Stepping Up in the Montgomery County Public Schools

By Katherine C. Cowan

It is tough out there. No matter who you talk to in education, grow is a common theme. Demands are growing. Stress is increasing. Resources are disappearing. Morale is sinking. Many people fear free-falling off the funding cliff. Others are adopting survival mode. The severity of the situation varies greatly from state to state but no one, it seems, is totally immune. Against this landscape, school psychologists are trying to assess prospects in terms of jobs, roles, ratios, and relevancy to the public discourse around school reform priorities.

It feels daunting. You can see why some folks are tempted by the instinct to throw up their hands in despair or hunker down until the storm passes and hope to emerge as intact as possible. Yet NASP is hearing from an increasing number of members who are choosing to craft a course of action to shape decision-making, even in small ways, rather than waiting to see how the larger economic and school reform forces play out.

The school psychologists in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Maryland, are a prime example. “Basically, we have no other choice. We have the skills and knowledge to provide solutions and reform practice to better serve our students and families,” explains June Lucas Zillich, copresident with Debra Watherspoon of the local Montgomery County School Psychology Association (MCSPA). “We are significantly stepping up our professional advocacy this year.” The local group has developed a comprehensive advocacy plan involving every one of the school psychologists in the district.

Context

MCPS is the 17th largest school district in the country, with more than 146,000 students and 200 schools (34 of which are National Blue Ribbon and 27 of which are Title 1). Once serving a predominately white middle class suburban population, MCPS has undergone the same demographic shifts in the past 2 decades seen in many school systems across the United States. Today the MCPS student population is 33% white, 26% Hispanic, 21% African American, 14% Asian American, and has students from 164 countries speaking 184 languages. Twelve percent of students receive special education.

Research-Based Practice

A Little Help From My Friends: Creating Socially Supportive Schools

By Michael L. Sulkowski, Michelle K. Demaray, & Philip J. Lazarus

We all get by with a little help from our friends. We all try with a little help from our friends. Students in our schools are no different. Students who feel socially supported get by a little better, try a little harder, and have better academic and psychosocial outcomes.

The Importance of Social Support

Social support can be defined as “an individual’s general support or specific support behaviors (available or enacted upon) from people in the social network, which enhances their functioning and/or may buffer them from adverse outcomes” (Malecki & Demaray, 2002, p. 2). Social support is a broad protective factor that can be subdivided into various subtypes, including emotional, instrumental, appraisal, and informational social support (Tardy, 1985). Emotional support consists of feeling taken care of or valued (e.g., a student feels as if his or her teacher really cares about him or her) and instrumental support involves receiving time and resources (e.g., a peer spends time helping a friend on a project). Appraisal support consists of receiving instructive feedback (e.g., a teacher provides helpful feedback to a student), whereas informational support simply involves providing needed information (e.g., a teacher provides a student with infor-

Advocacy in Action

Seclusion and Restraint: Federal Updates and Advocacy Opportunities

By Kelly Vaillancourt & Mary Beth Klotz

The issue of seclusion and restraint has been a recent hot topic widely discussed among many education and disability rights advocacy groups, and now the United States Congress. The Children’s Health Act of 2000 protects children from abusive seclusion and restraint practices in facilities that receive federal funding such as Medicaid. These centers include residential group homes, treatment facilities, and hospitals. However, there is no federal legislation that regulates the use of these techniques in our public schools. Historically, policies and procedures related to seclusion and restraint in the schools have been maintained at the state and local district level, although examples are limited. As of April, 2012, there are 30 states that have either a statute or regulation providing protection against seclusion and restraint for students. However, there is wide variation among these laws and regulations, and only 13 states have laws or regulations that cover all students, while others only protect students with
Decisions are made by those who show up.

As I am writing this article, our political parties are gearing up for the home stretch of the presidential campaign season. By the time you are reading this article, I suspect many of us will have had our fill of the political process. Both parties have declared that the stakes are high in this election and it seems that the behavior of those involved is matching the level of stress and urgency each side feels. It has become easy to be cynical about the political process and disengage. Indeed, the percentage of eligible voters that actually participate suggests many have. But rather than disengage, I submit that now is the time to lead through advocacy.

One notable difference for me in the 2012 campaign has been what seems to be a limited amount of time devoted to education issues. I’ve noticed fewer references to education during stump speeches and interviews compared to years past other than candidates vowing to “fix” public education. While it is understandable that the economy is the focus of the campaign, it still important to hold our leaders accountable for their responsibility to attend to the issues facing the field of education at this time. This is true at the national level, and it’s true at the state and local levels as well. But holding decision makers accountable and participating in the decision-making process—advocacy work—requires purposeful planning and action.

One of my favorite quotes, which I originally heard delivered by one of my favorite presidents, Jeb Bartlett from The West Wing, is “Decisions are made by those who show up.” It’s not clear who originally made the statement, but to me it captures the very essence of advocacy. Showing up, which can take many different forms, is what is needed now. Not being empowered to make decisions does not absolve us from the responsibility of educating those who do have that power. In fact, it becomes more important that those who are informed advocate for those issues.

The need to manage the changes occurring in education provides an opportunity for school psychologists to lead through advocacy. Educators are currently facing significant challenges at the federal, state, and local levels. The economy and actions resulting from the political climate are stressing already overwhelmed systems. Shrinking budgets and policy changes are forcing difficult decisions that will have far reaching implications for the services our students will receive. In many cases, who is chosen to make these decisions will determine, to a large part, the impact felt by those affected.

Decision makers who have good information will be more effective than those that don’t. There are tools available to develop advocacy skills that can be used at the local, state, and national levels. I encourage you to explore the resources available on the NASP website for information and ideas. One of our major advocacy events each year is a Public Policy Institute (PPI) that NASP offers in cooperation with George Washington University. Through our state affiliate associations, school psychologists from across the country come to Washington, DC, for 3 days in July. The focus of the first 2 days is learning about policy development, the political process, and skills associated with being an effective advocate. On the final day, participants go to Capitol Hill to meet with staff from the offices of their Senators and Congressman. They quite literally show up. It is an incredible experience, and participants leave with great stories and new skills they can use at the state and local levels.

One particular presentation I attended during a PPI left a lasting impression. A legislative aide shared his perspective on having appointments with visitors like us. He explained the reality that no politician or their staffs could have the level of expertise necessary to govern on every topic. They depend on having contacts and information from experts in the field. His point was, to paraphrase, if a politician or their staffers could have the level of expertise necessary to govern on every topic, they would not need us as school psychologists. He felt that the number of ways we can make a difference is limited only by our own creativity. This session was a model of how to create opportunities and find venues to engage others in the work of advocacy.

Decision makers do not need us to have all the answers. They need us to inform them about the problems they face and to help them make informed decisions. One of the best ways to do that is through our professional organizations, such as NASP. As a professional organization, NASP can and does provide a platform for us to share our expertise and knowledge. Our ability to provide a strong voice for our profession is seen by our ability to change the policies and practices that impact our students and educators.

Indeed, the percentage of eligible voters that actually participate suggests many have. But rather than disengage, I submit that now is the time to lead through advocacy.

As stated in our Principles for Professional Ethics, “School psychologists have a special obligation to speak up for the rights and welfare of students and families.” NASP continually conducts advocacy work on behalf of the field of school psychology as well as mental health and education-related issues. All this work is done with the goal of ensuring that the best possible services are available for the students, families, and educators we serve. Join the effort, consider ways you can contribute through advocacy work at a local, state, or national level and show up.

Showing up, which can take many different forms, is what is needed now. Not being empowered to make decisions does not absolve us from the responsibility of educating those who do have that power. In fact, it becomes more important that those who are informed advocate for those issues.

Leaders and Advocacy

By Amy R. Smith

The Future of School Psychology

I attended the Conference on the Future of School Psychology in 2002. School psychology leaders from all over the country were invited to come to Indianapolis for several days where we listened to presentations and worked in small groups to hammer out the immediate future of our profession. At the same time, the use of technology allowed us to connect with remote sites to participate in the discussions along with the onsite participants. The conference was incredibly well organized and everyone was determined to make it a success. The energy there was great and I remember some really intense discussions as we tried to come to consensus over issues in our field. As a practitioner from a small town in Connecticut, I felt privileged to be in the same room with so many well-known school psychology leaders.

The conference resulted in the formulation of a set of goals for the profession; task forces created to advance each of them; a significant collection of articles, books, and online resources; and organized efforts to help state associations implement the goals. The presentations and many of the resources from the conference can still be accessed at the Futures Conference website (http://www.indiana.edu/~futures), as can a free set of online learning modules published in 2006.

It was a very exciting time.

Well, here we are 10 years later and the 2012 Conference on the Future of School Psychology starts this month. But this time, it’s all online, free of charge, and the invitation is open to everyone to participate. Please see the article by Pattie Harrison, Jack Cummings, and Susan Jarmuz-Smith on page 30 for details on how to register, and also read Dan Florell’s comments about the conference on page 36. I hope you join this conference; after all, I have always considered the 2002 version a highlight of my professional life. As Dan says, “Comejoin in and be able to tell future school psychologists that you attended one of the landmark school psychology conferences that helped shape the profession.” This is a very exciting time!

There are many important articles in this issue of Communiqué. I would like to point out one article on seclusion and restraint (page 1) and the new NASP framework for school-wide bullying prevention and safety (page 24) as good starting points for your reading. I was also really inspired by the efforts of the Montgomery County School Psychology Association (page 1) to organize every one of its members around a systematic advocacy plan designed to prevent reductions in school psychologist staffing levels and to increase the awareness of administrators and school board members of their skills in prevention and intervention. I know how hard it is for many of us to act on our obligation to advocate for improved services for students, so I am very impressed with what they are trying to do. Read about it; maybe you’ll be inspired, too.

—John Desbrochers

Amy R. Smith is the president of the National Association of School Psychologists.
Integration of Social, Behavioral, and Academic Initiatives – Part I

By Hank Bohanon & Meng-Jia Wu

Many schools are working toward improving their overall social and behavioral climate. This endeavor is undertaken for its own sake, and in the anticipation that it will improve academic performance for students. School climate has been related to a lack of connection and commitment on the part of students toward the school, discipline problems, and dropping out (Zins & Elias, 2007). There appear to be at least three predominant school-wide approaches to frame improving school climate: positive behavior interventions and support (PBIS), response to intervention (RTI), and social and emotional learning (SEL). Each approach may discourage buy-in due to the complexity of the processes involved. As evaluators and supporters of schools and districts implementing academic and climate reform, we have had the opportunity to see all three approaches at work. All share similar immediate and long-term outcomes, but perhaps with a somewhat different order of anticipated change. Each can have its own set of developed measures of fidelity, in some cases with great overlap. Unfortunately, unless schools can find ways to integrate these approaches, the requirements for assessment and action planning associated individually by each approach may discourage buy-in due to the complexity of the processes involved.

Overview of this article. This is a two-part article, with the second part appearing in the next issue of COMMUNICATIONS. Part I will discuss the connections between various processes used in SEL, PBIS, and RTI, and compare the similarities and unique components of tools used for fidelity measurement and action planning. Part II will provide an example to describe the overlap among the three approaches and provide some possible ways to connect them through aligned processes and the use of combined approaches to maximize the support to students.

Comparison of processes within SEL, PBIS, and RTI

SEL has been defined as “a process for helping children and even adults develop the fundamental skills for life effectiveness. SEL teaches the skills we all need to handle ourselves, our relationships, and our work, effectively and ethically” (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning [CASEL], 2007, p. 1). PBIS has been defined as “a framework or approach comprised of intervention practices and organizational systems for establishing the social culture, learning and teaching environment, and individual behavior supports needed to achieve academic and social success for all students” (Sagi et al., 2010, p. 15). RTI “is the practice of providing high quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying student response data to important educational decisions” (Kurns & Tilly, 2008, p. 1).

Commonalities. All three approaches support the adoption of an evidence-based core instructional program. For each approach there are requirements for systems (e.g., teams, resources, practices) (e.g., interventions), and data (e.g., outcomes for program development and measuring impact). Additionally, addressing buy-in prior to implementation is a key element for all three approaches (Bohanon et al., 2006; Elias, Zins, Gracyk, & Weissberg, 2003; Kurns & Tilly, 2008; Hall, n.d.).

Comparison of processes: systems. There are several commonalities at the core of the systems that support PBIS, RTI, and SEL practices. Each approach has several common systems requirements, which include obtaining high levels of administrative commitment (e.g., providing resources, presence at team meetings), coaching (i.e., external, internal), establishing representative teams with defined roles and distributed leadership (e.g., chairs, action groups), auditing current practices and outcomes (e.g., self-assessment tools, reviewing outcome data), and establishing priorities for change (e.g., connection with school improvement plan; Elias, et al., 2003; Kurns & Tilly, 2008; Sagi et al., 2010). The literature on all three approaches supports the need to use evidence-based practices (e.g., problem solving, functional behavioral assessment) and contextually based standardized approaches (e.g., First Steps to Success, Walker et al., 2009; Check-in/Check-out, Crone, Hawkew, & Horner, 2010). These approaches, including SEL, support a continuum of interventions as student needs become more intense (Fox, 2009; Greenberg et al., 2003).

Comparison of processes: practices. The SEL perspective discourages the use of programs that are narrow, decontextualized, and guided by poor time management and resource allocation, and that lack understanding of the characteristics of the adults who must implement the change (Elias et al., 2003). Furthermore, there are strong recommendations from the SEL literature to prepare professionals for the school reform approach being applied (Elias et al., 2003). These suggestions are certainly related to the professional development for staff included in both RTI (Kurns & Tilly, 2008) and PBIS (Sagi et al., 2010).

Core messages from all three practices are that engaging instructional strategies should be utilized (Simonsen, Fairbanks, Brisch, Myers, & Sagi, 2008; Walberg, Zins, & Weissberg, 2004), effective instruction is critical (e.g., models instructional tasks; Kurns & Tilly, 2008), and students should be taught components of self-regulation (e.g., goals setting, self-evaluation). This focus on instruction may provide a critical link among all three approaches.

From an SEL perspective, programs that systematically teach cognitive, affective, and behavior skills improve self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, and relationship skills (CASEL, 2003). Outcomes associated with SEL programs have included improvements in social and emotional skills, attitude toward self and others, positive social behaviors, reduction of conduct problems, emotional distress, and academic performance (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011). From an RTI perspective, self-regulated learning strategies (Sawyer, Graham, & Harris, 1992) can be taught to all students to help them become more successful in the core curriculum. However, these strategies may not always be a part of the core curriculum itself. Strategies such as goal setting (e.g., identifying aim lines or targets for school-wide improvement in performance) from a PBIS perspective are typically associated with more immediate improvement (e.g., class-wide self-management) or interventions (e.g., social problem-solving skills that are incorporated into person-centered planning (e.g., futures planning).

Another point of interaction across all three approaches relates to connections with standards and the specificity of strategies taught. Both SEL and RTI support aligning instruction related to core skills (e.g., reading, respect) with standards for learning (CASEL, 2003; Kurns & Tilly, 2008). PBIS provides a school-based contextualized process for teaching locally defined behavioral norms directly, unique to each setting (e.g., safety, responsibility). However, one study suggests that there is more commonality in PBIS programs for behavioral expectations (e.g., be respectful, be responsible) across schools than not (Lynass, Tsai, Richman, & Cheney, 2012).

Each of the three approaches asks broadly similar yet specifically unique questions regarding the core curriculum. From an SEL perspective, there appears to be very specific skill sets that should be addressed to teach individuals to effectively and ethically handle themselves, relationships, and work (CASEL, 2007). Specifically, skills to be taught can include self-regulation, self-monitoring, and social skills (Norris, 2003). The SEL approach supports infusing these skills within the core curriculum. Infusion of SEL into core academic instruction can include the integration of goal setting into academic study habits, including literature that addresses conflict resolution, and utilizing effective instructional arrangements to increase academic gains (Zins & Elias, 2007). For PBIS, teams are asked to identify core behavioral norms and develop curriculum (e.g., matrices, lesson plans) to explicitly teach and acknowledge behaviors. From an RTI perspective, the components for the effective teaching of reading are identified clearly (e.g., teaching phonemic awareness, effective phonics instruction) along with features of effective instruction (e.g., explicit, meaningful interactions with language; Kurns & Tilly, 2008).

In summary, PBIS adds a behavioral core curriculum when one may not exist, RTI logic asks how effective the core curriculum is in meeting student needs and whether interventions such as changes in curriculum-based measures (CBM) and distal outcomes such as office disciplinary referrals (ODRs) and distal outcomes such as improved standardized test scores. The RTI approach may consider proximal outcomes such as changes in curriculum-based measures (CBM) and distal outcomes associated with improved measures of discipline.

The interaction among student academic, social, and behavioral performance has been explored under each approach. There are data that suggest that academic achievement may have some influence on social competence, and vice versa (Welsh, Parke, Widdam, & O’Neil, 2001). Furthermore, schools that addressed PBIS with fidelity have observed broader improvements (ODR’s, test performance, drop out, discipline). Data from PBIS could include proximal outcomes (e.g., office disciplinary referrals) and distal outcomes (e.g., improved standardized test scores). The RTI approach may consider proximal outcomes such as changes in curriculum-based measures (CBM) and distal outcomes associated with improved measures of discipline.
school was to, “increase our reading score[s] by 10% and our attendance by 95%,” but did not identify the changes to instruction (academic, social, or behavioral) that would be required to meet this goal (Kahne, Sporte, de la Torre, & Easton, 2008, p. 296). While each strategy can address problems when utilized as a single process, solutions may need to be selected to address the desired outcome (e.g., academic, behavioral, social).

**COMPARISON OF FIDELITY AND ACTION PLANNING TOOLS**

Each of the three approaches has specific tools used for measuring fidelity and action planning. Schools that implement approaches as designed have been more likely to experience successful outcomes (Bradshaw et al., 2010). Also, schools need self-assessment tools of fidelity for consensus building (Kurns & Tilly, 2008). For SEL, the CASEL Implementation Rubric can be used to guide the SEL process and measure fidelity. A measure that is completed by team members for action planning for PBIS can include the Trauma-Informed Checklist (TIC; Sugai et al., 2010). For RTI, an instrument that has been adopted by some states is the Self-Assessment of Problem Solving Implementation (SAPSI; Florida Problem Solving/Response to Intervention Project, n.d.). These tools include the components of systems, practices, and data discussed above.

**Examples.** For example, the CASEL Rubric includes items sequenced across four major implementation components including readiness (e.g., administrative support, team development), planning (e.g., self-assessment of needs, goal settings, action planning, selecting evidence-based practices), implementation (e.g., professional development, applications of interventions school-wide, applications of interventions at the classroom level), and sustainability (e.g., ongoing professional development, evaluation of programs, communication, policies and family collaboration). The TIC includes 22 questions that address issues of establishing commitments for implementation, creating and maintaining teams, conducting self-assessment of the PBIS process, developing school-wide support (e.g., school-wide expectations, classroom systems), formalizing data collection systems, and developing support for individualized interventions (Sugai et al., 2010). The SAPSI includes 22 questions related to RTI implementation. The tool is structured to include constructs such as infrastructure development (e.g., data collection, team structure), implementation of RTI across three tiers and problem solving, and monitoring and action planning (Florida Problem Solving/Response to Intervention Project, n.d.).

All three instruments can be completed by teams as self-assessments for action planning purposes. The areas with the greatest commonality again are found within the items related to systems supports. For example, step one and two of the CASEL Implementation Rubric asks if the principal has committed to the SEL process and has established a steering committee to guide the process. Question number one of the TIC for PBIS asks if the administrator is active on the behavior support team. Questions three and four of the SAPSI (v. 2a) ask if the principal is actively involved in leadership team meetings for RTI. All three tools require teams to reflect on the connection of the approach with existing school improvement goals, the establishment of teams, the status of current levels of support, and the development of action plans. Each instrument requires teams to consider systems supports and methods for evaluating outcomes prior to adopting practices.

**Cautions.** Unfortunately, when schools adopt all three approaches at once, they could be required to complete three separate tools and have three separate teams with three separate action plans. Larger schools may be able to operate such divergent structures. However, these schools would run the risk of having separate, competing programs while trying to improve the overall climate of their buildings. This lack of efficiency could jeopardize the collective strength of their approaches, and at a minimum, increase the chance that staff will not be willing to complete one more tool.

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**References**


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A Little Help From My Friends
[continued from page 1]

information on how to apply to college; Tardy, 1985). Collectively, these forms of social support undoubtedly benefit children. However, the ways in which support is provided may affect them differently.

EFFECTS OF SOCIAL SUPPORT ON STUDENT OUTCOMES

Teacher support. Students who report feeling supported by important individuals in their social networks generally display higher levels of academic achievement and social–emotional competence when compared to students who do not feel supported (Elias & Haynes, 2008). In particular, teacher social support is associated with better academic outcomes such as higher students’ grades and increased academic initiative, interest in subjects, and school engagement (Danielson, Wilum, Wilhelmsen, & Wold, 2010; Elias & Haynes, 2008; Wentzel, Battle, Russell, & Looney, 2010). Furthermore, the quality of teacher–student relationships (i.e., warmth, trust, low conflict) is related to successful school adjustment and satisfaction with school (Baker, Grant, & Morlock, 2008; Danielson, Samdal, Hetland, & Wold, 2009). Finally, teacher social support is positively associated with social–emotional outcomes, including students’ subjective well-being and self-esteem, and is negatively associated with depression (Colarossi & Eccles, 2003; De Wit, Karioja, Rye, & Shain, 2011).

However, despite these promising findings, research is needed to determine ways that teachers can optimally support students. Malecki and Demaray (2003) found that students reported that their teachers provided significantly more informational and appraisal support than emotional or instrumental support, even though emotional support was most strongly associated with the development of social skills and academic competence in students. Furthermore, students who believe that their teachers are emotionally supportive (e.g., fair and caring) are less likely to display a variety of problematic behaviors such as engaging in substance use, violent behavior, sexual activity, and suicide (McNeely & Falci, 2004). Therefore, the provision of emotional support by teachers and others is critical to fostering positive student outcomes and mitigating risk factors.

Michael L. Sulikowski, PhD, is an assistant professor in the school psychology program at the University of Arizona. Michelle K. Demaray, PhD, is an associate professor of psychology at Northern Illinois University. Philip J. Lazarus, PhD, is the immediate past president of the National Association of School Psychologists and the director of the school psychology training program at Florida International University.
Peer support. Similar to teacher support, peer support is also linked to many positive student outcomes. For example, peer support is linked to lower rates of depression, fewer psychosomatic complaints (e.g., headaches, stomachaches), higher levels of self-esteem, fewer emotional problems, as well as increases in self-efficacy, improve-ments in school climate, better social–emotional adjustment, and increased school engagement (Colarossi & Eccles, 2003; Demaray & Malecki, 2002; Perdue, Manzesko, & Estell, 2009). In addition, peer social support can help buffer against the effects of negative events in students’ lives. For example, peer social support mitigates the influence of family conflict or discord on the development of behavior problems in youth (Wasserstein & La Greca, 1996), and peer social support is negatively related to student and parent ratings of anxiety and depression in children who are subjected to physical abuse (Ezzell, Swenson, & Brondino, 2000).

Social support and peer victimization. Peer victimization or bullying (i.e., repetitive harassment or victimization perpetrated by one individual on another) is associated with a range of negative social–emotional, academic, and developmental outcomes that extend well beyond distress experienced in childhood. A study by Dempsey and Storch (2008) found that being victimized by peer aggression in childhood was related to the development of social anxiety and depression in adulthood. Furthermore, a study by Ttofi, Farrington, Lösel, and Loebel (2011) extends these findings. In this study, individuals who were bullied at school were found to be significantly more depressed in adulthood (up to 36 years later) compared to nonvictimized individuals. However, perhaps even more concerning than the long-term effects of bullying is its association with suicidality. Victims of bullying are at elevated risk of suicidal behavior and are less likely to display suicidal behavior than are their nonvictimized peers (Kimm & Leventhal, 2008).

Among other factors, the role of social support has been investigated as it relates to bullying and its deleterious effects. A study by Demaray and Malecki (2003) found that victims of bullying and bully-victims reported feeling less socially supported by their peers than did students who were not involved in bullying or bullied by others. In a subsequent investigation, Davidson and Demaray (2007) found that teacher, classmate, and school support for males and parent support for females moderated the relation between peer victimization and the development of internalizing psychopathology. A study by Flaspohler, Elfstrom, Vanderzee, Sink, and Birchmeier (2009) found that teacher and peer social support attenuated the negative effects of bullying on victimized students’ quality of life. However, a in a recent study by Rothon, Head, Klineberg, and Stansfeld (2011), peer and family social support did not adequately mitigate the negative effects of bullying on the development of mental health difficulties, even though it protected against poor academic achievement. Collectively, results of these studies highlight the importance of promoting interventions that increase peer and teacher social support as well as improve school climate.

Promoting Social Support in Schools
School systems and school personnel can use a variety of strategies, interventions, and programs to increase social support. Some of these efforts to increase social support have empirical support, others are part of larger efforts to improve school climates, and others are simply promising ideas that have intuitive appeal. In the following, a loose framework is provided that lists various ways that concerned adults can improve social support in schools.

School-wide interventions. Social–emotional learning (SEL) involves teaching pro-social skills and associated skills, such as self-regulation, that enhance one’s ability to understand their emotions and interpersonal relationships. Thus, relationship building is central to SEL, and many parts of SEL curricula relate to providing social support in schools (Greenberg et al., 2003). A recent meta-analysis found SEL to be associated with improvements in students’ academic achievement, social–emotional skills, attitudes about school, and school behavior (e.g., increased prosocial behaviors, reduced conduct problems; Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011). To explain these findings, Durlak et al. (2011) suggest that—among other variables—improvements in peer and student–teacher relationships help contribute to students’ immediate and long-term behavior changes.

In addition to specific programs or curricula, schools can implement interventions to help support particular groups of at-risk students. For example, schools can develop welcoming committees, peer mentoring programs, and social groups (e.g., circle of friends) for recently transferred students and students who are socially isolated. These interventions should include students who are friendly and popular and are willing to help others connect socially. In the aftermath of a natural disaster, displaced students are particularly at risk. Lazarus (2008) has developed a variety of intervention strategies to help affected students adjust when matriculating into a new school. These interventions are based on a social–ecological model of social support and the assumption that the more personal connections that students have and the stronger the bonds are, the more likely they will be able to recover from a disaster.

Schools also can develop programs to help groups of students who often feel disconnected from the school environment, such as students with limited English proficiency or youth with lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) sexual identities. Regarding the former, as a main component of instruction for English language learning students, Szpara and Ahmad (2007) include the provision of social and cultural support during the process of acculturation; and regarding the latter, the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) provides a range of materials for supporting LGBT students, educating students about anti-LGBT bias in society, and improving the school’s social climate. One such example is Ready, Set, Respect!, which is a new evidence-based instructional resource to help elementary educators ensure that all students feel safe and respected and develop respectful attitudes and behaviors. This curriculum from GLSEN provides a set of tools to help educators teach elementary school students respect and concern for all students, and it is available for free online (http://www.glsen.org/binary-data/GLSEN_ATTACHMENTS/file/000/002/2028-1.pdf). Similarly, NASP recently released a publication by Dewitt (2012) entitled Dignity for All: Safeguarding LGBT Students, which provides professional development ideas and case vignettes to help educators foster caring school environments.

Classroom-wide interventions. School psychologists can work with educators to implement classroom-wide interventions that aim to increase social support. As a promising intervention, positive peer reporting involves reinforcing students for en-gaging in positive interactions with others (e.g., complimenting another peer on an achievement, letting a peer borrow a needed resource, including another peer in a game or social activity). This research-based intervention allows students to report prosocial behaviors to educators who then reinforce the students who engage in positive behaviors by providing them with various incentives (e.g., stickers, extra computer time). Positive peer reporting has been found to increase the social involvement of withdrawn and socially rejected youth (Moroz & Jones, 2002). Furthermore, positive peer reporting may be a time-efficient intervention that improves peer social support and relationships in ad-olescence (Smith, Simon, & Bramlett, 2009).

The Jigsaw instructional technique, a cooperative learning technique that encourages listening, social interaction, and peer teaching to involve each group member in an academic activity, has been shown to be associated with more positive perceptions of other students, including students with disabilities and students from different ethnic backgrounds (Roseth, Fang, Johnson, & Johnson, 2006). Jigsaw group members depend on each other to complete an entire lesson and achieve a common goal (e.g., lesson comprehension, teacher praise, a good grade), which can bring them together and set aside differences while they connect socially. Similar to Jigsaw instruction, think–pair–share is another way that educators can facilitate collaborative learning. Think–pair–share encourages students to think individually about a topic or answer a question that is posed by a teacher and then share their ideas with a partner before synthesizing the information and sharing it with the class. The process of discussing putative answers with a partner helps to increase student participation and to facilitate a problem-solving dialogue between students. Although research on the efficacy of think–pair–share is limited, its close association with effective cooperative learning strategies suggests that it is a promising classroom-based intervention for improving social learning climates (Johnson & Johnson, 2009).

Schools can use the benefits of professional development or instruction to foster growth in student and teacher social support by making efforts to connect personally with students (e.g., checking in with them on a daily basis, greeting each student by name when they enter the classroom), encouraging their participation in group activities/practices (e.g., extracurricular activities, clubs, counseling groups), and working with caregivers to increase the amount of quality interactions they have with children. However, youth become increasingly influenced by their peers as they get older and peer social support becomes increasingly important as they age because of the greater premium they place on peer relationships while they differentiate from their primary caregivers. Moreover, making improvements in schools’ social climates may be important to increase opportunities for fostering peer social support. In this vein, schools can provide a wide-range of clubs and extra-curricular activities so that students with diverse interests and skills can feel welcomed and supported in at least one club, group, or team. Unfortunately, many schools are eliminating such programs because of financial cuts to education despite the benefits that these programs have for fostering supportive school environments, increasing school engagement, and decreasing student drop out (Juvonen, Espinoza, & Knifsend, 2012; Kort-Butler & Hagewen, 2011).

Conclusion
Students get by with a little help from their friends; students try with a little help from their case vignettes to help educators foster caring school environments.


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Moving Out, Again!

BY TOM JAMROG

I failed math but excel at backpacking. While sitting in a presentation at the NASP annual convention in Philadelphia, I learned that the foundation skills needed for student mathematics proficiency are “conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, strategic competence, adaptive reasoning, and productive disposition.” Hold on there! Those are the skills that are critical to long-distance backpacking, not math!

I have been an active communicant of the Church of Two Heels since 2007, when I completed my 2,160 mile thru-hike of the Appalachian Trail, and acquired my alter ego of Uncle Tom. Since “A Trail of a Lifetime: Getting a Midlife Jump-Start From the AT” was published in Volume 36, No. 8 of COMMUNIQUÉ, I have been back at it again. In 2010, I spent 5 months completing another continuous hike, this time over the Pacific Crest Trail, where I left the Mexican border in April and walked some 2,650 miles through California, Oregon, and Washington, eventually reaching Canada in mid-September just before the first snows. Luck, my own productive disposition, and Polish Power got me there.

In August, I spent another month thru-hiking the 272-mile Long Trail in Vermont, where I dealt with the devastation of Hurricane Irene before I was able to again reach Canada.

Why would someone subject himself to such madness?

I treasure the stripped-down experience of walking north, where I trade in my school psychology routines for unexpected adventures. In thru-hiking speak, I disdain my periodic lapses into the hiker-trash lifestyle. Long-distance backpacking embraces such experiences. Sometimes it’s true, “Just get moving.” “Stop and smell the roses.” “Share.” “Hike your own hike.” “Early to bed and early to rise.” It’s all true when you can enjoy the setting and the company. “Momentum helps,” I would counsel, for we are a people who move in groups.

Walking forward happens within a framework of much simpler goals, framed by more expansive views (“I have to get way up on that ridge today, then see where I might end up tonight.”). So much happens in a day when you wake up with the first light and move though the woods, desert, or fields and come across animals, insects, plant life, as well as others who are also moving about the countryside.

Long-distance backpacking demands a conceptual understanding of an array of survival skills. Life on the trail is easy when it’s pleasant and sunny out, but what about when things get downright dangerous? In the desert, it can range from a broiling 110 degrees to below freezing on the same day. How do you stay warm and, what is more important, not skid off a 13,000 foot ridge while walking over 400 miles of continuous snow and ice in the High Sierra? How do you even find a trail when it is buried under 8 feet of new snow and you are trying to follow your GPS? How do you continue to walk 41 miles in one 24-hour period.

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There is often no time in a thru-hike to adopt a reasonable, sloping learning curve. Procedural fluency is essential, so that daily tasks are completed promptly. Walking on unknown paths is a primal, universal experience that ties the ordinary adventurer to Odysseus, Daniel Boone, Shackleton, and other explorers who inspire us to go places. I consider myself fortunate to be on the short list of individuals who seek encounters with nature on a 24-hour-a-day, all-months-at-a-time period. Cooking meals, setting up a tent, avoiding bears, getting out of bed, and walking all day, day after day, is only possible when these actions are completed efficiently so that the 24 hours that are allotted each day are not squandered.

I learned to deal with adversity through adaptive reasoning to move ahead, even if it sometimes meant waking in circles or even backwards. I strive to reduce the time I spend in tension, indecision, and even pain, all of which sap energy and diminish one’s capacity to fully embrace the astounding panoramic beauty that one meets with on these National Scenic Trails.

Here’s an example of an adaptive skill, termed the Daily Inventory of Pain, which has yet to appear on the Vineland-II, that I learned from The Burglar, my Canadian hiking pal. Backpackers generally wake up either at first light or even just before sunrise, climb out of their sleeping bags, unzip the mosquito netting on their tents, and eventually right themselves to standing. Every long distance hiker engages in some degree, conscious or not, of becoming aware of body pain centers. For me, it was generally some combination of sore lower back, forehead numbness, fissured heels, tenderness or actual pain of one or both ankles, tender shins, inflammation of one or both shoulders, a dull head, thirst, digestive distress, chapped lips, minor lacerations, sore or cracked fingers, and downright fatigue. The Daily Inventory of Pain would be a conscious accounting of the cumulative effects of all these sensations, which may be unconsciously endorsed on a Likert Scale, and assigned a General Suffering Quotient which might be framed in the following manner: “I feel like crap. I am not going to be able to hike 30 miles over what’s coming. I’ll cut it to 20, and pray for that.” I might add that it would be an additional advantage to foster some measure of a productive disposition at this later stage of a thru-hike.

People make the trail. I started the Appalachian Trail alone, on my birthday, on March 27. That night, at a campsite, I met several other hikers who eventually became my best friends. We reached the terminus of the AT on the Mt. Katahdin summit together on September 16, 2007. Three years later, General Lee, Richard Wizard, and I walked together to complete the 2,160 mile Pacific Crest Trail, and finished this past August. My deepest memoriest are reenactures of scenes where there are other people present. My favorite AT photo is a blurry one taken into the setting sun in Virginia, with two men and a dog hiking in formation up a lushly planted hill. MeGaTex is what we call ourselves, and I never encountered each other at our end points. My favorite AT photo is a blurry one taken into the setting sun in Virginia, with two men and a dog hiking in formation up a lushly planted hill.

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Assessment of Cognitive Ability of Students With Severe and Low-Incidence Disabilities – Part 1

BY FRANCI CREPEAU-HOBSON & HANA VUJEVA

Students with severe and low-incidence disabilities comprise a heterogeneous population that often presents a challenge to the professionals charged with evaluating their skills and abilities. This is especially true in conducting a valid assessment of the cognitive ability of these children. Often, school psychologists are limited to the use of published norm-referenced tests (Pagan & Wise, 2000) that provide limited meaningful information to be used for educational and treatment planning and programming. President’s Commission on Excellence in Special Education, (2002), while these assessments can produce a comprehensive picture of intellectual functioning for most typically developing children, it is much more difficult to obtain a valid picture of overall cognitive functioning and to delineate relative strengths and weaknesses for children with severe and low-incidence disabilities. Utilizing commonly used cognitive assessment tools with these students may not provide meaningful data that can be used for educational planning and programming. It is extremely important that the assessment tools are appropriate to the population because the information related to cognitive skills is vital in educational programming and a significant component of treatment evaluation (Delmolino, 2006). This article provides a review of the literature examining a variety of tests of cognitive ability that can be used with students with severe and low-incidence disabilities. Recommendations for assessment practices for a range of specific low-incidence disabilities are described.

Nearly all standardized assessments of cognitive functioning assess a broad array of skills, including those in the visual, linguistic, and motor domains, in order to produce a comprehensive picture of intellectual functioning. As a result, individuals who take these tests need to have adequate vision, hearing, language functioning, and visual-motor skills (Satter, 2008). For instance, one of the most widely used assessments of general intellectual ability in children, the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, 4th Edition (WISC-IV; Wechsler, 2003), requires children to hear, understand directions, and to have adequate vision and fine motor skills for standardized administration (Satter & Dumont, 2004). If a child is deficient in one of these requisite skills, Satter and Dumont (2004) suggest either excluding subtests that rely heavily on a particular modality from the Index Score and Full Scale IQ computations, or engaging in a series of modifications (e.g., nodding to select a particular symbol instead of drawing it in Symbol Search) to make the subtests accessible. Roid (2003b) also notes the importance of adjusting cognitive assessments to accommodate examinees with disabilities in order to ensure that tests scores are indeed valid indicators of an examinee’s cognitive abilities. However, little research has been conducted that examines the impact of these adaptations on the reliability and validity of the test scores. Consequently, examiners need to be cautious when interpreting results of tests that have not been administered in the manner in which they have been standardized.

Children with significant motor, visual, hearing, or linguistic limitations are unable to be comprehensively and accurately assessed utilizing the WISC-IV and most other widely used cognitive assessments. The result is that a significant number of children with severe physical, communicative, or sensory impairments are currently assessed in ways that may underestimate their abilities, perhaps resulting in inappropriate educational placements (Driver & Warschausky, 2010). Such practices are inappropriate to the population and does not require any procedural or structural adaptations. A thorough review of the professional literature in key databases (e.g., Academic Search Premier Plus, Google Scholar) in the area of cognitive ability assessment of children with severe and low incidence disabilities revealed a paucity of research, particularly validity studies of cognitive assessment batteries with these populations, with the exception of studies with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. Clearly, further research into the assessment of such these populations and more awareness about the promising practices in assessing children with severe disabilities are needed.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

Individuals with blindness or visual impairment (B/VI) are generally at much greater risk of having neuropsychological disabilities than sighted individuals (Dial & Dial, 2010). Evaluating cognition in this population is especially challenging because the design of typical cognitive and neuropsychological tests frequently includes visually based material that requires functional vision (Wittich, Phillips, Nesredine, & Chertkow, 2010). Indeed, research indicates that individuals with visual impairments obtain significantly lower scores on many of the nonverbal components of comprehensive cognitive assessment batteries (Bertone, Bettinelli, & Faubert, 2007; Skeel, Niagra, van Voorst, & Olsen, 2003). This is especially true for individuals who suffer from cerebral visual impairment (Ek, Jacobson, Ygge, Fellenius, & Flodmark, 2000). However, few measures exist specifically for the assessment of individuals with B/VI, and many that have been designed are no longer marketed or updated, making assessment a challenge for most traditionally trained clinicians. In addition, as is the case with many of the other populations discussed in this paper, issues with test adaptation, test norming, and onset of disability complicate the provision and interpretation of traditional standardized assessments.

At present, two predominant approaches exist when considering assessment of children with B/VI. The first is the use of a measure designed and normed specifically for the B/VI population, such as the Intelligence Test for Visually Impaired Children (ITVIC; Dekker, 1989; 1993). Although this test is one of the few normed exclusively on a population of blind, Braille-reading children, it is limited by a small standardization sample (156 children) and the norms do not account for age at onset of visual loss or level of visual functioning. This may be critical as past studies have found that performance on standardized intelligence tests differs significantly by level of visual functioning (Hill-Briggs, Dial, Morere, & Joyce, 2007). However, the ITVIC has adequate reliability (r = .76–.94; Dekker, 1989) and factor analytic studies provide evidence of construct validity (Dekker, Drenth, & Zaal, 1991) with B/VI populations.

An additional measure specifically designed for cognitive assessment in the B/VI populations is the Cognitive Test for the blind (CTB; Dial et al., 1995), which also provides norms based on the B/VI population and does not require any procedural or structural adaptations. The CTB includes both verbal and performance scales for a comprehensive assessment of intellectual functioning and has added value because it is part of a broader neuropsychological and vocational assessment battery for individuals with B/VI called the Comprehensive Vocational Evaluation System for the blind/visually impaired (CVES; Dial et al., 1990).

Another approach for the B/VI population is to utilize traditional standardized assessment measures with modifications. For instance, a sheet magnifier could be placed over individual visual items as they are presented (Kaplan, Fein, Morris, & Delis, 1991). The major drawback to this approach is the lack of research examining the effects of adapting standardized procedures on the psychometric properties of the results. Though difficult to conduct, such research is critical to the accurate assessment of cognitive ability in individuals with B/VI and other low-incidence disabilities.

A thorough review of the professional literature in key databases (e.g., Academic Search Premier Plus, Google Scholar) in the area of cognitive ability assessment of children with severe and low-incidence disabilities revealed a paucity of research, particularly validity studies of cognitive assessment batteries with these populations, with the exception of studies with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. Clearly, further research into the assessment of such these populations and more awareness about the promising practices in assessing children with severe disabilities are needed.
uneven cognitive profiles (Ek et al., 2000), and utilizing only portions of a full cognitive assessment invariably fails to fully assess the strengths and weaknesses of the population. That being said, utilizing traditional cognitive assessments may be the only viable method for most school and clinical psychologists.

Regardless of the approach taken, the most important factor when assessing an individual who has R/I to recognize the “heterogeneity of this group” and to understand the interaction of “age at onset, level of visual functioning, [and] etiology” on neuropsychological functioning in order to increase the accuracy of interpretation of neuropsychological test results (Dial & Dial, 2010, p.470).

HEARING IMPAIRMENTS

In the context of cognitive ability assessment, individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing (D/H) have been the most extensively researched disability group, with hundreds of studies conducted over the last several decades (Braden 1992). Historically, approaches to assessing children who are D/H have often involved the use of a nonverbal IQ score as a proxy for a full scale score, thus avoiding the administration of verbally loaded items. Indeed, a comprehensive review by Vernon (2005) indicates that when there are no complicating multiple handicaps, children who are D/H function at approximately the same IQ level on performance/nonverbal cognitive tests as do their hearing peers. However, this practice results in less successful representation of the D/H student’s cognitive strengths and weaknesses (Naglieri & Goldstein, 2009), not only because of the limited range of ability that is assessed utilizing only nonverbal scores (or more accurately, language reduced) subserts, but also because such assessments are not normed on D/H populations (McC Comcast, 1997). Several manuals for standardized cognitive assessment measures, including the Differential Ability Scales, Second Edition (DAS-II; Elliott, 2007), the Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children, Second Edition (KABC-II; Kaufman & Kaufman, 2004), and the SBg explicitly discuss administration to D/H individuals, and provide information on clinical studies conducted with this population, as well as administration considerations including the use of American Sign Language (ASL). A review by Miller (2008) concluded that assessment tools that are based on the Cattel–Horn–Carroll (CHC) theory of intelligence such as the KABC-II and the DAS-II may provide a valid measure of a range of cognitive abilities when administered via ASL to D/H students. The use of CHC-based assessment with these individuals could allow for the identification of a broader picture of cognitive strengths and needs that are known to relate to reading development in different age periods. For example, research indicates that the broad CHC ability, Comprehension-Knowledge (Gc) is strongly related to basic reading skills and reading comprehension, particularly after the age of 8, while the narrow ability, Phonemic Awareness (PAg) is a strong predictor of reading comprehension during both the early school years and adolescence (Evans, Floyd, McGrew, & Lafargee, 2001). Clinicians can thus use these data to generate instructional recommendations for teachers (Miller, 2008).

Additonal choices with D/H students would include those assessments with less (or no) emphasis on verbal presentation of material and tasks with minimal verbal loading, such as the Leiter International Performance Scale-Revised (Leiter-R; Roid & Miller, 1997), the Universal Nonverbal Intelligence Test (UNIT; Bracken & McCalum, 1996), or the Comprehensive Test of Nonverbal Intelligence-Second Edition (CTONI-2; Hemmings, Holloway, & Hemsley, 2002). The Nonverbal Scale of Ability (WNS; Wechsler & Naglieri, 2006) may also be considered, particularly as research has demonstrated that it has acceptable validity in a D/H population (Wechsler & Naglieri, 2006). However, because these tools do not rely on overtly verbal material, the range of abilities assessed is limited (Harris, Reynolds, & Kogel, 1996).

The UNIT is likely to be one of the best choices for the assessment of children who are D/H because of the breadth of cognitive abilities it assesses coupled with the absence of spoken language in either receptive or expressive capacities (Sattler, 2001). The UNIT measures reasoning and associative ability or memory via both verbal and nonverbal means. Additional information was considered during the design of the UNIT. D/H children were included in the standardization sample, and the UNIT provides a comparison study of D/H children to hearing children in the examiner’s manual (Bracken & McCalum, 1998). Another advantage of the UNIT is that a number of validity studies of the UNIT with D/H populations have demonstrated technical adequacy (e.g., Krivitski, McIntosh, Rothlilberg, & Finch, 2004; Maller & French, 2004). The one major weakness of the UNIT and of the Leiter-R as well, is that these tools have dated and consequently questionable norms. Another drawback to the use of the Leiter-R is that there were questionable norms. Another drawback to the use of the Leiter-R is that there were paired.

Further complicating matters is that approximately half of all children who are D/H identify as having additional disabilities (Gallaudet Research Institute, 2006). As a result, valid cognitive assessment of D/H students remains a challenge for practitioners who are charged with helping teachers and parents understand the child’s cognitive abilities and educational needs (Maller, 2005).
Examples From the Field

BY ERIC ROSSEN

The Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services, also known as the NASP Practice Model, outlines 10 general domains of school psychological practices. This article is one in a series that highlights various domains within the Practice Model and, through an interview with a practicing school psychologist, illustrates how these domains are effectively applied in everyday professional activities.

DOMAIN 6: Preventive and Responsive Services

School psychologists work hard to provide the optimal conditions for learning. While often focused on mental health needs, school psychologists are also equipped to support physical health and well-being. Domain 6 of the Practice Model states:

- School psychologists promote wellness and resiliency by (a) collaborating with other healthcare professionals to provide a basic knowledge of behaviors that lead to good health for children; (b) facilitating environmental changes conducive to good health and adjustment for children; and (c) accessing resources to address a wide variety of behavioral, learning, mental, and physical needs. (p. 47)

School psychologists are in a unique position to contribute to the development and implementation of programs that support student health and help prevent behaviors that may jeopardize students’ physical well-being. This work is particularly relevant given the interaction between physical health, mental health, and learning.

One aspect of physical health that has a direct impact on school functioning is deafness or hearing loss. Even a small hearing loss can impact language and vocabulary development, communication, social functioning, and academic achievement. Approximately 1% of all school-age students receive special education services as a result of deafness or hearing loss (U.S. Department of Education, 2010), and others will later experience mild hearing loss that do not require special education services. Just over the last 10 years, the percentage of those with hearing loss has increased three-fold among second graders, and four-fold among eighth-graders. About 16% of American adults have an impaired ability to hear speech, and more than 30% of Americans over age 20—an estimated 55 million people—have lost some high-frequency hearing (Agrawal, Platz, & Niparko, 2008).

Many educators may consider physical health as the primary responsibility of the school nurse, the speech and language pathologist (as it relates to hearing loss), or other community specialists such as audiologists or physicians. Certainly, these experts should maintain a significant role, and school psychologists can collaborate with them to provide the optimal conditions for learning and support for student health and well-being.

INTERVIEW

Deborah Caron, PhD, NCSP, a school psychologist for the St. Lucie County (Florida) school board and chairperson of the deaf and hard of hearing services of the Treasure Coast, Inc., has helped implement the Dangerous Decibels program in nine schools in her county, which aims to reduce the prevalence of hearing loss among students.

Describe your role in bringing the Dangerous Decibels program into your schools and the community.

Juvenile hearing loss is reaching epidemic proportions. The primary culprit is the popular MP3 player. Sound measured at mid-level on some of these players can reach 100 decibels (dB) and can cause permanent damage after only 15 minutes. However, loud music through headphones and rock concerts are not the only source of noise that can lead to childhood hearing loss or deafness. Students are also at risk if they fail to protect their ears when mowing the lawn, using a leaf blower, listening to fireworks, or attending noisy events.

Dangerous Decibels, a school-based hearing loss prevention program, is a public health campaign designed to reduce the incidence and prevalence of noise-induced hearing loss and tinnitus by changing the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of students (Dangerous Decibels, 2009; www.dangerousdecibels.org). This educational program was developed by Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) hearing scientists and the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry educational outreach staff. The

How has this activity benefited the students, families, the school, and your district?

It has greatly benefited the students and educators who have participated in the program. After the implementation of the Dangerous Decibels project, many of the students and teachers provided feedback about how the lessons will impact future behaviors as they relate to noise reduction and avoiding hearing loss. One of the teachers who had implemented the program in her classroom reported, “The course was presented in a very practical and down to earth way. I could see the kids’ faces light up as they grasped how delicate the inner ear really was to high sound levels. The activities in the course also did a very good job of holding the kids attention; they were very engaging.” Another teacher wrote, “Very educational! The students especially loved the experiments that tied what we discussed together, and very much enjoyed the educational games on the Dangerous Decibels website.”

In addition to the individual students and teachers, the implementation had a positive impact on the families, schools, and district. The DHHS received positive feedback from families, and formal recognition came from the school board members thanking the teachers who implemented the program in their schools.

What are some of the initial barriers you faced in implementing this program?

The barriers we initially encountered, and continue to encounter, were primarily teacher buy-in and administrative support. Many teachers are already overwhelmed with their numerous job duties, and simply telling the administrators that the Dangerous Decibels program was a necessity was not enough; therefore, at an administrator’s meeting, we shared the disturbing data that hearing loss due to loud noise exposure is increasing dramatically and can be prevented (contact Deborah Caron—Deborah.Caron@stlucieschools.org—for these data). We were fortunate to find several administrators who were enthusiastic enough to implement this program at their schools. Additionally, another barrier was the budget. Although the kit is only $120, many schools are struggling to find the financial resources to support this program.

How do you plan to continue or improve upon this activity in the future?

In the past, DHHS proposed to all the elementary and K–8 principals that they include the Dangerous Decibels program as part of their fourth grade music curricula. Even though the general consensus was “yes, we need to do this,” to date we only have nine schools signed up. We need to emphasize that the kit will last from year to year and the program falls within the parameters of the Florida State guidelines (a.k.a., the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards). We may consider suggesting that the PTA assist with the purchasing of kits for their schools if the LEA budget is unable to cover the costs.

The month of May is Better Hearing and Speech Awareness Month, and is a perfect time to advertise this valuable information to students, families, and colleagues. In St. Lucie County, I coordinate an annual spaghetti dinner at one of our local K–8 schools to share the dangers of loud noise and to promote resources that are available in the community. It also is a fundraiser to benefit the DHHS, as well the hearing impaired programs in St. Lucie County. This is a great opportunity for deaf/hard of hearing individuals of all ages to network, and we also have our deaf and hard of hearing and hearing students (pre-K to high school) provide entertainment.

Children in today’s society need to be advised about any potential threat to their hearing when they are involved in educational or recreational activities, as well as what actions they can take to prevent hearing loss. Increasing hearing conservation education programs and reducing the risk factors associated with hearing loss may delay the onset of noise-induced hearing loss. Hearing loss prevention programs can teach students to enhance the quality of their life and offer hope for their future.

As a school psychologist and chairperson for the DHHS, I will continue advocating the need to implement Dangerous Decibels in our elementary schools. I am currently working on a plan (which includes targeting the music teachers) to get the other 20 schools to implement this program.

References


Check state licensure requirements. The license to practice as a professional psychologist or counselor is regulated independently in each state or province. Learners who intend to seek licensure or certification should check the program requirements in the state or province in which they hope to practice. This specialization/program is not accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) or by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). In accordance with U.S. Department of Education (DOE) new advance notice requirements, a notification for this program/specialization will be submitted to the DOE. This program/specialization may be subject to additional review and approval by the DOE, which could result in a potential delay in learners being able to start the program/specialization. If this program/specialization is subject to additional review, the DOE will notify Capella University at least 30 days prior to the scheduled start date. Capella University proactively will keep applicants and learners enrolled in this program/specialization fully informed of any actions taken by the DOE that may affect their ability to successfully begin classes as originally scheduled. Review of this specialization is pending in AL, IA, KS, ND, and WA. This specialization is not currently state-approved and will not lead to endorsement or license (as applicable) until state approval is received. North Carolina residents are currently not eligible to enroll in this program. This program has not been reviewed or approved by Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania residents will have to apply and meet requirements for certification as out-of-state candidates. Capella University cannot guarantee licensure, certification, or endorsement. State regulations vary regarding professional licensure and salary benefits. It is the learners’ responsibility to understand and comply with requirements for their state. Where applicable, teachers are advised to contact their individual school districts as to whether a program may qualify for salary advancement. For more information on licensure, see: www.capella.edu/licensure.aspx (Washington state learners are advised to go to: http://pathway.pesb.wa.gov/outofstate for more information).
Although current literature indicates the majority of adults and children evaluated after the events of September 11, 2001 have not suffered long-term psychological effects, questions remain as to the impact of this experience on the psychological well-being of young children living near the area. 

The Psychological Adjustment of New York City Preschool Children After September 11, 2001

Summarized by Michelle Serwacki, University at Buffalo, and Amanda Nickerson, Alberti Center for the Prevention of Bullying Abuse and School Violence

Although current literature indicates the majority of adults and children evaluated after the events of September 11, 2001 have not suffered long-term psychological effects, questions remain as to the impact of this experience on the psychological well-being of young children living near the area.

For demographic and covariate factors that might influence parents’ evaluations of their child’s functioning.

Consistent with previous studies, the authors found that none of the children met the criteria for a probable PTSD diagnosis. While there was a small but significant correlation found between the number of PTSD symptoms reported, results indicated that the number of PTSD symptoms did not significantly differ between children who were directly exposed to the traumatic events and those who were not exposed. Furthermore, when compared to mean ratings on a nationally standardized and norm-referenced index of childhood health adjustment, children in both groups were within normal limits. These results were consistent, even after adjusting for covariate factors (i.e., maternal PTSD, anxiety, and depression symptoms).

Recognized limitations or this study include the relatively small sample size, the inability to control for adjustment problems before the attack, and the limited generalizability of these findings based on the children’s demographic and trauma exposure experiences. Additionally, the authors recognize the need for longitudinal data to assess the long-term effects of early trauma exposure on psychological adjustment.

In summary, based on these results and the questionable validity of a PTSD classification among preschoolers, the authors recommend that preschool trauma researchers and practitioners assess and treat subclinical symptoms of distress or impairment rather than rely on diagnostic criteria which may be too high to accurately reflect impairment at the diagnostic level. Moving forward, school psychologists should be mindful of both the possible immediate and long-term impacts of trauma exposure in early childhood.

Reference


Traumatic Events and OCD in Children and Adolescents

Summarized by Erika Gonzalez, University of Houston

Existing literature supports an association between obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in adults. Notable co-occurrences of OCD and PTSD have been demonstrated and several studies have hypothesized why this relationship exists. Among the extant literature, few studies have explored the prevalence of OCD and PTSD in children and adolescents. Through the use of existing data, Lafleur and colleagues (2011) explored the link between PTSD and the occurrence of OCD in children and adolescents. This study hypothesized that children with OCD will demonstrate higher rates of PTSD and a history of trauma, and show that such a relationship is not limited to adults.

Participants in this study included children and adolescents with OCD, derived from a family genetic study of pediatric OCD, and systematically assessed OCD clinic patients. Siblings of control probands without OCD were used as comparison subjects. One sibling from each family was chosen to ensure the comparison group was similar in age and sex to the OCD group. All subjects were diagnosed using the Kiddie SADS-E for DSM IIIR or DSM IV and were based on indirect interviews (with the mother) or direct interviews with participants at least 12 years of age. Diagnoses of participants were defined only if DSM criteria were met and endorsed by either member of a diagnostic review team. In conjunction with using a traumatic life event, the endorsement of additional criteria was necessary for a PTSD diagnosis. Children’s Yale-Brown OCD Scale was used to evaluate symptoms and severity of OCD. In an effort to link OCD symptom appearance with specific life events, parents and children were asked when symptoms first began and when symptoms appeared to impair the child. Final assessments included the Hollingshead four-factor scale as a measure of socioeconomic status and the Global Assessment of Functioning to obtain overall functioning.

This study found a significant association between OCD and PTSD in children and adolescents, consistent with findings in the adult literature. Lafleur et al. (2011) suggest the importance of both genetic and unique environmental factors on the expression of OCD. Though nongenetic environmental factors may contribute to the variance in the occurrence of OCD, further research is necessary to determine significant environmental associations. Secondary analysis of existing data, confounded diagnoses, criteria used for subthreshold diagnoses, the specificity of the link between OCD and PTSD, and a lack of complete data for every participant limit the interpretation of the study. Further systematic study is essential to improve the conclusions indicating a significant relationship between OCD and PTSD in children and adolescents.

Information on an association between disorders may provide school psychologists with pertinent information to effectively intervene with students in need and provide a more tailored method of intervention. The more knowledge obtained, the more effectively an interventionist can serve a student.

Reference


Predictors of Change in Posttraumatic Stress Symptoms

Summarized by Natalie Raff, University of Houston, Houston, TX

Oron-Lar Marca, Vogt, King, King, and Saxe (2010) present findings relevant to the trauma of physical injury in youth with the aim of better understanding how individual characteristics present prior to a trauma may affect the course of change in post-traumatic stress symptoms (PTSS) over time. The study examined the initial levels of PTSS experienced by participants, as well as the speed and direction of change over time in PTSS symptom severity. Researchers examined the pretrauma characteristics of internalizing and externalizing problems, prior exposure to stressors, and the interaction between these factors and gender. Hypotheses were that internalizing and externalizing problems, high exposure to stressors, and female gender would be associated with higher levels of PTSS and a slower recovery from these symptoms.

Participants in this study included males and females, ages 6 to 18, who had been physically injured and admitted to hospitals in the Boston area. Participants varied in race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Researchers assessed participants’ PTSS with the Child

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Posttraumatic Stress Reaction Index at 3 and 12 months after the injury as well as a 6-month time point for a subgroup of participants. Parent ratings from the Codington Life Events Scale, Child were used to assess stressful life events in the 12 months prior to the injury. The Child Behavior Checklist was administered to parents to evaluate possible internalizing and externalizing problems preceding the injury.

Initial results of CPTSS-RI ratings were high in most injured participants, indicating the presence of PTSS. Overall trends in symptom trajectories followed a curvilinear model, with a faster decrease in symptoms initially, followed by a more gradual decrease. Among the possible covariates examined, only age was found to be predictive and was controlled for in other analyses. Of the pretrauma characteristics examined, externalizing problems and female gender were found to be predictive of high levels of PTSS, but the presence of internalizing problems was not. PTSS was also more prevalent in those participants who had experienced a high amount of stressors prior to injury than those with low amounts.

Results related to symptom trajectories could not be singularly predicted by pretrauma characteristics, but were moderated by gender. Interactions between gender and high or low ratings in each of the pretrauma characteristics produced distinct trajectories of recovery. Though females generally showed higher initial PTSS levels than males, these symptoms did not decrease at a slower rate as the hypothesis predicted.

Limitations of the study relate to the many factors that may impact PTSS levels and trajectories, not all of which were examined or controlled. Environmental factors present before and after the trauma and possible coping mechanisms may have affected these individuals. Researchers also identified limitations regarding the possible biases of parental reports, especially in the case of identifying internalizing behaviors, which can be more difficult to observe.

The implications of this study highlight the need for school psychologists to be aware of the relationship between physical injury in youth and PTSS, so that students who have returned to school after being injured can be monitored and supported. Additionally, school psychologists should be aware of the pretrauma characteristics that have been shown to elevate PTSS as well as the overall trajectory of recovery identified in this study in order to more accurately inform decisions regarding timing and intensity of treatment for students affected by physical injuries.

Reference


Montgomery County

services and 42% participate or have participated in the Free and Reduced-Priced Meals System (MCPS website: http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/about/MCPS-At-A-Glance.pdf).

Wielding a budget of more than $2 billion, MCPS is also one of the top performing school districts in the country, with a 90% graduation rate (the best among the 50 largest school districts) and some of the nation’s consistently highest achievement scores. Many credit the leadership of former MCPS superintendent Jerry Weast (1999–2011), a highly visible and controversial school leader who ushered in the agenda of “Raising the Bar and Closing the Gap” by emphasizing and disaggregating achievement data even before No Child Left Behind was conceived. Current superintendent Joshua Starr is maintaining the focus on achievement but looking to move beyond a singular reliance on test scores to include broader outcome measures and an emphasis on student engagement and social–emotional learning. Dr. Starr has emphasized professional development, interventions, and community engagement as district priorities for the 2012–2013 school year. With the changes in district priorities also comes changes in leadership and organizational alignment, which in turn present new ways of addressing leadership staff. The school board is also very engaged in supporting the district and has been involved in intense discussion over budget issues in recent years with the County Council. All of these entities comprise the key decision-makers to whom the MCPS school psychologists know they must reach out and share how their specific skills can provide essential services in tight budgetary times.

THE CHALLENGES

Despite many enviable aspects of MCPS’s position, the reality of the economy and direction of school reform is hitting hard here, too, and school psychologists are being affected. “We are certainly better off than some districts, yet many school psychologists feel underutilized,” says Zillich. “Many of us feel that decision-makers are not aware of the breadth of our skill set and therefore the value of the investment in school psychologists.” The reasons are both immediate-term fiscal issues and more entrenched, systemic disconnects between school psychologists’ comprehensive skills and training and the actual provision of services. The local group’s advocacy plan aims to address both.

Budgetary decisions are an immediate concern, according to Wotherspoon. In the past, school psychologists were under consideration for reduction in the school system.

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year, and the school board and administration are currently examining the possibility of cutting school psychologists’ positions down from 12 months to 10 months–20 days. Like the rest of the country, the possibility of reduced staff hours comes up against the inverse relationship between increasing student needs and decreasing resources, both within the district and the community. “A lot of people are wondering how they are going to get everything done when the caseload is already too high,” says Wotherspoon. “How are kids really going to be served properly?”

This concern directly relates to the more long-term problem of not having the time and opportunity to work differently. Many people in the district still see school psychologists as primarily relevant to compliance, not as prevention/intervention specialists, particularly in terms of academics. Zillich notes that, “We often get pigeon-holed as testers rather than prevention/intervention specialists who are skilled at data-based decision making and able to address core curriculum, instruction, social–emotional learning, and behavior.”

Another constraint in terms of being able to provide interventions that match student needs is that, in many schools, interdisciplinary teams need additional supports to implement evidence-based interventions. It is difficult to find the time necessary for psychologists to provide school staff with effective professional development. “Working smoothly together on specific interventions can be a challenge,” says Zillich. “Staff require specific training, time, and support to appropriately develop and apply interventions. Our message is that school psychologists are trained to do just that.”

**THE PLAN AND THE NASP PRACTICE MODEL**

The MCPS school psychologists started rethinking their professional advocacy efforts a few years ago with the release of the NASP Practice Model. Education stimulus funds were keeping dramatic budget cuts and layoffs at bay so the initial focus was on introducing the model to staff and district leaders, rather than on preserving jobs. The Practice Model, as intended by NASP, provided a framework for advocating for the comprehensive role of the school psychologist. The framework made sense as a goal even though there was quite a gap between the model and the current provision of school psychological services in the district. Initial advocacy efforts included discussions with district school psychologists and presentations to members of the school board and top district leaders.

In the past year, however, escalating budget realities and the transition in system leadership forced MCSPA leaders to rethink efforts as creatively—and broadly—as possible. They determined that they had to move beyond top leadership both in terms of target audiences and in terms of who was doing the advocating. They developed a multipronged plan that involves all of the school psychologists and targets building leaders and parents as well district leaders. The following highlights key elements of the plan.

**Establish goals.** Knowing what you are asking for is a critical first step in advocacy. In the case of MCSPA, they seek three specific outcomes: (a) preserve positions to serve our increasing student numbers and increasing needs; (b) improve understanding of school psychologists’ comprehensive skills and, as a result, expand opportunities to provide more prevention/intervention services; and (c) earn a seat at the planning table with district leadership to collaborate on school reform. Clearly goals b and c will be an evolving process over time in a district this large. The timing for goal a is driven by the superintendent’s budget plan for 2013–2014, which will be proposed to the school board in November.

**Be transparent and collaborative.** It is very important that a local school psychology organization be perceived as supporting the district’s school psychological services administrative structure. This would be true in any school district. The people are pretty much the same but the decision-making apparatus is not. Transparent, collaborative communication with program directors and their supervisors is key. In a district as large as MCPS, the key players include the director of school psychological services, the director of student services, the assistant superintendent for special education and student services, and ultimately, the superintendent.

**Focus on educating new leaders at all levels.** The thrust of outreach to district leaders is to share school psychologists’ skill set and make the leaders aware of the potential school psychologists can bring to the district. We realize that we are never done.” This year, MCSPA has also added a major focus on building principals, even if they are not new to the district, because many are unaware of school psychologists’ comprehensive skill set.

**Link services to district priorities.** The NASP Practice Model still provides the framework to effectively explain school psychologists’ skills and training but the district priorities provide the reference points. MCPS has established three priorities for the year: interventions, community engagement, and professional development. Luckily all three of these are easily linked to the training and skills of a school psychologist as defined in the model. The group developed concrete examples of how school psychologists can support the district objectives with their existing staff and with the specific skills that can be immediately accessed to address the stated priorities.

**Develop key messages.** Key messages are critical to establishing and maintaining clear, effective communications, particularly when you hope to have approximately 100 school psychologists doing the communicating. Zillich describes it as, “Our advocacy is only as good as our message.” MCPSA folks worked from key messages developed by NASP: (a) school psychologists are an underutilized resource in MCPS and can be more effectively deployed to help achieve district priorities, (b) tapping school psychologists’ broad skills is good for students and families, and (c) school psychologists are a wise investment in tough budgetary times. Each of these key messages is backed up by concrete examples and reinforced with an emphasis on what is good for students and families. Indeed, Zillich acknowledges how important—and sometimes challenging—it is to reframe staff frustration in order to focus on what is good for students and families, saying, “We have to stay positive and keep school outcomes at the center of our work and advocacy.”

**Identify achievable and coordinated outreach activities.** The MCSPA plan lays out specific outreach activities targeting multiple stakeholders, including the school board, district leadership, parents, community providers, and building leadership. (See Communiciqué Online Exclusive). A major goal is to have every school psychologist meet with at least one of their building principals to do a brief presentation and offer to assist the principal with a particular challenge or priority. The theme of these meetings is, “This is what I can do; how can I help you.” The school psychologists are being asked to identify one concrete example of their own to share regarding how their skills make a difference. This helps to put a face on the message. Zillich and Worthington realize that people serving multiple buildings will not likely meet with all of their principals, but one principal seems reasonable. As Worthington points out, “That’s 100 school administrators who will be better informed and more likely to advocate on behalf of school psychological services if necessary when budget discussions take place.” A centerpiece activity is a luncheon in late October hosted by MCSPA to which school board members and district leaders will be invited. The staff is being asked to invite their principals as well.

**Provide staff with advocacy resources.** Zillich worked with colleagues to develop a PowerPoint to use with top district leaders and group meetings and a briefer Powerpoint and handout for individual school psychologists to use when they meet with their principals. Key messages and examples are woven throughout. These examples are available in the October Communiciqué Online (http://www.nasponline.org/ocq). The group used the many resources provided by NASP as a starting point. Communications resources are available online for NASP members and can be found at http://www.nasponline.org/communications/index.aspx. Adaptable Practice Model resources are available at http://www.nasponline.org/standards/practice-model/implementation-and-promotion-resources.aspx.

**CONCLUSION**

At the time of writing this column, the MCPS school staff was just returning to work to prepare for school opening the last week of August and the school psychologists were just beginning to put their professional advocacy plan into action. By the time of publication, they will be midway through the build-up to the district-wide luncheon and presentations to the school board. Hopefully, 100 principals will have met with their school psychologists.

Zillich and Worthington are both optimistic and realistic about the effectiveness of the advocacy plan. “We have to balance our sense of urgency around change as school psychologists with the reality of moving a system as large and complex as MCPS in a world where we don’t control a lot of forces,” observes Zillich. “But there is real excitement among staff because we are at least doing something.” The hope is that, because they organized early and have learned from previous efforts, enough of their advocacy work will have an impact to keep moving forward. “It will be a huge achievement when change comes with us, not at us; when we are able to partake in decision-making that positions us to use our skill set as defined by the NASP Practice Model.”

Clearly, each state and school district has unique challenges and opportunities. Every district, however, has the ability to implement a plan that improves decision-maker understanding of school psychologists’ skills and value. NASP encourages you to adapt ideas from districts like MCPS and utilize the many resources on the NASP website. For questions or further information, contact NASP Director of Policy and Professional Practice, Stacy Skalski (sskalski@naswapweb.org) or NASP Director of Communications, Kathy Cowan (kcowan@naswapweb.org).
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Faculty Roles: A Primer for Students and Professionals Interested in Careers in Academia

BY BRYN HARRIS & AMANDA L. SULLIVAN

Faculty shortage is a major concern for the field of school psychology in the United States. Graduate students are not entering the field at a rate representative of the current need (Clopton & Haselhuhn, 2009). The reasons for this are multifaceted, but some studies have pointed to perceived high levels of job stress, perceived inadequate preparation to assume an academic position, and perceived low salary as possible deterents to entering academia (Nagle, Saldo, Christenson, & Hansen, 2004). A faculty member may spend a substantial portion of his time preparing large grant proposals and supervising the execution of funded projects. While this associate professor maintains his affiliation with the school psychology program, he is also responsible for managing wait lists and coordinating client care, organizing practicum and internship placements in the clinic, sometimes providing supervision to graduate students providing services to children and families of the community. In these cases, programs often hire a clinical coordinator for the position that entails responsibility for managing wait lists and coordinating client care, organizing practicum or internship placements in the clinic, sometimes providing supervision to graduate students within the clinic, and ensuring the financial viability of the clinic through for-fee services and external funding. In a time of budget cuts, these positions may entail a proportion of time similar to a tenure track position even though there is a set time period for the position, often 1 year. An adjunct is typically hired to teach a specific course only. A clinical faculty position may entail only teaching (e.g., six to eight or more courses per year), although a small proportion of time (e.g., 10%) may be reserved for college or university service. These faculty members typically have a very low or nonexistent expectation for research productivity because they are hired to address the teaching and supervision needs of a training program. For example, many institutions hire a clinical faculty member to coordinate field placements (e.g., practicum and internship) and/or accreditation processes. The particular number of courses evaluative of faculty productivity varies depending on the specific needs and expectations of the program and unit.

Nontraditional faculty positions. While clinical work is not common to the activities of many faculty, it is central to the roles of one. One type of position in which direct service and teaching is emphasized is that of clinic director/coordinator. Some school psychology programs operate clinics that provide school psychological services to the children and families of the community. In these cases, programs often hire a clinic coordinator to oversee the day-to-day operations of the clinic and supervise clinical services. In some instances, these positions were imbued with the expectation that all assistant professor endeavors to develop a record of scholarship, teaching, and service deserving of tenure.

Tenure-track positions at research-intensive universities. A typical tenure-track teaching position within a research-intensive school psychology program would be a 40%-50% research load, 30%-40% teaching load, and 10%-20% service load. Given a typical work week, this might translate into, on average across an academic term, 2 days allocated for research; 2 days allocated for teaching, advising, and supervision; and 1 day for service activities. With regard to teaching, this is generally reflected in a teaching load of 1 to 2 courses per semester plus advising of graduate students.

An individual’s exact distribution of time will likely depend on the expectations within their unit and research funding and internal supports available to bolster research time. In research-intensive institutions, research productivity is generally prioritized above all else, and faculty can find support for their work in the form of research or teaching assistants, startup funds, internal grants, and reduced teaching or service requirements. This prioritizing of research also means that research productivity is the primary determinant on one’s evaluation by colleagues and administrators. The particular types and quantities of research valued vary across institutions.

Tenure-track positions at teaching-intensive universities. Many school psychology programs are housed within teaching-intensive colleges or universities. These universities emphasize teaching responsibilities, although certain individuals may spend their time differently. Because teaching is the primary activity in these institutions, professors’ teaching assignments are generally greater than those of their colleagues at research-intensive institutions. For instance, one assistant professor has a teaching load of four classes per semester, which appears typical for this type of institution, although specific teaching assignments for a given semester varied depending on the professor’s number of advisees and research activities.

Nontenure track positions. Beyond tenure-track positions, there are a number of more temporary positions available in training programs. These include visiting professorships, adjunct professorships, and clinical faculty positions. Whereas tenure-track positions are generally on a 3- to 6-year contract preceding the university’s decision to grant tenure to the individual, these other types of positions are generally granted on a semester or annual basis. These types of positions can be found across institutions. Visiting professorships may entail distribution of time similar to a tenure track position even though there is a set time period for the position, often 1 year. An adjunct is typically hired to teach a specific course only. A clinical faculty position may entail only teaching (e.g., six to eight or more courses per year), although a small proportion of time (e.g., 10%) may be reserved for college or university service. These faculty members typically have a very low or nonexistent expectation for research productivity because they are hired to address the teaching and supervision needs of a training program. For example, many institutions hire a clinical faculty member to coordinate field placements (e.g., practicum and internship) and/or accreditation processes. The particular number of courses evaluative of faculty productivity varies depending on the specific needs and expectations of the program and unit.

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An individual’s exact distribution of time will likely depend on the expectations within their unit and research funding and internal supports available to bolster research time. In research-intensive institutions, research productivity is generally prioritized above all else, and faculty can find support for their work in the form of research or teaching assistants, startup funds, internal grants, and reduced teaching or service requirements. This prioritizing of research also means that research productivity is the primary determinant on one’s evaluation by colleagues and administrators. The particular types and quantities of research valued vary across institutions.

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Nontenure track positions. Beyond tenure-track positions, there are a number of more temporary positions available in training programs. These include visiting professorships, adjunct professorships, and clinical faculty positions. Whereas tenure-track positions are generally on a 3- to 6-year contract preceding the university’s decision to grant tenure to the individual, these other types of positions are generally granted on a semester or annual basis. These types of positions can be found across institutions. Visiting professorships may entail distribution of time similar to a tenure track position even though there is a set time period for the position, often 1 year. An adjunct is typically hired to teach a specific course only. A clinical faculty position may entail only teaching (e.g., six to eight or more courses per year), although a small proportion of time (e.g., 10%) may be reserved for college or university service. These faculty members typically have a very low or nonexistent expectation for research productivity because they are hired to address the teaching and supervision needs of a training program. For example, many institutions hire a clinical faculty member to coordinate field placements (e.g., practicum and internship) and/or accreditation processes. The particular number of courses evaluative of faculty productivity varies depending on the specific needs and expectations of the program and unit.

Nontraditional faculty positions. While clinical work is not common to the activities of many faculty, it is central to the roles of one. One type of position in which direct service and teaching is emphasized is that of clinic director/coordinator. Some school psychology programs operate clinics that provide school psychological services to the children and families of the community. In these cases, programs often hire a clinic coordinator to oversee the day-to-day operations of the clinic and supervise clinical services. In some instances, these positions were imbued with the expectation that all assistant professor endeavors to develop a record of scholarship, teaching, and service deserving of tenure.

Tenure-track positions at research-intensive universities. A typical tenure-track teaching position within a research-intensive school psychology program would be a 40%-50% research load, 30%-40% teaching load, and 10%-20% service load. Given a typical work week, this might translate into, on average across an academic term, 2 days allocated for research; 2 days allocated for teaching, advising, and supervision; and 1 day for service activities. With regard to teaching, this is generally reflected in a teaching load of 1 to 2 courses per semester plus advising of graduate students.

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spent conducting her own research agenda and supervising students as they assist her with research, while the other half of her time is spent providing clinical work to children with neurodevelopmental disabilities.

CONCLUSION
Those who are interested in obtaining academic positions should first think about the types of duties that would interest them the most—e.g., What would you like to research? What would you like to teach? What types of service do you/might you enjoy? For some, this may lead to positions such as those described above, while others might be steered toward faculty positions outside of school psychology (e.g., pediatrics, special education). It is also important to note that school psychologists often have positions within other program areas (e.g., educational psychology, early childhood education). An assistant professor stated:

What really prepares us is using the knowledge and skills from graduate school to continue to advance. It is the constant evolution of knowledge and skills that allows us to do what we do. I’m not sure if anyone is 100% prepared coming right out of grad school. In fact, I’m not sure if anyone is ever 100% prepared at any point in his/her career. The way I see it, it’s the constant learning, adaptation, and inquiry that propels faculty forward.

There are many rewards to a career in academia. One associate professor noted, “I love that I get paid to mentor, to teach, to read, to write, to think, to advocate. It really is especially gratifying. Interested individuals should take advantage of opportunities to learn more about faculty careers, such as published materials (e.g., the Chronicle of Higher Education) and meeting with faculty from diverse programs throughout the country. It is always advisable talk to others in this field about what they do. For instance, NASP’s early career mentoring program that occurs each year in conjunction with the annual convention provides one avenue by which to connect with faculty from training programs nationwide. Other local, state, or national conferences also provide a venue for networking with academics from diverse backgrounds and positions.

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school professionals, including school psychologists, have often operated from a problem- or deficit-based perspective with a focus on identifying and remediating psychoeducational disorders in children and adolescents. However, positive psychologists have argued that an exclusive focus on deficits does not offer a comprehensive perspective of children, families, or institutions. Rather, school psychologists must also consider personal strengths and environmental assets to promote optimal functioning of children and influential environmental contexts such as families, schools, and communities (Huebner & Gilman, 2003; Jimerson, Sharkey, Nyborg, & Furlong, 2004).

According to Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000), “Psychology is not just the study of pathology, weakness, and damage; it is also the study of strength and virtue. Treatment is not just fixing what is broken; it is nurturing what is best” (p. 7). Examples of personal strengths (e.g., hope, engagement, life satisfaction) and environmental assets (e.g., social support, positive school climate, opportunities to participate in meaningful activities) are provided in Jimerson et al. (2004). Although the origins of positive psychology are debatable (Proh, 2004), prominent positive psychologists have argued that the purpose of positive psychology is not to replace a problem-based science and practice of psychology, but rather to complement it so that psychology is applicable to all individuals (e.g., Wright & Lopes, 2002). Increasing interest in positive psychology among numerous professional groups (e.g., clinical psychologists, social workers, organizational psychologists) has led to the development of a specific professional organizations (i.e., International Positive Psychology Association), journals (e.g., The Journal of Positive Psychology, Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being), and numerous scholarly texts and popular press books.

Within school psychology in particular, noteworthy special issues of journals, in-

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**Transitions**

Ten Ways to Infuse Positive Psychology in the Schools

BY SCOTT HUEBNER

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cluding School Psychology Quarterly (Gilmian & Huebner, 2003), Psychology in the Schools (Chafouleas & Bray, 2004), and The California School Psychologist (Jimerson & Furlong, 2004), have been published drawing attention to the possible benefits of incorporating positive psychology theories, constructs, and methods into school psychology. An edited volume, the Handbook of Positive Psychology in Schools (Gilmian, Huebner, & Furlong, 2009) has also appeared summarizing a fairly large body of school-based research. Nevertheless, the extent of the interest and actual applications of positive psychology in schools is unclear (Huebner & Hills, 2011).

The purpose of this article is thus to summarize some empirically evaluated strategies, which could be relatively easy to infuse into practice to promote positive psychological applications in the schools. Based on the notion that school psychologists provide a variety of services, I offer 10 suggestions for positive psychology applications that seem especially promising for each of five job functions of school psychologists: assessment, direct intervention, consultation, research/program evaluation, and administration/supervision. For each activity, I will highlight one promising practice at the individual level and one at the systems level to infuse into practice.

ASSESSMENT

School psychologists can incorporate a personal strengths/environmental assets section into their psychological reports for individual students. Such strengths and assets could be iatpive or norm-referenced. This practice should facilitate searching for and recognizing positives along with problems. Studies have revealed that simply including some positive data in psychological reports can promote more positive expectations for students among school professionals (Donovan & Nickerson, 2007; Wellborn, Huebner, & Hills, 2012).

At the systems level, school psychologists can help develop school-wide or district-wide monitoring systems for students’ psychological well-being that incorporate measures of positive well-being as well as behavior problems or psychological symptoms. Studies have shown that including brief measures of subjective well-being (e.g., life satisfaction) provides important information above and beyond that of discriminating students who have behavior problems from those who do not. More specifically, the use of positive and negative indicators of well-being differentiates a group of flourishing students (high psychological well-being and low psychological symptoms) from a group of vulnerable students (low psychological well-being and low psychological symptoms). This latter group of vulnerable students would not be identified using traditional pathology-based measures, although these students show serious school difficulties (Antaramian, Huebner, Hills, & Valois, 2010; Greenspoon & Saklofske, 2001; Suldo & Shaffer, 2008).

INTERVENTION

A few empirically based positive psychology interventions specifically for children have been developed and evaluated with promising results (see Suldo, Huebner, Savage, & Thalji, 2011, for a review). For example, Froh, Seffick, and Emmons (2008) developed a brief gratitude intervention to promote emotional well-being that can easily be implemented by school psychologists. School psychologists can also obviously incorporate personal strengths or environmental assets that potentially broaden the focus and range of intervention plans. For example, a supportive grandmother might be included in parent–school meetings to improve interactions among family members.

At the individual level, school psychologists can promote school-wide or system-wide teams to support morale of administrators, teachers, and other staff. Forming a team or committee with the specific intention to improve morale, with clear objectives, methods, and evaluation plans, should prevent burnout and promote the engagement and well-being of the adults and children in the organization (Maslach & Goldberg, 1998).

CONSULTATION

Students often already display the desired behavior identified in behavioral intervention plans, albeit at low rates. School psychologists can help identify situations in which the desired behavior is occurring and recommend the procedures and strategies that surround the behavior can be considered for incorporation into treatment plans as in solution-oriented consultation (Carlson, Hickman, & Horton, 1992).

At the systems level, school psychologists can facilitate the adoption of broad-based educational goals and objectives that promote high expectations for academic learning and subjective well-being in the schools. The linkages between social and emotional functioning and academic learning and performance are well documented (e.g., Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011), reflecting the need for educational goals that extend beyond an exclusive emphasis on academic learning.

PROGRAM EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

School students are the recipients of numerous educational, psychological, and medical programs as individuals or as members of groups. For example, a child with ADHD may receive instructional modifications, individual counseling, and medical interventions, all of which potentially impact her or his well-being and quality of life. School psychologists can help develop program evaluations that incorporate positive psychology data to monitor the effects of individual, group, and system-wide interventions on individuals. For example, measures of students’ perceived quality of life (i.e., life satisfaction) have revealed evidence of sensitivity to intervention effects (Huebner & Hills, in press). At the group (e.g., remedial reading program) or school-wide level (e.g., new school-wide discipline policy or individual program), school psychologists can lead the way in ensuring that emerging programs incorporate positive data as well.

ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION

In performing administrative and supervisory duties, school psychologists can model positive, prosocial behavior with supervises and others (e.g., teachers), including providing acts of kindness and frequent recognition of positive supervisee behavior (Ko & Donaldson, 2011). Such behavior in turn facilitates supervisee well-being and more productive intervention, but often can get lost in the shuffle of management-by-crisis administrative behavior.

Finally, school psychologists can support the development of friendships at work. The presence of one good friend at work has been shown to be especially critical in high levels of employee engagement (Gordon & Crabtree, 2006). Promoting formal and informal opportunities for contact (e.g., parties, team projects) may help develop strong social relationships among staff members, enhancing overall productivity and well-being. Numerous specific examples of suggestions for promoting a positive school interpersonal climate at the systems level are given by Miller, Nickerson, Chafouleas, and Osborne (2008).

The above Top Ten list is only a sampling of potentially useful applications of positive psychology by school psychologists. Although it is possible that positive psychology may become a passing fad, it is hoped that professionals and researchers will work together to continue to develop stronger conceptual models, research, and practical applications to integrate positive and negative psychology, yielding more comprehensive school psychological services for children, families, and schools.

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A Framework for School-Wide Bullying Prevention and Safety

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) is committed to supporting accessible, high-quality education that prepares our children for college, work, and citizenship. Creating safe and supportive schools that are free from bullying, discrimination, harassment, aggression, violence, and abuse is essential to this mission. Bullying among school-age youth is a particularly serious, insidious, and pervasive problem that undermines the teaching and learning environment, increases mental health and behavior problems, diminishes school connectedness, and violates the right of students to receive equal educational opportunities in a safe environment. In response, schools have an ethical and legal responsibility to prevent bullying of any kind, ideally as part of a comprehensive approach to ensuring school safety and promoting positive behavior.

NASP developed this document to provide a guiding framework to local education agencies and school administrators for implementing effective, sustainable school-wide bullying prevention and safety efforts. Specifically, effective school-wide approaches to bullying:

- establish clear practices and policies that emphasize prevention;
- regularly assess and monitor needs and effectiveness of efforts;
- implement timely and consistent prevention and intervention strategies;
- provide social, emotional, and mental health supports for students involved in bullying, including bullies, victims, and bystanders;
- encourage positive discipline, and
- elicit engagement and commitment by all members of the school community.

NASP represents more than 24,000 school psychologists who work with students, educators, and families to improve students’ learning, behavior, and mental health. The guidance provided in this document supplements the information provided in NASP’s position statement, Bullying Prevention and Intervention in Schools (NASP, 2012; http://www.nasponline.org/about_nasp/position_paper).

BACKGROUND

Bullying is unwanted, repetitive, and aggressive behavior marked by an imbalance of power. It can take on multiple forms, including physical (e.g., hitting), verbal (e.g., name calling or making threats), relational (e.g., spreading rumors), and electronic (e.g., texting, social networking).

Estimates of the prevalence of bullying in the United States vary significantly depending on methodology, setting, or age groups studied, revealing the absence of consensus. Nevertheless, research on bullying and victimization generally suggests that approximately 70% to 80% of school-age students have been involved in bullying at some point during their school years, whether as bully, victim, or bystander (e.g., Graham, 2011; Nansel, Overpeck, Pilla, Ruan, Simons-Morton, & Scheidt, 2001).

EFFECTS OF BULLYING ON STUDENTS

Involvement in bullying creates barriers to learning and is associated with a host of negative outcomes including increased risk of substance abuse, delinquency, suicide, truancy, mental health problems, physical injury, and decreased academic performance. Students involved as both bullies and victims (i.e., bully-victims) are often the most troubled or negatively impacted. Importantly, even those witnessing bullying in school are at an increased risk to experience adverse mental health problems as a result, including depression, anxiety, substance abuse (Rivers, Poteat, Norté, & Ashurst, 2009), and an increased sense of vulnerability (Glover, Gough, Ison, & Cartwright, 2010).

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

Bullying occurs as part of a broad social and environmental context that includes individual, family, community, and school factors (Sharear, Espelage, Koenig, Berry, Collins, & Lembeck, 2012). Successful bullying prevention efforts in schools should consider this range of factors, including the facilitation of active involvement from families and the community.

- Numerous individual factors may contribute to involvement in bullying either as a bully, victim, or bystander, including but not limited to choice of peer groups, social interaction skills, popularity, attitudes toward violence, gender, age, intelligence, the existence of depression, degree of empathy and self-esteem, and being part of a particularly vulnerable population (e.g., students with disabilities and LGBTQ youth).
- Family factors that may influence bullying behavior include the degree of adult supervision and modeling of positive conflict resolution, problem solving, and prosocial behavior.
- Community factors may include the community connectedness, levels of participation in community organizations or activities, levels of poverty, and extent of exposure to community violence.
- Within the school context, adult indifference or lack of awareness, poor school engagement and connectedness among students and faculty, and negative or ineffectual discipline policies may contribute to or exacerbate bullying behaviors. Bullying, in turn, negatively affects the social environment of a school, creating a climate of fear among students and reinforcing a belief that adults simply do not care or are unable to do what is needed to protect students.

PREVENTING BULLYING AND IMPROVING SCHOOL SAFETY

Creating a safe and supportive school environment is critical to preventing and deterring bullying, mitigating the effects of aggression and intimidation, and supporting learning and academic achievement. A positive school climate is associated with less involvement in bullying as a bully or victim (Guerra, Williams, & Sadek, 2011; Meyer-Adams & Conner, 2008; Nansel et al., 2001), reduced peer rejection (Waasdorp, Bradshaw, & Leaf, 2012), and increased academic achievement (Speer, Cai, & Osher, 2007; Speer, Cai, Osher, & Kendziora, 2007). Furthermore, students who perceive their school as safe and supportive are more likely to report threats to safety (Syyvertsen, Flanagan, & Stout, 2009).

PROGRAMMATIC APPROACHES

Several programs intended to recognize, prevent, and intervene in bullying behavior have been developed and replicated in schools across the country (see Farrington & Ttofi, 2009; Merrell, Guelder, Ross, & Isava, 2008). These include, but are not limited to, adult training programs, antibullying campaigns, restorative justice, and intervention programs that focus on individuals, small groups, classrooms, and whole schools. Such approaches often include a standard set of materials and instructions to be delivered by selected staff, for specified students, and for specified periods of time.

Some packaged antibullying programs have evidence of moderate levels of success in reducing bullying behavior. The success of these programs is often dependent on the intensity and duration of the program, which must be long-lasting to have a significant impact (Ttofi & Farrington, 2011). Single, stand-alone bullying prevention programs, however, tend not to be optimally effective or sustainable because they:

- are fragmented;
- are seen as another task to do by only selected individuals;
- view bullying as an issue affecting a subset of students instead of the larger school context;
- rely on strategies that have proven ineffective, or even counterproductive, such as punitive discipline and zero tolerance policies;
- do not fully consider the unique characteristics of the local context, including family and community factors; and
- lack coordination between multiple grade levels and among faculty and staff.

A comprehensive, sustainable approach. To be effective, bullying prevention must be part of a comprehensive, cohesive, and integrated school-wide system of learning supports (see UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools and the National Association of School Psychologists, n.d.) that creates a cultural norm of safety, connectedness, acceptance, and support. This framework integrates and unifies parallel initiatives that may otherwise operate in a fragmented, uncoordinated, and inefficient fashion (e.g., separate initiatives to prevent drug abuse, bullying, gang violence). The ability to reduce duplicate efforts and close gaps in services is particularly important at a time when schools are being asked to do more with less.

Schools that effectively implement this framework provide physical, social-emotional, and academic supports that enable schools to decrease bullying and victimization and improve outcomes for all students. Indeed, school-wide interventions are more likely to positively affect the school climate and reduce bullying than individualized or classroom-level interventions implemented in isolation (Ttofi & Farrington, 2011; Veerman & Carroll, 2007). Importantly, creating this kind of school environment takes time and requires an integrated, whole school approach, and an ongoing commitment from school leadership, staff, students, parents, and the community.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

NASP advocates for the following guiding principles in developing comprehensive, integrated, school-wide approaches to bullying prevention and improving school safety:

- Prevention and intervention efforts must use evidence-based strategies and services that are developmentally appropriate, coordinated across grade levels, comprehensive in scope, adequately funded, collaboratively implemented, and implemented with fidelity.
- Ongoing engagement, evaluation, consistency, and commitment are necessary components to ensure sustainability.
- Students and their families should be actively engaged in policy and program development and implementation.
- The availability and accessibility of school-employed, specialized instructional support personnel with knowledge and training in creating safe schools (e.g., school psychologist.

Authors: Eric Rossmann, PhD, NCSP, and Katherine C. Cowan, National Association of School Psychologists. Contributors: Peter Faustino, PsyD, Bedford Central School District, NY; John Kelly, PhD, Commack High School, NY; Melissa A. Reeves, PhD, NCSP, Winthrop University, SC; and Susan M. Swearer, PhD, Bullying Research Network, University of Nebraska—Lincoln.

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gists, school counselors, school social workers, school nurses) is paramount to improv-
ing school environments.

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<th>A school safety team—which focuses on overall school climate—must be established to help sustain efforts over time.</th>
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| Staff training should reinforce the importance of bullying prevention and response efforts throughout all classroom and nonclassroom interactions and settings (e.g., cafeteria, hall-
ways, playground, digital media, bus stops, school-sponsored events off school grounds). |
| Discipline policies should: |
| ▪ be clear, consistent, and fair; |
| ▪ safeguard the well-being of students and staff; |
| ▪ teach students alternative, positive behaviors; |
| ▪ avoid harsh discipline and overly punitive policies (e.g., zero tolerance); and |
| ▪ cover before- and after-school activities, as well as bullying and harassment via digital media. |

**STEPS TO EFFECTIVE SCHOOL- AND DISTRICT-WIDE BULLYING PREVENTION**

1. Conduct an assessment of the school’s environment to:
   - determine perceived safety and supportiveness of the school among students, staff, and parents;
   - identify specific strengths and needs of the school;
   - identify specific groups at risk in the school (e.g., racial and ethnic groups, LGBTQ youth, students with disabilities); and
   - identify where and how bullying occurs.

2. Identify existing resources and efforts in the school by:
   - garnering involvement from student support and mental health personnel such as school psychologists, social workers, and school counselors;
   - incorporating bullying prevention strategies into classroom learning (e.g., writing as-
   signs, art projects, health curricula);
   - determining the existence of initiatives in the school that should be coordinated with antibullying efforts (e.g., positive behavior support, multilevel response to interven-
   tion); and
   - working and communicating with families and related organizations (e.g., PTA).

3. Create a school safety team—ideally made up of an administrator, school psychologist or counselor, teachers, parents, and students—that maintains responsibility for:
   - identifying a lead person to deal with bullying prevention and school safety;
   - establishing and communicating the roles and responsibilities for administrators, teach-
   ers, students, and parents in developing and maintaining a safe and supportive school environment;
   - designing and providing professional development and training to ensure that school safety efforts are coordinated and integrated with other school improvement initiatives;
   - recognizing contributing risk factors to bullying in the school and communicating those factors with school staff; and
   - ensuring that the school’s policies are in compliance with state laws and school board policies.

4. Incorporate the school safety and bullying prevention efforts into the school’s or dis-
   trict’s official policy on student and employee conduct. This should include:
   - clear and defined boundaries for appropriate behavior;
   - protocols and mechanisms for reporting concerns or violations, and maintaining a re-
   cord of those reports;
   - guidelines for investigating incidents of bullying or other threats to student safety, in-
   cluding those that occur after school hours, off campus, or through digital media;
   - guidelines for responding to reports of bullying behavior or other threats to student safety (avoiding overly harsh and punitive discipline such as zero tolerance policies); and
   - access to prevention and intervention services provided by school mental health pro-
   fessionals (school psychologists, counselors, and social workers) to remediate bullying behaviors and support victims, bullies, and bystanders as needed.

5. Establish positive discipline policies and practices that:
   - are fair, clearly understood, and consistent;
   - identify and consider contributing factors to student misbehavior;
   - teach all students alternative, prosocial behaviors; and
   - incorporate family involvement to the greatest extent possible.

6. Engage the entire school community by communicating policies with students, staff, parents, and other stakeholders (e.g., staff at after-school programs). This communica-
   tion should include:
   - open avenues for input and feedback;
   - transparent access to bullying and other school safety data; and
   - dialogue to ensure consistency of policies and responses to bullying across settings.

7. Regularly assess the school climate to determine effectiveness and whether additional supports are required. This process should be transparent and engage effective data analysis that helps inform evidence-based practice.

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**THE ROLE OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS**

School psychologists are uniquely trained school-based professionals who help children and youth succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally. They collaborate with educators, parents, and other professionals to create safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments. The broad-based role of school psychologists, as well as the range of competencies they possess, is described in the NASP Model for Compre-
prehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services (NASP, 2010).

School psychologists have substantial training and preparation in data-based decision making (at the individual and systems levels) and research and program evaluation. Thus, they possess the knowledge and skills required to help lead efforts related to needs assessments, estab-
lishing progress monitoring systems, evaluating and interpreting data, and helping use data to inform future directions for bullying intervention and prevention efforts. Additionally, school psychologists are trained in counseling, positive behavior supports, and other school-based intervention techniques necessary to help prevent and remediate bullying behavior.

School psychologists possess skills in consultation and working with others collabora-
atively, including fellow educators, families, and community stakeholders, making them prime candidates to serve on school safety teams and advisory boards. With extensive knowledge of education law, they can also help ensure legal compliance.

With their extensive understanding of school systems, knowledge of student develop-
ment and behavior, and understanding of mental health, school psychologists offer a unique perspective. As a result, they can help design appropriate discipline procedures, identify in-
dividual student and school-wide factors that may contribute to bullying and victim behavior, facilitate the establishment of systems of support for students, design methods for teaching prosocial behaviors, and offer suggestions for how to respond to incidents of bullying.

**SUMMARY**

Bullying prevention in schools requires strong leadership and the commitment of all members of the school community. The framework described within this document provides research-based guidance to school and public policy leaders to effectively ad-
dress bullying and improve students’ learning and life outcomes, and is consistent with the key policies identified by the U.S. Department of Education (see Stuart-Cassel, Bell, & Springer, 2011). Essential to this work is the creation of safe and supportive school environments through comprehensive and integrated school-wide approaches. Safe and supportive school environments decrease bullying and the effects of aggression and intimidation while improving teaching, learning, and academic achievement. Such efforts, however, take patience, coordination, commitment, and resources to ensure effectiveness and sustainability. School psychologists are ideally positioned to support these efforts given their broad range of skills in data-based decision making, col-
laboration and consultation, mental health, school-wide reform, and program evalua-
tion. And while legislative efforts increasingly are mandating this work, it is vital that school communities remain steadfast in their commitment to implementing practices that create safe schools where children are ready and able to learn and teachers are empowered to teach.

For a color version of this brief and further bullying prevention and school safety guid-
ance and resources, visit http://www.nasponline.org/bullying.

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Seclusion and Restraint
[ continued from page 1 ]

It is important to note the distinction between seclusion and time-out. These two terms are often used interchangeably, but they have very different meanings. Time-out involves removing a student from the group or requiring the student to go to a separate designated area, but the individual is monitored at all times by an adult and is not physically prevented from leaving the area. Typical examples of time-out include sending a student to sit at a desk in the hallway, facing the wall in the classroom, or sitting in a designated section of the classroom away from the rest of the group.

The Children’s Mental Health Act of 2000 defines seclusion as, “the involuntary confinement of an individual alone in a room or area from which the individual is physically isolated a resource document related to this issue. Although NASP does not have a formal position regarding seclusion and restraint, the association actively promotes the use of preventive measures and positive behavioral supports (PBS) with all students. This article will provide you with background information relating to this legislation as well as NASP’s response. The article will also highlight key recommendations from the U.S. Department of Education’s (2012) Restraint and Seclusion: Resource Document, and summarize the behavioral practices that NASP promotes, including the role of the school psychologist in ensuring that all students’ behavior is properly supported.

DEFINITIONS OF SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT

Both the Reynolds Child Depression Scale—2nd Edition (RCDS—2) and the Reynolds Adolescent Depression Scale—2nd Edition (RADS—2) can help you identify and gauge the severity of a child’s or an adolescent’s depressive symptoms. Brief versions derived from the original measures are ideal for group screening and when time is limited.

Empirically derived cutoff scores help identify those students who may require immediate clinical attention.

The 30-item RCDSD-2 includes updated norms and an expanded age range (for use with children as young as 7 years).

The 30-item RADS-2 self-report measures the four basic dimensions of depression: Dysphoric Mood, Anhedonia/ Negative Affect, Negative Self-Evaluation, and Somatic Complaints.

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To place an order or to learn more about the RCDS-2 and the RADS-2, contact us today!

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Is she just sad or moody? Is she social or a loner?
Depression is a major mental health problem that may have serious ramifications for children and adolescents.

Given the large numbers of children and adolescents who are at risk for depression, there is a compelling need for valid and reliable assessments and procedures to recognize and measure depression in young people.

Both the Reynolds Child Depression Scale—2nd Edition (RCDS—2) and the Reynolds Adolescent Depression Scale—2nd Edition (RADS—2) can help you identify and gauge the severity of a child’s or an adolescent’s depressive symptoms. Brief versions derived from the original measures are ideal for group screening and when time is limited.

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Kelly Vaillancourt, NCSP, is NASP Director of Government Relations and Mary Beth Klotz, PhD, NCSP, is NASP Director, IDEA Projects and Technical Assistance.
prevented from leaving.” Regulations issued around this definition indicate that seclusion can mean confinement in rooms that are locked, blocked by furniture, held shut by staff, or a door. Examples of seclusion include putting a child in a room and locking the door, strapping a child to a chair, or pinning a student to the floor to keep him or her from leaving an area (National Disability Rights Network [NDRN], 2009).

Restraint, as defined by the Children’s Health Act of 2000 and further interpreted by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services in final regulations, means any manual method, physical or mechanical device, material, or equipment that immobilizes or reduces the ability of an individual to move his or her arms, legs, body, or head freely. Restraint also refers to drugs or medications that are used to manage someone’s behavior or to restrict their freedom of movement, and are not part of a standard treatment dosage for a diagnosed condition. Restraint does not include physical escort, or the use of devices such as orthopedically prescribed devices, helmets, or bandages (NDRN, 2009).

FEDERAL INVESTIGATION OF SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT PRACTICES

Over the past several years, numerous reports examining the use of seclusion and restraint in public and private schools have been released (e.g., National Disability Rights Network, 2009; Butler, 2012). In addition to reports by advocacy organizations, the federal government has also investigated these practices. The United States Government Accountability Office (GAO), at the request of the House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor, reviewed available data on the use of restraint and seclusion as it pertained to allegations of death and abuse at public and private schools. In addition, as part of the investigation, GAO was asked to review laws pertaining to the use of seclusion and restraint in public and private schools. The results of this investigation were presented in May 2009 to the House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor (GAO, 2009). GAO reported that there were no federal laws restricting the use of seclusion and restraint, and that although some states had laws or policies to address the use of these techniques, they varied widely from state to state. In addition, GAO was not able to identify a single repository of information related to the use of seclusion and restraint methods. Although GAO could not investigate every allegation of death and abuse related to the misuse of seclusion and restraint, hundreds of such allegations were discovered, and the majority of these involved children with disabilities. In many cases, the teachers and staff who implemented the seclusion and restraint techniques were not properly trained (GAO, 2009). Although there are likely many instances in which seclusion and restraint techniques are used appropriately, the allegations of abuse and death have called into question the need for these practices in our schools.

In part because of the results of the GAO report, the U.S. Department of Education began to examine seclusion and restraint practices in the school setting. In July, 2009 Secretary of Education Arne Duncan sent a letter to the chief state school officers and encouraged them to review current policy and procedure related to seclusion and restraint, revise them if appropriate, and hold schools accountable to these policies. Additionally, the Office for Civil Rights revised its Civil Rights Data Collection, starting with the 2009–2010 school year, to require reporting the total number of students subjected to seclusion and restraint (U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

PROPOSED FEDERAL LEGISLATION

Due to the results of the GAO report, Congressional hearings, and pressure from advocacy groups, federal legislation was introduced in the 11th Congress relating to the use of seclusion and restraint in schools. In 2009, the House of Representatives introduced the Keeping All Students Safe Act (H.R. 4347) and the Preventing Harmful Restraint and Seclusion in Schools Act (H.R. 4247). The Senate also introduced a companion bill to the Keeping All Students Safe Act (S. 2985). None of these bills were signed into law. In April 2011, the Keeping All Students Safe Act was reintroduced in the House of Representatives (H.R. 1381) and in December, the Senate introduced its own version (S.2020). There are a host of disability rights and parent advocacy groups that fully support both of these bills that are intended to limit the use of seclusion and restraint in the schools, outline criteria for appropriate use of these methods, and require data collection on the use of these techniques. The GAO was asked to review the use of restraint and seclusion in schools, whether that intervention helped or hurt students, and whether regulations were appropriate. However, while NASP fully supports the House bill, it has concerns with language contained in S.2020, outlined in written testimony submitted for a Senate hearing held on July 12, 2012 and summarized below. Readers may also find the full set of NASP recommendations at http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/advocacynews.aspx.

Allowable use of physical restraint. NASP recognizes that physical restraint should only be used when absolutely necessary, by trained staff, and in concert with a range of positive discipline and behavioral techniques. NASP’s main concern with S. 2020 is that the GAO recommended that restraint may only be used in instances when the student’s behavior poses an immediate danger of serious bodily injury to self or others. The term serious bodily injury as defined in U.S. Criminal Code means being inflicted with an injury or illness that involves: (a) substantial risk of death, (b) extreme physical pain, (c) protracted and obvious disfigurement, or (d) protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty. Examination of case law indicates that determination of serious bodily injury is based on the type of care that is required by an injured party after such injury occurs, and in cases where the meaning of “serious bodily injury” has been examined, a broken nose and a concussion, injuries that parents and school personnel would consider very serious, did not meet the definition of serious bodily injury (SEA PA 2008; SEA CA 2006). The decision to use seclusion and restraint is generally made when a student is in crisis, with the intent of keeping students and staff safe, and it would be nearly impossible for school staff to predict if the student’s behavior would result in serious bodily injury when making this decision. NASP believes that the definition of serious bodily injury is too stringent and may prevent the necessary use of appropriate restraint when it is warranted to ensure the safety of students and staff.

Mandatory debriefing session. S. 2020 would require that parents be notified following each instance of seclusion and restraint. In addition, after each instance, a debriefing session, with all school personnel who were in proximity of the student before, during, and after the use of restraint, must take place within 5 school days. There are parts of the debriefing session that NASP supports, including the identification of additional positive strategies that could be used with the student in the future. However, this bill would also require that schools refer a student for eligibility consideration for IDEA or Section 504 if the student is not already receiving services or accommodations or document why a referral was not made. NASP believes it is inaccurate to assume that when a child receives behavioral interventions in school, including seclusion and restraint, that it is because the student has a disability. Requiring school personnel to prove they are not negligent in identifying a student’s disability would lead to a host of unintended consequences, including unnecessary referrals to special education and unnecessary litigation. Although there are concerns regarding this language in S. 2020 and the potential burdens it could place on school personnel, NASP does support many other aspects of the bill, including the recommended use of multi-tiered problem-solving strategies and PBIS.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION RESOURCE DOCUMENT

In response to the growing national concern, in May of 2012, the U.S. Department of Education published a resource document that states, school districts, school staff, parents, and other stakeholders may use when developing or refining policies and procedures on the use of seclusion and restraint. The document is applicable to all students, not just those with disabilities, and stresses that every effort should be made to structure learning environments and provide supports so that restraint and seclusion are unnecessary. In particular, the document recommends that schools review their strategies when there is repeated use of restraint or seclusion for an individual child, multiple uses within the same classroom, or multiple uses by the same individual. The Department, in collaboration with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), included 15 basic principles in the document that should be considered a framework to ensure that any use of seclusion and restraint occurs in a manner that protects the safety of all children and adults in school. School psychologists can take a leadership role in helping districts and schools adopt policies that reflect these 15 principles. In particular, school psychologists can work with school personnel to develop and implement prevention measures such school-wide positive behavioral support systems, functional behavioral assessments, and training on deescalation techniques to defuse potential violent dangerous behavior. The resource tool is not intended to provide formal guidance to states and districts and does not require any specific actions or mandate any new requirements regarding the use of seclusion and restraint.

NASP’S BEST PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS

NASP believes that the creation of positive conditions for learning is essential to student success and foundational to effective school discipline policies. To help students learn effectively, the Department needs to actively create conditions that promote safety, prevent negative behaviors, foster increased student engagement, and support social–emotional wellness, mental health, and positive behavior (NASP, 2011). In order to establish positive school climates and conditions for learning, NASP supports the use of multi-tiered problem-solving models that feature interventions that are evidence based, implemented with fidelity, and include objective and validated measures to monitor student progress (NASP, 2009). School-wide positive behavioral support programs help prevent negative behaviors and improve school safety and are central to positive conditions for learning. School psychologists play important leadership roles in designing and implementing these models and advocating for culturally competent and equitable discipline policies to address the use of seclusion and restraint. In particular, the best practice model that NASP recommends is the Collaborative Multi-Tiered System of Support (CoMTSS) and in this resource tool, it recommends “making connections for student success legislative priorities.”

References


BehavioralSupports/}


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What to Do in Seattle? Lots!

Within Walking Distance of the Headquarters Hotel and Convention Center

Pike Place Market. Only five blocks from the Sheraton Hotel, the 104-year-old purveyor of fish, flowers, crafts, and oddities is the oldest continuously operating market in the United States. It also contains several notable restaurants. If you want really cheap eats, one of life’s little pleasures is buying a barbecue pork hunk on the sidewalk across the street from the main market building at Mee Sum Pastry Company (www.MeeSumSeattle.com), which you can easily eat while shopping. (I am partial to the baked buns, but some like the steamed variety.) Also, on the same side of the street you can find the original Starbucks Store #1 and the original Sur La Table (www.surlatable.com) store (also now a chain). The daily hustle of 200 commercial businesses, 100 craftspeople, approximately 100 farmers, numerous street musicians, and a few actual apartment residences make the Pike Place Market a lively spot.

Post Alley. Starting just below the Pike Market and ending 3–4 blocks north of it, this converted alley is very walkable and high on charm and lots of shopping.

The Harbor Steps. South of the Pike Place Market, near the foot of University Street at First Avenue, look for the steps leading down toward the waterfront. Numerous shops and restaurants line the meandering steps, with potted flowers and great vistas of Puget Sound. You can shop all the way (only about four blocks) to the waterfront!

Waterfront Park and the Seattle Aquarium. Below the Harbor Steps and right at the edge of the sound both are great places to kids and for watching sea life displays, otters (too cute), and a not-to-be-missed underwater room with a 360-degree glass dome. (Seattle Aquarium, 1485 Alaskan Way, (206) 386-4300; ask.com and webcrawler always seem to have coupons if you are taking a family.)

Seattle Art Museum. Located several blocks south of the Pike Place Market is Seattle’s main art museum at 1300 First Avenue (http://seattleartmuseum.org). There is a permanent collection as well as the harbor and other waterfront tours (www.argosycruises.com). There is also a tour of what is referred to as underground Seattle. This resulted from a fire in the 1800s and a leveling of the streets after it, which left the original first floors below ground level. This became a kind of time capsule. Tours are available through http://undergroundtour.com.

A bit further

Seattle Center. Take the Monorail (www.seattlemonorail.com) from Westlake Center (see above) one mile to this park that features a collection of attractions for the whole family. These include the Pacific Science Center (http://pacificsciencecenter.org), with kid-friendly science exhibits (where adults also learn a lot), the new Chihuly Garden and Glass Museum (www.chihulygardensandglass.com), with incredible glass art by Dale Chihuly, and the Experience Music Project, or EMP, where you can be entertained with the exhibits and finally find something your teenager will think is cool. EMP includes sound labs, where said teenager can learn a new guitar lick (you can bring your guitar to the EMP and use the sound labs with others), and also a stage experience for either veteran or inexperienced musicians, where you can perform before an electric/video audience of thousands, guaranteed to go wild no matter how bad you are (http://www.empmuseum.org). For those of a certain age, the Jimi Hendrix (a Seattleite) and the early rock and roll collections alone are worth the trip to the EMP.

Space Needle. The Seattle Center also includes the iconic Space Needle (www.spaceneedle.com), the city symbol, which offers excellent area views from the observation deck (see website for tickets or purchase onsite). If the local weather is cooperating, February often offers surprising breaks of sun and clear weather, but grab them when they come. The restaurant on the Needle is moderately pricey but has excellent food. The restaurant rotates during your meal (timed to rotate a full turn twice during an average meal). It offers a great vista, again, if the weather cooperates.

Sky City Restaurant reservations can be planned from the same site as trips to the observation deck (www.spaceneedle.com).

Convention Registration Opens October 1

The online convention registration and housing reservations systems are now open (as of October 1). By registering early, you can save up to $70, plus be entered to win one of six fabulous prizes. NASP has a number of resources you can use to plan your best convention experience ever!

- You should have received your Preliminary Program in the mail. The printed program provides a terrific overview of the convention highlights, documented sessions, and workshops. Browse through it now and keep it for future reference. The printed registration form also allows you to register by mail if you prefer.
- The convention website expands on the program to provide descriptions of the more than 1,200 sessions (included with your registration), workshops, and special events (some of which will be added in the coming weeks), as well as tips on how to save money and what to do in Seattle. All easily searchable.
- Use the Create Your Own Schedule tool to plan what sessions will best meet your professional development needs.
- Review the sessions included in the Session Recording Packages for the NASP Online Learning Center to see if you can free up some time on site when session schedules conflict by accessing desired workshops or documented sessions after the convention.
- Take the Self-Assessment. Convention educational sessions represent the range of professional practice domains as outlined in the NASP Practice Model, offering an opportunity to build skills in areas that will strengthen your comprehensive role. We encourage you to review the domains and take a brief self-assessment tool (takes about 15 minutes) online at www.nasponline.org/practicemodel to help you target the topics and sessions that will be most valuable.
- Reserve your hotel room at the same time you register in one easy process. You do not need to reserve your hotel at the same time. However, you must register for the convention before gaining access to the NASP discounted room rates. These affordable rooms can fill up, so don’t wait too long.
- Back by popular demand: Look for the Convention Mobile Website again this year. Access is the entire convention program and receive updates on your mobile devices while on site at the convention.
plan your trip on (www.soundtransit.org). Attractions at the South end of the lake include the Center for Wooden Boats (http://cwb.org) where you can rent a rowboat and go out on the lake (they will take care of you, no experience necessary). Okay, it’s February, but this doesn’t stop Seattle-ites, so what’s your excuse? Or you can just view the collection of vintage craft or watch boats being built. The area at the end of the lake and following the streetcar line is filled with good restaurants, with many others along the streetcar line leading to the lake.

Washington State Ferries. The Seattle terminal of the system (801 Alaska Way, Pier 52) is a little under a one-mile walk from the Sheraton (about 18 minutes) to the southern end of the downtown waterfront. From there you can ride across Puget Sound to Winslow on Bainbridge Island. Eagle Harbor at Winslow is picturesque and there are attractive shops and restaurants in a very walkable small town. The trip to Winslow takes about 45 minutes. A walk-on passenger pays only $7.70. Trip planning information can be found at www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries.

University of Washington. The campus, north of downtown, about five miles off I-5 at 45th street northeast, draws approximately 80,000 students and staff daily. It offers, among other attractions, a small art museum (Henry Art Gallery: http://henryart.org) and the Burke Museum of Natural History, with a fascinating Northwest native art collection, including some incredible totem poles. Children love it (www.burke museum.org). It is about a 20-minute bus ride from Westlake Station (see above) or about a 12-minute taxi ride, even in the worst of traffic.

Seattle University. Due east (unfortunately uphill) from the Sheraton, this city campus is small but has attractive grounds (901 11th Avenue East). It is about a 10-minute walk one way, or a local bus from 6th Avenue and Pine Street will get you there. Get off at 12th Avenue East. The campus chapel has been won many architecture awards.

Quaint Neighborhoods. Tour neighborhoods for approximately a $1-$15 cab ride or cheap bus ride (plan it on the Metro trip planner: http://metro .kingcounty.gov). Several of Seattle’s microbreweries sit between the Ballard and Fremont neighborhoods.

Fremont. Often dedicated to making itself as odd as possible, Fremont is home to a troll sculpture underneath the Aurora Bridge at 36th street and a monumental east block Soviet era statue of Lenin (see Walking Guide on: http://fremont.com). Plans to put a cash machine in Lenin’s derriere were shelved in a rare outburst of diplomacy by the Fremont neighborhood officials after the Soviet Union fell apart. Near the quaintly inadequate Fremont Bridge, there is a Richard Beyer sculpture of a group of people standing forever waiting for a mass transit that was torn down during the freeway-crazed 1960s, called “Waiting For The Inturban.”

Ballard. This Scandinavian fishing section of Seattle has become gentrified. It still houses the North Pacific fishing fleet for much of the year. Lot’s of good shopping, good restaurants, and the quaint early 1900s Ballard Locks (official name: Hiram M. Chittenden Locks & Botanical Gardens), which raise ships from Puget Sound to the level of Lake Union and Lake Washington and provide entertainment (http://www.myballard.com/ballard-locks-seattle). Children, especially, find the locks and the related salmon ladder endlessly fascinating. Sometimes, migratory salmon are thick in the ladder as they move between the ocean and the lakes, although February, when the convention is held, is not known for this. The fishing fleet is also a site not readily available in most cityscapes and can be found at Fisherman’s Terminal (http://www.portseattle.org/Commercial Marine/Fishermens-Terminal) along with several good restaurants (such as, Chinooks: information at: http://www.anthony s.com/restaurants/detail/chi nook-at-salmon-bay). At times, famous ships from reality television shows, such as Deadliest Catch, are moored at the terminal.

Theatre in Seattle. There are many theatrical venues in the city; most notably, within walking distance of the hotel is Benaroya Hall, home of the Seattle Symphony, but used for many other events as well. View their calendar at http://www.seattlesymphony.org/benanoya/browse. Live theatre within a reasonable distance includes: Intiman Theatre (at Seattle Center; see above, and http://intiman.org), The Rep (also at Seattle Center: http://seattler ep.org), Fifth Avenue (just south on Fifth Avenue from the hotel (www.fthavenue.com)) and The Paramount Theatre, right around the corner from our hotel (www.paramount.seattle-theatre.com).

Music venues. Places to hear music include The Showbox, with two locations, one for the blues at Pike Place Market and one south of downtown near the baseball field and football stadium, in the Sodo neighborhood, with bands appealing to the younger set (Arch Enemy, Paul Van Dyk, Arctic Monkeys). One website serves both at: www.showbox online.com. Finally, also within walking distance of the convention hotels, there is Demetrious Jazz Alley (http://www.jazzalley.com/calendar.asp).

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2012 SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY FUTURES CONFERENCE

View Live or Archived Conference Webinars

By Patti L. Harrison, Jack Cummings, & Susan Jarmuz-Smith

The 2012 Conference on the Future of School Psychology is set to begin, with the first live conference webinar scheduled for October 8. Additional live webinars are scheduled for Friday, October 26 and Saturday, November 10. If your schedule does not allow you to attend the live webinar sessions, you can access archived presentations online following the live presentations.

If you have not yet planned to attend the live webinars or view the archived presentations, now is the time to register for the conference (http://www.indiana.edu/~futures) and get prepared to help define the future of school psychology. You can register as an individual or plan to host a group of practitioners, graduate students, faculty members, and related professionals.

Dates and Themes for the Futures Conference Webinars

There will be three Futures Conference webinars, one for each conference theme and spread across several weeks. The webinars will showcase keynote and featured speakers, panel presentations, and opportunities for comments and questions by attendees. Each webinar will be a total of 90 minutes in length, from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. (Eastern; GMT -5). Background materials for each webinar session will be posted on the Futures Conference website at least 2 weeks prior to the live session.

The live conference webinars are scheduled as follows:

- Monday, October 8, 2012 from 3:30–5:00 p.m. (Eastern time zone; GMT -5); Theme: Leadership by School Psychologists.
- Friday, October 26, 2012 from 3:30–5:00 p.m. (Eastern time zone; GMT -5); Theme: Critical Skills of School Psychologists.
- Saturday, November 10, 2012 from 3:30–5:00 p.m. (Eastern time zone; GMT -5); Theme: Advocacy by School Psychologists.

Individuals or Groups May Participate in the Futures Conference

Individual school psychology practitioners, graduate students, faculty, and others can view the conference presentations through their own work or home laptops, desktops, or mobile devices. Individuals are encouraged to join the live webinars or view the archived versions after the conference.

School psychologists also may organize international, national, state, association, university, or local groups for viewing the conference webinars. For example, groups of school psychology practitioners in school districts, students and faculty in graduate programs, joint practitioner and graduate program groups, intern cohorts in school districts, state or local school psychology associations, and others will benefit from viewing the online webinars in real time or viewing the archived versions later. Local groups can view the webinars, complete the Futures Conference Handbook, and hold problem-solving sessions to analyze issues and plan the future of school psychology within the local context.

Register for the Conference

Please register in advance for the conference. There is no charge for registration or any fee associated with the conference. Individual attendees and groups may elect to attend live or archived webinars, or a combination of each. Conference registration is encouraged so that individual participants and group host sites may receive additional conference information and updates. Also, we will use registration data to aggregate basic demographic information about conference attendees for conference reports and evaluations.

What to Do Right Away

- Register in advance on the Futures Conference registration form (http://www.indiana.edu/~futures/registration.html); note that individuals as well as group host sites should register.
- After registration, be on the lookout for more conference information to be sent to you on e-mail.
- Share information about the conference with your colleagues.
- If you are a group host site, send out invitations to group participants, reserve a meeting room, and plan your group activities.
- Check for conference updates and review resource materials and handbooks at http://www.indiana.edu/~futures.
- Test the online conference setup in advance at the Indiana University testing page at http://connect.iu.edu/futures (enter the meeting room as a guest).
- View the live webinars on the conference dates or access the archived presentations.

Patti L. Harrison and Jack Cummings are the planning committee co-chairs and Susan Jarmuz-Smith is the NASP student representative.
Three Tiers of Behavioral Intervention

REVIEWED BY RINA CHITTOOORAN
Managing Challenging Behaviors in Schools: Research-Based Strategies That Work is a relatively inexpensive, well-written book that will appeal to those who espouse a three-tiered model of behavioral support. The book is divided into three parts: Part I, Preventing Behavior Problems, addresses a proactive approach to managing behavior; Part II, Responding to Problem Behaviors, calls all of the strategies offered in Part I challenging behaviors through the use of behavior contracts, self-monitoring, and functional assessment-based interventions; and Part III, Getting Started, provides readers with ways to assess and intervene in problem situations that occur in their own classrooms.

It is the authors’ contention that proactive approaches are more effective at managing challenging behaviors than those aimed at behaviors after they occur. To this part, Part I includes information on the essentials of effective classroom management and its relationship to preventing problem behaviors. In addition, Part II emphasizes self-control and self-monitoring of behaviors; such approaches are more likely to be successful than those that are imposed on children, particularly so with adolescents who are learning to function independently and take responsibility for their actions. The book includes a number of brief, engaging case studies that help readers apply what they are learning to their classrooms. Also of value are several resource guides, one on low-intensity strategies, another on comprehensive classroom management, and yet another on instructional delivery; each of these provides information on a variety of tools, approaches, costs, and relevant research studies. Part III includes several reproducible handouts, checklists, assessments, and other teacher materials that are well worth the cost of the book.

In summary, this is a valuable resource on behavior management that is based on current research with children in school settings. It should be a welcome addition to the bookshelves of school professionals as well as trainers, and should provide information about how to effectively manage challenging behaviors that may interfere with learning.

RINA CHITTOOORAN, NCSP, is a faculty member in the department of education at Saint Louis University.

Behavioral Interventions for Teachers

REVIEWED BY EVA R. MARKHAM
The authors, Dr. Packer and Ms. Pruitt, are professionals who are parents of youngsters with developmental disorders. Their history as educators makes their advice concrete, practical, and fairly easily implemented.

The authors arrange a series of chapters topically, covering a variety of conditions or symptom clusters. For each, they do a tidy job of describing the symptoms associated with the condition, discussing the educational impact of the problem, and proposing interventions that might be appropriate. The careful way the authors point out co-occurring symptoms seen in students having particular disorders is a strong point for this book. Additionally, they thoughtfully point out how a symptom (e.g., inattention) can arise from a variety of underlying conditions.

In the section on behavioral interventions, there is a clear assumption that parents, students, and educators all aid in developing intervention plans. Information from the publisher suggests that the book’s utility was aimed at teachers and parents. This may explain, at least in part, why the discussion of behavioral intervention is rather nontechnical. Seeing technical terms in the glossary which are not used or defined within the text makes one wonder if the book’s utility might not have been enhanced by some discussion of specific procedures (e.g., differential reinforcement) within the body of the book.

If the book was indeed written for parents and teachers, psychologists may experience some concern with the chapter titles, which purport to represent different conditions. Some are diagnoses from the DSM. Others are conditions noted within IDEA. Some, however, are constructs (e.g., executive dysfunction). Admittedly, many pupils who have developmental disorders have deficits in executive functioning. The question is whether these are symptoms which occur across a range of problems rather than a diagnosis. For parents, and also for teachers to a certain extent, there may be a tendency to look to the diagnosis and then assume that the interventions proposed in the book are prescriptive.

Strong points of this book are the very practical suggestions offered and the resources included in checklists. A CD comes with the book containing these materials. For school psychologists needing concrete suggestions to offer teachers, the materials on the CD could come in handy. There is a degree of specificity which offers immediate utility for educators. Familiarity with the materials and the utility of certain items for a particular type of student allows a psychologist to offer concrete suggestions with a fair degree of detail, something often desired by teachers. The book is certainly a nice resource, both for psychologists, and for other educators.

EVA R. MARKHAM, EdD, is a licensed psychologist and a faculty member in the department of pediatrics, University of Louisville, School of Medicine.

Brothers of Ujima

REVIEWED BY CHYNNNA S. MCCALL & ROBYN S. HESS
Children spend the vast majority of their time in school, where they are exposed to and acquire much more than the carelessly planned lessons of their teachers. For every academic skill taught, a number of social skills are also developed. Brothers of Ujima: Cultural Enrichment Program to Empower Adolescent Males, is a social–emotional learning (SEL) program intended for African American males who are at the beginning stages of their identity development (ages 10–14). The goal of Brothers of Ujima is to guide adolescent African American males toward becoming productive, capable individuals. The curriculum focuses on assisting participants to develop a positive view of what it is to be an African American male by contesting negative stereotypes, supporting healthy relationships among group members, and becoming aware of community resources. Upon completion of the program, it is expected that participants will have a newfound pride in themselves and their culture.

The 2-hour sessions delivered across 14 weeks provide content deeply rooted in African history and culture. Each lesson reflects one of the eight principles of African American living: Umoja (Unity), Kujichagulia (Self-Determination), Ujima (Team- work) Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba (Creativity), Imani (Faith), and Heshima (Respect). The authors have formatted the lessons in a highly organized, sequential curriculum designed to actively engage the boys through different connective strategies, allowing them a better understanding of program content and objectives. In this after-school program, participants learn in family-like groups of eight members led by one African American adult male. Within each lesson, a consistent sequence of events is presented, with an emphasis on group procedures (e.g., differential reinforcement), there is a focus on skill development, and clear learning goals are consistent with well-designed, effective SEL programs.

While the program framework and content appear to have value, the narrow focus would make it difficult for individuals of other races to facilitate. To expand its implementation, the authors might consider ways to support program delivery in areas with very small African-American communities. Furthermore, the program focuses entirely on identity development through an Afrocentric perspective, whereas not all Black individuals identify as African Americans (Hecht & Ribeau, 1991). By ignoring this distinction, the program may alienate youth who identify with Black culture. In the introduction, the authors might acknowledge the multiple ways individuals identify themselves. The research base for this program was not provided and more evidence to support the foundation and outcomes would be helpful to ensure that this program is used to its fullest potential. The predecessor to Brothers of Ujima, Sistahs of Ujima, has resulted in positive outcomes utilizing a similar structure and content (Nicolas & Schwartz, 2010). Brothers of Ujima fills a unique niche and may support young African American men in developing a sense of cultural identity apart from negative media portrayals.

References

CHYNNNA S. MCCALL is a graduate student in school psychology at the University of Northern Colorado.

October 2012, Volume 41, Number 2 | COMMUNIQUÉ | 31
New Bullying Prevention Resource Released

A new cohort of NASP leaders started their terms as delegates at the July Delegate Assembly meeting in Bethesda, Maryland. Holding coffee cups in hand in symbolic preparation for the 2013 NASP convention in Seattle, these new delegates attended a new leader training session on July 19.

Seated from left to right are Wendy Stovall (Arkansas Delegate), Terri Sisson (Virginia Delegate), Stephanie Livesay (Maryland Delegate), and Katie Eklund (Government and Professional Relations cochair). Standing are Daniel Hyson (Minnesota Delegate), Esteban Walstrum (Hawaii Delegate), Jonathan Sikorski (Student Development cochair), Marsha Huff Miller (New Leadership Training cochair), Mary Osterloh (Nebraska Delegate), Carol Daniels (Kansas Delegate), Misty Lay (Kentucky Delegate), Michael Welch (Credentialing cochair), Terese Schaefer (North Dakota Delegate), Dan Newman (Early Career cochair), and Regina Kimbrel (New Leadership Training chair). Not shown is Wendy Price, new delegate from Massachusetts, who was unable to attend the training.

New NASP Leaders Undergo Training

A Framework for School-Wide Bullying Prevention and Safety is a centerpiece of NASP’s effort to provide updated, publicly available resources that will help schools implement effective bullying policies and practices, and to reinforce the role of the school psychologist in doing so. This resource builds on NASP’s position statement on bullying and includes background information, guiding principles, and steps to prevent bullying within a comprehensive, integrated system of school safety and learning supports.

Visit PAL-II.com for additional product information.

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ALWAYS LEARNING PEARSON

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Interview With Author Peter DeWitt

The following is an interview with Peter M. DeWitt, EdD, author of Dignity for All: Safeguarding LGBT Students, a joint publication of Corwin Press and the National Association of School Psychologists.

COMMUNIQUE: What exactly does this book cover?

Dr. Dewitt: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth are coming out at an earlier age. Many young adults in the LGBT community come out by the age of 15 and some have known their sexual identity by the age of 10, which means that they are experiencing these feelings in our schools. LGBT students often fear the consequences of coming out at such a young age. They fear losing friends and being disowned by family. In addition, they are harassed, tormented, and abused more than most other student populations.

The Gay, Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN) reports that “84.6% of LGBT students reported being verbally harassed, 40.1% reported being physically harassed, and 18.8% reported being physically assaulted at school in the past year because of their sexual orientation. 72.4% heard homophobic remarks, such as faggot or dyke, frequently or often at school” (2009, p. 26). Unfortunately, many school personnel ignore that abuse and fear losing their job if they do something about it. It’s a problem we need to deal with as we uncover more and more about the LGBT community.

In order for students to be engaged in school, they must feel safe in their school environment. School personnel can step in and help this often-mistreated group by providing safeguards to protect LGBT students. School administrators have the influence and duty to create those safeguards, and therefore, can have a profound impact on LGBT students. This book explores strategies that school personnel can use to safeguard sexually diverse students.

Dignity for All: Safeguarding LGBT Students focuses on explaining the plight of LGBT students but also gives practical advice to teachers, school psychologists, social workers, and administrators on how they can better meet the needs of these students. I once heard a quotation from an LGBT student from Rochester, NY, who said, “You don’t have to do everything, but you do have to do something.” I really cannot say it any better than that.

Overall, I wanted to provide professional development ideas, curriculum ideas, student code of conduct suggestions, and strategies that will help foster a more caring school environment for not only LGBT students, but all students as well. Exposure to any issue, regardless of how controversial it may be, helps educate all students and prepares them for a diverse world.

COMMUNIQUE: Why do we need a book on this topic?

Dr. Dewitt: Quite simply, there is not much on the topic, and I’m thankful that Corwin Press and NASP were progressive enough to support me on this book. There are only a handful of books out there, but I feel I have a unique perspective because I was a teacher and I am a practicing school administrator. In addition, we need only to look to the new reports about bullying and senseless deaths by suicide to know that these students are at risk. Students should not feel unsafe when they go to school. Parents send their kids to school to be safe and to learn. They don’t assume that their gay child should be abused when they enter school.

This was the topic of my doctoral research at Sage College of Albany (Albany, NY) and I found that many school administrators do not want to discuss LGBT issues because of a variety of reasons. LGBT issues are often seen as religious or political concerns and school administrators receive a great deal of community pushback. They find it easier to ignore it and hope it will go away. What’s worse is some of them do not care that these students are being abused, and that’s a problem. I have heard stories where administrators have said to students that if they didn’t act so “gay” they would not have a problem. Not only does that go against everything school personnel should stand for, it’s just plain discriminatory.

As a school administrator, I understand that school principals and superintendents are busy. They have other things to worry about like the Common Core State Standards, new teacher and administrator evaluation, increased accountability, and many other mandates, but keeping kids safe is our number one job.

I know what school principals have to deal with, and I think that provided me with great insight when writing this book. After 6 years as an administrator, I have had to negotiate my way through diverse situations. Fortunately, I have worked with great school psychologists and other personnel who have helped me find resources. All of that collaboration has helped me understand that it takes a whole school community to work with students. Only when school staff put aside their differences (e.g., those who do not agree with homosexuality) can we all really help students find themselves. It’s our responsibility to help prepare students for their future, and I believe Dignity for All: Safeguarding LGBT Students will provide school personnel the tools they need to help students get there.
**Communique**: Who is the target audience?

Dr. Dewitt: I believe there are a variety of groups who could benefit from reading this book. Teachers, school counselors, school psychologists, administrators, and parents are the target audience. Many parents do not know how to deal with the fact that their children are coming out because they may not know any other gay people. There is a sense of grief they feel that they need to work through. The acceptance will come after that, and I hope the book would help parents with that process.

School personnel may also not have a great deal of experience with the LGBT community. They may have come in contact with the community through television or books but those often play to stereotypes and there is a large population of LGBT people who do not fit into those stereotypes.

In addition, one of the things that I have found is that the book works well for college students. Whether students are in gender studies classes, educational psychology classes, or preparing to be teachers in preservice classes, this book will expose them to a type of diversity they may not always think about. I understand that the younger generation (and it pains me to say that) is more open-minded but there are still huge issues in schools when it comes to LGBT students.

**Communique**: Tell us a little bit about your background and how it contributed to your writing of this book.

Dr. Dewitt: I taught elementary school in a couple of city schools in New York State for 11 years and have been an elementary school principal in a rural/suburban district outside of Albany, NY, for the past 6 years. In addition, I taught as an adjunct at the graduate level for 4 years and received my doctorate a couple of years ago where I researched safeguarding LGBT students. I write a blog for Education Week called Finding Common Ground, a guest blog for the Huffington Post, and write articles for education journals on the state, national, and international levels.

By nature of what I write about, which focuses on social and emotional growth, school reform, high stakes testing, 21st century skills, etc., I need to look at a variety of topics through an objective lens. Also, because of my teaching and administrative experience, I have come in contact with students and parents of diverse backgrounds and believe they all deserve a place in the school system. My teaching and administrative experience has had a profound impact on my writing. I have spent years trying to help students feel safe. We have so many students who come from backgrounds that we could never imagine, and it is our job and responsibility to help them achieve whatever it is they want in life. Their sexual orientation, gender, race, and socioeconomic level should not matter.

Reference


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**Search Announced for Communique Editor-Elect**

In accordance with Executive Council procedures, NASP announces the search for a new **Communique** editor. A **Communique** editor-elect will be appointed by the NASP president for a 5-month term effective February 1, 2013; the **Communique** editor-elect will become **Communique** editor July 1, 2013 and serve a 3-year term, with the option of reappointment to additional terms. Current **Communique** editor, John Desrochers, has announced that he is seeking reappointment. For those seeking the position, all letters of intent are due by December 31, 2012. Applications will be reviewed by the search committee consisting of the chair of the Publications Board, three members of the Publications Board to be appointed by the chair, and one delegate representative appointed by the president. The committee will conduct phone interviews of finalists and recommend an appointment to the president.

The **Communique** editor-elect will serve concurrently with the **Communique** editor during the final 5 months of the current **Communique** editor’s term (February through June, 2013). A division of duties will be developed jointly by both the **Communique** editor and the **Communique** editor-elect to ensure a smooth transition of responsibilities. The **Communique** editor and **Communique** editor-elect work closely with NASP staff on all projects and initiatives. The **Communique** editor receives an annual salary replacement in accordance with the NASP fiscal policies and subject to the annual budget review process. The NASP **Communique** editor is an ex-officio member of the Publications Board and is expected to attend and participate in scheduled meetings of at least once per year.

Any NASP member interested in applying for the position of the **Communique** editor-elect should be familiar with the **Communique** website (www.nasponline.org) and NASP publications (www.nasponline.org/publications/Communique). Individuals who intend to apply for the position should submit a letter of intent by e-mail to the chair of the Publications Board, Janine Jones, (jonesj@uw.edu) by December 31, 2012. Applications must be submitted electronically and interested individuals are encouraged to contact John Desrochers (desroc@optonline.net) regarding responsibilities associated with the position.
Restraint and Seclusion in Schools: A Graduate Student’s Experience

BY BRIAN M. YANKOUSKI

Four years ago, I worked with John, a 13-year-old student who was a fun-loving, very intelligent young man at a special education school for students with severe emotional and behavioral disabilities. Working with John had a lasting impact on my professional development. John, who was diagnosed as having pervasive developmental disorder-not otherwise specified, had a history of severely aggressive behaviors toward staff (e.g., biting, hitting, kicking, hair pulling), property destruction, and self-injurious behavior (e.g., biting himself). His previous school placement was unable to effectively manage his challenging behaviors. The staff used taste aversion (e.g., a nutritious substance, such as hot pepper, was forced into his mouth when he bit himself) as part of the behavior modification process to reduce his self-injurious behavior. When John became aggressive toward staff, they placed him in a supine restraint and strapped him to a mat for up to 10 hours. Staff felt uncomfortable and unsafe in John’s presence. So when we first started working with him, we had the policy that at least one staff member had to remain in the room with him at all times. This ensured that the student was safe and the staff member could implement de-escalation techniques to help calm the student. We also included other protocols in the policy, such as staff training requirements, how to do face-to-face monitoring of restraints, debriefing procedures after an incident, data collection, and reporting procedures to parents. These are some examples of components that schools should consider when developing their policies on restraint and seclusion. Indeed, when writing a policy, restraint and seclusion practices in schools should be limited to emergency situations to maintain staff and student safety. Moreover, we focused on using a range of prevention measures and positive behavioral approaches to reduce dangerous outbursts and teach appropriate prosocial behaviors. When restraint techniques were necessary, they were used safely due to the school’s sound policies, implementation of positive behavior supports (PBS), comprehensive staff training in crisis intervention, and use of a collaborative team approach.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

While at the school, I worked closely with administration to revise its school policy on restraint and seclusion. I was fortunate that the administration recognized the extent of the misuse of these procedures and how it could expose the school to litigation. In addition, it was helpful that there was internal buy-in and administrative support to make the school a safe and positive learning environment for the students and staff. As a graduate student in school psychology, I was honored to be able to directly influence school policy that protected students from physical and psychological harm.

We included preventive strategies such as PBS as part of the procedures that must be used prior to using restraint. We also developed clear definitions of terms and descriptions as to when restraint was allowed (e.g., when a student posed a significant danger to self or others) and when it was prohibited (e.g., as a means of punishment). We also decided to prohibit the use of seclusion as part of our policy because we did not believe in isolating a student in a confined room. While we did have padded rooms to safely maintain a student, we realized that these were not necessary (Ryan, Peterson, Tetreault, & Van der Hagen, 2004). By that time, one staff member had to remain in the room with the student at all times. This ensured that the student was safe and the staff member could implement de-escalation techniques to help calm the student. We also included other protocols in the policy, such as staff training requirements, how to do face-to-face monitoring of restraints, debriefing procedures after an incident, data collection, and reporting procedures to parents. These are some examples of components that schools should consider when developing their policies on restraint and seclusion. Indeed, when writing a policy, restraint and seclusion practices in schools should be limited to emergency situations to maintain staff and student safety. Moreover, we focused on using a range of prevention measures and positive behavioral approaches to reduce dangerous outbursts and teach appropriate prosocial behaviors. When restraint techniques were necessary, they were used safely due to the school’s sound policies, implementation of positive behavior supports (PBS), comprehensive staff training in crisis intervention, and use of a collaborative team approach.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Restraint and seclusion practices in schools should be limited to emergency situations when a student is posing a significant danger to self or others. When implemented properly, these procedures can assist in maintaining a safe and positive school climate and afford students an opportunity to remain in the least restrictive educational placement. Schools utilizing these procedures should have well-established school policies, provide staff training in their appropriate use, and offer careful administrative oversight. As school psychologists, we can contribute to the policies and procedures that result in safe schools with positive learning environments. School psychologists are charged with advocating for the mental health needs of all students and play a critical role at all levels of support for students with behavioral, social, and emotional concerns (NASP, 2009). Therefore, given the growing concern surrounding restraint and seclusion use in schools, it is critical that school psychologists advocate at the local, state, and federal levels to protect the rights of students and to maintain safe and positive learning environments for all students in our nation’s schools.

References and Resources


Making History With the Futures Conference

A little over a month ago, the Olympics ended and many of us got back to our lives, which were temporarily suspended while we watched. I don’t know why I watched as much of the Olympics as I did since skeet shooting, rowing, and handball are not typically sports I would notice otherwise. I think a major contributor is that it happens only once every 4 years, and there is a lot of nationalistic pride watching athletes from our country succeed.

Now imagine how special an event might be if it happens only once every decade and it goes to the very core of what school psychologists do and will do in the future. There is no way that I would be kept away from watching every portion of that event! That event is one that will be occurring throughout this fall when the 2012 School Psychology Futures Conference is held.

It had been over 25 years since the last major school psychology conference was held before the first Futures Conference was organized in 2002. The goal was to bring together all of the school psychology associations and try to achieve a consensus on the current state of the field and where it was heading in the future. It brought together many of the top school psychologists and gave our profession a roadmap on how to maximize the benefits of our services to children and the schools. The conference was ahead of its time as it recorded all of the major conference presentations and created a website to archive all of the information. This archive allows anyone to go back and see how good the speakers were at predicting the future.

The conference was ahead of its time as it recorded all of the major conference presentations and created a website to archive all of the information. This archive serves as a great resource for trainers and allows anyone to go back and see how good the speakers were at predicting the future.

Fast forward a decade, and we are now in the midst of the 2012 Futures Conference. This Futures Conference is being organized around three different themes. These themes include promotion of advocacy, leadership, and critical skills. Each theme is organized around particular goals that presenters will focus on. There are also theme resources and action plans for participants to utilize around the country. For example, the advocacy theme has the goals of defining advocacy; identifying strengths and challenges for developing advocacy; identifying existing opportunities for advocacy; and identifying systems-level and individual opportunities to research, promote, and demonstrate advocacy by school psychologists.

Of course, a major concern for anyone interested in attending a conference is where it is located and the cost. Fortunately, these factors have been eliminated because this Futures Conference will be held online. As long as there is an Internet connection, your school district or university can be a host site for the conference. The conference will occur over 3 days during the fall. The dates are October 8, October 26, and November 10. Each session runs 90 minutes and has been conveniently scheduled on different days of the week at 3:30 p.m. EST. If it is not possible to meet during that time for the live broadcast, then the site can register to host archived presentations. Another option to participate in the conference is to register as an individual and watch at a time that is most convenient for you.

The 2012 Futures Conference is our chance to come together and plan where we are heading as a profession and how we are going to impact children and the schools. Come join in and be able to tell future school psychologists that you attended one of the landmark school psychology conferences that helped shape the profession. If you are interested in participating, go to www.indiana.edu/~futures and either sign up as an individual or find a group site that is hosting the event.

Dan Florell, PhD, NCSP, an assistant professor in the school psychology program at Eastern Kentucky University, is the NASP Webmaster.
**Worth the Price**

**REVIEWED BY SARA LEGGETT**

School Psychology Tools offers a variety of features for the user including a Calendar, To-Do list, Age Calculator, Observations tool, Reports, Stopwatch, Normal Distribution curve, Notes & Voice feature, and an Evaluations list.

The Calendar allows the user to keep track of upcoming evaluations by linking to the user’s calendar, which may link to all of the user’s Apple devices. The Calendar feature can be paired with the To-Do list so that the user can keep track of everything they have done for each evaluation. The application also allows the user to enter student information for each evaluation or observation so the data is easily on hand (e.g., student name, age, grade level, teacher, school).

I tend to use the Age Calculator, Observations, and Reports features the most. The Age Calculator allowed me to quickly determine a student’s chronological age on the day I was testing. However, I was not able to use it to calculate a student’s age before or after the day of testing. Therefore, if you are writing in your student’s age on your protocol before or after the test day, you will still have to do it by hand.

My favorite feature of this application was the Observation tool, which allowed me to either use a precreated template for an observation or create my own template. With this feature, I was able to do any kind of observation I wanted (e.g., interval, event, duration) and create observable behaviors unique for that student, while also comparing the student’s behavior with peers. During an observation, the user can pause the recording session to enter notes about the student (e.g., student answered one out of two questions correctly) and then continue recording where he or she left off.

After observations are complete (more than one can be done on a student), the Reports feature allows the user to create summary graphs or tables of the data. Although I really liked the tables the tool created and the fact that I could e-mail myself (or others) the data, I was not impressed by the graphs. They did not translate well to a printed copy because the backgrounds were very dark and I wasn’t able to customize the graph to my liking. On the other hand, I was able to complete many partial-interval recordings silently by turning my device on silent. The device would then vibrate at the beginning of each new interval. The application does require the user to take some time to learn it in order to complete an observation flawlessly, but it also allows the user to enable tips that aid the learning process.

In summary, there are many good features of this application. Although minor adjustments (e.g., more customizable graphs and age calculators) are needed, this application is a valuable and cost-effective tool that can improve a school psychologist’s productivity by reducing time spent on paperwork.

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**Caveat Emptor**

**REVIEWED BY LAURA WHITE**

Yeah, it is a pricey one. So is it worth the money? Well, that depends upon whether or not you use the many features it provides.

It has a Calendar, but most of us are hooked into our Outlook calendars. It has Notes, but only in the portrait view (not landscape), making it hard to use the touch keyboard and impossible to use a wireless keyboard. It has a feature for tracking your Evaluations, which I tried using this year. Rather than being helpful, it ended up being one more thing to do. Trying to figure out what was or was not done for my cases took a lot of screen tapping. To keep track this year, I will just return to my simple tried and true method of creating a chart with the names of cases on the vertical and columns for the components of the evaluation on the horizontal. As for the Stopwatch, Age Calculator, and Normal Distribution features, all can be found on PAR Assessment Toolkit (2.1), which is free.

Perhaps the best feature of the School Psychology Tools app is the Observations tool. With this tool you can create templates and perform ABC, event, duration, or interval recording observations. You can also make really cool charts with the data. Totally worth it, but only if you do a lot of behavioral observations (I don’t). A great deal of thought and care went into the creation of this app, and while the School Psychology Tools app was not helpful for me, it may be helpful for you. You can get more information and see a Power Point demo at http://www.schoolpsychologytools.com.

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Sara Leggett is an early career school psychologist who began practicing in Okemos Public Schools, Michigan, during this school year.

Laura White, PhD, NCSP is a school psychologist in Fairfax, Virginia.
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Employment Notices

NE/Faculty Position. The Psychology Department at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) invites applications for a tenure-track assistant professor position in School Psychology beginning August 2013. Our NASP-accredited Ed.S. program emphasizes a scientist-practitioner model and is committed to training outstanding practitioners with a strong background in problem solving, data-based decision making, and evidence-based practices. The university and department have a strong commitment to achieving diversity among faculty and staff. We are particularly interested in receiving applications from members of under-represented groups and strongly encourage women and persons of color to apply for this position. The successful candidate will work at the graduate level school psychology courses and undergraduate courses (depending on department needs); maintain a productive record of research and scholarship in areas(s) of specialization; advise graduate and undergraduate students; and participate in service at the local, state, and national levels. Qualifications include an earned doctorate (or anticipated by August 2013) in School Psychology from a NASP and/or APA-approved program; practical experience in schools; evidence of potential for scholarly productivity and teaching; demonstrated commitment to diversity; and eligibility for state and national certification as a school psychologist. To apply, please submit a letter of application, curriculum vitae, and names and contact information of three references who have been asked to send letters of recommendation electronically at http://www.unomaha.edu/humanresources/employment.php. Supplemental information (statements of teaching, research, and service goals; copies of publications, letters of recommendations, and past teaching evaluations) should be sent to: Brian McKevitt, Ph.D., School Psychology Search Committee Chair, Department of Psychology, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 6001 Dodge St., Omaha, NE 68182-0274, Phone: (402) 554-2498, Fax: (402) 554-2556, E-mail: bmckevitt@unomaha.edu. Applications will be reviewed beginning November 1, 2012 and will continue until the position is filled. For more information about UNO’s School Psychology program, please visit http://www.unomaha.edu/schoolpsych/.

IL/Indiana State University, Normal/Bloomington, School Psychology. The Department of Psychology seeks applicants for a tenure-track position at the Assistant Professor level in School Psychology. Area of specialization is open. This individual will work within the Department’s APA-accredited Ph.D. and NASP-approved Specialist (S.S.P.) School Psychology programs. The department has over 500 undergraduate majors, 170 graduate students, and 34 full-time faculty members. School Psychology faculty members are expected to supervise dissertations and theses in their area of specialization, provide practicum supervision, and teach courses at all levels for both graduate and undergraduate students. Qualifications for the position include a Ph.D. (or ABD with Ph.D. imminent) in School Psychology, openness to teaching at all levels based on department needs, and a record indicating the foundation of a strong program of research. The position begins August 16, 2013. Salary is competitive. Indiana State University, a Carnegie doctoral-research university, is located in the Bloomington-Normal metropolitan area, a community of 130,000 residents two hours from Chicago and St. Louis, offering varied cultural opportunities, good schools, and an affordable standard of living. Applicants must submit a cover letter, curriculum vita, statement of research interests, representative re/preprints, evidence of teaching skills, and at least three letters of recommendation by December 15, 2012. Submit dossiers to Dr. Jeffrey Kahn, School Psychology Search Committee Chair, Department of Psychology, Illinois State University, Campus Box 4620, Normal, IL 61790-4620. Materials may also be sent electronically to psysearch@ilstu.edu. Inquiries regarding the position can be directed to Dr. Kahn at psysearch@ilstu.edu or (309) 438-7939. For more information, visit www.psychology.illinoisstate.edu/school/EEO/AA Employer.

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