

Kayla Haak

Professor Marman

PSY 205

13 September 2015

### Reducing Academic Failure

Educators always want their students to succeed and do their best, but there are certain factors that play into students' lives that can put them at risk for academic failure or even dropping out. It is up to educators to create and employ strategies that can minimize those risks and help students to increase their success in school.

The first factor that can put students at risk for academic failure is a disability. Disabilities come in many different forms ranging from slight dyslexia to ADHD and autism. No matter the disability, students are at risk because their disabilities make it harder for them to learn as well as their peers without a disability. It is for this reason that students with a disability are particularly at risk for academic failure.

Even though disabilities can be challenging and put students at risk, educators can help to reduce the risk by introducing learning strategies that are beneficial to the learner. One of these strategies is scaffolding learning. By using this strategy, the educator can start the student out by heavily instructing them and then, as they acquire the skill, the educator can move more towards letting the student do it on their own. (America) This still gives the student the ability to learn the material but in a caring environment that includes close help from the educator.

Another strategy to help reduce academic failure in students with disabilities is to focus on their individual progress and achievement. Educators can do this by working one-on-one with students in order to help them understand concepts and to achieve their academic goals. They can

also praise and reward the students on their academic progress which, in return, will help boost the students' confidence in the subject and material they are learning.

The second factor putting students at risk is low parental involvement and expectations. Parents play a vital role in the education of their students. They offer support, encouragement, and set expectations for their student's achievement. When parents are not involved in their student's education and have low expectations set for them, the student is at risk for academic failure because they do not have the support they need to succeed. The students also do not have high expectations set for them, so as a result, they live up to their parent's low expectations in their academic endeavors. This sets the student up for failure. To counteract this low support at home, educators can implement a few different strategies.

One of the strategies an educator can use to help a student who has low parental involvement and expectations is encouragement. Encouraging the student to succeed and providing a safe and supportive environment for them to do so is a great way to help academically. Since the student lacks support at home, having support at school is a big factor in helping them to succeed academically. Having an educator there for the student who is involved and has high expectations for them to succeed will not only be motivating, but it will also help the student to realize that they have the ability to succeed on their own.

Another strategy educators can use to help students with low parental involvement and expectations is to show them why education matters and why it's important for them to learn. Educators can go about this by showing the student examples of educated people and introducing them to ways that education can make a difference in their lives. By showing the student the importance of education, they can gain the motivation to learn and eventually make a difference in their lives.

A third factor that puts students at risk for academic failure is that they are non-English speaking or are just learning English. This can be a big barrier for achieving academically, because non-English speaking or ELL students lack the economic and social resources that other students have and they are unable to compensate for the lack of these resources (Schneider, Martinez and Ownes). As a result of this lack, these students usually fall behind academically, and eventually begin to fail in their academics. To help bridge this language gap, there are a few strategies educators can use to help their ELL students, as well as non-English speaking students, academically.

The educator can first get to know the students language and familiarize themselves with it in order to better help the student out. Once the educator is familiar with the student's language, they can translate lessons into ways that students will understand. Doing this will help the student to succeed academically until they can understand English well enough to learn.

Educators can also provide brain based learning techniques for ELL and non-English speaking students in the classroom. When setting up the classroom, provide learning opportunities for ELL students to make connections with English words, and for English speaking students to make connections with words from other languages. For example, if you put up pictures of the colors and beside them write the Spanish and English words for that color, they can begin to learn both names for that particular color and make the language connections to that color. This will help expand every student's vocabulary in your classroom, not only the non-English speaking and ELL students.

Effective teaching strategies used by educators can help diminish the risk of academic failure in their students. No matter what the risk factor is for the student, effective teaching methods and support can bring the student farther than anyone could ever imagine. Each student

is important and if they succeed academically in the early years, they set themselves up for a lifetime and future of success.

Works Cited

America, Learning Disabilities Association of. *Successful Strategies for Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities*. n.d. Web. 12 October 2015.

Schneider, Barbara, Sylvia Martinez and Ann Ownes. *Hispanics and the Future of America*. 2006. Web. 10 October 2015.