

SCHOOL FAILURE

Many Americans do not complete high school :

The national graduation rate is 72% for females and 64% for males, according to a 2004 report. Of all students who entered ninth grade in 2000, only 68% will graduate in 2004. Of the 9.6 million 15- to 24-year-olds enrolled in high school, approximately 500,000 dropped out of high school.

A lack of education correlates with crime rates:

A one-year increase in average education levels reduces arrest rates by 11%, lowers the murder and assault rates by about 30%, motor vehicle theft by 20%, arson by 13%, and burglary and larceny by about 6%.

Approximately 50% of students labeled with emotional or behavior disorders dropped out of school; only 42% of those who remained in school graduated with a diploma.

- Children with mental disorders fail more courses, earn lower grade point averages, and miss more days of school than children with other disabilities.
- 11 million children and adolescents in America have psychosocial mental health or developmental problems that contribute to barriers in learning.
- Only 60% of youth with mental illnesses are employed a year after leaving high school and less than 10% move on to post-secondary education.

10% of children and adolescents suffer from mental illness severe enough to cause impairment, yet nearly 80% do not receive needed services.

- Currently there are 513 students per school counselor, the recommended ratio is 250:1.
- For nearly half the children with serious emotional disturbances who received services, the school was the only provider.
- A study of 12 special education classrooms found that children with emotional disturbances did not receive appropriate services until they were 10 years old.

Untreated mental illness among youth leads to school failure, delinquency, substance abuse and entrance into the criminal justice system.

- 65% of males and 75% of females in the juvenile justice system have at least one psychiatric diagnosis.
- Over 2/3 of all dollars spent on juvenile justice go to housing mentally ill youth in juvenile detention facilities.
- Youth prisons with little or no mental health programs cost more than college tuition - approximately \$37,000 annually per youth.

The lack of a high school diploma is costly to states and society as a whole:

In 2001, 16% of 20 to 24 year olds without a high school diploma were unemployed. There are \$200 billion in lost earning and unrealized tax revenue for each high school dropout over the course of a lifetime. One state estimated savings of \$130 million annually if high school dropouts had graduated and received public assistance at the same rate as other high school graduates. Adults without a high school diploma had a median income of under \$12,000 in 2001 – only \$3,000 over the federal poverty level.

Investing in early identification and intervention for serious emotional disturbances, helps children graduate and lead independent and productive lives.