



Success

Timely tips to improve student achievement

November 2023

Students gain work skills in simulated store

High school students with disabilities in **Orange City** are gaining job skills through a program hosted by CVS Health. Working in a simulated CVS store teaches students the technical and people skills needed to work as a cashier in a safe environment, says transition coordinator **Christine Noy**. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU900>.

High school agriculture students construct and sell chairs

Students in Dadeville High School's agricultural program and the local FFA chapter made and sold more than 60 Adirondack chairs as part of an agriculture construction class. Agriculture teacher **Matthew Wilson** posted about this initiative on Facebook, garnering community support and sales. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU901>.

Helping students unplug from technology

Educational technology is an important aspect of preparing students for future careers, but it's crucial to build screen-free time into the curriculum, writes **Kevin Brookhouser**, director of technology and innovation at York School. Implementing routines like spending time outdoors, 60 seconds of silence at the beginning of class with no phones and participating in project-based service learning can help students strike a healthy balance. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU902>.

Explaining is a skill – here's how to develop it

Communicating with precision and confidence first requires discovering what you didn't know about a subject and then studying it, says BBC journalist **Ros Atkins**, author of "The Art of Explanation: How to Communicate with Clarity and Confidence." For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU903>.

Students need more pathways for success

More than 40 million Americans have earned college credit but have not completed a degree, often due to financial and practical barriers, writes **Steven Taylor**, a senior fellow on postsecondary education at Stand Together Trust. Taylor suggests a need for more accessible, affordable and practical options beyond traditional degrees to help students build their careers. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU904>.

Students participate in fire safety training

Students in Providence, R.I., recently participated in the Fire Safety Career and Technical Education School. Students received 240 hours of training that can be applied to the Providence Fire Academy and are able to receive EMT certification upon completion. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU905>.

Student achievement in-depth

Each month, **Success** brings you a research brief or in-depth article to discuss with board members and administrators.

Study finds mental health boost from middle school biking

A study conducted at middle schools across the U.S. showed that a six-to-eight week cycling class as part of physical education can enhance students' mental health. The students who participated in the cycling program reported a more positive outlook on life, demonstrating the mental health benefits of physical activity, particularly during the challenging middle school years, researchers and program organizers said.

The study involved more than 1,200 students, ages 11 to 14, who were enrolled in middle schools across the U.S. that offered a program called Ride for Focus from the nonprofit Outride, which conducts research and provides cycling programs and equipment for youths, primarily middle schoolers. Students participated in a cycling class for at least three days a week for a minimum of six weeks. They learned cycling safety and maneuvering skills outdoors while raising their heart rate and just having fun. The students completed standardized screening questionnaires before and after the program which were designed to measure their well-being.

"Physical activities like cycling can benefit the body, but there's a growing amount of research showing how it benefits the mind and social relationships as well," says **Esther Walker**, the senior research program manager for Outride. She says bike riding can be an ideal activity for adolescents because of the physical and social benefits it offers. "Having that positive perception of riding and experiencing it with their peers in this really safe setting is really important."

Of course, while exercise has powerful mental health benefits, it's not a panacea. For example, previous research has shown that adolescent girls are at higher risk of mental health problems like depression and anxiety than boys. The current study found that, while middle school girls reported increased well-being after participating in the cycling program, that increase "may just reach the kind of baseline level for male students," Walker notes.

Other pillars of healthy living are also important, notes **Sean Wilson**, a researcher at Loma Linda University School of Medicine and the study's senior author. The study found that adolescents who didn't limit screen time to a maximum of two hours a day or who got less than the recommended eight-and-a-half hours of sleep saw less improvement in their well-being.

For more on this report and links to research studying the benefits of exercise and well-being, please visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU906>.

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