found the teacher pipeline is riddled with holes when it comes to diversity in the profession. Full-service and pre-service teachers of color are falling out at every stage of the pipeline according to "[The State of Racial Diversity in the Educator Workforce](#)" (which was released to coincide with the department's National Summit on Teacher Diversity).

### **Parents 2016: Hearts and Minds of Public School Parents in an Uncertain World**

A new [national poll](#) by Learning Heroes (an organization that helps parents navigate the school system) shows a disconnect between how well parents think their children are performing academically and how students score on tests nationally. About 90% of parents reported that they think their children are performing at or above grade level in reading and math. But results on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, or NAEP, were far lower. For example, about 36% of 4th graders scored at or proficient in reading and 40% scored at or above proficient in math in 2015.

### **In D.C., a Radical Shift in Parent Involvement**

Three times a year, teachers at a D.C. school host group meetings with parents to explain precisely what their children will learn over the next several months and hand out educational games and activities that reinforce those lessons at home. The program is part of a [radical shift](#) in the way some schools are thinking about parent involvement. Rather than encourage parents to attend bake sales and spaghetti dinners — which have long been the domain of middle-class families and have no direct link to academic achievement — these schools are effectively training parents of all backgrounds to become informed and confident tutors at home. The effort was spurred by a growing body of evidence showing that when teachers and parents trust one another and work together, students tend to earn higher grades and test scores, have fewer absences, and exhibit better social skills.

### **Low Performers Show Big Declines on 12<sup>th</sup> Grade NAEP Test**

According to the most recent scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, high school seniors (much like their 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade peers) have [lost ground](#) in math over the last two years. Perhaps the most striking detail in the test data is that the lowest achievers showed large score drops in both math and reading

### **Achievement Gaps and Racial Segregation: Research Finds an Insidious Cycle**

The Stanford Education Data Archive, a massive new database that allows researchers to compare school districts across state lines has led to the [unwelcome finding](#) that racial achievement gaps yawn in nearly every district in the country—and the districts with the most resources in place to serve all students frequently have the worst inequities.

### **Can San Diego Close the Gaps in AP Participation?**

The San Diego district is instituting a [districtwide expansion](#) of both Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate enrollment among its low-income students and students of color by the start of the 2016-17 school year. It has identified 1,891 low-income students and students of color who it believes are capable of taking and passing AP and IB courses. Educators are now working to enroll them.

### **Two Newspapers' Series on Race and Education Awarded Pulitzer Prizes**

The *Tampa Bay Times* [won](#) the Pulitzer for local reporting for its "[Failure Factories](#)" series, about the failures of the Pinellas County, Fla., school system to educate its African-American children. "In just eight years, Pinellas County School Board members turned five schools in the county's black neighborhoods into some of the worst in Florida," the series began last August. "First they abandoned integration, leaving the schools overwhelmingly poor and black. Then they broke promises of more money and resources," it continued. "Then—as black children started failing at outrageous rates, as overstressed teachers walked off the job, as middle class families fled en masse—the board stood by and did nothing." The Pulitzer for commentary went to Farah Stockman of *The Boston Globe*, for what the prize committee said were "extensively reported columns that probe the legacy of busing in Boston and its effect on education in the city with a clear eye on ongoing racial contradictions."

### **Young Anti-Racists Celebrate the Unity They See Amid the Hate**

There were violent clashes between law enforcement and a scattering of the several hundred who turned out to counter protest a so-called pro-white people's rally at the suburban Atlanta park — a [rally](#) that drew about two dozen white supremacists. Still, there was a lot of love, too, and none stronger and more clearly stated than from young people — teens and those in their early 20s.

### **Latino Perspectives on K-12 Education & School Choice**

A [survey](#) conducted by Braun Research Inc., found about one in five Latinos name education as the country's number one issue right now. Only "economy and jobs" was seen as more important. The Latino community is more likely to say education is the top priority for the nation even compared with the high-profile issue of immigration. Latinos support a broad variety of education reforms, including increased standardized testing in public schools, public charter schools, and school choice.

### **Report: Unaccompanied Minors Blocked From Enrolling in School in 14 States**

In the past three years, the federal government has placed more than 100,000 unaccompanied minors with adult guardians in communities nationwide. All children, regardless of their immigration status, have the right to enroll in public schools under federal law. But even when enrolled some of these students are "pressured into what advocates and attorneys argue are separate but unequal alternative programs," an Associated Press investigation found. Social workers and immigration attorneys in Alabama, California, Florida, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas and South Carolina told the Associated Press that migrant students were [barred](#) from enrolling in K-12 schools, kept out of class for months, or sent to alternative programs that are deemed inferior.

### **This Undocumented, Standout Student Faces Another Challenge: Paying for College**

Undocumented immigrants are [far less likely](#) than other students to graduate from high school or get a college degree. A Harvard professor Gonzales tracked 150 undocumented youth in Los Angeles for a dozen years in an unprecedented longitudinal study. Of the 79 who went to college, nearly half left before receiving a degree. Even those who received degrees ended up in low-skilled, low-wage jobs — in restaurants, factories and call centers — because their immigration status hindered them in getting professional work.

### **Left Behind: Poverty's Toll on the Children of Puerto Rico**

In 2014, the U.S. Census estimated that [58%](#) of Puerto Rico's children live below the federal poverty level—much higher than the overall rate of 22% of children living below the poverty line throughout the United States.

### **Maya-American Youth: A New Population at Risk in the U.S.**

Hundreds of thousands or perhaps several million children with Native American Maya heritage have been born in the United States during the past two decades. Some groups of [Maya](#) have established strong communities, and Maya children appear to be adjusting and assimilating into the mainstream of their generation. But Maya children overall continue to face barriers that hinder school success, and a high percentage of Maya youth drop out of school before getting diplomas.

### **Does More Time on the Playground Equal Success in the Classroom?**

Six elementary schools in Texas are [participating](#) in the LiNK (Let's Inspire Innovation 'N Kids) Project, a [research study](#) on the effects of kids having multiple recess periods a day.

### **Gallup Student Poll Finds Engagement in School Dropping by Grade Level**

A Gallup poll of nearly a million U.S. students [concluded](#) schools need to work on building supports to keep students invested in their educations, especially as they advance in grade. The [survey](#) found that only half of adolescents report feeling engaged in school, and a fifth are actively disengaged. About 10% of students are classified as both disengaged and discouraged. Engagement levels also show a consistent decrease as students get older, bottoming out in 11th grade. The survey's findings are based on a non-representative sampling of more than 900,000 students in grades 5 through 12 that was conducted online last fall.

### **Student Absenteeism**

Attendance is an important factor in school success among children and youth. Studies show that [better attendance](#) is related to higher academic achievement for students of all backgrounds, but particularly for children with lower socio-economic status.

### **Report Finds Correlation Between Chronic Absenteeism, Difficulty Reading**

Two key findings of a study conducted by the Iowa-based Child & Family Policy Center were chronic absenteeism is a problem for a significant number of early-elementary students in Iowa, and these students are more likely to struggle with reading. "[School Attendance Patterns in Iowa: Chronic Absence in the Early Grades](#)" analyzed the prevalence of chronic absenteeism among more than 37,000 Iowa students in kindergarten through 3rd grade.

### **The Every Student Succeed Act Explained: Now in Video**

*Education Week* produced an ESSA explainer [video](#).

### **Will ESSA Raise College Access, Track Graduation Rates for Foster Youth?**

Before the Allegheny County Department of Human Services set up a [data-sharing program](#) in 2009 with the Pittsburgh Public School District, the department “lacked a clear picture” of how children in foster care were faring in school.

### **Is the New SAT Better? Is It Worth Taking? (Video)**

In a recent Making the Grade [education segment](#), the *PBS NewsHour* reported on the changing status of the SAT. Despite its recent redesign, there is growing skepticism of the test's value as a predictor of college success. Does the SAT have a viable future?

### **Education Department Announces Grants to Reduce and Improve Tests**

The U.S. Department of Education [announced](#) that states wanting to develop new types of tests, revamp test scoring and score reporting, or take a close look at the number and type of tests they offer to eliminate low-quality or redundant tests can apply for \$9 million in federal competitive grants under the Enhanced Assessment Grant program. The department also put out a [report](#) highlighting local and state efforts to pare back testing.

### **College Board Attacks ACT’s Live Teaching Prep Service**

The College Board has lashed out at its rival, ACT Inc., saying its plan to add live teaching to its online test-prep service is more about money than public service, and accusing ACT of trying to “replace” classroom teachers with long-distance instruction. The accusations were sparked by ACT's [announcement](#) that it had teamed up with Kaplan Test Prep to add a live-instruction element to its existing lineup of test-prep services. The new service will cost less than \$200, ACT said. The existing service costs students \$39.95 per year.

### **Only 8 Percent of Students Complete College and Career-Ready Curriculum**

A [study](#) by Education Trust found only 8% of U.S. high school graduates complete a curriculum that prepares them well for college and the workplace. Even fewer complete those course sequences with grades that would suggest they mastered the content. The study [raises questions](#) about how well adults in schools are guiding students along pathways that provide strong preparation for college, job training, or the workplace.

### **Study Finds Little Tracking, Big Graduation Boost, in Career-Tech Focus**

A new study of career and technical education concluded disadvantaged students are not “tracked” in large numbers into those programs, and that taking three or more related courses in one career area significantly boosts students' chances of graduating from high school on time. The [report](#) published by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute found that students who “concentrated”—took three related courses focused on one industry—were 21 percentage points more likely to graduate from high school in four years than their peers who did not, and were just as likely to go to a four-year college. It also found no evidence of disproportionate participation in career-tech-ed programs by disadvantaged students, except among students who went into career-tech-ed most deeply. That finding contradicts the belief that “vocational education” is often used as a dead-end pathway for students who are perceived to have little chance of succeeding in college. The author of the study wrote that the playing field seems to have changed.

### **Fulfilling the Promise: Serving the Need: Advancing College Opportunity for Low-Income Students**

The [report](#) by the U.S. Department of Education profiles institutions across the country with a strong record of success in ensuring that low-income students are not just attending college, but are completing their degrees.

### **Community Colleges Seek to Improve Grad Rates by Supporting Students (Video)**

*PBS NewsHour* profiled a program that aims to bolster community college graduation rates. In the city's CUNY system of 2-year institutions, only 17% of students typically graduate within three years. The [Accelerated Study in Associate Program](#), however, provides financial assistance, convenient class scheduling, and attentive advisors to keep students on track and 57% graduate on time.

### **White House Offers \$100 Million in Grants to Connect Community College and Jobs**

The new [grant program](#) is designed to engage employers in identifying the competencies needed for jobs in high demand regionally as well as offer opportunities to build those skills through work-based learning, internships or paid work experience. The program envisions community colleges teaming up with employers and organizations that provide job training. The competition will begin this summer.

### **Income-Based Gaps in College Attainment Have Worsened Since 1970, Report Finds**

Students from all socioeconomic groups have been earning bachelor's degrees at increasing rates in recent years, but gaps in college attainment by socioeconomic status have worsened slightly since 1970. A [study](#) of college attainment patterns, released by the Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education, shows that 72% of the bachelor's degrees earned in 1970 went to students whose families are in the top half of the income spectrum. In 2014, that figure rose to 77%. Students whose families are in the bottom half of the income strata earned 23% of the bachelor's degrees in 2014, compared with 28% in 1970.

### **Number of U.S. Students in Special Education Ticks Upward**

After years of steady decline, the nationwide count of school-age students covered under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act has shown an [upswing](#) since the 2011-12 school year based on the most recently available federal data, driven by rapid growth in such disability categories as autism. A third of the nationwide increase in 2014-15 came from one state, New York and the reasons are not clear. Virginia is among the states that have seen a large increase in the population of students with autism. At one time, autism was considered a "low incidence" disability in Virginia, said John Eisenberg, the state's director of special education. Now, those students make up the fourth-largest disability category in the state.

### **Autism Prevalence Stable, But Varies Widely Among Communities, Groups**

An estimated 1 in 68 8-year-olds have been diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—the same [prevalence rate](#) that the agency found when it released a autism monitoring report in 2014. The most recent [report](#) is based on data that was collected in 2012. The 2014 report, which had the same prevalence rate, was based on data that had been collected four years earlier.

### **Autism Research Misses Minorities as Study Subjects**

A [report](#) published in the Journal of Special Education found that while minority students are less likely to be identified with autism, most research into effective educational interventions has concerned white, English-speaking males with autism—prompting questions about whether some interventions touted as evidence-based are really the best fit for students who come from different backgrounds.

### **Many Young Children with ADHD Are Missing Behavior Therapy**

For toddlers and young children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, the first order of treatment is not for the child but the parents. That means teaching caregivers several concrete strategies for guiding their child's behavior. This therapy is the [preferred first option](#) for children ages 2-5 with ADHD. But about three-quarters of children in this age group are getting medication, says a new [report](#) on ADHD treatment in young children from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Only about 50% of children are receiving any type of psychological services, which could include therapy aimed at addressing ADHD behaviors. The findings, taken from a study of children insured by Medicaid and by employer-sponsored insurance programs, suggest that many children are being overmedicated for attention deficit disorder. And the medication comes with some damaging side effects for young children, including irritability, stomach pain, reduced appetite and slowed growth.

### **As the Number of Students with Disabilities Grows, So Does the Need for Policy Changes**

Nationally, students without identified disabilities graduate at a rate of 84.8%, compared with just 63.1% of students with disabilities – a [gap](#) of more than 21 percentage points, according to a 2016 *Building a Grad Nation* data brief.

“Studies have estimated that 85 to 90 percent of students with disabilities can graduate on time with the right interventions,” said Jennifer DePaoli, senior education adviser at Civic Enterprises and co-author of the *Building a Grad Nation* data brief and annual report.

### **Why Are Students with Disabilities Failing Standardized Tests?**

Among the [findings](#) of policy briefs produced by the National Center on Educational Outcomes and the National Center on Systemic Improvement, students with disabilities are failing in part because they are not being exposed to the kind of instruction that would allow them to pass these tests.

### **Most of \$1 Million Verdict Reinstated in Special Education Student's Abuse Case**

A federal appeals court [restored](#) most of a \$1 million jury verdict awarded to a Texas family who sued over alleged physical abuse of a student with severe physical disabilities after a trial judge had thrown out the award.

### **Attorney: NY School Ignored Abuse by Special Ed Teacher**

The parents of five middle school-aged children with autism or Down syndrome are pursuing a [lawsuit](#) against a suburban New York school district, claiming it did nothing after becoming aware that their children were restrained and otherwise abused by a special education teacher. Legal papers seeking \$25 million in damages state a male student was encouraged to masturbate in front of other classmates; that children were restrained with zip ties and duct tape and physically and verbally abused; and that the teacher and two aides improperly used a bathroom as a timeout room.

### **Grandson with Special Needs Hung by Belt as Punishment, Parent Says**

The principal at an elementary school in Georgia [found](#) a 5 year-old with special needs hanging from a chalkboard by his belt. The state Division of Family and Children Services interviewed the boy and learned this was not the first time the teacher had done this. The school informed the parent it is disciplining two teachers and a paraprofessional because of the incident.

### **Suit: NYC Education Dept. Not Addressing School Violence**

A federal [lawsuit](#) filed by a group that supports charter schools and several New York City schoolchildren and their guardians says the Department of Education's failure to properly address violence in schools is depriving students of their right to a public education.

### **Schools See Less Crime, Fewer Students Feel Unsafe, Federal Data Show**

According to the annual report [Indicators of School Crime and Safety](#), which is produced jointly by the National Center for Education Statistics and the Bureau of Justice Statistics at the U.S. Department of Justice, American schools may actually be getting safer. Reports of student victimization at school continue to decline, and students' reports of fear of harm at school also keep falling.

### **School Crime Rates Down in Most Every Category — Except Sex Crimes at Colleges**

Overall crime rates have fallen over the past decade on the nation's college campuses, but the number of reported forcible sex crimes on campus has [substantially increased](#). Postsecondary institutions reported a 34% decline in crimes between 2001 and 2013, with decreases in every category except forcible sex crimes, which rose 120% over the same period.

### **Engaging Communities in Reducing Gun Violence: A Road Map for Safer Communities**

Gun violence inflicts a devastating toll on communities of color, but the justice system response to this violence frequently destabilizes neighborhoods and damages police-community relations. The Urban Institute, Joyce Foundation, and Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies convened more than one hundred people from communities affected by violence and learned that violence prevention demands a [holistic set of solutions](#). Limiting access to firearms is part of the solution, but a comprehensive strategy will also require improving police-community relations, investing in community services, and facilitating community leadership in violence prevention efforts.

### **Over 100 Medical and Public Health Organizations Call for Federal Gun Research**

During National Public Health Week in April, 141 of the Nation's leading medical and public health organizations joined with members of the scientific community and research universities to [urge Congress](#) to end the dramatic chilling effect of the current rider language restricting gun violence research and to fund this critical work at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). These calls echo the requests from 17 Senators and 53 members of Congress who recently urged for dedicated funds for the CDC to conduct research into the causes and prevention of gun violence.

### **School Shooting Suit Against Gun-Maker Set for Trial in 2018**

A judge has set a 2018 trial date in the [lawsuit](#) against the maker of the rifle used in the Sandy Hook Elementary School shootings. The judge last week ruled that a 2005 federal law protecting gun-makers from lawsuits does not prevent lawyers for the victims' families from arguing that the semi-automatic rifle is a military weapon and should not have been sold to civilians.

### **Douglas County School to Issue Semiautomatic Rifles to Security Staff**

A Colorado school district plans to arm its security staff with ten [semiautomatic rifles](#) designed to provide a high-powered defense in the event of a shooting or other violent incident.

### **School Board to Wait for Feedback on Arming Some Employees**

The Tri-Valley School Board in South Dakota is waiting to schedule training for certain school employees to [carry guns](#) until it is known whether the School Board's decision will be referred to a public vote. State legislators passed the school sentinel law in March 2013, a few months after the deadly Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in Connecticut. Tri-Valley's board last week became the first South Dakota district to approve such a policy.

### **Studies: When Educators Cheat, Students Suffer**

By tracking what happened to more than a half-million general education students who took the Regents exams from 2003-04 to 2012-13, before and after the grading policies changed, economists and researchers dug into what made teachers manipulate test scores and what happened to students whose scores were inflated. Teachers at schools with high percentages of poor or minority students were [more likely](#) than those in other schools to manipulate test scores, as were teachers at schools whose 8th grade test scores ranked below the city's average. Researchers found, however, that the rates of cheating did not significantly rise in schools where teachers were eligible to receive bonuses based on their students' test-score growth, nor was cheating significantly more prevalent when schools were under more pressure from state or federal accountability systems.

### **Why Would a Teacher Cheat?**

There is good [evidence](#) that score manipulation does harm kids, particularly when teachers are falsifying their responses outright for the sake of avoiding sanctions. But there is also good evidence to suggest that score *inflation*—teachers grading a bit more leniently, often because they think the student underperformed on the exam—may have positive effects as well. Unlike the U.S., Sweden keeps detailed longitudinal data that allowed the researchers to track student progress not only throughout school, but into the labor market, painting a comprehensive picture of the potential long-term effects of score manipulation. For years, psychology studies have demonstrated powerful effects from a phenomenon known as “stereotype threat”: when individuals are primed with negative stereotypes about a group they belong to, they can fail to perform at their genuine ability level on tests. The study on Swedish students suggests a contrary effect: when kids thought they did better than they actually did, that confidence boost helped them to perform better than they previously could.

### **Arrests Prompt CCSD to Study Policies on Contact Between Teachers, Students**

A 2015 investigation found that around 80% of recent teacher sex abuse cases in the Clark County, Nevada school district involved some type of [private communication](#) between the student and the teacher. And out of the five teachers arrested since that investigation was published, four were found to have communicated privately with students without the knowledge of their parents.

### **McAuliffe Vetoes Bill Permitting Parents to Block Sexually Explicit Books in School**

Gov. Terry McAuliffe [vetoed](#) a bill that would have made Virginia the first state to allow parents to block their children from reading books in school that contain sexually explicit material. The measure became known in the General Assembly as [the “Beloved” bill](#) because supporters have cited that seminal work of fiction by Nobel laureate Toni Morrison as an example of a book too graphic for some students.

### **Spurred by Student Boycotters, School Board Members Urge Virginia High School League to Move Championships from Liberty University**

School board members in Virginia’s largest district are pushing the state’s high school sports league to [end](#) its relationship with Liberty University saying they were “deeply disturbed” by comments made by university president Jerry Falwell Jr. that some criticized as anti-Muslim. During a convocation in December, Falwell urged the Liberty University student body to arm themselves so they “could end those Muslims.” He later said that he was referring to the Islamic terrorists who were behind recent attacks in Paris and San Bernardino, Calif., and that he believes his comments have been taken out of context.

### **Social Studies Teachers: Politicians Influencing New Standards More than Educators**

Georgia teachers asked to review and rewrite the k-12 social studies standards are expressing [dismay](#) over the [draft released](#) by the state Board of Education. Despite their hundreds of hours of work, teachers say they do not recognize much of what has been put forth by the board.

### **Louisiana Senate Kills Attempt to Remove Unconstitutional Creationism Statute from State Law**

Without any debate, Louisiana state senators voted against an effort to [remove](#) an unconstitutional creationism statute from state law books. The U.S. Supreme Court struck down the law as unconstitutional 27 years ago, but it remains on the books in Louisiana, although unenforceable. Critics of the act say it opens a backdoor to the teaching of creationism.

### **Chicago Teachers' Union Rejects Fact-Finder's Recommendations on Contract**

The Chicago Teachers Union said it [rejected](#) a fact-finder's recommendations to consider terms from a district contract offer that it had already voted against, increasing the likelihood that union members will go on strike over a labor pact.

### **Detroit School Board Lawsuit Targets Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder**

The Detroit school board has named Gov. Rick Snyder in a [federal lawsuit](#) that in part blames the district's deep financial troubles on Michigan's emergency manager law. The lawsuit was filed in federal court in Detroit and seeks class-action status on behalf of about 58,000 students enrolled since 2011. Also named are three of the four people appointed by the state to try to fix money woes in the district, which has been under continuous state oversight since 2009 when its budget deficit was estimated at about \$300 million. State management of the Detroit Public Schools has "turned the district into a virtual financial hell-hole," according to the lawsuit.

### **Lawmakers Agree on Statewide Takeover School District**

A [bill](#) headed to Gov. Phil Bryant's desk would establish a statewide district that would take over schools that receive an F grade for two straight years or districts with an F rating for two out of three years. Under the new bill, schools would stay under state control until they receive a grade of C or higher for five years. The schools or districts taken over by the state could be run by charter schools and they would not be required to return to their original school board after their academic standing improves.

### **Louisiana Senate Advances Bill that Would Return New Orleans Schools to Local Control**

A Louisiana Senate [bill](#) unanimously approved aims to return schools in the Recovery School District to the local school board by no later than 2019. The bill passed 36-0 and now has to be considered by the House of Representatives.

### **Sonja Santelises to Replace Gregory Thornton as CEO of Baltimore City Schools**

Baltimore City Schools CEO Gregory Thornton will be [replaced](#) on July 1 by Sonja Santelises, a former chief academic officer in the district. The surprise move follows a national superintendent search that was not publicly announced. Santelises, the vice president of K-12 policy and practice at The Education Trust, a Washington-based education policy organization, served as Baltimore's chief academic officer for three years under former schools chief Andres Alonso during a period when elementary test scores increased.

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## **YOUTH WELL-BEING**

### **De Niro, Tribeca Film Festival Pull Anti-Vaccine Film From Slate After Outcry**

Facing a storm of criticism over its plan to show a [documentary](#) about the widely debunked link between vaccines and autism, the Tribeca Film Festival pulled the film from its schedule. In a statement, Robert De Niro, a founder of the festival, wrote: "My intent in screening this film was to provide an opportunity for conversation around an issue that is deeply personal to me and my family. But after reviewing it over the past few days with the Tribeca Film Festival team and others from the scientific community, we do not believe it contributes to or furthers the discussion I had hoped for."

### **The Impact of Food Insecurity on Child Well-Being**

Food insecurity impacts nearly one out of every five households in the United States, many of which include young children. In 2014, more than 15.3 million children lived in [food-insecure households](#), while the rate of children

living in “very food insecure” households — a more severe form of food insecurity where families experience more frequent disruptions to normal eating patterns — is on the rise.

### **How Schools Are Using ‘Mindful Eating’ to Help Prevent Eating Disorders**

[Mindful eating](#) invites participants to “pay attention” to the food in front of them and engage their five senses (sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch) before consuming a single morsel. This mindfulness practice builds the children's awareness of important physical cues like hunger and satiety. While mindful eating is scientifically proven to help prevent overeating and obesity, a new psychological study suggests that it may also forestall eating disorders, such as anorexia and bulimia, which affect 30 million people each year and are the deadliest of psychiatric illnesses. Anorexia nervosa is deadlier than major depression, schizophrenia or bipolar disorder. Individuals who suffer from it are at higher risk of suicide as well as prone to major health complications such as cardiac arrest.

### **2016 Shape of the Nation Report**

SHAPE America (Society of Health and Physical Educators) and Voices for Healthy Kids (a joint initiative of the American Heart Association and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation) produced a [report](#) that found only Iowa and the District of Columbia require the amount of weekly physical education time recommended by national experts at the elementary and middle school levels. The report found that only 37% of the states require that a specific amount of time be spent in gym class in elementary school. That percentage drops to 29% in middle and high schools: 62% of states permit schools to allow students to substitute other activities for physical education.

### **Ensuring Young Children Grow Up at a Healthy Weight: Policy Opportunities to Prevent Obesity**

A [policy brief](#) provides an overview of the childhood obesity issue, highlights opportunities for prevention, and recommends five specific ways Connecticut's child care settings and hospitals can help young children get off to a healthy start.

### **CDC: Teens with Sleep Issues More Often Take Dangerous Risks**

High school students who get too little sleep-- or too much -- are also [more likely](#) to drive drunk or take other risks. Scientists say they do not know if sleep issues cause teens to take dangerous risks, or whether both are a reflection of depression or other problems. But the link between sleep and injury-causing risks is striking -- especially when it comes to drinking and driving.

### **Teen Birth Rates Hit All-Time Low, But Disparities Persist**

According to [data](#) released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, births to American teenagers have dropped 40% in the last decade. But the U.S. teen pregnancy rate is still “substantially higher” than in other western, industrialized nations.

### **How Are Schools Dealing with Lead Contamination? (Video)**

*PBS NewsHour* looked into [water contamination](#) in schools. While recent news coverage has focused on schools in Flint, Mich., schools, districts nationwide have also found higher than acceptable lead levels in their students' drinking water. How are they addressing this problem? Are they doing enough?

### **InfoAboutKids.org**

The Consortium for Science-Based Information on Children, Youth and Families launched a new web-based [resource center](#) that promotes healthy child and family development by highlighting science-based information for those who care for, or work with, children.

### **A Cross-Sectional Study of Parental Awareness of and Reasons for Lack of Health Insurance Among Minority Children, and the Impact on Health, Access to Care, and Unmet Needs**

A [study](#) published in the *International Journal for Equity in Health* for half of parents of uninsured minority children are unaware that the children are Medicaid/CHIP eligible. The study findings indicate an urgent need for better parental education about Medicaid/CHIP, and for improved Medicaid/CHIP outreach and enrollment.

### **Report: Bullying is a Serious Public Health Problem**

A [report](#) released by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine said bullying should no longer be dismissed as merely a matter of kids being kids. “Its prevalence perpetuates its normalization. But bullying is not a normal part of childhood,” the report said. Zero-tolerance policies are ineffective in combating bullying, an

independent government advisory group says in urging schools to take a more preventative approach that includes teaching tolerance to address this "serious public health problem." Schools, the researchers concluded, should end zero-tolerance policies that automatically suspend students for bullying. The report also said zero-tolerance policies may lead to an underreporting of bullying because suspensions are perceived as too punitive.

### **Sundance Film: Understand Huge Impact of Tough Childhood Events , Build Resilience**

The film "Resilience: The Biology of Stress & the Science of Hope" presents the two doctors, Robert Anda and Vincent Felitti, whose pioneering study showed that [adverse childhood experiences](#) predict future health problems.

### **Angela Duckworth: To Grow Students' Grit, Balance Challenges with Support**

Angela Duckworth, the University of Pennsylvania psychology professor and 2013 MacArthur "genius" grant winner, has released a new book that explores and explains her research on grit, which she defines as the ability to develop and sustain passion and commitment to achieving long-term goals. Duckworth explains her idea by exploring the life stories and philosophies of people she calls "[paragons of grit](#)," including the Seattle Seahawks, West Point Cadets, and successful business leaders.

### **Scholars: Better Gauges Needed for 'Mindset', 'Grit'**

Concepts like growth mindset—the belief that intelligence and other skills are not fixed, but can be improved through effort—and grit—the ability to sustain interest over a long period and persist in a task in the face of boredom or challenges—have garnered great interest as potential levers to lift student academic achievement through non-academic skills. Education researchers caution traditional methods of studying social-emotional skills will have to [evolve](#) in more reliable, less subjective ways if educators and policymakers expect to incorporate them validly into accountability systems and school improvement plans.

### **Emotions Help Steer Students' Learning, Studies Find**

"People think of emotion getting in the way of cognition, but it doesn't. Emotion steers our thinking; it's the rudder that directs our mind and organizes what we need to do," said Mary Helen Immordino-Yang, an associate professor of education, psychology, and neuroscience at the University of Southern California, in an [interview](#) with *Education Week*. In a new book, [Emotions, Learning, and the Brain](#), Immordino-Yang and her colleagues at USC's Brain Creativity Institute found that as students learn new rules during a task, such as the most efficient way to answer a math problem or the best deck to choose in a card game, they show emotional and physical responses long before they became consciously aware of the rules or are able to articulate them.

### **Students Help Design Measures of Social-Emotional Skills**

Schools in Reno, Nevada are using a comprehensive [social-emotional learning strategy](#) to tackle student engagement and academic success. With the help of a federal grant and assistance from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, Washoe County administrators developed new survey measures, working with students to understand how they respond to questions about social-emotional skills, and with teachers to develop data that could actually be used to change what happens in the classroom. Alongside the district's existing early-warning system, which tracks risk factors for dropping out throughout a student's school career, the data being gathered around social-emotional learning is helping educators ensure that students' needs are met and their skills are developed as they progress through school.

### **This After-School Program Uses Social-Emotional Learning to Help Student Soar**

WINGS for Kids is a South Carolina-based afterschool program that focuses on social and emotional learning. Studies conducted by the University of Virginia and the College of Charleston found that students who took part in [WINGS](#) for two or more years had considerably higher math and reading scores, better grades, and better attendance records than their classmates.

### **Is There "Summer Melt" For Social-Emotional Learning, Too?**

Researchers tracked the academic and social-emotional development of more than 18,000 children who entered kindergarten in 2010 to 2014. Using both student assessments and interviews with the students' parents, teachers, administrators and child-care providers, the researchers analyzed how the students progressed through kindergarten into the fall of their 1st grade year and found that the development of students' interpersonal skills and approaches to learning suffered [significant setbacks](#) during the summer months.

## **Re-Designing Community Mental Health Services for Urban Children: Supporting Schooling to Promote Mental Health**

Community mental health services targeting empirical predictors of learning can [improve](#) school and home behavior for children living in high poverty urban communities.

## **Partnership Explores Role of Student Mental Health in Classroom Management**

Researchers have found a teacher often can be the first adult to notice something is off when a student experiences depression, mania or other mental health issues. Yet just a little more than half of states require teachers to learn about student mental health and classroom management, and many teachers feel [unprepared](#) to support students facing mental health struggles in class.

## **Implementing Mental Health Screenings for Children and Youth in Family Shelters**

Researchers wanted to investigate whether [family shelters](#) could implement an in-house mental health screening and referral program for children and youth up to age 17. They found that participating family shelters successfully implemented mental health screenings and referrals for children and youth, despite having limited resources and serving a highly transient population. Among the 118 participants screened, 23% of young children (ages 0 to 5) and 33% of older children (ages 6 to 17) had scores indicating they may be at-risk for behavioral and mental health challenges.

## **Benefits of Medicaid Expansion for Behavioral Health**

A [brief](#) analyzes data on behavioral health and reviews published research on how Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act advances the goal of improving treatment for people with behavioral health needs.

## **Youth Suicide Rates Have Climbed Since 1999, Data Shows**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released new data on [stunning increases](#) in U.S. suicide rates. While the numbers of suicides for children remain low compared to other populations, girls aged 10-14 had the highest growth in suicide rates of any group between 1999 and 2014, the most recent year reported in federal data. In that time, the rate of suicides for girls in that age group tripled, growing from 0.5 per 100,000 people to 1.5 per 100,000 people. For boys ages 10-14, the rate climbed from 1.9 per 100,000 people to 2.6 per 100,000 people during that time period. Among girls and women ages 15-24, the rate grew from 3 to 4.6 per 100,000 people, and among boys and men in that age group, it grew from 16.8 to 18.2 per 100,000 people, the data show.

## **New Film on the Experience of Psychosis**

The Young Adult Leadership Council (YALC) of Oregon's Early Assessment and Support Alliance (EASA) has released their first [film project](#), "In Our Own Words, Sounds and Visions: EASA Young Adult Leadership Council." The film provides insight into the experience of psychosis through the stories, visual art, and music of YALC members.

## **Meet PRIME, the New App That Wants to Help End Schizophrenia**

A team of researchers at the University of California-San Francisco is developing a [smartphone application](#) that is designed to provide patients with on-demand counseling, tools to meet treatment goals, and a social network of young people with schizophrenia.

## **The Next Big Thing in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: Interventions to Prevent and Intervene Early in Psychiatric Illnesses**

Prevention of mental illness is possible. [Interventions](#) that are inexpensive and that have limited capacity to harm, such as the GBG and SPARX, can be implemented widely. Interventions that are more expensive and have some potential for harm, like treatment of psychiatric illness, should be applied more judiciously and in specific targeted populations. The development of biomarkers may one day help clinicians to determine which patients would benefit from interventions to prevent later illness.

## **Health Care, Family, and Community Factors Associated with Mental, Behavioral, and Developmental Disorders in Early Childhood, 2011-2012**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published a [study](#) looking at health care, family, and community factors related to mental, behavioral, and developmental disorders (MBDDs) among children aged two to eight years in the United States. Researchers found that one out of seven children aged two to eight years were reported to have a diagnosed MBDD. Study findings highlight specific health care, family, and community factors that could be addressed through collaborative policy and programmatic efforts at national, state, and local levels.

### **Personalized Learning for Preschool: IBM, Sesame Workshop Team Up**

Computing giant IBM and the nonprofit organization behind "Sesame Street" [announced](#) a new partnership to bring so-called "cognitive computing" to early childhood education. The idea is to develop products featuring Sesame characters and content capable of responding in personalized ways to individual students based on their skills, interests, and developmental trajectories. Key to the effort will be the technology behind IBM's Watson, which takes a "big data" approach to understanding and responding to human language.

### **Congressional Pre-K Caucus Launches With Celebrity Guests**

Democratic Reps. Joaquin Castro of Texas, Katherine Clark of Massachusetts and Republican Reps. Tom Cole of Oklahoma and Richard Hanna of New York have [launched](#) what they called the first Congressional Pre-K Caucus. The four members of Congress are joint co-chairs of the caucus, which plans to bring "members of congress together to gain a deeper understanding of the benefits of early childhood education and promote policy recommendations to expand pre-K access for children throughout the country".

### **White House Rolls Out Early-Childhood STEM Initiatives**

The White House announced the rollout of several public and private initiatives to support teaching young children about STEM subjects. The [initiatives](#) include research support, school-based programs, expansion of existing programs, and creation of new ones such as STEM-based apps and summer camps. The U.S. Department of Education's Institute for Education Science announced new grants to explore how early elementary science teaching can improve academic outcomes for children, particularly those from low-income communities and among groups underrepresented in science backgrounds.

### **Principles of Substance Abuse Prevention for Early Childhood**

Substance abuse and addiction are preventable disorders that interfere with normal healthy functioning, contributing to physical and behavioral health problems, injuries, lost income and productivity, and family dysfunction. While substance use generally begins during the adolescent years, there are known biological, psychological, social, and [environmental](#) factors that contribute to the risk that begins accumulating as early as the prenatal period. This creates opportunities to intervene very early in an individual's life and thereby prevent substance use disorders—and, along with them, a range of other related behavioral problems—long before they would normally manifest themselves.

### **An Old Message from the Drug War: Just Say No to Marijuana**

Drug laws are being relaxed, four states plus Washington, District of Columbia, have made marijuana legal, and drug criminalization is linked to the problem of mass incarceration — but one vocal group is still urging what amounts to a "[just say no](#)" approach. "Of all of our drugs, the most dangerous drug is marijuana," said former White House drug chief Bob DuPont, at the SAM ([Smart Approaches to Marijuana](#)) Marijuana Education Summit in Atlanta.

### **Drug to Treat Opioid, Heroin Overdoses Offered Free to All U.S. High Schools**

A pharmaceutical company based in Ireland announced plans to partner with an American distributor to offer a [free carton](#) of the overdose drug Naloxone, also known as Narcan, to every high school in the United States. Naloxone can help stabilize people suffering from opioid or heroin overdoses until emergency medical help arrives by slowing the drugs' effects on their respiratory and nervous systems.

### **Federal PSA Campaign and Study Aim to Increase Awareness of Youth Homelessness**

A new [campaign](#) allows teenagers and young adults to explain their experiences of homelessness — and of finding support — in their own words and offers the National Runaway Safeline as a resource to those seeking help. The federal PSA campaign launched in April, along with the release of a [study](#) that looks at the varied experiences of homeless youth ages 14-21 in 11 cities.

### **Screening and Assessment Tools for Runaway and Homeless Youth Program**

A [list](#) prepared by the Family and Youth Services Bureau helps identify screening and assessment tools that can be used to decide the types of interventions and services each young person requires.

### **Six-Year Mortality in Street-Recruited Cohort of Homeless Youth in San Francisco, California**

Homeless and unstably housed youth in San Francisco experience a mortality rate more than [ten times](#) that of the state's general youth population. The primary causes of death were suicide and/or alcohol- or drug-related.

### **Homeless Youth Count Turns Up Surprises in Atlanta**

A yearlong effort to [count](#) the number of homeless young people in Atlanta found they are more numerous, more connected, and more hopeful than previously believed. But they also engage in a lot of high-risk behavior that leaves them “exceptionally vulnerable,” and bounce in and out of a fragmented social-service network.

### **A Shared Sentence: The Devastating Toll of Parental Incarceration on Kids, Families and Communities**

A new [report](#) from the Annie E. Casey Foundation concluded children with an incarcerated parent often suffer emotionally, academically and financially, and too few policies consider their needs. Nationwide, more than 5.1 million children have experienced separation from a parent because of incarceration. Research shows children may experience increased mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety, and children of incarcerated mothers, in particular, are more likely to drop out of school. The foundation made recommendations in three areas: supporting children directly during and after a parent’s incarceration, connecting parents to employment when they re-enter the community, and building stronger communities that promote family stability and opportunity.

### **Incarceration Affects Education, Panel Says as Ed. Dept. Releases New Resources**

A roundtable of students, parents, and re-entry professionals [shared](#) with U.S. Secretary of Education John B. King the need of schools for better resources and guidance to help youth with incarcerated parents feel supported, and to help them navigate changing family dynamics when their parents are released. The discussion was held as the U.S. Department of Education announced \$5.7 million in new grants targeted at assistance for students who have been involved in the criminal justice system and a [new toolkit](#) with resources for guidance educators to help support formerly incarcerated youth and adults and their families.

### **States Could Not Terminate Medicaid for Juveniles in Custody Under Bill**

States would be prohibited from terminating Medicaid coverage for incarcerated juveniles under legislation introduced in the House and Senate. States could suspend coverage while juveniles were in custody rather [than](#) cutting off their coverage, a change the bill’s sponsors said would ensure a smooth transition for youth as they re-enter the community. States would be required to automatically restore Medicaid enrollment when a juvenile was released.

### **Disproportionality Rates for Children of Color in Foster Care**

A [technical assistance bulletin](#) from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges presents disproportionality rates for all 50 states. The report indicates, in general, African-American and American Indian/Alaska Native children are overrepresented in the foster care population, but rates of disproportionality vary from state to state.

### **Implicit Bias in Child Welfare, Education and Mental Health Systems**

The focus of a [report](#) by the National Center for Youth Law is how racial bias in the child welfare, education, and mental health systems affects racial disparity in the juvenile justice system. The report particularly focuses on how ambiguities in evaluation criteria for determining outcomes in each of these systems often allows room for professionals’ personal biases to impact decision-making. In the child welfare system, for example, racial disparities exist despite the fact that research has shown families of color are no more likely to abuse or neglect their children than white families.

### **Focus on Foster Families App**

UCLA Nathanson Family Resilience Center’s FOCUS on Foster Families program aims to help foster families develop skills and strengths to overcome these challenges. Targeted skills include problem-solving, goal setting, communication, emotional regulation, managing trauma, and stress reminders. The downloadable FOCUS on Foster Families app provides users with easily accessible resources parents can always have on hand, including tips, answers to common questions and encouragement from foster caregivers, youth, and experts; demonstration videos sharing key strategies for dealing with common challenges, and interactive video games for youth designed to build skills in problem-solving and emotional regulation. The app is available for download via the [iTunes](#) app store and the [Google Play](#) store.

### **Always a Need: Recruiting Foster Parents (Video)**

“They’re kids. They need a home; they need to be [loved](#),” says Catherine Harm, a social worker and prospective foster parent.

### **Foster Kids in the House (Video)**

Driven by current and former foster kids between the ages 14 and 25, the [Oregon Foster Youth Connection](#) helps shape foster-oriented bills that go before the Oregon legislature.

### **New York Tries New Ways to Increase Stability for Kids in Foster Care**

New York City's Administration for Children's Services (ACS) has legal custody of children in the foster care system, and contracts with 23 local agencies to provide day-to-day services. After reaching an all-time high of almost 49,000 in 1991, the number of children in care has dropped in recent years, mirroring a national trend. In 2013, with nearly 13,000 children in the system, the city sought to further reduce that number. ACS implemented ChildSuccessNYC (CSNYC) in five of its contracted agencies. CSNYC is a [program](#) that uses evidence-based practices to provide biological and foster parents skills they need.

### **Foster Youth and College: How One Student Defied the Odds (Video)**

Only about half of all youth in foster care in the U.S. graduate from high school, and just 1 in 10 enroll in college. James Turner, raised in foster care since he was 18 months old and now a second-semester college student, is defying these odds. The 19-year-old wants to use his education to help other foster youth overcome the same hurdles he did. The [video segment](#) appeared on *PBS NewsHour*.

### **Think of Us Storyboard Project**

Think of Us is a nonprofit organization that offers a supportive platform for self-development to help youth in foster care navigate important decisions and situations. Its Storyboard Project encourages youth to share stories through written formats and visual media such as video. Workshops and coaching are used to show youth how to effectively tell their stories as well as school-to-work [curriculum](#) that helps youth develop and strengthen their interview skills.

### **Sex Trafficking Young Victims in Northern Virginia**

There was one detective in Northern Virginia assigned to [human trafficking](#) – Detective William Woolf. Woolf's human trafficking work had been funded by a two-year Department of Justice Federal grant to establish a task force on human trafficking. The grant expired April 1. The Fairfax County Police Department agreed to absorb and fund the position. Detective Woolf will be transferred to child exploitation and the county will approve a full-time position to replace the task force. that will be filled with a different detective.

### **'Sextortion,' Growing Online Problem Worldwide, Victimized Two George Mason Students**

Two students at George Mason University have become the latest victims of "[sextortion](#)," in which people send sexually explicit photos or videos of themselves to someone over the Internet and are then extorted for money by the recipient in exchange for not distributing them further.

### **2015 Protected Innocence Challenge: A Legal Framework of Protection**

The [report](#) by Shared Hope examines efforts being made to respond to domestic minor sex trafficking by the 50 states and the District of Columbia. It identifies key elements necessary to address the needs of child victims and potential victims, including preventing domestic minor sex trafficking through reducing demand, rescuing and restoring victims through improved training on identification, establishing protocols and facilities for victim placement, mandating appropriate services and shelter, and incorporating trauma-reducing mechanisms into the justice system.

### **For LGBTQ Youth Who Trade Sex to Survive, Turning 22 Can Be an Unwanted Milestone**

In New York City, and in many other cities across the country, funding for runaway and homeless youth is often limited to those ages 16 to 21. The [age policy](#) frequently leaves 22- to 24-year-olds without shelter beds, access to group sessions, job training, and medical care, even though they are still technically eligible for services through youth programs, which typically go up to age 24. For young people in this group who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning (LGBTQ), this means they lose access to a crucial source of safety and stability in difficult times.

### **Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities Fact Sheet**

The Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities (CECANF) was established to develop a national strategy and recommendations for reducing child fatalities resulting from abuse and neglect. Beginning in 2014, twelve Commissioners, appointed by the president and Congress, began a two-year process of holding public hearings in 11 jurisdictions to hear from state leaders, local and tribal leaders, child protection and safety staff,

advocates, and parents. The commission found an estimated four to eight children a day, every day, [die from abuse and neglect](#). Approximately one-half are less than a year old, and 75% are under 3 years of age.

### **The National Strategy for Child Exploitation Prevention and Interdiction**

The Department of Justice has released the [National Strategy](#), which details national efforts to address child exploitation; provides a threat assessment of the nature and scope of the problem; lays out plans for future investigations and prosecutions, outreach and education, victim services, and policy initiatives; addresses child exploitation in Indian Country; and offers Department statistics and research on the topic. Four video [public service announcements](#) produced in partnership with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children that address the threat of sextortion were also released.

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## **JUVENILE JUSTICE**

### **Youth Justice Websites**

Global Youth Justice has launched [600 websites](#) to promote juvenile justice diversion programs nationwide. More than 1,600 communities and tribes worldwide currently operate a volunteer-driven youth justice diversion program. These diversion programs train teenagers, including youth who have previously offended, to be judges, prosecutors, attorneys, and jurors who handle low-level offenses of their peers, promote accountability, teach law-related education, and reduce and prevent juvenile crime.

### **Youth Policing Project**

The Police Foundation, a Washington, DC-based non-profit organization, released the first of a series of youth-focused policy briefs which were first presented at the Annual Training Symposium of the California Police Chiefs Association in Ontario, California. The [first brief](#) challenges law enforcement executives to develop a vision for positive police-youth interactions, develop policies that recognize the developmental stages of youth, provide youth-specific training for police officers, develop or sustain community partnerships, and identify means to eliminate racial bias in policing youth. Topics of the remaining policy briefs include Teen Brain: Preparing Your Officers to Engage with Youth; Defining the Role of School-Based Police Officers; and The Career Pipeline Concept.

### **Substance Use Disorders Extremely Common Among Previously Incarcerated Youth**

New research funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) revealed that of previously incarcerated youths, more than 90% of males and nearly 80% of females had a [substance use disorder](#) at some point in their lifetime.

### **Health Disparities in Drug and Alcohol-Use Disorders: A 12-Year Longitudinal Study of Youths After Detention**

An [article](#) by OJJDP-funded researchers examined the health disparities in drug and alcohol use disorders of delinquent youth for as many as twelve years after detention (median age 28 years). The article is based on findings from the Northwestern Juvenile Project, a longitudinal study of a diverse sample of juvenile detainees. The researchers found that substance use disorders after detention differed markedly by sex, race/ethnicity, and substance abused. Most common substance use disorder changed as youth aged (from marijuana to alcohol).

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## **WORKSHOPS & WEBINARS**

### **Briefing Webinar: National Polling on Youth Incarceration & Alternatives (May 11, 1 – 2 p.m.)**

The [webinar](#) sponsored by Youth First Initiative will present findings on the perceptions and beliefs of the public regarding youth incarceration and community-based alternatives to incarceration.

### **Engaging Non-Traditional Partners to Increase Medicaid and CHIP Enrollment (May 12, 3 – 4:15 p.m.)**

Traditional partners, such as health centers and clinics, have proven to be invaluable to increasing Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) enrollment. There may be many untapped opportunities, however, to engage with non-traditional partners to further an organization's reach and to boost program enrollment. These

partnerships can strengthen the connections between their daily lives and healthcare, ultimately enrolling more families and children in Medicaid and CHIP.

**Community-wide Partnerships to Support Student Success (May 17, 1 – 1:30 p.m.)**

Relationships between schools and afterschool programs can be problematic. Effective partnerships, however, can have a big impact on student learning, attendance, and behavior. The webinar will provide an overview on the research on effective partnerships, followed by school district personnel in Connecticut who will discuss their experience creating partnerships with a wide range of community organizations. The cost of the Youth Today webinar is \$10.

**Educators and Counselors Prevent Bullying of Muslim Youth (May 23, 2 – 3:30 p.m.)**

Presenters will discuss civil rights bullying and harassment, cultural competence 101, behavioral health implications of bullying, and resources for protecting America’s Muslim youth. The [webinar](#) is sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

**Ensuring Professional Capacity to Support English Learners (May 24, 12 – 1:30 p.m.)**

The [webinar](#) will highlight the latest research on ensuring positive outcomes for ELs; share concrete professional development strategies for teachers and administrators; examine policy supports at the federal, state, and local levels; and explore the inherent challenges in ensuring sufficient qualified teachers for ELs.

**Disciplinary Data Use and Research: Lessons from Syracuse (June 14, 1 – 2:30 p.m.)**

The Urban School Improvement Alliance will host a [conversation](#) on using data to inform school improvement, with a special focus on disciplinary data and Syracuse City Schools. Dan Losen, Director of the Civil Rights Project at UCLA, will present research on school discipline policies, ways that schools are currently collecting and analyzing disciplinary data, and the challenges and opportunities for districts in setting and practicing fair discipline policies. Participants will also learn in detail about how Syracuse rewrote its code of conduct using data and research, which is documented in a REL Northeast & Islands [case study](#) published in late 2015.

**Promoting Positive Pathways to Adulthood (On Demand)**

The series of ten one-hour online [training modules](#) is based on a positive youth development and empowerment framework. Each incorporates video segments featuring young people with behavioral health experience, service providers, and family members; interactive exercises; knowledge tests, and downloadable resources and references. To support knowledge translation into practice, an accompanying toolkit includes practice scenarios, video segments with discussion questions, role plays, and questions that invite participants to apply their learning to practice in their local context. The training is free and CEU’s are provided.

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