



Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

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Children age 0-8 spend over 2 hours a day on digital screens

CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

***Evaluating the Effects of Police Body-Worn Cameras: A Randomized Controlled Trial.* By David Yokum, et al. Executive Office of the Mayor, Washington DC. Oct. 20, 2017. 32 p.**

http://bwc.thelab.dc.gov/TheLabDC_MPD_BWC_Working_Paper_10.20.17.pdf

In a study of 2,224 police officers in Washington, D.C., "results showed that wearing a body camera does not influence how an officer acts." The study "compared the number of citations for disorderly conduct those officers administered, the number of complaints made about those officers, and the number of times they used force with someone." The results are different for this study compared to a 2012 study of 54 officers in Rialto (San Bernardino County) that showed both the likelihood of force and the rate of complaints against officers were reduced when cameras were used.

ECONOMY

Defensive Investments and the Demand for Air Quality: Evidence from the NOx Budget Program. By Olivier Deschênes, et al. American Economic Association. Oct. 2017. 72 p.
<https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/aer.20131002>

“The demand for air quality depends on health impacts and defensive investments, but little research assesses the empirical importance of defenses. A rich quasi-experiment suggests that the Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) Budget Program (NBP), a cap-and-trade market, decreased NOx emissions, ambient ozone concentrations, pharmaceutical expenditures, and mortality rates. The annual reductions in pharmaceutical purchases, a key defensive investment, and mortality are valued at about \$800 million and \$1.3 billion, respectively, suggesting that defenses are over one-third of willingness-to-pay for reductions in NOx emissions. Further, estimates indicate that the NBP’s benefits easily exceed its costs and that NOx reductions have substantial benefits.”

EDUCATION

Tracking Transfer: Measures of Effectiveness in Helping Community College Students to Complete Bachelor’s Degrees. By Doug Shapiro, et al. National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. Sep. 2017. 31 p.
<https://nscresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/SignatureReport13.pdf>

“Out of 852,439 students who first enrolled at a community college, 31.5% (268,749) transferred to a four-year institution within six years. Among those students, about one-third (34%) transferred after receiving a credential (either a certificate or associate degree) at the starting school. In addition, 42% of those who transferred earned a bachelor’s degree within six years of starting in the community college. Those bachelor’s degree completers represent just 13% of the original starting cohort. Among those who transferred, lower and higher income students had similar rates of receiving a credential from the community college before their transfer (33%). Higher income students were more likely to earn a bachelor’s degree after they transferred, however, compared to lower income students (49% vs. 35%).”

Crossing the Line: Exploring Equity in Special Education Classification Across the United States. By Thomas Reap, Frontline Institute. 2017. 17 p.
https://www.frontlineeducation.com/FrontlineEducation/media/images/FRLI/Special%20Ed%20Report%202017/Frontline_Education_2017_Special_Ed_Report_Part1.pdf
Heat map: U.S. Special Education Classification Rates
https://www.frontlineeducation.com/Frontline_Research_Learning_Institute/Reports/Special_Ed_Report

“As equity takes a front line position in ESSA [the Every Student Succeeds Act], special education becomes especially important from a measurement and reporting perspective. At the state level, enormously varied rates of special education classification beckon a closer look into the distribution of those rates and related perceptions of educators about issues like classification rate appropriateness, contributing factors and the resulting outcomes.” California’s classification rate is at 11.3% of public school enrollment—considered in the mid-range, compared to the highest states such as New York (17.8%) and low states such as Hawaii, at 10.5%.

EMPLOYMENT

The State of Occupational Licensing: Research, State Policies and Trends. National Conference of State Legislatures. Oct. 2017. 28 p.
http://www.ncsl.org/Portals/1/Documents/employ/Licensing/State_Occupational_Licensing.pdf

“Occupational licenses are given almost entirely at the state level, meaning that the requirements can vary widely from one to another, making it difficult for people to relocate and stay in their current profession.... Licensing is generally justified on the grounds of public safety or fraud protection. But while it makes sense to license people in fields such as healthcare, many local governments regulate careers in

which the public benefit is harder to justify....[One study found] there were 'far more cases' in which licensing reduced employment than ones where it improved the quality and safety of services. The restrictions have resulted in 2.8 million fewer jobs nationally and raised consumer costs by \$203 billion annually." ([Washington Examiner](#), Oct. 16, 2017).

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

"Dry Groundwater Wells in the Western United States." By Debra Perrone, et al. *Environmental Research Letters*. Online ahead of print. Sep. 28, 2017. 25 p.
<http://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/aa8ac0/pdf>

"During California's severe five-year drought groundwater levels fell to record lows and people in farming communities from Tulare County to Paso Robles saw their wells go dry. Now researchers have analyzed records for about 2 million wells across 17 western states from Texas to Oregon, and they estimate that one out of every 30 wells was dry between 2013 and 2015. The researchers also found dry wells were concentrated in farming areas such as California's Central Valley and the High Plains. In some areas, they estimated that up to one-fifth of wells were dry.... [T]he study confirmed that domestic wells are shallower and more susceptible to going dry than agricultural wells in parts of the Central Valley, though not all of it. Outside of California ... the depths of household wells and agricultural wells were similar in most of the areas they analyzed." ([Desert Sun](#), Sep. 29, 2017)

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Investigations of Improper Activities by State Agencies and Employees: Inaccurate Attendance Records, Violation of State Laws, and Misuse of State Resources. California State Auditor. Oct. 12, 2017. 39 p.
<http://www.auditor.ca.gov/pdfs/reports/l2017-2.pdf>

Between January and June 2017, the State Auditor's office received over 662 calls and conducted preliminary investigations on nearly 677 cases. Of the 242 cases determined to have sufficient information for further inquiry, 50 of them resulted in an investigation. This report details six substantiated allegations. "A UC Davis professor returned almost \$1,000 to the school this year after officials determined that three limousine trips he charged to the campus were inappropriate.... [A]n annual holiday party for workers at the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation included an illegal raffle.... [A] mental health technician at a state hospital received \$7,540 in improper overtime pay even though he regularly arrived late to work, left early and took long lunches." ([Sacramento Bee](#), Oct. 12, 2017).

HEALTH

"High-Deductible Health Plans Reduce Health Care Cost and Utilization, Including Use of Needed Preventive Services." By Rajender Agarwal, et al. *Health Affairs*, vol. 36, no. 10 (Oct. 2017) 7 p.
<http://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/pdf/10.1377/hlthaff.2017.0610>

This study compares "patterns of insurance coverage and health care access in suburban, urban, and rural areas using national survey data from 2005 to 2015" and compares "outcomes by geography before and after the Affordable Care Act took effect. We found that nearly 40% of the uninsured population lived in suburban areas. Though unadjusted rates of health care access were better in suburban areas, compared to urban and rural communities, this advantage was greatly reduced after income and other demographics are accounted for. Overall, a substantial portion of the US population residing in the suburbs lacked health insurance and experienced difficulties accessing care. Increased policy attention is needed to address these challenges for vulnerable populations living in the suburbs."

HUMAN SERVICES

Census Data Show Robust Progress Across the Board in 2016 in Income, Poverty, and Health Coverage. By Arloc Sherman, et al. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Sep. 12, 2017. 5 p.
<https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/9-12-17pov.pdf>

“Economic progress lowered poverty and lifted median household income to its highest level in at least nine years, Census data released September 12 show, while the continuing effectiveness of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) pushed the uninsured rate down to a new record low.... This also marks the first time on record that income, poverty, and health coverage all improved for two consecutive years; these data go back to 1988. The challenge for policymakers now is to build on the last few years’ progress and not worsen poverty, inequality, and health coverage.”

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

The Common Sense Census: Media Use by Kids Age Zero to Eight. Common Sense Media. Oct. 2017. 64 p.
<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/research/the-common-sense-census-media-use-by-kids-age-zero-to-eight-2017> (Free registration required)
Infographic: <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/zero-to-eight-census-infographic>

“[O]verall, children spend two hours and 19 minutes a day with ‘screen media,’ which includes mobile devices, television, DVDs and videos, video game players, computers and small digital devices such as iPods and virtual reality headsets. However, how children are using that media time has shifted from 2011 to 2017, researchers state. A third of all screen time is now mobile, with 35% of children on mobile devices in 2017, compared to 4% in 2011.... The report states that 96% of families with high incomes have internet access at home compared to 74% of families with low incomes with internet access. The report defines ‘low income’ as families earning less than \$30,000 a year and ‘high income’ as families earning more than \$75,000 a year.” ([EdSource](#), Oct. 22, 2017).

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