

ENEWS



30 Years & Counting

A Monthly Forum for Sharing and Interchange

March, 2016 (Vol. 20 #6)

Concerned about addressing barriers to student learning and teaching & re-engaging disconnected students? Concerned about equity of opportunity? Concerned about whole child development? This newsletter focuses on relevant policies and practices.



We encourage you to forward this to others. If this has been forwarded and you want to receive it directly, contact Ltaylor@ucla.edu



For more on resources from our national Center, see http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

WHAT'S HERE THIS MONTH

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EMERGING ISSUE

Transition to ESSA = Choice

With enactment of the *Every Student Succeeds Act*, the shift to more local control is on the way. As state and local stakeholders play a decisive role in the planning and implementation of the legislation and its guidelines, there is a choice to be made related to addressing barriers to learning and teaching.

Will planners just maintain/do a bit of tinkering with the current unsatisfactory status quo?

Or will they begin the process of transforming student and learning supports into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system?

Our view is that ESSA provides an opportunity to begin planning for transforming the outdated patchwork of programs and services that have emerged over the years.*

What's your view?

Send your comments for sharing to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

*For an analysis of how the act addresses the nature and scope of supports to address barriers to learning and re-engage disconnected students, see:

ESSA, Equity of Opportunity, and Addressing Barriers to Learning

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/essaanal.pdf

For a range of resources related to this matter, see

National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html

NEWS ABOUT SCHOOLS

General Education Development (GED) students still struggling. Masked in Oregon's recent celebration of higher graduation rates was the fact that 26 percent of the state's students did not graduate high school in the regular way last year. In the Portland area, there are several programs to retain failing high schoolers or encourage them to come back after dropping out. But after they have left the K-12 system for good, the General Educational Development or GED test is the only one available to give Oregonians a high school degree equivalent. Some critics say the Common Core-based and now computerized test is more difficult than it needs to be. Ever since a new GED test rolled out Jan 1, 2014, passing rates have been a small fraction of historical levels (in Oregon almost 12,000 passed in 2013, this dropped to about 2,000 in 2014). Currently, 24 states are offering alternatives to the GED. 2/11/16 http://www.pamplinmedia.com/0t/9-news/292842-169366-oregon-ged-students-still-struggling

Learning how to teach in an increasingly diverse classroom. Drake University in Des Moines IA has partnered with the city's public schools to offer a master's degree that will focus on "cultural competency" and on instruction for children new to English. The experiment in Des Moines gives the 32,500-student school district a chance to train a nearly all-white group of instructors, many of them born and raised in Iowa, in how to effectively serve an increasingly diverse student population. White students now make up less than half of the school population; Hispanics account for a quarter and African Americans for a fifth. A fifth of the students are enrolled in the English Language Learner program, having arrived from countries such as Bhutan, Bosnia, Burundi, Eritrea, Laos, Mexico, and Vietnam. 2/1/16 http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2016/02/learning-to-teach-amore-diverse-classroom/458736/

Schools lose hundreds of students, millions in funding. After enrollment in Baltimore public schools unexpectedly dropped following years of growth, officials are bracing for nearly \$30 million in funding cuts and investigating whether hundreds of students were mistakenly kept on the rolls. The city schools chief executive launched the internal investigation into student rolls after he noticed discrepancies between attendance data and what he saw when he visited schools. He said he expected to find overcrowded classrooms, a common complaint from teachers, but often did not. Among some educators in city schools, the phenomenon has a name: "ghost students." District officials said they discovered "irregularities" and the extent of the problem, about 1,900 pupil slots will no longer be funded by taxpayers, when they took the annual student count Sept. 30. The district has had years of budget problems, including an unforeseen deficit of \$60 million that grew to \$100 million last year, forcing the first layoffs in more than a decade. 1/31/16

 $https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/baltimore-schools-lose-hundreds-of-students-millions-infunding/2016/01/31/cb741928-c6e4-11e5-9693-933a4d31bcc8_story.html$

Weathering the cuts: Factors in local schools' ability to sink or swim. Oklahoma news headlines about midyear state funding cuts for public schools have all been million-dollar totals and political debate over root causes and potential solutions. But the impact on local school districts is already beginning to trickle down in the form of employee layoffs, eliminated teacher positions, hiring freezes and canceled purchase orders. Districts that began the year the most cash-strapped and that rely the most on funding from the Oklahoma State Department of Education are having a much more difficult time keeping their budgets in the black amid midyear cuts expected to reach at least \$67 million. With Fiscal Year 2017 shaping up to be at least as bad as 2016 because of a sharp decline in the state's economy, administrators and school board members are already seeking input from teachers, principals and parents about what and whom to keep or cut for next year. Because state funding levels haven't kept up with student enrollment growth, even fast-growing school districts in the state have had to cut personnel costs to maintain service levels for students. 2/9/16 http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/education/weathering-the-cuts-two-biggest-factors-in-local-schools-ability/article_c21232ea-0c75-5a0e-a1d9-23972d108406.html

Note: Each week the Center highlights newsworthy stories online at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/whatsnew/linkstolatest.htm
If you see a story that should be included, let us know. Send to ltaylor@ucla.edu.

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This year I'm a star, but what will I be next year? A Black Hole?

Woody Allen

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THIS MONTH'S FOCUS FOR SCHOOLS TO ADDRESS BARRIERS TO LEARNING

March: Addressing the Spring Slump

"I noticed a trend lately a sleepy, tired and sad trend. We're growing, slowly but surely, more impatient and grumpy as the year progresses. I'm calling this phenomenon the 'Spring Semester Slump.' It's common sense, really. We start out the school year relatively excited to be back on campus, with friends, possibly even excited to be in class. Fall break comes, and while it's well-appreciated, we can come back to school without much coaxing. School has yet to get truly difficult. ... This goes out the proverbial window, however, after Fall Break....Winter Break cannot come fast enough. Those three beautiful weeks are the shortest three weeks of my life.... After that brief respite, spring semester begins."

Amanda Gray – http://www.ndsmcobserver.com

"We teachers don't always admit it to students and parents, but the curriculum does get more complex as the year goes on. There is an assumption that basic skills have been covered and that good study habits have been formed. But for the child with anxiety, attention, or learning disabilities, this may not be the case. He or she might be struggling with gaps in basic skills or experiencing problems with speed of performance. When this gap lowers his performance level, or causes missed deadlines, things get challenging....

Margaret Foster – http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/10598.html

While a second semester slump may have a small effect on motivated and successful students, there is a sense of mounting frustration for students who aren't doing well (socially, emotionally, academically) that can lead to problems in attendance and effort. For some, it is just that the school year seems so long and their motivation lags. For others, it is clear that they aren't doing well and are unlikely to catch up. For those in their last year at a school, a version of 'senioritis' hits, and they hope to coast through and survive the last few months.

Thus, as the school year progresses, an increasing concern is not only on how to enhance engagement in learning, but how to re-engage those students who have become actively disengaged in classroom instruction. From a psychological perspective, student disengagement is associated with situational threats to feelings of competence, self-determination, and/or relatedness to valued others. The demands may be from school staff, peers, instructional content and processes. Psychological disengagement may be internalized (e.g., boredom, emotional distress) and/or externalized (misbehavior, dropping out).

Disengagement is associated with behavior problems, and behavior and learning problems may eventually lead to dropout. Engagement is associated with positive academic outcomes, including achievement and persistence in school; and it is higher in classrooms with supportive teachers and peers, challenging and authentic tasks, opportunities for choice, and sufficient structure Re-engagement depends on use of interventions that help minimize conditions that negatively affect intrinsic motivation and maximize conditions that have a positive intrinsic motivational effect.

Countering the Slump

Margaret Foster (http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/10598.html) stresses the following:

- >Parents and teachers should pause at this point, assess what knowledge or skills are missing, and help students acquire them....
- >If boredom is your child's problem, change things up. It's not always possible to find a new teacher or class for your child, but changing the way your child does things can make a

difference. Can he or she do homework in a new setting, like the dining room or a library? Or with a partner? Is there a new twist a teacher can add to a repetitive assignment? Is there a new sport your child can try?...

- >Practice makes perfect, but poor practice creates a mess. If your child is struggling, it might be time to check on those good habits that were set at the beginning of the school year. Is he still using his planner, or does it sit at the bottom of his backpack? Does your child still study for small quizzes, or does he obsess about larger tests? Have homework routines been shelved?...
- >Establishing or re-establishing good habits and routines planner use, homework structure, or breaking large assignments into smaller ones can increase the capacity of working memory and help us manage complexity. Making something a habit or routine allows you to do tasks without having to tap into working memory. Increased working memory enables higher-level thinking and increases performance and speed we work smarter, not harder!"

For more on keeping students and staff engaged in learning through the second semester, see our online clearinghouse Quick Find on *Motivation* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/motiv.htm

Here are a few resources listed there:

>Engaging and Re-engaging Students in Learning at School – http://www.smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/engagingandre-engagingstudents.pdf

>About School Engagement and Re-engagement http://www.smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/reengagestudents.pdf

>Re-engaging Students in Learning at School http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newsletter/winter02.pdf

Note: Integrating support for learning and teaching into the natural opportunities and phases of the school year provide unlimited opportunities. For a range of ideas organized by each month, see *Ideas for Enhancing Learning Supports at your school this month* on the homepage at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

If you had three apples and four oranges in one hand and four apples and three oranges in the other hand, what would you have?

Very large hands!

NATIONAL INITIATIVE FOR TRANSFORMING STUDENT & LEARNING SUPPORTS*

Just released - analysis of:

ESSA, Equity of Opportunity, and Addressing Barriers to Learning*

See the analysis of how the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) focuses on addressing barriers to learning and re-engaging disconnected students -- http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/essaanal.pdf

Among the Conclusions

- The legislation clearly underscores that barriers to learning need to be addressed so that many more students will be able to meet challenging state academic standards.
- At the same time, the act addresses such barriers in a piecemeal and mostly indirect manner.
- As a result, ESSA conveys a fragmented picture and a lack of coherence with respect to essential student and learning supports.
- Student and learning supports need to be unified and developed into comprehensive system if they are to significantly enhance equity of opportunity as an essential component in enabling every student to succeed.
- If states and LEAs are to move away from existing fragmented and marginalized approaches for dealing with factors interfering with student success, they will need to use the transition to local control as a time to plan beyond the limitations of federal formulations.

Thinking Out of the Box

The analysis indicates the imperative for transformative system change. From this perspective, the report also highlights frameworks and prototypes that can be used as planning aids and guides in developing a unified, comprehensive, equitable, and systemic approach for addressing barriers to learning and re-engaging disconnected students.

For information on the *National Initiative to Transform Student and Learning Supports*, see http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html

Please forward this report to a few colleagues you think might be interested.

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU SEE HAPPENING TO TRANSFORM STUDENT AND LEARNING SUPPORTS

And if anyone is thinking about increasing the capacity of a district or school with respect to developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student supports, *we can help*. Send all info to ltaylor@ucla.edu.

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The best way to cheer yourself up is to cheer somebody else up.

Mark Twain

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^{*}From the national Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA (co directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor). Send comments to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

UCLA CENTER DEVELOPED RESOURCES – UPDATE

New

>Policy Brief:

ESSA, Equity of Opportunity and Addressing Barriers to Learning – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/essaanal.pdf

>Hot Issue:

Concerns about Personalizing Teaching – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/ongoinghotissues.htm

Updated Resources

- > Responding to Crisis at a School http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/crisis/crisis.pdf
- >Students and Psychotropic Medication: the School's Role –

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/psymeds/med1.pdf

>Teen Pregnancy Prevention - http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/teenpreg/teenpreg.pdf

School Practitioner Community of Practice Interchange: Weekly Listserv

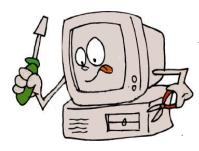
http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm

- >How will the Every Student Succeeds Act affect student support services?
- >How does a multi-tiered student support model fit into a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports?
- >Who provides student and learning supports?

Note: The latest School Practitioner and archived previous ones are on our website at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm (Also on our Facebook page) Follow-up exchanges are posted on the Center website's Net Exchange – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newnetexchange.htm

Recently Featured Center Resources

- > Center Tool kits
 - (1) System Change Toolkit for Transforming Student Supports into a Unified, Comprehensive, & Equitable System for Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching -Rebuilding Student Supports into a Comprehensive System for Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching. Offers materials, tools, specific guides, and other resources as aids for action and to deepen learning about the substance and processes of the work to be done. The tools are grouped in an order that roughly approximates moving from creating readiness, through initial implementation, to sustaining and scaling-up. http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm



(2) Practitioner and Professional Development: Virtual Toolbox for *MH in Schools* – This toolbox reflects a broad view of mental health in schools and of the role mental health plays in the well-being of students, their families, and their teachers. Also stressed is the value of embedding mental health into a comprehensive classroom and school-wide system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students as an essential facet of ensuring all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school. http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/toolbox.htm

ACCESS LINKS ABOUT:

- >Upcoming initiatives, conferences & workshops http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upconf.htm
- >Calls for grant proposals, presentations, and papers http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/upcall.htm
- >Training and job opportunities http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/job.htm
- >Upcoming and archived webcasts and other professional development opportunities http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/webcast.htm

Note: These links are on our homepage for easy access. Each is updated regularly. Just click on the indicated URL or go to our homepage at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu

If you would like to add information to these, send it to ltaylor@ucla.edu

OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES ACCESSIBLE FROM THE INTERNET

- >Adverse community experiences and resilience http://preventioninstitute.org/component/jlibrary/article/id-372/127.html
- >Community Schools: Transforming Struggling Schools into Thriving Schools. Center for Popular Democracy, Coalition for Community Schools, Southern Education Foundation https://populardemocracy.org/sites/default/files/Community-Schools-Layout e.pdf

In many schools/districts the largest number of student support staff are the paraprofessionals. Below are some capacity building resources to strengthen their impact:

- >Title 1 Non-regulatory Guidance for Paraprofessionals https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/paraguidance.pdf
- >National Resource Center for Paraeducators http://www.nrcpara.org/
- >A Guide to Schoolwide Planning for Paraeducator Supports http://www.uvm.edu/~cdci/parasupport/downloads/guide.pdf
- >Paraeducator Resource and Learning Center http://www.uvm.edu/~cdci/parasupport/downloads/guide.pdf
- >National Clearinghouse for Paraeducator Resources http://www.usc.edu/dept/education/CMMR/Clearinghouse.html
- >Maximize paraprofessional services http://www.ldonline.org/article/6184/
- >Guidelines for Training and Support of Paraprofessionals http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/cali/guidelines_paraprofessionals.pdf
- >Best Practices in Utilizing Special Education Assistants http://isminc.com/pdf/research-free/general/2937_best-practices-in-utilizing-special-education-assistants

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We had a kid in our class who spent so much time in the Principal's office, they gave him his own key.

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ADDITIONAL RECENT PUBLICATIONS

(in print and on the web)

School, Family & Community

- >Family resources as protective factors for low-income youth exposed to community violence. Hardaway, C.R., Sterrett-Hong, E., Larkby, C.A., & Cornelius, M.D. (2016). *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, ePub http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs10964-015-0410-1
- >Building on youth's strengths: a call to include adolescents in developing, implementing, and evaluating violence prevention programs. Edwards KM, Jones LM, Mitchell KJ, Hagler MA, Roberts LT. (2016). *Psychology of Violence*, *6*, 15-21. http://psycnet.apa.org/index.cfm?fa=search.displayrecord&uid=2015-59081-003
- >Social risk and peer victimization in elementary school children: The protective role of teacher-student relationships. Elledge, L.C., Elledge, A.R., Newgent, R.A., & Cavell, T.A. (2015). *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, ePub http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs10802-015-0074-z

Policy, systems, law, ethics, finances & statistics

- >Bridging the gap between research and practice by strengthening academic-community partnerships for violence research. Yuan, N.P., Gaines, T.L., Jones, L.M., Rodriguez, L.M., Hamilton, N., & Kinnish, K. (2016). *Psychology of Violence*, *6*, 27-33. http://psycnet.apa.org/index.cfm?fa=search.displayrecord&uid=2015-59081-005
- >Are school policies focused on sexual orientation and gender identity associated with less bullying? Teachers' perspectives. Russell, S.T., Day, J.K., Ioverno, S., & Toomey, R.B. (2016). *Journal of School Psychology*, *54*, 29-38. http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S002244051500076X
- >Beyond resilience: why we need to look at systems too. Shaw, J., McLean, K.C., Taylor, B., Swartout, K., & Querna, K. (2016) *Psychology of Violence*, 6, 34-41. http://psycnet.apa.org/index.cfm?fa=search.displayrecord&uid=2015-59081-006

Child, adolescent, and young adult's mental and physical health

- >Empathy in adolescence: relations with emotion awareness and social roles. Rieffe, C., & Camodeca, M. (2016). *British. Journal of Developmental. Psychol*ogy, ePub http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/bjdp.12133/abstract;jsessionid=43FDDFC0AE5C4EB6BF FDEA7DDF049F1E.f02t03
- >Providing psychosocial support to children and families in the aftermath of disasters and crises. Schonfeld, D.J., & Demaria, T. (2015). *Pediatrics*, *136*(4): e1120-30. http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/136/4/e1120
- >Characteristics of adolescents who intervene to stop the risky and dangerous behavior of their friends. Buckley, L., & Chapman, R. (2016). *Accident Analysis & Prevention*, 88, 187-193. http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0001457515301743

FYI: Safety Lit is a useful resource for abstracts related to injury prevention policy and practice. Http://www.safetylit.org

Note: The Center's Quick Find online clearinghouse at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu is updated regularly with new reports and publications such as those listed above. Currently there are over 130 alphabetized topics with direct links to Center materials and to other online resources and related centers. Let us know about publications and reports that should be included in this dedicated online clearinghouse. Send to Ltaylor@ucla.edu

Resources to Aid Moving Forward in Addressing Barriers to Learning and Teaching

The following comments reflect those posed by many working in districts and schools as they think about using the transition to ESSA as an opportunity to move toward a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports.

".... We have great academic supports in place, but behavior supports are slower to take hold. Academics RTI is strong, but is still looked at separately from behavior supports. Suspension and alternative school placement are still the go to options for dealing with difficult students. I have been working at the district level for three years now to slowly chip away at the institutional thinking that keeps everyone departmentalized. ... I am beginning to see changes at the school level, but this is slow going. ... if we can make changes at the top using the new ESSA as a spring board, and continue with the school level changes for student supports, maybe each process will meet in the middle. ... As long as we stay compartmentalized, progress will be slow due to funding being used ineffectively. Hopefully ESSA will help change this."

Efforts to transform student/learning supports have begun to blossom across the country. With the transition to ESSA, states and LEAs can build on work done over the last two decades to develop resources to guide and aid (1) an expansion of education *policy* to ensure development of a unified component for directly addressing barriers to learning, (2) a reformulation of student and learning support *interventions* in classrooms and schoolwide, (3) a reworking of the *operational infrastructure* for daily implementation and ongoing development, and (4) the facilitation of *systemic change* for effective implementation, replication to scale, and sustainability. See below for examples of relevant online resources from our Center.

- >Introduction. To provide a brief introduction, there is a 30 minute Introductory webinar http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/powerpoint/briefintroslidesrec.pptx and an accompanying set of PDF formatted handouts http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/intropphandouts.pdf
- >Policy Brief. See Student and Learning Supports: Moving Forward http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/suppbrief.pdf
- >School Board Policy Protoype. http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/announcefeb.pdf
- >**Starting the Process.** Quick overviews: see the seven steps outlined for a school http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/7steps.pdf and first steps for State Education Agencies and School Districts http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/firststeps.pdf
- >In-depth Overview. For an overview guide, see Education Leaders' Guide to Transforming Student/Learning Supports http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/transguide.pdf or the new book entitled Transforming Student and Learning Supports: Developing a Unified, Comprehensive, and Equitable System which can be freely accessed at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/book/book.pdf
- >About Trailblazing States and Districts. See documents online at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/whereupdate.pdf and http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/trailblazing.htm

For more, see the Center's System Change toolkit – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm.

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I cannot say that I do not disagree with you. Groucho Marx

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COMMENTS AND SHARING FROM THE FIELD

We were asked to sharing the following

- (1) "... help us promote our 2016 statewide school health and education equity conference (May 5-6 in Sacramento) to your stakeholders via your newsletter and/or website. https://www.schoolhealthcenters.org/about-us/conference/2016-conference-registration/
- (2) "... please share this information far and wide regarding an upcoming conference regarding Educating, Connecting with AND Loving the Black Child. April 9, 9a.m. 3 p.m. Manual High School, Denver, CO. Contact: Dr. Sampson (<u>Darlene Sampson@dpsk12.org</u>)
- (3) "I just finished my dissertation on data driven student placement. More specifically in the areas of elementary placement for fall rosters and for secondary students being placed into the correct math course. You can review some of my Tweets at @datasuccessinc or check the website at www.datasuccess.net

I would like to share a couple articles with principals that run into this placement process each year, and could use something that offers equity and access to great instruction for all students - I have a plan!"

THIS IS THE END OF THIS ISSUE OF ENEWS

Who Are We? The *national Center for Mental Health in Schools* was established in 1995 under the auspices of the *School Mental Health Project* (which was established in 1986). We are part of the Department of Psychology at UCLA. The Project and Center are co-directed by Howard Adelman and Linda Taylor.

For more information about the Center and its many resources, go to the website at http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu or email Ltaylor@ucla.edu or adelman@psych.ucla.edu

Send info to share with others or ask for specific resources by email to Ltaylor@ucla.edu