

May 26, 2009 ♦ Partnerships to Strengthen Career Planning for Milwaukee Teens

Pilot program answers president's call to emphasize math and science education

This is an excerpt of an article written by Rebecca Cole, which appeared in the Los Angeles Times on May 21, 2009.

With President Obama calling math and science education the key to good jobs in our future economy, Congress was told Wednesday that a pilot program in Los Angeles schools has started to show promising results in computer science.

Over the last five years, the program -- which was established in six schools and focused on persuading more technology classes -- doubled American students taking Advanced computer science and tripled females.

Joanna Goode, assistant University of Oregon and a said the key to changing demonstrating that what was already at the center of



students to enroll in computer the number of African Placement the numbers of Latinos and

professor of education at the co-leader of the program, student attitudes was seemed like a distant subject their lives.

"Computer science is the iPhone. It is social networking and downloading MP3s," she said. If schools approach the subject as a way to study how technology powers "the things they already do for fun, it is much more effective."

Calling the effort an "intervention," Goode said the group purposely targeted schools that had underprivileged students of color.

The first hurdle was enticing students who traditionally viewed computer science as a profession for "geeky white guys with pocket protectors" or "people in lab coats," she said. And the key to changing those perspectives was to show them how they already use technology.

For the full article visit: <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-igital-divide21-2009may21,0,4195521.story>

Tying education to future goals may boost grades more than helping with homework

This is an excerpt of an article which was published by Science Daily on May 21, 2009.

Helping middle school students with their homework may not be the best way to get them on the honor roll. But telling them how important academic performance is to their future job prospects and providing specific strategies to study and learn might clinch the grades, according to a research review.

"Instilling the value of education and linking school work to future goals is what this age group needs to excel in school, more than parents' helping with homework or showing up at school," said lead researcher Nancy E. Hill, PhD, of Harvard University. She examined 50 studies with more than 50,000 students over a 26-year period looking at what kinds of parent involvement helped children's academic achievement.

"Middle school is the time when grades and interest in school decline," said Hill. "Entering puberty, hanging out with friends, wanting distance from parents and longing to make one's own decisions win over listening to parents and studying."

But adolescence is also a time when analytic thinking, problem-solving, planning and decision-making skills start to increase, Hill said. At this age, "teens are starting to internalize goals, beliefs and motivations and use these to make decisions. Although they may want to make their own decisions, they need guidance from parents to help provide the link between school and their aspirations for future work."

Helping with homework had mixed results. Some students felt that parents were interfering with their independence or putting too much pressure on them. Some found that their parents' help was confusing because they didn't use the same strategies as their teachers. Still others felt that parents helped them complete or understand their homework, said Hill and co-author Diana F. Tyson, PhD, of Duke University.

"Lack of guidance is the chief reason that academically able students do not go to college," said Hill. "So communicating the value of education and offering curriculum advice about what to focus on helps these students plan their long-term goals."

Journal reference:

Hill et al. Parental involvement in middle school: A meta-analytic assessment of the strategies that promote achievement. *Developmental Psychology*, 2009; 45 (3): 740
DOI: 10.1037/a0015362

For the complete article visit: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/05/090519134711.htm>.

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