

## Safety

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you can check to make sure your child's safety seat is properly installed and that your child is properly buckled-in, call SeatCheck toll-free at 1-866-732-8243.

All infants should ride rear-facing until they have reached at least 1 year of age AND weigh at least 20 pounds. At this point, they should ride in a forward facing safety seat in the back seat of the vehicle. NEVER place a child in a rear-facing car safety seat in the front seat of a vehicle that has an airbag; if the airbag deploys, it could kill the child.

When your child becomes too big for a safety seat (or when he or she reaches 40 pounds), you must purchase a booster seat. Booster seats are devices that position the child so that seat belts fit properly. According to North Carolina law, children must ride in booster seats until they reach 80 pounds or 8 years of age. Need proof that booster seats are helpful in keeping your child safe? Consider this: one study showed that booster seats reduced the risk of injury in an accident by 59 percent for children ages 4 to 7, compared with seat belts alone!

Seat belts remain of utmost importance in keeping your family safe in the car. Children, like all passengers, need both lap belts and shoulder belts. The lap belt should fit snugly across the thighs, and the shoulder belt should lie flat against the shoulder and chest, not the neck. You should never allow children to share seat belts; each child should have his or her own seat belt. The driver of the vehicle is responsible for wearing a seatbelt as well as for making sure all children age 16 and younger in the vehicle are wearing seatbelts.

#### What else can I do to keep my family safe in the car?

There are other important things you should keep in mind when considering your family's safety:

- Do not drive while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. In 2007, 12,998 people died in alcohol-related crashes, and 15 percent of child fatalities in 2007 occurred in alcohol-related crashes.

- Set a good example: wear your seatbelt, too. It's not just common sense; it's the law!

- The safest place for your child to ride is in the back seat. Riding in the back reduces your child's risk of being injured by a deployed airbag. A recent study demonstrated that the risk of serious injury in the event of a car accident was reduced by 40 percent for children under the age of 16 when they were riding in the back seat versus the front seat.

- Children 12 and younger should never be placed in a seat in front of an airbag. The force of the airbag, if it goes off, can kill a child. Again, keep your kids in the back seat!

- Never let your children ride in the back (cargo area) of a pickup truck; this is illegal in North Carolina!

- Always obey all traffic laws and signals. Oftentimes we think of these as an inconvenience, but they are in place to keep us and everyone else on the road safe.

**Remember:** Keeping your child safely restrained in your car or truck until the age of 8 or 80 pounds is the LAW in North Carolina. Always wear your seatbelt properly. Following these laws will help reduce your and your family's risk of becoming a statistic.

- Information compiled by Jaimie Hunter, MPH, and Sarah Langdon, MPH

Do you need further information or have questions or comments about this article? Please call toll-free 1-877-530-1824. Or, for more information about the Maya Angelou Center for Health Equity, please visit our website: <http://www.wfubmc.edu/minorityhealth>.

## Money crunch means changes at WSSU

*Some will lose their jobs under restructuring plan*

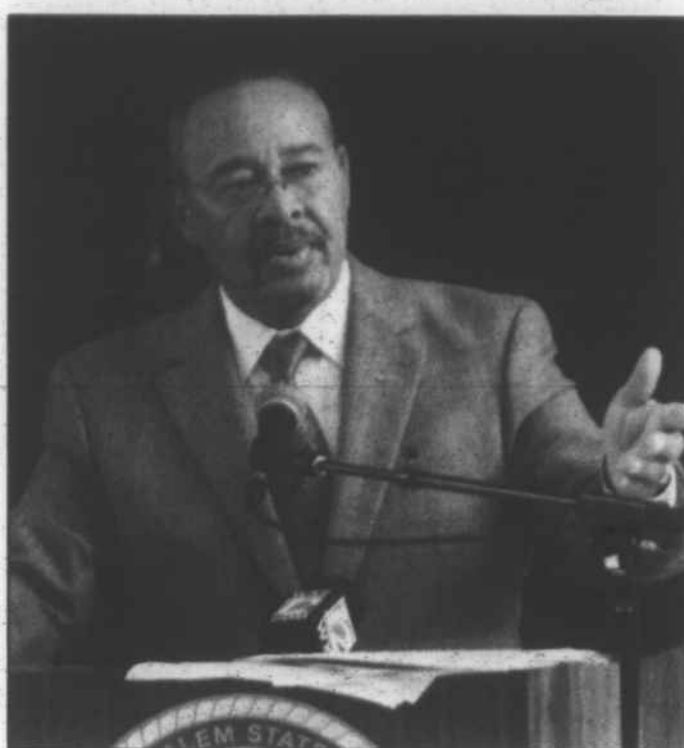
CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Winston-Salem State University Chancellor Donald Reaves hopes that a restructuring plan announced this week will get the school on better economic footing.

WSSU plans to eliminate 16 currently-filled positions and will not fill 30 vacant positions. The reshuffling will also involve reorganizing certain programs and other operational changes that could reduce the total operating budget for the university by \$7 million to \$9 million in the next fiscal year. The school is preparing itself for a reduction in state funding.

"Eliminating positions is never easy," Reaves said in a statement. "These decisions are extremely difficult because they affect our employees, the university family and the community. Yet, we believe we have no choice at this time but to take the steps necessary to ensure the future of our students and WSSU."

Under the restructuring, the Child Development Center



WSSU Photo

Chancellor Donald Reaves says more cuts are possible.

and Laboratory School at the university will close on Aug. 21, eliminating eight jobs.

Parents currently using the Center will receive a tuition reduction for the remaining weeks of operation and information on other options for their children.

Another eight administra-

tive or professional positions will be eliminated in various areas of the university. Additionally, 21 employees will be impacted by program reorganizations, with 13 being reassigned to new areas and eight maintaining their existing positions as part of a different group.

"Given the current economic conditions that all schools in the University of North Carolina System are facing, we have to take the steps necessary to reduce our operating costs," said Reaves. "We are adjusting our budget through reorganizing certain areas, realigning specific functions and developing a cost-savings plan in conjunction with job eliminations. In addition to adjusting our budget to deal with the reduction of funds received from the state, we will reallocate resources to support our major priorities."

"Our first commitment is to improving student retention and graduation rates, and that will require an incremental investment in our University College. We will be expanding our efforts to provide support for incoming freshmen to help ensure their future success at WSSU. We also will enhance funding for Campus Safety and University Advancement. Having a safe campus and raising funds needed for student scholarships and additional program support are two of our other key priorities."

Reaves said the school will continue to investigate ways to save money.

### Latino

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parents who develop a strong bicultural perspective have teen children who are less likely to feel anxiety and face fewer social problems. For every increase in a parent's involvement in United States culture, we saw a 15 to 18 percent decrease in adolescent social problems, aggression and anxiety one year later. Parents who were more involved in U.S. culture were in a better position to proactively help their adolescents with peer relations, forming friendships and staying engaged in school. This decreases the chances of social problems arising.

The findings are from a longitudinal study by UNC's Latino Acculturation and Health Project, which is supported by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and directed by Smokowski. The findings are presented as part of a series of articles featured next

month in a special issue of The Journal of Primary Prevention, a collaborative initiative between UNC and the CDC. The special issue presents the latest research on how cultural adaptation influences Latino youth behaviors — including involvement in violence, smoking and substance use, as well as overall emotional well-being — and offers suggestions for primary prevention programs that support minority families.



Smokowski

better in school, report higher self esteem, and experience less anxiety, depression and aggression," said study co-author Martica Bacallao, an assistant professor at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, whose work is also featured

in the special issue. "It is interesting that, in order to obtain these benefits of biculturalism, adolescents and parents often need to do the opposite of what their natural tendencies tell them. Parents who are strongly tied to their native cultures must reach out to learn skills in the new culture. Adolescents who quickly soak up new cultural behaviors should slow down and cultivate the richness in their native cultures."

Smokowski added: "The burgeoning size of the Latino population and the increasingly important roles that Latino youth will play in American culture are worthy of community attention. Communities can either invest in prevention to nurture Latino youth as a national resource or pay a heavy price later in trying to help these youth address social problems such as substance use, aggression or dropping out of school; all of which often results from the stress of acculturation."

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