

Education News & Notes

Combating The High School Dropout Rate

(NAPSA)—There is promising news for teens at risk of dropping out of high school. There are new programs designed to help them stay in school and succeed.

It's estimated that one in three U.S. teens fails to graduate high school, according to a 2010 Alliance for Excellent Education study. That's one teen dropping out nearly every 26 seconds.

Fortunately, there are several ways parents, teachers and mentors can help students realize their potential and graduate. Here are some tips:

- **Parental Involvement:** According to a November 2010 report published by Johns Hopkins University, students with involved parents are more likely to graduate from high school.

Check in with your teen about his final projects, tests or exams, and create a study calendar together. Reference graduation and discuss college plans, and your teen will recognize these milestones are expected and achievable.

- **Reading Materials:** Provide teens with summer educational experiences that will continue to stimulate them while school is out. A 2007 study by Alexander, Entwisle & Olson found that two-thirds of the 9th grade reading achievement gap can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities during elementary school years.

If your school does not offer a program, look to your local library to see if it hosts students during these times and sign your teen up to receive a library card.

- **Experiential Programs:** Experiential programs can often



Research has shown that students desire more real-world learning experiences that teach them the benefits of staying in school and graduating.

help teens understand how their diploma will be helpful down the road.

A 2006 study by Bridgeland, Dilulio & Morison found that 80 percent of high school dropouts said their chances of staying in school would have increased if classes were more interesting and provided opportunities for real-world learning.

Whether a summer internship, a college visit or a volunteer program, real-world experiences can help teens set and work toward their goals.

The Taco Bell Foundation for Teens' Graduate to Go initiative sponsors a host of such programs, including college camps where teens spend a weekend on a campus while learning about the college application process and the benefits of a college education.

For more action steps you can take and information about the Taco Bell Foundation for Teens' Graduate to Go program, visit www.graduatetogo.com. On Facebook, you can go to www.facebook.com/GraduateToGo.