

## NATIONAL AT-RISK EDUCATION NETWORK (NAREN)

### DEFINITION OF AN AT RISK STUDENT IS:

**Students are placed at-risk when they experience a significant mismatch between their circumstances and needs, and the capacity or willingness of the school to accept, accommodate, and respond to them in a manner that supports and enables their maximum social, emotional and intellectual growth and development.**

- At-risk of dropping out of school;
- At-risk of not succeeding in life due to being raised in unfavorable circumstances.

Educational systems have to reach the at-risk population and help these students to not only survive but to succeed in life.

By default, our schools have become the focus of efforts to address at-risk issues. Schools readily admit they are both inadequately informed and inadequately prepared for this immense task, but this has not stopped many of them from making the noble effort.

When any student walks into Kindergarten, they should be assured that in the next 13 years, we, your local school, will provide you with a good education so you can have a great life.

Some facts:

- Seventy-five percent of state prison inmates and 59 percent of federal inmates are high school dropouts.
- High school dropouts are 3.5 times more likely than graduates to be incarcerated.
- Dropouts contribute disproportionately to the unemployment rate. In 2001, 55 percent of young adult dropouts were employed, compared to 74 percent of high school graduates and 87 percent of college graduates.
- Dropouts contribute to state and federal tax coffers at about one-half the rate of high school graduates. Over a working lifetime, a dropout will contribute about \$60,000 less.
- Nationwide, the 23 million high school dropouts aged 18-67 will contribute roughly \$50 billion less annually in state and federal taxes.
- Studies suggest the United States would save \$41.8 billion in health care costs if the 600,000 young people who dropped out in 2004 were to complete 1 additional year of education.

- If 33 percent of dropouts graduated from high school, the federal government would save \$10.8 billion each year in food stamps, housing assistance, and temporary assistance for needy families.

Median annual earnings and percentage of lifetime, full-time wage and salary workers ages 25-34, by educational attainment, sex, and race/ethnicity for 2008		
Educational attainment, sex, and race/ethnicity	Median annual earnings (in thousands of 2008 dollars)	Percentage of lifetime, full-time wage and salary workers in 2008
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$37,000</b>	<b>64.9</b>
Less than high school	23,500	48.4
High school diploma or equivalent	30,000	61.7
Some college <sup>a</sup>	32,000	62.9
Associate's degree	36,000	66.3
Bachelor's degree or higher	50,000	71.6
Bachelor's degree	46,000	71.6
Master's degree or higher	55,000	71.5
<b>Sex and educational attainment</b>		
<b>Male</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>68.9</b>
Less than high school	25,000	54.8
High school diploma or equivalent	32,000	64.8
Some college <sup>a</sup>	37,000	68.2
Associate's degree	41,000	73.2

Bachelor's degree or higher	55,000	76.6
Bachelor's degree	53,000	76.3
Master's degree or higher	65,000	77.2
<b>Female</b>	<b>34,000</b>	<b>60.3</b>
Less than high school	17,000	35.9
High school diploma or equivalent	25,000	56.6
Some college <sup>a</sup>	29,000	56.6
Associate's degree	32,500	60.1
Bachelor's degree or higher	45,000	67.2
Bachelor's degree	42,000	67.3
Master's degree or higher	51,000	67.1
<b>Race/ethnicity<sup>a</sup> and educational attainment</b>		
<b>White</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>65.8</b>
Less than high school	26,400	43.6
High school diploma or equivalent	31,200	61.9
Some college <sup>a</sup>	33,100	63.2
Associate's degree	40,000	66.3
Bachelor's degree or higher	50,000	71.5
Bachelor's degree	47,000	71.5
Master's degree or higher	55,000	71.5

<b>Black</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>60.6</b>
Less than high school	20,000	37.4
High school diploma or equivalent	26,000	57.8
Some college <sup>4</sup>	30,000	60.0
Associate's degree	31,000	58.6
Bachelor's degree or higher	45,000	73.5
Bachelor's degree	40,000	72.2
Master's degree or higher	53,000	77.2
<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>	<b>64.6</b>
Less than high school	22,000	55.2
High school diploma or equivalent	27,000	64.3
Some college <sup>4</sup>	30,100	66.8
Associate's degree	32,000	71.0
Bachelor's degree or higher	45,000	71.0
Bachelor's degree	42,000	71.5
Master's degree or higher	52,000	68.7
<b>Asian</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>69.1</b>
Less than high school	‡	‡
High school diploma or equivalent	28,000	63.0
Some college <sup>4</sup>	33,000	63.8

Associate's degree	31,700	78.4
Bachelor's degree or higher	60,000	71.9
Bachelor's degree	55,000	72.7
Master's degree or higher	70,000	70.9
<b>Pacific Islander</b>	‡	<b>58.7</b>
<b>American Indian/Alaska Native</b>	<b>29,000</b>	<b>52.8</b>
<b>Two or more races</b>	<b>34,000</b>	<b>59.5</b>

‡ Reporting standards not met (too few cases).

<sup>1</sup> Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Estimates for educational categories for Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Two or more races subgroups did not meet reporting standards. For more information on race/ethnicity, see supplemental note x.

<sup>2</sup> Full-time, full-year wage workers as a percentage of the population ages 25–34 who reported working or looking for work in 2008.

<sup>3</sup> Totals for 1980 and 1985 include other racial/ethnic groups not shown.

<sup>4</sup> Due to changes in categories across time, the category "some college" prior to 1992 is not comparable with "some college" from 1992 onward. Prior to 1992, "some college" may have included students who earned an associate's degree.

<sup>5</sup> From 1989 through 2002, data for Asians and Pacific Islanders were not reported separately; therefore, Pacific Islanders are included with Asians during this period.

NOTE: Earnings are presented in constant dollars by means of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to eliminate inflationary factors and allow for direct comparison across years. For more information on the CPI, see supplemental note 10. Full-year worker refers to those who were employed 50 or more weeks during the previous year; full-time worker refers to those who were usually employed 35 or more hours per week. For more information on the CPS, see supplemental note 2.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), March and Annual Social and Economic Supplement, selected years, 1981–2009.

## II. At-Risk From A Bad Start

It is safe to assume that many of the children represented in the figures below are, indeed, at-risk of having decreased horizons of success whether they remain in school or drop-out.

Facts that we know:

- Over 3,000,000 children are reported for child abuse and neglect to CPS agencies in the U.S. each year. Approximately 1,000,000 children are verified as victims of child maltreatment, or about 16 out of every 1000.<sup>4,5</sup> One can only estimate how many go unreported or are true but are unsubstantiated -- but there is no doubt the actual numbers are much higher.
- 13,500,000 children live in poverty -- or one in five (18.9%).<sup>1</sup>
- An estimated 200,000 children in this country have an imprisoned mother and more than 1.6 million have an imprisoned father. With the nation's incarcerated population growing by an average of 6.5% each year,<sup>6</sup> the number of children with parents in prison will likely continue to increase. Parental incarceration -- and the crimes and arrests that precede it -- causes chaos in the lives of these children, including traumatic separations and erratic shifts from one caregiver to another. Most children with incarcerated parents live in poverty before, during, and after their parents' incarceration.<sup>7</sup>
- Recent illicit drug use among youth changed little from 2006 to 2007. In 2007, 7 percent of 8th-graders, 17 percent of 10th-graders, and 22 percent of 12th-graders reported illicit drug use in the past 30 days. These statistics represent declines from peaks of 15 percent for 8th-graders and 23 percent for 10th-graders in 1996, and 26 percent for 12th-graders in 1997.<sup>8</sup>
- Heavy drinking declined from 15 percent in 1995 to 10 percent in 2007 for 8th-graders, from 24 to 22 percent for 10th-graders, and from 30 to 26 percent for 12th-graders.<sup>8</sup>
- The number of juveniles held in state custody increased 10.4 percent from June 30, 2006 to 2007.<sup>6</sup>

All these children come to school carrying their burdens and issues with them!

Even with these significant personal issues filling the hearts and heads of students, local, state and federal educational stakeholders expect our schools to reach and teach all children with a standardized curriculum, achieve state standards, and do well on state-mandated achievement tests or else!

None of these children asked to be placed at-risk." 