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**National Dropout Prevention Month Recognized During October**

**City, State (Date**)-October is National Dropout Prevention Month, a time to focus on increasing awareness of the long-term effects on students, the economy, and society when students drop out of school. National Dropout Prevention Month challenges our nation to become better informed about how to prevent students from dropping out of school. Too often, the need for both dropout prevention awareness and viable solutions is underestimated. While progress in reducing school dropout rates has been made, the need for greater awareness still exists. As recently as 2014, for example, the National Center for Education Statistics noted 6.5% of all U.S. 16- to 24-year-olds were not enrolled in school and had not earned a high school diploma or equivalency credential (www.nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=16).

The decision to drop out of school is not due to one single factor. It is the result of a process that often begins years before the actual event. Communities that understand the life-long impact for students who drop out of school and that work together to support at-risk students, however, can help decrease the likelihood that students will drop out of school. Begun early, effective prevention initiatives are the result of community-wide efforts that involve families, businesses, faith-based organizations, and schools.

National Dropout Prevention Month encourages public, private and nonprofit entities to raise awareness of the issue and encourage all students to stay in school for the brighter future it means. The effects of dropping out of school are far-reaching. Researchers at Georgetown University report that dropouts are typically qualified for only about 10% of our economy’s jobs <https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/HelpWanted.ExecutiveSummary.pdf>

Further, the Alliance for Excellent Education reported that, on average, nongraduates earn $8,000 less per year than high school graduates; rely more heavily on public health services; are more likely to be involved in the criminal justice system; are more likely to rely on various sources of public assistance and welfare; often experience quality-of-life challenges as a result of lower income levels and higher rates of public dependence; and are less likely to vote, have poorer health, and have shorter life expectancies than graduates.

“If we can call attention to the long-term challenges presented when a student drops out of school and the opportunities we as communities have for addressing the needs of at-risk students before they drop out,” said Dr. Sandy Addis, Executive Director of the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network, “then we are better prepared to counsel students about the benefits of staying in school and to direct them to the resources they need to help them experience success. Our goal must be zero school dropouts. Increased awareness created by National Dropout Prevention Month is one step toward that goal.”

The National Dropout Prevention Center offers free resources to promote awareness and public education about dropout prevention for the annual observance. For more information, please contact [ndpc@clemson.edu](mailto:ndpc@clemson.edu) or visit [www.dropoutprevention.org/Octoberresources](http://www.dropoutprevention.org/Octoberresources) to download resources to help promote National Dropout Prevention Month.

**About the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network**

Established in 1986, the National Dropout Prevention Center/Network (NDPC/N) serves as a clearinghouse on issues related to dropout prevention, intervention, and reentry/recovery; offers strategies designed to increase graduation rates in America’s schools; promotes awareness of successful programs and policies related to dropout prevention; and assists schools, school districts, and states across the U.S. in reducing dropout rates and improving high school graduation rates. NDPC/N is a well-established national resource for sharing solutions for student success. By promoting awareness of successful programs and policies related to dropout prevention through conferences and events and dissemination of information, the NDPC/N and its members have had a great impact on education from the local to the national level. Through its clearinghouse function, active research projects, publications, professional learning and development activities, and third-party evaluations program reviews, the NDPC/N serves as a research center for practitioners, researchers, and policymakers to reshape school, family, and community environments to meet the needs of youth in at-risk situations so these students receive the quality education and support necessary to successfully graduate from school. The National Dropout Prevention Center/Network is a resource network and is the nation’s leading provider of practical, effective, and research-based solutions to engaging students and reducing school dropout. Visit our website, [www.dropoutprevention.org](http://www.dropoutprevention.org) , for more information.

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