



*Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health
Research Digest - Child Health and Related News
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(NOTE: Sources listed above are respective news blurbs)

1. After-School Funding Losing Ground

The National After School Alliance reports that President Bush's FY 2003 budget proposal provides no increases in funding for either the Child Care and Development Block Grant or 21st Century Community Learning Centers. As program costs increase, level funding would mean a decline in services to children.

http://www.nsaca.org/action_reminders.htm

2. New Searchable Database of Out-of-School Time Evaluation Profiles

The Harvard Family Research Project has launched a database of out-of-school time evaluation profiles so service providers and evaluators can get detailed information on evaluation options and methodologies.

<http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/evaldatabase.html>

3. Bush Calls for More Money for Treatment, But Cuts Prevention

Join Together reports that the Bush administration is sticking to a pledge to substantially increase federal spending on addiction treatment over the next few years, but the president's budget proposal also calls for significant cuts in prevention funding, especially for the Safe and Drug-Free Schools program.

<http://www.jointogether.org/jtodirect?U=24562&O=548143>

4. Prevention Programs that Work for Youth At Risk

Prevention programs not only prevent youth substance abuse before they start, they help reduce use among young people who already smoke or use drugs, especially when they incorporate the characteristics most associated with success, according to a major evaluation study from the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration. Programs that combine life skills, interactive rather than passive classroom techniques, intensive participation, and strong implementation consistently show stronger and longer-lasting positive outcomes.

<http://www.health.org/govpubs/fo36/overview.asp>

Child Health Information Project
Children's Defense Fund
February 8, 2002

5. Report Issued On Newborns In Cities and States

February 6- Kids Count and Child Trends jointly issued a report highlighting eight measures of healthy births throughout the nation and the 50 largest cities in the United States. This study looks at births from 1990-1999, revealing that the United States has made important strides in improving the lives of newborns but there are still many aspects that need attention.

www.aecf.org/kidscount/rightstart202/

Source: Annie E. Casey Foundation www.aecf.org February 6, 2002

6. Births Up, Teen Births Down

After a period of low birth rates, the average number of children born to women over a lifetime climbed to 2.1 in 2000, according to this CDC report. Increased fertility in 2000 was reported for all age groups, except teenagers, whose rates declined. More than one-third of all births were to unmarried women, up from 33 percent in 1999, but again birth rates for unmarried teens continued to decline.

<http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2002pres/20020212.html>

7. Poverty Harms Kids, But More Resources Make a Difference

Early Childhood Development and Family Housing Poverty in the United States is highest among children, and poverty during childhood interferes with cognitive and behavioral development. A Centers for Disease Control Task Force strongly recommends publicly funded, center-based, comprehensive early childhood development programs for low-income children ages 3-5 and housing subsidy programs for low-income families to help them find safer housing and safer neighborhoods.

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5101a1.htm>

8. Community Programs to Promote Youth Development

The National Academy of Sciences book concedes that we don't know as much as we'd like from research to identify the specific assets and environments that help adolescents develop into healthy, productive adults, but we do know enough to continue to support community programs that help youth meet universal needs like feeling competent, being socially connected and having one's physical needs taken care of.

http://www.nap.edu/catalog/10022.html?onpi_listserv021502

9. Mentoring: A Promising Strategy for Youth Development

Mentoring programs can be effective tools for enhancing the positive development of youth, concludes this Child Trends analysis of the research on mentoring programs. Mentored youth are likely to have fewer school absences, better attitudes toward school, fewer incidents of hitting others, less drug and alcohol abuse and improved attitudes and relationships with adults including their parents. But mentoring of short duration may do more harm than good.

<http://www.childtrends.org/PDF/MentoringBrief2002.pdf>

10. Trends in the Well-Being of America's Children and Youth 2001

A new federal report offers key facts about America's families: From 1975 through 1999 the median income of mother-only families has never exceeded 35 percent of the median income of two-parent families. Between 1975 and 1993. The proportion of children living in extreme poverty doubled from 5 to 10 percent. Rates of maternal employment rose most sharply in the late 90s for mothers of preschool children, and the percentage of low-income renter households with children paying more than 30 percent of their income on housing rose from 59 percent in 1978 to 70 percent in 1999. The "Trends" report is available in hard copy only right now. Additional information is available online in "America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being 2001."

<http://childstats.gov/ac2001/ac01.asp>

11. Ground Breaking Data On How Children Are Faring Children at Risk: State Trends 1990 - 2000

Nationally the child poverty rate is down, but in quite a few states the proportion of children living in poverty has actually risen over the last decade. This new Kids Count report uses the latest census data to document enormous diversity across the states, with some improving on many more indicators than others. There are also wide state differences on specific indicators.

Broad and widespread improvements in child well-being during the 90s are surprisingly modest given the economic boom, according to Kids Count spokesperson William O'Hare: "I'm concerned that some of the progress and policies that led to these improvements in the states are vulnerable to cutbacks as state budgets face crises."

<http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/c2ss/>

12. Exposure to Violence: Psychological and Academic Correlates in Child Witnesses--children age 7--not in LPCH age group, but deals with children witnessing violence

Hallam Hurt, MD; Elsa Malmud, PhD;
Nancy L. Brodsky, PhD; Joan Giannetta, BA
<http://archpedi.ama-assn.org/issues/v155n12/abs/poa00487.html>

HEALTH BEHAVIOR NEWS SERVICE
January 19, 2002:

13. Tax Increases Can Cut the Number of Habitual Teen Smokers

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Tax Increases Can Cut the Number of Habitual Teen Smokers
HEALTH BEHAVIOR NEWS SERVICE

Relatively small increases in cigarette taxes can prevent teenagers from becoming heavier smokers, according to a new analysis of national data.

Previous research has shown that raising cigarette taxes decreases the number of teenagers who smoke or the number of cigarettes they smoke if they do. This study, published in the February issue of *Nicotine & Tobacco Research*, is the first to show how much cigarette tax increases affect adolescents who smoke every day. Teenagers who experiment with smoking or smoke only infrequently are unlikely to be dissuaded by price increases because they mostly buy cigarettes, says author Lan Liang, Ph.D., of the University of Illinois at Chicago. "Regular smokers, on the other hand, are more likely to purchase their own cigarettes. When the amount of money they spend on cigarettes constitutes a larger share of their budgets, economic theory predicts that they will be more responsive to price," Liang explains.

The researchers analyzed 1992, 1993 and 1994 data from the Monitoring the Future Surveys of 8th-, 10th- and 12-grade students. The survey collects data on a nationally representative sample of 15,000 to 19,000 students per grade each year. According to this study, teenagers living in areas where taxes pushed the cost of a pack of cigarettes above \$2.32 (adjusted to 2001 dollars) were about 13 percent less likely to smoke any cigarettes than teenagers living in areas with prices below \$2.07. Teenagers in the high-tax areas were also about 30 percent less likely to smoke a pack or more a day when compared with teens in the low-tax areas. Teens in areas with middle-of-the-road taxes fell predictably along this continuum. The researchers note that their study is limited by the fact that they did not assess smoking intensity above a pack a day and so could not determine how price affected teenagers who were heavier smokers. However, "given the estimates above, it is likely that there are further differences between teens who smoke one pack of cigarettes per day and those who smoke two packs per day," they say.

Overall, the study shows that increasing cigarette prices discourages teens from becoming heavier smokers, they say. The study was funded through grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Nicotine & Tobacco Research* is the official peer-reviewed quarterly journal of the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco. For information about the journal, contact Gary E. Swan, Ph.D., at (650) 859-5322.