



Department of Community
and Human Services

YOUTH TOPICS NEWSLETTER

IN THE JULY 18 EDITION:

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EVENTS

Youth Mental Health First Aid (July 23)

The eight-hour course teaches adults the risk factors, warning signs, and symptoms of mental health and substance disorders in youth; the effects of the illnesses and an overview of treatments; and a five-step action plan for helping youth with symptoms. The event is scheduled for 9 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. at 1900 N. Beauregard Street. [Registration](#) is open until filled and limited to 20 participants per class. Additional sessions will be held on August 8 & 9 and September 13 & 15.

Financial Literacy Workshop (July 27, August 10, August 24)

The Youth Career Academy of the City of Alexandria Workforce Development Center is hosting a [workshop](#) from 10 – 11:30 a.m. to help 16 to 24 year olds better understand credit, budgeting and money management. Pre-register online or contact [Tiffany Gray](#) (703.746.6046) or [Emily Coopwood](#) (703.746.5997)

Fair Chance Business Summit (July 28)

The Alexandria Reentry Council invites area businesses to attend an [informational and networking event](#) to encourage employers to hire individuals who have had involvement in the criminal justice system. The event at Beth El Hebrew Congregation (3830 Seminary Road) will begin at 9 with the keynote address from 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Youth Arts Festival (August 6)

The festival will showcase the talents of youth around the city and serve as a forum of expression for both visual and performing arts. The event from 1- 5 p.m. at the Mount Vernon Recreation Center (2701 Commonwealth Ave.) is free of charge and will include artists, music, entertainment, and food vendors.

Second Thursday Art Night (August 11)

Enjoy an special [after-hours event](#) from 6-9 p.m. at the Torpedo Factory Art Center every month. Browse open studios and galleries, interact with artists, and enjoy special programming. Stop by on your way to dinner and make an evening of it!

Festival Celebrating Smithsonian's Museum of African American History and Culture (September 23-25)

The Smithsonian has launched a new [website](#) to celebrate the opening of the museum. Information includes details of the festival as well as the Dedication Ceremony at 10 a.m. on September 24.

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CAREERS/VOLUNTEERISM

Prudential Spirit of Community Awards

The [program](#) honors middle and high school students in the United States who volunteer at home or abroad. Several students in each state and the District of Columbia will be named runners-up, with one middle level and one high school student named a state honoree. State honorees will receive \$1,000 awards, silver medallions, and an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. National honorees receive \$5,000 awards, gold medallions, crystal trophies for their nominating schools or organizations, and \$5,000 grants for a charitable organization of their choice.

Students in grades 5-12 are eligible to apply if they have volunteered in the past year. Applications are due November 8.

American Association on Health and Disability Scholarships

The AAHD Scholarship Program [supports](#) students with disabilities who are pursuing higher education. Preference is given to students who plan to pursue undergraduate/graduate studies in the field of public health, health promotion, and disability studies. Scholarships will be limited to under \$1,000 and will be awarded in January 2017. Preference will be given to students majoring in public health, disability studies, disability research, health promotion, or a field related to disability and health. The deadline to apply is November 15.

Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth Regional Trainings

The Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth offers [workshops](#) in Tobacco Prevention/Cessation, Nutrition, Obesity and Physical Activity, Community Team Development & Sustainability, Program Development & Assessment, Professional & Organizational Development, Youth Advocacy, Development & Engagement; Classroom Management, Proposal Writing & Grant Management, Technology, Media and Public Relations Education, as well as online Courses and webinars. More detailed information is available in the [VFHY 2016 Training Catalog](#). The cost of hosting a workshop is \$300 for up to 15 people and \$25 for each additional attendee. Contact [Charlie McLaughlin](#) (804.786.2279).

National Advisory Committee on the Trafficking of Children and Youth in the United States

The Administration for Children and Families is soliciting [Statements of Interest](#) from stakeholders interested in serving on a committee that will advise the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Attorney General on policies to improve the nation's response to the sex trafficking of children and youth in the United States. The committee will be comprised of no more than 21 members with diverse experience and backgrounds. The deadline for submissions is July 20.

Shell Science Teaching Award

The National Science Teachers Association is inviting nominations for an annual program that recognizes an outstanding K-12 classroom science teacher who has had a positive impact on his or her students, school, and community through exemplary classroom science teaching. The [award](#) includes a \$10,000 cash prize and an all-expenses paid trip to attend NSTA's national conference; two finalists will also receive all-expenses-paid trips to the conference. Completed applications must be received by January 6, 2017.

Young Artists Prize

The National YoungArts Foundation provides emerging high school artists with opportunities to work with renowned mentors such as Debbie Allen, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Judith Hill, Plácido Domingo, Frank Gehry, Neil Patrick Harris, Jeff Koons, Wynton Marsalis, Salman Rushdie, and Carrie Mae Weems and are eligible to participate in one of YoungArts' annual regional programs in Miami, Los Angeles and New York. Support is offered in ten artistic disciplines: cinematic arts, dance, design, jazz, music, photography, theater, visual arts, voice, and writing. Winners will receive [grants](#) of up to \$10,000 each. Citizens or legal residents of the United States or U.S. territories who are between the ages of 15 and 18 on December 1, 2016, or in grades 10-12, may apply. International students who are studying in the U.S. on a student visa are eligible to apply. The deadline to apply is October 14.

VCCA Creative Nonfiction Residency

Situated in the foothills of Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts (VCCA) is inviting applications from creative nonfiction writers for the [Wachtmeister Award](#), which includes a fully funded residency at VCCA of up to thirty days, an honorarium of \$1,000, and reimbursed travel expenses of up to \$750. The residency includes use of a private studio, a private bedroom with semi-private bath, and three prepared meals a day as part of a community of twenty-five professional artists, writers, and composers. Applicants must have worked professionally for the past fifteen years and have demonstrated achievements in their field, including a minimum of at least two full-length books as well as recognition in the form of grants and awards. The deadline is September 15.

Fellowship for Socially Engaged Art

The \$20,000 [fellowship](#) offered by A Blade of Grass supports socially engaged projects that promote art as a catalyst for social change; projects that feature artists in leadership roles; dialogue-based projects that emphasize active and sustainable partnerships with communities; and projects in which artists engage community members as equal partners on locally relevant issues. Eligible applicants include individual artists or artist collectives with projects that engage directly with a specific community or communities. Letters of Intent are due September 19.

Art-in-Education Artist Book Residency

The Women's Studio Workshop in Rosendale, New York is accepting applications for its Art-in-Education Artist's Book Grant. The eight-to-ten-week [residency](#) is awarded to two emerging women artists in support of their efforts to create a new artist's book and teach young people. The program provides a stipend of \$350 per week for up to ten weeks, up to \$750 for materials, up to \$250 for travel within the continental United States, free onsite housing, and 24/7 studio access during non-AIE sessions. All applications must be physically mailed to Women's Studio Workshop and postmarked no later than November 15.

Individual Support Grants

The Individual Support Grants program of the Adolph & Esther Gottlieb Foundation awards twelve [grants](#) each year to artists who have been in a mature phase of their art practice for at least twenty years. Only artists working in the disciplines of painting, sculpture, or printmaking are eligible to apply. Eligibility is determined by current financial need; grant amounts will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Applications are due December 15.

Young Investigator Program

The annual [program](#) of the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation provides research support to young faculty members in the early stages of their academic career in the chemical and life sciences, with a focus on fostering the invention of methods, instruments, and materials that will open up new avenues of research in science. Proposed research that cuts across traditional boundaries of scientific disciplines is encouraged. Projects are normally funded for a period of four years. Grants will be in the range of \$750,000 over the term of the project, contingent upon demonstrated progress after the second year of the award. Letters of Intent are due August 15.

Innovative Anxiety Disorders Research

The American Psychological Foundation will be awarding a single [grant](#) of \$9,000 for novel basic or clinical research on anxiety and anxiety-related disorders conducted by graduate students and early-career researchers. Applicants must be a graduate student or early-career researcher (no more than ten years postdoctoral); be affiliated with a nonprofit charitable, educational, or scientific institution, or a government entity operating exclusively for charitable and educational purposes; have a demonstrated knowledge of anxiety and anxiety research, either basic or clinical; and have demonstrated the competence and capacity to execute the proposed work. Applications are due September 15.

Pearson Early Career Grant

The goal of the program of the American Psychological Foundation is to encourage early-career psychologists to devote their careers to underserved populations, including but not limited to innovative scientifically-based clinical work on serious mental illness, serious emotional disturbance, incarcerated or homeless individuals, children with serious emotional disturbance, and adults with serious mental illness. A single [grant](#) of \$12,000 will be awarded. The deadline to apply is December 31.

Midcareer Grant Program

The Spencer Foundation program supports a year-long program of study for scholars interested in advancing their understanding of a compelling problem of education by acquiring new skills, substantive knowledge, theoretical perspectives, and/or methodological tools. [Grants](#) of up to \$150,000 will be awarded for projects focused on the exploration of an important problem or set of problems. Applicants must be a faculty member or a research scholar who was awarded a doctorate within the last seven to twenty years. The deadline for applications is September 13.

Faculty/Post-Doctoral Fellows Program

The Fahs-Beck Fund for Research and Experimentation will award [grants](#) of up to \$20,000 in support of studies aimed at developing, refining, evaluating, or disseminating innovative interventions designed to prevent or ameliorate major social, psychological, behavioral, or public health problems affecting children, adults, couples, families, or communities. The fund will also consider studies that have the potential for adding significantly to knowledge about such problems. Applicants must be a faculty member at an accredited college or university or an individual affiliated with an accredited human service organization with 501(c)(3) status. Applications must be submitted by November 1.

Radcliffe Institute Fellowship Program

The Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University is accepting applications for fellowship grants of up to \$75,000 over a year (with additional funds for project expenses) from individuals [working](#) in the creative arts, humanities, social sciences, natural sciences or mathematics. Fellows receive office or studio space and access to the

libraries and other resources of Harvard University during the fellowship year. Visual, film and video artists may apply for either one or two semesters. The deadline for applications in the creative arts, humanities, and social sciences is September 15. Applications in the natural sciences and mathematics are due October 6.

Notre Dame Institute for Advanced Study Fellowships

The Notre Dame Institute for Advanced Study is dedicated to fostering and supporting integrative scholarship that addresses critical questions at the intersection of the arts, engineering, humanities, law, and the natural, physical, and social sciences, especially those that transcend disciplinary boundaries. It offers [residential fellowships](#) for periods ranging from three weeks to a full academic year (fall and spring semesters, August through May). Fellowships range up to \$60,000 per academic year (up to a maximum of \$30,000 per semester), or can be a pro-rated amount for a shorter period. Fellows who do not reside in the greater Michiana area are provided with subsidized visiting-faculty housing adjacent to the university during their fellowship. The deadline to apply is October 15.

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RESEARCH & RESOURCES

Read with Alexandria Library's Summer Reading Programs

The Alexandria Library is offering a [free online program](#) with customized reading lists.

Top 7 Fun, Free Ways to Keep the Learning Alive This Summer

ACPS has published a list of activities families can enjoy over the summer.

School Board Votes on Educational Specifications for Pre-K Centers

The Alexandria City School Board has voted to [approve](#) the educational specifications for pre-K centers. These specifications will be used to inform the focus of future resources and future building projects.

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EDUCATION

Commonwealth Institute Says Virginia is Short-Changing Its Poor Students

A [report](#) from the Commonwealth Institute, a liberal think tank based in Richmond, calls on lawmakers to study the issue of additional funding for disadvantaged students and to boost such funding. Among 37 states that provide schools with extra money to help students in poverty, the average boost is 29% above standard student funding. Virginia gives roughly 14% to 19% in additional funds for each student who qualifies for free school meals.

Being a Few Miles Apart in Northern Virginia Can Mean Very Different Life Expectancies, Report Says

A newly-released [study](#) shows the stark disparity in life expectancies between Northern Virginia's richest and poorest residents. The average life expectancy of a child born in an affluent census tract can be as much as 13 years higher than those in the poorest.

Fairfax Board Pledges to Weigh 'Equity' When Making Decisions

A [resolution](#) unanimously approved by Fairfax County's Board of Supervisors aims to address disparities in the county of 1.1 million residents by allocating more funds in some areas and considering the importance of diversity in hiring and other decisions.

Disparities Continue to Plague U.S. Schools, Federal Data Show

New federal data show a [continuing deep gulf](#) between the educational experiences of traditionally disadvantaged student groups and their peers on a broad range of indicators, findings that follow years of efforts by government and advocacy groups to level the playing field in U.S. public schools. Black and Latino students are still more likely to be suspended, more likely to attend schools with high concentrations of inexperienced teachers, and less likely to have access to rigorous and advanced coursework than their white peers, according to the data released by the U.S. Department of Education's office for civil rights.

Federal Data Show Unequal Access to Challenging Math and Science Courses

New federal civil rights data show black and Latino high school students are being shortchanged in their [access](#) to high-level math and science courses that could prepare them for college. An early preview of the latest U.S.

Department of Education's Civil Rights Data Collection, based on the 2013-14 school year, lays out sharp racial and ethnic disparities in access to challenging high school courses:

“Suspended Progress”

The JustChildren Program and the Legal Aid Justice Center authored a [report](#) that found short-term suspension rates in Virginia schools fell 20% between 2010 and 2014, but have remained relatively unchanged during the past two school years. The report found during the 2014-2015 school year, 12.4% of Virginia’s black students received short-term suspensions compared with 3.4% of white students.

Suspensions Have a Multi-Billion-Dollar Cost Nationwide, Study Says

A [study](#) released by the Center for Civil Rights Remedies and the University of California Los Angeles concluded a one percentage point drop in the 16% in-school and out-of-school sophomore suspension rate could lead to a fiscal benefit of \$691 million as estimated by the study because of improvements in areas like earnings and taxes for affected students, and it could lead to a social benefit of \$2.2 billion because of savings in areas like welfare, criminal justice, and health care spending.

Q&A With Monique W. Morris: How K-12 Schools Push Out Black Girls

In her fourth book, *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools*, Monique Morris takes a closer look at the educational policies, practices, and conditions in U.S. schools that [marginalize](#) black girls both academically and socially as early, she argues, as pre-K.

Black Girls and School Discipline: Four Researchers Unpack k-12’s Racial Bias

Education Week Commentary sat down with researchers Adrienne D. Dixon, Shaun R. Harper, Bettina L. Love, and Terri N. Watson at this spring's American Educational Research Association conference to [discuss](#) their perspectives on this crisis.

One Key to Reducing School Suspension: A Little Respect

According to [research](#) by Stanford University, a one-time intervention to help teachers and students empathize with each other halved the number of suspensions at five diverse California middle schools and helped students who had previously been suspended feel more connected at school.

Georgia Court: Students Can Stand Their Ground

In a [case](#) pitting one controversial public policy against another, a Georgia court has found school administrators violated the state’s “stand your ground” self-defense law when they expelled a student for fighting.

Diversity

50 Years Seeking Educational Equality: Revisiting the Coleman Report

The Coleman Report has been one of the most influential and hotly debated education studies in American history. It identified families, not just schools, as key drivers of student achievement. In the heat of the Civil Rights movement, it found strong benefits of integrated schools for black and white students alike. It also included prescient findings about how students’ mindsets and motivation contribute to their learning. *EdWeek* assessed what the Coleman Report had to say about [six key education issues](#): school segregation, testing, academic mindset, college enrollment, and teachers.

Three of the Office of Civil Rights Report’s Most Troubling Reveals

The latest data comes from a new [report](#) by the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) sheds light on some of the most problematic obstacles to equal opportunity in education: chronic absenteeism threatens high school graduation for millions, particularly students of color and students with disabilities; suspensions discriminate based on race, disability and geography; students of color and English learners lack access to advanced coursework.

Aftershocks From Affirmative Action Ruling to Hit K-12, College

In [Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin](#) (Case No. 14-981), Justice Anthony M. Kennedy [wrote](#) for a 5-3 majority that “considerable deference is owed to a university in defining those intangible characteristics, like student body diversity, that are central to its identity and educational mission.”

Mississippi City Ordered to Desegregate Schools 60 years After Landmark Ruling

Nearly 60 years after the landmark US Supreme Court ruling that ordered schools to integrate, the classrooms of Cleveland, Mississippi, are still divided by race. A federal court ordered the Cleveland school district to [consolidate](#) its schools entirely, ruling that after so many decades of resistance, only dismantling and reforming the schools could bring the town's two sides together. The Mississippi school board filed papers on July 11 to appeal a federal judge's order in a long-running desegregation case. The three white members of the local school board voted for the appeal and the two black members voted against it.

Better Use of Information Could Help Agencies Identify Disparities and Address Racial Discrimination

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) examined poverty and race in schools as well as efforts by the Departments of Education and Justice, which are responsible for enforcing federal civil rights laws prohibiting racial discrimination against students. The [report](#) examined how the percentage of schools with high percentages of poor and Black or Hispanic students has changed over time and the characteristics of these schools, why and how selected school districts have implemented actions to increase student diversity, and the extent to which the Departments of Education and Justice have taken actions to identify and address issues related to racial discrimination in schools. From school years 2000-01 to 2013-14 (the most recent data available), the percentage of all K-12 public schools that had high percentages of poor and Black or Hispanic students grew from 9% to 16%.

Amid Influx of Muslim Students, Schools Temper Tensions (Video)

Growing anti-Muslim sentiment has become a problem in U.S. schools—as many as half of Muslim students have been bullied by their peers, mainly because of their religion. The school district in St. Cloud, Minn. (a small city 90 minutes west of Minneapolis) is working to create a [welcoming and tolerant school climate](#), offering language and cultural services as well as extracurricular programs designed to promote acceptance among students.

Are You Culturally Competent? Responding to Kids' Diverse Backgrounds and Experiences

“To make progress with real youth outcomes” you’ve got to get staff to be [responsive](#) to the cultures of the children in the program, said the chief program quality officer at School’s Out Washington, the state’s after-school network.

90 for All: Getting a Student’s Name Right

School personnel who are not familiar with naming conventions from other cultures may have trouble correctly entering students’ names in databases. But [misspellings](#) can result in multiple student IDs and incomplete records. Worse, incorrectly entering students’ names can mean they miss getting the services they need, including language support.

America Needs More Black Men Leading Its Classrooms

Black men represent just 2% of teachers. Although woefully underrepresented in the classroom, they can serve as crucial [male role models](#). Data also suggests that students of color are often unfairly penalized when graded by white teachers—but teachers of color do not appear to exhibit this same grading bias against white children. In fact, the tendency of white teachers to grade black and Latino students more harshly could explain up to 22% of the achievement gap between white students and students of color.

College and Career Preparation

New Survey Finds Education is Top Political Issue for Young Americans

The "GenForward" [survey](#), conducted by the Black Youth Project at the University of Chicago and the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research with responses from nearly 2,000 individuals ages 18-30, asked them to select the three most important issues to them when considering candidates. Education was selected as a top-three issue by 31% of all those surveyed.

The Condition of Future Educators 2015

An ACT [survey](#) of high school graduates who took its college-entrance exam shows that in the class of 2015, only 4% said they planned to become teachers, counselors, or administrators. In 2014, 5% said they had such plans and 7% in 2010. While about 1.9 million students were surveyed, only 87,653 said they were aiming for careers in education. The ACT found a continuation of another disturbing trend in the survey as well: students who plan to become educators are lower-than-average achievers. That finding is based on the proportion who met its college-readiness benchmarks, ACT scores that correlate with a good chance of getting at least Bs or Cs in college courses.

Common Core, College Readiness Skills Don't Match Up, Study Says

The ACT's latest National Curriculum Survey points out [mismatches](#) between the skills in certain parts of the common core and the skills college instructors consider most important for success in higher education.

Many College-Ready Students Aren't Enrolling in College, Says ACT

A new [report](#) from the ACT found about 20% of students who are likely well-prepared for their first year of college are not actually enrolling.

Barely Half of Colleges Validate Use of SAT, ACT as Success Predictors

A [study](#) by the National Association for College Admission Counseling raises a question that goes to the heart of the debate about the transition from high school to college: When colleges and universities place significant weight on admissions test scores, is that practice based on solid research? NACAC surveyed about 400 of its member colleges and found that 78% require students to submit SAT or ACT scores, but only 51% conduct what are known as "predictive validity" studies, which follow students as they progress through college. By tracking student behavior, such studies can show whether college-admission scores do a good job of predicting whether students will earn good grades and stay in school.

PARCC's 'College-Ready' Score Reflects Rigor of College Work, Study Finds

A first-of-its-kind study has found that students who score at the "college-ready" level on the PARCC exam are well-positioned to earn good grades in college. The [findings](#) provide early evidence that the assessment does what it was designed to do: measure college readiness.

Right Combination of Career, Academic Skills Pays for H.S. Grads, Study Finds

In a report, the Center for Public Education at the National School Boards Association defines the six ingredients of what it calls the "high-credentials" combination: completing Algebra 2 and advanced science; carrying a C-plus grade point average or better; completing three or more related career-focused courses and earning the accompanying professional license or certificate, and, of course, graduating from high school. The study is the last in the [NSBA's "Path Least Taken"](#) series, which explores options for students who do not attend college. The latest [report](#) found students who earn the "high credentials" combination have better job and social outcomes than young adults who earned associate degrees or did not finish their college degrees, and, in some cases, better outcomes than those who earned bachelor's degrees.

New Study Shows Promise for Reducing Early Warning Indicators

Diplomas Now increases support for students exhibiting early warning signs of trouble down the road. By helping students improve their attendance, behavior and grades in middle school, research shows they stand a significantly better chance of graduating high school on time. In a new [report](#), the research firm MDRC found that the [Diplomas Now](#) model's interventions succeeded by reducing the percentage of students with early warning signs.

Code.org Gets Facebook Boost for Diversity Efforts

Code.org will get a [\\$15 million boost](#) from social media giant Facebook for its efforts to expand access to computer science education for K-12 students across the country. Facebook said that the gift would go to develop teacher training and curriculum for public schools, particularly those serving groups of students who are underrepresented in the technology fields.

Can Digital Games Help Students Conquer the Toughest Science Content?

Ralph Bouquet, the education and outreach manager at the TV series NOVA, argues games can play a critical role in helping students conquer some of the most essential, and the most difficult, material in science. Bouquet introduced attendees gathered for the ISTE annual summit to a series of [NOVA online resources and games](#). Another NOVA resource offers "[cybersecurity lab](#)," which introduces students to hacking, presents them with the perils it poses and challenges them to set up firewalls to stave off virtual intruders.

The Plummeting Labor Market Fortunes of Teens and Young Adults

Employment prospects for teens and young adults in the nation's 100 largest metropolitan areas plummeted between 2000 and 2011. On a number of measures—employment rates, labor force underutilization, unemployment, and year-round joblessness—teens and young adults fared poorly, and sometimes disastrously. A [report](#) by the Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings provides a number of strategies to reduce youth joblessness and labor force underutilization.

Youth Employment

As of late 2014, youth in high school had an [employment rate](#) of 18%. Those who work in high school are generally less likely to drop out, but if they work more than 20 hours per week, they are more likely to do so. White students had the highest high school employment rate, but some studies show that longer work hours are more prevalent among minority and other disadvantaged students.

Three Powerful Strategies that Prepare Youth for the Workforce

For the past six months, America's Promise has published a series of profiles highlighting *2015 Youth Opportunity Fund* [grantees](#) that are supporting innovative, scalable programs that place low-income youth on a path to college and career success. This is the first article to look at trends and promising practices across all 12 of them. The fund is led by the Citi Foundation and America's Promise Alliance.

Teachers and School Districts

Study: Give Weak Teachers Good Lesson Plans, Not Professional Development

A recent [study](#) found that giving middle school math teachers access to inquiry-based lesson plans and online support significantly improved student achievement—and benefited weaker teachers the most. The effect on learning was about the same as moving from an average-performing teacher to one at the 80th percentile.

1 in 4 Teachers Miss 10 or More School Days, Analysis Finds

More than 6.5 million students in 2013-14 attended a school where at least half of teachers missed 10 days of school or more, according to the most recent estimate from the U.S. Department of Education. A [new analysis](#) by the Education Week Research Center adds some context to those numbers. Looking at the same data from the federal civil rights office, it finds that nationwide, slightly more than 1 in 4 teachers missed 10 days or more of school in 2013-14.

Chronic Absenteeism in the Nation's Schools

U.S. Department of Education announced today an [interactive website on chronic absenteeism](#) that will help break down data in an accessible manner.

Skill Levels Remain Issue in Pre-K Staffing

High-quality child care and preschool are supposed to help close the gap between children who are immersed in rich language from their earliest days and children who do not get that experience. But those programs often rely on a workforce that has a [literacy gap](#) of its own.

Map Shows Where Preschool Access and Quality Intersect

Using new data by the National Institute for Early Education Research, *The Hechinger Report* built [an interactive map](#) that shows where preschool access and quality intersect.

Schools to Begin Monitoring Students from Military Families

Schools across the country are preparing to formally track students from military families, monitoring their academic progress as they move from military base to military base and state to state, under a new provision in the federal education law. The [change](#) comes in response to concerns raised by the Department of Defense that the children of active-duty members of the Army, Navy, Coast Guard, Air Force and Marines have academic and emotional needs that schools are ill-equipped to meet.

Split of Detroit District is Latest Bid to Shore Up Troubled System

Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder signed legislation that [divides](#) the Detroit school district into two separate systems: a new district tasked with educating the city's 46,000 regular public school students; and the old district left intact solely to pay off hundreds of millions of dollars in debt. Detroit is probably the first school system in the nation to adopt the approach. The change allows the new district to devote more of its money to educating students. Under the old system, nearly \$1,100 per student in state funding went toward retiring the district's crushing debt. In the new district, educators will have that money, around \$50 million in the coming school year, at their disposal for use in classrooms.

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YOUTH WELL-BEING

The State of the World's Children 2016: A Fair Chance for Every Child

Every child has the right to health, education and protection, and every society has a stake in expanding children's opportunities in life. [The State of the World's Children 2016](#) argues that progress for the most disadvantaged children is not only a moral, but also a strategic imperative. The report concludes with a set of recommendations to help chart the course towards a more equitable world.

Children's Leadership Council Releases Child Well-Being Poll

According to a [poll](#) released by the Children's Leadership Council, Americans strongly support increased government spending on children and child well-being policies. The findings show 70% of Americans believe children would be better off if government did more to support parents and families; 63% of Americans favor increasing funding for programs and services to meet children's needs; and a majority of Americans say they are more likely to support someone who commits to making child well-being policies a priority, especially in the areas of: child abuse and family violence (75%); child poverty and hunger (71%); child health care coverage (67%); college affordability (66%), and child care and early education (58%).

Child Well-Being a Mixed-Bag in Still-Rocky Economic Climate, Says Casey Report

The lives of children improved by some measures during recent years, but their opportunities still are constrained by persistent family and neighborhood poverty, says the [2016 Kids Count Data Book](#)

The CDC and WHO Are Teaming Up to End the "Contagious Disease" of Child Violence

The World Health Organization [announced](#) the first coordinated plan to end violence against children. It includes a seven-point strategy that consists of measures such as implementing and enforcing laws that limit young people's access to firearms; changing beliefs and values around gender roles; creating safe environments by doing things like improving housing; increasing parent and caregiver support; strengthening economies; shoring up support services such as treatment programs for juvenile offenders; and educating children in life and social skills.

Compare These Gun Death Rates: The U.S. Is In a Different World

Its level of violence makes the United States an extreme [outlier](#) when measured against the experience of other advanced countries. In Germany, being murdered with a gun is as uncommon as being killed by a falling object in the United States. About two people out of every million are killed in a gun homicide. In the United States, two per million is roughly the death rate for hypothermia or plane crashes. In Poland and England, only about one out of every million people die in gun homicides each year — about as often as an American dies in an agricultural accident or falling from a ladder. In Japan, where gun homicides are even rarer, the likelihood of dying this way is about the same as an American's chance of being killed by lightning — roughly one in 10 million.

Powerful Rifles at Center of Gun Debates Are Also Used by Some School Police

Recent debates over guns, which have touched heavily on school violence, have often focused on the availability of powerful semi-automatic rifles. Some school district police departments stock these types of [guns](#), including AR-15s and modified weapons obtained through a military surplus program.

Newtown Parents Offer to Settle Lawsuit for \$5.5 Million Apiece

The parents of two children killed in the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting massacre are offering to [settle](#) their wrongful death lawsuit against Newtown, Connecticut, and its school system for \$5.5 million apiece. The parents of Jesse Lewis and Noah Pozner filed the settlement offers Monday in Danbury Superior Court. The lawsuit alleges security measures at the school weren't adequate when Adam Lanza fatally shot 20 first-graders and six educators in 2012. The other victims' parents are not part of the lawsuit.

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. To develop a better response, the Urban Institute, Joyce Foundation, and Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies [convened](#) more than 100 people from communities affected by violence. 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.

Resources for Discussing Police Violence, Race, and Racism With Students

Trauma can leave children in a perpetual state of fight-or-flight, interfering with normal brain development, executive functioning, and engagement in classroom activities. And, short of addressing trauma, [discussing](#) current events in the classroom provides a real learning opportunity and a chance for students to develop social awareness and empathy about their peers' experiences.

More Than 1,300 Suspected Child Predators Arrested During Operation Broken Heart

The Department of Justice [announced](#) the recently concluded Operation Broken Heart III led to the arrest of more than 1,300 suspected child predators. This operation was conducted during April and May 2016 by the OJJDP-funded Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Forces as a coordinated investigation to identify and arrest suspected child sexual predators.

Sextortion Affecting Thousands of U.S. Children

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) issued the [public service announcement](#) that is designed for parents, educators, caregivers, and children and warns about the dangers of sextortion. It further explains the threat of sextortion, outlines measures adults can take to help educate and prevent children from becoming victims of sextortion, and provides resources for victims.

“Essentials for Childhood: Steps to Create Safe, Stable, Nurturing Relationships and Environments”

A [guide](#) by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides evidence-based strategies to help communities build safe and stable relationships and environments that will protect children and prevent child maltreatment.

Health

Every School Needs a Full-Time Nurse, American Academy of Pediatrics Says

A [policy statement](#) by the American Academy of Pediatrics states every school needs at least one full-time nurse. According to the National Association of School Nurses, just 45% of public schools have a school nurse all day, every day. Another 30% of schools have a school nurse who works part-time in one or more schools.

Teenagers' Health, Educational Outcomes Improving

Teenagers in the "Generation Z" cohort—those born after 1995—are [healthier](#) and on more solid ground educationally than teenagers were a few years ago, despite living through a widespread economic downturn, says the 2016 Kids Count Data Book.

Study Finds Concussions Prevalent Among H.S. Water Polo Players

Nearly a third of water polo players who only played the sport in high school reported suffering at least one concussion during practice or a game, according to [a study](#) published online last month in the journal *Frontiers in Neurology*.

Teen Stress and the Growing Brain

Researchers have known for a while now that the teenage brain is wired differently; it remains [under construction](#) during adolescence and will not develop completely until a person's early 20s.

Reduced Disparities in Birth Rates Among Teens Aged 15-19 Years

From 2006 to 2014, the birth rate for teens aged 15–19 years [declined](#) 41% overall (from 41.1 to 24.2 per 1,000 females). The greatest decline was for Hispanics (51%), followed by non-Hispanic blacks (44%), and non-Hispanic whites (35%).

Marijuana Use Remains Flat Among Colorado Teens, Survey Finds

One out of every five Colorado teens say they have used marijuana in the last month, but that rate has not increased since pot was legalized in the state and is in line with the national average, according to a new [report](#) from the state Health Department.

Most Antidepressant Drugs Ineffective for Children and Teens, According to Study

According to the most [comprehensive comparison](#) of commonly prescribed antidepressant drugs so far, most available antidepressants are ineffective – and some may be unsafe – for children and teenagers with major depression.

Multicultural Mental Health Infographic

Mental health conditions cause changes in thoughts, feelings and mood and can [affect](#) home, work, school, relationships with others, sleep, appetite, decision making and may worsen other medical problems.

Pine Ridge Suicides Highlight Stresses on Native American Youth

Pine Ridge, home of the Oglala Sioux Tribe, drew [national attention](#) last year after nine young people aged 12 to 22 killed themselves during a four-month period. Another 103 youth attempted suicide in that period.

Free Curriculum Helps Youth Prevent Suicide Among Their LGBTQ Peers

The Trevor Project wants to encourage young people to become "[lifeguards](#)" for one another by giving them the knowledge and techniques they need to help friends in crisis. Educators and youth service providers can request an in-person workshop free-of-charge, or they can visit a no-cost collection of digital resources to create their own personalized trainings.

Homeless and Foster Youth

Hidden in Plain Sight

A [report](#) by Civic Enterprises examines the growing problem of student homelessness by interviewing and surveying currently and formerly homeless students as well as the state coordinators and local liaisons assigned to help them.

Garbage Bag Suitcase: A Memoir

"I always felt isolated and alone" in foster care, begins Shenandoah Chefalo in "Garbage Bag Suitcase." "As soon as I understood that the suffering I felt as a child was being felt by millions of other children, I knew it was time to write this [book](#)."

Represent: A Magazine for Foster Kids by Foster Kids

The nonprofit Youth Communication in Manhattan shares the voices of youth in foster care through Represent magazine, used as an [educational tool](#) by youth workers nationwide. Organizers created the publication so that the stories and voices of foster youth could influence policy and practice for youth in care.

Senators Propose Grant Program to Help Dual Status Youth

A proposed [federal grant program](#) aims to encourage cooperation between states' juvenile justice and child welfare agencies, to help youth who encounter both systems. The Childhood Outcomes Need New Efficient Community Teams (CONNECT) Act would authorize grants for collecting data on and developing policies to help so-called dual status youth.

House Judiciary Committee Reauthorizes Federal Juvenile Justice Block Grants

The House Judiciary Committee [approved](#) by voice vote legislation ([HR 68](#)) to reauthorize the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant program, which lapsed in 2009 and has received no funding since 2013. The program provides grants for state and local initiatives that hold youth accountable for their behavior in ways that are appropriate for their age and development, such as graduated sanctions like curfews and drug testing instead of incarceration, alternatives to detention for status offenses and diversion assessment tools. The bill authorizes \$25 million for five years.

Financial Aid Made Easier for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

The Department of Education announced [policy changes](#) designed to make it easier for homeless youth to navigate the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

GAO Calls For Reducing Barriers to College for Foster and Homeless Youth

A new [report](#) by the Government Accountability Office concluded burdensome paperwork requirements, limited academic preparation and a lack of adult guidance and support make it difficult for foster and homeless youth to pursue higher education.

A Qualitative Research Study of Kinship Diversion Practices

Over the past two decades, there has been increased federal and state emphasis on family involvement in child welfare agency policies and practices. A [brief](#) explores the practice of "kinship diversion," in which children are placed with relatives as an alternative to foster care. Kinship diversion was examined in one state, interviewing caseworkers, families, and court personnel to find out how the practice works, and what support kinship caregivers need.

Mindfulness Classes Help Homeless Youth Understand, Regulate Emotions and Behaviors

Across the country, programs like Urban Peak in Denver are holding [mindfulness classes](#) to help homeless young people understand how their experiences have shaped their brain chemistry, impacting the way they think and behave. In San Francisco, Larkin Street Youth Services partners with the Osher Center for Integrative Medicine to help youth understand these patterns and to react differently to everyday stressors.

Emotional/Social Development

Emotional Intelligence: How It Interfaces with Social & Emotional Learning

The [13-minute video](#) presentation fosters an understanding of how emotional intelligence (EQ) and social and emotional learning (SEL) interface. It was designed to provide adults with a solid grounding for helping youth develop SEL skills.

Study: Music Education Aids Cognitive Development

Early [findings](#) from a five-year longitudinal study being conducted by researchers with the Brain and Creativity Institute at the University of Southern California, in partnership with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Association and the Heart of Los Angeles (a community center) suggest studying music can accelerate cognitive development, particularly the auditory, speech, and language-processing abilities. Previous studies have shown that adult musicians' brains are distinct from those of non-musicians, and that musical training in early childhood is associated with structural changes in the brain. The USC researchers write that this study should increase the field's understanding of how and whether musical training affects the brain.

Combined Daycare/ Nursing Home Brings Young and Old Together (Video)

At Seattle's Providence Mount St. Vincent nursing home, an on-site daycare allows toddlers and elderly adults to [interact](#) on a daily basis.

Boston Students Speak Out, Make Change with Support from Youth on Board

Young people in Boston have created what may be a [\\$5 million impact](#) in their city. Public school students came together as a youth council, with involvement and organizing support from Youth on Board (a 22-year-old nonprofit) working to make the voices of Boston youth heard. After they organized two school walkouts and took over a budget meeting, Mayor Marty Walsh announced the addition of \$4.7 million in school funding.

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WEBINARS

Coordinating Early Childhood Data Policies: Opportunities for States (July 19, 1 – 2 p.m.)

Recent changes to the Child Care and Development Block Grant, Proposed Head Start Standards, and Every Student Succeeds Act have broad implications for early childhood data collection. The Early Childhood Data Collaborative will host a [discussion](#) of strategies and approaches.

The Model Program Guide iGuides (July 19, 1-2:30 p.m.)

The [webinar](#) will highlight OJJDP's Model Programs Guide (MPG) and the MPG iGuides, which provide users with 10 steps to take before implementing evidence-based intervention and prevention juvenile justice programs. The webinar will review [the first MPG iGuide](#), which is on school-based bullying prevention.

Preparing Mentees and Families for Successful Matches (July 21, 1 – 2:15 p.m.)

The [webinar](#) will focus on how effective preparation and training for a mentoring program match can promote safety, teach important relational skills, and bolster family involvement.

The Unintended Consequences of Domestic Violence Arrest Policies on Girls (July 25, 3 – 4:30 p.m.)

The focus of the [webinar](#) will be the unintended consequences that mandatory and pro-arrest policies of domestic violence have on girls and their resultant involvement in juvenile justice system involvement. Presenters will discuss alternative policies and system responses to family conflict and in-home assault.

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