



Studies in the News

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

Homicide in California: 2014. Office of the Attorney General. July 1, 2015. 54 p.

<http://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/cjsc/publications/homicide/hm14/hm14.pdf>

“[This report] contains information about the crime of homicide and its victims, including demographic data on victims, persons arrested for homicide, persons sentenced to death, peace officers ... killed in the line of duty, and justifiable homicides. This report focuses on data reported in 2014 with prior years included for context.” In 2014, 1,697 homicides were reported, a 2.8% decrease from the 1,745 reported in 2013, and a 32.2% decrease from the 2,503 homicides reported in 2005. Other statistics include: 81.8% of the homicide victims were male, 18.2% were female; in homicides where the victim’s ethnicity was identified, 41.4% of the victims were Hispanic, 30.2% were black, 21.3% were white, and 7.1% were classified as “other.”

ECONOMY

Protecting Working-Age People with Disabilities: Experiences of Four Industrialized Nations. By Richard V. Burkhauser, et al. Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. Working Paper No. 2015-08. June 2015. 50 p.

<http://www.frbsf.org/economic-research/files/wp2015-08.pdf>

“Although industrialized nations have long provided public protection to working-age individuals with disabilities, the form has changed over time. The impetus for change has been multifaceted: rapid growth in program costs; greater awareness that people with impairments are able and willing to work; and increasing recognition that protecting the economic security of people with disabilities might be best done by keeping them in the labor market. We describe the evolution of disability programs in four countries: Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United States.... Based on our descriptive comparative analysis we summarize shared experiences that have the potential to benefit policymakers in all countries.”

EDUCATION

Deeper Learning: A Primer for State Legislators. By Stephanie Aragon. Education Commission of the States. Sep. 2015. 6 p.

<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/01/21/08/12108.pdf>

“Deeper” learning calls for teachers to be overseers in education, not lecturers. It also employs new strategies for learning: project or service-based learning, individualized learning plans, competency-based learning and the use of performance-based assessments or portfolios to evaluate achievement. This brief offers an overview of how states are aligning deeper learning with standards and assessment systems, and how they are training teachers on this concept.

Chartering Turnaround: Leveraging Public Charter School Autonomy to Address Failure. By Julie Corbett. National Alliance for Public Charter Schools. Aug. 2015. 28 p.

http://www.publiccharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/turnaround_web.pdf

“This paper examines how the autonomies related to staffing, curriculum, and general operations provided by state charter laws can be used to catalyze school turnaround efforts.” The report includes a review of a “traditional public school restart” (TPS) of three low-performing charter schools in the United States, including Green Dot Public Schools in Los Angeles. After initiating the turnaround phase, each of the schools has shown improved Academic Performance Index scores, improved high school graduation rates and college readiness.

EMPLOYMENT

Occupational Wage Declines Since the Great Recession: Low-Wage Occupations See Largest Real Wage Declines. By Claire McKenna, et al. National Employment Law Project. Sep. 2, 2015. 11 p.

<http://www.nelp.org/publication/occupational-wage-declines-since-the-great-recession/>

“[W]e find that real wage declines were greatest for the lowest-wage occupations. In the bottom quintile, restaurant cooks and food preparation workers experienced wage declines well in excess of the average for all bottom-quintile occupations and the entire occupational distribution.... On the whole, average declines in real hourly wages at the 10th percentile were proportionately smaller at the bottom of the occupational distribution than at the higher-end. By contrast, average declines in real wages at the 90th percentile generally increased with each additional step down the distribution.” Some policy suggestions

include “raising the minimum wage to at least \$12.00 per hour by 2020 nationally, and to \$15 per hour in higher-cost cities and states; restoring workers’ freedom to form unions and bargain collectively.”

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

On Financing Retirement with an Aging Population. By Ellen R. McGrattan, et al. Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. Research Department Staff Report 472. Revised Aug. 2015. 58 p.

<https://www.minneapolisfed.org/research/SR/SR472.pdf>

“A problem that faces many countries including the United States is how to finance retirement consumption as the population ages. Proposals for switching to a saving-for-retirement system that do not rely on high payroll taxes have been challenged on the grounds that welfare would fall for some groups such as retirees or the working poor. We show how to devise a transition path from the current U.S. system to a saving-for-retirement system that increases the welfare of all current and future generations, with estimates of future gains higher than those found in typically used macroeconomic models.”

HEALTH

“Intake of Saturated and Trans Unsaturated Fatty Acids and Risk of All Cause Mortality, Cardiovascular Disease, and Type 2 Diabetes: Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Observational Studies.” By Russell J de Souza, et al. *British Medical Journal*. Published online ahead of print. July 15, 2015. 16 p.

<http://www.bmj.com/content/351/bmj.h3978>

“A major study into the health implications of dietary fats has failed to find a link between food containing saturated fats, such as eggs, chocolate and cream, and an increased risk of dying from heart disease, stroke or type-2 diabetes. The study nevertheless did find that industrially-produced ‘trans-fats’ made from hydrogenated oils, and once used in margarine, snack foods and packaged baked foods such as some cakes and crisps, are linked with a greater risk of death from coronary heart disease. The latest findings ... appear to confirm the growing realisation that the prevailing health advice for the past half century to cut down on foods that are rich in saturated fats such as butter and cheese may have been misguided.” (*The Independent*, Aug. 14, 2015).

HUMAN SERVICES

Federal Low-income Programs: Multiple Programs Target Diverse Populations and Needs. U.S. Government Accountability Office. GAO-15-516. July 2015. 129 p.

<http://www.gao.gov/assets/680/671779.pdf>

“In 2012, the most recent year of data available, GAO estimated that 106 million people, or one-third of the U.S. population, received benefits from at least one or more of eight selected federal low-income programs: Additional Child Tax Credit, EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit), SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), SSI (Supplemental Security Income), and four others. Almost two-thirds of the eight programs’ recipients were in households with children, including many married families. More than 80% of recipients also lived in households with some earned income during the year. Without these programs’ benefits, GAO estimated that 25 million of these recipients would have been below the SPM (Supplemental Poverty Measure) poverty threshold.”

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Living Wage Calculator, 2015. Massachusetts Institute of Technology

<http://livingwage.mit.edu/states/06/locations>

Amy Glasmeier, professor of Economic Geography and Regional Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, created a tool that calculates the minimum income required for individuals and families to live in a community. The calculator lists living expenses as well as both the typical wage and living wage for various areas throughout California and the rest of the country.

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