CONTENTS
Top Stories | Sound Connections | Video | Funding Sources | Policy Updates | International Notes | Students with Disabilities | Effective Strategies | Resources and Tools | Feedback

It's time to plan for the 2008 National Dropout Prevention Network Conference, to be held in Atlanta, Georgia, November 16-19, 2008. The Call for Presenters is now online!
http://www.dropoutprevention.org/conferen/conferen.htm

Top Stories
A new report, *One in 100: Behind Bars in America 2008*, by Pew's Public Safety Performance Project details how, for the first time in history, more than one in every 100 adults in America are in jail or prison.
http://stage.pewcenteronthestates.org/uploadedFiles/One%20in%20100.pdf

This report is the first to analyze how child and youth well-being has changed among Black, Hispanic, and White children from 1985-2004. Using the FCD Child Well-Being Index (CWI) and its domains and indicators, the report presents a new and surprising picture of change.
http://www.fcd-us.org/usr_doc/DisparitiesBrief.pdf

Sound Connections
Listen to the archived first radio Webcast of *Solutions to the Dropout Crisis* with our first guest, Dr. Steve Edwards, author of the *Principal's Role in Dropout Prevention: Seven Key Principles.*
http://www.dropoutprevention.org/webcast/ep.php?ep=00001

Video
Meet Bill Milliken, Founder of Communities In Schools, in this interview from the recent At-Risk Youth National FORUM.
http://cufan.clemson.edu/psaradio/ndpcvideo/Milliken.mov

Funding Sources
Full-Service Community Schools Program notice inviting applications for new awards for Fiscal Year 2008. Full-service community schools provide comprehensive academic, social, mental, physical, and vocational programs and services to meet individual, family, and community needs. Up to $500,000.
Deadline for Notice of Intent to Apply: March 17, 2008. Deadline for submission: April 15, 2008.
http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do;jsessionid=H1hHJYZjJ8lz29HVzyt42G2v2jhy29LKy1L2ZkTwR53wJTkFLd81!247387810?oppId=16885&flag2006=true&mode=VIEW

The Sprint Foundation Sprint Ahead for Education grant program awards grants to school districts and individual schools to fund the purchase of resources that facilitate and encourage character education among K-12 students. Maximum Award: $25,000.
Deadline: April 15, 2008.
http://www.sprint.com/citizenship/education/sprintahead/

The Dana Foundation Rural Arts Initiative grants funds to professional development programs for performing arts teachers in rural communities in the U.S. Maximum Award: $50,000.
Deadline: June 4, 2008.
http://www.dana.org/grants/rural/

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools is seeking applications for its Partnerships in Character Education Program.
Deadline: March 31, 2008.
http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/announcements/2008-1/022108b.html

Policy Updates
A report from the School Finance Redesign Project (SFRP), it remains unclear as to how to effectively educate a growing number of poor and minority children while schools are financed and regulated as if that knowledge is apparent.
http://www.schoolfinanceredesign.org/pub/pdf/sfrp_interim_07_web.pdf

Public Education Network ("PEN") has developed this Guide to encourage community-based organizations to employ public engagement strategies while school finance litigation takes place in their states.
http://www.publiceducation.org/pdf/Publications/Public_Engagement/2008_Litigation_Guide.pdf

International Notes
Prime Minister Gordon Brown says he wants to see one in five young people on apprenticeships within 10 years, in a push to win the global "skills race."
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/7213127.stm

Girls Helping Girls is a youth-led international nonprofit organization that partners girls in the United States with girls in schools and community organizations in developing countries to jointly identify problems in their communities and develop social change through micro lending projects to address those issues.
http://www.empoweragirl.org/pages/page.php?pageid=1

According to the 2008 UNICEF report, while recent data show a fall in the rate of under-five mortality, much more is needed to reduce the over 26,000 children under five who die each day.
http://www.unicef.org/sowc08/docs/sowc08.pdf

Students with Disabilities
Youth with Disabilities in the Foster Care System: Barriers to Success and Proposed Policy Solutions, by the National Council on Disability. This report examines one exceptionally challenged group in particular: older youth (specifically, preteen through young adult) with disabilities who are involved in the foster care system.
http://www.ncd.gov/newsroom/publications/2008/pdf/FosterCareSystem_Report.pdf

This document outlines best practices for professionals who encounter culturally and linguistically diverse students in their classrooms in order to promote academic success and prevent unnecessary referrals to special education.
http://www.nccrest.org/Briefs/Pre-referral_Brief.pdf?v_document_name=Pre-Referral%20Brief

National service organizations should indeed try to sensitize participants to the disability experience, but there are better ways to do so than relying on simplistic simulations. The key to increasing understanding is to have people see what it's like to have a disability first-hand — from people in the disability community, not a blindfold or a wheelchair.
http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/epicenter/practices/index.php?ep_action=view&ep_id=4830

Effective Strategies

Early Childhood Education

Tangible Steps Toward Tomorrow, a publication developed by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in collaboration with IDEO, details a human-centered approach to evolving the system of early education for the needs and possibilities of the 21st century.
http://www.wkkf.org/DesktopModules/WKF.00_DmaSupport/ViewDoc.aspx?LanguageID=0&CID=168&ListID=28&ItemID=5000407&fld=PDFFile

Professional Development

Take the first step toward engaging the professionals in your schools and districts. *On Point: Reconceptualizing Continuing Professional Development: A Framework for Planning.*
http://www.urbanschools.org/pdf/OP_Recon.pdf?v_document_name=Reconceptualizing%20Continuing%20Professional%20Development

More schools are asking, "How do we infuse thinking into the curriculum?" Teaching students to think is the theme of the latest issue of *Educational Leadership.*
http://www.ascd.org/portal/site/ascd/menuitem.c00a836e7622024fb85516f762108a0c/

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

A new analysis from Achieve finds that 18 states and the District of Columbia currently require students to complete a college and career-ready curriculum in order to graduate.
http://www.achieve.org/files/50-state-2008-prepub.pdf

Resources and Tools

Because of the urgency for moving forward in creating a school environment that promotes mental health and reduces problems, the School Mental Health Project has just completed a new book-length resource online to make it immediately accessible at no cost and with no restrictions on its use:.*Mental Health in School & School Improvement: Current Status, Concerns, and New Directions.*
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/mhbook/mhbook.pdf

Unfortunately, a majority of ninth graders in low-performing high schools begin freshman year with significant reading difficulties. A new report from MDRC presents the early findings from the Enhanced Reading Opportunities (ERO) study, which is an evaluation of two supplemental literacy programs (Reading Apprenticeship Academic Literacy and Xtreme Reading).
http://www.mdrc.org/publications/471/full.pdf

Feedback

We appreciate comments from our readers. We invite new subscribers to receive the Dropout Prevention Update. Please contact us at ndpc@clemson.edu.

Sources: PEN Weekly Newsblast, EquiNews, The Resource Center, National Service Briefing, School Mental Health Project, AYPF, MiddleWeb, JUV JUST