MIDDLE SCHOOL MOMENT

Community Screening Guide

A Special FRONTLINE Resource for the
***Dropout Nation* Community Engagement Campaign**

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FRONTLINE's *Dropout Nation* Community Engagement Campaign

Dropping out of high school has devastating consequences, not only for students and schools but for communities and our country. While the national graduation rate has improved in recent years, one in four students still do not finish on time. Every year, hundreds of thousands of teenagers in the United States quit high school without diplomas—an epidemic so out of control that nobody knows the exact number. What is clear is that massive dropout rates cripple individual career prospects and cloud the country's future.

PBS's acclaimed documentary series FRONTLINE is taking on the dropout issue. We are joining forces with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting on **American Graduate: Let's Make It Happen,** a nationwide public media initiative to help local communities across the United States address the dropout crisis. FRONTLINE's *Dropout Nation* community campaign combines a series of groundbreaking documentaries with community engagement activities and resources aimed at identifying opportunities for adults to get involved in helping students graduate from high school.

Ending the high school dropout crisis is not only a priority for public media. It's a growing national movement that involves many groups—parents, faith-based institutions, schools, businesses, political leaders and community organizations among them. To encourage community conversations on this issue, FRONTLINE has created a specially edited DVD titled *Middle School Moment* with an accompanying discussion guide designed to help facilitate community screenings. The goal of such screenings is to spur audiences to action and to make them aware that a strong support system for students during the middle grades will have a positive impact on high school graduation rates.

AMERICAN GRADUATE CITIES

- Alabama Alabama Public Television
- Amarillo, TX KACV
- Atlanta, GA Georgia Public Broadcasting
- Atlanta, GA Jazz 91.9 FM (WCLK-FM)
- Baton Rouge, LA Louisiana Public Broadcasting
- Binghamton, NY WSKG
- Chapel Hill, NC North Carolina Public Radio
- Charlotte, NC WTVI
- Chicago, IL WTTW
- Cincinnati, OH CET
- Columbia, SC SCETV
- Columbus, OH WOSU Public Media
- Conway, AR AETN
- Cookeville, TN WCTE
- Daytona Beach, FL WDSC
- Denver, CO KUVO-FM
- Denver, CO Colorado Public Television (KBDI)
- Detroit, MI Detroit Public Television (DPTV)
- Fayetteville, NC WFSS-FM
- Fresno, CA Valley PBS (KVPT)
- Grand Rapids, MI WGVU

- Indianapolis, IN WFYI
- Jackson, MS Mississippi Public Broadcasting
- Jacksonville, FL WJCT
- Las Vegas, NV Vegas PBS (KLVX)
- Lincoln, NE Nebraska Educational Telecommunications (NET)
- Mancos, CO KSJD-FM
- Miami, FL South Florida (WLRN)
- Milwaukee, WI Milwaukee Public Television
- Minneapolis, MN KMOJ-FM
- Moline, IL WQPT
- Montgomery, AL WVAS-FM
- Nashville, TN Nashville Public Television
- New Mexico KNME
- New Orleans, LA WYES
- New York WNET
- Norfolk/Hampton, VA WHRO
- Owings Mills, MD Maryland Public Television
- Philadelphia, PA WHYY
- Phoenix, AZ Radio Campesina Network
- Reno, NV KNPB
- Research Triangle Park, NC UNC-TV

- Rio Piedras, PR WMTJ
- Rochester, NY WXXI
- Sacramento, CA KVIE Public Television
- San Antonio, TX Texas PBS (KLRN)
- San Francisco, CA KQED (KTEH, KQET, KQEI)
- Shreveport, LA KDAQ-FM Red River Radio
- Springfield, MA WGBY
- Southern California KOCE/KLCS/KVCR
- St. Paul, MN Twin Cities Public Television
- St. Louis, MO Nine Network of Public Media (KETC)
- Syracuse, NY WCNY
- Tacoma, WA KBTC
- Tallahassee, FL WFSU
- Tampa, FL WUSF/WEDU
- Toledo, OH WGTE
- Troy, NY WMHT
- Washington, DC WETA/WHUT-TV/WAMU
- Whitesburg, KY WMMT-FM
- Winston-Salem, NC WFDD-FM

Introduction to *Middle School Moment*

Omarina Cabrera, a student at Middle School 244 in the Bronx, was struggling. With difficulties at home ranging from eviction to the death of her estranged father, her school life began to suffer. She didn't know it, but she was starting down a path traveled by millions of students each year: the path to dropping out.

Her principal, Dolores Peterson, noticed that something was wrong. While Omarina was performing well in her classes, she had amassed a few absences and had begun to withdraw. In some schools, this might have gone unobserved, but the school administrators at M.S. 244 have come up with a novel way to identify and react to changes in their students' behavior—changes that at first glance may seem minor.

Middle School Moment explores a growing body of evidence that suggests that the make-or-break moment for high school dropouts may actually be in middle school. While educators have long recognized the importance of the middle grades—and the vulnerability of students in them— middle schools have frequently been overlooked in conversations about the dropout crisis. But that is changing, and middle schools are taking center stage as an important key to improving high school graduation rates.

Robert Balfanz is a leading education researcher at Johns Hopkins University who has been studying the population of children who drop out of high school. He has found that a key moment when kids start down the wrong path is in middle school. According to his research, if a sixth-grade student in a high-poverty environment attends school less than 80 percent of the time, fails math or English, or receives an unsatisfactory behavior grade in a core course, then—absent effective intervention—there is a 75 percent chance that he or she will drop out of high school.

Balfanz and others believe that these indicators offer a sign of hope. Once students demonstrating these traits are identified, they can be targeted for intervention. And in *Middle School Moment*, viewers see what that looks like, as M.S. 244 puts Balfanz's research into action.

Middle School Moment sparks discussions about the challenges that youth face both in and out of school and about how communities, institutions and individuals can better meet their needs. It allows viewers the opportunity to

Middle School 244 Principal Dolores Peterson meets with Catherine Miller, one of her teachers.

reflect on how circumstances influence behavior and choices, and on the impact that a robust support system has on a child's life chances.

Using the *Middle School Moment* Film for Outreach

This guide is intended to aid in the facilitation of community screenings of *Middle School Moment*. It is provided to help audiences understand the dropout crisis and consider how they, as individuals and as a community, might take action. Use this film and discussion guide to:

Raise community awareness about:
- The national dropout crisis
- The dropout issue in your community
- The importance of the middle grades and the vulnerability of students in them

Increase community engagement in:
- Supporting local schools
- Supporting local youth
- Mentoring and volunteerism

Preparing for a Screening: The Value of Partnerships

Successful events are organized with the help and support of others in your community. Ideally, you will work with partners to plan the screening, set the agenda and promote the event. If your facility is limited, a community partner might also host the event. After the event, you can keep people engaged by providing a space where they can meet and collaborate on follow-up activities sparked by the screening and discussion.

STRATEGIES FOR FACILITATORS

Effective facilitation looks easy when done well, but it requires the coordinated use of several skills at once: active listening, thinking ahead, paying attention to the needs of individuals while moving the group forward and monitoring ground rules, to name a few. It is much easier when you are well prepared and have thought ahead about the event and the audience. The reminders below can help you set up an engaging discussion.

Organize the Room

Ensure that the physical arrangement of the room will encourage the type of discussion you seek and that there is enough seating for everyone. Consider how much light will be needed during both the screening and the discussion portions of the event. Make sure that the temperature of the room is neither too hot nor too cold. Provide signs throughout the building or entryway that make it easy for attendees to find both the room and restrooms. Consider whether a portable microphone is needed to ensure that everyone will be able to hear what is said. Make sure your audiovisual equipment is functioning properly before people arrive at the event, and have a backup plan in case something goes wrong.

Be Prepared

Be familiar enough with this material that you can keep dialogue moving, make smooth transitions to new topics, and listen to participant responses without being preoccupied with what should happen next. View the DVD prior to the screening to help you guide the discussion and anticipate the reaction of the audience.

Establish Ground Rules

Make clear how people should indicate when they want a turn to speak. Encourage attendees to listen carefully as well as share their views without interrupting others. Ask the audience to try to understand one another, use positive language and show respect to everyone in the room. Remind them to keep cell phones off and out of sight.

Involve Everyone

Allow as many opportunities for participation in the discussion as you can. Move away from a person who makes a comment so he or she will speak up and outward, drawing everyone into the conversation. Don't let one person dominate the discussion.

Capture Important Ideas

Reinforce good points by paraphrasing or summarizing them. Assign someone to be in charge of writing key ideas on a whiteboard or flip chart so you can focus on what people are saying. Review or refer back to these ideas at appropriate points in the discussion. Controversial topics can sometimes dominate conversation. Acknowledge controversial topics, but allow all topics to have equal consideration.

Evaluate the Experience

Provide an opportunity for attendees to give feedback on the screening, either orally or anonymously in writing. Such information will help you in planning future screenings.

Plan Follow-Up

Let attendees know how and when you will be following up. Remember to bring an email sign-up sheet to collect contact information.

PARTNERS TO INCLUDE
Youth
Parents
Educators (teachers, principals, superintendents and others)
School board members
Elected officials
Business leaders
Leaders of community organizations (including those working in after-school, juvenile justice, and other youth and education-focused groups, as well as those with less explicit ties to education, such as public health)
Reporters
Leaders in the faith community
Members of the higher-education community
Concerned citizens with no direct ties to K-12 education (college students, retirees, local membership groups and others)

RECOMMENDED SCREENING FORMAT

TIME NEEDED: Approximately 2 hours

MATERIALS: Copy of *Middle School Moment* and discussion guide, email sign-up sheet, evaluation forms, optional handouts

We recommend scheduling a two-hour event (an hour and a half for the film and discussion followed by a half hour for networking and refreshments). You should tailor the screening event to the needs and interests of your community. This guide offers several resources and activities that you may include as desired. The objectives of the event are to help attendees 1) learn about the dropout crisis nationally, 2) explore its impact on their state and community, 3) discuss the important issues raised in *Middle School Moment*, and 4) set personal and community goals to support local youth and schools.

One way the event could be structured using these resources is as follows:

Introductions (5 minutes). Welcome attendees to the event, introduce the facilitator and audience, explain the goals of the event, what you hope the group will accomplish and set ground rules. (See "Strategies for Facilitators" on page 3 for ideas.)

Frame the event (15 minutes). Help the audience understand why the dropout issue is important, what it looks like in your community, and how middle schools can play a role in dropout prevention.

Possible ways to do this include:

Discuss key facts. To impress upon the audience the importance of this issue, ask and answer the following questions:

- How many people drop out of school?
- Why does it matter?
- What are the warning signs that a student might drop out?

See page 5 for details. Provide a copy of that page as a take-home handout.

Compare data. Discuss how this issue impacts your community. (See page 12 for resources to help you gather data for this discussion.)

Test background knowledge. Assess the audience's knowledge about middle school-level students. See page 7 for a short quiz to administer.

Watch the film (15 minutes). *Middle School Moment* highlights how one middle school helped one child overcome daunting odds to stay on track to graduate.

Discuss the film (25 minutes) and how it relates to the local community. See page 8 for discussion prompts.

Take action (30 minutes). It is important that attendees leave with a sense of not only how they can help solve the dropout crisis on an individual level but what the community as a whole is committed to doing.
Possible ways to do this include:

Discuss local challenges. Choose two or three challenges regarding the dropout rate in your community that the audience would like to focus on.

Set goals for personal action. Discuss what individuals and the community as a whole can do to be part of the solution. Review "Models for Action" and complete the worksheet "What Can We Do?" (optional handouts) (See page 9.)

Set community goals. Note themes that emerged and address the challenges faced by communities and schools.

Discuss next steps. What needs to happen to ensure that these ideas turn into community action?

Reflect and adjourn (5 minutes).

- Ask attendees to share some things that they learned with the group.
- Distribute "Resources for Learning More" (see page 12) as a take-home handout.
- Let attendees know how you will be following up.

Invite attendees to stay and mingle over refreshments.

What Is the 'Dropout Crisis'? PART 1

THE NATIONAL CONTEXT *(Optional Handout)*

The Good News: Nationwide, graduation rates are up over the past several years.

The Bad News: We have to do better. The jobs of the future will require more education than ever, and a high school diploma is the first step to ensuring that students remain competitive and successful.
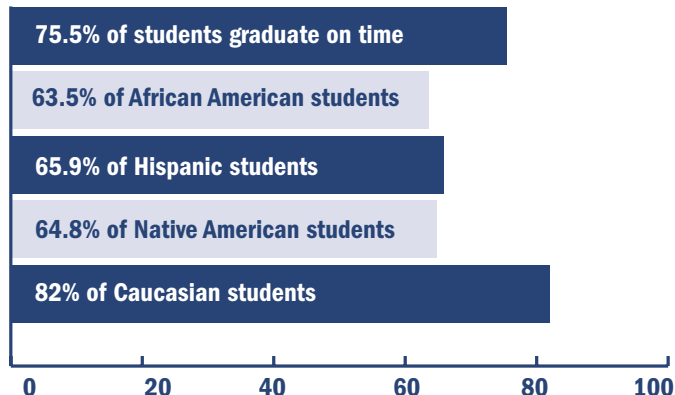
How many people drop out of high school?

Until recently, there has been no uniform way to calculate the exact number of high school dropouts. Estimates range from the hundreds of thousands to over 1 million students. Experts often use the 'on-time graduation' as an indicator of high school dropout rates:

http://www.americaspromise.org/Our-Work/Grad-Nation/Dropout-Facts.aspx

ON-TIME GRADUATION
(four years after starting high school) rates for the class of 2009:

- 75.5% of students graduate on time
- 63.5% of African American students
- 65.9% of Hispanic students
- 64.8% of Native American students
- 82% of Caucasian students

(scale: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80, 100)

Why does it matter?

- The average annual income for a high school graduate is more than 40 percent higher than that of a high school dropout ($27,380 versus $19,450 in 2009), and even greater for those with an associate's degree or higher.

- Over a lifetime, a high school graduate yields a public benefit of more than $200,000 in lower government spending and higher tax revenue compared to a high school dropout.

- High school graduates are less likely to rely on government health care, use other public services (such as food stamps) and become incarcerated than high school dropouts.

What are the warning signs?

Dropouts don't just happen. The warning signs are there, often for years:

First Grade: Teacher ratings of student achievement, conduct and behavior

Third Grade: Not reading on grade level

Sixth to Eighth Grade: The ABCs:

- Attendance problems
- Behavior problems
- Course failure

Ninth Grade: Poor attendance, earning few credits and not being promoted to 10th grade

Grade retention: Repeating a grade in elementary, middle or high school

Poverty: Low-income students are much less likely to graduate than their middle- and upper-income peers.

The Bottom Line: Investing in solutions to the dropout crisis could have a profound effect not only on the individuals whose lives would be improved but also on our economy.

There is no single action that schools, parents or communities can take to prevent high school dropouts. But research suggests that there is a window of opportunity in targeting resources for dropout prevention at middle school-grade students who show signs of poor behavior and disengagement.

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What Is the 'Dropout Crisis'? PART 2

THE STATE AND LOCAL CONTEXT *(Optional Handout)*

Facilitators: Data is a powerful tool in convincing an audience about the urgency of the dropout crisis. While national statistics around dropouts are sobering, tying the dropout crisis to your own community can lead to constructive discussion.

Set the state context:

American Graduate State Report Card

Download data for your state http://americangraduate.org/learn/research-center.html.
Here you can find information on early predictors of dropping out, current graduation rates and the social and economic benefits of increased graduation rates in your state.

Annie E. Casey Foundation's KIDS COUNT Data Center

Access your state's data http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/bystate/Default.aspx. This website offers data on a variety of child wellness indicators (reported indicators vary by state and can include teen birth rates and child Medicaid enrollment rates, among others) that can be used in discussions about how to support youth in your community. You can also click "View Community-Level Profiles" to see local information on a variety of child wellness indicators.

Set the local context:

State and national data can help provide a broader picture of the dropout crisis, but each community faces its own unique challenges. Given that we know that students of certain demographics face greater challenges than others in graduating, prepare for a discussion on the context in your community:

- What does our community look like? What are the demographics by race/ethnicity, income level and gender?
- What is our district (or school) graduation rate?
  - What is the graduation rate by demographic?
  - Are we doing better or worse than the national average? The state average?
- Overall, how is our district (or school) performing on academic measures?
  - How are our middle schools in particular performing?
  - What is our district (or school) absentee rate?

To find answers to these questions, as well as other information you might want to include:

Visit your state department of education website and download your district (or school) report card, which offers valuable information on academic performance, funding, attendance and more (reported indicators vary by state).

Visit http://www.greatschools.org and search for your district (or school). Offering information also found on district and school report cards, GreatSchools.org offers easy-to-understand visuals of student performance over time, as well as demographic and staffing information.

What Do You Know About Middle Schoolers? *(Optional Handout)*

Facilitators: Plan to spend approximately 10 minutes on this activity. If you are administering the quiz orally, spend five to 10 minutes asking questions and discussing answers. Start by prompting discussion with the question:

Do you know any middle school students? **What community activities are available to them?**	
How old are middle school students? **What grades are they in?**	Middle school students who are on track to graduate on time are typically 10 to 14 (sometimes 15) years old. The middle-level grades are fifth through eighth (sometimes ninth).
What are some changes that youth this age undergo?	
	Physical changes (including growth spurts and puberty/hormone changes leading to breast development in girls, facial hair in boys, and skin changes in both sexes)
	Intellectual changes (including interest in a broad array of subjects; eagerness to learn about real-world topics, but less interest in conventional academic topics; progression to more analytical thinking; increased ability to argue a position; and appreciation of sophisticated levels of humor)
	Moral/ethical development (including idealism, a strong sense of fairness, awareness of others' flaws, development of personal values, and understanding of moral issues in shades of gray)
	Emotional/psychological development (including a quest for individuality, a search for an adult identity, moodiness, erratic and inconsistent behavior, self-consciousness and diminished self-esteem, and high sensitivity to criticism)
	Social development (including a strong need to belong to a group, assigning greater importance to peer approval, testing the limits of acceptable behavior, challenging adult authority, ridiculing others, and vulnerability to media and negative interactions with adults)
How might some of these changes impact youth at school?	
	Preoccupation with body image and self-consciousness distracts them from learning.
	Boredom/disengagement from activities leads to a lack of connectedness to the real world.
	Risk increases of adopting the view expressed by others around them that school and education are unimportant.
	Changes in their social circle and sensitivity to criticism, sarcasm and bullying cause dread of school and lead to disengagement.
	Challenges to adult authority result in disciplinary action with academic consequences.
What are the odds that a sixth-grader who has demonstrated one of the ABCs (attendance: missed more than 20 percent of school; behavior: demonstrated mild but sustained misbehavior; or course failure: failed an academic subject) will graduate on time? At all?	10 to 20 percent. Fewer than 25 percent who demonstrate at least one off-track indicator in sixth grade will graduate within an extra year of on-time graduation.

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Discussion Questions: *Middle School Moment*

Watch *Middle School Moment* and use the following questions to prompt discussion. Set the initial direction of the conversation, but let the interest of the group guide discussion.

General questions about the film:

1. Was there anything in the film that you found particularly surprising? Anything that you had a powerful reaction to, be it hope, anger or some other emotion?

2. What are some of the challenges that Omarina had to overcome to succeed?

3. Omarina's success can be partly attributed to the caring adults in her life. Yet initially she indicated a reluctance to talk to them. How do you think these adults built a trusting relationship with her?

4. What are some of the challenges that Omarina will face as she moves on to high school? What supports will she need to keep her on track?

5. Omarina's brother is entering high school in a much different place than she is. What can help re-engage him once he gets there?

How the film relates to our community:

6. What issues raised in the film are relevant in our community?

7. How might the challenges of providing support for students like Omarina vary depending on school context—for example, urban versus rural; high income versus low income? What might they be in our community?

8. From the perspective of school staff, such as principals or teachers, what kinds of supports are needed?

9. What are some of the barriers to ensuring that all children receive a high-quality education? What are some examples of great work in our local schools?

10. What kind of systemic changes are needed to ensure that all students succeed, that they do not fall through the cracks but instead get the support they need?

Moving Forward: Taking Action

After discussing the film and how it relates to your community, discuss ideas for taking action to keep students in school and on track to graduation:

What challenges is our community facing around high school graduation?

- As a group, focus on two or three specific challenges that you would like the community to address. Is it the dropout rate among one group of students? Absenteeism among middle school students? The fact that high school students lack safe spaces and activities to engage in outside of school?

- Have attendees write these challenges on their "What Can We Do?" worksheet (optional handout).

What can we do, both as individuals and as a community?

- Distribute/discuss "Models for Actions" (optional handout) as ideas on individuals and community action.

- Divide into small groups to discuss and complete the "What Can We Do?" worksheet.

- Report ideas for individual and community actions.

Next steps. As a large group, discuss the themes that emerged from the small-group discussions around community actions. Determine next steps to ensure that those actions are taken. Possible topics for discussion include:

- How different community stakeholders could combine efforts

- Building support for these actions

- Following up to ensure that actions are taken. Evaluate impact.

- Steps to consider whether these actions are effective or not

What Can We Do? *(Optional Handout)*

The dropout crisis is a community concern. But while community stakeholders can acknowledge the problem, they might have a hard time figuring out how to help.

What are the problems that our community would like to address?

1. _____

   _____

2. _____

   _____

3. _____

   _____

In small groups, brainstorm what each community member can do, as well as how the community as a whole can combine efforts. Reconvene and share thoughts.

STAKEHOLDERS	POSSIBLE ACTIONS
School board members	
School staff (principals, teachers and others)	
Business leaders	
Faith-based leaders and organizations	
Youth-oriented community-based organizations (Boys & Girls Clubs, youth sports teams and so on)	
Other community institutions (libraries, museums, parks and so on)	
Higher-education partners	
Government agencies (local and state)	
Elected city and county leaders	
Parents	
Youth	
Concerned citizens	

What can I commit to doing? _____

_____

What would our group like to see the community as a whole do? _____

_____

Models for Actions *(Optional Handout)*

To seriously address the dropout crisis, communities must work together. But there are also actions that individuals and organizations can take to improve graduation rates and life chances for all youth. Below are promising models and ideas for how you can get involved.

ACTIONS FOR CONCERNED CITIZENS

MENTOR

Research shows that mentoring—a caring, one-to-one, supportive relationship based on trust—has significant positive effects on early indicators of dropping out of high school, such as school engagement, absenteeism and behavior problems. Learn more from:

MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership
http://www.mentoring.org
United Way
http://www.unitedway.org/take-action/volunteer

VOLUNTEER WITH OUT-OF-SCHOOL (AFTER-SCHOOL OR SUMMER) PROGRAMS

Keeping youth out of trouble and providing role models for them when they are not in school is an important part of keeping them on track. Two national organizations with local affiliates dependent on volunteers are:

Boys & Girls Clubs of America
http://bgca.org
YMCA
http://www.ymca.net

VOLUNTEER IN A CLASSROOM

Schools and districts can offer opportunities to get involved doing everything from photocopying to working one-on-one with struggling readers. In addition, there are national programs that place volunteers in classrooms, such as **Junior Achievement**, which trains community members to teach students about workforce readiness, entrepreneurship and financial literacy.
http://www.ja.org

ACTIONS FOR COMMUNITIES

CONVENE KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN A VARIETY OF FIELDS TO ORGANIZE PEOPLE, TIME, MONEY AND OTHER RESOURCES TO SUPPORT YOUTH

Bring together representatives of K-12 education, business, government, higher education, philanthropy and nonprofits to coordinate efforts and ensure that comprehensive support**s** (after-school and summer programming, family outreach, psychological services and so on) are available for all students. One such effort that has seen great success was initially led by the **Say Yes to Education** foundation in Syracuse, N.Y.
http://www.sayyessyracuse.org

WORK WITH SCHOOL-BASED STAFF TO ORGANIZE LOCAL SERVICES TO BENEFIT STUDENTS

Schools often have staff dedicated to meeting the needs of students that go beyond their academic performance. These staff can organize local services (including tutoring, family counseling, health services, job shadowing and access to food banks) to help children. One national model for such efforts is:

Communities in Schools
http://www.communitiesinschools.org

ACTIONS FOR PARENTS

MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD IS ATTENDING SCHOOL

School absence at all levels—early elementary through high school—is a predictor of dropping out. Learn more at:
http://www.attendanceworks.org

BECOME A PARENT LEADER/ADVOCATE

Parent leaders and advocates help all children achieve better outcomes. Active parents reap personal rewards while also improving results for children and family throughout the community. Organizations like **Families in Schools** involve parents and communities in their children's education to achieve lifelong success through parent training, outreach and capacity building activities.
http://www.familiesinschools.org

Models for Actions *(continued)*

ACTIONS FOR PARENTS

SUPPORT LEARNING AT SCHOOL AND HOME

Research shows that family involvement in education—
both in the school setting by volunteering and at home
with reading and through discussions about the school
day and tracking of school progress—promotes student
success. The **National PTA** offers many resources to help
parents help their child and school succeed at:

http://www.pta.org/topics.asp

ACTIONS FOR YOUTH

PEER-TO-PEER MENTORING

In peer mentoring, older youth befriend and mentor
younger children in a structured environment. One
model that has seen success is:

Link Crew
http://www.boomerangproject.com/high-school-transition

DEDICATE A YEAR TO VOLUNTEERING

Through service, young people can help develop young
leaders of the next generation by acting as tutors,
mentors and role models. One such service program
that is dedicated to fighting the national dropout
crisis is:

City Year
http://www.cityyear.org

ACTIONS FOR BUSINESS LEADERS

OFFER INTERNSHIPS TO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Provide students with the real-world experience they
need to understand the importance of staying in school.
Contact your local district to see if there is an opportu-
nity to participate in an existing internship program,
or start a new one. Learn more about starting and
maintaining an effective internship program at

https://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~gsph/fieldpractice/
sites/starting-maintaining-quality-internship-program.pdf

ADOPT-A-SCHOOL

Businesses can partner with local schools to provide
the resources necessary to meet a school's needs
(such as academic or cultural enrichment, mentoring,
career awareness and help with school beautification
projects). A model for this program can be found in
Tuscaloosa, Ala.

http://www.tuscaloosachamber.com/aas

START OR JOIN A COMMUNITY-WIDE
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Offer students hope for going on to college, and provide
scholarships to all students graduating from a school or
district. Models for these types of programs include:

Michigan's **Kalamazoo Promise**
https://www.kalamazoopromise.com

Arkansas' **El Dorado Promise**
http://www.eldoradopromise.com

Resources for Learning More

There are many national organizations dedicated to improving graduation rates and community-school partnerships. Here is a sampling of organizations that offer resources to help you learn more about these issues:

American Graduate: Let's Make It Happen
A public media initiative supported by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) to help students stay on the path to graduation and future success.
http://www.americangraduate.org

Alliance for Excellent Education
A national policy and advocacy organization working to ensure that all students graduate from high school ready for success in college, work and citizenship.
http://www.all4ed.org

America's Promise Alliance
An alliance consisting of more than 400 national partners and their local affiliates united in efforts to end the dropout crisis and ensure that all young people can live up to their full potential.
http://www.americaspromise.org

Association for Middle-Level Education
The only national education association dedicated exclusively to youth in the middle grades, providing support to anyone interested in the health and education of young adolescents.
http://www.amle.org

Center for School, Health and Education at the American Public Health Association
An organization that recognizes that high school completion is a public health priority and advances school-based health care as a comprehensive strategy for preventing school dropouts and improving graduation rates.
http://www.schoolbasedhealthcare.org

Coalition for Community Schools
An alliance of national, state and local organizations across a variety of sectors advocating for community schools (which are both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources), in recognition of the belief that strong communities require strong schools and strong schools require strong communities.
http://www.communityschools.org

Everyone Graduates Center
An organization dedicated to developing and disseminating the know-how required to enable all students to graduate from high school
prepared for college, career and civic life.
http://new.every1graduates.org

Forum for Youth Investment
A nonprofit, nonpartisan "action tank" dedicated to helping communities and the nation make sure all young people are Ready by 21®: ready for college, work and life.
http://www.forumfyi.org

National Association of Secondary School Principals
A professional organization of middle-level and high school-level school leaders, providing professional resources and practical tools and materials to help advance middle-level and high school education.
http://www.nassp.org

National Dropout Prevention Center
A clearinghouse on issues related to dropout prevention and strategies designed to increase the graduation rate in America's schools.
http://www.dropoutprevention.org

National High School Center
Part of a national network funded by the U.S. Department of Education to help build the capacity of states to effectively implement the goals and objectives of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) that directly affect high school improvement.
http://www.betterhighschools.org

SMILES
A partnership of leaders from the business, faith, and education communities in New Bedford, MA. The program was developed in response to the area's high and chronic dropout rate.
http://www.smilesmentoring.org

FRONTLINE *Dropout Nation* offers full streaming video of its documentaries on the national dropout crisis from the series' website:
http://www.pbs.org/frontline/dropout-nation

MENTOR
NATIONAL MENTORING PARTNERSHIP

Learn how to start a mentoring program in your community:
http://www.mentoring.org/start_a_program

WHAT IS MENTOR?

MENTOR is the lead champion for youth mentoring in the United States.MENTOR's goal is to help young people by providing a public voice, developing and delivering resources to mentoring programs nationwide and promoting quality for mentoring through standards, cutting-edge research and state-of-the-art tools.

MENTOR works closely with State Mentoring Partnerships and more than **5,000 mentoring programs and volunteer centers** throughout the country, serving more than **3 million children in all 50 states**. MENTOR is headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia.

There are currently 18 million children in the United States who want and need a mentor, but only three million have one. MENTOR's mission is to close that gap so that every one of those 15 million children has a caring adult in their life.

MENTOR serves young people between the ages of 6 and18, and its work over the last two decades has helped millions of young people find the support and guidance they need to build productive and meaningful lives.

WHAT DOES MENTOR DO?

MENTOR develops **quality programming** for mentoring programs and works to raise funds to sustain and grow mentoring programs nationwide.

MENTOR has established rigorous national guidelines for service providers through its manuals and publications, such as the *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring™*.

MENTOR galvanized the support of national leaders and mentoring advocates resulting in the **preservation of $248 million in federal funding for mentoring programs** since 2008.

MENTOR has led the effort for SafetyNET, which, for the first time ever, provides an affordable FBI background check for adults working with children. It serves as a model for a major bill before Congress.

MENTOR developed **MentorPRO**®, an online data tracking tool which measures outcomes of mentoring programs' effectiveness.

MENTOR launched the National Mentoring Summit in partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service, the Harvard School of Public Health and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The first historic Summit took place in January 2011 at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Speakers at the event included: First Lady Michelle Obama; U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder Jr; U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius; U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan; CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service Patrick Corvington; and Chief of Staff of the White House Office of Public Engagement and Intergovernmental Affairs Mike Strautmanis. 2013 will be the third National Mentoring Summit slated for January 24-25 at The Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C.

MENTOR partners with the University of Massachusetts Boston in forming the UMass Boston/MENTOR Center for Evidence-Based Mentoring, a first-of-its-kind institute to support the advancement of youth mentoring efforts.

MENTOR was chosen by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for its $30,000,000 voucher-based demonstration grant to providers to support children in an innovative three-year initiative called: **"Mentoring Children of Prisoners: Caregiver's Choice."**

MENTOR joined forces with the Harvard School of Public Health and the Corporation for National and Community Service, as well as local partners nationwide, to conduct National Mentoring Month activities each January.

MENTOR's Research and Policy Council has organized the country's leading researchers, practitioners and policy experts to focus on state-of-the-art research on mentoring and national policy recommendations.

WHO LEADS MENTOR?

MENTOR's board of directors includes MENTOR Chairman of the Board **Willem Kooyker** (Chairman and CEO, Blenheim Capital Management LLC). MENTOR's co-founders are **Geoffrey T. Boisi** (Chairman and CEO, Roundtable Investment Partners LLC) and **Raymond G. Chambers** (Founder and Chairman, Amelior Foundation). Other board members include: NBA legends **Bill Bradley** and **Bill Russell**; Grammy award-winner **Michael Bolton**; **George A. Fertitta** (CEO of NYC & Company); **James Sinegal** (President and CEO, Costco Wholesale), as well as many other men and women who donate their time and efforts to enhance the lives of our nation's youth. MENTOR's President and CEO is **David Shapiro.**

In addition, many luminaries, including politicians, celebrities and sports icons have been involved and honored by MENTOR over the years. Such notable figures include **Maya Angelou, Tom Brokaw, David Brooks, Ray Charles, President Bill Clinton, Bill Cosby, Tom Cruise, Maureen Dowd, Clint Eastwood, Quincy Jones, Colin Powell, Cal Ripken Jr., Sting** and **Oprah Winfrey.**