

# Of Interest to Teachers

## **On-the-Job Training: Only for the Educated?**

On-the-job training is offered most often to white-collar workers and the technical elite, according to *The Learning Enterprise*, a new study by the American Society for Training and Development funded by the U.S. Department of Labor. Those who do not learn basic skills in school are also less likely to get training on the job. Yet this type of training will be the only way for many to gain the skills they need to make a living. Workers who receive formal training on the job earn more than 25 percent more than those who receive none.

Workers with two years of formal education after high school have a 20 percent greater chance of getting on-the-job training than high school graduates, the study found. For college graduates, the chances are 50 percent greater. U.S. employers currently spend about \$30 billion (1.4 percent of their payroll) on formal job-training programs.

## **Inadequate Teacher Training a Factor in Unreported Child Abuse**

Child abuse often goes undetected because elementary teachers are poorly trained to recognize and report the problem, according to the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse.

The committee surveyed teachers' knowledge of child abuse and child-protection policies, after learning that while 57 percent of known cases of child abuse involved school-age children, only 16 percent of the reports originated with school personnel.

Of the teachers surveyed, 72 percent said they suspected a child was being abused or neglected at some time. While 90 percent of these teachers said they had reported their suspicions, most informed other school personnel rather than child protective services.

The main barriers preventing teachers from reporting their suspicions were lack of knowledge about signs of child abuse and fear of legal retribution. Only half of the teachers had any training in child-abuse reporting procedures.—Reported in *Christian Home & School*, November-December 1989.

## **U.S. Safety Unit Issues Warning About Bleachers**

"The Consumer Product Safety Commission, responding to more than

a dozen reports of collapsing gymnasium bleachers, [recently] warned schools and the public that some bleachers may give way if not properly operated and maintained.

"Since 1978, 16 known bleacher collapses have occurred involving manual, telescopic bleachers manufactured between 1966 and 1979 under the trade names Interkal, Vecta, and Brunswick, according to a statement released by the commission.

"The incidents took place during school activities, resulting in injuries to schoolchildren ranging from minor bruises to more serious injuries to the leg, ankle, and back, according to the C.P.S.C....

"The C.P.S.C. said investigations revealed that if bleachers are not properly opened and maintained, they may one day collapse.

"It advised owners of manual, telescopic bleachers to inspect the bleachers for signs of damage, wear, and misalignment before further use. The bleachers should also be routinely inspected and maintained at least twice a year in accordance with the owner's manual, the commission said.

"The agency also recommended that the bleachers be opened and closed only by trained personnel, not by students. Guardrails, it said, should be installed as a safety precaution and to ensure that bleachers are fully extended."—*Education Week*, vol. IX:4, No. 14, December 6, 1989. Reprinted by permission.

## **Peer Pressure**

More than half of elementary school students do things they don't want to do because of peer pressure.—Metropolitan Life Foundation report.



## **U.S. College Participation Rates Drop for Most Blacks and Hispanics**

Far lower percentages of low- and middle-income black and Hispanic college-age youth are attending college than in previous years.

Between 1976 and 1988, the college participation rate for low-income black youth dropped from 40 percent to 30 percent. In 1988, only 23 percent of low-income black males attended college, compared to 36 percent of their female counterparts.

The college participation rate for low-income Hispanic youth also declined during those years, from 50 percent to 35 percent.

In 1988, 46 percent of middle-income Hispanics were enrolled in college, down from 53 percent in 1976. The percentage of middle income blacks enrolled in college decreased from 53 percent in 1976 to 36 percent in 1988.

The data on college participation are based on 18- to 24-year-old high school graduates enrolled in college as of September of that year and who are financially dependent on their families.—"Eighth Annual Status Report on Minorities in Higher Education," American Council on Education, Washington, D.C.

## **Hands-on College Technology Education Needed in Liberal- Arts Programs**

A liberal arts education as we know it today is not adequate to provide young people with the requisite skills for life in today's world, according to a report from the Council for Independent Colleges.

Liberal-arts education must incorporate the study of technology, the council says. Its 12-page report covers the first five years of a project to introduce the study of technology into the liberal-arts curricula.

The council's report describes the first 20 projects, and concludes that technology must be taught not just as an intellectual discipline, but by giving students "hands-on" experience with different technologies.

In addition, it says, liberal-arts colleges have a responsibility to look at the philosophical aspects of technology, such as the choices it both makes possible and requires.

The report calls for new curricular materials to help teach technology in liberal-arts colleges. □