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Summer 2015 Student Newsletter

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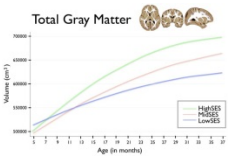

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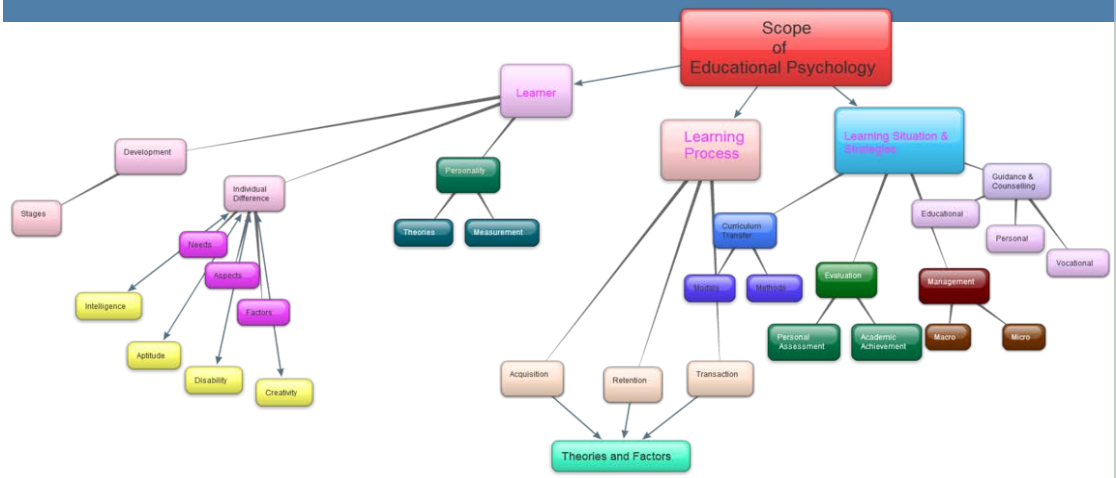
ED. PSYC NEWS

SUMMER, 2015



Students in Educational Psychology reviewed and commented on contemporary stories from various media they are learning in the courses. Contributors summarize the report in a few sentences, reference theory, and either support, dissent from, or reflect on the report.

TEACHING TEENAGERS TO DEVELOP THEIR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

BY: MARY BLAIS, CHELSEA JAMES, AND ZACHARY TANNOIA

Today's youths are not ready for today's competitive career fields such as: business, politics, engineering, education, and many others. They have the training; however they lack emotional maturity and carry psychological baggage. Business leaders are working to fix this flaw sooner than later do produce strong job candidates for the future.

According to the American Psychological Association or APA, teens today in the United States have a plethora of psychological issues. Today's teens are five times more likely to receive some type of psychological treatment than 75 years ago. According to one report by the APA teens report a higher stress level than adults, and our teenage attempted suicide rate is higher than any other county in the world. To correct this problem, investing in non-cognitive skills such as: motivation, perseverance, and self-control is suggested by James Heckman.

The Yale School of Management tests Emotional Intelligence in students, then offers coaching to students who need improvement. The Stanford Graduate School of Business also has a program called Interpersonal

small groups and discuss student behaviors (Brackett, Divecha, & Stern, 2015).

An upcoming idea is to teach social and emotional learning, or SEL research to adults and children. This program was proven effective at Yale and it produced benefits such as: leadership skills, stronger relationships, connections with teachers, conflict resolution, and most importantly, academic achievement. Policies to mandate these programs are slow, so there is much needed support required from business leaders to put successful programs in effect.

We believe that schools should put emphasis on developing children and teenager's cognitive skills within their education. Throughout the semester we have learned a lot about encouraging students to learn through self-regulation. Learning through self-regulation requires a proficient motivation and self-efficacy level. Teenagers and young adults need the opportunity to believe in them in order to succeed.

The numbers do not lie, and our concern for teenagers should be higher than ever with Americans leading other nations in Negative categories as explained in the article. More attention should be placed on emotional intelligence because being emotionally aware can be just as a powerful tool than using intellectual intelligence. The ideas of SEL research should be supported at a faster pace because awareness causes attention and giving attention to an idea is the first step in taking action. All in all, this article gave us insight on the importance of expanding the emotional intelligence of our youth today and we feel that this concept is important in growing future generations.

LIST OF ARTICLES WITH PAGE #S

Brackett, M., Divecha, D., & Stern, R. (2015, May 19). *Teaching Teenagers to Develop Their Emotional Intelligence.* Retrieved from Harvard Business Review: https://hbr.org/2015/05/teaching-teenagers-to-develop-their-emotional-intelligence

Children Learning To Write By Teaching Robots

By Alexis Di Mercurio, Rebekah Sabo, and Matthew Przywara

Article Summary

Who would have ever thought children could learn to write by teaching student robots? Researchers in Switzerland have designed this system, which might be able to engage unmotivated students, and boost their self-confidence. Scientists have been able to develop progressive writing algorithms, which are programmed into the robot. By children teaching robots how to write, they are able to practice their writing skills, making the students rewrite the words until the robot succeeds. In psychology, this is known as the protégé effect. The students are like the teacher now, helping them regain their self-esteem and motivation.

Many people might worry about future technology, and whether robots will eventually be able to replace teachers or not. The answer to this is no. The point of the robot is to have the robot make mistakes, so the students can then teach it how to improve. Future research needs to be conducted in order to see if this use of robots will be possible and helpful to students.

Citation

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Monday June 8, 2015

Stock, M. (2016, June 8). Children learn to write by teaching robots. *News Daily*. Retrieved from: http://newsdaily.com/2015/06/children-learn-to-write-by-teaching-robots/

Thoughts/Reactions

Alexis Di Mercurio: I believe this could be a good way for students to learn in the future, but I am not sure how successful it would be, even though research has been done already with positive results. Technology has really helped with learning, but I think there is a point to where people rely on technology too much. What would happen if the robot just stopped working, and shut down? In this case, the students would not be able to learn.

Rebekah Sabo: I believe that this educational approach to writing can help strengthen a student's skills while also encouraging them to consistently improve. Using a robot allows students to play the role of the teacher while helping them improve their own writing. Although there are critics who believe that if robots are used too frequently they will replace teachers, I disagree. Technology is rapidly advancing and if robots can help a student improve his or her writing why should we discourage the use of them.

Matthew Przywara: I am of the opinion that this will, over the next century, be the direction that education will chose to go. As technology continues to improve, programs such as the one discussed by this article are becoming increasingly viable. When combined with a good synthesis of educational theory, such as enabling struggling students to "teach" a robot that is struggling more than them in order to engage and motivate them, technology will rapidly become the dominate and most successful force in education.

Stephanie Peterson, Cory Adamonis, Jessica Mallett

"School Bullying, Cyberbullying Continue to Drop"

According to US News "School Bullying, Cyberbullying Continue to Drop," School bullying rates are now at the lowest since 2005 and a Crime Victimization Survey showed that the percentage of students aged 12-18 who reported being bullied dropped to 21.5 percent, 6.1 percent lower than in 2011. Cyber bullying has also decreased. The percentage of students who reported being cyber bullied dropped to 6. almost 10% percent lower than in 2011.

Reporting rates however remain low with only one-third of victimized students reporting the incidents to an adult. Data from the National Center on Education Statistics show that female students are still consistently experiencing higher than average rates of victimization. In 2013, 23.7 percent of females said they had been traditionally bullied compared to 19.5 percent of males. Females are significantly more likely than males to be made fun of, called names, to be the subject of rumors, and to be excluded from activities. On the other hand, males who are bullied are more likely than females to be pushed, shoved, tripped, or even spit on. Overall, females experience more emotional bullying while males are victims to more physical bullying. The most common forms of bullying overall include being made fun of, called names or insulted, unwanted contact via text messaging, and posting hurtful information on the web. Being bullied, whether it is traditional or cyber affects male and female students, both physically and emotionally. More than 1 in 10 students who are victims of traditional bullying fear being attacked or harmed at school. Cyberbullying is more likely to impacts students' behaviors and they are prone to skip school, avoid school activities, and to even carry a weapon to school.

It is the school's responsibility to guarantee the safety of the students and that includes protection from bullying. Obviously the schools are on the right path to eliminating bullying although any bullying is too much bullying. It is the job of schools to continue to lower bullying rates to make a happy, healthy education possible for all students.

Leanna Schuck and Samantha Stratton

"Public Schools Profit from Failure" was written by Jason Russell of the Washington Examiner.

We were surprised to learn that charter schools in some states are operated by for-profit businesses that don't always give "quality education". They often profit from failing students. It is also true that Public Schools profit from failure.

Some public school teachers don't give their students the best education, but still get paid and are not held responsible for their actions and the sub-standard job that they do of teaching. There are some amazing teachers who genuinely care about educating the students, however there are unfortunately many that are just there for the money and they end up endangering the students' futures. However, what defines failure is debatable for a charter school, whether too few students or bad test results. The charter schools will close because of this but public schools with these issues stay open regardless of the test results or the drop in attendance.

In Queens, NY, a public school teacher physically abused his first graders and was sent to anger management, fined, but still continued to teach. Firing was not an option because of tenure laws.

Seven families sued the state of New York to overturn the state's tenure laws; this case is ongoing. Some more affluent families are able to switch their children to different schools, either to private or a better public school. Unfortunately many families do not have the choice so they are stuck where they are. As potential future teachers it is very upsetting to see that there are teachers who are not in the classroom for the right reasons. They are hiding behind the walls of tenure, and are negatively affecting the education of students, and compromising their futures. The reality of it is that there are bad teachers in every school because the state laws make it so there are no legal grounds for firing.

School is about the students' education; the students should not be suffering because of the teachers. Parents should be free not to choose a failing school but have the option from many schools (charter, private or public) to make sure that their children learn.

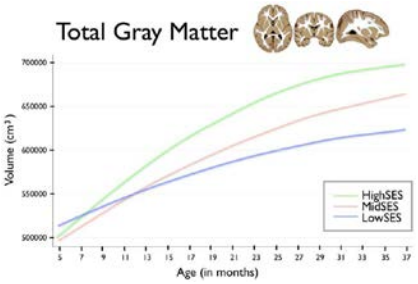
Rob Spaeth Morgan Osborn Shannon Costello Joseph Bolona

"Bullying at school: Brave kids tell their stories" by Amanda Lamb.

Bullying has continued to become worse and worse in terms of the cruelty of it. Social media and online access have allowed bullies to feel secure when picking on others. They seem to avoid face-to-face interactions and make the victim feel terrible from afar. Adults themselves set the tone for kids to become bullies because even adults are becoming cruel over the Internet and what they post online. The author was shocked to realize that the children bullied, even young children, were "...able to explain how afraid the bullying had made them." What is also noted in this article is that the majority of young people who commit suicide have experienced bullying at some point in their lives. The article seems to be based more upon interviews and shared experiences. One student who was interviewed, had been bullied her entire life. She is 17 years old and picked on because she 'had a large nose'. What is remarkable is that she did not become the bully back to others. Bullying in one way or another hurts everyone involved. The difference is the ways that children will cope and what they decide to do next. They could retaliate against the bully, bury it inside, or be proactive to stop it from occurring again by going to adults or administration in the school. The interviews with the children clearly show that bullying has a negative effect on a child's emotions and shapes them dramatically. Bullying is not just physical harm but emotional as well.

Effective solutions must involve families as well as schools. Parents need to be involved in their kids' lives and become good role models themselves. They can all work together to help stop bullying. For instance, some schools have incorporated zero tolerance policies that have certainly reduced the amount of bullying since its application. However, it does not eliminate bullying entirely. The real solution to bullying is up to each and every one of us. A small random act of kindness can be just what is needed to help those in need and to minimize the egregious effects of bullying. If everybody could simply take it upon himself or herself to do one act of kindness a day, could we change the culture of school bullying?

Lauren Garrity , Ryan Kendall, Dominick Pontari and Gillian Rhoads
Poverty May Hinder Kid's Brain Development, by Dennis Thompson, Health Day



According to researchers, including JAMA Pediatrics, poverty affects areas of the brain associated with academic skills. Poverty is now being investigated as a biomedical issue affecting brain development, not just a social issue. This could have profound implications for U.S. public schools, where more than half of students come from low-income homes. To see whether poverty has some physical effect on the brain, MRI scans of 389 typically developing 4 to 22 year olds, were analyzed for the amount of gray matter, which is responsible for seeing, hearing, memory, emotion, speech, decision-making and self-control. Children living 150 percent below the poverty level had 3 to 4 percent less gray matter than the group of children from middle SES. If more than half of public school students come from low-income homes, and more than half of these students have difficulty in terms of memory, speech, and decision-making, then early identification of students at risk will help to get a better outcome and if educators are aware of this disparity, they can take supportive action.
It is important to determine whether 3 to 4 percent difference in grey matter is a significant difference and how much intervention is necessary to close the gap.
It is important that further study is done to understand both the causes of the brain development differences and the effects on education in order to develop both preventative and post-developmental strategies to be used in the classroom in order to close this gap.
This article reflects a consistency with the theory that has been learned in class. Social and cultural factors do play a part in cognitive development and academic performance in children. There has been very little, if any, evidence refuting this claim.

Rachel Sanders, Emily Vaughn, Brittany Murray and Alia Sutherland

The rise of Smartphone usage among students has prompted educators to evaluate the use of Smartphones in the classroom. Today, Smartphone technology can certainly have a place in learning. For instance, there are apps that allow teachers to assess students in real time and that help promote math and reading fluency skills. However, the real issue is whether Smartphone usage provides any general learning advantage for students.

To answer this question, researchers from Rice University and the U.S. Air Force conducted a study published in the British Journal of Educational Technology entitled, *"You Can Lead a Horse to Water but You Cannot Make Him Learn: Smartphone Use in Higher Education."* The investigators found that college students who never had prior access to a Smartphone and then were provided with one during the school year, reported that their Smartphones deterred them from getting better grades. The students believed that the phones were distracting and ultimately did not help in their preparation for tests or in completing homework assignments.

Reaction 1: Smartphones can be detrimental to learning

Students who are allowed to use their Smartphones in the classroom could be at a disadvantage.The main problem is that Smartphones could be distracting to the students as well as the teacher. Frequent phone checking disrupts attention to instruction and could cause the teacher to interrupt the lesson.

Cellphone usage in the classroom takes away from the student's cognitive ability. Instead of allowing the students to think on their own, they can always find the answers on their phone. One such example is the calculator on the phone, which would provide answers to any math questions instead of allowing the student to figure it out himself.

Reaction 2: Smartphones can be beneficial to learning

When a student has a smartphone and knows how to use it well, the student can find answers to any question. Smartphones can also be used for specific learning objectives and can improve the learning experience. Phones would allow students to use outside resources to answer questions that sometimes cannot be found in their textbooks. Since many textbooks are outdated, the Smartphones would help provide updated information on particular subjects.

Additionally, the use of Smartphones allow learners to find games in almost every subject area. With proper instructions and regular monitoring by the teacher, Smartphones can be beneficial and enhance learning.