
the

KAPS REVIEW

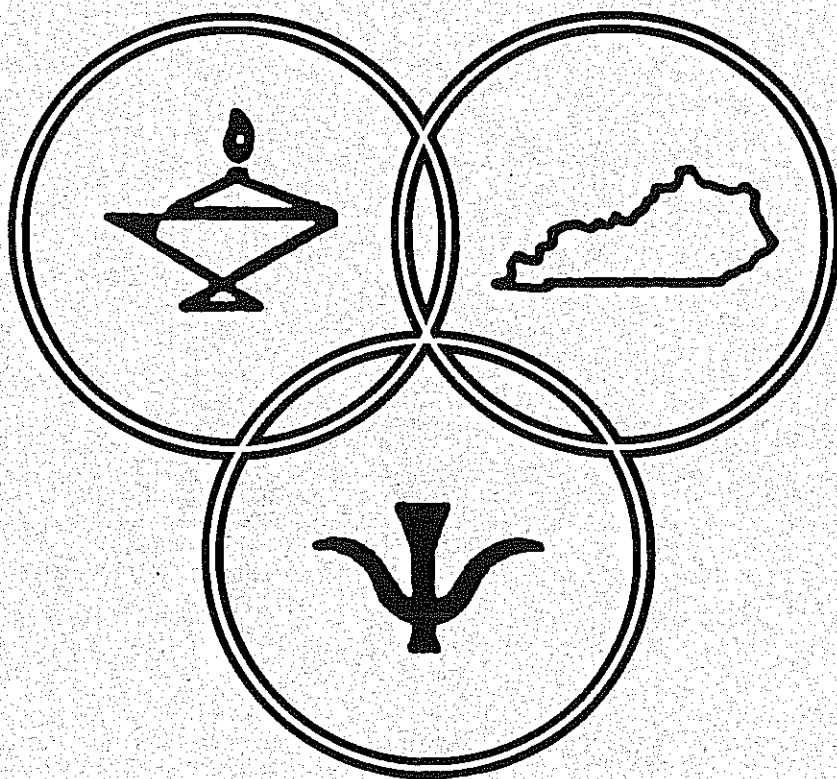
*A PUBLICATION OF THE
**KENTUCKY ASSOCIATION FOR
PSYCHOLOGY IN THE SCHOOLS***

FOUNDED 1977

VOLUME 14

NUMBER 2

SPRING 1994



CONTENTS

President's Message	1
Secretary's Report	1
Editor's Comments	2
Executive Secretary's Report	2
Treasurer's Report	2
Program Committee Report	2
Legislative Committee Report	2
Region 1 Report	3
Region 2 Report	4
Region 4 Report	4
Region 7 Report	4
Parent-Child Interactions and Non-Compliance: Implications For School	
Psychologists Working With Families	5
For Our Children's Security	7
What Is Happening To The "Hump?"	7
Law Dialogue: Full Inclusion	8
New Practitioner's Yardstick	9
Here I Come, Ready Or Not: Transition To Kindergarten	10
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder	12
Use And Abuse Of Figure Drawings	13
The Assessment Debate in School Psychology: A Runaway Train?	14
Alternative Instruction In The Regular Classroom	15

THE KENTUCKY ASSOCIATION FOR PSYCHOLOGY IN THE SCHOOLS

The KAPS Review is the official newsletter of the Kentucky Association for Psychology in the Schools (KAPS), and is published three times a year (Fall, Winter, Spring). Opinions and statements appearing herein are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the executive Committee. Editors reserve the right to edit articles submitted.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY SHARON KIETA

Are you involved in and committed to your state school psychology organization, KAPS?

Take this mini, informal survey and find out:

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. I currently hold an office (e.g., President, Treasurer, Secretary) in KAPS | YES | NO |
| 2. I currently serve as a Committee Chair or Co-Chair | YES | NO |
| 3. I currently serve as a Regional Representative | YES | NO |
| 4. I currently serve on a committee (actively serve) | YES | NO |
| 5. I currently "help out" various KAPS officers, Regional Representatives, Committee Chairs on a regular or intermittent basis for special projects (e.g., setting up trainings) | YES | NO |
| 6. I am currently running for KAPS office or Regional Representative | YES | NO |

If you answered yes to any of the above questions you are demonstrating some level of involvement in and commitment to KAPS.

If you answered no to all the questions it is time for you, my dear friend in education, to demonstrate your commitment to school psychology by becoming involved in the state organization that supports and advocates for Kentucky's children.

"Yes, but . . ." you say? "I don't know how to get involved in KAPS," you say. Ah, that is easily addressed. Jennifer Elam is the President-Elect of KAPS. She will assume office July 1, 1994. Contact Jennifer and let her know you want to get involved. "But, I don't know what I want to do for KAPS," you say. Well, KAPS elects a President-Elect every year, a Secretary and Treasurer every other year, and eight Regional Representatives every two years. Consider running for office. Jennifer, as President, will appoint Committee Chairs. Call her if you have an interest in chairing a committee. Committees include: ADHOC-KERA, Continuing Professional Development, Ethics, Legislative, Membership, Newsletter, Planning and Development, Program, and Public Relations. The Chairs select committee members. Your KAPS directory lists Chairs, so contact them if you wish to serve on their committee.

KAPS is only as strong and effective as its members make it. With our commitment and involvement, school psychologists and persons advocating for psychology in the schools influence and create policy that positively impact children, youth and families. Get involved - Make a commitment to KAPS.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

BY JOSEPH BARGIONE

The Executive Committee (EC) met in the afternoon on 2/4/94 after participating in a workshop on how to influence the legislative process. As a participant in the role playing exercise I found it both informative and rewarding. After the lunch break the EC got down to the business of addressing issues facing KAPS and planning for its continued professional growth.

With the backdrop of the legislature being in session, it was decided that KAPS should become more "politically proactive." To achieve this goal, a couple of ideas were discussed. First, KAPS should update its phone tree and let its "organizational fingers do some walking." Another idea was utilizing a lobbyist to help us achieve our objectives. Although we are a small organization with a modest budget, we might be able to align ourselves with like-minded organizations who have similar objectives and share the cost of hiring a lobbyist.

It was decided that before KAPS gets more involved in the legislative process, we should review our short and long term goals as an organization. To reach this end, a retreat will be scheduled for after the school year at one of the state parks. To help us clarify our objectives we will try to arrange to have a facilitator from KASA join us.

Finally, it was reported that the four school psychology innovative grants were awarded to Scott County, Russell County, Covington Independent, and Paducah Independent. Congratulations to the winners. Once again, I make the offer of providing the actual minutes of the EC meeting to any members of KAPS. With summer coming on we are all looking for some good leisure reading material to pass the time.

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

BY BRUCE WESS

Faculty and students at the University of Kentucky have proven to be a veritable gristmill for cognitive meal, submitting not one but two articles for this issue of the KAPS Review. Thanks to Jennifer Borders and Paul de Mesquita as well as A.J. Vaughns for their efforts. Thanks also to John Murphy for his thought-provoking essay. With more home-grown talent like this I wouldn't have to import so much material. Thanks also to the KAPS president, secretary, treasurer, executive secretary, two committee chairs, and four regional representatives for their reports. What you see is what I get.

In annual fashion, I would once again like to alert readers (this is not a Dave Barryism, I'm using alert as a verb, not an adjective) to the "Call for Papers" for the 1994 fall convention. KAPS members are always well represented in convention proceedings - so get your proposal in NOW.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT

BY LISA DAUGHERTY

Hello, KAPS members, my name is Lisa Daugherty. I am the new Executive Secretary for KAPS. I am employed as a Secretary for the Breckinridge County Board of Education in Hardinsburg, Kentucky. If you need any KAPS materials or information please feel free to contact me at the address or phone numbers below:

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(502) 756-2837 - Work
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TREASURER'S REPORT

BY RAY ROTH

The year is ending and all is hectic. Between the impending tax filing deadline, the extended school year from snow days, and the "normal" crunch time for evaluations I am sure there is a population of school psychologists out there just waiting for the summer break. By the time you read this I hope things have calmed down for all and you are recovering from the school year. Just remember, a few more weeks and the new school year will be opening.

Not much has changed from the last treasurer's report. Some membership dues have been received and some bills paid, but overall our finances have not varied much. Our current checking balance is \$9,064.71. We also have the CD worth \$2,500, which gives us a grand total of \$11,564.71 in assets.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE REPORT

BY REBECCA JOAN JONES

The program committee for the 13th Annual Convention of the Kentucky Association for Psychology in the Schools consists of Marty Kent, Mary Twohig, and Joan Jones from the Jefferson County Public School System. These three have enlisted support from various other JCPS staff members and made great progress toward producing a top quality convention to be held at the Radisson Hotel off of Hurstbourne Lane in Louisville, Kentucky. This meeting site promises to be an enjoyable, convenient location.

The Honorable Chris Gorman, Attorney General, Commonwealth of Kentucky, has agreed to speak at the luncheon on Friday, September 30, to discuss "Youth Violence/Violence in Schools." Other speakers and participants are being contacted to participate in addressing a very timely issue.

The Conference is being planned so that all Kentucky school psychologists will benefit from innovative educational practices, interventions, and information on state regulations. More details will be provided later, but **MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW** for **September 28-30, 1994** and plan to be involved in this exciting conference.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

BY CONNIE ADAMS

Were you contacted by KAPS during our February legislative alert? If so, great! If not, please let your regional rep know. Our phone tree is organized by regions.

Our alert was a courtesy call to all KAPS members to inform you of the status of HB 514, the "freedom of choice bill." The amended version of this bill was delivered to the governor per my latest copy of the Legislative Record. It allows coverage of services by a psychologist engaged in the lawful practice of psychology to be reimbursed directly through third party payments. Unfortunately, the Kentucky Psychological Association did not continue to support the original intention to include master's level psychologists and that part was deleted.

A crucial concern of KAPS during the session was SB 283, the counselor licensing bill. Due to the efforts of Sharon Kieta, Lesa Billings, and Jim Batts, and with the input of many KAPS members at the convention,

Continued on next page

**LEGISLATIVE
COMMITTEE REPORT**

Continued from page 2

we affected wording changes in the assessment component of the bill, or so we thought. Unfortunately, when the final bill came down, even more subtle changes were made, again raising concerns about the definition and use of psychological testing. The bill was sent to the Appropriations and Revenue graveyard. We must be ever vigilant!

Another bill of interest delivered to the governor was HB 826, requiring the Cabinet for Human Resources and the State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education to implement policies to assure that local school districts have access to medicaid funding for health related services to eligible children under the age of 21 with disabilities (state agency children).

Bill concerning school violence were hot topics. Bills sent to the governor related to school violence included SB 112, requiring parents to report a student's expulsion for designated crimes, requiring student records to reflect expulsion, and requiring school officials to report designated crimes to appropriate law enforcement agencies if the crime takes place in or near school premises. The bill waives certain confidential information and privileges, and grants the reporter of the crime immunity from civil or criminal liability. The bill also includes legal consequences for violations. Also sent to the governor was HB 205 which permits victims, family of victims, or the legal representative of either to attend juvenile court proceedings regarding cases in which they were the victim. It also permits the court to require parents, guardians, or the parents exercising control of a child to attend juvenile court proceedings involving the child.

Indirectly related to school violence, HB 176 was signed into law and deals with FERPA (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act). It defines circumstances of release of educational records, right of privacy, procedures of notification of rights and requirements for consent to release records, and procedures for challenges to content of records.

HB 359 was also signed into law and more directly relates to school violence. It prohibits persons under 18 from possessing, manufacturing, or transporting a handgun. Exceptions include hunter safety courses, target shooting, marksmanship competition, hunting or trapping with a license, traveling to these activities, or possessing a handgun on property of an adult with parental consent for self defense. The bill also includes legal consequences for violations.

As we look toward the future sessions of the legislature, and hopefully learn from the past, I solicit your commitment and involvement in the legislative process. Our KAPS goals include activities on behalf of the children we serve, the educational process in which we participate, and the profession we practice. Our numbers are relatively small and our efforts have tended to be reactive rather than proactive. In some cases we have become more effective by cooperating and collaborating with related professionals. Professional self-preservation and a bottom line commitment for psychology in the schools are the motivators. Let me know if you would like to become more involved.

REGION 1 REPORT

BY ALAN MULLINS

I suppose I will begin this regional report with a brief introduction since I have only recently begun serving as KAPS Western Region representative. I am currently in my fourth year as school psychologist with the Paducah Independent School System. I received my graduate and undergraduate training at Western Kentucky University and have been a KAPS member since 1989.

My first official piece of business within the Western Region will be an introductory letter to be mailed out to all regional members. This mailing will include a personal introduction as well as a needs assessment survey to identify particular areas of need and/or interest from members. We do not have an end-of-year meeting planned as yet. Depending on individual schedules and availability we may attempt a gathering in May or June. If this does not work out, we will schedule a meeting within the first month of the 1994-95 school year.

We are currently attempting to update an official phone tree to include a listing of all KAPS Western Region members. After reviewing the recent 1994 edition of the KAPS Membership Directory, it became apparent that our regional membership involves employees from ONLY 3 school districts of the 26 located within our regional boundaries. This is very disturbing to me, both as regional rep and as a practicing school psychologist. Thus an immediate chore will be to develop an action plan for increasing the exposure of the benefits of school psychological services to all school systems within Region 1.

Continued on page 4

REGION 1 REPORT

Continued from page 3

Also of interest is that four of nine members currently listed within our region are serving internships. So comparing our current regional membership to the list from 1992 shows a disappearance of several old KAPS members. Thus another mission will be to "find" these "lost" members and investigate why they are not viewing a membership in KAPS as beneficial.

In summary, I look forward to attempting to tackle some of these problems along with others over the next couple of years. I will end with a piece of personal news regarding the recent birth of my son. Tate Alan Mullins was born on February 16 to very proud parents (especially this father!!) and is very healthy and happy.

REGION 2 REPORT

BY JENNIE S. EWALD

Tax time or not . . . the regional report shall prevail. Region 2 has met twice since last report. Thanks to our Region 2 Exceptional Child Consultant from KDE, Joyce Al-Kishaly, we have had interesting speakers.

We met on November 5, 1993 in Cave City at Mammoth Resort. In the morning, we heard from Dr. Jennie Franz, Developmental Pediatrician. She spoke on Tourette Syndrome, OCD, and ADHD. She had recently located to Bowling Green, Kentucky, from the East Tennessee area. Dr. Franz was very interesting and enlightening. Everyone seemed to receive new information from her. Lunch was provided at the Resort. After lunch, Janet Crock, Atty. spoke on 504 and the attorney's perspective of 504. Debates were short lived but exciting.

Region 2 met again on February 25, 1994 in Bowling Green at the Advanced Technology Center. Patricia Dye Collins presented in the morning hours on the Skillstreaming program by Goldstein and others. Ones experiences with this program varies and Patti seemed to be having some success using it in classrooms with cooperative teachers. Lunch was catered and we were able to spend more time sharing our experiences with the new regs and LD guidelines and everyday kind of school psych stuff. After lunch, Tom Branscum was present to give his perspective of the regs and monitoring. Tom is a member of the monitoring crew from KDE. He was informative, understanding, and escaped from the meeting with all parts intact.

By the time this is published, the elections will probably be over, and I will no longer be the Region 2 Representative. I have enjoyed serving as representative and it has been an educational experience as I had suspicioned it would be. I plan to continue involvement in KAPS, but not necessarily as a member of the Executive Council. Thanks for the opportunity and best wishes to my successor.

REGION 4 REPORT

BY MICHAEL WALTERS

Northern Region members have met three times since the KAPS convention. School Psychologist Michael Laughlin presented an overview of a grant funded project that he is coordinating in Kenton County to develop conflict resolution and peer mediation programs.

Regional special education coordinator Margaret Reed presented on the highlights of the new special education regulations. Jean Andrew from the Children's Law Center in Covington described the comprehensive legal services provided to children by the center. Of course, social gatherings were mixed with professional development activities to help ensure that northern region school psychologists maintain a well-rounded lifestyle. The region has added several new members since regional realignment. However, it will be a challenge to gain their participation at regional gatherings since most live long distances from the usual meeting sites.

REGION 7 REPORT

BY LYN LAWRENCE

Although our region is large our membership is quite small. There are only four of us at this time. As a region we hope to get together some time to become better acquainted and possibly to plan some possible areas of research or discussion that we could become involved in as a group. Activities recently engaged in include attendance at a recent meeting in Elizabethtown by two of our members. A great deal was learned about how the government works and how we can best have issues important to us addressed in a positive fashion. The regional representative, Lyn Lawrence, attended the KAPS regional representative meeting in late March at Eastern Kentucky University.

PARENT-CHILD INTERACTIONS AND NON-COMPLIANCE: IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS WORKING WITH FAMILIES

BY PAUL B. de MESQUITA
AND JENNIFER L. BORDERS,
UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

The most difficult and frustrating child rearing problems for parents frequently involve issues of noncompliance. An estimated 89% of child referrals from families involve children who for one reason or another fail to comply with the requests and/or commands of parents (Patterson, 1982). Understanding the noncompliant child and the accompanying parent-child interaction is an essential element in helping parents to improve family functioning (Forehand, King, Peed, & Yoder, 1975; Forehand & MaMahon, 1981; Johnson & Lobitz, 1974). With the increasing trend for school psychologists to expand their role to include services to families, a large number of parents will request assistance with child behavior problems involving noncompliance. Therefore, this article briefly highlights relevant research on parent-child interaction associated with noncompliance in young children. Implications are offered for school psychologists working with parents, families, and preschool children.

Reciprocal Nature of Parent-Child Interactions?

Research studies emphasize the

reciprocal nature of the parent-child interaction and suggest a clear correlation between parent negativity and their children's deviant behavior. In early investigations of behavioral compliance, the parents of children referred for non-compliance demonstrated higher rates of verbal commands and harsh criticisms than did parents of compliant non-referred children (Forehand, 1975; Campbell, 1986). When children and their parents were observed during dinnertime, deviant children's behavior appeared to fluctuate depending upon the negativity of their parents. Higher rates of child deviant behavior led to higher rates of negative responses. More deviant children tended to get more attention and responses from the environment (Lobitz & Johnson, 1975; Wahler & Dumas, 1986). Research on toddlers in their natural home environment showed that compliance was most likely to follow parental verbal suggestions and was less likely to occur following parental commands and reasoning (Lytton & Zwirner, 1975). Attempts to gain compliance with physical actions, as well as threats, criticism, and refusal of requests appeared to facilitate noncompliance more than compliance. In contrast, positive and neutral actions tended to lead to more compliance.

Four positive parent interactions have been identified as predictors of child compliance: 1) consistent rule enforcement; 2) encouragement of mature actions; 3) use of psychological rewards; 4) and play with the child. Conversely, negative predictors of compliance were the amount of physical punishment and the frequency of withdrawal of love (Lytton, 1977).

Parental Strategies

Investigations into the nature of parental requests associated with compliance examined three types of control techniques: orientation, contact, and task. In addition to

these three, the timing of request, the syntactical nature of the directive, and accompanying nonverbal behavior were found to be important (Schaffer & Crook, 1980). The control directives most likely to gain compliance were those which formed part of a sequential attention-action strategy attempting to influence the child's level of involvement. For example, a request coming "out of the blue" had the least chance of succeeding and generally met with noncompliance. However, if requests were planned with a sort of sequential strategy to them compliance was sure to occur (e.g., first gaining the child's attention, then specifying the task).

The amount and type of control directives attempted by both fathers and mothers studied how verbal interactions encourage immediate compliance during a play situation (McLaughlin, 1983). Both mothers and fathers were found to utilize action controls (61% and 72% respectively) more frequently than attention controls. Parents tended to deal with noncompliance by repeating their verbalization, and this usually led to eventual compliance. When direct imperative controls vs. questions or suggestions were used, the effectiveness of these strategies varied depending on the age of the child.

Research with preschool children demonstrated that there are strategies that achieve immediate compliance and lead to a generalized compliance at a later time (Lepper & Gilovich, 1982). Activity-oriented requests using either a goal-setting or a fantasy strategy facilitated an increase in compliance to subsequent adult requests. A fantasy strategy, for example, would include a statement such as "Pretend you're a hungry toy eating monster and pick up all the toys and bring them to your cave

Continued from page 5

for supper." A goal-setting strategy would include a request such as "See how many toys you can pick up and put on the shelf by the time I count to 25." Such approaches are playful and fun. They minimize the external constraints of the situation and encourage internal attributions resulting in increased motivation to comply with later requests.

Implications for School Psychologists

School psychologists can be more helpful to parents when they are familiar with the reciprocal nature of parent-child interaction. Observation of a parent interacting with a child is an essential part of assessing the problem. This can be accomplished informally by requesting that the child accompany the parent to a conference with the school psychologist. Home visits provide better opportunities for both formal and informal observations of the interactions that might be contributing to noncompliance. During such a visit the school psychologist may request the parent to engage in a typical compliance task with the child. Consideration of various styles and patterns of parent-child interactions can assist in determining whether a family intervention will be successful or not. Interactions between parent and child are not only complex but play a critical role in the development of patterns of compliance, subsequent motivation to cooperate with parents, and even possibly intellectual growth and self-concept. Therefore, the kind of requests and directives given to the child, the strategy employed at the time, the language used, and the style of communication are essential factors which can encourage a healthy acceptance of social standards and values.

Parent training programs may be more effective when they consider the very complicated family process dynamics and underlying family variables (Dubey & Kaufman, 1982; Griest & Forehand, 1982; Kuczynski, 1991). When assisting parents and

teachers with behavioral noncompliance, it is important for school psychologists to assess interaction processes. The nature of the noncompliance as well as the nature of the adult-child interaction should be assessed, with problem definitions addressing problematic interactions. Focusing on parent-child interactions and helping parents develop communication patterns that promote compliance and cooperation at an early age can prevent later more serious problems and minimize the severity of family conflicts during adolescence.

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FOR OUR
CHILDREN'S
SECURITY

BY BARBARA BUTCHER
School Psychologist,
Hammond, Indiana

There seems to be an unusual amount of parents who have entered my office lately with a request for testing. Usually, if Channel 11 or someone runs a program about a specific disability, we receive a few phone calls, but this current trend seems to be pretty consistent. One mother demanded an evaluation for her daughter on her third day of school. There used to be a stigma attached to labeling a child "handicapped" but attitudes have shifted and we are now catering to a new dilemma: "labeling for money."

In case you haven't heard, social security now provides funding to households with disabled youngsters. Learning disabled, emotionally handicapped, communication handicapped, and other categories of disabilities are now eligible. Families can receive as much as \$434.00 a month to assist them in getting services for their child. Eligibility is based on financial need and proof of the disability.*

The original intent of this program was to bridge the financial gap in services available to lower income families. The problem lies not in the funding, but the accountability for it. Speech therapist? Tutoring? Perhaps, but follow up from social security on the actual expenditures is minimal (a friend who serves as a special education director recently fielded a call from an angry parent who complained that the papers were not filed on time and she was forced to cancel her vacation).

The implications of this type of program are obvious. Parents are demanding more evaluations and are often pushing heavily for labels . . . even when it is not warranted. "Gray area" labels such as emotional disorders could fall prey to further scrutiny. We may see an increase in outside evaluations or due process hearings to justify placement. The parents rights manual may become a best seller.

There are no easy solutions without getting bogged down in paperwork. Two possible alternatives are: social security can pay directly for services rendered (with limitations). The child receives the help, the approved organization gets the funding.

Establish a community resource center that could provide professional help with compensation given for transportation. Speech specialists, behavioral experts, and other disciplines can be readily available to families that qualify.

Teachers work with disabled children so that they can learn to compensate for their weaknesses and stand less of a chance of being victimized out in the community. But here the potential for exploitation is rooted in the home and sanctioned by the government. It's tough enough to label a child without having to worry about a "hidden agenda." Attaching price tags to the process without accountability makes it too easy to take advantage of . . . and that is clearly not the message we as educators want to reinforce.

* Source: National Social Security Office.
Reprinted from the December 1993 issue of the IASP Newsletter.

WHAT IS
HAPPENING TO
THE 'HUMP?'

BY JERRY OERMANN, PRESIDENT
MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

The "hump" seems to be disappearing, and I am deeply concerned. You know which "hump" I mean; the one in the middle of the normal curve; the one where most people are supposed to be. It seems as if society wants to move away from the notion of individual differences and to homogenize itself. The worst part is that we are not collapsing toward the middle of the curve, but rather pushing everyone into the top half.

Statistically speaking, I didn't think this was possible. I thought that it was good and natural that in every situation, some individuals were at the top, and most were in the middle. But the problem is, no one wants to be on the bottom half of the curve. In large part, I blame the American Dream. What we perceive as being an ideal standard of living and a need to achieve has become harder and harder for many individuals to attain. You just have to love all those old movies with happy endings, where the guy gets the girl and the money and lives happily ever after. Unfortunately, in real life, this simply is not true.

But if you can no longer attain the American Dream, what do you do? I believe that our nation may be in a period of denial, similar to that which individuals go through when having lost a loved one. We don't want to believe what is happening to us and we distort the reality of those situations to fit our own needs.

If you look at many of the current trends in education, they follow this direction of thought. Take, for example, ungraded school systems. In this situation, children are no longer placed in classrooms on the basis of chronological age or past achievement. Instead, children work at

WHAT IS HAPPENING TO THE 'HUMP?'

Continued from page 7

their own pace, and achievement is not from comparison with others, but solely an individual concern.

The American Dream is changed so that if I cannot attain a standard proposed by society, then I will develop my own standard. That standard will not be compared with other standards developed by other individuals for themselves, but will be only for me. In other words, I will be happy if I don't know what I am missing.

Likewise, the new upswing in Section 504 legislation has focused on ridding the world of individual differences. This law dictates that any person found to be handicapped is eligible for whatever services are necessary to accommodate or remediate the problem. However, the definition of "handicapped" under this law is so broad that just about anybody can qualify.

Again, it is a modification of the American Dream that if I cannot attain a standard then someone else must make amends for me.

The dramatic increase in diagnosis of attention deficit disorders also falls along these lines. As I have stated before, I believe that in a good number of these cases Ritalin is used as a cure for a lack of discipline, poor parenting skills, and other environmental conditions. (Before you lynch me, yes, I do believe that there are legitimate cases and yours is probably one of them.)

The move toward inclusion also falls into the category of an attempt to modify the attainment

of the American Dream. In this scenario, children who as identified as having some form of learning disability or other handicapping condition are placed with "average" students. Hopefully no one will be able to tell the difference between the two groups. I refer to this style of American Dream as "Don't rain on my parade." Even though I may not be able to achieve the same level as others, I will make sure that the teacher and other students treat me as if I am no different. We have tried this in small amounts for the last several years and since it is not working, we are now going to try it in large amounts.

Please do not misunderstand my comments. I certainly feel that handicapped children and adults should not be discriminated against. However, I don't feel that we should approach the problem by ignoring it or trying to change the reality of the situation. The fact is all of us are different and, no matter what we do, we will be treated differently in our society and will attain different levels. I believe that we have to learn to accept this fact and deal with our differences in realistic, adult ways. We cannot expect others to change the world for us, nor pretend that the differences do not exist.

We constantly compare our education system with those of other countries. I believe that our teachers and educators are the best in the world or at least have the potential to be. The differences lie in our national mindset, which is directly tied to that American Dream. We have to learn to take pride in our achievements, no matter what they are. We have to learn to be proud of ourselves, whether we collect trash or perform lobotomies. The reality is that there are individual differences and we cannot homogenize them. What we do have to homogenize is how we feel about our achievements and about the achievements of

others. It is time for our society to mature to the point where individual differences are accepted and celebrated, rather than smoothed over and ignored.

The current trend in education may well be working toward such a goal. But we are attempting to solve the problem using a trial and error approach, rather than performing good research and following practices which have been documented to provide desired results.

Can we only hope that these current trends will accomplish what they intend to, and will not turn out to be short-term fads, passing the way of the hula hoop and the Bender? I think not! It is up to us as a professional group, which is dedicated to protecting the "... rights and welfare of children and youth" (a direct quote from my membership certificate), to ensure that our schools are utilizing sound educational practices. Our children are our future and we must prioritize education if we are to survive in the new world order. It sounds like a tough job, but one perfectly designed for the school psychologist.

(Reprinted from *The Michigan Psych Report*).

LAW DIALOGUE: FULL INCLUSION

BY PATICK W. McKEE AND
RICHARD H. BARBE

Reprinted from the *GASP Dialogue*, Spring, 1993

Full inclusion is of growing concern among school people. The short piece that follows neither cites judges' opinions nor quotes extensively from the federal regulations. Instead, it tries to define the full inclusion situation generally. From the outset, Congress saw the legislation that is the IDEA as a financial incentive designed, in part, to get special needs children out of institutions and other isolated programs and into the educational mainstream. Equally clearly, however, these legislators knew that there had to be a reasonable balance between placing special need students into regular classes and programs and

Continued on page 9

LAW DIALOGUE: FULL INCLUSION

Continued from page 8

doing an effective job with all children. Merely taking special students out of institutional or program isolation and dumping them into unprepared regular programs would simply trade one set of problems for another.

The law requires that students eligible for special education services receive their education in company with regular education pupils to the maximum extent appropriate for that individual. The notion of least restrictive environment (LRE) governs. Students are to be educated according to individually designed programs of study, tailored to their individual needs, with isolation to be kept to the minimum that is consistent with the goal of meeting those special needs.

Courts have examined the ways in which school systems proposed, in students' IEPs, to meet both the educational needs and the social needs represented by the LRE mandate. Schools had to explain in reasonable terms why students needed to be isolated in special classes, programs, or schools. That is, schools, when challenged at due process hearings, had to provide professionally sound reasons for keeping a child out of the classroom he or she would have been assigned were they not eligible for assistance under the terms of the IDEA.

School systems' reasons for separation were given deference by the courts; schools gave strong arguments both educational and economic. When students having similar learning problems are grouped, both educational efficiency and effectiveness tend to

follow. This is, after all, the history of American education. We have ordinarily put nonreaders together, grouped those students ready for trigonometry, and, generally, put students with like needs together.

When challenged, schools were usually successful at explaining the need for separation when the educational needs of the special students differed very widely from those of students in regular classes. The hard cases were those close to the border. It seems clear to almost everyone, including judges, that students with profound mental impairments, for example, won't profit much from inclusion in regular math classes; but, on the other hand, students with very specific learning problems very possibly might.

Compromises were reached. Inclusion often took the form of including special education students in activities such as lunch and physical education. Sometimes inclusion was extended to performance areas such as music and art. If differences were generally minor, inclusion was full-time except for the provision of some resource room support.

Education changes, however. Knowledge evolves and techniques improve. The press for further and further inclusion continues similarly. Including all students - even those receiving special education support in regular classes is a goal, an aspiration, but is currently neither the law nor federal regulation. The law demands that IDEA-eligible students are to receive the educational services in groups with non-IDEA students "to the maximum extent feasible." What is changing, however, is how much inclusion is educationally feasible.

As regular classroom teachers become better able to cope with wider ranges of abilities and needs, as they accept that much broader inclusion is a sound educational

objective, fuller and fuller inclusion will result. For now, however, the courts continue to force schools to offer explanations of why separation is justified. Keep in mind, though, that as other schools find greater inclusion increasingly workable, the reasons offered for separation become less and less tenable. If a nearby school system finds it possible to include a child further, how will your school argue that isolation is the only effective path?

NEW PRACTITIONER'S YARDSTICK

BY BILL LAMP'L

Reprinted from GASP Dialogue, Fall, 1993

O.K., even the newest, greenest school psychologist has been slugging it out "in the field" for a few months now. Gauge your progress (or preview what's in store for you) by seeing how many of these vital, basic concepts you've already encountered.

The Horaffe (Equus Giraffa):

A masterpiece of genetic engineering: a mammal resembling a horse, but with the neck of a giraffe. Known only to school psychologists; perhaps best kept that way.

Three-Quarter Syndrome:

A very persistent maxim decreeing that a child will diligently turn a block through three (and only three) of the four possible placements before abandoning it in favor of another block, where the process is repeated. If you've encountered this, there's no need to point out the significance of the side untried.

Rule of Puzzle Fracturing:

When a child is working on an Object Assembly task and reaches a stalemate, he will, after considering his options, remove the one and only correctly placed piece in an effort to get moving again.

Continued on page 10

NEW PRACTITIONER'S YARDSTICK

Continued from page 9

Nominees for most frequently hear pronouncement:

a. *"Gee, that was easy."* (Usually proclaimed as the student presents a truly bizarre arrangement.)

b. *"You didn't give me enough blocks."* (Usually delivered with considerable righteous indignation.)

General Tips:

- Test all your kids in December; chronological ages are easier to calculate then.

- Send word to the principal when you're about to start the Coding subtest; then he won't have to guess about when to spring the fire drill.

HERE I COME, READY OR NOT: TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN

BY SHARON E.
ROSENKOETTE, Ph.D.

In this world of increasing developmental diversity, it is difficult to have a single standard for entrance to kindergarten; yet for many years, we in America tried to do that. And when some children didn't measure up to the local standard for kindergarten readiness, some school districts sent them home to "wait a year", hoping that additional time in the same environment would bring these "immature" young children up to standard. Other school districts started special classes - pre-K and/or post-K "transition" classes - to provide special support and additional time for those children developing

slowly to catch up to their peers. Research now shows clearly that neither of those efforts made much difference in student outcomes (Love et al., 1992).

A 1991 study of more than 7,000 kindergarten teachers by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching showed that 42% of the teachers said their entering students were less ready than five years previously. As school psychologists know well, lack of readiness, immaturity, developmental delay, and disability can be caused by a host of factors that are both internal and external to the child and, as well, often impossible to delineate.

One of the most persistent issues is how to handle the transition to school for a child developing slower than many age-mates in one or more areas. Three recommendations are offered: 1) Change the system to support transition. 2) Involve the family. 3) Prepare the child.

Change the System

A major philosophical shift is underway regarding entry to school: In the 1970's and 1980's we talked about getting children ready for school. In the 1990's and beyond, we talk more about getting schools ready for the children who come.

The school psychologist can be a leader in bringing agencies, teachers, and parents in the community together to create a barrier-free journey from home, preschool, or Head Start, through kindergarten, and on into first and second grades for all children, whatever their abilities. The foundation for such smooth transitions is developmentally appropriate curriculum that allows each child to learn at his or her individual developmental level, both prior to kindergarten and in early elementary school. Long term success in school develops from preschool, kindergarten, and grade

level curricula that allow child-initiated activity, exploration, and individual and small-group learning experiences rich in language opportunities and problem-solving challenges. Such a curriculum allows children with disabilities, giftedness, delays, and typical uneven development to learn in the same classroom, with acceptance of the diversity that exists accompanied by appropriate challenge and achievement for every child.

Moving to a developmentally-based approach involves major philosophical changes for educators; it requires a shift away from labels and special placements for children and focuses efforts, instead, on fundamental changes in classroom organization and activities to promote individual accomplishment for every child at a developmentally appropriate level. It requires professional teamwork and role release for both classroom teachers and special educators.

Curricular changes of the sort described above are receiving strong encouragement in the professional literature and in position statements* from groups as diverse as the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and the International Reading Association. Nevertheless, real changes of this sort happen classroom by classroom, teacher by teacher.

As Kansas schools initiate more developmentally appropriate kindergarten programs, school psychologists are ideally placed to assist in the change process. Leadership may happen at a district level or on a classroom-by-classroom and child-by-child basis. Strategies include sharing articles,* teaching suggestions, and organizational plans that foster developmentally appropriate classrooms; helping teachers interested in child-centered curriculum to network with one another; and promoting inservice opportunities that lead to local problem-solving.

Continued on page 11

HERE I COME, READY OR NOT TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN

Continued from page 10

A first step in changing the system to promote continuity in learning for young children in transition is to develop a written community transition plan* for all children entering kindergarten. Participants in writing such an agreement include preschool, child care, Head Start, and kindergarten teachers and administrators and parents. A school psychologist might well chair the effort.

Each community's early childhood transition agreement should reflect local values and customs, but every plan should include the following: schedules for cross visitation of classrooms and joint inservice training by kindergarten, preschool, and Head Start teachers; open houses for entering children and their families; access to health information and screening for developmental concerns; early literacy programs to provide parents of prekindergartners with books suitable for sharing with their children; procedures for designation of a contact person who can answer transition questions; and timelines for sharing information about the transition process with all families.

The community's transition agreement should contain the following policies related to children with special needs: explanation of the general timeline for transition activities; resources available to support families in transition; pooling (with parent permission) of assessment information between sending and receiving programs to avoid expensive and time consuming duplication;

definition of responsibility for sharing information between sending and receiving programs; and timely determination of eligibility for services, IEP development (including both sending and receiving staffs as well as parents), and formal placement decision, no later than April of the child's prekindergarten year.

Many of the elements of any community's transition agreement are certainly in place currently as informal practices. The subsequent action of writing the transition plan will, however, clarify existing procedures and focus attention on gaps in services as well as on areas that call for future system-wide effort. The process of writing the agreement will help program personnel make kindergartens ready for young children and their families.

Involve Families

In Head Start and preschool, families are welcome members of the instructional team. Parents should feel equally welcome at kindergarten, and schools can certainly benefit from the support parents can provide. Data from a longitudinal study of Head Start graduates (Schweinhart et al., 1991) showed that when parents continued to be involved with their children's education after Head Start, their children were more likely to remain in school, to perform better in school, and to have fewer social problems than offspring of parents who ceased to be involved.

Parents in several states, however, have told our project that they are intimidated by elementary school personnel and procedures in ways that they were not during interactions with child care, preschool, or Head Start personnel; the size of the school building, the number of children enrolled, the child vs. family focus of services, transportation arrangement, and parents' own educational histories seem to contribute to this distancing.

On the other hand, welcoming parents to help plan their children's transition to kindergarten, seeking parent contributions to assessment procedures, urging parents to visit the kindergarten in advance of their children's entry, and inviting family members to share their longterm goals* for their children as part of the IEP process are strategies that involve parents at a meaningful level and also aid the school district in providing appropriate services to children. Offering to parents of prekindergartners mentoring from parents experienced at transition is another service appreciated by many families.

Prepare the Child

Many of the activities to prepare young children for transition to kindergarten will be conducted by teachers. Some common ones include reading books about kindergarten*, planning field trips to school playgrounds or special elementary school programs, and dramatic play of transition events such as riding the school bus or meeting a new friend. School psychologists can support or suggest such activities when appropriate.

For many children with special needs, it will be helpful to include transition-related goals in the IEP during the year prior to kindergarten as well as after the transition if the targeted outcomes still have not been attained. Skills such as the following should not be viewed as kindergarten readiness criteria to exclude some 5-year-olds from formal education, but rather the achievement of these and similar skills tends to help young children to feel more competent, confident, and accepted in an unfamiliar kindergarten setting.

Common transition skills for kindergarten* include asking for help appropriately, gaining teacher attention in an approved manner, working or playing without direct adult supervision, obeying a cue given to the group rather than to the individual child, independent toileting and hand washing, lengthening on-task behavior during play or work

Continued on page 12

HERE I COME, READY OR NOT TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN

Continued from page 11

activities, care of personal possessions, independent clean-up of work or play materials, and sitting appropriately during group discussions. Few of these skills appear on developmental checklists, yet they are highly functional for kindergarten success.

During the IEP process the school psychologist can assist preschool teachers by communicating about behaviors valued in kindergarten and can aid kindergarten teachers by devising ways to continue working on the child's skill development when mastery has not occurred prior to transition.

Transition to kindergarten is a process extending over more than a year. Actions by the school psychologist can ease the stress of transition for children, their families, and educators; promote continuity in learning for all children, including those with special needs; and help schools be ready to serve every child who enrolls.

Note: Items in the text followed by an asterisk are available free of charge by contacting the author c/o Bridging Early Services Transition Project, Associated Colleges of Central Kansas, 105 E. Kansas, McPherson, KS 67460. The federally funded project also offers technical assistance and training related to transition throughout Kansas.

Reprinted from KASP *Examiner*, Spring 1994

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

BY DIANN HUNTER

Differentiating post traumatic stress disorder from hyperactivity, learning disability and behavior disorder is crucial to treatment according to Brenda Turnbloom, Clinical Social Work, The Mercury Center. School psychologists and school personnel can be valuable in recognizing patterns of behaviors that would indicate PTSD.

Trauma was defined as natural or man-made occurring in a single incident or in multiple incidents. More intense use of dissociation as a coping strategy appeared as the result of man-made trauma. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder can occur when the events evoke terror and fear for life.

Diagnostic criteria for PTSD include five characteristics. A recognizable stressor such as physical or sexual abuse or experiencing a life threatening event such as witnessing a homicide needs to be present. The child re-experiences the trauma in a cycle triggered by environmental cues which evoke a re-living of the trauma in nightmares or worry about safety issues. The cycle recreates the need to dissociate to numb emotional responses. Dissociation is used to such an extent that it becomes a disturbance of consciousness and memory. Children may begin to avoid situations or stimuli which trigger this cycle.

Also present in PTSD are hyper-arousal symptoms indicative of fear and anxiety reactions. Heart rate and blood sugar levels may increase. Physiological reactions can also contribute to avoidance of situations which elicit this type of reactions. Children may avoid situations which to an observer can appear without reason. Duration of thirty or more days is the fifth characteristic of PTSD.

The primary hallmark of PTSD is the reliance on dissociation, separating from the emotional and physical pain which resembles a hypnotic trance. When dissociation is over utilized in trauma and in dealing with the cycle of re-living the trauma, multiple personalities can develop.

Multiple personality disorders as presented in the video "Identifying Dissociation in Children" published by the International Association of Dissociative Disorders were described as having six major features. The child may demonstrate trance-like states which interfere with functioning and the learning process in school. Others may perceive the child as daydreaming all the time or "just not there."

Children with MPD demonstrate marked differences in abilities among various setting and across time. There are also marked differences in behavioral styles. The child may relate seeing color designs in lines or stripes.

Therapy for dissociative disorder would focus on decreasing use of dissociation and establishing alternatives to cope with anxiety levels. Increasing feelings of safety and ego building are critical elements of therapy.

Reprinted from the IASP Newsletter, December 1993

USE AND ABUSE OF FIGURE DRAWINGS

BY ROBERT MOTTA, Ed.D.

(Reprinted from the New York School
Psychological Association's *Psychologist*
newsletter)

This is the second article on figure drawings presented in the *Psychologist*. The first appeared in the January, 1991 issue and argued that drawings have little validity and should not be used as a test of anything.

That article brought responses of agreement and disagreement. There were suggestions I might have been bitten by a drawing and was therefore attacking back (let me check my own drawing for bite marks); figure drawings were no better and no worse than other projectives (an unfortunate indictment of other projectives), so why only pick on figure drawings? (they are the most used and least valid of instruments); the prior article cited no references (the *Psychologist's* format doesn't lend itself to referenced articles, but if this is what you'd like - read on).

USAGE

Figure drawings are an important part of most psychological assessments yet their validity as an assessment instrument has yet to be demonstrated. In a 1983 paper, Prout reviews two national surveys of school psychologists. In these surveys it was found that when assessing the social-emotional functioning of children and adolescents, the most widely used procedures were figure drawings, interviews and classroom observations. Similarly Goh (1983), in a survey of 274 practicing school psychologists, found projective techniques, especially human figure drawings and sentence completion tests, were the most often used instruments for

personality assessment. Despite the wide use of figure drawings, the evidence for their accuracy in predicting or describing behavior, personality, or emotions is weak, at best.

Those who defend figure drawings usually do so by maintaining two positions. The first is that experts, unlike inexperienced psychologists, are able to make accurate descriptions of personality and behavioral functioning based upon their accumulated knowledge of prior drawing. This frequently maintained position is virtually without empirical support. There are no well controlled studies showing experts are any more accurate in deriving useful information from drawings than amateurs, in fact there are a few studies showing that amateurs are more accurate (e.g. Stricker, 1967).

The second position is figure drawings are never to be used in isolation but are helpful in supporting other test instruments or hypotheses derived from these instruments. This particular position, although also widely held, defies common logic. If figure drawings are weak psychometrically, they can add little or nothing to findings derived from stronger measure (Martens, 1990). One does not use a less valid measure to support a more valid one. An analogy would be dart-throwing accuracy to support the findings of the WISC-R. Dart accuracy has no established validity as a measure of intelligence so the use of accuracy to support the findings of the psychometrically sound WISC-R makes little sense. Figure drawings do not have established validity as measures of behavior, personality, or emotion and can add little to existing valid measures of these characteristics.

WHERE'S THE DATA?

In 1957, Swenson conducted an exhaustive review of studies on human figure drawings conducted

between 1945 and 1956. The conclusion was that Machover's hypotheses concerning the Draw-A-Person Test (DAP) and the projection of one's own concerns onto the drawing was not supported by the available research at that time. Suinn and Oskamp (1969) surveyed a smaller selection of studies and also concluded the validity of figure drawings as test instruments was 'tenuous.' Klopfer and Taulbee (1976), in another survey, concluded it is unfortunate so much research effort is expended on the DAP in view of the rather discouraging results of this instrument. They recommend using the results of the DAP as a kind of graphic behavior that only takes on meaning within the context of the subject's comments which might be stimulated by the drawing.

More recently Kahill (1984) reviewed the empirical literature on the reliability and validity of human figure drawings of adults, covering the period of 1967 through 1982. Kahill reached a number of non-supportive conclusions with regard to adult drawings and much of the same is found with children's drawings. On the positive side, inter-rater reliabilities for figure drawing scoring systems were found to be relatively high. Despite this, evidence for the hypothesis that one projects one own concerns when forming a drawing was non-existent to mixed. The evidence regarding both the content and the structural and formal aspects of drawings failed to support the majority of Machover's hypotheses or were contradictory to them. Only two of the 30 indices which were reviewed were supported. The influence of confounding variables, such as artistic ability was seen as significant and needed to be controlled for in studies of drawings.

A partial listing of figure drawing features that received virtually no support (Kahill, 1984) despite the existence of many published studies which investigated these are the following: placement on page: Hammer 1954, 1958, for example, asserted left-hand placement indicated impulsivity and

Continued on page 14

USE AND ABUSE OF FIGURE DRAWINGS

Continued from page 13

seeking for immediate gratification; stance of the drawn figure; perspective, i.e. the direction in which the figure is facing; erasure, omission of body parts, distortion, transparency, eye-brows; hair; anatomy indicators (e.g. Machover has stated that internal organs were not drawn except by schizophrenics or manic patients); sex of first drawn figure.

The existence of studies which are both non-supportive or supportive of the value of a given figure drawing features included the following: size of body, size of head, shading, symmetry, mouth and teeth, eyes, breasts, nudity, and clothing. The most fundamental proposition of figure drawings is the "body-image hypothesis" which, according to Machover (1949), suggests that when one is asked to draw a person, the drawn figure is that person. Existing literature does not support this hypothesis despite the hundreds of studies on drawings.

Kahill suggests the basic problem with drawings may lie with the nature of the instrument itself. She states "As with much of the psychoanalytic theory on which it was based, a great deal of what is said about figure drawings is simply not testable. She states that one can easily find individual studies that are able to discriminate one group from another at slightly above chance (statistically significant) levels but these studies are of little value in real world psychological evaluations. Like Klopfer and Taulbee (1976) and others, she concludes her study by suggesting that the proper use of the drawing may be to provide a springboard or

stimulus for patient discussion but that her review of the literature in figure drawings leads to no more optimism (regarding the value of drawings) than prior reviews.

RECENT STUDIES

Although literature surveys provide a far better overall picture of the research in a given field than any one study, there are numerous, recent, individual studies on drawings. Norford & Barakat (1990) failed to find differences in the drawings of aggressive and non-aggressive preschoolers. Acosta (1990) found no relationship between closeness in Kinetic Family Drawings and actual interpersonal closeness. Wilson-Ball (1989) found no relationship between children's self-concept derived from drawings and those derived from standard measures. Calhoun et al., 1988 found an inverse relationship between boys' self-esteem scores derived from drawings and actual self-esteem. Kurdek, et al. (1987), found no relationship between figure drawing features and anxiety and hostility. The list goes on and on. Why beat a dead horse?

Conclusion: There is ample evidence figure drawings should not be used as test instruments and that they do not provide valid information about personality, behavior, or emotion. Valid scoring systems may be possible (e.g. McNeish, 1991) but are almost never employed in routine psychological evaluations. Despite the above, figure drawings will continue to be used as 'further proof' that Johnny has such and such problem. This only indicates if the facts conflict with one's belief - damn the facts! No level of dis-proof will suffice. More people believe in the science of astrology than the science of psychology.

A complete reference listing is available by writing to me at Hofstra's Dept. of Psychology, Hempstead, NY 11550.

THE ASSESSMENT DEBATE IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY: A RUNAWAY TRAIN?

BY JOHN J. MURPHY, Ph.D.

*To test or not to test, that is the question.
Whether 'tis nobler to administer stan-
dardized tests or CBM probes . . .*

The national debate regarding the relative merits of standardized testing and alternative assessment rages on like a train, gaining momentum with each passing month. I only hope it's not a runaway train, pushing ahead faster and farther without clear direction or purpose.

This is a personal reaction, not an empirical one. My intention is not to mount evidence for one side or the other. In fact, the major contention of this article is that our opinions as professionals are secondary to those of the clients we serve. In schools, our clients primarily are students, parents, and school personnel.

The title of a recent column from an assessment newsletter, "School Psychologists' Love-Hate Relationship with Tests," illustrates the key concern of this article - the lack of a client-service context for discussing assessment issues and evaluating the usefulness of specific procedures. My "relationship" with a test is irrelevant in a clinical context. From a clinical perspective, the primary selection criterion for any assessment procedure is the procedure's potential contribution to client goals (i.e., its clinical or client-based validity). If we judge that a particular procedure will enhance client goals, we should consider using it regardless of its "status" in the current assessment debate or other peripheral considerations. This is not meant to imply that statistical aspects of validity are unimportant in assessment decisions, but to suggest that such considerations be made within the context of unique client goals.

Continued on page 15

THE ASSESSMENT DEBATE IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY: A RUNAWAY TRAIN?

Continued from page 14

These issues have important ramifications for future research and discussions of assessment in school psychology. For starters, we need to clearly define and prioritize our goals as a profession and as individual service providers. It is the contention of this article that serving clients is our primary goal, and that client outcomes and experiences are the key indicators of our success. From a client-driven perspective, it is meaningless to say that a specific measure is "good" or categorically "better" than another, as is sometimes stated or implied in the assessment literature. Good for whom? For what purposes? In what situations? The value of research and dialogue on assessment (and other issues in school psychology) depends on the degree to which these pragmatic questions are addressed.

The most obvious way to address these challenges is to involve clients in significant and meaningful ways. The assessment controversies in school psychology will not be effectively resolved by an exclusive group of professionals who talk to each other through journals and conferences. If we truly want to know what works best for those we serve, we need to ask them. We need to develop ways to evaluate the relative benefits of various assessment measures for clients, not for us. The benefits of grappling with these issues as they bear on the current assessment debate in school psychology far outweigh the costs of spending time and energy in contexts which are marginally relevant to client services.

When we allow our clients to direct us instead of the other way around, we are being true to the service orientation of school psychology. Returning to the train metaphor, the surest way of staying on the right track is to share the engineer's seat with the clients we serve.

ALTERNATIVE INSTRUCTION IN THE REGULAR CLASSROOM

BY A.J. VAUGHNS

In an effort to better meet the needs of children having academic difficulty, an elementary school in Portland, OR has established a successful program expanding the services available in the regular classroom. The program was not designed as a replacement of special education classes or services, but as a supplement and additional tool available to the school. There are several potential benefits to such a program: (1) children that are having problems but do not qualify for special education receive assistance, (2) the stigmatization of special placement is removed, (3) teaches are provided with support, and (4) school psychologists are decreasingly involved in testing, thus able to expand their services further beyond a simple assessment role.

The program in Portland is a combination of two programs that developed simultaneously and proved to be compatible. The first is called Maximizing Educational Remediation within General Education (MERGE). Through MERGE, students having difficulties, regardless of classification, were provided with modified instruction in math and/or reading. A team of one special education teacher and two educational assistants traveled between

classrooms. Classrooms coordinated their schedules so that the team could be in every class during their math and reading periods. While the regular teacher taught the non-identified students, the team provided individualized instructions to those identified as having problems.

The second program was Building Educational Support Teams (BEST). As the name suggests, the purpose of this program was to better serve students and teachers by organizing staff efforts. If a teacher was concerned with the academic or behavioral performance of a student, they would first notify the parent and register the student for the BEST Program. Weekly meetings of the BEST team then reviewed the case. The teams consisted of two teachers (rotated among all teachers), the principal, school psychologist(s), and the counselor. In the meeting the problem was clarified, intervention options were discussed, next steps were identified, and responsibilities were assigned. The ultimate choice of intervention is left up to the teacher. During intervention, monitoring is done, with further meetings or change scheduled as needed.

The BEST and MERGE programs fit together well. Instead of simply being assessed and placed, a student benefits from a team of supporters, a systematic process of intervention, and multiple options in addressing problems. Due to the MERGE program, teachers reported that students were benefiting from more instructional assistance, greater individualization, and immediate service provision. The greatest benefit seen by teachers was the preservation of student self-esteem as a result of being able to remain in the classroom. As a result of the programs, referrals increased dramatically, indicating that teachers were more willing to seek assistance. Testing, however, decreased significantly because of the options provided by MERGE. Compared to past school performance and to comparable schools in the district, special education classifications decreased dramatically.

Continued on page 16

ALTERNATIVE INSTRUCTION IN THE REGULAR CLASSROOM

Continued from page 15

The concerns about the program were mostly logistical. Teachers were still waiting to judge whether students' academic performance increased more through MERGE than through special education placement. Teachers reported that it was initially difficult adapting to having four teaching staff in the same room and having two sets of instruction running concurrently. Also, it was initially difficult scheduling content-area instruction.

Implications for practitioners

While the two programs provide additional support and options for teachers and positive results for students' esteem, the program also seems to be very much in the interest of the school psychologist. First, because of the team approach, teachers are more likely to value and take advantage of the psychologist's input beyond assessment. Second, because less formal assessment is necessary, the school psychologists were able to provide a broader range of services. Third, through a team approach, the staff is united in its efforts for each student, often under the leadership of the school psychologist.

School psychologists may be concerned that a diminishing role in assessment and a decreasing amount of special education classification might decrease the value of psychological services in the district. It would seem, however, that this is the opportunity many practitioners have awaited. If the psychologist replaces

assessment services with effective leadership in program development, training, and consultation, they can at once make themselves invaluable and diversify their responsibilities. By showing results in increased staff involvement, increased student services, and more complete identification of students with problems, the school psychologist can gain the same, if not more, value as they would have in only identifying special education students.

In the case presented, two school psychologists were essential in the adoption and implementation of both the BEST and the MERGE programs. They provided leadership by training the special education team, consulting with teachers on adapting to changes, serving as guides in the BEST team meetings, and in providing interventions to students. It is suggested that if practitioners are interested in such a program, they take the initiative, establish their integral role, and apply their special knowledge and abilities to the entire process.

Program information was taken from the following publication:

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KENTUCKY ASSOCIATION FOR PSYCHOLOGY IN THE SCHOOLS

Call for Presentations: Convention 1994

September 28, 29 and 30

The 13th Annual Convention of the Kentucky Association for Psychology in the Schools will be held at the Radisson Hotel at I-64 and Hurstbourne Lane (1903 Embassy Square Boulevard) in Louisville, Kentucky. The theme of the conference will be "*Violence in the Schools*." Attorney General Chris Gorman will speak at our Friday Luncheon on the topic of Youth Violence.

Consider being a part of this exciting opportunity to share your innovative educational practices, personal experiences in the field, research, intervention strategies, etc. Please submit your application to be a presenter by providing the information requested below.

Please **type** or **print** information as to appear in convention program.

Presenter(s): Include degree, title, and employer.

Address of first presenter: _____

Home phone: _____

Title of presentation: _____

Abstract for convention program: (approximately 50 words) _____

Preferred length: _____ 50 minutes _____ 110 minutes

AV needs: _____

Return this page, a one-page typed summary (100-150 words) of the presentation, and a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

MARTY KENT

ECE Placement and Pupil Assessment
9117 Fern Creek Road, Louisville, KY 40291

Submission Deadline: Materials Must Be Received By June 17