



Success

Timely tips to improve student achievement

December 2020

COSI invites students, educators to live interview with Dr. Kathy Sullivan

School administrators, educators, teachers and students are invited to join an upcoming free, online COSI event on Dec. 3 at 3 p.m. COSI President and Chief Executive Officer Dr. **Frederic Bertley** will interview former NASA astronaut Dr. **Kathy Sullivan** live online. Sullivan was the first American woman to spacewalk and recently set a world record for the deepest ocean dive. For details, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU670>.

College graduates return for CTE

A growing number of people with bachelor's degrees are returning to school for career and technical education (CTE), with about 1 in 12 community college students already having earned a bachelor's degree, according to the American Association of Community Colleges. Officials say students are drawn to the skilled trades due to high demand and competitive pay and benefits. For more, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU671>.

Is it possible to outgrow ADHD?

For some students with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), remote learning may have certain advantages, such as not forgetting their Chromebooks or their assignment on the bus. However, the challenges of the diagnosis make it unclear whether the condition is outgrown or simply becomes better managed, experts say. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU672>.

Researchers divided over state of the achievement gap

Researchers have presented varying narratives about the state of the test-score gap among students from low-income families and their peers from wealthier ones. During a recent panel discussion, researchers considered data showing the gap had widened, closed and remained largely the same. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU673>.

Teachers build life-size Candy Land game in classroom

Fourth-grade Florida teacher **Robin Diedrichs** discovered that Candy Land was created in the 1940s by a teacher trying to entertain quarantined children during the polio epidemic. Diedrichs partnered with teacher **Brian Levine** to create a life-size version for the classroom. Students move across the room-size board as they do interactive lessons. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU674>.

What an uptick in screen time may tell us

A spike in screen time among children during the coronavirus pandemic is tied to a lack of child care and family stress, according to a study by researchers at Boston College and the University of Maryland. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU675>.

Student achievement in-depth

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

What the research says about the academic power of friendship

Friends can make mundane tasks more fun, reports **Lydia Denworth** in *Friendship: The Evolution, Biology, and Extraordinary Power of Life's Fundamental Bond*. Her 2020 book catalogues research on the many benefits of life's fundamental bond.

For example, when they smell familiar fish, zebrafish show reduced levels of fear, a fact that seems cool but irrelevant until you learn that a 2011 study of humans showed that having a best friend present during an experience significantly buffered any negative feelings, lowering cortisol and boosting a sense of self-worth.

Another study found that talking to supportive friends after a stressful incident increases the speed with which cortisol levels revert to normal. This buffering effect appears to insulate kids from both social and academic missteps by shifting their inner narrative in the face of failure from there's something wrong with me to a more resilient response.

In one study, adolescents working together took part in more exploratory behavior, learned faster and completed tasks better than they did working alone. In another, Florida Atlantic University's Dr. **Brett Laursen** and his colleagues arranged for pairs of students to be taught a new programming language. Children were asked how they felt about their partner multiple times. The response to the question, how much the student thought that the other was his or her friend, predicted how much the student learned in that situation, he said.

Taken together, the evidence suggests that with a friend on hand, a child's tolerance for novelty and intellectual stretching tends to increase, while without one, engagement tends to decrease.

How can educators both promote this type of bond and exploit its academic power?

For more information and links to the studies referenced, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU676>.

Success

December 2020

Success is published monthly as a member service by the Ohio School Boards Association, 8050 North High Street, Suite 100, Columbus, Ohio 43235-6481, (614) 540-4000 or (800) 589-OSBA. Kim Miller-Smith, senior student achievement consultant, editor; Jeff Chambers, director of communication services, assistant editor. To download a PDF of this eNewsletter, go to <http://www.ohioschoolboards.org/Success>.