2014 GW NASP Public Policy Institute

Stacy Skalski, NASP Director of Professional Policy & Practice
Kelly Vaillancourt, NASP Director of Government Relations
Kathy Cowan, NASP Director of Communications
Laurie Klose, Government & Professional Relations

NASP Website: www.nasponline.org
Learning Objectives

- Through lecture, demonstration, and role playing, participants will:
  - Learn the basic components of the legislative process
  - Learn the basic grassroots advocacy strategies needed for effective legislative advocacy
  - Learn the key messages important to effective advocacy for school psychology
  - Learn about the NASP Policy and Advocacy Agendas and Messaging
Four Big “Take Aways” From Today

• You have the ability—and responsibility—to advocate for your role and services; doing so is good for kids.
• Advocacy and communication may feel outside your comfort zone; you can do it!
• There are some fairly basic skills and strategies that contribute to effective professional advocacy and communication.
• NASP has resources that can help.

www.nasponline.org/communications
“If you are not at the table, you are on the menu...”

--Author Unknown
The WHAT and WHY of Advocacy
What is Advocacy?

advocacy

Syllabification: adˈvoˌcaˌcy

public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy:

Example: ...their advocacy of traditional family values...

Source: Oxford Dictionary
What is ADVOCACY?, continued

• Advocacy is the "act of **pleading** or **arguing in favor of** something, such as a cause, idea, or policy." (American Heritage Dictionary, 2003)

• Key issues:
  » Pleading
  » Arguing
  » Taking a position for or against
Types of Advocacy Important to School Psychologists

• Professional
  » Helping people know who you are, what you do, and why it matters

• Legislative
  » Helping policy makers understand school psychology and infuse us and our services into law and regulation so that it helps students and schools
There are two general ways to advocate for your role at the local level:

- Direct advocacy
- Demonstrating value through action

Good communication is essential to both.
Levels of Advocacy

Micro Level:

• Advocating for individuals in a system
  » Examples: Speaking up for a student in a disciplinary hearing; helping a parent understand their son/daughter better
  » Focus: Practices

Macro Level:

• Advocating for groups in a system
  » Examples: Presenting to the school board in order to preserve school psych positions; working with an elected official to get a bill passed authorizing a new grant program, public policy
“Why do **YOU** need to advocate?”

- There are **535 voting members** of Congress.
- There are over **4.5 million teachers** who are members of the NEA and the AFT combined.
- If only 10% of NEA/AFT members contacted their elected officials, there would be an average of **421 contacts** per member of Congress.
- There are **25,000 NASP members**. If only 10% of NASP members contact their elected officials, there would be an average of **5 contacts** per member of Congress regarding the issues important to school psychologists.
- **Why should a Congressman care about our issues if he’s only going to have 5 of us knocking on his door?**
Influencing the Legislative Process: How A Bill Becomes a Law
How a Bill Becomes a Law

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyeJ55o3Ei0
How a Bill Becomes a Law

**New Bill**
- Introduced by member
- Numbered and printed
- Sent to committee

**Committee considers bill and ...**
- Recommends that bill pass (with or without changes)
- Recommends that bill does not pass
- Holds bill

If recommended favorably

**House of Representatives**
- Debates bill
- Amends bill
- Votes on bill

If bill passes, goes to

**Senate**
- Reviews bill using similar process
- Reaches agreement with House*

**Governor**
- Signs bill and it becomes a law
- Takes no action and bill becomes a law
- Vetoes bill, which dies unless overridden by 2/3 vote of General Assembly

* Both houses must agree to identical versions of the bill. If they can't, a conference committee may be set up with representatives from both houses to resolve disagreements.

Key Audiences: Legislative, Elected or Appointed

- **Elected Officials and Staff**
  - President, Governor, Mayor
  - Senators or Representatives
  - City Council
  - Education and Health Committee appointees

- **Agency administrators and Staff**
  - US or State Departments of Education, Health and Human Services
  - Secretary, Asst. Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Project Directors
  - Some State Superintendents

- **Elected Administrators and Executive Board Members**
  - Elected School Boards
  - Some District Superintendents
Key Influential Stakeholders

• **School Personnel: Decision Makers or People with Influence**
  » School Superintendent, Central Office Directors, Principals
  » Professional Colleagues and Allies

• **External Stakeholders with Influence**
  » Parents/Community Leaders
  » Professional Association Representatives
  » Lobbyists
  » Professional Advocates
  » Official (Celebrity) Spokespeople
  » Foundations
  » Media
Influencing Legislation

• “Friend” or build a relationship w/ an elected official or person of influence
  » Garner his/her support for your issues
  » Request that they sponsor/support a bill or position
  » Support (share expertise) in the development of a bill
  » Support other legislative priorities of the official

• Lobby for support of a bill by communicating with influential decision makers
  » Advocate/Educate co-sponsors and committee members (Face to face meetings, phone calls, emails, letters, materials, testimony)
  » Help garner bi-partisan support

• Activate grassroots networks to expand support for the bill
Grassroots Advocacy
What is Grassroots Advocacy?

• “Grassroots” refers to a network of people who care about something or desire to do something.

• They emerge from the “core” and provide a foundation for action.

• Grassroots efforts typically progress from bottom up vs. being driven from someone at the top.
8 Key Steps for Grassroots Advocacy

1. Identifying a Cause: What are the issues that are important to you?
2. Gathering information
3. Developing your Grassroots Network
4. Building external stakeholder relationships
5. Developing Key Messaging and “Ask fors”
6. Disseminating Information
7. Call to Action
8. Follow through and evaluation
Identifying Your Cause: Building your Advocacy Agenda
Advocacy starts with clear concise statements about what you believe...
Your Advocacy Identity

**Vision**: How do you want the world to be?

**Mission**: What is your role in making the world that way?

**Core Values**: What values form the center of your work?
VISION: How we want the world to be.

All children and youth thrive in school, at home, and throughout life.
MISSION:
Our role in making the world that way.

NASP empowers school psychologists by advancing effective services that improve students’ learning, behavior, and mental health.
CORE VALUES:
The center of what we do.

- Student focus
- Accountability
- Diversity
- Integrity
- Excellence
- Collaborative relationships
- Continuous improvement
- Visionary leadership
- Advocacy
Advocacy as a Core Value

Embracing Advocacy & Public Policy as a Core Value, Communique, 40 (7), pgs. 4-6
Setting a Legislative Agenda

• Generally, a professional association will set a legislative agenda by asking:
  » What current professional policies and practices are working in your district/state?
  » What would you like to see changed?
  » Are there adequate resources available?
  » Is there specific legislation in place that helps you meet your goals?
  » Is there legislation that prevents you from meeting your goals?
  » How does your vision, mission and core values support your legislative agenda?
Effective Legislative Agendas
Integrate Local, State and National Agendas

• What is of national importance?
  » e.g. school safety, mental health, education funding

• How does this align with issues important to your state departments of education, state school board, or local school districts?

• How can you use the national conversation to advance your state or local agendas?
Current National Agenda for School Psychologists

- Increasing the number of school psychologists professionals in the workforce
- Increasing access to child mental health services at school and in the community
- Promoting effective school discipline policies
- Improving the availability of behavioral/emotional/social/mental health supports for all students
- Promoting evidence based school safety, bullying prevention, and violence prevention policies
- Positioning school psychologists to provide broad based services and be considered integral to school accountability efforts
Elevator Chat #1

What are some issues important to you, your state association, or your local school district that are also being addressed at the national level?
Gathering Information
Gathering Information:
What you need to know to get started

• What
  » Your key messages and ask fors

• Why
  » The problem you want to solve and the costs of not solving it

• Who
  » Your champions (sponsors/co-sponsors)
  » Your allies (coalitions)
  » Your opponents (other advocates)
Assess Situation

- What are the driving priorities/challenges for your state/district?
- What is your objective?
- What are potential opportunities?
- What are the obstacles?
- What is your timeframe?
- What are your available resources?
- Who else cares about this issue?
- Where will your efforts be most effective?
- Why are school psychologists integral to resolving the issue(s)?

Identify and collect data that will help make your case!
So, you’re a school counselor, right?
Belgrade counselor named School Psychologist of Year

By Michael Tucker, staff writer | 0 comments

Around the Belgrade School District office, they use the words “finest” and “dedicated” along with “deserving” to describe school psychologist Marshall Prindle and his recent award.

“I’ve told him to his face since I’ve been here that he is one of the finest school psychologists I’ve ever worked with,” Curriculum Director Gary Kidd said. “I was thrilled when I found he won the School Psychologist of the Year award because he deserves it.”

Prindle won the annual award from the state Association of School Psychologists this weekend.
I'm a school PSYCHOLOGIST, not a counselor, DAMNIT!

Andrew Huggins
PAID INTERNSHIP Available for 2010-2011 school year. West of Atlanta about 45 minutes. Now interviewing prospective School Psychology Interns. Contact me via message for more info!!!
Yesterday at 5:25pm · Comment · Like · Report

Maryanne McFalls
Hi! I'm the (only) school psychologist in Bledsoe County, TN. It's a small, rural, mountainous county with high poverty. It's an interesting place to work and I work with some of the most awesome teachers and staff! My caseload is a killer though....
Sun at 7:12pm · Comment · Like · Report

Heather Adams
Has anyone gone through the School Neuropsychology Certification Program through Kids Inc.? I am very interested in this program and would love to know more about it from those who have done it.
February 18 at 7:05pm · Comment · Like · Report

Laura Jacobs Sanders
Love it! I just explained this 2 times today.
February 4 at 9:23pm · Comment · Like · Report

Andie Hill
Does anyone know of any current job openings, or know a good site for finding vacancies?
January 17 at 2:12pm · Comment · Like · Report

Vito Pisa
Hello!

My name is Franco Curlee and I am responsible for the United States Division of the new website www.interpsyche.com which registers Psychologists and Psychotherapists throughout the United States, offering you a valid opportunity to be visualized and known by your future clients in a clear and complete way to a vast number of visitors.
Happy New Year!!!
January 2 at 3:55am · Comment · Like · Report

Kent Elliott Allen
Sometimes I tell people that I am an educational psychologist. That communicates the idea that my profession applies psychology to education and aims to improve educational outcomes for children.

Susan Knight M...
Assess the Situation

• You need to understand and be able to communicate how your training and experience as a school psychologist makes YOU relevant.

  » What does a school psychologist do?
  » What makes you specially qualified to do this?
  » What makes you integral to addressing the needs and solutions to the issues?
This is a critical time to promote YOUR value!

• How do you meet the needs of students at-risk for school failure?
• How do you ensure safe school environments?
• How can you help students who live in families experiencing economic challenges?
• How can you help realign services to continue to support academic progress even with budget cuts?
• How can you contribute school climate?
• How can you help prevent barriers to learning?
• What is our role in supporting data based decision making?
• Who recognizes your role in student success?
• Are key decision-makers on your list?
Elevator Chat #2

Given the issues you identified as most critical to your state/district....

1. What can you (a school psychologist) do to address these issues?
2. How do you know that you are having a positive impact?
3. Why are you essential to addressing these issues?
Developing your Grassroots Network
Who is part of your grassroots advocacy network?

- Me
- My friend
- My colleague
- My principal
- My neighbor
- Oh yes...and my MOM!
Basic Things to Consider: WHO

- Who are your advocates?
- How are you organized?
- What qualities do good advocates have?
- Who leads your advocacy activities?
- What skills do your advocates need and how will you ensure they acquire them?
WHO:
Grassroots Advocates

• State associations need to have members who are willing to advocate on behalf of the profession and the children we serve

• SPAN: School Psychology Action Networks
  » NASP has one representative from each state who acts as a liaison for advocacy
  » States are encouraged to form their own SPAN

• Need: advocates, a message, a method for “calling people to action”, and actions to take
WHO:
The Legislative Committee

• Most state associations benefit from having a standing committee charged with organizational and professional advocacy

• The role of the committee is to help identify the focus for advocacy and keep the “rhythm of interaction” going for advocacy activities

• Committees typically include a chair and at least 2 regular members

• Most committees are looking for volunteers
WHO:
Basic Knowledge and Skills

- Basic understanding of the legislative process and public policy
- Basic knowledge of advocacy strategies
- Positive, enthusiastic and friendly
- Good at listening and communicating
- “Visionaries”
- Committed to act
- Responsible with good follow-through
- Able to represent the school psychologists with balanced perspectives
Building External Stakeholder Relationships
WHO:
Allies & External Stakeholders

• Remember: “The more the merrier”

• Coalitions
  » Topical
  • Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities
  • Coalition for Education Funding (CEF)
  • Safe Schools Partnership
  • Mental Health Liaison Group

  » Personnel Affiliations
  • National Alliance of Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (NASISP)
Examples of WHO: Allies & External Stakeholders

• Administrative
  » US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, State Administrators Assoc

• Technical Assistance
  » Center for Safe and Supportive Learning
  » National Center on Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

• Professional Relationships
  » IDEA Partnership
  » APA Board of Educational Affairs (BAE)
  » Column writing for Educational Leadership (NASSP)
  » NASP Graduate Educators/TSP: Trainers of SP
  » State Psych/School Counselor/Soc Worker Assoc
Identify Your Stakeholders

- Community Providers
- District Leaders
- Other Student Support Personnel
- Parents
- Teachers
- State Legislators
- Students
- State Education Groups
- State Education Leaders
- School Boards
- Community Providers
- Media
- Congress
Internal Versus External Communications & Advocacy

• Internal communications facilitates DOING.

• External communications facilitates SUPPORTING.

• They must work together.
Know Your Stakeholders’

Risks/Concerns

Goals/Hopes
Building Relationships

- Consider and reach out to key stakeholders and allies as genuine partners
- Emphasize the strengths of each group
- Mention the collaborative work with each other when talking publicly
- Keep the focus upon outcomes for kids and families
- Avoid whining, complaining, or competing with each other
Build Relationships

• Offer value
• Don’t wait until you need help
• Collaborate.
• Avoid “turf battles”
Elevator Chat #3

Who are the key external stakeholders (allies and opponents) that are influential “players” involved in the issues that your district or state is working on?
Developing Key Messaging and “Ask fors”
Three benefits to being intentional and planful about communications and advocacy:

1. Helps you target right audience with right strategies.
2. Helps to organize your thoughts, maintain consistent messages.
3. Easier for target audience to understand, remember, and act.
Key Message Goals

• Get their attention
• Connect to a priority
• Minimize suspicion/reactive rejection
• Engage discussion
• Be easy to remember

• Key messages can’t convey everything
The Kathy Cowan Interrogation Technique

• Imagine this....
  • You have a great idea about something related to school psychology.
  • You venture into Kathy Cowan’s office (NASP Director of Communications) and share your idea.

• Here’s the warm response you receive:
  ▪ So what?
  ▪ Who cares?
  ▪ Why does that matter?
  ▪ What’s the most important thing for people to know?
  ▪ What do you want people to do about it?
You have to identify the most important:

- Why
- What
- WOW!

...factors.

People generally only remember 3 things.
Effective Message Structure

Problem statement
Action/solution
Benefits

Easy for People to Grasp
**Complete Message Example**

- **Problem:** Student office referrals for interpersonal conflicts (student-student & student-teacher) are on the rise.
- **Action:** Examining student data will help identify settings and situations where conflicts are occurring and which students are having the most difficulty.
- **Benefit:** I can work with students to teach conflict resolution skills and work with teachers to respond to students in a way that de-escalates problems.
NASP Key Messages

NASP Communications Workgroup
• Develops key messages for school psychologists
• Revises annually to reflect priorities of the association
• Provides supporting materials and training resources on the website

http://www.nasponline.org/communications/index.aspx

Core Messages:

**School Psychologists: We can help.**

*We support teachers’ ability to teach and students’ ability to learn.*  
*We are a ready resource to help ALL students achieve their best.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the effort to raise achievement for ALL students, your school psychologist is a potentially untapped resource.</td>
<td>School psychologists help educators and families use data and evidenced-based approaches to improve teaching and learning.</td>
<td>Improve school outcomes by supporting your school psychologists’ comprehensive role.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **We are uniquely trained to identify, evaluate, connect, and provide supports for students’ academic, cognitive, social-emotional, and mental health problems.**
   - We help reduce behavior problems and improve classroom and school climate so that all students learn.

2. **We help schools successfully implement early intervention initiatives that promote learning environments.**
   - The NASP Practice Model delineates what services can reasonably be expected from school psychologists across 10 domains of practice, and the general framework within which services should be provided.

3. **We are experts in the use and evaluation of data to identify strategies that improve student, classroom, and school outcomes.**
   - Making the best use of school psychologists’ skills and expertise improves students’ access to the services that can help them stay engaged and successful in school.
Overarching Message

• What you want decision makers to understand:
  » We support teachers’ ability to teach and students’ ability to learn.
  » We are a ready resource to help all students achieve their best.

• What you want decision makers to do:
  » Tap your school psychologist as a resource to help all students learn.
Core Messages

1. In the effort to raise achievement for ALL students, your school psychologist is a potentially untapped resource.

2. School psychologists help educators and families use data and evidenced-based approaches to improve teaching and learning.

3. Improve school outcomes by supporting your school psychologists’ comprehensive role.
Elevator Chat #4

Considering the issues you previously identified, what are the 1-2 key messages that are important for each stakeholder group?

» Teachers
» School Admin
» Parents
Disseminating Information
Three Types of Strategic Communications & Advocacy

- Crisis Management
- Action Request
- Proactive Outreach Communications

- Crisis
- Targeted
- Universal

- Urgent/in the moment
- Resolving a problem
- Sharing information
Proactive Outreach
(You offer something. No strings.)

- Increase your visibility (with staff, parents, and administrators).
- Raise awareness and comfort level on an issue.
- Get more involved/be accessible.
- Improve collaboration.
- Disseminate useful information, especially in times of crisis.
- Create environment for decision-maker “buy-in.”
- **Strategies:** school newsletters, parent handouts, brown bag discussions, website content, “good to know” updates for district administrators/school boards.
Clinical Corner

Helping Children and Families Cope with the Economic Crisis

As a new school year begins, parents, educators, and children are full of anticipation for new learning experiences and the opportunity to develop new relationships. Unfortunately, this year will be especially stressful for many because of changes in our economy. Over recent months when we have turned on the car radio, watched television, or read newspapers, we have been flooded with news of the financial crisis in our country. Fairfax County is no exception as our communities have been impacted by soaring unemployment rates and home foreclosures. When we think about these issues, we tend to focus on adults. If job loss, losing a home, and not being able to pay utility bills are stressful for adults, imagine the confusion and feelings of uncertainty that children are experiencing.

The manner in which parents cope with their financial challenges will have a direct impact on their children. Monitoring your own level of stress is very important. If children ask questions about your situation, be honest, but limit how much information you share depending on the age level. Only state what is factual. Worrying about something that may not actually happen can increase a child’s anxieties. Even though your financial situation has changed, remind yourself and your children that the most important things in their lives are still there: your love and support. Reassure them that you are still a family and will get through this together as a family.

Signs of stress in children may include changes in physical, behavioral, and emotional functioning. Changes in eating and sleeping patterns, as well as physical complaints such as headaches and stomachaches may occur. Children may have difficulty focusing and paying attention because they are preoccupied with stressful issues. Changes in behavior such as becoming withdrawn and irritable may occur. These problems may contribute to a decline in academic performance in school.

(Continued on the Back Page)

My School Psychologist

NEWSLETTER FROM YOUR SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST


What is a School Psychologist?

School psychologists are mental health professionals who help children and adolescents overcome barriers to success in school, at home, and in life. We collaborate with school staff, parents, and other professionals to develop strategies that enhance learning environments and promote success for all students.

School psychologists provide a range of services including the following:

- Consultation with school staff and parents to provide effective interventions for learning and behavior problems.
- Individual and group counseling to help resolve student problems that interfere with school performance.
- Direct training to students in social skills, anger management, and other essential life skills.
- Identification of learning strengths and areas in need of intervention, and assessment of social-emotional development and school related adjustment.
- Behavior assessment leading to an intervention plan.
- Training to school staff and parents on a variety of educational and mental health issues.
- Assistance to families in accessing community resources.
- Implementation of programs that improve our schools and promote safe, effective learning environments.
School Psychology Awareness

Celebrated Annually in the 2nd Week in November

www.nasponline.org/communications
Action Request: Targeted
(You need *and* offer something.)

- **Need (examples)**
  - Protect role/positions.
  - Program support or implementation.
  - Reallocation of funding for new or expanded programs.

- **Offer (advocacy through action)**
  - Improved collaboration/realignment of support services.
  - Crisis support for students and teachers.
  - Participate in planning/program design.
  - Conduct needs assessment/data collection and evaluation.
  - Conduct in-service training.
A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools

The author organizations and cosigners of A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools represent the educators and community partners who work day in and day out to keep our children safe, ensure their well-being, and promote learning. The partnership between our organizations seeks to reinforce the interdisciplinary, collaborative, and cohesive approach that is required to create and sustain genuinely safe, supportive schools that meet the needs of the whole child.

Our joint statement outlines evidence-based policies and practices for improving school safety and increasing access to mental health supports for children and youth. Efforts to improve school climate, safety, and learning are not separate endeavors and must be designed, funded, and implemented as a comprehensive school-wide approach. We urge policy leaders to support this guidance to shape meaningful policies that will genuinely equip America’s schools to educate and safeguard our children over the long term.

A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools

Framework Press Release

NASP Contacts
Kathy Cowan, Director of Communications, kcowan@nasweb.org
Eric Rossen, Director of Professional Development and Standards eroissen@nasweb.org
Kelly Vaillancourt, Director of Government Relations, kvaillancourt@nasweb.org
Crisis Management Goals

- **Professional crisis**
  - proposed cuts to school psychologist positions

- **Legislative crisis**
  - change in Medicaid rules excluding SPs from billing

- **Public relations crisis**
  - bad press coverage, editorial

- **Crisis involving school, district, or community**
  - school shooting, suicides, natural disasters, etc.

- **Integrated part of response; rapid response; regular communications with “home base”; designated spokesperson; media (proactive, provide experts, materials, op-eds).**
Resources Related to Sandy Hook & School Safety

On behalf of our 25,000 members, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) joins the nation in expressing our sadness and shock at the horrific events at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT. Our thoughts and prayers go out to everyone affected by this heartbreaking tragedy. Read our full statement.

Our challenge as a country is to enact evidence-based policies and practices that will continue to reinforce school safety, student wellness, and learning. NASP offers the following guidelines and resources for educators, families and policymakers.

Read NASP's Comprehensive School Safety Recommendations.

Read our statement NASP Cautions Against Increased Armed Security to Address School Safety.

Read our statement NASP Calls for Comprehensive School Safety Policies.

Read our statement Stigmatizing Mental Health and Developmental Disorders is Harmful.

Additional Resources

- Conducting Crisis Exercises and Drills: Guidelines for Schools
- Research on School Security: The Impact of Security Measures on Students
- Youth Gun Violence Fact Sheet
- Tips for Teachers and Parents Following School and Community Violence
  A brief PowerPoint presentation on key talking points.
- Helping Children Cope With Crisis: Care for Caregivers
- Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers
Make It Easy for People

- Lead with the point (improved outcomes).
- Keep students at the center.
- Be relevant (know your audience).
- Be concise.
- Use audience appropriate language.
- Avoid acronyms/technical language.
- Use bullets to the extent possible.
- Resonate.
Resonate

• Appeal to emotion as well as intellect.
• Use “social math,” not just statistics.
• Put a “face” on the issue. Tell stories, not just facts.
• Be a good listener.
• Need a clear “call to action”
  » Don’t allow (or expect) your target audience to guess what you need
… Personal Stories

“A student who had been bullied once asked me, “Do you know what it is like to feel that you are hated by everyone the first day you enter kindergarten?” This young man had composed a journal filled with his dark and sad reflections on life. The last page was filled with one phrase repeated again and again: “I decide who lives and who dies.” Luckily, there is good news with this young man. Through significant emotional support and alternative strategies for education, he graduated last year. He hugged me on graduation day, thanking me for believing in him. He told me that his greatest joy was not in graduating, but in the fact that his mother hugged him, telling him how proud she felt.”

--John Kelly, U.S. Senate Briefing Testimony, 2006
Using Social Media

- Quick way to engage grassroots
- Engage in dialogue with diverse groups
- Share resources
- Stay connected with other organizations
- Forge new partnerships
- Identify potential allies
Tips for Using Facebook

- Use your brand
- Post regularly
- Pose a Question
- Link to valuable resources
- Keep posts short and to the point
Tips for Using Twitter

• Use hashtags (#)

• Tweet directly to those you wish to influence

• “Live tweet”

• Share resources

• Host Twitter Town Halls
“Tell Your Story” Activity

- Have you presented to your school board on an issue (e.g. the NASP Practice Model?)
- Have you offered a PREPaRE training in your school district?
- Do you provide a newsletter column in your school or district newspaper about school psychology?
- Have you ever agreed to do a media interview related to a story impacting school psychologists?

Considering these examples above…
- What is an example of a strategic communication strategy/activity (any level) that you have utilized in your work?
- What communication strategy could you do to address the issue(s) you identified previously?
Call to Action
# Action Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal #1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Who is responsible?</th>
<th>Resources Needed</th>
<th>Allied Groups</th>
<th>Anticipated Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grassroots Methods to Influence Legislation

• Face to Face Meeting with official or staff
  » Organize a “Hill Day”

• Attend a “town hall” meeting

• Write a Letter or Email
  » Organize a letter writing campaign

• Make a phone call

• Sponsor a briefing

• Testifying before a committee
  » Oral or Written
Tips for Written Communications

• Professional style
• State that you are a constituent or employee
• Start with your “ask for” (e.g. support or opposition to specific policy)
• Develop with 2-3 supporting points
• Offer to assist future efforts
• Thank them for their time & service
Working With Elected Officials

• Prepare talking points and distribute handout/packet
• Try to make a personal connection
• **Listen. Listen. Listen!** Find out what issues your official is concerned about, and offer to help if appropriate.
• Personalize your Story/Put a “face” on every issue
• Invite elected officials to visit your school (Be sure and get permission.)
• Offer to assist in writing and reviewing proposed testimony
• Recognize the accomplishments of elected officials
• Thank them for their time and service.
Influencing Elected Officials

• Organize and conduct communication/advocacy campaigns
• Organize group advocacy days (e.g., "Day at the Capital“, school board presentations) with officials
• Prepare sample policy (legislation, school board policies, etc.)
• Work closely with elected officials who sponsor your bills from bill development to introduction and passage. Be a resource!
• Utilize the NASP Advocacy in Action Center
Tips for Meetings With Officials

• *In coordination with your state association or advocacy leadership team*, request a meeting with your officials working in your state’s general assembly or school board

• Set up meetings by email and phone

• Consider the state legislative or school calendar

• Don’t be discouraged if you are only able to get a meeting with an aide

• Make visits to local and state offices

• Town hall meetings or other public meetings
Tips for Calling Elected Officials

• Calling congressional legislators or state administrators can take as little as one minute and can have greater impact than email.

• Know what you are going to say (your message) in advance. Be brief, clear, and concise.

• Identify your federal elected officials at http://capwiz.com/naspweb/dbq/official.

• Visit your state’s general assembly website or Department of Education to find contact information for local officials (in online PPI downloadable materials).
Tips for Testifying on Behalf of a Bill or Policy

• Check agenda and rules for presenting at public meetings
• Coordinate testimony with your state association or leadership team
• Arrive at designated meeting room early before the hearing/meeting begins. On-site sign-up may be required.
• You will typically have 3-5 minutes to offer oral comment.
• Typically, written testimony may be submitted and may be more lengthy than oral.
Follow Through and Evaluation
Follow Through

• Send a “thank you” note
• Send any requested materials
• After a little time passes, follow up with a “can I help you with anything”....“has there been any progress” message
• Periodically weigh in on related issues with an email to your contact person
• Always respond to emails received even if you don’t know the answer and need to check with others
Evaluate Your Advocacy Effectiveness

• Assess your advocacy activities
  » Frequency of advocacy outreach
  » How many other people joined your cause? (Social Media)
  » Number of co-sponsors on a bill
  » Did the bill get a hearing?
  » Will it be reintroduced if it wasn’t acted upon this year?

• Communicate your advocacy efforts to your state professional association leaders

• Provide stories about your advocacy efforts to your colleagues...inspire them to action!
  » Communique, “Advocacy in Action” Column
  » State newsletter articles
Evaluate your Campaigns

- Informational material development and distribution
- Google it!
- Extent in which your material is cited by others
- Social Media Campaigns
REMEMBER.....
Effective communication & advocacy are responsive to:

Emerging and priority situations

Knowledge needs of individual audiences
Putting Advocacy into Action
Role Playing a Capitol Hill Visit

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9CgM6iuKr6s
Is Advocacy for YOU?
Where do YOU go from here?

1. Become an active member of your state’s government relations committee; participate in letter writing campaigns, “meet and greets”, and capital hill day; develop relationships.

2. Review NASP Advocacy website materials regularly and send letters through the Advocacy Action network.

3. Meet with your influential school administrators and share with them the NASP Practice Model.

4. Offer to participate on an accountability and school reform committees. Emphasize the valuable contributions that school psychologists can make.
Where do YOU go from here?, continued

5. Utilize at least one proactive communication strategy that will help my school/state understand the value of school psychologists.

6. Invest energy and time embracing the roles articulated in the NASP Practice Model.

7. Embrace Advocacy as a Core Value!
Advocacy & Communication Tools and Resources
The NASP GPR Committee promotes professional practices, legislation, and policies that support the educational, health, and mental health needs of children and families, and the profession of school psychology.
NASP Advocacy Efforts Depend on YOU! NASP needs….

- Individuals who are willing to build relationships and advocate with state and local administrators and elected officials.
- Strong and effective relationships among individual advocates, local SP organizations, state leaders, SPAN contacts, NASP GPR committee members and NASP Leadership and Staff.
- Coalitions of state leaders willing to collaboratively work towards shared interests and agendas.
Developing Advocacy Skills

• NASP Online workshops
  » Promoting and Preserving Your Role and Services to Improve Student Outcomes
    • http://nasp.inreachce.com/Search?q=advocacy
  » NASP Practice Model Webinar

• GW/NASP Annual Public Policy Institute
  » http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/professional-development.aspx

• GPR State Trainings
  » http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/gpr.aspx
Developing Advocacy Skills, continued

• NASP Annual Convention and Summer Conferences
• Annual state conference sessions and Advocacy Action Center letter writing opportunities
• Opportunities to use advocacy skills at state conferences, capitol hill day experiences, legislative breakfasts, etc.
• Collaborative advocacy trainings offered in the state with other professional organizations or universities
NASP Materials and Resources

NASP Communications Resources:
http://www.nasponline.org/communications/index.aspx

NASP Advocacy Page:

NASP Research Summaries:
http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/research.aspx

NASP Materials for Families and Educators:
http://www.nasponline.org/families/index.aspx
Examples of Best Materials

• What is a School Psychologist brochure
  » http://www.nasponline.org/resources/freepubs.aspx

• NASP Practice Model Website
  » http://www.nasponline.org/standards/practice-model/

• School Psychologists: Improving School and Student Outcomes (Research to Policy & Practice Summary)
  » http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/SP_Improving_Student_School_Outcomes_Final.pdf

• School Psychologists: A More Valuable Resource
  » http://www.nasponline.org/resources/principals/PLNov10_schoolpsyhc.pdf

• Embracing Advocacy & Public Policy as a Core Value

• What Makes a School Psychologist a School Psychologist?
NASP Advocacy Roadmap: Promoting and Preserving School Psychology

http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/psychservice sroadmap.aspx

- Contains resources that you can use to assess risk and determine a course of action that promotes school psychology. Includes tools and specific examples of professional advocacy in action.
NASP Practice Model Assessments

• **Self-Assessments**
  » assist individuals in evaluating their own professional development needs relative to the 10 domains of practice
  » versions for supervisors, graduates educators and students as well

• **State Assessment**
  » [http://www.nasponline.org/standards/practice-model/Model_State_Assessment.doc](http://www.nasponline.org/standards/practice-model/Model_State_Assessment.doc)
  » Examines current roles of SPs in state, credentialing practices, promotion of SP practices
Just the tip of the iceberg...
To explore further, contact:

Stacy Skalski, Director of Professional Policy & Practice
sskalski@naswpweb.org
Kelly Vaillancourt, Director of Government Relations
kvaillancourt@naswpweb.org
Kathy Cowan, Director of Communications
kcowan@naswpweb.org

Government & Professional Relations (GPR):
Katie Eklund, GPR Committee, Chair,
keklund@email.arizona.edu
Nathan von de Embse, GPR Co-Chair,
nate.vonderembse@gmail.com

Assistance to States (ATS):
Jennifer Kitson, Assistance to States, Chair
jkitson@eaglecom.net
Michelle Malvey, Assistance to States, Co-Chair
What do Gumby and you have in common?
Gumby’s Qualities

• Flexible
• Helpful
• Optimistic—all is possible
• Honest and pure
• Adventurous
• Fearless
• Loving
• Everybody’s friend
• Gumby represents the good in all of us.

—Art Clokey, Gumby’s creator, back of the Gumby package
School Psychologists’ Qualities

- Flexible
- Helpful
- Optimistic—all is possible
- Honest and ethical
- Resourceful
- Highly skilled
- Dedicated
- Caring
- Every child’s advocate
- School psychologists see the good in all of us.

Hi, what can I do to help?

Mr. Gumby, EdS, NCSP, School Psychologist
Overarching Message

• What you want decision makers to understand:
  » We are a ready resource to help all students achieve their best.

• What you want decision makers to do:
  » Tap your school psychologist as a resource to help all students learn.
See the Gumby in you!
We do!
...And help the world see the Gumby in you, too.

Now is the time for Advocacy in Action!

"I never worry about action, but only inaction."

Winston Churchill
Acknowledgements

Thanks to the many Government and Professional Relations Committee and Communications Committee members that contributed content to this presentation.

Also thanks to other NASP leaders and staff:

- Kathy Minke
- Rhonda Armistead
- Kathy Cowan
- Eric Rossen
Final Questions or Comments?