




**Risky Business: Risk Factors for Dropping Out & the NTACT Risk Calculator**



**Great news!**

- In 2012-13, the high school graduation rate in the U.S. was 81.4 percent – a record high
- Six states were within 2 percentage points of a 90% graduation rate
- Hispanic and African American students are starting to close the graduation rate gap with their White student peers



**Not such great news**

- The U.S. average graduation rate for students with disabilities was 61.9% in 2012-13, an improvement, but still nearly 20 percentage points lower than the all-students rate
- Graduation rates for students with disabilities still vary dramatically by state (11.1% to 90.9% from the APRs submitted in 2015)



**The upshot**

- We will not reach the national goal of 90% graduation rate by 2020 if students with disabilities, who represent 13 percent of all students nationwide, continue to have low graduation rates



## Who drops out?

### High incidence of dropout among:

- Youth in poverty
- Youth in 9<sup>th</sup> Grade – the transition years
- Youth in heavily urban or very rural areas
- Males – particularly from minority backgrounds
- Youth with disabilities – particularly LD and SED

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## Why youth drop out

- Low interest & engagement
- Poor relationships with peers or adults
- Poor attendance/tardiness
- Low academic skills and insufficient credits accrued
- Disability-based difficulties/behavior problems
- Parents' mobility – Transfers from school to school
- Life events

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## IES Practice Guide on Dropout Prevention: Recommendations

- **Diagnostic processes** for identifying school-wide and student-level issues that might impact school completion
- **Targeted interventions** for a subset of middle and high school students who are identified as at risk of dropping out
- **Schoolwide reforms** designed to enhance engagement

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## Early warning & intervention systems

EWS are diagnostic tools to identify youth who are at risk of dropping out and indicate where those students need targeted intervention and supports to stay in school and succeed

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## Early-warning indicators: the usual suspects

- **The ABCs**
  - Attendance
  - Behavior marks, suspensions, expulsions
  - Course performance, GPA, credit accrual (on-track), grade retention

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## The Risk Calculator

- A Web-based early warning intervention system
- Examines individual student data elements
- Looks beyond the A, B, Cs to provide information about each student's needs for intervention and support
- Estimates each student's risk of dropping out (low, medium, high, and ultra)

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## The Risk Calculator

- Provides a student-level roster report that indicates each student's risk level and areas of need
- Provides a building-level report that shows overall risk-level distribution and other summary information
- Tool can be used one time or longitudinally to follow changes over time at the student and building levels

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## Systemic strategies to keep youth in school

- Conduct building-level analysis of data to identify broad needs for improvement
- Use the Risk Calculator or another EWS to identify individual students' needs and to help place students in appropriate intervention groups
- Provide rigorous, tiered interventions in academic, social, emotional, and behavioral areas
- Promote regular attendance

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## Systemic strategies to keep youth in school

- Promote a sense of belonging and an encouraging school climate
- Provide opportunities for career development and work based learning
- Embrace families and communities as partners
- Provide educators with ongoing professional development



**Thank You!**  
**Contact info:**  
[mklare@uncc.edu](mailto:mklare@uncc.edu)  
Visit our website : [www.transitionta.org](http://www.transitionta.org)

The slide features a large, stylized background of grey cubes. In the upper center, there is a smaller version of the NTACT logo, including the colorful cube cluster and the text "NTACT National Technical Assistance Center on Transition". Below the logo, the text "Thank You!" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Underneath that, "Contact info:" is also in bold black. The email address "mklare@uncc.edu" is displayed in a blue, underlined font. Finally, the website "www.transitionta.org" is shown in a blue, underlined font, preceded by the text "Visit our website :".