Don’t Call Them Dropouts: Understanding the Experiences of Young People Who Leave High School Before Graduation
Released: May 20, 2014

Don’t Call Them Dropouts: Understanding the Experiences of Young People Who Leave High School Before Graduation, the largest nationwide study of its kind to date, shares the stories of young people who left high school before graduating. This mixed-methods study discovered youth left school not because they were bored or unmotivated, but because adverse circumstances forced them to prioritize life over schoolwork. They often showed great strength, bouncing back from adversity time and again, and thriving when they found supportive connections with adults and organizations.

The study involved 30 group interviews in 16 cities with 212 youth who had disengaged from school, as well as a national survey of nearly 3,000 youth, two thirds of whom stopped going to school for at least one semester.

Don’t Call Them Dropouts was generously supported by Target.

The Role of National Service in Closing the Graduation Gap
Released: September 4, 2014

Many efforts are converging to increase the on-time high school graduation rate and keep the nation on track to reach the 90 percent GradNation goal – including education reform at the national, state and district levels; stronger systems for collecting and sharing data; supportive public policies; investments from public and private funders; and determined leadership at all levels and across several sectors.

One contributor that has not received as much attention is national service – substantial volunteer commitments by ordinary Americans (including AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps VISTA and Senior Corps) that benefit both the people serving and those being served.

This paper examines the contributions national service programs are making to help young people stay in and succeed in school. What are we learning about what works? What can we say about the impact of two decades of investment in this national service program? And what does the experience and evidence suggest about future actions?

Back to School: Promising Practices for Re-engaging Young People in Secondary Education
Released: December 18, 2014

Back to School: Promising Practices for Re-engaging Young People in Secondary Education offers an introduction to re-engagement, with a focus on common characteristics and promising practices from community-based organizations profiled as part of the Don’t Call Them Dropouts study released in May 2014. The economic and personal benefits for re-engagement are clear, but
the research base on this topic is thin. With the release of Back to School, we hope to spark conversations about what works when designing and sustaining pathways for young people to attain a diploma or credential.

To accompany the release of Back to School, the Center for Promise held a virtual event on January 22, 2015. The event featured a panel discussion on three community-based organizations’ approaches to re-engaging young people featuring Otis Zanders, CEO/president of Ujamaa Place in St. Paul, MN; Gregg Croteau, executive director of the United Teen Equality Center (UTEC) in Lowell, MA; and Dominick Correy, chaser/academic coach at Learning Works Charter School in Los Angeles, CA. The event is available to view online at https://youtu.be/Dh1-XDSrnx0.

**Case Study Series on Comprehensive Community Initiatives**

**Released:** February 24, 2015

This case study series profiles comprehensive community initiatives throughout the country to meet the educational, physical and socio-emotional needs of children, young people and their families. Collectively, these cases provide practical examples and offer stories of hope to those engaged in catalyzing systemic change for children, youth and families.

*Transforming East Lake: Systematic Intentionality in Atlanta*

In Atlanta, the East Lake Foundation designed a multi-pillar model involving mixed-income housing, a cradle-to-college educational pipeline, and community wellness.

*Parramore, Orlando: Leveraging Local Strengths*

The Parramore Kidz Zone in Orlando provides an example of a comprehensive, coordinated approach to respond to the multifaceted needs of young people. This city-led initiative adapted the Harlem Children’s Zone model, partnering with local organizations to deliver a cradle-to-career pipeline.

*New Orleans Kids Partnership: Bolstering Supports, Brightening Futures*

Similar to Atlanta and Orlando, New Orleans is implementing a collaborative effort to bolster supports for the city’s youth. Operating within the increasingly common context of school choice, New Orleans Kids Partnership is striving to identify an optimal strategy for providing necessary resources.

*Wired to Learn: K-12 Students in the Digital Classroom*

**Released:** March 11, 2015

Digital technology in the classroom, when properly integrated, is helping American school children stay competitive globally and on track to compete successfully in the 21st century workforce. Wired to Learn, a study commissioned by the Cable Impacts Foundation, explores digital learning as a strategy to improve student classroom experiences and highlights the efforts of five school districts across the United States that use technology to reshape the traditional K-12 learning environment. The release was accompanied by an event at the National Cable and Telecommunications Association headquarters in Washington, D.C. that was live streamed via webcast.