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National School Psychology Week Activities for Graduate Educators and Graduate Education Programs

National School Psychology Week is November 8-12, 2021. The theme for our 2021 National School Psychology Week is *Get in G.E.A.R.* (*Grow, Engage, Advocate, Rise*). The theme's acronym provides a challenge to **grow** both personally and professionally. It encourages us to **engage** in best practices and **advocate** for the field and mental health supports for children. To **rise** implies resilience and renewal. Getting in gear also 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 can become contagious. We grow together, we can engage in the field and advocate and rise together.

During the week, school psychologists will connect with students and staff to highlight how getting in G.E.A.R. together can help lead us to positive growth. The concept that we continue to grow and develop as people and with our skills is central to the theme, as is the idea that with support, we can develop resilience beyond stressful circumstances. 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. Getting in G.E.A.R. together can help us set goals for growth, engage in action steps, advocate for our needs, and raise our voices in discussions to help create the connections necessary for students to develop critical academic and social emotional skills.

For graduate educators and graduate education programs, National School Psychology Week is an opportunity to promote the theme and the profession to others at postsecondary institutions. While the theme is generally directed to school-age children and youth, its message about how school psychologists help promote individuals' strengths and interests can be applied more broadly in efforts to raise awareness about the profession.

Suggested Activities for Graduate Educators and Graduate Education Programs

Have class discussions about "Getting in G.E.A.R." What are some ways students and faculty can grow, engage, advocate, and rise themselves and with the students they serve in practicum and other applied experiences? Engage in class discussions about how school psychologists can lead powerful change by taking on leadership roles, improving school climate, promoting new initiatives, or engaging in systems level activities. Doing so may help graduate students see themselves as future leaders. Use NASP's [Leadership in Action Spotlight columns](#) to showcase examples of school psychology leaders who have been able to Get in G.E.A.R.

Host an information table. Host a table in the student center or other high traffic area. At the table, include informational brochures about school psychology and the National School Psychology Week theme. Have other materials (e.g., *Communiqué*, NASP website) available for people to view. Consider distributing candy or baked treats to encourage people to stop and talk to you.

Speak in undergraduate classes about school psychology. Arrange to visit undergraduate classes in psychology, education, and other related fields to talk about school psychology. If you have time, consider using the [PowerPoint developed by NASP](#) that has information about the career.

Visit or send information to other local colleges. There may be colleges and universities in your area without school psychology programs. Consider contacting departments of psychology and education at those universities to request time to speak in classes. If that's not possible, consider sending informational packets about school psychology that they can have available for their students.

Visit your university career center. Find out if your college's career center has information available about careers in school psychology. If not, provide them with resources they can distribute at career fairs and to students when consulting about career opportunities.

Personally connect with faculty in other departments. School psychology programs are often housed in schools of education or psychology departments, but there might be faculty and students in those and other departments who still don't know much about the profession. Pay visits to other departments (e.g., teacher education, special education, counseling, social work) and connect with faculty and students during office hours or between popular class times. Stop by to introduce yourself and provide them with brief information about school psychology, the National School Psychology Week theme, and a small treat. If it's not possible to visit with faculty and students in person, leave information in their mailboxes with a small treat.

Host an event for prospective graduate students. Invite psychology and/or education majors to an informal event in which graduate school in school psychology is discussed. Consider having current school psychology graduate students and alumni talk on a panel about their own experiences as an undergraduate with the application process, why they chose school psychology, and what the career is like. Ask your department chair or dean for a small amount of funding to provide snacks to attendees or have faculty and students bring treats. Be sure to discuss the National School Psychology Week theme as an example of what school psychologists value and promote in schools.

Promote the value of your program. Calculate the economic impact of your program by describing the number of graduates, their places of employment, and their contributions to the well-being of students locally and nationally. Provide this information to the dean and other university administrators along with other information about the profession.

Have practicum students discuss National School Psychology Week at their practicum sites. Have practicum students work with their supervisors to promote school psychology in local schools. Present about school psychology in high school classes and/or provide information to school staff. See the [NSPW poster activities](#) for more ideas about promoting National School Psychology Week in schools.

Create a video about school psychology and your program. The video can be posted on your program's website or on YouTube to promote the profession and your program. Incorporate the National School Psychology Week theme into your video to demonstrate the positive impact school psychologists can have.

National School Psychology Week is an important way to promote school psychology and the services school psychologists provide to children and families. Promoting school psychology in postsecondary institutions is a great way to *Get in G.E.A.R!* Let us know how you promoted National School Psychology Week in your institution using the [NSPW feedback survey!](#)