



Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

Veterans Outreach Justice Program. By Daniel Bertoni. Government Accountability Office.

GAO-16-393. Apr. 2016. 53 p.

<http://gao.gov/assets/680/676861.pdf>

"Most veterans transition to civilian life trouble-free. For those who struggle with their transition to the point that they are arrested and jailed, VA (Dept. of Veterans Affairs) created the VJO (Veterans Justice Outreach) program, which connects veterans with supports and services to help avoid re-incarceration.... This report examines 1) how the program delivers services and the number and characteristics of veterans in the program, 2) the extent to which VA uses performance assessment of the program, and 3) the key challenges that VA has identified and the extent to which VA has developed strategies." GAO recommends that VA establish program goals and measures along with conducting a comprehensive risk assessment.

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

The Nation's Latino Population is Defined by Its Youth: Nearly Half of U.S.-born Latinos Are Younger than 18. By Eileen Patten. Pew Research Center. Apr. 2016.

Report. 14 p.: http://www.pewhispanic.org/files/2016/04/PH_2016-04-20_LatinoYouth-Final.pdf

Statistical Profile of Hispanics in the U.S. 7 p.:

<http://www.pewhispanic.org/2016/04/19/statistical-portrait-of-hispanics-in-the-united-states-key-charts/>

"Mexican-origin Hispanics have always been the largest Hispanic-origin group in the U.S. In 1860, for example, among the 155,000 Hispanics living in the U.S., 81.1% were of Mexican origin—a historic high. Since then the origins of the nation's Hispanic population have diversified as growing numbers of immigrants from other Latin American nations and Puerto Rico settled in the U.S.... Between 1980 and 2000, immigration was the main driver of Latino population growth as the Latino immigrant population boomed from 4.2 million to 14.1 million. However since 2000, the primary source of Latino population growth has swung from immigration to native births."

EDUCATION

Summary of Research on the Association between State Interventions in Chronically Low-Performing Schools and Student Achievement. By Mary Klute, et al. National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance. Apr. 2016. 25 p.

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/central/pdf/REL_2016138.pdf

This literature review summarizes research on the "association between state interventions in chronically low-performing schools and student achievement." The focus of much of the research is on the involvement of a "turnaround partner" in the intervention process and includes eight studies in California examining the Immediate Intervention/Underperforming Schools Program and the High Priority School Grant Program. The researchers found that "[r]esults of studies of turnaround partner interventions were mixed and suggested that student achievement was more likely to improve when particular factors—such as strong leadership, use of data to guide instruction, and a positive school culture characterized by trust and increased expectations for students—were in place in schools."

EMPLOYMENT

U-6: Broader Unemployment Measure Continues to Improve. By Jason Sisney. Legislative Analyst's Office. Apr. 2016. 4 p.

<http://www.lao.ca.gov/LAOEconTax/Article/Detail/182>

Unemployment rates are often measured as the percentage of people who are in the labor force but who are not employed. The Bureau of Labor Statistics has added an alternative measure of the job distress rate called U-6, "which considers not only the unemployed population in the official 'U-3' unemployment rate, but also marginally attached workers and those employed part-time for economic reasons.... This U-6 measure has been said to measure the 'unemployed, underemployed, and those who are not looking but want a job.'" California's U-6 rate is 12% currently, which is still higher than the national rate of 10.1% and higher than before the Great Recession. "These numbers suggest that around 2.9 million Californians are unemployed, underemployed, or wanting a job but not looking for one now."

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

“Flow Management for Hydropower Extirpates Aquatic Insects, Undermining River Food Webs.”
By Theodore A. Kennedy, et al. *BioScience*. Advance access May 2016. 15 p.

<http://bioscience.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2016/04/30/biosci.biw059.full.pdf+html>

“Dams impound the majority of rivers and provide important societal benefits, especially daily water releases that enable on-peak hydroelectricity generation. Such ‘hydropeaking’ is common worldwide, but its downstream impacts remain unclear.... Our model predicts that aquatic-insect abundance will depend on a basic life-history trait—adult egg-laying behavior—such that open-water layers will be unaffected by hydropeaking, whereas ecologically important and widespread river-edge layers, such as mayflies, will be extirpated. These predictions are supported by a more-than-2500-sample, citizen-science data set of aquatic insects from the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon and by a survey of insect diversity and hydropeaking intensity across dammed rivers of the Western United States.”

Residential End Uses of Water, Version 2: Executive Report. By William B. DeOreo, et al.
Water Research Foundation. Apr. 2016. 16 p.

<http://www.waterrf.org/PublicReportLibrary/4309a.pdf>

An updated and expanded assessment of a 1999 report on residential water use, this report finds that the average annual use of water per household is 88,000 gallons, indoor water use is 138 gallons per household per day, 33.2% of total indoor water use is associated with household hot water use, and average annual outdoor water use per household per year is 50,500 gallons. Since the 1999 report, there has been a decrease in residential indoor water use in single-family homes, due in large part to improved water efficiency of clothes washers and toilets.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Library Services for Those with Disabilities: Additional Steps Needed to Ease Access to Services and Modernize Technology. Government Accountability Office. GAO-16-355. Apr. 2016. 41 p.

<http://www.gao.gov/assets/680/676309.pdf>

“The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) is primarily used by older adults with visual disabilities, and NLS has taken some steps to ensure eligible users’ access to and awareness of available services. In fiscal year 2014, about 70% of the program’s 430,000 users were ages 60 and older and almost 85% had visual disabilities.” This report explores challenges NLS is facing including limitations in its statutory authority, obstacles for individuals trying to establish eligibility, certification practices largely unchanged for the last 40 years, and transitioning from providing access with digital cartridges delivered via the postal service to delivering audio content via the Internet.

HEALTH

Rare Diseases: Too Early to Gauge Effectiveness of FDA’s Pediatric Voucher Program.
Government Accountability Office. GAO-16-319. Mar. 2016. 32 p.

<http://gao.gov/assets/680/675544.pdf>

“About half of all rare diseases affect children, and few of those diseases have viable treatments.” To address this problem, in 2012 the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) began offering an economic incentive, in the form of vouchers, to drug sponsors that treat rare pediatric diseases with approved medicine. These vouchers give qualified drug sponsors one priority review by the FDA in a future approval process. As of December 15, 2015, there have been 11 requests for these vouchers. Of these, six have resulted in drug sponsors providing new medicine to treat cancer and metabolic diseases in children. The voucher program is slated to end in late 2016, and the FDA is not currently in favor of

continuing it due to workload issues, but stakeholders are generally positive about the program's outcomes.

HUMAN SERVICES

Rapid Re-housing for Homeless Families Demonstration Programs Evaluation Report Part II: Demonstration Findings—Outcomes Evaluation. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Apr. 2016. 146 p.

<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/RRHD-PartII-Outcomes.pdf>

Rapid re-housing for homeless families is homeless intervention designed to quickly move homeless families from homelessness into permanent housing. "In 2009, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded funding to 23 communities to implement the Rapid Rehousing for Homeless Families Demonstration (RRHD) program. HUD contracted with Abt Associates Inc. (Abt) to conduct an outcomes evaluation of this demonstration.... The study results affirm that rapid re-housing is effective at moving families into permanent housing and that most (90%) of those families who were placed do not return to homelessness."

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

California Data Profiles. California Center for Jobs & the Economy. Mar. 2016.

<http://centerforjobs.org/profiles/>

The California Center for Job & the Economy has expanded its interactive data visualization tool, "Data Profiles," to include U.S. congressional districts. Users can now obtain quick facts on the state of local economies for congressional districts and, in addition, there are breakouts by county, assembly and senate districts, Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (Go-Biz) regions, and workforce regions. The tool provides information on unemployment, labor force participation, industrial categories, and basic demographics.

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