

- The literature points to the need to provide one-on-one intensive attention to at-risk students, who often must be convinced that they are competent and can be successful in school. Children at-risk need to be identified at a young age (as early as preschool) so that early sustained intervention can be applied. See:

>>*Youth in Transition* – <http://www11.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/cs/sp/hrsdcaarb/publications/research/2002-000121/page01.shtml>

This long-term study of school dropouts provides many insights about the problem and what needs to be done. The document reports that being held back one grade increases the risk of dropping out later by 40 percent to 50 percent, two grades by 90 percent. However, there are some strategies that can be used as alternatives to retention.

- Enhance the professional development of teachers to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to teach a wider range of students to meet standards
- Redesign school structures to support more intensive learning
- Provide students the support and services they need in order to succeed
- Use classroom assessments that better inform teaching

Retention efforts for junior high and high school students use out-of-school efforts such as tutoring, mentoring, service learning, career advising, and arranging for older students (who might otherwise drop-out) to work with younger ones. Service learning, for example, is a teaching methodology, which integrates community service into the academic curriculum. Using service-learning, elementary school students tutor younger students, and both improve their mastery of essential literacy skills. Investigators have found that when rigorous study in academic disciplines is linked to serious work on real needs, students' motivation to learn increases. When teachers are rigorous about partnering with young people to design and carry out service-learning projects that are tied to curricular objectives and standards, they are likely to benefit in the following ways: Academic and intellectual benefits, Civic and ethical benefits, and social and personal benefits.

- Educational alternative programs provide a non-traditional approach to curriculum by utilizing alternative teaching strategies. Programs focus upon the needs and interests of students by offering positive school experiences, which are geared for achievement, enhancement of positive self-concept, motivation, reduction of truancy, reduction of disruptive behavior, and reduction of teenage pregnancy.

The *National Dropout Prevention Center/Network* has identified 15 effective strategies that have the most positive impact on the dropout rate. These strategies have been implemented successfully at all education levels and environments throughout the nation.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School and Community Perspective • Systemic Renewal • School-Community Collaboration • Safe Learning Environments • Early Interventions • Family Engagement • Early Childhood Education • Early Literacy Development • Basic Core Strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring/Tutoring • Service-Learning • Alternative Schooling • After-School Opportunities • Making the Most of Instruction • Professional Development • Active Learning • Educational Technology • Individualized Instruction • Career and Technical Education (CTE) |
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For more information, see: <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/effstrat/effstrat.htm>

See the specially developed Center Introductory Packet entitled:

>>*Dropout Prevention* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/DropoutPrev/dropout.pdf>

Need More?

Use the Center's Online Clearinghouse Quick Find on *Dropout Prevention* :
(It contains links to key references, empirically supported programs, and centers specializing in the topic and related topics.)

Other **Quick Finds** that may be helpful:

- >>Alternative Schools and Alternative Education
- >>Barriers to Learning
- >>Bullying
- >>Classroom Climate/Culture
- >>Classroom-focused Enabling
- >>Environments that Support Learning
- >>Gangs
- >>Hotlines
- >>Learning Supports: Students to Succeed
- >>Mentoring
- >>Motivation
- >>Parent/Home Involvement in Schools
- >>Parenting Skills and Parenting Education
- >>Prevention for Students "At Risk"
- >>Resilience/Protective Factors
- >>School Avoidance
- >>Self-Esteem
- >>Social Promotion
- >>Substance Abuse
- >>Teen Pregnancy

Among the links you will find on various of the above Quick Finds are:

- >>*Dropout Rates in the United States: 2001*
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2005046>
- >>*Keeping Kids in Schools* from the American School Board Journal
<http://www.asbj.com/MainMenuCategory/Archive/2002/December.aspx>
- >>*The Real Truth about Low Graduation Rates, An Evidence-Based Commentary*
<http://www.urban.org/publications/411050.html>

A Few Websites Dealing Directly with Dropout Prevention

- <http://www.dropoutprevention.org/> - National Dropout Prevention Centers
- <http://www.tpronline.org/> — The Prevention Researcher
- <http://www.focusas.com/Dropouts.html> - Focus Adolescent Services: Youth Who Drop Out
- <http://www.ed.gov/programs/dropout/index.html> — School Dropout Prevention Program
- <http://nces.ed.gov/Pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2004310>— NCES: Public High School Dropouts and Completers from the Common Core of Data
- <http://www.schoolengagement.org/> — National Center for School Engagement
- <http://www.tutorsforkids.org/>— Tutors for Kids
- <http://www.youthbuild.org/> — Youth Build USA

And, if you can't find something you need, contact us directly:

By email — Ltaylor@ucla.edu
Toll free phone – (866) 846-4843



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