Supporting Students With Post-Acute Sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 Infection: Applying Lessons Learned From Postconcussion Symptoms

By Susan C. Davies, Julie Walsh-Messinger, & Noah Greenspan

The SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes the COVID-19 disease, has swiftly infected millions of people since it was first identified in late 2019. While much remains unknown about the virus, it is increasingly clear that many survivors (including children and adolescents) struggle with ongoing symptoms for months after they receive a negative test.

According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) most recent guidelines (2021), students who had COVID-19 are permitted to return to school after 10 days since symptoms first appeared if they are fever-free and other symptoms are improving. In general, children appear to recover from COVID-19 more quickly than adults and have less severe symptoms overall; most youth will recover within a few weeks and not require special support upon return to school (Götzinger et al., 2020). However, some students who return to school may experience persistent symptoms or develop post-acute COVID-19 complications. These may include dyspnea, cough, loss of smell or taste, fever, diarrhea, nausea, headache, fatigue, exercise intolerance, chest pain, cardiac arrhythmias, brain fog, and memory impairment (CDC, 2021).

The medical community has used varied terminology to describe those who experience protracted COVID-19 symptoms. This article intends to help school psychologists possess the skills to advocate for Indigenous youth and help improve their educational outcomes in schools. To do this work, it becomes necessary to confront the history of colonization, understand its effect on students and families, and identify strategies to reduce the risks posed. We identify five general consequences of colonization, provide brief examples of each, and recommend advocacy strategies for school psychologists to address these consequences. While each consequence is presented separately, they are implicitly tied together, as colonialism is a multifaceted and pervasive force (Asante, 2006).

We utilize the term Indigenous to refer to and be inclusive of Native Americans, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians who hold space in what is called The United States of America. We recognize that these groups have preferred terms that refer to their tribal, clan, and band affiliations or regional locations. We also acknowledge that the term Indigenous is used to identify other groups around the world such as the Maori, Inuit, and Aboriginal Australians. As authors, we have reflected on our own identities as two Indigenous [continued on page 26].
Engaging Hearts and Minds

By Laurie Klose

Happy New Year! Like many of us who work in schools, NASP organizes years from July to June instead of January to December. I am honored to begin my year as NASP president, and I pledge to do my best to deserve the trust members have placed in me. No one can know exactly what schools will look like and what will be asked of school psychologists in the next year, but one thing we can all know for sure is that NASP will continue to support school psychologists in doing the work that helps children and youth grow and thrive.

My presidential theme for the year is Engaging Hearts and Minds. Throughout the year, I want to inspire school psychologists to take an active role in engaging the hearts and minds of students, colleagues, systems, and most importantly, themselves. When we engage our hearts and minds, we can do tremendous things!

How can school psychologists engage their hearts?

Be passionate! Find an aspect of our complex work and dive in. Learn more about a specific topic and become an expert. Use that knowledge to advocate for systems that are supportive for all students and centers diversity as a core value. Use your passion to advocate at the local, state, or national level. Check out this past June’s Communiqué article, “Planning a Fresh Start,” for some tips and ideas on getting started this fall.

Be kind! Know yourself and know what you need to recharge yourself. Never judge yourself or others for needing that time; it’s not a sign of weakness, it’s a sign of strength! In addition, be kind to others. In the middle of all the demands we face in our work, it is easy to forget the impact of a simple act of kindness. Being kind costs nothing and yet its value is infinite. Review some of the strategies and concepts in our Gratitude Works program and in the Self-Care section of our website.

How can school psychologists engage their minds?

Be open! Be open to new experiences, new challenges, new people, and new responsibilities. Engaging in ongoing professional development is more than a requirement for credential renewal. It is an opportunity to really think about what we do and how we do it. Learning a new skill, investigating a new way of understanding instruction and learning, increasing knowledge about one’s implicit biases, and refreshing one’s understanding of our professional standards are just few examples of professional development that engages the minds of school psychologists. Plan now to come to the convention in Boston. In the meantime, Communiqué, School Psychology Review, and the Online Learning Center all offer easily accessible content to help us learn new ways of understanding our roles and expertise.

Be curious! Dust off those program evaluation skills and evaluate the impact of interventions and other school-based procedures. Examine the data that shows the difference that school psychologists are making in the lives of children and youth. Present that data to decision makers to advocate for resources needed to increase the availability of school psychological services.

These are just a few examples of how we can engage our hearts and minds to enhance our professional service and personal well-being—there are countless other ways. Consider sharing the ways you engage your heart and mind in the NASP Communities!

Becoming NASP president represents a culmination of many years of work and volunteer leadership in school psychology. When I started my NASP leadership activities, as a member of the Government and Professional Relations Committee, I did not know a single person in that room. I was scared, intimidated, and sure I was about to be discovered as a fraud (hello, imposter syndrome). But I was also excited beyond anything I could have imagined. We worked very hard. We shared knowledge and experience. We laughed. We struggled. We supported each other so that we could do hard things in service to children, youth, and schools. Time passed and more and different opportunities came my way. Each time, I would experience that sense of excitement and terror: Would I be enough? By engaging my heart and my mind, I have benefited from these experiences, and I will use this foundation to work on my presidential goals of supporting all school psychologists with compassion, leading the organization with integrity and transparency, advocating for the children we serve with passion and commitment, and engaging members in meaningful work that propels NASP and school psychology into the future while centering social justice, equity, and diversity in all decision making and interactions.

Let’s have a great year!

Editor’s Note

Happy Anniversary, Communiqué!

Welcome back, friends and colleagues, to another school year and another year of Communiqué! The start of the school year is always exciting, and here at Communiqué it is especially so as we celebrate our 50th anniversary. We will be noting this event in a variety of ways in the coming months, but our most important observance will be to continue delivering the best reporting on research-based practice, professional issues, and NASP association news. Please join us in our celebration of a half century of proudly serving NASP members and the profession of school psychology.

In keeping with that tradition of excellence, I am proud to present this issue. Let me highlight a couple of articles that I found particularly enlightening.

If you follow baseball, you know that the Cleveland Indians are now the Cleveland Guardians, and theirs is the latest mascot featuring Indigenous imagery to be dropped as a result of years of advocacy and education culminating in the era of change in which we now find ourselves. Hundreds of school teams still have Indian names and mascots—who long before all that changes? Read the article on Indigenous Youth in Schools and decide for yourself where you stand on this question.

COVID-19 is still here, meaning continued uncertainty about what’s in store for schooling this year. Certainly, a lot depends on how many people get vaccinated. We’ll have to be flexible and resilient—just like last year. On top of that, we now know more about the risk for long-term complications among some children who contract this illness. It’s important to learn what to look for and how to address these issues in school, and our front page article is a good place to start.

On another celebratory note, I wish to thank some individuals who are stepping down as contributing editors: Merryl Bushansky, Rob Dixon, Scott Huebner, Andrew Jennings, and Steve Shaw. These are some of the finest colleagues I have ever worked with. And stepping into their new roles as editors are Denise Maricle, Katie McLendon, Amanda VanDerHeyden, and Rachel Wiegand. Each of these people have served Communiqué in the past through their writing and reviewing, and each will be making substantial contributions to our work this year. Please join me in thanking all of our editors for volunteering their service.

And if the volunteering bug is nibbling at you, page 23 tells you how to nominate yourself for leadership positions in NASP. Go ahead—Do it! In other news, we are gearing up for National School Psychology Week in November, and the convention is in Boston! Now, that’s good news!

—John E. Desrochers
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EDITORIAL DEADLINES, Volume 50

Issue #  Month  Deadline
#1  September  July 5, 2021
#2  October  August 9, 2021
#3  November  September 7, 2021
#4  December  October 4, 2021
#5  January/February  November 15, 2021
#6  March/April  January 31, 2022
#7  May  March 14, 2022
#8  June  April 11, 2022

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September 2021, Volume 50, Number 1 | COMMUNIQUÉ | 3
Disruptive Innovation Defines Leadership Opportunities: State Organization Strategic Goal and Agenda Advancements

By Erika Stevens Olinger, Tracy Hobbs, & Christina Hare

There is no question that NASP Past President Wendy Price’s presidential theme for 2020–2021, “The Power of Possibility,” was indeed the perfect tagline to not only describe the landscape for the school psychology profession during the pandemic, but also highlight the optimistic and problem-solving nature of school psychologist leaders. The May 2019 Communiqué article, “Professional Practice: Disruptive Innovation Defines Leadership Opportunities: Membership Engagement,” explored how NASP and state associations transitioned with disruptive innovation practices to support members during the COVID-19 pandemic. State organization innovation for member engagement was highlighted. This article seeks to expand on how the COVID-19 pandemic, racial and social injustice experienced across our country, and the enormous shifts in school psychological practices resulted not tragically in disaster, but rather in distinctive opportunities for growth and advancement of the values and goals school psychologists hold dear. State organizations across the nation were placed in the unique position to lead their members through uncertainty and without the option of the status quo. Ultimately, the pandemic resulted in new and robust solutions to serve members by providing quality virtual professional development, social (if not physical) networking, and novel ways to recruit and serve diverse members.

Just as state organizations were able to enhance rather than sacrifice membership engagement and services, they also did not stall out on advancement of strategic goals and agenda items. Rather than allowing the pandemic to incapacitate states’ strategic plans, school psychology leaders across the nation took the reins and boldly responded with innovation to promote best practices via the NASP Practice Model, including promoting social justice. The following are a few of the many examples demonstrating how state organizations developed novel and timely resources in response to crises and turning points in history, and in doing so, advanced their strategic goals and professional practices.

Much like NASP leadership, Tracy Hobbs, Michigan Association of School Psychologists (MASP) membership chair, was concerned about the impact of the pandemic on membership in his state association. With the challenges faced by school psychologists across the state who were dealing with unprecedented levels of uncertainty, and that the 2020–2021 membership renewal cycle was beginning in the midst of the pandemic and school closures, Tracy and the MASP executive board feared and planned for the worst: a steep decline in membership.

Faced with this crisis, MASP and its leaders took several actions to demonstrate the value of membership and its relevance to Michigan’s school psychologists. MASP continuously works to advocate for best practices in school psychology service delivery, including utilization of the NASP Practice Model. Given the nature of the remote needs of schools and communities, concerns and questions have been raised regarding how school psychologists can best serve them. In response, MASP created a guidance document for a COVID-19 Response Model of Practice. In addition, the MASP executive board adopted its The Role of the School Psychologist in the Return to School Post COVID-19 guidance document. This guidance document utilizes the COVID-19 Response Model of Practice and its applicability in planning for reentry to school this upcoming fall. Furthermore, this document should be considered a tool for both guidance and advocacy in the role and function of school psychologists. Also, a dedicated section of the MASP website was created with relevant and timely COVID-19 resources. In late August, MASP’s professional standards committee hosted two virtual Town Hall meetings to identify concerns from practitioners that was utilized to create a guidance document focusing on practice norms, advocacy, and responding to potential ethical and legal issues throughout it this pandemic: MASP Professional Standards Guidance During COVID.

And in response to the racial and social injustice which engulfed our nation last year, the MASP board of directors adopted a position statement, MASP Call to Action for Social and Racial Justice, that states: “The MASP Board believes each of us has a moral and ethical imperative to identify and intervene in matters of social and racial injustice when the well-being of children, families, and communities are at stake.” Recognizing the importance of social justice as a focus for our association, the executive board approved the creation of a new standing committee, social justice and multicultural ethics. This vibrant new committee surveyed members and hosted a Virtual Town Hall meeting to identify areas of concern for practitioners across Michigan to prioritize action steps and develop relevant resources. The committee is hosting monthly book club meetings, and in conjunction with our conference committee, planned a webinar focused on the school-to-prison pipeline. All of these documents are posted on the MASP website. MASP ended up exceeding its membership income projection for 2020–2021 by 64%, saving the association from having a significant budget deficit without the income typically generated from its two conferences.

Regardless of the size of the state association, similar stressors were felt across our country. Similar to the larger state of Michigan, smaller state organizations, such as the West Virginia School Psychologists Association (WVSPA), mirrored the need for a quick transition to meet the needs of practicing psychologists, including members and nonmembers of the association, in light of the pandemic. To help ensure that school psychologists were as informed as possible with regard to student services and their support role, Dr. Christina Hare, WVSPA president and Holly Yoke, WVSPA president-elect, established bimonthly meetings between the director of special education at the West Virginia Department of Education and the executive board. This allowed the board to use the existing leadership structure to not only disseminate information across the state through region representatives but also collect concerns and questions from the field. This ongoing meeting series not only served as an information gateway, but it also gave board members a safe space to share stressors they were seeing from their regions. It was within this framework that the board felt it necessary to develop a guidance document in conjunction with the West Virginia Board of Examiners of Psychologists to give suggestions for school psychologists, both independent practitioners and regular employees to the school district. This collaborative effort allowed WVSPA and WVBEP to provide a needed resource in response to concerns for how assessments would proceed with respect to COVID restrictions: Guidance on Assessment Practices for School Psychologists During COVID-19 School Closures (available on the WVSPA website).

With the MASP Annual Conference (which is typically held in November) cancelled due to the pandemic, the MASP conference committee, with support from the executive board, decided to offer a series of webinars over the course of the school year in lieu of an actual virtual conference, which would be free to members and for a nominal cost to nonmembers. This decision was made as an incentive for membership in the association but also as a service to members in providing valuable and timely professional development. Likewise, in West Virginia, drastic changes were made to the conference offerings to adjust to social distance requirements. Although the beginning of the pandemic caused the traditional spring conference to be cancelled, WVSPA knew the need for relevant professional development did not stop. As such, the association quickly shifted to arrange a series of virtual webinars spread out over time to prevent the dreaded and real “Zoom fatigue.” In addition, WVSPA made a switch from offering previously planned MASP PrePRe training in a face-to-face format to a virtual platform in an effort to continue progress on a strategic goal to have a trained statewide crisis network.

Similarly, the Oklahoma School Psychological Association (OSPA) met in spring 2020 to brainstorm solutions to problems facing the executive board and members amid the uncertainty. The OSPA board stayed from business as usual and reimagined traditional roles of board members. One half of the Board remained in place to...
Who would have thought, a year ago, that we would still be working to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic? Even as we make progress with vaccination against the virus, we continue to be challenged by serious economic issues, racism and systemic inequities in our schools, and the urgent need to support students whose academic skills did not develop as expected through remote learning.

As we reach the start of a new school year, we also have real opportunities to shape the policies and funding that will help us tackle these challenges in the coming months. NASP’s voice—your voice—is critical to this effort and to ensuring that school psychologists are central to and supported in the work ahead.

Let NASP membership be there to support you once again.

Last year, members benefitted from:

- Strong, effective advocacy and resources to position school psychologists as essential to supporting students and families throughout this crisis;
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Impact of Migration-Related Trauma Experiences on Mental Health Outcomes of Latinx Immigrant Youth

By Sarina Roschmann

Children who are recent immigrants comprise a growing segment of the school population in the United States. Many are from Latinx backgrounds, which includes those from countries in Central America, South America, and Mexico. To enable school mental health professionals to serve this population adequately, it is critical that the unique needs of these children are understood. This article focuses specifically on immigrants who were not born in the United States.

As first-generation immigrants, these youth have experienced the migration process from their home country to the United States as children or adolescents. This may be a very different experience from Latinx children who are children of first-generation immigrants because the migration experience presents unique stressors, possible adverse experiences and, potentially, protective factors. Both protective factors and adverse experiences will be explored throughout this article. These experiences may then also have unique effects on mental health outcomes that might be missed in findings describing Latinx youth in general. Similarly, the migration experience from Latin American countries may differ significantly from the migration experience from other parts of the world. It is critical to understand this experience to assess, prevent, and treat mental health concerns adequately.

To understand the migration experience, researchers often divide the process into three stages: premigration, perimigration, and postmigration, each of which may present with unique stressors (Kirmayer et al., 2011). The first stage, premigration, refers to events before the child or family leaves their home country. Often, it may be the case that children who leave their home countries, even if they are not refugees, have lived in areas of low income, high crime, or social unrest (Jaycox et al., 2002). Thus, during this time, children may experience disruptions in education and separation from immediate or extended family members and peer networks (Kirmayer et al., 2011). For youth, the decision to make the migration will also typically be made by their parents, and thus many young immigrants likely leave their country involuntarily (Potochnick & Perreira, 2010).

The perimigration stage refers to the time in which children and families are no longer in their previous home but not yet in their destination location. The experiences during this time may vary greatly, but children from Latinx countries are at risk for potential separation from their caregiver(s), exposure to violence, exposure to harsh living conditions, poor nutrition, and a feeling of uncertainty about their future (Jaycox et al., 2002; Kirmayer et al., 2011). These experiences are particularly more likely when families travel to the United States without legal authorization (Perrína & Ornelas, 2013).

The third stage, postmigration, refers to the time starting with and after the youth and family arrive in the United States. Families and youth may experience both positive and negative feelings during the initial times of this period. Some may feel a sort of “honeymoon” period (Zuniga, 2002) when first arriving. However, at this time of readjustment, youth and families may also experience acculturation stress, school stressors related to language barriers, discrimination, and social exclusion (Kirmayer et al., 2011). Furthermore, migration is often economically demanding, and immigrant children may experience poverty (Jaycox et al., 2002).

While immigrant Latinx youth may have a variety of experiences during their migration, there are some that are more concerning than others when considering their potential impact on youth mental health. Specifically, experiences of particular concern are potentially traumatic events (PTEs). PTEs, as described by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (5th ed.; American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2013), are “exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence.” PTEs are especially critical to understand as they increase youth’s risk for adverse mental health outcomes. About 16% of children who have experienced at least one PTE are found to develop posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD; Alvic et al., 2014).

The mental health outcomes most often studied in relation to PTEs of immigrant youth are PTSD and internalizing (e.g., depression, anxiety) symptoms. Factors unique to Latinx culture, such as reliance on internal strength and external (e.g., familial) support, may provide both protective and risk factors for Latinx immigrant youth with regard to the development of internalizing disorders (Potochnick & Perreira, 2010). The promise of a better life in the United States alongside reliance on family as a support system may promote resilience, optimism, and motivation that fight against challenging experiences in the United States or along the migration process (Potochnick & Perreira, 2010). On the other hand, traumatic experiences may be more difficult for Latinx immigrant youth to cope with when internal strength is overemphasized or when social support systems are stressed or not available to the same extent they were before the migration.

Given the high number of immigrant youth in the United States that are from support operations to ensure the continuity and health of the organization. The other half shifted into roles within an ad hoc crisis committee to lead and provide support to members in direct response to the pressing concerns of the pandemic. In this way, both stability and flexibility were ensured and leaders were given the space and freedom to think outside the box. The change in roles and responsibilities, while seemingly drastic at first, resulted in advancements in member services, professional development, professional resources, and the promotion of social justice. In addition to the crisis committee, an improved diversity and equity committee was formed under the guidance of new-to-the-board leaders. The crisis committee was able to provide frequent quality professional development and consultation virtually. Virtual attendance at each event rivaled total attendance of yearly conferences. The communications committee was able to engage members in novel ways and to connect members and nonmembers with resources (and each other), providing much needed networking and support. The annual OSPA Legislative Day grew from a 1-day to a 1-week event, which likely contributed to successful passage of a long-awaited MTSS bill. Upon reflection, OSPA board members at the recent summer board retreat indicated that while the new structure was unconventional, and even initially uncomfortable, the shift resulted in significant growth on strategic goals that had previously been stagnant and may have remained so without the disruption.

All of these activities, and myriad examples from across the country, signaled to members and school psychologists their state organizations’ responsiveness to their needs and demonstrated the value in association membership. Though borne of necessity, NASP is hopeful that the resultant innovative products, practices, and lessons learned remain. States that experienced increased membership, quality engagement, vital resource development, and other significant progress on strategic goals and improved practices during the pandemic are encouraged to examine and replicate the innovation that made such advancement possible. As some things return to pre-pandemic “normal,” it will be tempting for state organizations to fall into old habits and former stagnation. It will be easy to allow our well-deserved rest to regress to complacency rather than renewal; however, the concept of disruptive innovation allows us to see the value of change as an impetus for forward movement. State organizations are encouraged to capitalize on the current momentum via intentional examination of operational practices, member services, and other strategic goals that guide our work. Harness the drive that helped to identify and replace ineffective systems, to engage in unique problem-solving, to collaborate across distance, and to think outside the box during the pandemic. Consider that disruptive innovation captures the very essence of school psychology and embraces the notion that “the power of possibility” was not only a 1-year theme that represented our temporary response to struggles, but rather is a constant and necessary way of leading that allows fluid growth in the face of any obstacle.

Sarina Roschmann is a 5th year doctoral student in the school psychology program at Michigan State University.
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PROFESSIONAL ETHICS
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A Problem-Solving Model Casebook

Susan Jacob | Barbara Bole Williams | Leigh Armistead
Latinx backgrounds and given that these youth are at risk for experiencing traumatic events during their migration, it is critical for school mental health providers to understand how to best serve this population. To do so, they must first understand how the unique experience of Latinx immigrant youth, especially experiences related to trauma, might affect their mental health. Thus, the following sections review the relevant literature, with these specific areas of focus: (a) the prevalence of migration-related traumatic experiences among Latinx immigrant youth, (b) the prevalence of traumatic experiences during various stages of the migration experience, (c) the effects of migration-related traumatic experiences on youth’s mental health, and (d) the risk and protective factors for experiencing traumatic events and for developing mental health symptoms among Latinx immigrant youth.

**PREVALENCE OF MIGRATION-RELATED TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES**

Five studies assessing migration-related PTEs of Latinx immigrant youth indicate that youth experience various traumatic experiences and that these experiences are prevalent at all three stages of migration. First, Jaycox and colleagues (2002) studied community violence exposure using a modified version of the Life Events Scale with 1,004 eight to fifteen-year-old recent immigrant youth in Los Angeles, of which 87% were from Latinx countries. Results were not disaggregated by race/ethnicity; however, given the large Latinx proportion of the sample, findings are most generalizable to Latinx youth. The authors found that 88% of children reported at least one exposure to a violent event. Youth reported being personal victims of 1.2 and witnessing 3 violent events, on average, within the last year. For lifetime exposure, youth reported being personal victims of 0.6 and witness to 1.2 violent events, on average. In terms of location, 23% of youth reported that they experienced violence in both the United States and their country of origin, while over half (53%) reported experiences of violence only in their home country.

Second, Potochnick and Perreira (2010) studied 281 first-generation Latinx immigrants in middle and high schools in North Carolina. Trauma or stressors were measured for traumatic migration experiences (separation from primary caregiver, violence, illness) and discrimination in the United States (postmigration). The authors found that approximately 75% of their sample experienced separation from their primary caregiver for an average of 3 years. Additionally, approximately one quarter of their sample experienced at least one traumatic perimigration event. Experiences of discrimination in the United States were reported by 42% of the sample.

Third, in a follow-up, secondary analysis of the Potochnick and Perreira (2010) dataset, Perreira and Ornelas (2013) evaluated the PTEs of the adolescents in more detail. Specifically, they investigated three premigration traumatic experiences: poverty, whether they or their parent had previously traveled to the United States, and separation from their primary caregiver for at least 1 year prior to migration. The authors also investigated three perimigration factors: documentation status, separation from their family, and age at the time of migration. Lastly, two postmigration PTEs were considered: discrimination and neighborhood safety. Results indicated that during premigration, the most common PTE was separation from a caregiver’s, with approximately two thirds reporting this. Experience of poverty was low at 7%. During migration, most (84%) adolescents were over 6 years old and most entered the United States undocumented (74%) and with a family member (89%). Lastly, at postmigration, over half of adolescents reported experiencing discrimination and 18% had experienced living in unsafe neighborhoods.

Fourth, de Arellano and colleagues (2018) studied PTEs at the perimigration stage. They suspected an underreporting of perimigration traumatic events due to current trauma assessments’ shortcomings in assessing migratory-related PTEs. With their adapted measure, the authors interviewed 131 immigrant Latinx 9–17-year-olds, predominantly from Mexico (91%). In addition to standard questions about a history of PTEs, the authors also asked participants to indicate whether one of those events happened during migration, specific questions about experiences during migration related to violence, and questions about perceptions of the migration process itself as a traumatic event. Results indicated that 20% of youth experienced perimigration PTEs; however, only 18% of those youth reported these PTEs during the regular trauma assessment, indicating that the standard assessment did not adequately address the experiences of these youth. Additionally, 21% reported finding the process of migration as a whole to be traumatic, even though they did not endorse any other specific perimigration PTE, indicating that assessment of singular events may not always be appropriate with this population.

Lastly, Cleary et al. (2018) assessed the association of PTEs and PTSD, depression, and anxiety in 104 Central American Latinx adolescents living in Maryland. Results indicated that approximately two thirds had experienced at least one PTE at any time during migration. Most participants experienced PTEs during only one migration stage, most commonly at premigration. At this stage, youth experienced, on average, 2.6 PTEs, compared to 0.5–0.6 at peri- and postmigration. There were some differences in the types of traumas experienced at the different stages, with natural disasters being most common at premigration, and witnessing or experiencing violence most common during all stages.

Based on these five studies, it appears that there is variation in the reported prevalence of migration-related PTEs (30–80%), although most studies report overall prevalence rates above 50%. Given these findings, Latinx youth are likely to experience at least one PTE at some point during their migration experience. Most reported events included witnessing violence and separation from a caregiver(s) prior to migration. Witnessing and experiencing violence were slightly more likely at premigration than postmigration. Other PTEs such as poverty and separation from family members during migration were among the lowest reported.

**EFFECTS OF MIGRATION-RELATED TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES ON MENTAL HEALTH**

All studies that investigated the prevalence of migration-related PTEs also examined the relationship between PTEs and mental health outcomes after youth migrated to the United States. Jaycox et al. (2002) found greater levels of PTSD symptoms than depression symptoms, with approximately 35% of youth reporting symptoms indicative of meeting PTSD diagnostic criteria and 16% of youth reporting clinically significant depression symptoms. Frequently endorsed symptoms of PTSD included persistent low mood, diminished interest in activities or interpersonal relationships, low motivation, and impairment in their familial relationships, faith, and schoolwork. Those participants with more violence exposures were also more likely to experience more elevated symptoms of PTSD and depression.

Potochnick and Perreira (2010) found 7% of youth showed clinical levels of depression and 29% showed clinical levels of anxiety. Similar to Jaycox et al. (2002), the authors found that those with a history of migration-related PTEs were significantly more at risk for adverse mental health outcomes. In contrast, those who had experienced migration-related PTEs were significantly more likely to develop anxiety-related symptoms but not depressive symptoms, as was the case in the Jaycox et al. (2002) study.

Perreira and Ornelas (2013) found low levels of clinically significant PTSD symptoms (4%). Nonetheless, they found that those youth with at least one PTE at any point were more likely to develop PTSD symptoms, as were those who experienced at least one PTE during the perimigration stage, even if those PTSD symptoms did not reach clinical significance. Premigration trauma was not significantly related to later development of PTSD symptoms. At the postmigration stage, experiences of discrimination and unsafe living environments were also significantly related to PTSD symptoms. Similar to Jaycox et al. (2002), de Arellano et al. (2018) assessed youth’s depression and PTSD symptoms; however, this study focused specifically on perimigration traumatic experiences. Findings indicated that those youth who experienced PTEs during migration were more likely to show depression and PTSD symptoms. This was particularly important finding because the authors’ trauma history assessment also considered whether youth considered the migration process, as a whole, traumatic (i.e., immigration process trauma). Youth who found the process traumatic but reported no other specific perimigration PTEs were significantly more likely to have symptoms of depression and PTSD than those who did not find the process traumatic. A shortcoming of this study was that the authors provided little information on the prevalence of depression and PTSD symptoms in their sample, in terms of how many children had clinical levels of symptoms. Thus, even though immigration process trauma significantly predicted PTSD and depressive symptoms, it is unclear how severe these symptoms were in the study sample.

Lastly, Cleary et al. (2018) found that symptoms of PTSD and depression were predicted by peri- and postmigration PTEs, while symptoms of anxiety were predicted by premigration PTEs. Similar to de Arellano et al. (2018), a limitation of this study was that there was no context provided to the severity of PTSD, depression, and anxiety symptoms.

Overall, these studies indicate that Latinx immigrant youth are at risk for adverse mental health outcomes, such as PTSD, depression, and anxiety, that are, at least in part, potentially due to migration-related PTEs. Between 4% and 35% of youth had clinically significant PTSD symptoms, approximately 25% of youth had clinically significant anxiety symptoms, and between 7% and 16% of youth had clinically significant depression symptoms. This compares to prevalence rates of 5% for PTSD (Merikangas et al., 2010), 6% for anxiety (CDC, 2020), and 5% for depression (CDC, 2020) among children and adolescents in the general population.
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*Donna Geffner, Ph.D., Ed.D. (Hon.), CCC-SP/A*  
Past President and Fellow of ASHA with Honors

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*Christina Hanel, Psy.D.*  
Lead School Psychologist Washington Elementary School District, Phoenix, AZ
To conclude, it is evident that Latinx immigrant youth are at risk for experiencing traumatic events specifically related to their migration process. Youth may experience traumatic events at any stage, although they seem most likely to occur premigration. The literature has also provided evidence that these traumatic experiences are related to later mental health functioning, specifically in the areas of PTSD, depression, and anxiety symptoms. At this time, it is unclear whether specific subgroups within the larger Latinx immigrant youth population are at more risk for adverse mental health outcomes than others. Future research should target this question through the use of an intersectional lens that addresses a variety of identity considerations beyond just gender and age. Current implications for practice include development of cultural competence among mental health providers, use of an ecological framework, and use of trauma-informed services.

**References**


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The purposes of this article are (a) to canvass the current legislation, regulations, and illustrative agency policy interpretations specific to “transition services” under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2018), and (b) to provide an update of the court decisions since the coverage of an earlier overview of the case law (Zirkel, 2017).

LEGISLATION

The requirement for transition services in the IDEA legislation originated in the 1990 amendments and was subject to refinements in the 1997 and 2004 amendments. The resulting language has two parts—a definition and an age-based IEP requirement. The IDEA definition (§1414[d][1][A][VIII]) requires that

The term “transition services” means a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that—

(A) is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;

(B) is based upon the individual student’s needs, taking into account the student’s strengths, preferences, and interests; and

(C) includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

The corresponding IEP provision in the IDEA (§1414[d][1][A][VIII]) requires that the IEP include the following:

beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child is 16, and updated annually thereafter—

(aa) appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills;

(bb) the transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals

REGULATIONS

The current IDEA regulations (2019) add that (a) transition services may be either special education or related services (§300.343[b]); (b) the beginning date may “younger if determined appropriate” (§300.320[b]); (c) the district “may invite” the child and, with the parents’ consent, a representative of the participating transition services agency to attend the IEP meeting if the purpose is to consider the transition services (§300.321[b]); (d) the district must include this invitational information in the parental notice for the applicable IEP meeting (§300.322[b][2]); and (e) if the participating agency fails to provide the IEP’s transition services, the district’s IEP team must meet and set forth alternative strategies to do so (§300.324[c]).

AGENCY INTERPRETATIONS

The U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has issued various policy interpretations concerning transition services, including the following relatively recent examples:

- Work placement is a permissible, not required, component of transition services, and the least restrictive environment requirements of the IDEA apply to transition service placements (Letter to Spitzer-Rensnick, 2012).
- Transition services are a permissible but not required subject of the regular progress reporting requirement of the IDEA, which extends beyond age 18 if the student has not graduated (Letter to Pugh, 2017).
- The IEP provision for transition services, including the postsecondary goals, are subject to the annual updating requirements for IEPs (Letter to Anonymous, 2017).
- The above-referenced provision for inviting the child to the IEP meeting upon consideration of transition services is mandatory (Letter to Anonymous, 2019).
- Parental consent is not required for transition assessments unless they are part of the initial evaluation or the reevaluation (Letter to Olex, 2019).
- It is imperative, particularly under COVID-19, for public schools under the IDEA and vocational rehabilitation agencies under the Rehabilitation Act to collaborate in providing transition services (Letter to Vocational Rehabilitation and Special Education Partners, 2020).

STATE LAWS

Several state statutes or regulations add to the IDEA provisions by retaining age 14 (e.g., DE, DC, FL, KS, MD, MA, MS, NE, NM, OH, RI, VA, and WI) or opting for another triggering point earlier than age 16 (e.g., IL—age 14½; IN—earlier of age 14 or grade 9; MN—grade 9; and NE—age 15). Some states have added further requirements for transition services (e.g., HA—coordination with individual plan for employment; IL—identify responsible persons in the IEP and model pilot program for individual transition plans; and MA—certification for transition coordinator).

EARLIER JUDICIAL RULINGS

A previous analysis provided an overview of the court decisions specific to transition services under the IDEA as of December 31, 2016 (Zirkel, 2017). This comprehensive analysis identified 62 court decisions with rulings on IDEA transition services. The frequency of these rulings rose steadily since the first one in 1991, and the outcomes favored school districts on an overall 3:1 ratio. In most cases, the court’s analysis was relatively cursory and deferential to district authorities. Those that approached the issue in terms of the procedural dimension of the IDEA’s requirements for a free appropriate public education (FAPE) often found that deficiencies amounted to harmless error based on the applicable two-step test. Those based on the substantive dimension of FAPE often took a holistic approach to the IEP, thus similarly excusing transition services that would have been clearly questionable from a nuanced or rigorous professional perspective.

UPDATED JUDICIAL RULINGS

Using the same legal databases and selection criteria as the earlier analysis, this update of the case law from January 1, 2017 to June 30, 2021 found 21 court decisions with relevant rulings. The accompanying table lists these court decisions in inverse chronological order along with the following two features: (a) issue category—entitlement, procedural FAPE, or substantive FAPE; and (b) outcome—P—in favor of parent; Inc.—inconclusive; and SD—in favor of district. “Inconclusive” refers to the occasional ruling, such as denial of a dismissal motion, that preserves the issue for further proceedings if not settled or abandoned. The tracking feature of the legal databases allowed identification of the latest judicial ruling for the transition services issue.

Review of the table entries reveals a few trends. First, the frequency of cases, which averaged 4.7 per year, approximated the highest level of the previous, steadily ascending period (Zirkel, 2017).

Second, the outcomes distribution was as follows: for districts—15 (71%); inconclusive—1 (5%); for parents—5 (24%). Thus, the proportion skews at a 3:1 ratio continued from the previous period without any notable change (Zirkel, 2017).

Finally, as partly indicated in the Comments column of the table, the court analyses largely shifted from a holistic approach in relation to the IEP to a transition-specific focus in relation to the statutory standards. The majority view, however, continued to reflect deference to school authorities. For example, in Renee J. v. Houston Independent School District (2019), the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals added this explanation in upholding the goals and contents of the student’s transition services:

This court is mindful of its obligation not to stray into the field of education policymaking and is reluctant to say, as a matter of law, that [the district] was required to communicate a nuanced transition plan in a different way (p. 533).

In contrast, the unpublished federal district court decision in S.G.W. v. Eugene

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School District (2017) represents what continues to be the minority judicial view. First, in rejecting the appropriateness of the student’s transition services, this court was relatively rigorous about the procedural requirements by concluding (a) “[a]lthough the IDEA does not mandate any particular transition assessment tool, a student interview, without more, is insufficient” and (b) “[a] school district must do more than enroll a student in generally available courses and send the student to one career interview, without more, is insufficient” and (b) “[a] school district must do more than enroll a student in generally available courses and send the student to one career interview, without more, is insufficient.” With resulting rigor that found a substantive denial of FAPE, the continuing outcomes trend, which is even more district-friendly than for special education litigation, may have had a dampening effect, but it is not clear that the “iceberg” effect, such analyses do not show the subsurface trends of hearing officer filings and decisions, unpublished court dispositions, and the interstitial layers of cases that are withdrawn, abandoned, or settled. Regardless of the reasons, the IDEA’s transition services provisions remain as a relatively active area of judicial activity.

The outcomes finding shows that this activity also continues to show a prodistrict skew, which is in part attributable to the rather broad-based requirements in the IDEA and corollary state legislation and regulations and the prevailing judicial deference to school authorities in the application of these rather relaxed specifications. Although still a minority judicial view, it is not particularly predictable when a court will be relatively rigorous in applying the IDEA standards for transition services. In any event, these recent court decisions are at least moving from a holistic view of IEPs to the point of almost rendering it insignificant via the following reasoning:

In view of the special difficulty of showing educational harm vis-a-vis a student’s readiness to navigate a future transition, I conclude the [hearing officer] was no such individual tailoring (and no appropriate assessment), and so the educational harm standard is satisfied (p. *7). Moving a step further to the plaintiff-parent’s side, in the more recent decision in E.G. v. Anchorage Independent Board of Education (2021), a federal court in Kentucky characterized transition services as substantive, not procedural, and concluded that their importance for students with disabilities moving toward self-sufficiency “cannot be overstated” (p. *4). With resulting rigor that found a substantive denial of FAPE, the court ruled that “the transition services provided in the IEP appear to be, at best, generic and not individualized” (p. *14). With resulting rigor that found a substantive denial of FAPE, the court loosened the second, resulting loss step for procedural FAPE, to the point of almost rendering it insignificant via the following reasoning:

The outcomes finding shows that this activity also continues to show a prodistrict skew, which is in part attributable to the rather broad-based requirements in the IDEA and corollary state legislation and regulations and the prevailing judicial deference to school authorities in the application of these rather relaxed specifications. Although still a minority judicial view, it is not particularly predictable when a court will be relatively rigorous in applying the IDEA standards for transition services. In any event, these recent court decisions are at least moving from a holistic view of IEPs to the transition-specific standards. Thus far, the agency policy interpretations have not played a notable role in the relevant judicial rulings, although their effect may be more pronounced in the OSEP state-supervision procedures, the state complaints process, and the alternate dispute resolution mechanisms of the IDEA. Finally, as found more generally (e.g., Moran, 2020), the substantive FAPE standard in Endrew F. (2017) has appeared often in, but without an outcome-slurring effect on, these rulings.

The overall message for school psychologists, once again, is not only to maintain up-to-date legal literacy about the various sources of law specific to postsecondary transition services but also to promote the higher professional level of proactive evidence-based practice for this important aspect of the IDEA. As others have observed, “[s]chool psychologists, with their graduate training in a variety of transition-related domains are well suited to play a key additive role in the transition process” (Talapatra et al., 2019). This activity can be of significant benefit to the individual student with disabilities and our society at large. ■

References


Letter to Anonymous, 75 IDEL ¶ 109 (OSEP 2019).

Letter to Olex, 74 IDEL ¶ 22 (OSEP 2019).

Letter to Pugh, 69 IDEL ¶ 135 (OSEP 2017).

Letter to Spitzer-Resnick, 59 IDEL ¶ 230 (OSEP 2012).

Letter to Vocational Rehabilitation and Special Education Partners, 77 IDEL ¶ 75 (OSEP 2020).


Table 1. Recent Court Decisions Regarding Transition Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CASE NAME</th>
<th>CITATION</th>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perkamen Valley Sch. Dist. v. R.B.</td>
<td>78 IDEL ¶ 222 (E.D. Pa. 2021)</td>
<td>substantive FAPE</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>tuition reimbursement remedy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.P. v. Pasadena Unified Sch. Dist.</td>
<td>78 IDEL ¶ 139 (C.D. Cal. 2021)</td>
<td>procedural FAPE</td>
<td></td>
<td>vocational assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirk v. N.Y.C. Dept of Educ.</td>
<td>78 IDEL ¶ 25 (N.Y. Sup. Ct. 2020)</td>
<td>procedural FAPE</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>no proven step 2 loss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butte Sch. Dist. No. 1 v. C.S.</td>
<td>817 F. App’x 321 (9th Cir. 2020)</td>
<td>procedural FAPE</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>marginal-transition placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew B. v. Pleasant Valley Sch. Dist.</td>
<td>75 IDEL ¶ 157 (E.D. Pa. 2019)</td>
<td>substantive FAPE</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>repeated, mastered goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pangari v. Peoria Unified Sch. Dist.</td>
<td>780 F. App’x 505 (9th Cir. 2019)</td>
<td>substantive FAPE</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>deference to school authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.D. v. Natick Pub. Schs.*</td>
<td>924 F.3d 621 (1st Cir. 2019)</td>
<td>procedural FAPE</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>no violation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renee J. v. Houston Indep. Sch. Dist.</td>
<td>913 F.3d 523 (5th Cir. 2019)</td>
<td>substantive FAPE</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>procedural FAPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.L. v. Alamo Heights Indep. Sch. Dist.</td>
<td>73 IDEL ¶ 71 (W.D. Tex. 2018)</td>
<td>procedural FAPE</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>supported by the record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rogers v. Hempfield Sch. Dist.</td>
<td>73 IDEL ¶ 7 (E.D. Pa. 2018)</td>
<td>substantive FAPE</td>
<td></td>
<td>supported by the record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middleton v. District of Columbia</td>
<td>312 F. Supp. 3d 113 (D.D.C. 2018)</td>
<td>proc./subst. FAPE</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>supported by the record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geneviva v. Hampton Twp. Sch. Dist.</td>
<td>72 IDEL ¶ 57 (W.D. Pa. 2018)</td>
<td>substantive FAPE</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>supported by the record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.B. v. New York City Dept of Educ.</td>
<td>689 F. App’x 48 (2d Cir. 2017)</td>
<td>proc./subst. FAPE</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>supported by the record</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Same parties but different IEPs at issue.
The achievement gap in education is a well-documented phenomenon: White students outperform Black, Hispanic, and Native students. Family engagement efforts in children’s education have largely focused on these underperforming populations. Research on racial socialization has largely focused on people of color and neglected Whites, as if White people do not have race (Hagerman, 2020). A racial reckoning has been sweeping our nation, exemplified by the Black Lives Matter protests. Additionally, the previous president had granted license to aggrieved White folks to express their barely concealed and, at times, outright racism (Fuller & Meiners, 2020). Schools are microcosms of the larger community, and the prejudices and injustices outside the schoolhouse find their way inside (Gutkin & Song, 2013). Therefore, schools must double down on their efforts to advance educational equity. Moreover, instead of studying disadvantaged communities and marveling at their resilience in the face of injustice, this article seeks to shift the focus and wonder about the dominant group and how to engage them in collective action toward racial justice (Fuller & Meiners, 2020).

Racial socialization has primarily focused on Black families and how they teach their children about race and racism and how to negotiate these issues in an unequal world (Hagerman, 2020). Less scholarship has explored White racial ideology. Jennifer Harvey’s book Raising White Kids: Bringing Up Children in a Racially Unjust America (2017) discussed the importance of White children developing a healthy racial identity. Children must learn the truth about American history and commit to being a different kind of White person. She argued that many White people are socialized into either White silence or outright racism. Our culture is flawed in the way it talks about race. On the one hand we may celebrate multiculturalism and diversity while neglecting anything to do with White culture. On the other hand, learning about American history and hearing about current racial injustices may cause some to wallow in White guilt. White guilt unsupported and unprocessed can easily turn to White rage.

How might school psychologists harness the current heightened awareness among Whites about racial injustice and White supremacy? Syeed (2018) noted the eagerness of several higher income White parents to engage in honest dialogue around issues of race and privilege. Harvey (2017) pointed out that it takes only 10 to 20% of a certain population to create a critical change. Thus, given the recent racial unrest in our country and the increased awareness of social injustices, school psychologists might feel emboldened to invite collective antiracist efforts such as professional learning for school staff and educational events for families.

Could school psychologists lead antiracist work with a committed group of White families, not only for the sake of disadvantaged populations who have suffered at the hands of systemic racism, but also for the sake of White people themselves? Racism in the United States has killed untold numbers of African Americans “but also the hearts and spirits of all raised within the hateful racist system,” thus harming us all (Fuller & Meiners, 2020, p. 268). “Enhancing social justice in our society will require educational interventions in which people learn about the centrality of equity, fairness, diversity, etc. to the fabric of our society” (Gutkin & Song, 2013).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

Much like restorative justice practices, Fuller and Meiners (2020) recommended transformative justice and community accountability as frameworks for collective engagement when confronting racism and White supremacy. Such frameworks seek an alternative approach to harmful practices that does not rely on traditional punitive measures modeled after a criminal justice system. Instead, transformative justice and community accountability “...aim to support those that have experienced harm, hold those that do harm accountable, and draw communities in to name and transform the wider conditions that make that harm possible” (Fuller & Meiners, 2020, p. 265). The authors noted the importance of shifting our beliefs from “individual pathologies” (i.e., “bad apples”) to an understanding of the structural and systemic nature of racial injustice. Here the school psychologist assumes the role of mediator, facilitator, or consultant. Instead of addressing an individual instance of injustice, school psychologists could intervene with students, parents, teachers, and administrators to implement school-wide and district-wide events and interventions to promote social justice. Fuller and Meiners (2020) offered specific ideas that include resisting White fragility and creating a culture that values political education.

To promote inclusive and equitable schools, Syeed (2018) suggested three commitments school staff and diverse families must make: develop a “shared identity rooted in... school and neighborhood history,” build relationships, and establish “equitable leadership structures and practices” that give voice to lower-income families (p. 265). Syeed provided an example of a lower-income parent feeling indignant because newly arrived higher-income families were given tours of the school before enrolling, whereas lower-income families were not. Interviews with the higher-income parents revealed an awareness of, but discomfort with, their own privilege. Creating a shared identity would require the airing of these issues and confronting racial and class disparities. A school psychologist’s role in this case would be problem solver and relationship builder among the conflicting parental groups, and one way to do this is to facilitate critical conversations. Syeed also described the unequal division of labor among families in the school with mostly Hispanic parents organizing holiday events while mostly White parents assumed governance roles where decisions about budgeting, funding, and curriculum were made. In this example, school psychologists might point out this disparity to administrators and the parents themselves and advocate for more equal representation on governing boards. A commitment to social justice requires school psychologists to call attention to inconsistencies in how the school itself responds to the needs and interests of different families and consider more equitable practices. Syeed cited a specific example where a principal in a gentrifying D.C. school with a large Spanish-speaking population flipped the script, so to speak, during a parent meeting. The meeting was conducted in Spanish, and the English-speaking parents had to use the interpretation services instead of the other way around.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

School psychologists are held to professional standards that include social justice and racial equity. “[A] commitment to equity means that [school personnel] must confront Whiteness and racial injustice” (Syeed, 2018, p. 297). Antiracist work among White folks is important for people of color but also because “Our lives and our humanity depends on it” (Fuller & Meiners, 2020, p. 265). We know our nation’s schools are segregated, and even in these schools where the majority of families are White and middle class, does that mean that race is irrelevant despite what is happening across our country? Should we engage even these families in ways that puts their privilege in check and calls upon them to commit to antiracist work? As Jennifer Harvey noted (2017), a healthy White racial identity is not parallel to a positive Black or Latin identity, otherwise there is a risk of White nationalism. Rather, a healthy identity for White people acknowledges historical wrongs, does not get stuck in White guilt, and commits to racial justice. Raising a generation of antiracist White children has never been done before.

References


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After getting your luggage, a shuttle will deliver you to the convention center. For quick reference you can use the MBTA trip finder page (www.mbta.com/trip-planner) to plan your route around the city using public transportation. If you prefer to get a ride with a shared rider car, both Uber and Lyft are easier to find in Boston. Of course, once you are in the city, walking is a great way to get around, with beautiful streets and lots of walking trails. Walk Boston is a website (https://walkboston.org/resources/maps) with walking maps and suggested routes. Boston is a wonderful city for visitors, as many of the sites to visit are all within walking distance of each other and are very close to the convention location.

CONVENTION LOCATION

Located in the heart of downtown, Back Bay is an incredible neighborhood. Famous for its Victorian brownstones, historical sites, shops, and restaurants, Back Bay has something for everyone. In the center stands the stunning Trinity Church (https://www.trinitychurchboston.org). Built in 1872, this remarkable church is recognized as a National Historic Landmark building. Don’t miss its beautiful stained glass windows. Standing in the same square is the Boston Public Library. As the oldest library in the United States, the Boston Public Library Copley Square (https://www.bpl.org/visit-central-library) holds historical documents, hosts concert series, and even has high tea in the garden. If you love architecture, this is one place you will not want to miss. Nearby is Newbury Street (www.newburystreetleague.org), considered Boston’s Rodeo Drive, which is a charming cobblestone street full of trendy shops and restaurants. Are you hungry? Then this is the place to go! Mexican tacos, Italian gelato, French bistros, and Peruvian ceviche are just a few of the yummy foods available. One of the most stunning parks in Boston, Boston Public Garden (https://www.boston.gov/parks/public-garden) is at the end of Newbury Street and within walking distance of the convention hotels. The Boston Public Garden was the first botanical garden in this country and is home to a pond and hundreds of plants, trees, and walking paths. Next door is the Boston Common where the Frog Pond hosts ice skating and is the first stop on the Freedom Trail (www.thefreedomtrail.org), which is a must do if you are a history buff and want to follow on foot the course of critical places and events in U.S. history.

HYNES CONVENTION CENTER

While all these things are steps outside of the convention location there is much to do indoors as well—no need to worry about weather! The Hynes Convention Center (www.signatureboston.com/hynes) is in a complex that connects three hotels, two shopping malls, and one convention center, all indoors. Part of the complex is the Prudential Center (www.prudentialcenter.com), which contains 43 stores and many great places to eat. Also connected is the Copley Place Shopping Gallery, and if high end shopping is your thing, then you will not want to miss this stunning mall. All of this is within steps of your conference hotel.

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

Still looking for more to do? Well you are in luck! Boston has many museums to pique anyone’s interests. The Museum of Fine Arts (www.mfa.org) has shared works of art since 1876. From Monet to mummies, the MFA houses remarkable works of art from around the world. Looking for modern art? Then take a trip to the Institute of Contemporary Art (www.icaboston.org), which features thematic exhibitions, local artists, and student art. Not into art? Check out the Museum of Science (www.mos.org) for interactive exhibits, Omni movies, planetarium shows, and live presentations. A distinctively unique museum near the Convention Center is the Museum of African American History (www.maah.org), which encompasses both the the Abiel Smith School and the African Meeting House. The Abiel Smith School (1836) is the oldest public school still standing in the United States that was built for the sole purpose of educating African American children. The first African Meeting House (1806) is the oldest extant Black church building in the nation.

Prefer the sea? Then take a trip to the New England Aquarium (www.neaq.org), where the sea lions will make you smile, the giant octopus will amaze you, and you are sure to fall in love with the African penguins. If you want to see an even bigger animal, then walk next door to Northern Wharf where you can go on a whale watch, where on each trip a whale sighting is guaranteed! Are you a movie or television buff? On Location Tours (onlocationtours.com/boston-movie-tv-tours/boston-tv-movie-tour) visits locations made famous by movies and shows filmed in Boston such as The Departed, The Heat, The Town, Legally Blonde, American Hustle, Gone Baby Gone, Good Will Hunting, Mystic River, Cheers, and Boston Legal.

SPORTS

If sports are more your thing, then you have come to the right place. You might have heard that we have won a championship or two! Between the Patriots, Red Sox, Celtics, Bruins, and New England Revolution, as well as...
We’re Back in Person!

We are so excited to be back in person at the NASP 2022 Annual Convention in Boston. Our 2021 Virtual Convention was a huge success, but there is nothing like being together in one place with more than 5,000 fellow school psychologists. As always, we have a terrific program and the City of Boston promises a great time for everyone.

- Online convention and hotel registration opens October 1, 2021.
- Convention registration is required for access to hotel registration.
- Register by November 3, 2021 and save $50. You’ll also be automatically entered for a chance to win a $500 Visa gift card.

New for 2022: The Boston Express Virtual Package. We realize that some people simply can’t travel to the convention for a variety of reasons, so we are adding a virtual component to help meet those needs. If you are unable to attend the 2022 convention in person, be sure to register for our Boston Express Virtual Package. This is an entirely virtual package of eight 80-minute live-streamed Documented Sessions, all of which are closed-captioned and include live chats. Watch all sessions in real time to earn 10 hours of Category A CPD credit with these fantastic sessions.

Addition to more than 1,000 peer reviewed educational sessions, the Boston convention will include a number of invited presentations over the course of the week.

**Keynote.** Our keynote speaker will be renowned author, scientist, and speaker, Temple Grandin, who will share her experiences and expertise on being a person living with autism, her understanding of the human mind, and the ways educators and school psychologists can support the learning, healthy development, and well-being of students with autism. Look for her keynote address, “Engaging Hearts and Minds: Unwritten Rules of Social Relationships.”

**Featured sessions.** Featured sessions will be presented by notable experts such as Frank Worrell (our Distinguished Lecturer) on psychosocial constructs and adaptive functioning, Susan Jacob (our Legends Address) on ethics in school psychology, Byron McClure on social justice and equity, Michele Gay on resilience and recovery after tragedy, and Anne Zaslofsky on math anxiety and interventions.

All of the above are included with convention registration! You can also add more intensive professional development by selecting one of the 28 paid workshops.

**Documented sessions.** Documented sessions provide NASP-Approved CPD and will address racial trauma, restorative practices, early childhood social–emotional learning, multitiered systems of support, autism, mental health, ethics, and supervision.

Visit www.nasponline.org/conventions for full details on our exciting convention program.

many college sports teams, there is seldom a day that a game is not played in Boston. Check out the Celtics and Bruins schedules for home games during the convention week.

**FOOD**
End your conference day with a wonderful meal. Head to Chinatown for delicious dim sum. The Seaport has the perfect spot to get all of the New England seafood you have been craving. From barbecue to Japanese food to a juicy burger, the South End has anything you crave. Browse through the iconic Boston landmark, Faneuil Hall Marketplace (faneuilhallmarketplace.com) to sample of little of everything Boston has to offer. Sweet tooth? Join the debate on which Northend bakery has the best cannolis. Boston is a food city, and there is something for everyone.

Whether it is the history, the food, the arts, or the activities, Boston is a city that anyone can enjoy! The local team is here to answer any questions and help you discover all that Boston has to offer. We look forward to seeing you in Beantown in 2022!
Post-COVID Complications
[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]

develop post-COVID complications. The United Kingdom’s National Health Service, which recognized lingering viral effects much earlier than other nations, uses the term “long COVID.” In the United States, “COVID long hauler” and “long-term COVID” are more frequently used. However, these terms may be somewhat misleading, as the chronicity of this postviral syndrome is unknown. The CDC uses the term “post-COVID conditions” to describe persistent health issues after a COVID-19 infection in their recent guidelines for healthcare professionals (CDC, 2021). The National Institute of Health recently started using the term “post-acute sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 (PASC)” and we encourage its use because the term more accurately refers to the symptoms and complications experienced after the virus is no longer detected via testing. Further complicating our understanding of PASC is disagreement regarding what symptom duration defines the condition, as various time frames have been suggested, including more than three weeks (Teneforde et al., 2020), 1 month (CDC, 2021), and 3 months (Dennis et al., 2020).

While PASC now receives frequent media coverage, the scientific literature lags, with less than a dozen published or preprint studies which focus on nonhospitalized adults (Bliddal et al., 2021; Dennis et al., 2020; Hellmuth et al., 2021; Logue et al., 2021; Mahmoud et al., 2021; Makaronidis et al., 2021; Peterson et al., 2020), college students (Walsh-Messinger et al., in press), and children (Buonsenso et al., 2021). Thus, members of the medical community may be relatively unaware of or untrained regarding persistent post-COVID symptoms and complications, and school might be the place such issues are first identified.

Many PASC symptoms resemble persistent symptoms experienced by some students who have sustained concussions (e.g., headache, fatigue, brain fog, memory impairment). Because both conditions involve “invisible” issues in previously healthy individuals, and because there is limited research on this novel coronavirus, schools might effectively apply strategies recommended for students with persistent postconcussion symptoms to support students with PASC. Such strategies include temporary academic and environmental accommodations while symptoms resolve.

COVID EFFECTS ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Acute severity in children and adolescents. Children and adolescents were initially considered low risk for contracting severe COVID-19, but research now suggests that 8–20% require hospitalization (Kim et al., 2020; Liao et al., 2020). Although rare, it is now apparent that children and adolescents are also at higher risk of developing COVID-19 associated multisystem inflammatory syndrome, typically 2–4 weeks after the onset of acute COVID-19 symptoms (Cheung et al., 2020; Torral et al., 2021). Multisystem inflammatory syndrome presents with features similar to Kawasaki disease and toxic shock syndrome, including persistent fever, systemic shock, elevated markers of inflammation, swelling of the legs and hands, cardiac and kidney damage, and gastrointestinal symptoms.

Prevalence and symptomatology of PASC. In children and adolescents, PASC is more common than initially thought, with preliminary estimates that 30–55% experience persistent symptoms and post-COVID complications for 6 weeks or more, and many of whom continue to report at least one symptom 6 months after acute illness (Buonsenso et al., 2021; Ludvigsson, 2021; Walsh-Messinger et al., in press). Although research remains scarce in all populations, one peer-reviewed study and two preprint studies of PASC in children and university students suggest that fatigue, exercise intolerance (i.e., exacerbation of symptoms following minimal physical exertion), headache, rhinitis, dyspnea, cough, chest pain and tightness, muscle and joint pain, insomnia, impaired concentration, brain fog, and appetite loss are most frequently reported (Buonsenso et al., 2021; Dobkin et al., 2021; Walsh-Messinger et al., in press). Known symptoms associated with PASC are included in Figure 1.

Anxiety, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms are frequently reported by adults with PASC (Mazza et al., 2020; Uzunova et al., 2021), similar to reports after the first coronavirus outbreak (Sheng et al., 2005). Although rare, it should be noted that there are case reports of post-acute COVID psychosis in adults (Ferrando et al., 2020; Lim et al., 2020). Neuroinflammation is linked to both depression and psychosis, which could explain the increase in depression, and, to a much lesser extent, psychosis (Mazza et al., 2020). It has also been proposed that combinations of biological vulnerability, stress, SARS-CoV-2 infection of the central nervous system, cytokine storm, and smell loss likely contribute to the development or exacerbation of anxiety (Uzunova et al., 2021). Again, limited research is available to indicate whether children and adolescents with PASC also experience increased psychiatric symptoms. We found that depression was significantly increased in college students with PASC compared to students who fully recovered from disease within a month, but there was no difference compared to students who never contracted COVID-19 (Walsh-Messinger et al., in press). Until more research is available to provide guidance, we recommend close monitoring for increased anxiety, depression, and PTSD symptoms.

PASC risk factors. While estimates vary widely, 50–90% of PASC cases are female, with similar rates reported in adult (Dennis et al., 2020; Petersen et al., 2020), child, adolescent, and young adult samples (Buonsenso et al., 2021; Walsh-Messinger et al., in press) and a child case series (Ludvigsson, 2021), suggesting that female sex may be a risk factor for developing post-COVID syndrome. What is striking about this postviral syndrome in adults is that it frequently affects those who were previously healthy, with no obvious risk factors beyond biological sex, and who experienced mild-to-moderate acute illness. In a few cases, children who were asymptomatic during the acute phase developed PASC weeks later (Buonsenso et al., 2021). Until scientists identify genetic, immunological, environmental, or other risk factors, it should be assumed that anyone may develop PASC.

COLLABORATIVE CARE

When a health issue affects a student’s learning, school personnel must communicate effectively with one another, with medical personnel, and with the family to prevent and address obstacles to effective and efficient care (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2014). Post-acute COVID care coordination is essential because the disease can damage or disrupt multiple organ systems; thus, treatment may involve numerous medical specialists (e.g., cardiologists, neurologists, pulmonologists) in addition to the primary care physician. COVID is an emotionally charged topic. Many people feel passionately (and differently from one another) about mask-wearing, vaccines, quarantines, and remote learning. Parents, educators, and healthcare professionals may disagree on some of these issues, which can create barriers to collaborative care. Even when there are such disagreements, it is essential that school personnel listen to parents, validate feelings, avoid defensiveness, recognize fears and frustrations, focus on solutions, and work together toward common goals. A school-based team can facilitate this collaborative process and ensure that every student who returns to school post-COVID is monitored for return to academics and activity.

A COVID TEAM LEADER. The first author’s previous work on concussions emphasized the importance of developing a school-based concussion team, with a designated team leader.
(Davies, 2016). Similarly, it can be helpful to have a school-based “COVID team leader” who serves as the central communicator for everyone involved in the student’s care. This person can oversee the environmental and academic accommodations, disseminating them to teachers and communicating with the family and community-based healthcare providers. Depending on the roles and responsibilities of school personnel, this might be the school nurse, school psychologist, school counselor, an administrator, or someone else. In many cases, the best person to serve in this role is the 504 coordinator or RTI/MTSS leader, due to their understanding of both accommodations and progress monitoring. Other staff can assist as needed, particularly if they have taken the time to educate themselves on outcomes of COVID-19 in children.

It is helpful for the team leader to secure a signed release of medical information from the parent to allow two-way communication between the school and healthcare providers. The COVID team leader can help ensure that school staff understand how to appropriately communicate what is involved in this plan in a way that maintains student privacy, per the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, which protects information on a student’s health (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, n.d.) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which protects information on a student’s school records (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.)

Return to school and activity. Just as every concussion is different, everyone reacts to COVID-19 differently; symptom clusters and recovery rates will vary. The overall recovery trajectory is not linear, as the disease presents with variable symptoms that can fluctuate day to day, and even throughout the day. One might feel “better,” only to walk up a flight of stairs and end up with profound fatigue and unable to get out of bed for a week or more. Thus, a very gradual return to physical activity is essential. For example, the recovering student might engage in no more than 30% of what they feel capable of on any given day. A good rule of thumb is to think of the recovering student as having a strict $100 daily “budget,” which they can expend on academics, physical activity, and/or emotional stress or excitement, but spending even just $1 more may set their recovery back days or even weeks. It is also important that they get plenty of rest and drink electrolytes (e.g., Gatorade, Pedialyte, Nuun) throughout the day.

As with students returning to school postconcussion, it is recommended that educators front-load adjustments for students with post-acute COVID symptoms. This means providing ample support and accommodations, then gradually withdrawing them as the symptoms subside and stamina increases. Because the COVID recovery trajectory can be particularly erratic, it is recommended that the student be symptom free for an extended period of time before very gradually withdrawing accommodations, erring on the side of waiting longer than may seem necessary. Withdrawal of accommodations should be carefully monitored, and any resurgence of symptoms during this time warrants reinstatement of accommodations.

Herein, we recommend the process outlined below for return to school, modified from our concussion response process (Davies, 2016) and drawing from our PASC research in college students (Walsh-Messinger et al., in press) and evaluation fied from our concussion response process (Davies, 2016) and drawing from our knowledge of concussion responses.

The SARS-CoV-2 virus has swiftly infected millions of people since it was first identified. It is increasingly clear that many survivors (including children and adolescents) struggle with ongoing symptoms for months after they receive a negative test.

1. COVID diagnosis is reported to school.
2. School official asks the parent to notify the school if the child remains symptomatic after the quarantine period.
3. Educational materials outlining post-acute COVID symptoms and potential complications are sent to the parent.
4. Upon return to school, COVID Team Leader coordinates the assessment of the child’s medical and academic needs.
5. The COVID team determines appropriate academic and environmental accommodations.
6. The COVID Team Leader disseminates accommodations to teachers and other relevant personnel and oversees progress monitoring.

To aid in symptom monitoring, we have developed a tool (see Table 1) to assess severity of PASC symptoms; however, we caution educational professionals to keep in mind that our knowledge of PASC continues to evolve and this tool may need to be modified as we learn more about PASC in children and adolescents.

### ACADEMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL ACCOMMODATIONS

The following general and symptoms-based accommodations are modified from those developed for students with persistent postconcussion symptoms (CDC, n.d.; Davies, 2016). Most of these can apply to (or be modified for) students enrolled in online learning and we offer some specific remote learning suggestions.

#### General
- Flexible attendance schedule with the understanding that the student might have several good days or weeks in a row which could be followed by bad days or weeks causing them to miss school.
- Optional remote learning for days in which they cannot attend school in person.
- No physical education class or rigorous physical play at recess; all other physical activity (e.g., walking between classrooms) should be minimized.
- Allow student to audit class (i.e., participate without producing grades).
- Avoid overstimulating environments (e.g., hallway at class transitions, band practice).
- Allow students to drop high level or elective classes or take an incomplete without penalty if adjustments go on for a long period of time.
- Remove or limit high-stakes testing or projects.
- Alternate periods of mental exertion with longer periods of mental rest.
- Allow the student to drink electrolyte beverages in class throughout the day.

#### Accommodations for Cognitive/Thinking Symptoms
- Do not penalize students for forgetting assignments or for writing errors, as this is a common manifestation of brain fog.
- Modify workload. Exempt nonessential written class work or homework when possible.
- Reduce class assignments and homework to critical tasks only.
- Base grades on adjusted work.
- Provide extended time to complete assignments/tests. Adjust due dates or have a no-deadline policy.
- Once key learning objective has been presented, reduce length of assignments/workload to maximize cognitive stamina (e.g., assign 5 of 30 math problems).
- Allow alternative means of assessment (e.g., student can demonstrate understanding orally to the teacher or via multiple choice format instead of in writing).
- Provide written instructions for work that is deemed essential.
- Provide class notes by the teacher or a peer. Allow use of a computer, smartphone, or voice recorder.
- Allow use of notes for test taking.

#### Accommodations for Fatigue/Physical Symptoms
- Allow time to visit the school nurse for headaches and other symptoms.
- Allow strategic rest breaks (e.g., between classes or 5–10 minutes every 30–40 minutes during the day).
- Allow hall passing time before crowds have cleared.
- Develop a plan so student can discreetly leave class as needed for rest.
- Students with smell or taste loss may experience a decrease in appetite. In such cases, caloric intake during lunch should be discreetly monitored.
- Develop a plan for students with GI symptoms to quickly and discreetly access the restroom.

#### Accommodations for Social or Emotional Issues
- Encourage student to explore alternative extracurricular activities that are nonphysical and not emotionally or intellectually taxing.
- Develop an emotional support plan for the student (e.g., identify an adult at school to talk with if the child feels overwhelmed).
- Provide supportive therapy or a support group for students to discuss their COVID-19 experiences and recovery.
Accommodations for Remote Learning

- Allow the student to attend class with their camera off so they can lay in bed if needed.
- Flexible attendance schedule that allows the student to join class for only part of the day, at whatever interval they can (e.g., attend class for an hour in the morning or 30 minutes before lunch and 30 minutes in the afternoon).
- Learning via an online platform can be more emotionally and cognitively draining than learning in person. As such, workload should be adjusted.
- Anticipate that attention, concentration, and memory difficulties may hinder organization and self-sufficiency (even in older students) and more frequent contact with a parent or caregiver should be maintained so they are aware of what is expected of the student.

Accommodations: Potential Barriers to Implementation

- Some students may be reluctant to accept accommodations and instead push through symptoms to complete work because of the anxiety of work piling up (Halstead et al., 2013; Sady et al., 2021).
- Thus, it is helpful, when possible, to excuse assignments altogether. If an assignment cannot be excused entirely, providing a parallel self-care “assignment” could provide incentive for the student to use the accommodations and work at a more reasonable pace.
- Medical professionals who are unaware of PASC or who are untrained in its care can help by providing information to all students, families, and school staff.

References

Let’s Get in GEAR: National School Psychology Week, November 8–12, 2021

By Courtney Huguenin, Eric Elias, Rebecca Comizio, & Katherine Cowan

National School Psychology Week (NSPW) is a fun, easy way to highlight the vital work that school psychologists and other educators do to help all students thrive. This year’s theme of “Let’s Get in GEAR!” enables you to highlight what you and others can do to help students identify and develop their academic, social, emotional, and behavioral skills, and the evidence-based practices that help them achieve their best. It is crucial that families, teachers, and administrators are aware of our role in making those connections and providing those services.

The GEAR (Grow, Engage, Advocate, Rise) acronym speaks to both students and adults and provides a challenge to grow both personally and academically or professionally. It encourages us as school psychologists to engage in best practices and advocate for the field and mental health supports for children. To rise implies resilience and renewal, which has a particular resonance this year as we work to help students, families, and school staff emerge from the challenges of the past year and a half. School psychologists are particularly skilled at assisting students and staff in growing and working together while shifting into different gears to meet the demands of school and life. Overall, getting in gear suggests that we move together; when one gear moves, the gears connected to it move as well. When we grow and move together, there is a positive synergy that builds and becomes greater than any single effort. We grow together, we engage critical systems, and we advocate and rise together.

NSPW resources and messaging can be adapted to students and adults, different age groups, and multiple contexts. From sample newsletters to interactive classroom activities, to press releases and social media images, there are multiple ways to share your efforts to “Get In GEAR.”

**SAMPLE GEAR ACTIVITIES**

Your NSPW poster will arrive in your October Communiqué. This is a great visual to hang in your office or on a bulletin board in the hallway to help create connections and spark ideas and actions. You can also download the poster image in English or Spanish to give to teachers and other staff to post in their classrooms or spaces. Following is a sample of the suggested activities to throughout the week, linked to theme.

**Make it interactive.** Add the words Grow - Engage - Advocate - Rise on the bulletin board with the poster. Use the blank cut out versions of the gears from the poster available with the downloadable resources. Each time a student engages in a behavior or completes a task related to any of those words, have them write it down or draw a picture in a gear and staple the description or picture under the word. In a pocket on the corner of the bulletin board, keep a list of sample activities the students can do that will relate to one or more of the four words (for those who may struggle to come up with ideas on their own). When they have completed this, have them discuss in their own words and add it to the bulletin board.

**Build social skills.** The poster provides some initial ideas for positive behaviors that can help students envision how to grow social skills, engage with community and peers, advocate for others, and rise to be their best selves, all to develop and maintain deep friendships. Discuss the ideas on the poster and consider why they might be good suggestions for the students in your group. Assist them to brainstorm other activities that will help them build self-confidence and connect with others in order to overcome barriers and understand what’s possible. Have them role-play specific behaviors with you or other members of the group and discuss when would be ideal times to try to engage in these behaviors. Consider sending each student with a homework assignment to try one new or challenging behavior from the list and report back at your next meeting. (Virtual activity: Use the chat feature of your platform to ask students to share ideas.)

**Build self-esteem and confidence.** Lead a discussion about previous experiences in which students have risen to a challenge. Ask them to identify the ways in which they changed gears to meet their situations with their strengths. Then, discuss the feelings associated with their achievement, such as pride, happiness, self-confidence, and self-esteem.

**Link to the Gratitude Works program.** Identify one of the actions that embody gratitude and select one of the Gratitude Works activities to do.

**Classroom lesson.** Work with teachers to design a writing, social studies, or health lesson on small acts of positive behavior that can have a larger impact on peers, adults, and the students themselves. Have students pick different suggestions from the list or develop one of their own to relate how even small behaviors, particularly interpersonal ones, can leave a lasting impression on others and change the course of your day and that of others. Some suggestions could be to have the students write about getting into GEAR and why it is important to them or to others, talk about how kind acts “ripple” and change how everyone is feeling and acting, and work with speech pathologists to include the word in vocabulary and concept formation lessons.

**Hold a scavenger hunt.** Have students work as a class-wide team to find someone throughout the day who is demonstrating growth, engagement, advocacy, or rising above challenges. See if together the class can identify all of the concepts from the poster. Or have students select four concepts to find that day and see if each student can find people demonstrating these concepts. Provide an opportunity to share at the end of the day.

**Empower students by helping them get into gear.** Considering nominating students for the NASP Student Power Award. This award was created to honor students who support others and recognize students for progress toward personal goals, optimism, problem solving, eagerness, resiliency, and dedication. This would be a great way to honor students at an award ceremony that parents can attend.

**Connect with school-wide positive behavior interventions and supports.** Consider your school rules and how growth, engagement, advocacy, and rising support them. Help students see how engaging in these behaviors will help them meet personal or classroom goals. Encourage teachers to provide intermittent positive reinforcement in the form of verbal comments, thumbs up, or even school-wide tokens (e.g., printable gears) for engaging in these types of behaviors. Include the words and explanations in the school’s morning announcement. Consider using the poster as a kick-off to a year-long focus on the GEAR behaviors. For example, create a bulletin board that changes weekly or monthly to highlight different behaviors that relate to growth.

**Morning announcements.** On the first day of NSPW, explain that it is National School Psychology Week and this week is all about Getting in GEAR. Explain that throughout the week, you will share what it means to get in GEAR. Read a description for each letter in GEAR per day over the morning announcements.
Monday, 11/8/2021: “G stands for Grow. Today, think of a goal that you would like to achieve. The goal can be academic or personal. Identify one step you can take this week that will help you reach your goal. Even small steps count!”

Tuesday, 11/9/2021: “E stands for Engage. Today, show interest in an activity during one of your lessons. At the end of the lesson, share one fact you learned with a friend. Showing interest helps you engage and learn.”

Wednesday, 11/10/2021: “A stands for Advocate. Ask a question or share one thing you may need to help make it a great day.”

Thursday, 11/11/2021 (Read on Wednesday if you are closed today): “R stands for Rise. Rise relates to resilience. Take a moment today to reflect on something that was difficult that you have overcome. What did you learn from that situation?”

Friday, 11/12/2021: “As National School Psychology Week comes to a close, we invite you to reflect on how you worked with others to Get in GEAR. Through growth, engagement, and advocacy, we can all rise together to make a positive impact in our school community.”

Recognize others. The Possibilities in Action Partner program is a great way to recognize colleagues, either through their own efforts or by encouraging the efforts of others, who make an exceptional difference in the lives of students and families by supporting the possibilities within each student. This could be a teacher, administrator, coach, community provider, parent mentor, or any other individual who stands out in your mind as going above and beyond the call of duty to help students achieve their best.

Visit https://www.nasponline.org/research-and-policy/advocacy/national-school-psychology-week-(nspw) for more suggestions and resources. Be creative yourself! And share your efforts with us through the NSPW feedback survey and on social media using the @nasponline and #SchoolPsychWeek hashtag.

EARLY CAREER SPOTLIGHT

Program to Engage in Conversations About Systemic Racism

Q&A WITH EMILY NEUBAUER

Emily Neubauer, NCSP, works primarily with elementary students (3-year-olds to fourth grade) at two schools within Capital School District in Dover, DE. Capital School District serves culturally and racially diverse suburban, urban, and rural communities. Some of the district-based programs include: Spanish immersion, Intensive Learning Center, 21st Century Community Learning Center, Advanced Placement, Career and Technical Education, and Gifted and Talented Education. Capital School District has also received a multimillion dollar grant for mental health services for supporting student and staff mental health. At one of her schools, there is a Spanish immersion program in place for grades K–4.

Tell us where you work and how you decided on this type of placement.

I transferred to Capital School District for the 2020–2021 school year after working for the Hawaii Department of Education as a school psychologist. I chose Capital School District because of the large amount of support for school psychologists in the district. The administration and staff truly value the expertise of school psychologists and their contributions to the schools. The Capital School District staff and my school psychologist colleagues have been extremely supportive of me since starting in my new position. The district staff has provided continuous professional development and has been supportive with initiatives for change as well as for our passions and areas of continued interest. I have enjoyed my experience at Capital School District as well as working with colleagues who are passionate about the success of our students and meeting the needs of the whole child.

What experience have you had in developing programs for areas of need in your work setting?

My experience has been positive thus far. This past year I worked on developing a program within the district called “Let’s Talk” to engage my colleagues in open and honest discussions about systemic racism. One thing I made sure to do when introducing the program to the district and my colleagues was to be flexible with ideas and open to collaboration with others with a shared passion. I have been able to collaborate and expand this initiative to larger groups within the district with much positive feedback as well. I’m hoping to expand this program further in the next school year.

What is your area of expertise? How have you developed skills in this area?

I would say at this point in my career I don’t have an area of expertise. I’m still working on my craft and finding my passions within the field. I continuously work on developing skills in many different areas that I work closely with, such as English language learners, culturally and linguistically diverse students, and low socioeconomic status populations. In working with culturally and linguistically diverse students, I collaborate with professionals in my district and throughout the field in general to gather more information and techniques for working with such diverse students. For me, continuing to ask questions and collaborating with others who are more knowledgeable in this area is a key component to developing the skills needed for success. I also have collaborated and connected with a few professionals that I have met through NASP, who have encouraged continuous education and provided exposure to various viewpoints.

How do you build relationships with colleagues when broaching difficult topics like systemic racism?

Developing relationships with colleagues is a key component to a successful and efficient work space. I always try my best to be an active listener when developing relationships and ensure that I hear the other person’s points of view. As I mentioned before, last year I developed a program called “Let’s Talk” as a safe space for my colleagues and me to engage in dialogue around systemic racism. My goal was to ensure that the conversations I facilitate remain safe, welcoming, diverse, productive, and a positive contribution to our schools. Before each session of Let’s Talk, I reviewed ground rules to ensure that everyone was on the same page throughout the session. I told my colleagues to try to understand what someone is saying before rushing to judgement, understand we...
NASP ELECTIONS

Self-Nominations Due for NASP 2022 Elections
By Stephen E. Brock

The 2022 election process has begun. This year our association will elect a president-elect, treasurer, and 17 state delegates. Below you will find a listing of NASP positions open for self-nomination.

NASP’s nominating process is simple. The association takes self-nominations from any eligible NASP member wishing to seek election as a NASP officer or delegate. Delegate candidates must have their official NASP mailing address be the state or territory wherein they are seeking election. With many working and living in different states, it is important to note that NASP goes by where official association mailings are sent (i.e., the state or territory that the member’s Communiqué is mailed to would be the state or territory wherein they are eligible to run for delegate).

The deadline for all self-nominations is midnight Pacific time September 15, 2021. The Elections Committee chair must receive an email from the candidate (nominations are not accepted from anyone other than the candidate) stating their intent to run for a specific office (i.e., president-elect, treasurer, or a state/territory delegate). All potential candidates must contact the Nominations and Elections Chair personally via email. All self-nominations must be sent to Stephen E. Brock, NASP Nominations and Elections chair, at brock@csus.edu.

As has been the case in the past, we will again conduct a video interview of all president-elect candidates. This will occur sometime in the fall of 2020. In addition, the president-elect candidates and all delegate candidates will be asked to submit in writing responses to specific questions developed by the Nominations and Elections Committee. The positions open for election (with 3-year terms beginning on July 1, 2022) are as follows:

PRESIDENT- ELECT (three 1-year terms as: president-elect, July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023; president, July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024; and past-president, July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025).  
TREASURER (3-year term, July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2025).  
DELEGATES (3-year terms beginning July 1, 2022 and ending June 30, 2025).

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- Delaware  
- New York*  
- Puerto Rico*  
- Vermont*

SOUTHEAST REGION
- North Carolina*  
- South Carolina*  
- Tennessee  
- Texas  
- West Virginia

CENTRAL REGION
- Indiana*  
- Missouri**  
- Oklahoma*  
- South Dakota

WESTERN REGION
- Alaska  
- Idaho  
- Oregon  
- Washington

* Indicates the current delegate is terming out of office and is not eligible to run again.  
**The Missouri delegate (who would have termed out this year) moved before her term expired and a new delegate was appointed to complete her term. This appointed delegate is eligible for two more complete 3-year terms. This footnote is intended to correct an error in the June 2021 issue of Communiqué, which mistakenly listed the current Missouri delegate as terming out.

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Future School Psychologists Clubs

By Elana R. Bernstein, Ashley E. Lockemer, & Ann F. Justice

Historically, despite more formal efforts to spread awareness about the profession (e.g., National School Psychologists Week presentations, word of mouth), many school psychologists discover the field “by accident” or happenstance. This, in conjunction with attrition, training constraints, an expanding role in schools, and an ever-evolving need for increased school psychologist-to-student ratios to address unmet academic and mental health needs, has resulted in a critical shortage of school psychologists nationwide. The shortage in many regions across the United States has led to increased advocacy initiatives to promote and diversify the field (NASP 2021). In Ohio, we are experiencing a shortage, particularly in rural underserved regions (Ohio Department of Education, 2019). Increasing efforts to attract, recruit, and retain high-quality school psychologists have been recommended nationwide (NASP, 2020).

To address such shortages, the Ohio School Psychologists Association (OSPA) engaged in several initiatives, including a related services workforce group sponsored by our state board of education (ODE) and a joint task force established with our state’s Inter-University Council (IUC) of school psychology programs, which conducted a strategic analysis of the barriers contributing to the current shortages of school psychologists in Ohio. The findings of these two groups were similar, noting that the greatest areas of need for additional school psychologists and related services personnel (denoted by unfilled positions at the start of the school year) are in rural and underserved areas, particularly in urban districts with high student poverty and average to high population size, and in suburban districts with low student poverty and average student population size (OSPA, 2016).

As an extension of these work groups, several specific recommendations to address the current shortages were made for various external stakeholders including universities and state and local policy makers; OSPA, in conjunction with ODE, IUC, NASP, State Board of Education and General Assembly members; and Ohio’s Congressional representatives. The following goal areas were prioritized:

- Attract individuals to the field: Promote the profession of school psychology to more high school and undergraduate students, as well as the general public, and recruit highly motivated and more diverse students to school psychology graduate programs.
- Prepare individuals for the field: Assure the maximum number of school psychologist interns graduate from the state’s NASP-approved programs.
- Retain individuals in the field: Retain school psychologists, especially those in underserved school districts, and ensure job quality (e.g., caseloads, workloads), financial incentives (e.g., license renewal fees), and supported professional development and mentorship.

NASP (2020) similarly made recommendations to ameliorate shortages via recruitment and training that extended beyond those identified in OSPA 2016. These include:

- Recruiting a more inclusive and diverse workforce by emphasizing themes of multiculturalism, equity, and social justice; ensuring that school psychology program faculty represent a range of minoritized backgrounds; and directly and personally contacting applicants from minoritized backgrounds.
- Making re specializing and professional retraining more accessible by helping to recruit professionals from related fields (e.g., school counseling, clinical psychology) and offering flexible options for those returning to school.

One initiative that grew from our state recommendations was the establishment of a future school psychologists club. This club targeted the first prioritized goal: to attract individuals into the field through intentional and early recruitment, especially from minoritized backgrounds and rural areas, and by establishing ongoing connections to school psychologists in the field.

FUTURE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS OF OHIO CLUB

As a relatively unexplored avenue through which to address the school psychology shortage, the formation of a school psychology-related club at the high school and undergraduate levels, was proposed. This club focused on student outreach opportunities and was fashioned as a targeted recruitment tool to increase the number of school psychologists from minoritized backgrounds, race, gender, and ethnicity, as well as potential school psychologists from rural areas, especially those who might wish to commit to working in these areas. OSPA and IUC endorsed the club proposal and agreed to name the club the Future School Psychologists of Ohio (FSPO). To establish the club, we began our efforts in the late spring and proceeded through the following steps:

1. We received a NASP Community of Practice mini grant ($500) to initiate the club.
2. We created a logo with the assistance of OSPA’s business manager, who helped us order branded T-shirts, stickers, and pop sockets to distribute to FSPO members.
3. We engaged in targeted recruitment efforts through multiple channels, including university department chairs in related disciplines, college Psi Chi chapter presidents, diversity-focused student organizations, and service organizations in related disciplines.
4. We formed a planning committee to set dates for monthly meetings, agendas and speakers, and roles/tasks for contacting members, etc.
5. We built meeting agendas utilizing resources from NASP, including the NASP Exposure Project, resources from ODE, and several peer reviewed articles on a variety of related topics.
6. We collected pre and post data documenting members’ awareness of the field and ultimate interest and commitment to applying to a school psychology training program.
7. We engaged in ongoing communication with state association members to promote and provide updates on the FSPO initiative, continue to recruit new members, and solicit participation in our practitioner panel.
8. We regularly reported on our progress during NASP’s Regional Assistance to States/Government and Professional Relations and Regional Leadership meetings to create awareness of the initiative and to engage with other state leaders on issues related to workforce shortages.

The club's mission statement states: The Future School Psychologists of Ohio club aims to spread awareness and garner the interest and early commitment of students to the field of school psychology by providing members related educational and professional outreach opportunities within educational, psychological, and other community settings.

The primary goals of the FSPO club is to provide both high school and undergraduate students with related educational and community opportunities and volunteer experiences, opportunities to build relationships with school psychologists and school psychology trainees, didactic sessions on various disabilities, and awareness of social justice and current issues impacting the field. The club also promotes participation in community outreach activities or fundraisers to increase awareness and knowledge of school psychology as a profession. Ultimately, the FSPO club can serve as an avenue to assist the individual in garnering related experiences and necessary skills toward becoming a successful school psychologist. It is grounded in the notion that establishing an early and meaningful connection with the field is important, and largely missing from many of our current initiatives.

The pilot of the project occurred at the University of Dayton (UD) during the 2020–2021 academic year, through a partnership between Dr. Elana Bernstein, assistant professor in school psychology and IUC president at that time, and Ashley Lockemer, OSPA president at that time. Three school psychology graduate students were also involved in the pilot of this club, including Emily Mosca, intern and third-year student representative for the School Psychologists of the University of Dayton (SPUD) and former UD OSPA student representative; Annie Justice, second-year school psychology student and vice president for SPUD; and Katie Pfeifer, SPUD president. We also created an undergraduate student liaison position to ensure that we were adequately meeting the needs of our undergraduate student members and a diversity student...
liaison position to ensure that we were meeting the needs of our members from mini-
orized backgrounds. Several members of the OSPA executive board also provided support, including the early career and diversity equity and inclusion committees, membership co-chairs, student representatives to OSPA, the Ohio Psychological As-
sociation (OPA) liaison, and the fiscal advisory committee. Finally, the club engaged in ongoing collaboration with diversity experts at Ohio State University and the OPA, who provided suggestions on how to strategize and prioritize the recruitment and retention of individuals from minoritized backgrounds and other related fields.

Consistent with OSPA’s commitment to social justice, we plan to expand FSPO chapters to universities in rural and urban areas, and then to high schools in diverse or underserved areas. We intend to seek inclusion of several external stakeholder groups, particularly those who serve diverse populations (e.g., Hispanic Associa-
tion of Colleges and Universities, Offices of Multicultural Affairs, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and individuals/groups attending the Latino Education Summit), as well as others that engage broad groups of students (e.g., American Psychological Association psychology teachers groups, local Psi Chi and Student Af-
liates of School Psychology chapters, and the Ohio School Counselors Association).

In the midst of a pandemic, antiracism advocacy efforts, an ever-changing edu-
cational landscape, and rising mental health needs among the students and families we serve, now more than ever, we need to be a part of the solution to actively address the shortages in school psychology in Ohio and nationwide. The Future School Psy-
chologists Club offers an opportunity to share the joys and professional fulfillment we serve, now more than ever, we need to be a part of the solution to actively address the shortages in school psychology in Ohio and nationwide. The Future School Psychology: Resource guide.

TIPS FOR ROLLING OUT A CLUB IN YOUR STATE

As this initiative grew, various tips were learned along the way. Our suggestions:

- Partner with school psychology graduate student associations. Support from graduate students provides valued experience to undergraduate students from a more relatable source. Utilizing this resource also allows for graduate students to gain valuable leadership experience and removes the direct burden from busy faculty members.
- Partner with practitioners. Connect with your state or regional association. In our case, these associations helped to provide ongoing funding and increased awareness of the program. These practitioners were also tapped to participate in a panel for FSPO members during one of our meetings.
- Engage with your state association. Engage with association members who have alumni connections to other universities, particularly those that do not already have a school psychology training program. This will help to lay the foundation for a chapter in areas of high need. Often, colleges and universities are located within proximity to underserved regions.
- Establish a network of school psychologists practicing in high school settings. Lastly, establish a network of your state’s high school level school psychologists to help in future rollout of the clubs. The goal is to broaden awareness of the field of school psychology. The earlier this can be done, the more likely students are to enter into the field, and to gain valuable experiences and connections.

References


September 2021, Volume 50, Number 1 | COMMUNICATION | 25

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NEXT STEPS

Based on the outcomes of our pilot year, plans for years 2–5 and beyond have been developed. During Year 2, the goal is to establish 3–5 FSPO chapters across several regions of the state. Ideally, these clubs will be sponsored by universities with established school psychology programs in collaboration with the regional school psychology association in that area. We aim to prioritize clubs within urban and rural regions of the state. This will work to increase awareness for the field of school psychology for students who may have a greater opportunity to attend graduate school due to their proximity to a program. Additionally, consideration for maintaining a virtual format for meetings may allow for easier access for individuals for whom attending an in-person session may be burdensome. In the third year, the goal is to expand FSPO to additional universities with or without school psychology training programs across the state, especially where shortages are most pronounced, and to pilot FSPO at the high school level. Creating an FSPO chapter in a high school setting will also work to spread awareness about the field of school psychology at a younger age. It will also provide high school students with another career field they may be interested in and lay the foundation for garnering related experiences to transition into undergraduate and graduate school.

In Year 4, the primary goal is to expand high schools to regions of the state with a school psychology training program and to continue to expand and establish FSPO chapters in universities across the state, again with a priority in areas where shortages are most pronounced. In order to establish these new chapters in high schools, we plan to recruit a current practicing school psychologist who is an OSPA member and lives and works in the in the region or is an alumnus of the university training program. In Year 5 and beyond, our goal is to continue to establish FSPO chapters at other colleges and universities across the state and in high schools, with a school psychology practitioner serving as the advisor. This will work to spread awareness about and continue to diversify the field of school psychology while also better preparing undergraduate students for applying and transitioning into a graduate school pro-
gram in school psychology.
Indigenous Youth in Schools

women, one Latinx woman, and one White woman. We have agreed that the term Indigenous fits best to represent the school population we urge school psychologists to advocate for and how we want to refer to individuals who experience the world and are experienced by the world through an Indigenous lens.

EXPERIENCES OF RACISM AND VIOLENCE

Individual and systemic experiences of racism are present throughout Indigenous students’ educational careers (Castagné & Brayboy, 2008). The painful history of forced schooling, current images of racist mascots, and the staggering number of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls highlight the severity of racism encountered by Indigenous students.

Boarding school era. Efforts to assimilate Indigenous peoples began upon the immediate arrival of settler Europeans to the United States. Religious organizations played a large role early in the process of “civilizing” Indigenous children (Ramirez, 1993) until the government took formal control in the latter half of the 19th century (Cross, 1999). During this time, Captain Richard H. Pratt opened the first federal boarding school, Carlisle Indian Industrial School, in Pennsylvania. His motto was: “Kill the Indian, and save the man” (Pember, 2007). To increase enrollment, the government began stealing Indigenous children from their homes on reservations (Pember, 2007; Tyler, 1973) and subjecting them to physical abuse for speaking their languages and practicing traditional ceremonies. Many students also experienced sexual abuse by school officials, staff, and other students themselves. To exacerbate the issue, children were forbidden from visiting their parents and some even died from starvation and other preventable diseases without the family knowing. By the 1970s, several schools were closed, and the mission of the remaining schools shifted away from overt assimilation (Evans–Campbell et al., 2012). But it was not until the passage of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) in 1978 that Native American parents gained the legal right to deny their child’s placement in off-reservation schools.

Mascot imagery. According to the National Congress of American Indians, as recently as August 2020, there are almost 2,000 schools and over 1,000 school districts in the U.S. that have an Indigenous mascot of some kind (NCAI, 2020a). Names like “Redskins” and “Tomahawks” elicit images of Indigenous peoples as ruthless savages or primitive warriors that relegate them to a prehistoric and racist past. The American Psychological Association issued a resolution statement in 2005 affirming the harmful effects of Indigenous mascots and how they establish hostile learning environments, lower self-esteem, undermine efforts to portray a positive image, and violate Indigenous civil rights (APA, 2005). Fryberg and colleagues (2008) conducted a series of studies which revealed that Indigenous students consistently rate their mascots negatively, and they judge their mascots to be more harmful than mascots for other groups. Mascots can cause significant trauma to Indigenous youth and community members. Proponents of harmful mascots vehemently champion the argument of “honor” despite many tribes vocally opposing this sentiment. Mascots are a real and documented negative impact on Indigenous youth (Stegman & Philips, 2014) and operate as a form of racism regardless of how beloved they are by non-Indigenous folks.

Missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG). Indigenous people are facing an epidemic of violence against their women and girls. About 80% of Indigenous women have endured violence throughout their lifetime, with most perpetrator(s) identifying as non-Native (Rosay, 2016) and some even holding law enforcement positions (Palmater, 2016). Extractive industries account for some of the violence, such as the oil fields in North Dakota that have coincided with a 75% increase in reported sexual assaults on the Fort Berthold reservation (Flan et al., 2017). The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) identified homicide as the fourth leading cause of death among Indigenous girls ages 0 to 19, and the third leading cause of death for Indigenous girls between the ages of 10 and 24. (CDC, 2015). The MMIWG epidemic is relevant to the education of Indigenous youth because violent victimization is linked to several adverse outcomes for them in early adulthood, including poor health, depressive symptoms, and violent offending (Turnavnic & Pratt, 2017).

Advocacy strategies. The following are strategies to support students who experience racism in school and violence in their communities. These strategies address adult behavior and system practices.

- Create a bias incident reporting system that students and staff can access with an option for anonymity. These data can be used to plan in-service, professional development, and group intervention efforts relevant to combating racism against Indigenous students.
- Discourage and confront racist rhetoric when it happens in conversations with parents and school staff. Condemn and avoid terms like “powwow” to refer to meetings; “savage” as cool or risky; “lowest man on the totem pole” to indicate rank; “Natives” to describe a group of Indigenous students; “Indian” to refer to an Indigenous individual; and “chief” to someone in power.
- Understand that Indigenous students are exposed to harmful mascots every day in media, sports, music, and grocery brands that put students at risk for lower self-esteem and negative self-image.
- Testify to the harm of Indigenous mascots at school board meetings with and on behalf of Indigenous students and community members.
- Support student mental health as it relates to MMIWG and be aware that students and their families may be directly and indirectly impacted by daily violence in their communities.

INVISIBILITY OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Schools were one of many systems that attempted to eradicate Indigenous peoples, and that legacy continues through its exclusion of Indigenous peoples in curriculum, censorship of sovereignty, and whitewashing of historical events.

Curricular exclusion of Indigenous peoples. Curriculum for K–12 students in the United States fails to accurately represent Indigenous groups as contemporary people who have made significant advancements and contributions to modern society. For example, a study conducted by Shear and colleagues (2015) found that 17 states make no mention of a single Indigenous person in their K–12 curriculum beyond the context of the 1900s. In a report titled “Becoming Visible,” a survey of 28 states revealed that only one third of participating states reported allocating funding to implement Indigenous education curriculum (National Congress of American Indians, 2019). Eighty-two percent of states reported including Indigenous education in their state standards, but primarily in social studies. However, the accuracy of the information included in the curricula was not examined and fewer than half of the states taught content across all grade levels. The exclusion of critical historical content promotes a limited version of history with a single perspective on Indigenous—settler relations that inevitably becomes filled with stereotypes and caricatures of real people (Chandler, 2010).

Whitewashing of Indigenous history. When Indigenous history is told in schools, it is from a Eurocentric perspective. A few examples include: (a) Indigenous people as thieves, drunks, bloodthirsty savages, and lazy; (b) failure to address the kidnapping, rape, murder, and enslavement of Indigenous peoples; (c) the government “gifting” land and rights to Indigenous peoples; and (d) settler colonialism as a terminal event that ended long ago (Chandler, 2010; Moore & Clark, 2004; Trefzer & Lorimer, 2014). These perspectives erase that vast and rich history of Indigenous peoples in America before colonization and tie their identity almost entirely to their oppressors. This Eurocentric narrative promotes a shift in society that excludes Indigenous voices from contributing to a complete story. What students learn about history and the connections of racial and cultural oppression shapes their view on the world and the role they play in it (Shear et al., 2015). In this case, White students are receiving the message that they are the heroes of history while Indigenous students are internalizing messages of their inferiority.

Censorship of Indigenous sovereignty. Indigenous peoples are likely the most diverse racialized group in the United States because they represent 574 federally recognized groups (National Congress of American Indians, 2020b) each with its own cultural practices and languages. They also maintain a distinct political status separate from the United States, which makes them sovereign people (Brayboy et al., 2015). Sovereignty is relevant to the educational lives of Indigenous students because

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The diversity among Indigenous nations and tribes requires recognition of Indigenous peoples have the right to self-govern, self-determine, and most importantly, self-educate (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2006). Robinson-Zañartu and colleagues (2021) highlight important legal and social issues like ICWA, Religious Freedom Act and wearing long hair, and the No Dakota Access Pipeline movement in relation to water sovereignty. They say, “Understanding the relationship of sovereignty to these issues will help school psychologists become social justice advocates in relation to similar issues” (p. 34). **Advocacy strategies.** The following are strategies to increase visibility of Indigenous peoples through accurate and real representation in schools. School psychologists’ understanding of sovereignty should guide and precede their consultation, relationship building, and advocacy efforts.

- **Provide inservice presentations about the impact misrepresentation and exclusion of Indigenous history has on students’ sense of self and cultural identity.**
- **Encourage your school to invite Indigenous community members to share their knowledge and culture. Integrate this strategy with others (See “Damaged Parent/Community Relationship” section below) to avoid tokenization, translation exhaustion, and burdening Indigenous communities.**
- **Visit the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) website.** Ready-made lessons are provided that support the continuous teaching and learning about boarding school, sovereignty, and history. Visit https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/resources-subject-area/time-immemorial-tribal-sovereignty-washington-state
- **Utilize the conversation starters outlined in NCAI (2019) when speaking with education agencies, tribal nations, universities, foundations, and policy makers about Indigenous education. An example: “Most Americans do not have accurate information about the historical and contemporary lives of Indigenous people in their state. This lack of awareness and knowledge of contemporary Indigenous people leads to misguided school policies and practices, impaired relationships, racism, and discrimination.”**
- **Integrate historical and modern contributions of Indigenous peoples in all curricular content throughout the year. Avoid waiting until the month of November (Native American History Month) to highlight worthy contributions.**

**CULTURAL MISMATCH BETWEEN EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS**

The diversity among Indigenous nations and tribes requires recognition of Indigenous-run schools in providing a quality education for Indigenous youth, robust teacher preparation, and a renewed focus on promoting Indigenous school psychologists. **Perceptions of Indigenous-run schools.** After the boarding school era, Indigenous nations could reassert their educational sovereignty rights through the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (Wilkins & Stark, 2011). The Self-Determination Act was designed to foster collaborative governance by supporting the establishment of tribal departments of education (Conner, 2021). A current example of a thriving Indigenous-run school is ‘Aha Pūnana Leo in Hawai‘i. ‘Aha Pūnana Leo serves prekindergarten through 12th grade students and teaches ‘o­lelo Hawai‘i through immersion across 12 school sites. Ninety-three percent of enrolled students are Native Hawaiian, and the program has graduated more than 6,000 speakers of a previously declining language. Since its founding in 1986, ‘Aha Pūnana Leo students have demonstrated improved academic outcomes as well as stronger ties to community and culture (‘Aha Pūnana Leo, 2018). Many Indigenous-run schools like ‘Aha Pūnana Leo rely on quality partnerships between a public school system and tribal nation to be successful. Unfortunately, Conner (2014) found that substantial barriers exist that limit involvement of Indigenous communities in decisions that directly impact their students. Data gathered through interviews with tribal leaders specify that education directors are typically non-Indigenous and have little to no experience working with Indigenous youth, there is a lack of trust on the part of tribes, public schools expect monetary support from tribes, knowledge of sovereignty and the importance of tribal partnerships is limited, and there is no oversight or accountability for public schools who choose not to serve the interest of tribal nations. **Misguided approach to culturally responsive teaching.** “Culturally responsive teaching is defined as using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively” (Gay, 2002, p.106–116). Teacher preparation programs are tasked with helping teachers construct this broad base of knowledge that shifts as students, contexts, and subject matters change (Banks et al., 2005). This can be challenging given the immense diversity among and between Indigenous communities. But Hayes and Juarez (2012) also make the argument that universities “support the continuing and systemic privileging of Whiteness in teacher education” (p. 2). This is evidenced by teachers being required to take only one “multicultural” or “diversity” course rather than diverse content being integrated throughout the curriculum (Ebersole et al., 2016). As Ebercole and colleagues found, this is problematic because it promotes a superficial view of Indigenous cultures as fixed in their beliefs and customs and causes teachers to focus on “doing” culturally responsive practices as opposed to “being” culturally responsive. Teachers who did view culturally responsive teaching as an activity could not teach without relying on outside resources and faced many barriers to being effective such as lack of time, resources, and competing priorities.

**Few Indigenous school psychologists.** The probability of an Indigenous student being served by a school psychologist who is culturally similarly to them is quite low (Curtis et al., 2012). At the same time, previous research has found that school psychologists reported being significantly underprepared to work with Indigenous children and families despite prior exposure through professional development or experiences (Robinson-Zañartu et al., 2011). Goforth and colleagues (2016) emphasize the need to recruit and retain more Indigenous graduate students into school psychology and they discuss the benefits of Indigenous representation in creating understanding through a shared history and lived experiences while also reminding youth of their strengths. Yet, “Indigenous” was not an option available for school psychologists to check indicating their race in the 2015 NASP membership study. To help determine whether the field is addressing the concern of a lack of Indigenous practitioners, it is essential that we begin collecting these data if the field is to reach its goals related to social justice. **Advocacy strategies.** Strategies to address the cultural mismatch between school psychologists, educators, and students are listed below. These recommendations describe how school psychologists can work with teachers to provide a culturally supportive school environment.

- **Utilize NASP’s Indigenous Conceptual Framework: Guiding School Psychology Practice With Indigenous Children, Youth, Families, and Communities to engage in culturally responsive practice with Indigenous children and youth.**
- **Give Indigenous students dedicated space and time to discuss issues they face within educational environments. Consider including parents or tribal/community members as potential co-facilitators.**
- **Advocate for the recruitment of Indigenous school psychologists and educators by highlighting their ability to support Indigenous students, contribute to a culturally equitable environment, and provide positive representation for Indigenous students.**
- **Contribute to the retention of Indigenous school psychologists and educators by highlighting their strengths, supporting their decisions, and fostering collaboration to avoid burn out.**
- **Encourage teachers to translate from the PBIS framework to the culturally responsive-PBIS (CR-PBIS) framework and practices.**

**DAMAGED FAMILY/COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS**

School psychologists must understand the barriers that contribute to a perceived lack of parental involvement. For Indigenous parents, their historical trauma and oppression of language and cultural practices because of colonization contributes to their perceptions about and mistrust of schools. **Historical trauma.** Colonization and cultural genocide through boarding schools created a cycle of historical trauma that resulted in internalized oppression for many Indigenous nations and members (Pember, 2007). Brave Heart (1998) defines historical trauma as “multigenerational and cumulative over time; it extends beyond the life span” (p. 342). Long-term consequences include alcohol use, lifetime of illicit drug use, and lower family cohesion (Wiechelt et al., 2012). Individuals raised by someone who attended boarding school are significantly more likely than others to report having experienced suicidal thoughts and general anxiety and PTSD symptoms (Evans-Campbell et al., 2012). Mental health struggles combined with residential schooling experiences make it difficult for parents to raise their children.
and foster good relationships with them. Consequently, parents unable to care for their children cannot transfer their cultural knowledge, language, and ceremonies (Cooper et al., 2019; Weder, 2014).

**Loss of language and cultural practices.** The removal of children from their homes was so successful that when students eventually returned to their families, they could not communicate what happened to them in their Indigenous languages. Today, it is estimated that only 6.7% of people who identify as Indigenous speak their language (United States Census Bureau, 2015). Language revitalization, then, becomes a significant component of culturally responsive school psychological practice (Charley et al., 2015). However, despite regular use of native languages as a protective factor, schools remain predominantly monolingual (Fitzgerald, 2017). Similarly, public schools do not take an active role in promoting cultural preservation through education. Ninman and colleagues (2017) found that 42% of 4th graders and 37% of 8th graders reported they never participated in Indigenous-related activities in school. However, this is not to argue that mainstream schools should serve as the only sites of cultural preservation and language revitalization. But it is through these efforts that schools can responsibly acknowledge and repair past harms of forced family separation through involuntary schooling and the subsequent loss of language and culture that resulted.

**Deficit-based thinking and mistrust.** Deficit-based thinking is an ideology rooted in racism and classism that blames students for their lack of educational achievement (Valencia, 2010). This framework assumes that low-achieving students are deficient and by extension so are their families. This deficit-based approach has been shown to limit engagement with schools for Indigenous families (Rattenborg et al., 2018). Research that centers Indigenous perspectives found that parents perceived a great deal of ignorance about and disrespect for themselves, their children, and communities from both public and Bureau of Indian Education schools (Robinson-Zañartu & Majel-Dixon, 1996). For families of children referred for special education, parents and community members did not feel they understood, agreed with, were served well by the process. In contrast, parents and community members were happy with Indigenous-run schools’ treatment, involvement, and expectations of them and their family.

**Advocacy strategies.** Strategies for school psychologists to help build family and community relationships are provided below. It is important to note that these relationships are only viable and meaningful when continually honored and supported.

- Build relationships with local tribal nations and engage tribal leaders on strategies toward inclusivity and equity. The app/website https://native-land.ca can be used as a resource that provides a visual representation of the original stewards of the land you reside on.
- Attend tribal events open to the public and encourage participation among your colleagues, friends, and family to learn more about local cultures and current issues.
- Invite tribal leaders to help shape school-wide initiatives, programs, and policies that impact Indigenous youth (e.g., discipline and incentive methods, graduation rates, special education referral process, college preparation programs, and celebration of holidays).
- Advocate for your school to develop an Indigenous advisory panel to initiate, improve, and maintain communication between the school and local tribes. Panel members can also serve as consultants regarding contentious Indigenous-related issues such as mascots.
- Focus on home–school collaboration that is responsive to community needs. Involve Indigenous community members to address how support of families and students should look at school and in the community.
- Help teachers and other educators recognize and empower students by emphasizing their academic, behavioral, and cultural strengths.
- Listen to families, take time to meet with them, learn about their educational expectations, and know the goals they have for their children (Robinson-Zañartu & Majel-Dixon, 1996).
- Consider holding special education meetings in a neutral or Indigenous-based setting (e.g., tribal building or family’s home) to create an inclusive atmosphere.
- Support language revitalization efforts and honor the use of Indigenous languages with youth and families in schools (e.g., use original place names when appropriate; Charley et al., 2015).

**POOR STUDENT OUTCOMES**

Schools have not been welcoming spaces for Indigenous students simply because they face many obstacles to success: high ratios of discipline, low graduation rates, lack of sense of belonging, and exclusion from gifted education programs.

**Disproportionate discipline and graduation rates.** Indigenous students are disproportionately retained and are overrepresented in special education placement and disciplinary consequences (Goforth et al., 2016). Gion and colleagues (2018) examined disproportionality in discipline for high school students and found that Indigenous students are almost twice as likely to receive a major subjective office discipline referral (ODR) than White students. Almost twice as many of these subjective ODRs occur in the classroom, which suggests that teachers yield a lot of power based on biased perceptions of behavior. This is not only problematic from a disciplinary standpoint, but Indigenous students are put at-risk for not graduating high school because they are missing more class. This becomes evident considering that only 72% of Indigenous students nationwide graduated high school in 2017 compared to 89% of White students (McFarland et al., 2019). In some states with a higher population of Indigenous students, like South Dakota, graduation rates are as low as 50%.

**Lack of sense of belonging.** Researchers have documented that starting in middle school many Indigenous students begin to withdraw and become frustrated by their experiences in mainstream schools (Brayboy & Maaka, 2015; Weaver 2015). They are particularly frustrated by the treatment they receive from their peers and school personnel, lower academic expectations, lack of meaningful connection to the curriculum, and perceptions of their own academic ability (Brayboy & Maaka, 2015; Irvin et al., 2016). Research has shown that racist attitudes and behaviors prevent Indigenous students from feeling welcome at school (Palmer & Cooke, 1996). Furthermore, this weakened sense of belonging attributes to uncertainty about their place within a White-centric world (Hussong et al., 1994) where they are constantly compared to their high-achieving White peers and Western standards of schooling (Weaver 2015).

**Exclusion from gifted education.** A focus on Indigenous students in gifted education programs is scarce within educational research (Gentry & Fugate, 2012) and practically nonexistent within school psychology. Most of the literature that does exist is quite dated and classifies all Indigenous groups as one culture (Wu, 2011). A more recent study by Peters and colleagues (2019) examined how state and national gifted education demographics have changed over time and their impact on proportionality. States with larger Indigenous populations like Alaska, Montana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and South Dakota demonstrated variable changes from 2006–2016 in representation rates of Indigenous students in gifted education. The authors also determined that states with mandated gifted education contributed to more-proportional representation of Indigenous students but only when they were also served under IDEA. This study confirms previous research in concluding that gifted Indigenous students are among the most underserved in gifted education programs (Yoon & Gentry, 2009) and remain underrepresented due to opportunity gaps (Gentry et al., 2014).

**Advocacy strategies.** Below are five strategies that focus on increasing school belonging, with emphasis on school policies that marginalize and put Indigenous youth at risk for exclusionary discipline actions, school dropout, and low achievement.

- Identify graduation rates, involvement in college preparation programs, and students living in rural versus urban areas in your school/district.
- Examine discipline data, disaggregate by race, and share with key stakeholders including students, parents, community members, district officials, and grassroots organizations.
- Seek guidance from community members about how to infuse culturally relevant practices within the school environment to increase a sense of belonging.
- Offer to observe teachers’ ratio of positive to negative interactions with their Indigenous students and consult with them on where they can improve.

Indigenous women and girls are facing an epidemic of violence with about 80% of them having endured violence throughout their lifetime. The epidemic is relevant to the education of Indigenous youth because violent victimization is linked to adverse outcomes in early adulthood, including poor health, depressive symptoms, and violent offending.
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CONCLUSION

Today, the misrepresentation and erasure of Indigenous within mainstream American culture combined with the effects of historical trauma continues to contribute to Indigenous youth’s poor outcomes. It is crucial that school psychologists situate themselves at the forefront of advocacy efforts at all levels, build their knowledge base, and share that knowledge in professional and personal circles to enhance the lives and education of Indigenous youth.

References


methods of contraception (e.g., condoms, birth control) to avoid accidental pregnancies and protect against STIs. With a distinctive background woven from child development, education, and psychology, we are called to integrate our knowledge of evidence-based practices, current research, and central theories to support students’ academic, behavioral, emotional, and social well-being. This notion should be broadened through recognizing how overall student well-being includes sexual health and development. In a recent study, Desai (2019) investigated the role of school psychologists within sexuality education for students with disabilities and found that more than two thirds (68%) of school psychologists reported that they should be involved, yet only 3% endorsed that they actually were. There is a clear need in our schools for CSE and associated concepts to be shared. Just as well, school psychologists are seeking to be more involved in decision-making and implementing of such concepts and curricula. With the appropriate knowledge and resources, we can become advocates of CSE for all students.

SEX AND SEXUALITY AS EXPERIENCES OF OVERALL DEVELOPMENT

Sexual development is similar to other forms of development, in that it begins at birth. Newborns receive affection and positive physical contact through their parental and caregiver attachments, which provides a foundation for experiencing other forms of intimacy as they grow older (KidsHealth, 2014). Sexual development inevitably intersects with other parts of child development, including their emotional, physical, and social well-being.

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN, 2009a) extends sexual development to include sexual knowledge and beliefs that children gather from a young age. Sexual knowledge is heavily saturated by children’s consistent exposure to cultural and religious beliefs about sex and sexuality in their environments, whether from messages sent by family members or those received by children through various forms of media. All sexual behavior seen in children can be linked to a corresponding adult behavior. This includes boundary setting, exhibitionism, self-stimulation, and voyeurism, to name a few (Friedrich et al., 1998). Children are tremendously observant and attuned to the world around them. What they notice and are taught, intentionally or otherwise, inevitably builds their knowledge base and shapes their behaviors around sex and sexuality over time.

It is common and often appropriate for children to exhibit sexual behavior as they develop (Kellogg, 2010). In fact, studies have shown that between 42–73% of children engaged in some sort of sexual behavior prior to becoming a teenager (Haaguard & Tilly, 1988; Larson & Svedin, 2002). However, you have seen a curious toddler grab their mother’s chest while in line at the grocery store or overheard them enthusiastically asking questions about “private parts” while in a public restroom with their parent or guardian. If you work in a childcare center, you may have witnessed a group of preschoolers role-playing “doctor” and looking at or touching their own or each other’s bodies during play, or have been asked by a child, “Where do babies come from?” Awareness of one’s gender identity and gender roles also takes shape during the first years of a child’s life (KidsHealth, 2014). These actions and inquiries, along with other less-mentioned, can all be considered healthy sexual behavior in young children.

Research suggests that reporting of child sexual behaviors decreases as children get older (Santilla et al., 2005), which is likely a result of social expectations enacted on them by their newfound school structure. For instance, school-age children may become more self-conscious about using the bathroom or changing in the presence of their peers for physical education class; yet, walking through a fifth grade hallway and overhearing a student tell a dirty joke and receive a barrage of giggles in response is enough to know that sexual development does not become dormant during these years; it can just seem subdued before the storm of puberty arrives. Sexual experiences play a defining role in adolescence as puberty arrives to support future reproduction. A more sustained interest in sex can emerge during this critical period; teens may explore masturbation to express their sexual feelings or become interested in pursuing romantic connections with their peers. In fact, nearly half of teenagers have vaginal sex for the first time around the age of 16 (Haydon et al., 2012). Given that sex and sexuality are a fundamental part of being human and are woven into other areas of healthy development (e.g., biological, sociocultural), it deserves to be included in the formative educational experiences of all students (Meaney et al., 2009).

Please note that it is beyond the scope of this article to illustrate how sexual development can shift from healthy to problematic or to speculate on the causes of these behaviors and those which may reveal experiences of child sexual abuse (CSA). Generally, sexual behavior problems in children can include those that are viewed as too advanced for their developmental stage, demonstrate harmful or aggressive use of sexual body parts, involve children from vastly different age groups and abilities, elicit a strong emotional response from the child, or interfere with normal interests or activities (NCTSN, 2009b). If you are aware of or suspect CSA, please contact your state’s child protection services so they can conduct an investigation.

THE CURRENT STATE OF SEXUALITY EDUCATION IN AMERICA

The United States currently does not have a federally mandated sexuality education curriculum; only 28 states and the District of Columbia (DC) require both sexuality and HIV education to be taught in schools (Guttmacher Institute, 2021). Every state has its own laws about sexuality education requirements, and often districts can decide how and what type of instruction, if any, they will implement. For example, when sexuality education is provided, 39 states and DC require that abstinence is either “stressed” or “covered,” while only 20 states and DC require that content, when provided, includes contraception (Guttmacher Institute, 2021).

Sexuality education curricula has traditionally introduced sex as a biological function rather than an action with ethical, psychological, and social implications that lend themselves to serious discussion (Buess & Greenberg, 1981; Yarber & McCabe, 1984). Its initial purpose was heavily focused on preventing sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and linking positive sexual expression with marriage only (Elia & Eliassen, 2010). Abstinence is often taught due to a misconception that, if sex is discussed, youth are more likely to engage in sexual activity. However, this premise is false: Adolescents participate in sexual activity with or without sexuality education (Schael et al., 2014). There are also claims that abstinence-only curricula, commonly referred to as Abstinence Only Until Marriage (AOUM) curricula, postpones sexual activity and teenage pregnancy. However, research has shown that AOUM is ineffective in reducing pregnancy and STI rates and bars methods of safe sex from being taught in schools (Schael et al., 2014). In fact, there are higher rates of STIs, unplanned pregnancies, and sexual assaults in regions where abstinence or abstinence plus is taught (Hoefert & Hoefert, 2017; Santelli et al., 2018). Despite this curriculum’s noted ineffectiveness, between 1982 and 2017, the United States spent over $2 billion on domestic abstinence-only curricula and $1.4 billion on similar programs as foreign aid (Burns, 2017).

It is clear that our country has failed its youth when it comes to supporting healthy sexual health outcomes. In general, the United States has one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates among industrialized countries as well as consistently alarming rates of STI rates among youth ages 15 to 24 years old (Kearney & Levine, 2012), who make up 25% of our country’s “sexually experienced” population but account for nearly half of all STI cases (CDC, 2013). Fifty-seven percent of teenage females and 45% of teenage males endorsed that they did not receive information about birth control before they had sex for the first time (Lindberg et al., 2016). Even more troubling is that STI rates are disproportionally higher for Black youth who are more likely to receive AOUM than their White counterparts (Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States, 2018). Furthermore, Black youth are more likely to engage in sex at a younger age than other races, with 17% of Black students having engaged in sex before the age of 13 (Miller et al., 2009). These trends are mirrored in school funding, or lack thereof, as predominantly non-White school districts receive $23 billion less in funding than White districts with the same number of students (EdBuild, 2019).

The LGBTQIA+ community has also been negatively affected by AOUM; 69% of students reported that LGBTQIA+ issues were never addressed in their sexuality education curriculum, and 12% reported that it was mentioned negatively (Elia & Eliassen, 2010). This is harmful to the LGBTQIA+ community because they may not have access to inclusive information about how to have safe sex from family sources. Nor does it provide their straight peers with accurate information about sexual orientation or gender identity. Negative consequences have ensued throughout the community as it tends to have higher rates of sexual activity and higher rates of HIV (Schael et al., 2014). Overall, this lack of consistency across the country when it comes to sexuality education is troubling and inequitable because students receive dissimilar information regarding sex, which continues to lead to increasingly negative sexual health outcomes for specific populations.

CSE AND ITS BARRIERS

In general, CSE provides a holistic view of sex and sexuality by allowing students...
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- Advocate for a safe, supportive school environment for LGBTQ+ youth.
- Learn from the experiences of LGBTQ+ and intersex students.
- Identify and address mental health concerns and suicide risk.

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*In the above acronym, 2-S refers to Two-Spirit, referencing the Indigenous American culture with regards to gender identity.

to develop attitudes, knowledge, and skills that promote healthy sexual development and decision-making (Lee & Lee, 2018). Supporters of CSE underscore the important public health implications for young people and see the dissemination of information about safe sex practices and STIs as a way to protect all communities and provide information to students before they might engage in sex. Moreover, the CDC (2019) has identified 19 critical sexual education topics that expand sexuality education to include communication skills; the impact of influences of family, peers, media, technology, and other factors on sexual risk behaviors; sexual orientation; and gender identity.

Though many parents agree that children should receive CSE in school, several barriers remain, including societal shame and stigma around topics of sex and sexuality. Some parents might believe that their child is not ready to engage in sex or that they will engage in risky sexual behaviors that will increase their risk of teen pregnancy or STIs through being introduced to CSE. However, despite this stigma, research has shown that discussions about sex have been associated with positive outcomes. Adolescents want to talk about sex and sexuality; 87% of teens reported that having open, honest conversations with their parents would make postponing sexual experiences and avoiding pregnancy easier (Albert, 2004). Adults want to have these conversations too, but they revealed that they sometimes do not know where to start or what to cover when it comes to sexual health (Albert, 2004). Such conversations are crucial; when a parent is more responsive to engaging in communication around sex, their child is more likely to listen and less likely to engage in risky sexual behaviors (Miller et al., 2009). Specifically, communication from parents to their teenagers about sexual health has been linked to adolescents using condoms more consistently, having less of a chance of getting an STI, and initiating sexual activity at a later age (Hutchinson, 2002). In fact, learning about consent is one of the highest predictive factors in preventing sexual assault and rape (Santelli et al., 2018). Yet, 36 states and DC give parents the right to opt their child out from instruction, and five states require parents to provide consent for their child to participate in CSE (Guttmacher Institute, 2021).

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS AS CHAMPIONS OF CSE

School psychologists are uniquely positioned in schools to advocate for CSE at the school, district, state, and federal levels. Even if it is not realistic to fully or sustainably implement CSE in our school building or district, using our expertise in consultation and collaboration, data-based decision making, program development and evaluation, as well as providing both direct and indirect services can become effective ways to promote and advocate for CSE.

Listed below are suggestions for advocacy that are applicable to the school, district, state, and federal levels. Those marked with an asterisk have been suggested by the CDC (2019).

- Consider assessment procedures.*
- Meet with the school board about developing or purchasing a CSE curriculum.
- Meet with parent organizations to provide education around why CSE benefits all students and promotes equitable outcomes.
- Support implementation of Tier 1 SEL curriculum around healthy relationships, communication, and decision-making skills, as aligned with CDC topics.*
- Provide school-wide assemblies on positive school climate topics as related to CSE.
- Support implementation of Tier 1 SEL curriculum around healthy relationships, communication, and decision-making skills, as aligned with CDC topics.*
- Provide professional development on benefits of CSE and how to support students affected by sexual assault, LGBTQ+ harassment, etc.
- Provide resources and support for parents and students as they navigate conversations about sex and sexuality.
- Support implementation of Tier 1 SEL curriculum around healthy relationships, communication, and decision-making skills, as aligned with CDC topics.*
- Consult with teachers on incorporating CSE concepts into their classrooms (or support them as they implement the curriculum to ensure instructional competency).

Activities at the district level might include:
- Consult with teachers on incorporating CSE concepts into their classrooms (or support them as they implement the curriculum to ensure instructional competency).
- Meet with parent organizations to provide education around why CSE benefits all students and promotes equitable outcomes.
- Meet with the school board about developing or purchasing a CSE curriculum.
- Create a skills-based health education course requirement that includes CSE topics.
- Initiate and collaborate on a CSE scope and sequence document that outlines student behavioral and learning outcomes.
- Use CDC’s Health Education Curriculum Analysis Tool to develop or select a curriculum that includes instructional lessons with activities and resources. Consider assessment procedures.*
Activities appropriate to the federal (and all preceding levels) might include:

- Work with local and state organizations (e.g., community health centers) to provide CSE resources and education to school and community.
- Share resources of CSE with state school psychology organizations to promote school psychologist involvement.

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Tech Lessons That Stick After a Virtual School Year

Since the pandemic struck in March 2020, school psychologists have been scrambling to find technological solutions to provide services to students. As school psychologists return to an in-person school year, they should pause to reflect on what lessons from technology will stick and become incorporated into everyday practice.

First, school psychologists are more likely to consider adopting new technology into their practice. Last year forced everyone into becoming more open to technological innovations. The increased openness to new technology could spark profound changes in school psychologists’ roles over the next few years.

Second, virtual meetings provide an opportunity for parents to become more involved in their children’s educational services. During the pandemic, most schools reworked their rooms to allow for virtual meetings. Giving families an option to attend meetings virtually will allow those who may not be able to take time off from work to physically drive to the school the ability to participate. This should greatly increase participation with special education meetings, consultations, and coordination of interventions, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of all those services.

Third, while everyone knows that securing student data is important, it was easy to overlook privacy issues that arose while using technology. The switch during the pandemic to using so many technological tools forced school psychologists to examine the risks in using technology and make adjustments (e.g., when selecting a third party service, making sure it was HIPAA compliant and offered a Business Associates Agreement).

Fourth, using videoconference platforms, school psychologists were able to conduct class- or home-based observations, counsel students, and implement interventions with families. This should continue as efforts to address the availability of home internet services for all students has accelerated, making the socioeconomic disparity of internet access painfully clear.

Fifth, many have come to the realization that virtual assessment can work, under specific circumstances. Tele-assessment was the least developed technology when the pandemic hit, and its weaknesses became readily apparent. The main weakness is a lack of control over the home environment. No matter how good the test or computer software, most homes introduced too many variables that could negatively impact the results. This does not mean tele-assessment is going away.

More research and resources for tele-assessment were produced over the past year than the last several years combined. As a result, school psychologists have more assessments available that can be administered remotely. The test publishers have produced more guidance on tele-assessment and equivalency research between in-person and remote administration has blossomed. Through experience, school psychologists are better able to assess the relative benefits of in-home and in-person assessment procedures.

Finally, society has become more open to receiving psychological services through telehealth technologies. The pandemic forced a liberalization of telehealth throughout the health system, and this carried over to school systems. As the public became more familiar with using the technology, it became more acceptable to use. In addition, more guidance was provided on how to use technology in a legal and ethical manner. NASP released its updated Professional Standards and Ethics that included guidance regarding the use of technology. It, along with the APA Guidelines for Telepsychology, provide effective frameworks for continuing to use and adapt new technologies in delivering services.

As school psychologists enter a new academic year of in-person schooling, it is important to reflect on the past year of providing virtual services. Consider what was learned during that year and what technologies can continue to be used going forward.

Dan Florell, PhD, NCSP, is a professor at Eastern Kentucky University and a contributing editor for Communiqué.
Leveraging Graduate Training Experiences to Advocate for Socially Just School Psychological Practices

By Zachary A. Santana, Kaylee DeFelice, Kelsey Gordon, & Sarah A. Fefer

In response to the reinvigorated national debates and protests over police misconduct during the summer of 2020, our research team discussed methods for disseminating social justice- and advocacy-focused messages within our school psychology program and beyond. We noticed that statements relating to police utility in schools across social media platforms and within the NASP community forums often lacked data and failed to account for historical policy and legislation. As graduate students with the privilege of access to library databases and training in data-based decision-making, we viewed ourselves as well positioned to examine systemic inequities in the school setting. To do this, we consolidated complex multisource information on police in schools into an accessible, easy-to-read, and easy to share infographic. We created our infographic through reviews of relevant literature, historical and contemporary public policy, and national statistics to understand the potential impacts of police in schools from multiple perspectives. This project provided us with unique training opportunities and the ability to widely advocate for the socially just practice of school psychology. We hope that sharing our process can support other school psychology graduate students in supplementing their program of study and in creating student-led antiracist advocacy initiatives.

MOVING FROM DISCUSSION TO ACTION

Progressing from social justice discussions to action-oriented advocacy work encompassed multiple steps. Our motivation for this was twofold: to obtain critical training experiences while simultaneously amplifying the social justice dialogue related to school resource officers (SROs) and school-based inequities.

We began with discussions grounded in a social justice framework, submerging ourselves in the literature surrounding policing in schools. We centered our research efforts around three aims: the expansion of our field’s understanding of the utility of school resource officers (sworn law enforcement officers deployed by a police department to work in schools; COPS, n.d.), an examination of SROs in the context of systemic educational inequities, and a reflection on how school psychologists can disrupt inequitable systems. The process of outlining project aims and splitting the tasks related to synthesizing literature is a critical initial step for graduate students to ensure their advocacy work is feasible and grounded in empirical research.

Faculty support was important from the beginning of our advocacy work. Having faculty involved in our work served to elevate the importance of this project within our program. Faculty support also provided us access to rich professional networks that offered expert consultation related to content (i.e., school discipline and SROs) and processes (i.e., the digital copywriting process of creative commons licensing) needed to complete our project. With faculty support, we were also able to critically reflect on our personal experiences with police in schools and how our biases could impact our interpretation of the research on this specific polarized social justice issue.

After each team member annotated the policy and literature they were assigned to review, we brainstormed various outlets that would allow us to translate the information into digestible formats for diverse audiences. With an advocacy goal in mind, we wanted to ensure that our message was as accessible as possible; therefore, we utilized the free graphic design platform Canva to create an appealing and shareable infographic. Consistent with the problem-solving framework our graduate training emphasizes, we engaged in a collaborative process of sharing the draft of our infographic with our peers as well as family members. Our purpose for soliciting constructive feedback from a diverse array of individuals was to ensure our that advocacy resources were clear, thorough, grounded in research, and accessible to multiple audiences. Obtaining extensive feedback also allowed us to improve the packaging of our message. We were then able to share our infographic via informal outlets (e.g., social media, bulletin boards) while using our infographic as a springboard for advocacy via formal outlets (e.g., conferences, publications).

The processes of outlining our project’s aims, gathering faculty support, utilizing expert consultation, engaging in introspective dialogue, and forming creative dissemination plans are useful strategies for school psychology trainees hoping to engage in advocacy. These strategies made our student-led project feasible while diversifying the training experiences we gained along the way.

SYNTHESIZING AND PACKAGING YOUR ADVOCACY MESSAGE

Our experience allowed us to realize that research related to SROs in school psychology research is underdeveloped. To create effective advocacy messages, our team quickly understood that we had to look beyond just school psychology research. For instance, we examined literature from education, psychology, sociology, and political science. We also examined statistics published by organizations like the American Civil Liberties Union and the U.S. Department of Education. We recommend that other graduate students take a similarly broad approach to social justice advocacy to have a complete picture of their project and avoid blind spots in their findings that are likely to arise from a narrow examination of their topic.

While synthesizing the multiple forms of media across several disciplines, our team noticed incongruities between research findings, national statistics, and school psychology practice. Some of the most effective claims our team made for reworking inequitable SRO-related practices arose from highlighting these incongruities. While the statements below do not reflect current NASP positions or policy, we invite our school psychology community members to reflect on the following observations.

- Spending more than $1,000,000,000 (Congressional Research Service, 2019) to supply our schools with SROs when “14 million students are in schools with police but no counselor, nurse, psychologist, or social worker” (Whitaker et al., 2019, p. 4) is incongruent with the socially just practice of school psychology and begs for rethinking how to fund school safety efforts.
- Due to NASP’s (2020) acknowledgment that “the existing [SRO] literature is contradictory and fraught with methodological weaknesses,” school psychologists should advocate for replacing SROs with evidence-based alternatives until empirical studies are able to demonstrate the utility of SROs.
- Utilizing SROs when it is well-established that Black students are over two times more likely to be arrested at school than White students (U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, 2018) perpetuates systemically racist practices and requires school psychologists to replace these practices with socially just alternatives that support positive outcomes for all students.

Additionally, we would like to offer our infographic as one example of how to synthesize research and statistics into an accessible and easy-to-share format. Please view (and share!) our infographic. You can access it here: http://rebrand.ly/Police-In-Schools.

It is imperative for graduate students to critically engage in data-based social justice advocacy because it is through our conversations, our passion projects, and our critique of the status quo that we will dismantle the pervasive systemic inequities within our schools.

Zachary A. Santana, Kaylee DeFelice, and Kelsey Gordon are doctoral students in the University of Massachusetts, Amherst school psychology program. Sarah A. Fefer, PhD, is an associate professor in the University of Massachusetts, Amherst school psychology program.

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Diagnosis and Treatment of Learning Disorders

Review by Justin Ayoub

School psychologists are scientist practitioners who work with individuals diagnosed with a wide variety of learning disorders. Thus, it is important that they keep abreast of current research on diagnosis and treatment. This most recent installment of Diagnosis Learning Disorders is an informative resource for school psychologists seeking to update their knowledge on a range of disorders including autism spectrum disorder (ASD), reading disorder, mathematics disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and intellectual disabilities.

Part I of the book covers the scientific foundations used to understand learning disorders as well as salient issues for practice. Topics discussed in this section include the multilevel model of learning disorders, the etiology of learning disorders, brain mechanisms, neuropsychological constructs, comorbidity, assessment, and achievement gaps. Earlier chapters on etiology and brain mechanisms may not be accessible to practitioners without a background in behavioral genetics or neuroscience; however, later chapters in Part II are useful for school psychologists, offering brief but sober discussions on issues ranging from the shortcomings of various models (e.g., discrepancy and patterns of strengths and weaknesses) for diagnosing specific learning disorders to achievement gaps across various cultural and ethnic groups.

Part II of the book is most relevant for practicing school psychologists. A chapter is devoted to each disorder, covering its history, prevalence, neuropsychology, etiology (i.e., heritability, gene identification), environmental influences, diagnosis, and treatment. While the history, brain mechanisms, and etiology sections may not be applicable to service in the schools, they nonetheless provide school psychologists with information necessary for consultation and psychoeducation with parents, particularly parents encountering a learning disorder for the first time. The diagnosis and treatment sections are comprehensive but not overwhelming, and they are replete with citations for further reading. In addition to informing readers of the most effective treatments, the book discusses therapies that lack empirical evidence (e.g., hyperbaric oxygen therapy for ASD) and clarifies misconceptions regarding certain treatments (e.g., side effects of psychostimulants for ADHD).

Building a Foundation for Effective Consultative Practice

Review by Sayani Das Chaudhuri

Theory and Cases in School-Based Consultation, 2nd Edition is a timely and updated research-based guide that can be used by graduate educators to assist emerging practitioners in understanding, developing, and applying consultation problem solving skills in practice. The text provides information and case studies to illustrate the differing models of consultation in disciplines such as counseling and social work as well. The authors intend to help practitioners “select the most appropriate consultative theory and model based upon the referral issue, gender, and characteristics of students, attributes of teachers, and the qualities of the school, educational, and community systems” (p.22).

The book begins with a broad overview of school-based consultation, its utility, the role of consultants, common barriers, and the state of consultation training. Next, there is a discussion of the problem-solving process and its stages and steps. Special attention is paid to the relational process of consultation, including considerations for how the characteristics of consultants and consultees influence the success of consultation. A chapter devoted to multicultural considerations is ambitious in its scope, as it attempts to cover the nuanced and complex nature of cultural, linguistic, and racial factors related to identity, equity, and assessment and intervention practices in 36 pages. However, it is a good starting point for practitioners in training. The last two chapters discuss assessment procedures and the effectiveness of consultation, and contextualize the procedures and approaches of consultation within the framework multileveled systems of student support. The authors discuss direct and indirect techniques, progress monitoring, and measuring consultation outcomes related to student improvement and teacher satisfaction.

A majority of the book is dedicated to a chapter on each of the six consultation models: instructional, mental health, behavioral/conjoint (problem solving), social cognitive theory, Adlerian and solution focused, and organizational/systems. Chapters provide historical context, point out distinguishing features, and critique barriers and facilitators to implementing each model. Textboxes help distill information and provide an overview of relevant steps, procedures, and questionnaires. Figures help readers visualize theories and processes. For consultants in training, the structure and organization of the text is developmentally appropriate, and opportunities for skill acquisition and practice using a large variety of case studies is helpful. Case studies in each chapter vary in the nature of the presenting problem, characteristics of the client, features of the consultee (e.g., teachers, systems, or families), and the environmental context. The authors provide guiding questions to stir discussion, and intentionally do not provide answers.

Although this book can be used by early career practitioners for a self-guided study, the book is ideal as a supplement to a consultation training curriculum. The text provides access to PowerPoint lectures and an instructor’s test bank. Students may prefer the electronic copy of this text, as it allows them to highlight, search relevant terms, and create flashcards. Overall, I would highly recommend this book as a resource for consultation training. The text is anchored in the extant research and theories of consultation, and it pushes beyond theory to skills that are critical to the success of consultation, but difficult to acquire through reading alone.

Sayani Das Chaudhuri is a PhD candidate at the University of Denver’s school psychology program and currently practicing at the Downtown Denver Expeditionary School in Colorado.

Executive Functions and Their Social and Cultural Contexts

Review by Sharon Carpenter

This volume, a paperback reprint of Barkley’s earlier edition released in 2012, provides a framework with which to explain executive functions (EF) as an evolutionary expression of Darwinist theories within cognition. The usefulness to the practitioner is in its handling of how to operationally define EFs, how to assess them in affected individuals, and how to intervene in ways that will improve outcomes for the client.

Barkley first emphasizes the problems in the field of EF in modern neuropsychology as being the impetus for writing this volume. He cites the fact that there exists no consensus on an operational definition of EF, and laments the fact that the field has shifted away from capturing characteristics of individual affected with prefrontal cortex impairments and their impact on daily living skills. Instead, the field favors the use of psychometric assessments that are administered in clinical settings, and omits consideration of the social purposes for which EF evolved. Finally, he puts forth several theories for why EF evolved as adaptations necessary for solving problems that arose in social life.

The author postulates EF as an extended phenotype, a suite of neuropsychological abilities that create effects across time and distance that evolved to solve the ever increasing complexity of problems encountered by modern man. He organizes EF development in individuals in a hierarchical fashion, rang-
EF-impaired individuals in ways that correspond to the various levels of EF and development and their unique challenges related to the specific goal-directed behavior(s) being disrupted.

This book is an interesting read that provides the reader with an in-depth discussion of why and how EF’s likely evolved and the social and cultural contexts within which they can be understood, something that is not usually considered in current psychometric assessments of EF.

Sharon Carpenter is a school psychologist in Phoenix, Arizona.

ASD Diagnosis and Treatment of Toddlers

Review by Jamie Ryland

Presented as an array of scholarly articles focused on the current research of how autism spectrum disorder (ASD) presents in children who are very young, the book provides insights, explanations, new developments, ongoing research concerns, and unanswered questions highlighted by some of the top leaders in the field. The focus centers on the screening, identification, treatment, and outcome of children ages 0–5 with possible diagnoses of ASD. The articles are highly researched, based upon quantitative designs, ranging from small to large case studies. There are also clear and concise reviews of effective screening measures, intervention programs, and medical care options that are currently available, some of which are free for use or easily downloaded by a professional. Overall, the book examines 11 areas of concern, beginning with an introduction to the identification and classification of ASD. Topics such as screening, long-term risks, and developmental outcomes of siblings are included. Perhaps the most useful and illuminative sections focus on reviews of screening and intervention measures, the psychological developmental trajectory of toddlers diagnosed with ASD, and the difficulties that arise with revision and use of medical diagnostic methods.

The cutting edge research and concerns highlighted in this book are raised by established forerunners in the field of ASD around the globe. Perhaps due to the background of the majority of the authors, many of whom are medical doctors, there is an emphasis on medical concerns and a reliance on medical vocabulary that may be cumbersome. However, the authors are concise and relevant, presenting many illuminating examples and data to illustrate their points. The perspective of those in the medical field only seems to enhance the book. A clear background into the labeling and diagnosis of ASD highlights how confusion regarding diagnostic requirements and past identifications continues to be a hurdle even today. Discussion of the many aspects surrounding screening concerns, ranging from speech delays to cognitive variances, helps to highlight different modes of identification. Possibly, though, the most useful portions of this book emphasize evidence-based techniques for early interventions that have been proven to improve long-term trajectory and development.

Overall, the book highlights various resources and techniques that are extremely useful. An effort has been made to review free resources and interventions, which can be particularly useful in serving underprivileged populations. The inclusion of medical vocabulary with the emphasis on explanation and example helps to cement a common jargon that can be used across disciplines. As we know, the early identification of ASD is extremely important, but identification does not immediately translate into treatment and a positive effect on outcome. This book strives to change that, providing background information, current developments in tools and resources, updated information on interventions and techniques, as well as possible trajectories and future areas of concern.

Jamie Ryland, is a school psychologist in Richmond Public Schools, Virginia. She is the communications committee cochair for the Virginia Academy of School Psychologists, and sits on the public outreach subcommittee and the social justice committee. She also is the leader of the social justice book club for VASP. She holds a certificate in autism studies from the William & Mary School of Education.
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