Professional Advocacy

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Stacy Skalski, NASP Director of Professional Policy & Practice
Kelly Vaillancourt, NASP Director of Government Relations
Kathy Cowan, NASP Director of Communications
Katie Eklund, Government & Professional Relations Chair
Topics

• The What & Why of Advocacy
• Influencing the Legislative Process
• Grassroots Advocacy
  – Identifying Your Cause
  – Creating Allies
  – Developing Key Messages and “Ask Fors”
  – Disseminating Information and Taking Action
• Call to Action
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.
“If you are not at the table, you are on the menu…”

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

• 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
Two General Ways to Advocate at the Local Level

• Direct advocacy
• Demonstrating value through action

Good communication is essential to both.
“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=tyeJ55o3El0
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.

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?
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?
Key Influential Players and Stakeholders

- **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

- **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
  - Media
Influencing Legislation

• “Friend” or build relationships w/ influential players and stakeholders
  – 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 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
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 for”
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…

“Embracing Advocacy & Public Policy as a Core Value”, Communique, 40 (7), pgs. 4-6
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
Current National Agenda for School Psychologists

• Increase the number of school psychologist professionals in the workforce
• Increase access to school based mental health services and collaboration with community professionals
• Promote effective school discipline policies
• Improve the availability comprehensive learning supports for all students
• Promote policies that create safe and supportive school environments for all students.
• Position school psychologists to provide broad based services and to be considered integral to school accountability efforts
NASP Priorities 3-5 Years

• **School Mental Health Services**
  (Advancing the role of school psychologists as mental and behavioral health providers.)

• **NASP Practice Model**
  (Expanding implementation of the NASP Practice Model; release of the *Implementation Guide*.)

• **Shortages in School Psychology**
  (Addressing training and outreach to ensure adequate numbers of school psychologists and school psychologist positions.)

• **Leadership Development**
  (Developing school psychologists’ leadership skills at the local, state and national levels.)
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 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?
Belgrade counselor named School Psychologist of Year

Posted: Tuesday, October 26, 2010 5:30 pm

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 psychologist 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 during the group’s conference held in Bozeman, special services director Laurie Salo said in e-mail Monday.

“He is very deserving of the award,” she said.

The award winner said he started working for Belgrade...
Elevator Chat

You are on an elevator and strike up a conversation with another passenger after they notice your nametag identifying you as a school psychologist. They ask…

“\textit{What kind of trauma issues do you see that impact your students’ learning and what do you do to help?}”

You have one minute to respond.
Creating Allies

(Your grassroots network and strategic relationships.)
Basic Things to Consider: WHO

• What qualities should good advocates possess?
• How can you find and organize advocates?
• Who will lead your advocacy activities?
• What skills do your advocates need and how will you ensure they acquire them?
WHO: Grassroots Advocates

• Schools, districts, local and state associations need to have people willing to advocate on behalf of the profession and the children we serve

• SPAN (School Psychology Action Network) Coordinator/State Track Teams:
  – Collaborative relationships between NASP and State Associations about state-level and national advocacy priorities
  – States are encouraged to form their own SPAN

• Need: advocates, a message, a method for “calling people to action”, and actions to take
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
Who are your stakeholders, allies, opponents?

- Principals
- Other Student Support Personnel
- District Leaders
- Teachers
- Parents
- Students
- State Legislators
- State Education Groups
- State Education Leaders
- Community Providers
- Administration
- School Boards
- Media
- Congress
WHO: Allies & External Stakeholders

Coalitions (Topical/and or professional)
- Coalition for Education Funding (CEF)
- National Safe Schools Partnership
- National Alliance of Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (NASISP)

State/Federal Agencies
- Department of Education, HHS, Office of Special Education Programs, Medicaid etc.

Technical Assistance Centers
- National Center for Safe and Supportive Learning
- National Center for PBIS

Strategic Professional Relationships
- Superintendent, principals, school counselors, PTA
- IDEA partnership
Internal Versus External Communications & Advocacy

• Internal communications facilitates DOING.
• External communications facilitates SUPPORTING.
• They must work together.
Build Relationships

• Offer value
• Don’t wait until you need help
• Collaborate
• Avoid “turf battles”
Hallway Conference

What 2 steps can you take to develop strategic relationships to create more trauma sensitive schools and with whom?
Developing Key Messages and “Ask-Fors”
Know Your Stakeholders’

Risks/Concerns

Goals/Hopes
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.

Why does this matter to them?
Generally 3 Core Messages is Optimal

(It’s hard for people to remember more than 3 things at a time.)
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.

1. In the effort to raise achievement for ALL students, your school psychologist is a potentially untapped resource.
   - 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. School psychologists help educators and families use data and evidenced-based approaches to improve teaching and learning.
   - We are experts in the use and evaluation of data to identify strategies that improve student, classroom, and school outcomes.
   - We help administrators effectively identify, collect and interpret the most meaningful data, and support accountability and school

3. Improve school outcomes by supporting your school psychologists’ comprehensive role.
   - 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.
   - Making the best use of school psychologists’ skills and expertise

The purpose of the Maryland School Psychologists’ Association:

**Our Vision**
All students will thrive in school, at home, and throughout their lives.

**Our Mission**
MSPA promotes and advocates for best practices in school psychology to improve learning, behavior, and mental health for all students, families, and schools.

MSPA partners with professional organizations, family advocacy groups, and state agencies on behalf of students and families.

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Maryland School Psychologists’ Association: Helping All Students Thrive

**Our Vision:**
All students will thrive in school, at home, and throughout their lives.

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MSPA promotes and advocates for best practices in school psychology to improve learning, behavior, and mental health for all students, families, and schools.

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**MSPA Works to Enhance Collaboration:**
MSPA collaborates with professional organizations, family advocacy groups, and state agencies on behalf of students and families.

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**About MSPA:**
- Celebrating more than 50 years of providing services to children and their families.
- Over 600 members strong.
- Representing over 75% of School Psychologists employed by the Public School Systems in Maryland.
How do School Psychologists make a difference in schools?

All children and adolescents face problems from time to time. They may:

- Feel afraid to go to school
- Have difficulty organizing their time efficiently
- Lack effective study skills
- Fall behind in their school work
- Lack self-discipline
- Worry about family matters such as divorce and death
- Feel depressed or anxious
- Experiment with drugs and alcohol
- Think about suicide
- Worry about their sexuality
- Face difficult situations, such as applying to college, getting a job, or quitting school
- Question their aptitudes and abilities

School psychologists help children, parents, teachers, and members of the community understand and resolve these problems.

How do School Psychologists Make a Difference in Schools?

School psychologists are uniquely trained to identify, evaluate, connect, and provide supports for students’ academic, cognitive, social/emotional, and mental health problems.

School psychologists work with students to:

- Provide counseling, instruction, and mentoring to student’s struggling with social, emotional, and behavioral problems.
- Increase achievement by assessing barriers to learning and determining the best strategies to improve learning.

School psychologists work with families to:

- Identify and address learning and behavior problems that interfere with school success.
- Evaluate eligibility for special education services.
- Teach parenting skills and enhance home-school collaboration.

School psychologists work with teachers to:

- Identify and resolve academic barriers to learning.
- Design & implement academic and behavioral interventions.
- Motivate all students to engage in learning.

School psychologists work with administrators to:

- Collect and analyze data related to school improvement, student outcomes, and accountability requirements.
- Implement school-wide prevention programs to help maintain positive school climate.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why Hire a School Psychologist?</th>
<th>School Psychologist</th>
<th>Psychometrist</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete Functional Behavior Assessments</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Develop and monitor Positive Behavior Intervention Plans</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Counseling/Therapy/Consultation with School Counselors</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Crisis Interventions</td>
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<td>Interpret Psychiatric Reports &amp; Diagnoses</td>
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<td>Monitor Mental Health Issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suicide Assessments</td>
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<td>Parent Education &amp; Collaboration</td>
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<td>Develop and monitor Academic &amp; Behavior Interventions</td>
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<td>Evaluate Academic Skills</td>
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<td>Evaluate IQ/Cognitive</td>
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<td>Evaluate Perceptual Processing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluate Adaptive Behavior</td>
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<td>Identify &amp; Consult for Intellectual Disability (ID)</td>
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<td>Identify &amp; Consult for Specific Learning Disability (SLD)</td>
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<td>Establish Eligibility for Other Health Impairment with medical documentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establish Eligibility for Visual and Hearing Impairments with medical documentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify &amp; Consult for Emotional Disturbance</td>
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<td>Identify &amp; Consult for ODD/Conduct Disorders</td>
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<td>Identify &amp; Consult for Autism/Asperger’s</td>
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<td>Identify &amp; Consult for Attention Deficit Disorder (ADHD)</td>
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<td>Identify &amp; Consult for Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify &amp; Consult for Mental/Physical Issues</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Education Determination/Eligibility Paperwork (RED &amp; MEEGS)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conduct Parent Meetings (Review of Existing Data &amp; SPED Eligibility)</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervise School Psychologists &amp; Psychometrists</td>
<td>✓</td>
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Effective Message Structure

- Problem statement
- Action/solution
- Benefits

- Benefit: Easy for People to Grasp
- Problem
- Action
Chronic trauma is putting many of our students at risk and kids who are traumatized can’t focus.

- **Problem:** 53% of our students experience chronic trauma, particularly related to poverty and community violence. This is contributing to conflicts and truancy.

- **Action:** I’ve investigated strategies we can take to identify these students and help meet their needs. Specifically I think we need to employ the XXX screening tool and invest in teacher training.

- **Action:** I can work with students to teach self-regulation and SEL skills. I can work with teachers to respond to students in a way that de-escalates problems and conveys a sense of safety and caring.

- **Benefit:** The whole school will be better able to help our students feel supported and able to learn.
“The teachers tell me I’m smart. They say I’m just not trying.”

The Problem

1. Many students have had traumatic experiences.
2. Trauma can impact learning, behavior and relationships at school.

The Solution

3. Trauma-sensitive schools help children feel safe to learn.

How We Get There

4. Trauma sensitivity requires a whole school effort.
5. Helping traumatized children learn should be a major focus of education reform.

WELCOME VIDEO
Director Susan Cole describes the work of the Trauma
Make It Easy for People

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

• Appeal to emotion as well as intellect.
• Put a “face” on the issue. Be a good storyteller.
• Use data but use “social math,” not just statistics, when possible.
• Be a good listener.
• Need a clear “call to action”
  – Don’t allow (or expect) your target audience to guess what you need
Show Them the Data

• Educational Outcome Data
  o State/District/Building

• Demographic Risk Data
  o Kids Count http://datacenter.kidscount.org/

• Research or Survey Data
  o YRBSS
    http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm
  o School Climate
  o Scholarly Research

• Office of Civil Rights Data http://ocrdata.ed.gov/
# Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance

Percentage of students responding regarding behavior during 12 months preceding survey:

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<th>YRBSS 2003*</th>
<th>Middle School Survey 2003**</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Seriously considered attempting suicide</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>20.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Made a specific plan</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>13.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Made an attempt</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Made an attempt requiring medical attention</td>
<td>2.9</td>
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Lieberman, Poland & Cassel, 2006
… “Social Math”

• For every 100-200 youth that attempt suicide, one child succeeds.
• For every three youths who attempt suicide, one goes to the hospital and two go to school.
What Can Be Done About School Shootings? A Review of the Evidence
Randy Borum, Dewey G. Cornell, William Modzeleski, and Shane R. Jimerson

“Any given school can expect to experience a student homicide about once every 6,000 years.”

125,000 schools ÷ 21 deaths/year

Courtesy Dewey Cornell
During the 2010/2011 school year, the odds of a student (age 5-18) being the victim of a homicide at school was the equivalent of being struck by lightning 5 times.

“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
Time for Staff Lounge Problem Solving

Consider the trauma issue you have identified. What are the 3 key messages most important for each stakeholder group?
- Elected officials
- School leaders
- Families
Disseminating Information and Taking Action
Three Types of Strategic Communications & Advocacy

- **Crisis Management**
- **Action Request**
- **Proactive Outreach Communications**
- **Universal**
- **Targeted**
- **Crisis**

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.
I loved school when I was little. I loved it so much I played “school” on the weekends. I work with kids who hate school. This is my blog.

FRIDAY, JULY 3, 2015

5 Things for School Psychologists to Do this Summer
The Role of Schools in Supporting Traumatized Students

By Eric Rossen and Katherine Cowan

Childhood trauma is among the most relevant and significant psychosocial factors affecting education today (Blaustein, 2013). The effects of those traumas are far reaching, with the potential to influence students, families, educators, and the overall school culture. Exposure to adverse experiences and childhood traumas poses a significant risk to student learning and mental health and is far more pervasive than previously thought. Whether the trauma is the result of chronic adverse experiences (e.g., neglect) or an acute crisis event (e.g., a tornado), schools play a crucial and unique role in mitigating the effects of adversity, stress, and trauma.

Schools are well-suited to offer an ongoing presence of trained, caring, stable adults; a learning environment that can naturally support and develop resilience and coping skills; and partnerships with families and community providers to help provide comprehensive supports.

Addressing trauma and its related issues is essential to the mission and purpose of schools: learning. Traumatized students are often focused on survival, which hampers their ability to learn, socialize, and develop the skills needed to thrive. Failure to provide adequate infrastructure to support students with trauma histories can undermine academic and social-emotional development.
Improving mental health in schools

Raising awareness of the many children who come to school with mental health issues and then treating them appropriately is the best way to ensure they achieve their potential in school and life.

By Eric Rossen and Katherine C. Cowan

“My son's access to in-school counseling has been our door to hope that Cameron will have a successful life at home and at school.”

—Parent statement on the Mental Health in Schools Act (Franken, 2013).

Every school has students who are struggling with mental health problems. Many face temporary challenges like conflicts with peers, divorce, deployment, or a death in the family. Some are dealing with chronic stressors that can cause psychological harm including poverty, community violence, homelessness, or abuse. And still others are coping with emerging or chronic mental illness such as depression, generalized anxiety disorder, and emotional-behavioral disorders.

Students struggling emotionally or psychologically cannot thrive or learn to their potential. Addressing student mental health is a prerequisite to learning and achievement, not an add-on or extracurricular luxury. In most cases, mental health problems don't simply go away on their own but often become worse if they are not identified or if they are left untreated. The near-term consequences range from quiet misery and academic struggles to more serious behavior and safety risks. The long-term consequences contribute to our most intractable problems, including unemployment, civil disengagement, incarceration, substance abuse, lost productivity, and poor health (World Health Organization, 2003).

Raising awareness of the need for improved school-based mental health services is a central focus of our work at the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). Our 25,000 members, like other school-employed mental health professionals — counselors, social workers and nurses — work side-by-side with teachers and administrators to address the learning, behavioral, and mental health needs of students. Schools are both ground zero for the effects of mental health problems in children and youth and critical players in providing support.
Join the Conversation

POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

CONNECTEDNESS  SAFETY  RESPECT  SUPPORT

ALL STUDENTS THRIVE

Tell us how you connectthedots to help them thrive in school, at home, and in life @nasponline.
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.
Active Shooter Training Guidance

- Delineates risks, multi-level options of training and critical role of MH.
- Outlines developmental considerations.
- Emphasizes EXTREME caution when doing full-scale drills.
- Recognizes local decision-making.

Burrillville High School, RI
The Little School Psychologist That Could

I think I can, I think I can, I think I can....
Creating Systems Change, High School

School psych noticed increase in student mental health problems

Communicated need to the principal, using data,

Based on research, SP recommended school-wide social-emotional screening

Identified obstacles/challenges to implementation

Established a representative implementation team

Principal advocated with the superintendent

Used data to communicate needs/benefits with staff.

Communicated informally, formally in staff meetings, and through multiple methods to establish buy in (particularly teachers) with full support of implementation team and school leadership.
Four-Year Longitudinal Data

Percentage of students reporting at least one adult connection in school

Pristawa, K. & Walden-Doppke, M., 2014
Correlations across Years 1, 2 & 3 at School A and Year 3 at School B  

(* p < .01)
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).

- Culturally Competent Crisis Response Resources
  - Dealing with a Death in School
  - Helping Children Cope With Crisis: Care for Caregivers
  - Memorials/Activities/Rituals Following Traumatic Events - Suggestions for Schools
  - Student Perpetrators of School Violence—Brief Facts and Tips

Media and Crisis
  - Responsible Media Coverage of Crisis Events Impacting Children
  - How to Handle The Media During A Crisis

Trauma
  - Coalition to Support Grieving Children: Resources for Educators and School Professionals
  - The Role of Schools in Supporting Traumatized Students (Principal's Research Review)
  - Recommended Books for Children Coping With Loss or Trauma
  - How Children Cope With Trauma and Ongoing Threat: The BASIC Ph Model
  - Identifying Seriously Traumatized Children - Tips for Parents and Educators
  - Managing Strong Emotional Reactions to Traumatic Events: Tips for Parents and Teachers

Natural Disasters
  - Responding to Natural Disasters - Helping Children and Families: Information for School Crisis Teams
  - Helping Children After a Natural Disaster: Information for Parents and Teachers
  - Global Disasters: Helping Children Cope
  - Helping Children After a Wildfire: Tips for Parents and Teachers
  - New Schools for Students With Disabilities: Tips for Families Who Have Been Relocated
  - Relocated Students With Special Needs: Recommendations for Receiving Schools
Letter: Schools Need Psychologists

Published: Friday, July 10, 2015 at 12:01 a.m.
Last Modified: Thursday, July 9, 2015 at 10:04 p.m.

I am writing to express my concern about a recent decision made by Polk County Public Schools to eliminate eight school psychologist positions for the coming school year. As a retired supervisor of school psychologists in our district, I am very much aware of the critical services they deliver.

School psychologists provide students with individual and group counseling, data collection, and more, among its many roles. Eliminating these positions will undoubtedly have a negative impact on our students.
Communication Matters

Nonessential School Funding? The Story Behind Our Opinion Piece

By Kathleen Rahn, Elizabeth Kay Danielson & Libby Nellsch

At the NASP convention in Orlando, Elizabeth Danielson (Arizona Association of School Psychologists [AASP] president) and Kathleen Rahn (Arizona NASP School Psychology Action Network representative) spoke to many school psychologists about the proposed funding cuts to public education in Arizona, including the governor's proposal that targeted spending outside of the classroom. Elizabeth attended NASP Assistance to States meetings, and Kathleen attended the NASP Regional Leadership meeting, both of which stressed advocacy for the role of school psychologists in multitiered systems of supports.

Last year, Kathleen and Libby Nellsch, a member of the AASP child and family advocacy committee, attended the Arizona Business and Education Coalition Conference on behalf of AASP. In discussions about school funding, business leaders pointed out that the language of economic development and the language of education are often different. They suggested that educators are often ineffective in the way we communicate, which led Libby and Kathleen to have conversations about effective ways to communicate outside of the educator platform.

Governor Doug Ducey proposed that education funding be “increased,” largely by moving noninstructional funds to support “classroom instruction.” In response, a number of Arizona school superintendents stepped up to challenge his assertion that this could be called a funding increase. Mesa Public Schools is the largest school district in the state, and its superintendent, Dr. Michael Cowan, sent a letter to all district employees and parents. In retaliation for his public stance, Dr. Cowan was targeted in a robocall asking Mesa residents to call him to task. The funding source for this call was a
The Basics to Remember

- Follow the identified path
- Find allies
- Stick together
- Tap your strengths
- Get to know the man behind the curtain
- (And always be prepared for flying monkeys)
What’s your story?

Once upon a time there was a Brave School Psychologist...
Call to Action
## ADVOCACY ACTION PLAN

State:
Planning Participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal:</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Who’s Responsible?</th>
<th>Resources Needed</th>
<th>Allied Groups</th>
<th>Anticipated Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1.1 Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>Activity 1.2 Description</td>
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</table>

Action Plan Review Date/ Progress Summary:
Grassroots Methods for Advocacy

• Face to Face Meetings
• Attend town hall meetings and advisory groups
• Write a letter or email
• Make a phone call
• Sponsor a briefing or informational session
• Share print materials, handouts, brochures
• Testify before a committee or board (Oral and Written)
Lessons from Jimmy

• Never assume that someone will not care or be supportive of your issue.
• Always take the time to inform others, ask for support, and offer to be a resource.
• Always thank people for their time (in person and in writing.)
Do Not Reinvent the Wheel.

NASP has resources that can help.
Foundational NASP Documents

• Standards, Ethics, and Practice Model
• Position Papers (Official NASP policy)
• A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools
• A Framework for School-Wide Bullying Prevention and Safety
NASP White Paper: School Psychologists Mental and Behavioral Health Role

• School psychologists are qualified MBH providers
• NASP training and practice standards encompass MBH services
• School psychologists are recognized in the ACA and NCLB as qualified providers

NASP Position Statement: School Violence Prevention

- Emphasizes prevention and creating positive school climates
- Recognizes more common forms of violence (e.g., bullying and harassment)
- Calls for common sense gun safety policies

http://www.nasponline.org/about_nasp/positionpapers/schoolviolence.pdf
Communication Planning, Message Development, and Implementation

- 2012 Convention Presentation:
  Communication Matters: Promoting and Preserving Your Role in a Tough Professional Climate
  - Key Message Sheet (NASP Core Messages) (PDF)
  - Presentation Activities Worksheet (.docx)
  - Effective Communication: Tips for School Psychologists (.doc)
  - Communications Planning Worksheet (.doc)
  - Convention Presentation (.ppt)

- School Psychologists: Improving Student and School Outcomes
- Effective Communications-Tips for School Psychologists (Word)
- Media Outreach Through Newspapers
- Activities Suggestions
- Writing for the Media
- Writing for School Publications
- The Power of Presentations
- Selecting an Outstanding Communicator of the Year
- Key Messages on Helping All Children Learn
- Activity Suggestions for Graduate Students
- Effective Communications Planning and Implementation (MH Focus) (PowerPoint)
- Effectively Communicating Your Role Within an RTI Framework (PowerPoint)
- Sample Communications Plan Chart.doc (Word)
- Communication Planning Worksheet Activity - RTI Example (Word)
- Message Development Activity - Effectively Communicating Your Role in an RTI Framework (Word)
Information for Principals and Administrators

Principal Leadership Magazine Articles

2004 & 2005 Golden Lamp Distinguished Achievement Award for Excellence in Educational Publishing

NASP contributes a monthly column to Principal Leadership, the flagship magazine of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). Columns are written by NASP members and address issues relevant to adolescent mental health and academic achievement in the context of what a middle or high school principal needs to know. The column, "Pupil Services" (formally titled "Counseling 101") received the Golden Lamp Distinguished Achievement Award for Excellence in Educational Publishing from the Association of Educational Publishers (AEP) in both 2004 and 2005. Also available on this page are corresponding NASP handouts for parents and teachers on most topics.

2012 / 2013

May
Is Your School Prepared for a Sexting Crisis?

April
Depression: A Quiet Crisis

March
School Safety: What Really Works

February
The Challenges of Homelessness
NASP Advocacy Roadmap: Preserving and Promoting School Psychological Services

Introduction

Welcome to the *NASP Advocacy Roadmap: Preserving and Promoting School Psychological Services*. This is a set of tools designed to help individuals and state associations plan their grassroots advocacy efforts directed at preserving and promoting school psychology and school psychological services.

How to Use the *NASP Advocacy Roadmap*

The *NASP Advocacy Roadmap* contains a variety of materials and resources for developing a local- or state-level response to potential threats to school psychology. As our country and local communities face growing concerns about the economy, our members have reported increased stress related to layoffs and hiring freezes that impact workload, job satisfaction, and job security. This *Roadmap* is designed to assist individuals and state associations address immediate threats and help them proactively advocate for the preservation and promotion of school psychological services during these tough economic times. This *Roadmap* is designed to support the work of state associations and is not meant to be exhaustive in its content. We hope that those who have engaged in advocacy activities that have proven to be successful will consider sharing their ideas and experiences with association leaders for possible inclusion in this *Roadmap*. You are encouraged to review all of the materials posted at this site and think creatively and broadly about how they may be most effectively adapted for your use. Ultimately, you and your colleagues will need to craft your own unique response based upon the issues and policies in your local school districts and states.

Table of Contents

*Exhibit A: Brief Overview of the Current Issues Related to Advocacy for School Psychology*

This document provides a quick overview of the current issues that are impacting school psychologists and explains why there is a critical need for all school psychologists to actively advocate for the profession.

*Exhibit B: Assessing the Current Climate and Needs: Key Questions in Assessing Job Risk, Threats, Needs, and Opportunities*

This document is designed to inform your advocacy efforts by helping you assess the current climate and needs regarding school psychology. It provides questions that help guide you through considerations of the roles of school psychologists, how they are perceived and valued, and how they function in relation to school system leadership. Through careful review of these questions, you can begin to understand where it would be most advantageous to focus your advocacy efforts.
NASP Practice Model: Improving outcomes for students and schools

The NASP Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services (PDF), also known as the NASP Practice Model, represents NASP’s official policy regarding the delivery of school psychological services.

- NASP Practice Model Assessment, Implementation, and Promotion Resources
- NASP Practice Model Brochure (PDF)
- NASP Practice Model Webinar
- 10 Domains of Practice
- Personnel Evaluation Handout (PDF)

THE NASP PRACTICE MODEL

- Delineates skills and services available from school psychologists across 10 domains of practice
- Describes the general framework within which services should be provided
- Promotes the connection between school psychologists’ training, standards, and actual practice
- Recommends a ratio for schools implementing this comprehensive model of one school psychologist to 500-700 students (1:500-700) depending on level of need within the student population
- Creates the capacity to make the best, most cost-effective use of school psychologists’ skills and expertise, which are an existing but sometimes underutilized resource in schools
- Allows flexibility for agencies and professionals to develop policies and procedures that meet local needs, while also providing sufficient specificity to ensure appropriate, comprehensive service provision
- Provides a reference for assessing continuing professional development needs
- Provides an organized and coherent framework (PowerPoint) to advocate for and communicate about school psychological services
Best Advocacy Resources

• **What is a School Psychologist brochure**
  - [http://www.nasponline.org/resources/freepubs.aspx](http://www.nasponline.org/resources/freepubs.aspx)

• **NASP Practice Model Website**

• **School Psychologists: Improving School and Student Outcomes** (Research to Policy & Practice Summary)
  - [http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/SP_Improving_Student_School_Outcomes_Final.pdf](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_schoolpsych.pdf](http://www.nasponline.org/resources/principals/PLNov10_schoolpsych.pdf)

• **Embracing Advocacy & Public Policy as a Core Value**

• **What Makes a School Psychologist a School Psychologist?**
NASP Advocacy Depends on YOU!
School Psychology needs....

- Believers
- Advocates
- Relationships with Influential Decision Makers
- Coalition Partners
- Collaborators
- Active Leaders
- Faithful Followers
Not so sure about this?
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
Advocating for your skills is not self-interested, self-promotion. It is essential to doing your best for kids.
Help the world see the Gumby in you.

Now is the time for Advocacy in Action!

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

—Winston Churchill
Human Resources for You!

**NASP Staff:**
Stacy Skalski, Director of Professional Policy & Practice
sskalski@naspweb.org
Kelly Vaillancourt, Director of Government Relations
kvaillancourt@naspweb.org
Kathy Cowan, Director of Communications
kcowan@naspweb.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 jjkitson@fhsu.edu
Michelle Malvey, Assistance to States, Co-Chair
michmalvey@comcast.net
Final Questions or Comments?