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Career Counseling for Equity in Rural America

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand previous research and data illustrating the barriers to rural youth's career aspirations as well as unique strengths of rural identity and community.
2. Identify unique multi-tiered evidence-based interventions and systems of support to meet the needs of diverse rural students through MTSS and social justice frameworks.
3. Discuss strategies for evaluating your work, as well as strategies for evaluating local resources that can be used in place-based career counseling to meet the needs of rural students and to increase student awareness of career opportunities.



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ITINERARY FOR TODAY

- 1. Review of Research – Context is important!**
- 1. Review Social Justice Frameworks**
- 1. Discuss applications of Place-Based Education**
- 1. Evidence-based Tier 1 & 2 Interventions**



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WHAT DID WE EVEN DO?

Searching...

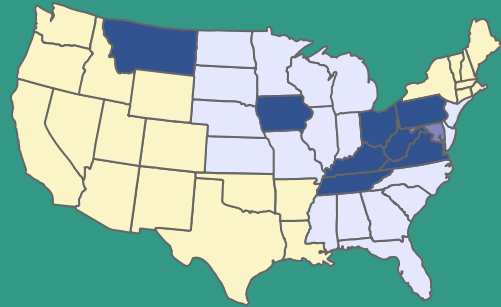
Rural career aspirations, rural youth aspirations, rural career counseling, etc.

19 total research studies

14 quant, 5 qual

Mostly nationwide surveys

A few in specific regions (light purple) and locations (dark blue)



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Title	Author	Pub-Year	Region	Sample Group	Size (n)
The Influences of Family and Place on Rural Adolescents' Educational Aspirations and Post-secondary Enrollment.	Agger, C., Meece, J.L., Byun, S.	2018	Nationwide	11-12 th	3,456
College Expectations of Rural Appalachian Youth: An Exploration of Social Cognitive Career Theory Factors.	All, S.R. & Saunders, J.L.	2006	Central Appalachia	9 th -12 th	87
Aspirations of Rural Youth	Bejema, D.H., Miller, W.W., & Williams, D.L.	2002	Iowa	12 th	883
Predictors of College Attendance Patterns of Rural Youth	Byun, S., Meece, J.L., & Agger, C.A.	2017	Nationwide	9 th -12 th	2,112
The Role of Social Capital in Educational Aspirations of Rural Youth	Byun, S., Meece, J.L., Irvin, M.L., & Hutchins, B.C.	2012	Nationwide	9 th -12 th	5,663
Predictors of Bachelor's Degree Completion among Rural Students at Four-Year Institutions	Byun, S., Irvin, M.J., & Meece, J.L.	2012	Nationwide	9 th -12 th	4,880
A Qualitative Analysis of Career Choice Pathways of College-Oriented Rural Central Appalachian High School Students	Carrico, C., Matuzovich H. M., and Paretti, M.C.	2019	Central Appalachia	9 th -12 th	24
A Call for Dreamkeepers in Rural United States: Considering the Postsecondary Aspirations of Rural Ninth Graders	Chambers, C., Crumb, L., & Hamis, C.	2019	Nationwide	9 th	5,006
Factors influencing college aspirations of rural West Virginia high school students	Chenoweth, E., & Galliher, R.V.	2004	West Virginia	12 th	242
Anticipating Adulthood: Expected Timing of Work and Family Transitions Among Rural Youth	Crockett, L.J. & Bingham, C.R.	2000	Allegheny region	7 th -12 th	235
Where Do Rural High School Students Go to Find Information About Their Futures?	Griffin, D., Hutchins, B.C., & Meece, J.L.	2011	Nationwide	9 th -12 th	8,754
How Can They Know What They Don't Know? The Beliefs and Experiences of Rural School Counselors about STEM Career Advising	Grimes, L.E., Anstasia-Chisholm, M.C., & Bright, S.B.	2019	Southeastern state	School counselors	8
Educational Barriers of Rural Youth: Relation of Individual and Contextual Difference Variables	Irvin, M.J., Bryan, S., Meece, J.L., Farmer, T.W., & Hutchins, B.C.	2012	Nationwide	9 th -12 th	7,076
School Characteristics and Experiences of African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Native American Youth in Rural Communities: Relation to Educational Aspirations	Irvin, M.J., Byun, S., Meece, J.L., Reed, K.S., & Farmer, T.W.	2016	Nationwide	9 th -12 th	6,150
Familial and Economic Influences on the Gender-Related Educational and Occupational Aspirations of Rural Adolescents	Meece, J.L., Askew, K.J.S., Agger, C.A., Hutchins, B.C., & Byun, S.	2014	Nationwide	9 th -12 th	8,756
Perceived Barriers, Anxieties, and Fears in Prospective College Students from Rural High Schools	Morton, T.R., Ramirez, N.A., Meece, J.L., Demetrio, C., & Parmer, A.T.	2018	SE state	Undergrad students	10
"REDNECKS," "RUTTERS," AND "RITHMETIC" Social Class, Masculinity, and Schooling in a Rural Context.	Morris, E.M.	2008	Ohio	9 th -11 th	15
Educational Sorting and Residential Aspirations Among Rural High School Students: What are the Contributions of Schools and Educators to Rural Brain Drain?	Petrin, R.A., Schafft, K.A., & Meece, J.L.	2014	Nationwide	12 th	8,754
College Enrollment and STEM Major Choice in a Rural State: A Statewide Examination of Recent High School Cohorts	Tran, Q.N., Meyerink, M., Aylward, A., & Luo, F.	2021	Montana	High school graduates	3,119

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Emerging Themes of Youth Career Decision-Making

1. Geography
2. Family & Community Ties
3. School Community
4. Adultification
5. Class & Economic Outlook of Community
6. Student Characteristics (Race, Gender, and First-Generation College Student Status)



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Themes Expanded...



GEOGRAPHY

- Community identity
- Distance to learning
- Access to internet

FAMILY & COMMUNITY TIES

- Collectivism
- Social network
- Expectations

SCHOOL COMMUNITY

- Staff expectations
- Access to curriculum
- Student dreams



“ADULT-IFICATION”

- Poverty & work
- Anticipated timelines
- Reliance on community college

CLASS & ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

- Job prospects of area
- Peer perceptions
- Community perceptions

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

- First-Generation College
- Gender
- Race



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Processing Themes

In the chat, let's chat!

How does your identity **directly** impact the services you provide

- a. to your students?
- b. to your school community?

How might your identity **indirectly** impact the services you provide

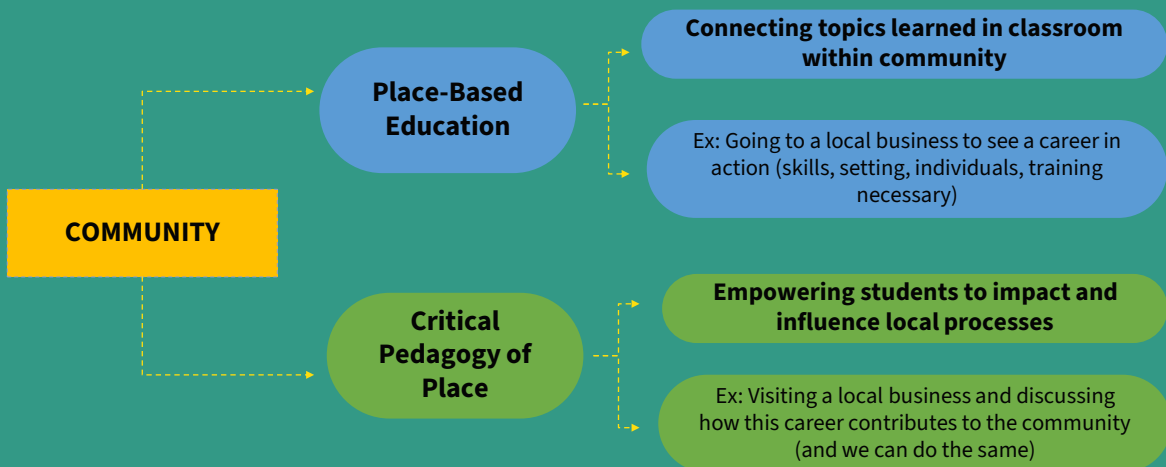
- a. to your students?
- b. to your school community?



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Place-Based Career Education

(BRIGHT, 2020, Image: Sarah Henry)



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Rural Social Justice Framework

Grimes, L.E., Haskins, N., & Paisley, P.O. (2013). "So I Went Out There": A Phenomenological study on the Experiences of Rural School Counselor Justice Advocates. *Professional School Counseling*, 17(3).



Limitations

- 7 white SCs
- 6 women
- 1 region of USA
- 6 lifelong residents



Themes

1. Stability of place
2. Community promise
3. Mutual reliance
4. Professional and personal integration
5. Focus on individuals



Suggestions

- Community
- Summits
 - Partnerships
 - Asset mapping

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Overlaying Grimes et al. (2013) with MTSS



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Evidence-Based Interventions

Tier 1 & Tier 2



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ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Woods, C. & Kaszubowski, Y. (2008). The Career Development Needs of Rural Elementary Students. *The Elementary School Journal*, 108(5), 431-44.

Theoretical Foundation

Super's (1990) career development theory

- Super posited that individuals progress through life states of career development: growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement. Elementary students fall into the growth category meaning:
- The period when students fantasize and develop likes/dislikes and abilities/potential relating to careers

Methods

Investigated the career development in 150 4th-grade students from two rural schools in the Midwestern United States

- Administered the Childhood Career Development Scale in 6 classrooms (CCDS; Schultheiss & Stead, 2004)
- Students answered a 52-item instrument designed to assess six subscales: Information, Curiosity, Interests, Locus of Control, Key Figures, Time Perspective, Planning, and Self-Concept



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ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Woods, C. & Kaszubowski, Y. (2008). The Career Development Needs of Rural Elementary Students. *The Elementary School Journal*, 108(5), 431-44.

Findings

- That the top for career development needs for students were in areas of curiosity, information, key figures, and planning
- Males were found to have less curiosity than their female peers

Implications

- Classroom lessons on career development to boost curiosity and exploration, which in turn, encourages students to explore careers and the world of work
- Students old enough can use Internet searches to access reliable sources on career occupations
- Career Days/Fairs and career speakers in the classroom
 - Involving role models who expands students' views of career opportunities, and;
 - Involving parents and guardians in the career development process/programs



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Measure Exploration!

Brown-Huston, H. & Wilkerson, K. (2014). Closing the Loop: Incorporating Program Evaluation Into an Elementary School Career Day. *VISTAS*, 59, 1-14.

Career Days for K-6

- Teacher Feedback
- Student perceptions to connecting academics to careers, enjoyment of activities, and career knowledge



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MIDDLE SCHOOL

Grant, K., Springer, S., Tuttle, M. & Reno, M. (2021). Small-Group Counseling Intervention to Support Career Exploration of Rural Middle School Students. *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work*. 46. 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01933922.2020.1856254>.

Theoretical Foundation

Relational Cultural Theory Framework through a social justice lens

Methods

- Screening Student Participants
- Pre-Group Meetings
- Student Introductions, Parental/ Guardian Involvement
- Formative Evaluations
- Implementation of College and Career Readiness Unit

Goals

- Promotes student carer self-efficacy
- Enhance career exploration skills and motivation



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MIDDLE SCHOOL

Grant, K., Springer, S., Tuttle, M. & Reno, M. (2021). Small-Group Counseling Intervention to Support Career Exploration of Rural Middle School Students. *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work*. 46. 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01933922.2020.1856254>.

CCR Unit Components within a COMMUNITY (group, school, locale)

BUILDING RAPPORT

- Session 1: Fostering Connections
- Session 2: Influences on Career Choice and Goals

UNDERSTANDING INFLUENCES AND VALUES

- Session 3: Career Values and Their Connection to Education
- Session 4: Exposure to the World of Work and Furthering Interpersonal Exploration

GAINING CAREER INFORMATION

- Session 5: Communicating Values and Using Career Exploration Technology
- Session 6: Interpreting Career Data

FAMILY & SELF-REFLECTION

- Session 7: Celebrating Learning and Communicating with families
- Session 8: Reflecting on the Past while paving the Way for Future Career Development



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Career Development & Community Connection!

Garrison, Y., Ali, S. R., Lin, C. L. R., Kim, J. Y. C., and Hestmati, S. (2021). Healthcare career intervention with youth in a predominantly Latinx rural community: a pilot study of a creative approach. *International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance*, 21(3), 589-606. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10775-020-09455-y>

- Tailoring broader career development programs to your school's specific community values and needs (ex: Latinx rural health care)



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HIGH SCHOOL

Bettinger, E.P., Long, B. T., Oreopoulos, P., & Sanbonmatsu, L. (2012). The Role of Application Assistance and Information in College Decisions: Results from the H&R Block Fafsa Experiment*, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 127(3), 1205–1242. <https://doi.org/10.1093/qje/qjs017>

Page, L. C., Castleman, B. L., & Meyer, K. (2020). Customized Nudging to Improve FAFSA Completion and Income Verification. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 42(1), 3–21. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0162373719876916>

FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA) INTERVENTION

Methods

Implemented a text messaging intervention aimed at improving FAFSA submission and completion rates among high school seniors by sending weekly, personalized text messages related to FAFSA and college financial aid

Participants

Researcher partnered with 8 public schools from a sample of 66 public schools serving 17,000 high school seniors. Make-up was 26% white, 19% black, and over 50% Hispanic.

BOTH STUDIES showed statistically significant effects on FAFSA interventions on students' enrollment in postsecondary education



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HIGH SCHOOL

Bettinger, E.P., Long, B. T., Oreopoulos, P., & Sanbonmatsu, L. (2012). The Role of Application Assistance and Information in College Decisions: Results from the H&R Block Fafsa Experiment*. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 127(3), 1205–1242. <https://doi.org/10.1093/qje/qjs017>

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FINDINGS

- Positive impacts on students
- Text outreach was presumed to be sent by the school counselor
- Because students' school counselors were engaged, students had the opportunity to follow up with their counselor either via text, in person during the school day, or via other modes of communication
- Ability to reach a large number of students at a low cost

Implications

- As school counselors, working with admin and districts to communicate financial aid information via text
- Using administrative data to better target outreach to students
- Low-cost intervention to provide outreach and support over summer break to engage students



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Get Creative with Technology!

Gibbons, M. M., Hardin, E. E., Taylor, A. L., Brown, E., and Graham, D. (2020). Evaluation of an SCCT-Based Intervention to Increase Postsecondary Awareness in Rural Appalachian Youth. *Journal of Career Development*, 47(4), 424-439. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0894845319832972>

- Technology can aid in career exploration and follow-through, especially if it can be contextually relevant to students.



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Key Takeaways

1. Community dynamics impact on students' career decisions
1. It's never too early to begin to discuss and evaluate career development
1. Involving family and community members makes for a more holistic experience



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