



## Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

Issue 14-140

October 8, 2014

Contents this week:

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT**

Recidivism data collection needed for improving outcomes

### **CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY**

A snapshot of the achievements and needs of young adults

### **ECONOMY**

A plan to restore American research competitiveness

### **EDUCATION**

Closing the education gap for black males

### **EMPLOYMENT**

Minimum wage increase in L.A. not likely to impact overall employment

### **ENVIRONMENT**

Germany and Japan: lessons in adopting renewable energy strategies

### **GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

Young people & public libraries: high usage, low personal value

### **HEALTH**

CA's teen birth rate below the national average in 2012

### **HUMAN SERVICES**

One in five U.S. children remains food insecure

### **TOOLS OF THE TRADE**

Follow the money in California legislative battles

### **TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE**

Oil and gas by rail: GAO recommendations

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT**

*Improving Recidivism as a Performance Measure.* By Ryan King, et al. Urban Institute. Oct. 2014. 13 p.

<http://www.urban.org/publications/413247.html>

"Improving recidivism data collection and reporting is a critical first step to advancing our knowledge about what works in sentencing and corrections policy. This brief outlines the necessary elements that every state should use when defining, collecting, analyzing, and disseminating recidivism data. It offers a blueprint for gathering a broad range of reoffending indicators, accurately comparing across groups and over time, and using the results to inform decisionmaking and improve outcomes."

## CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

***America's Young Adults: Special Issue, 2014.*** Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. July 2014. 100 p.

[http://www.childstats.gov/pdf/ac2014/YA\\_14.pdf](http://www.childstats.gov/pdf/ac2014/YA_14.pdf)

This report provides data on young adults in the United States, derived from several federally-sponsored surveys. Its purpose is to help policymakers understand the achievements and needs of young adults. "As of 2012, there were 31.2 million young adults ages 18–24 living in the United States. About 522,000 young adults were serving on active duty in the armed forces in 2012. Just over 180,000 young adults were imprisoned in State correctional institutions in 2011.... The overall college enrollment rate for 18- to 24-year-olds increased from 26% in 1980 to 41% in 2012.... The mean cumulative debt per fourth-year student in 2011–12 was \$25,400, up from \$14,700 in 1989–90."

## ECONOMY

***Restoring the Foundation: The Vital Role of Research in Preserving the American Dream.*** American Academy of Arts & Sciences. Oct. 2014. 152 p.

[https://www.amacad.org/multimedia/pdfs/publications/researchpapersmonographs/AmericanAcad\\_RestoringtheFoundation.pdf](https://www.amacad.org/multimedia/pdfs/publications/researchpapersmonographs/AmericanAcad_RestoringtheFoundation.pdf)

"As American spending on research relative to GDP dwindles, the system that generated America's economic prosperity over the past century has begun to fall apart.... The Academy calls the disintegration of the country's national innovation system the key threat to American prosperity. The authors propose several strategies to address the issue, including ... policy solutions to ensure that the benefits of R&D are maximized and widespread, and strengthening government-industry-university partnerships." (*SSTI Weekly Digest*, Sep. 25, 2014).

## EDUCATION

***Advancing the Success of Boys and Men of Color in Education: Recommendations for Policy Makers.*** The Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education, et al. Aug. 2014. 24 p.

<http://ddce.utexas.edu/projectmales/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/POLICY-REPORT-8-29-141-copy.pdf>

"Institutions across the U.S. and throughout the educational pipeline (e.g., elementary, secondary, and postsecondary) have been confronted with innumerable challenges achieving parity in educating males of color compared to their White and Asian male counterparts. For example, only 18% of Black boys are proficient in fourth grade mathematics compared to 55% and 64% for their White and Asian peers.... MBK [My Brother's Keeper] represents a major undertaking in that it seeks to diagnose the pitfalls that plague educational achievement among males of color and comprehensively catalogue proven solutions to the problem. To this end, this brief aims to contribute to this effort by proposing specific educational policies and practices that should be implemented to improve outcomes for boys and men of color at every junction of their education."

## EMPLOYMENT

***The Mayor of Los Angeles' Proposed City Minimum Wage Policy: A Prospective Impact Study.*** By Michael Reich, et al. Institute for Research on Labor and Employment. Sep. 2014. 22 p.  
<http://www.irle.berkeley.edu/cwed/briefs/2014-05.pdf>

“The Mayor of Los Angeles ... requested that UC Berkeley’s Institute for Research on Labor and Employment conduct an impact study of his proposal to establish a city-wide minimum wage of \$13.25 an hour by 2017, phased in over three steps.... [T]he proposed policy would provide significant gains in income to Los Angeles’ low-wage workers and their families. Most businesses would be able to absorb the increased costs, and consumers would see a small one-time increase in restaurant prices. The policy’s impact on overall employment is not likely to be significant.”

## ENVIRONMENT

***Transforming the Electricity Portfolio: Lessons from Germany and Japan in Deploying Renewable Energy.*** By John P. Banks, et al. Brookings. Sep. 2014. 71 p.  
<http://www.brookings.edu/research/reports/2014/09/transforming-electricity-portfolio-renewable-energy>

“Amid an ongoing international debate on the reduction of carbon emissions, Germany and Japan are undertaking a dramatic shift in their electricity portfolios. The 2011 Japanese earthquake and the subsequent Fukushima Daiichi nuclear facility accident have sparked both Japanese and German energy policy to shift away from carbon-free nuclear energy and towards renewables. However, despite large gains in market share by renewables, these two countries have seen increases in both fossil fuel usage and carbon emissions as the market share of nuclear energy has declined.”

## GENERAL GOVERNMENT

***Younger Americans and Public Libraries.*** By Kathryn Zickuhr, et al. Pew Research Center. Sep. 10, 2014. 32 p.  
[http://www.pewinternet.org/files/2014/09/PI\\_YoungerAmericansandLibraries\\_091014.pdf](http://www.pewinternet.org/files/2014/09/PI_YoungerAmericansandLibraries_091014.pdf)

“Despite their higher rates of library usage overall, younger Americans—particularly those under age 25—continue to be less likely than older adults to say that if their local public library closed it would have a major impact on either them and their family or on their community. Patrons ages 16-29 are also less likely than those ages 30 and older to say that several services are ‘very important’ to them and their family, though those in their late twenties are more likely than younger age groups to strongly value most services.”

## HEALTH

**“National and State Patterns of Teen Births in the United States, 1940-2013.”** By Stephanie J. Ventura, et al. *National Vital Statistics Reports*, vol. 63, no. 4 (Aug. 20, 2014) pp. 1-33.  
[http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr63/nvsr63\\_04.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr63/nvsr63_04.pdf)

“This report presents trends from 1940 through 2013 in national birth rates for teenagers, with particular focus on the period since 1991.... Birth rates for U.S. teenagers have generally fallen in the United States since peaking in 1957. The rate fell 57% between 1991 and 2013.” California’s teen birth rate in 2012 was lower than the national average. In California, the birth rate for teenagers of all races and origins, age 15-19, was 26.5 out of 1,000 women, compared to the national rate of 29.4 out of 1,000.

## HUMAN SERVICES

***Childhood Food Insecurity in the U.S.: Trends, Causes, and Policy Options.*** By Craig Gundersen, et al. *The Future of Children*. Fall 2014. 24 p.

[http://futureofchildren.org/publications/journals/journal\\_details/index.xml?journalid=82](http://futureofchildren.org/publications/journals/journal_details/index.xml?journalid=82)

“In 2012, nearly 16 million U.S. children, or over one in five, lived in households that were food insecure, which the U.S. Department of Agriculture defines as ‘a household-level economic and social condition of limited access to food.’... [F]ood insecurity remains so high even though the government spent over \$100 billion on the various federal food-assistance programs in fiscal year 2012.” This study identifies the causes of food insecurity among children, discusses the effectiveness of public policies, and makes policy recommendations for improving children’s food security.

## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

***Follow the Money in California Legislative Battles.*** *Sacramento Bee*. Sep. 19, 2014.

<http://www.sacbee.com/2014/09/19/6702536/fight-for-the-california-legislature.html>

This interactive map provides data on campaign contributions, independent expenditures, and constituent demographics for California’s Assembly and Senate Districts. It also identifies districts with particularly competitive races.

## TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

***Oil and Gas Transportation: Department of Transportation Is Taking Actions to Address Rail Safety, but Additional Actions Are Needed to Improve Pipeline Safety.*** By Susan Fleming, et al. U.S. Government Accountability Office. GAO-14-667. Aug. 2014. 65 p.

<http://www.gao.gov/assets/670/665404.pdf>

“This report examines (1) overall challenges that increased oil and gas production may pose for transportation infrastructure, (2) specific pipeline safety risks and how DOT [U.S. Department of Transportation] is addressing them, and (3) specific rail safety risks and how DOT is addressing them.... Crude oil carloads moved by rail in 2012 increased by 24 times over that moved in 2008.... Crude oil shippers are required to identify their product’s hazardous properties, including flammability, before packaging the oil in an authorized tank car. DOT has issued safety alerts on the importance of proper testing and packaging of crude oil. However, industry stakeholders said that DOT’s guidance on this issue is vague and that clarity about the type and frequency of testing is needed.”

### **About *Studies in the News***

*Studies in the News* (SITN) is a service provided by the California Research Bureau (CRB), a division of the California State Library. CRB provides independent, nonpartisan research and analysis for the Governor, Legislature and State Constitutional Officers.

SITN lists of current studies related to public policy issues are e-mailed weekly. Archived issues are available at <http://www.library.ca.gov/sitn/crb/>.

To add or remove your name from the SITN distribution list, or to update your e-mail address, please contact us at [crb@library.ca.gov](mailto:crb@library.ca.gov), or (916) 319-2691.

SITN is available as an RSS feed at <http://www.library.ca.gov/sitn/crb/>.