

May 2008 Advocacy Newsletter

Information gathered by the Education, Environment, Health and Wellness, Parent Involvement, Parenting and Family Life, Cyber Safety and Special Education Chairs to assist you in your advocacy efforts



Education

- **NCLB Interim Report:** The U.S. Department of Education recently released an interim report on state and local implementation of No Child Left Behind's public school choice and supplemental educational services options during the 2003-04 and 2004-05 school years. State and Local Implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act, Volume IV - Title I School Choice and Supplemental Educational Services: **Interim Report**, is available at www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ooped/ppss/reports.html#title The study was conducted for the Department by the RAND Corporation, the American Institutes for Research, and the National Opinion Research Center.
- **RTI Website:** The RTI Action Network has launched its Web site, www.RTINetwork.org This site features informational resources as well as opportunities to interact with top researchers, experienced implementers, and colleagues. Content addresses implementation of RTI from preschool to secondary, with information for administrators, teachers, specialists, and families.
- **Technology Resource:** The Virtual Institute website has a number of resources for integrating technology into the various subject areas:
<http://www.etc.net/techfellow/institute.htm>
- **High School Dropout Rate Receives National Attention:**
<http://ascd.typepad.com/blog/2008/04/high-school-dro.html> ABC World News recently featured a report from America's Promise Alliance and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation that showed 1.2 million students drop out of high school each year. An ASCD blog post describes ASCD Executive Director Gene Carter's response to the producers of ABC World News, as well as efforts to advocate for more support for U.S. high schools.
- **State spending per pupil:**
http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/article.aspx?articleID=20080402_1_A11_hrpVi23135 While U.S. schools spent an average \$9,138 educating each student in 2006, Utah spent less than \$5,500 per student while New York paid nearly \$15,000, according to a new U.S. Census Bureau school survey. The report said state governments in 2006 contributed the lion's share of public school funding, followed closely by localities, with the federal government a distant third in terms of its fiscal contribution.
- **Report Urges Changes in Teaching Math:**
http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/14/education/14math.html?_r=1&ref=education&oref=slogin American students' math achievement is "at a mediocre level" compared with that of their peers worldwide, according to a National Mathematics Advisory Panel report, which recommended that schools focus on key skills that prepare students to learn algebra. Pre-kindergarten-to-8th grade math curriculums should be streamlined and put focused attention on skills like the handling of fractions and certain aspects of geometry. The report offers specific goals for students in different grades.



Environment

- **New Bulbrite Recycling Program for CFLs:** This program is available to NYS residents! Bulbrite, Moonachie, N.J., has launched a new recycling program with Complete Recycling Solutions, LLC, Fall River, Mass. Participants can purchase recycling boxes that will safely dispose compact fluorescent and fluorescent lamps and protect the environment from harmful mercury and other chemicals. For more information, contact Bulbrite at info@bulbrite.com or 800-528-5555.



Health and Wellness

- **Babies' lack of sleep boosts later obesity risk:** Babies and toddlers who sleep fewer than 12 hours daily are at greater risk for being overweight in preschool, a new Harvard study finds, providing startling evidence that the link between sleep and obesity may affect even very young children. TV viewing heightened the effect. The children who slept the least and watched the most television had the greatest chance of becoming obese. The findings, published in April's Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, are based on mothers' reports of their babies' sleep habits and TV viewing, and direct measures of the children's height, weight and skin fold thickness. The researchers took into account other risk factors for obesity, including TV viewing, and still found the children who slept fewer than 12 hours a day had a doubled risk of being obese at age 3 than the other children. TV viewing is thought to increase the risk of obesity both because it takes time away from calorie-burning play and because of food ads for snacks and fast food.
<http://www.cnn.com/2008/HEALTH/conditions/04/07/infant.sleep.obesity.ap/index.html>
- **Washington Supreme Court rules out random drug tests:**
http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/education/2004281787_drugtests14m.html The Washington State Supreme Court said randomly testing student-athletes for drugs violates that state's constitutional guarantee of a right to privacy. The ruling means the school district at the center of a lawsuit over random testing must stop the practice, although the decision reportedly does not preclude testing of a student suspected of using drugs.



Parenting and Family Life

- **Study ties bedroom TV to unhealthy habits in teens:** Teenagers with a bedroom TV tend to have poorer diet and exercise habits and lower grades in school than those without one, U.S. researchers reported. While many studies have examined TV viewing habits of young people, researchers at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health said little had been known about the consequences in particular for older adolescents of having a bedroom TV. Of 781 teens questioned 62% reported having a TV in their bedroom. Not surprisingly, those with a bedroom TV were more apt to watch it a lot, clocking four to five more hours in front of a television per week, the researchers said. Girls with a bedroom TV reported getting less vigorous exercise -- 1.8 hours per week compared to 2.5 hours for girls without a TV. They also ate fewer vegetables, drank more

sweetened beverages and ate meals with their family less often, the researchers said. Boys with a bedroom TV reported having a lower grade point average than boys without one, as well as eating less fruit and having fewer family meals, the researchers said. The American Academy of Pediatrics urges parents to remove TV sets from children's bedrooms, the researchers noted. The findings were published in the Academy's Journal of Pediatrics. <http://www.newsdaily.com/stories/n04391294-teens/>



Special Education

- **Free e-Newsletter:** Announcing the launch of *Parent News* — the newest addition to NCLD's FREE email newsletter subscription options. This newsletter is designed especially for parents of children who are struggling in school or who have an identified learning disability (LD). It will keep you informed about timely, practical, and research-based information on topics to help you support your child's success at home, in the classroom, and to help you prepare your child for life beyond high school. [http://nclد.convio.net/site/Survey?SURVEY_ID=1140&ACTION_REQUIRED=URI ACTION USER REQUESTS](http://nclد.convio.net/site/Survey?SURVEY_ID=1140&ACTION_REQUIRED=URI_ACTION_USER_REQUESTS)