BARHII
Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative

Important Educational Attainment Topics for Engaging Clients

Below are recommended topics by grade level that public health staff might use to engage clients in conversations around educational attainment.

PRE-K AND KINDERGARTEN READINESS (AGES 2-5)

* Parent plan, readiness to enroll child in preschool
* How child speech, alphabet recognition, and counting abilities can be enhanced through parental engagement with child--utilizing books, activities, community resources. (Examples of important skills: child can count to 10, identify alphabet letters, talk in 5-6 word sentences, understand the concept of time of day, etc., among other skills and checklists that can be referenced)

KINDERGARTEN

* Importance of child attending school regularly, addressing any issues that might be leading to frequent child absences
* Parental monitoring of child's reading proficiency according to grade level and passing of teacher assessments as well as parental plan to support child's literacy and development. (In K-2nd grade most schools administer an assessment like the DIBELS which offers information on whether students are on track to be proficient readers)
* Healthy habits concerning sufficient exercise (or playtimes) and balanced meals

2ND GRADE

* Parental monitoring of child's proficiency on school administered standardized tests (e.g. The California Standards Test—CST –begins in the 2nd grade and is taken in the spring)
* Free or reduced priced meals at school
* Importance of child attending school regularly, addressing any issues that might be leading to frequent child absences

ELEMENTARY (3-8)

* Parental monitoring of child's proficiency on school administered standardized tests
* Keeping child on track to take Algebra I by the 8th or 9th grade and planning to support child's Math skill development
* Healthy habits concerning sufficient exercise and balanced meals

* Parental monitoring of any child disciplinary problems at school (expulsion, suspension, etc.)
* Parental involvement in student's education (help with homework, teacher conferences, volunteering at school, visiting the school, observing classes/learning, talking with teachers about scores and grades)
* Child's school connectedness (i.e. feels safe, has friends, involved in activities)

HIGH SCHOOL (9-12) FOR YOUTH (OR PARENTS)

* Parental engagement in youth education (prompts: parental knowledge of youth classes; awareness of homework, assignments, projects, exams and deadlines; parental support in youth process of applying to college; parental attendance of events and teacher conferences at school; parental monitoring of youth school attendance)
* Level of youth engagement in school
* Youth access to college counseling and support
* Youth plans for college and for life after high school
* Importance of youth scoring Advanced or Proficient on the California Standards Test (CST) (administered each spring in a variety of subject areas)
* Successful passage of Algebra I by 9th grade
* Passage of the CAHSEE (California High School Exit Examination). Appropriate academic support in the case youth has not passed.
* Importance of "a-g" requirements, which qualify youth to apply to CSU or UC (e.g. 4 years of English, 2 lab sciences, etc.)
* Participation in the Early Assessment Program (EAP) for youth considering attending a CSU (11th grade)
* Sequenced and meaningful coursework with a career track for youth enrolled in career and technical programs
* Healthy habits concerning balanced meals and daily physical activity
* Importance of school attendance, addressing reasons for absenteeism or truancy
* Knowledge of any youth suspensions, expulsions, their frequency, and reasons why (including in-school suspensions)
* Importance of parental completion of the Federal Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) for college bound youth (Grades 11-12)

TOPICS TO RAISE CONCERNING THE SCHOOL

* Is the school implementing the Common Core? (As evidenced by instruction, homework, and assignments being aligned with the Common Core standards?)
* Are there opportunities in the curriculum for students to be challenged? At the middle school level, is Algebra or perhaps even Geometry an option by 8th grade?
* How often are teachers absent, and how often does the typical classroom have a substitute?
* How stable is the staff, in terms of year-to-year turnover?
* Are there opportunities for parent engagement, including: parent/teacher conferences, opportunities to observe classroom and learning, volunteer opportunities, events that parents are invited to attend, parent educational offerings/workshops, a school site council?
* Are there counselors, nurses, and/or other mental health and health professionals at the school? And, is there a guidance counselor assigned to each student for assuring graduation requirements and/or college readiness?
* Does the school offer PE, breaks/recess, and other opportunities for physical activity?

RESOURCES

* **Shifts in Mathematics, English, Literacy, and Language Arts under the Common Core** - http://www.achievethecore.org/files/5713/6508/7343/2-pager.pdf
* **"A-G" graduation requirements as defined by the California Department of Education -** http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/hs/hsgrtable.asp
* **Information regarding the CAHSEE (California High School Exit Exam) -** http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/cefcahsee.asp
* **Federal Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) -** http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/
* **FAFSA Deadlines by state -** http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/deadlines.htm