

**Dropout Prevention Update**  
**January 1, 2002- Volume 1- No. 7**  
**National Dropout Prevention Center/Network**

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Best wishes for a healthy, happy, and peace-filled new year.

**Top Stories**

America's 15-year-olds perform at the international average of their peers in other highly industrialized countries in reading, mathematics and science, according to the latest report issued by the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OCED)

<http://www.nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2002115>

*Perfect Schools in 2013?* Two decades of national debate over how to fix public schools have come down to this: Within 12 years, the federal government expects all eighth-graders to be fully proficient in math and reading. <http://www.csmonitor.com/2001/1213/p20s1-comv.html>

A lively U.S. Supreme Court oral argument had several justices recalling their own school days and wondering whether common classroom practices were threatened by a strict interpretation of federal law. <http://www.you-click.net/GoNow/a15864a47946a92915319a6>

**Funding Sources**

To encourage greater participation by first-time and inexperienced applicants for federal funding, the Department of Education recently published new rules in the Federal Register.

<http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/finrule/2001-4/113001a.html>

The Smaller Learning Communities program will support the planning, implementation or expansion of small, safe, & successful learning environments in large public high schools to help ensure that all students graduate with the knowledge & skills necessary to make successful transitions to college & careers. Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: February 19, 2002.

<http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/announcements/>

Best Buy Children's Foundation Invites Proposals for Programs Benefiting School-Aged Children Emphasis is placed on innovative programs that promote personal achievement through mentor relationships, development of life and leadership skills, and educational opportunities outside of regular classroom instruction. Deadline: February 15.

<http://www.bestbuy.com/about/CommunityRelations/ChildrensFoundation.asp?m=435&cat=463>

**Policy Updates**

This study suggests that states' policies on teacher quality may make important differences in student achievement. [http://www.principals.org/news/bltn\\_tch\\_qul\\_stdnt\\_ach1101.html](http://www.principals.org/news/bltn_tch_qul_stdnt_ach1101.html)

A fact sheet and the Secretary Paige's full statement on President Bush's education reform bill, the "No Child Left Behind Act" are available. <http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/12-001/12112001b.html>. The complete 1,184-page ES EA bill is located at

<http://www.house.gov/rules/hr0001cr.pdf>.

**Effective Strategies**

**Family Involvement**

Learn some key lessons about the role of parents as educational change agents.

[http://www.pewtrusts.com/return\\_results.cfm?content\\_item\\_id=844](http://www.pewtrusts.com/return_results.cfm?content_item_id=844)

Once considered the public education's core supporters, many minority parents have quietly embraced other schooling options. Their experiences help illuminate the realities behind the politically charged debate over school choice.

<http://www.you-click.net/GoNow/a15864a47946a92915319a10>

### **Early Childhood Education**

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) recently released a study of early childcare that found small increases in family income could better prepare low-income students for school. <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/about/crmc/secc/index.htm>

*Teaching Young Children to Resist Bias: What Parents Can Do* provides suggestions on how to help children grow up to value, accept, and comfortably interact with diverse people.

[http://www.uua.org/re/reach/parenting/children\\_resist\\_bias.html](http://www.uua.org/re/reach/parenting/children_resist_bias.html)

### **Reading/Writing Programs**

The United States scored in the middle on a new 32-nation study of educational achievement, experts say, because many of the best readers in the world live here-and many more of the worst. <http://www.you-click.net/GoNow/a15864a48396a92915319a11>

The NWREL assessment model for good writing has seven traits: ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions, and presentation. A collection of lesson plans for grades 6-8 is available. <http://www.nwrel.org/assessment/lessonplans.asp?odelay=2&d=1>

### **Violence Prevention**

A new report from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) documents the growth of small-town gang problems between the years 1970 and 1998.

<http://www.jointogether.org/sa/news/summaries/reader/0%2C1854%2C546518%2C00.html>

A federal study of violent deaths in American schools found that there were warning signs--such as verbal threats, notes, or suicidal behavior--prior to many of the incidents.

<http://www.you-click.net/GoNow/a15864a48396a92915319a5>

### **Resources & Tools**

Stories of the impact of business life on children rarely appear in the business press, debate rages in the broader community, and many parents fear that their children may be paying the price for their success. [http://www.hbsp.harvard.edu/hbsp/prod\\_detail.asp?R0110C](http://www.hbsp.harvard.edu/hbsp/prod_detail.asp?R0110C)

A new "research-to-practice" booklet from the National Research Center on English Learning & Achievement (CELA) offers some of the most effective classroom strategies doing so. It also includes a brief summary of the research on which the strategies are based.

<http://cela.albany.edu/publication/ilu.htm>

NCES' new School District Demographics Website provides access to school district demographic data useful for describing and analyzing characteristics of school districts, children, and K-12 education. <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sdds/>

*Add It Up: Using Research to Improve Minority Education for Low-Income and Minority Students* clearly explains new research on turning around low-performing schools. It also examines the effectiveness of the standards movement and Title I programs. <http://www.prrac.org/additup.html>

### **Feedback**

We appreciate comments from our readers. We are in the process of redesigning the Web site to make it more user friendly and we need your suggestions. Please complete the user survey on the Web site <http://www.dropoutprevention.org>

Sources: ED Week, JTO Direct, NCES, NEGP, PEN NewsBlast,