



THE TEXAS SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

Newsletter of the Texas Association
of School Psychologists

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President's Corner

Phyllis Hamilton, LSSP, NCSP

This has to be, for me, the hardest task imaginable...sitting in front of a blank paper (actually a blank computer screen), trying to be inspired as well as inspirational. I dread no other "presidential" task quite as much as having to write these columns for the Texas School Psychologist. In fact, instead of this, I would gladly plan and produce another conference! (Just kidding, Robb.) Not that I don't enjoy talking and sharing my ideas, it's just the thought that people might actually read and remember what I have written! What words do I want to put to paper? What words do I want others, TASP members, buddies, colleagues, peers, friends, pals, cronies, comrades, associates, LSSPs from around the state, to hear from me? When will I have such an opportunity to again reach so many who are like me? This truly is an overwhelming task!

This year's NASP theme is "Celebrating Our Success". I would like to borrow this idea from them as a sort of "rallying cry" for LSSPs. The NASP theme spotlights programs for, by, about, using, featuring, and involving school psychologists from around the nation. That theme says a lot to me. It gives us permission to "toot our own horns" and showcase what we have done, and will continue to do, for children and schools as a whole. I would certainly encourage any of you to submit your program, idea, or initiative to NASP for inclusion in the soon-to-be-published resource listing. Give yourself that deserved pat on the back! We may also learn a little from each other by reading about, talking to, or visiting some of the resources listed. It is certainly by banding together, sharing, and supporting each other that we, as a profession, will become even more effective and valued.

Behind every innovation or initiative, there is also an active search for understanding and knowledge. We have long been required to continue our professional development. I know very few LSSPs who do not actively pursue understanding and knowledge for their own intrinsic reasons. Seeking new and better ways, as well as a need to improvise (may be read as "punt") in programming for the most challenging, have seemed to be important factors in the development of many of the most innovative and effective programs I have seen. LSSPs are often involved in the planning and development of these programs due to the ingrained notion that continued education and professional development are important. We are not content to stay with minimal requirements. Instead we seek and insist on the implementation of "best practices". We push the edges of

the box, often stepping outside as a "devil's advocate" to ensure that all sides are seen, all issues are covered, all persons are heard. We need to revel in our successes and truly celebrate ourselves.

Join us in Dallas in February 2000 for our 7th Annual Professional Development Conference. We have tried to provide a forum for everyone to find the understanding and knowledge that is such a life-blood of our profession. We have a multitude of topics, ranging from basic to advanced sessions with a wide variety of presenters and styles. We are also initiating a "Conversation Hour" with TASP Area Representatives so that the dialogue can continue on any topic of interest. Please be a part of our "family" and join fellow LSSPs while we celebrate who we are!

Now then...I've finally accomplished my task and met another challenge with success. And it really wasn't all that painful! On behalf of everyone on the TASP Executive Board, I wish you, your families, and the families you touch a wonderful, safe, and joy-filled holiday season!

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The Hardware Side of School Safety: Why it is Not Enough!

*By Scott Poland, Ed.D.
Director of Psychological School Services
Cypress Fairbanks I.S.D.*

The top school officials in Jefferson County Colorado where Columbine High School is located were uncertain that they agreed with my recommendation that additional security measures would be demanded by the Columbine school community. I explained that in Paducah, Kentucky and Jonesboro, Arkansas, where I also led crisis teams that a number of hardware security measures were now in place in the aftermath of school shootings. How many increased security measures should schools employ in the aftermath of the Columbine massacre?

The Columbine shooting sent shock waves across the country unlike any other previous act of violence at school. The extensive horrific and sensationalistic television coverage seared many children including our thirteen year old daughter. There were bomb threats in many schools across the country in the wake of Columbine. Numerous students reported that principals got on the public address systems and said for students not to worry and to get back to work! But, is it that easy and will spending millions of dollars on school police, surveillance cameras, identification badges and metal detectors alone result in eliminating the possibility of further multiple homicides at school? After all, none of the above hardware measures are new.

Several school systems have enacted elaborate and very realistic crisis drills where local police storm schools and disarm students who are armed with fake weapons and dressed in camouflage. Many of these drills have involved simulated blood and firing of weapons loaded with blanks. As a psychologist I am very concerned that those drills are too realistic and that they scare and confuse children who can not truly distinguish reality from fantasy. I do advocate crisis drills that teach students to follow the directions of adults and to move to a protected place. Those can be done without scaring anyone. There is much more information about how to carry out a crisis drill in my recent publication.

I believe that everyday since April 20, 1999 has provided a teachable moment in every classroom in America to discuss school safety and violence prevention and to empower students that they hold the key to school safety. Few classroom teachers and administrators have taken advantage of this teachable moment. I am at a loss to explain why educators did not arrange the desks in a circle in every classroom so that students could express their fears and concerns and identify prevention strategies to help make their school safer. I do know that educators in every state are under tremendous pressure to raise

academic scores on the state accountability test. School principals have told me that they would like to devote curriculum time to topics such as managing anger, violence prevention and learning to get along with others regardless of race and ethnicity but time can not be taken away from teaching the basic subjects. The first question that I was asked by the Columbine parent when I addressed a crowd of over 3000 in the aftermath of the shooting was, "We know this massacre was because of racism and I want to know what is being done about it!" My response was, "Sir, there is so much that we do not know about the motivation of these perpetrators, but, I do believe that racism is a problem in every school in America and the question is what are all schools going to do about it? It is frustrating to me to know that there are many excellent curriculum programs to work on the topics listed above but school personnel do not feel they have the time, mandate or resources to implement prevention programs. One question that I raised in my most recent U.S. Congressional testimony was, "Does anyone have a good reason why we send millions of school children in America home early in the afternoon (some as early as 2:30 pm)? Is there something safe, productive and supervised for them to do? Why not lengthen the school day which would provide more curriculum time for prevention programs and extra curricular activities for all students not only those gifted in athletics! I presented with Vice President Gore on school violence recently and he was openly critical of large high schools in America. He cited that the size of high schools has nearly quadrupled in the past thirty years. I do believe that it is a particular challenge in a large school to make each student feel valued and that they belong. I recommend that all large schools do everything possible to personalize them and make them seem smaller and I hope that across the country we will stop building massive schools that increase competition, pressure and anonymity among students.

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The Editor:

Alicia Paredes Scribner, Ph.D.
Department of Educ. Admin. & Psychological Services
Southwest Texas State University
601 University Drive
San Marcos, TX 78666
(512) 245-8682 (Office)
(512) 245-8872 (Fax)

Associate Editor:

Angela Peveto, B.S.
School Psychology Program
Southwest Texas State University

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There has been much discussion of how to end the conspiracy of silence that allows guns and weapons in our school. I will never forget leading the intervention in the aftermath of a shooting in one of my school district's large high schools. Several students who witnessed the accidental shooting in their classroom said, "That was so serious. She could have been killed! That could have been me! But, you know what, I don't think I would tell an adult tomorrow if I saw a gun on campus!" My experience has been that almost always students talk to their friends about homicidal thoughts, suicidal thoughts, and plans to bring guns to school. We have done a poor job in our society of separating incessant tattling about things that don't matter from the things that do. We must devote curriculum time to ending the conspiracy of silence. I certainly support the use of crisis tip lines in schools but students are not using them because we have not addressed prevention and personal responsibility issues in the classroom.

I have just completed a videotape series for the classroom where I talk to students about what they can do to make their schools safer. My wife has developed a workbook with violence prevention activities for the classroom. The workbook and videotapes entitled, "Take Back Your School: Challenging Students to Prevent Violence" can be ordered from Oracle Educational Video, 800-542-9243.

I had numerous conversations recently with the superintendent of Jefferson County Schools, Dr. Jane Hammond and the school board president, Mr. Jon Destefano. They have done an excellent job of managing a very traumatic situation. They made the following key points about what they learned:

- It is a community crisis.
- They could not control the media which at their peak numbered 750.
- They could control their reactions to the media.
- Prior relationships with police, clergy, mental health, parent, and teacher groups were very helpful.
- Assistance from The National School Public Relations Association and The National Association of School Psychologists was very helpful.

Columbine High School reopened on August 16, 1999 with a carefully planned rally with the focus on students and staff taking back their school and working together to provide support for each other and to create a climate where violence will never reoccur. Columbine does have new hardware security measures in place such as more school police, surveillance cameras, metal detectors and identification badges for staff and students. Those are all logical, helpful and preventative in the aftermath of school violence. Jefferson County implemented these measures after gathering input from parents, staff and students. My own school

superintendent, Mr. Rick Berry implemented a safety task force a year ago with membership composed of school personnel, community members and perhaps most importantly, students.

There has been criticism this fall that some schools have gone too far with the implementation of hardware measures only. I believe that the wise superintendent or principal would form district and building level task forces on school safety. I very importantly point out that Jefferson County has increased the number of mental health workers at Columbine High School and at many other county schools. They also have many curriculum prevention programs in place to teach tolerance of diversity and individual differences and to promote a climate where everyone is treated with respect.

The head of the U.S. Congressional Committee asked me how we can spot a troubled and potentially violent student in America. My response was that school personnel spot them every single day but that schools do not have the resources to help them. It is the rare school psychologist or counselor who actually provides mental health services. High school counselors in particular spend almost all their time on clerical tasks such as scheduling!

Many schools are increasing hardware school security measures to start the 1999-2000 school year and adding metal detectors is one of the most common strategies. Metal detectors in schools are not new. I would like to make the following analogy- Has any single strategy ever stopped contraband from crossing the border between Mexico and the U.S.? Then, why would we expect hardware measures alone to stop weapons from entering our schools? Why not work on reducing the availability of guns to children? I believe the issue is gun responsibility, not gun control. Adults must keep guns away from children! Children do not understand the finality of death, are very influenced by violence in the media, and have difficulty controlling aggressive impulses.

On a recent trip to Colorado, I noted with great interest that the school board in Mancos, Colorado voted to hold a gun show at the local high school. Ghandi said, "What we do speaks so loudly to children that they can not hear what we say!" The school boards action sent a powerful and unfortunate message.

The most heartwarming and encouraging signs to me when I assisted in the aftermath of the Columbine massacre were the "I Will" messages written by thousands of Jefferson County students. The real question is what will every educator and student do to make a difference? Educators must step forward and stop bullying and harassment in schools. Those signs that say "No guns, drugs, or weapons allowed" should also say "No bullying allowed" and educators should mean it. I know that our daughter is a very capable learner but what I want as a parent is for her to come home safe from school every day and not to be harassed in any way. Schools have been slow to recognize that safety is what parents want above all else.

I do a lot of training on school crisis teams and often an educator comes up and says, "We have a crisis team. At least, I think we, do. I might be on the team but, we have never met and I have no idea what I am supposed to do!" Shakespeare wrote in MacBeth, "A false sense of security is mortars chiefest enemy". Many schools that do have crisis plans about what to do in the aftermath fail to include prevention activities.

I applaud recent legislation in Texas that requires every school to have a violence prevention plan. It is my hope that curriculum time will be devoted to that goal. Since the leading causes of death for children in order are: accidents, homicides, and suicide, it is important that prevention programs be implemented to reduce each of these. Why can they not be a part of school curriculums, and crisis plans? Adolescents are dying at a record pace. The Center for Disease Control estimates that approximately one out of 1000 high school students die or is killed each year. There are also approximately 5000 gun deaths for children each year. There has been so much written about the fourteen students who were killed by guns at Columbine but that is the daily average number of gun deaths for children in our country. Many Americans believe that we live in the best country in the world, but, we are the only country where kids bring guns to school and shoot their classmates and teachers. Why don't we develop and implement prevention programs to address the leading causes of death for children?

There has been much attention placed on how to spot a potentially violent child in America. The most common factors from the Early Warning Guide published by the Department of Education are the following:

- fascination with guns, violence and bombs
- history of bullying and being aggressive
- history of being victimized
- interpersonal deficits
- history of depression
- cruelty towards animals
- violent talk, writings and/or artwork
- fascination with violent video games
- firesetting
- lack of remorse for empathy

There is only one problem with these descriptors -- unfortunately, they fit thousands and thousands of children. We need increased mental health services for children and we must end the conspiracy of silence that stops friends from coming forward and getting help for someone who is homicidal or suicidal.

Everyone wants to know why school shootings occurred. The perpetrators of six of the last seven school shootings are alive but, have they shed any light on why they committed their crimes? Is anyone satisfied with what they have said-- which is nothing really!

The American Psychological Association and the National Association of School Psychologists have identified the major factors in our society that cause youth violence:

- child abuse
- ineffective parenting
- media violence
- violence in the home
- poverty
- prejudice
- substance abuse
- gun access

Those are the issues that we must address in our society. In just the three locations where I led national crisis teams; Paducah, Jonesboro, and Columbine, twenty-three were killed and thirty-eight were wounded. I am absolutely committed to prevention! The parents of the children who were murdered are angry. They want a promise that their children did not die in vain-- they want changes in our country and our schools. The philosopher Dac wrote, "The future is the past in preparation." My question is, what have we changed? What are we doing to reduce the senseless deaths of young people in our country? Where are our prevention programs? Then, why would we not expect the future to be the past in preparation?

Dr. Scott Poland is the Director of Psychological Services for the Cypress Fairbanks Schools in Houston, Texas. He is the President Elect of the National Association of School Psychologists. He personally led national crisis teams in the aftermath of school violence in Paduch, Kentucky, Jonesboro, Arkansas, and Littleton, Colorado. He is the author of numerous books, chapters, and articles on school crisis and youth violence. His most recent book, which has just been published, Coping with Crisis: Lessons Learned for Parents, Schools and Communities is available from Sopris West, 800-547-6747. He is also on the advisory board for Mothers Against Violence in America (MAVIA, 800-897-7697).

TASP Executive Committee in discussion with Scott Poland, NASP president-elect is forming an Emergency Response Team. The Team will be based on the National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) Model. The goal of the Team will be to provide support and services to schools following a crisis, provide resources and in-services for state educators on crisis prevention, and provide training for school psychologists on crisis intervention and prevention.

We are in the process of assembling rosters of Crisis Responders to serve on the Emergency Response Team. School psychologists trained through NOVA in group crisis intervention please contact Jay Glynn at Cypress Fairbanks ISD; P.O. Box 69203; Reo Annex; Houston, TX 77269, 713/460-7825, or e-mail jglynn@tenet.edu.

Best Practices Hotline

This column is designed to address practice issues in the field of school psychology. Questions should be sent to : Dr. Ginger E. Gates, 7145 West Tidwell, Houston, TX 77092.

Question: As an LSSP, I am often asked to participate in the collection of information to assist in a manifestation determination review (MDR). However, I feel uncomfortable interviewing a student that I see for counseling due to confidentiality. What should I do?

Answer: This question brings up several issues. One issue is in regard to the involvement of LSSPs in the manifestation determination process, and the other is the issue of confidentiality. I feel that LSSPs are a great resource to the MDR process. With the specialized training in assessment and differential diagnosis, the LSSP can bring critical skills to this determination. If interviewing a student with whom you have a counseling relationship it is imperative that you inform the student of the purpose of this present interview, and that it does not fall under the confidentiality guidelines of the counseling relationship. The student should understand that the information obtained **will** be shared with an ARD committee and will be used in determining whether the behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability. If you feel uncomfortable about being the interviewer, you can certainly provide information to another staff member on the types of questions to ask to assist in the determination.

As our roles expand, we will find ourselves in a variety of different situations. It is important that LSSPs use their extensive training to assist in the educational process, while following our ethical guidelines at the same time.

NOTE: *In the last Texas School Psychologist the Hotline question was about timelines for reevaluations. I have received many phone calls about the reference to the TEA White Paper which gave "initial evaluation" timelines to reevaluations. Let me clarify that the White Paper was prepared by TEA personnel in response to requests for guidance from districts. The guidelines expressed represent TEA staff's analysis of good practice, but are not currently mandated in any form of state rule of law. It is my opinion, that it does represent best practice.*

KEEP INFORMED!

Let TASP know your e-mail address.

Send your e-mail to TASPOrg@aol.com or call

TASP at their toll-free number:

1-888-414-TASP(8277) or in Austin at 836-1001.

What Happened To Cody?

A story of how Autism took our child & how we are struggling to get him back.

by Jill Anthony

This is a brief introduction to the following article by Jill Anthony. I became involved with the Anthony family through consultation regarding their son, Cody. It became very apparent that Mrs. Anthony is an articulate and sensitive mother who has excellent insight into her son's strengths and disabilities, and the role these disabilities play on the dynamics of family adjustment. She is truly an advocate for children and parents regarding the identification, intervention and adjustment to pervasive developmental disorders. Mrs. Anthony agreed to speak to my class at SWT about her personal experiences with "coming to terms" with her child's disability. Like the following article, her class presentation was powerful, emotional, and riveting. I believe you will appreciate Cody's story and the persistence and optimism that Mrs. Anthony presents. For additional information on Autism/Pervasive Developmental Disorders or to obtain information on communicating with Mrs. Anthony, please feel free to contact me at (512) 245-3093, or by email at ES12@SWT.EDU or by writing Dr. Ed Scholwinski, School Psychology Program, EAPS Department, Southwest Texas State University, San Marcos, TX 78666.

Life ... ours was the best ... great marriage, good jobs, wonderful family and friends and to top it off we had two beautiful children. Happy, happy, happy! We just assumed that is how it would always be. Sure life has its ups and downs but with a positive attitude, a rock solid marriage and the help of God we could make it through anything ... right?

My story has one underlying message for everyone... we should all keep this in mind... we are not fully "in control" of our lives and we definitely cannot control our own destinies, as Shane and I have very harshly found out.

Here is our story. Cody Shane Anthony, born January 24, 1996, was perfect in our eyes. My pregnancy was unmarked, my delivery was very long, but relatively smooth and like many babies, Cody suffered from colic for the first three months of his life. Cody was not the best "sleeper" or "napper" (didn't sleep through the night until 18 months), but he was very alert, loved to be held and had a hearty appetite... just a typical, adorable baby by all standards. He did everything in the correct developmental order a child should do. All the "milestones" were met with ease. At the age of one, he said things such as "ball", "ba-ba" (for bottle), "coke", "cockcorn" (for popcorn), grandparents, aunts and uncles names, "hot" (for anything that scared him), "airplane", "bye-bye", "eye", "ear", "nose", "eyebrow", "hair", "teeth" and "shoe". I was one of those moms that literally wrote down everyday what Cody did and said. My records are now an extremely good source of reference for me. At 14 months the first question emerged "Where moon?", stated

one night when the moon was behind the clouds. We had several friends that had children around the same age as Cody and they were constantly telling us Cody was "ahead of the ballgame". At 21 months Cody began to ask simple questions and make statements such as "Where Dada?", "I got it", "Move Mommy", "Bye baby", "Oh Boy". I was playing hide and seek with Cody on a daily basis. Shane (my husband) played ball with Cody each night. We were delighted when Cody began to take interest in using the potty (which he did at least two times a day). At the age of two Cody would imitate us (tried to sweep with a broom, cook in the kitchen, hammer like Daddy and clean like Mommy). He began to sing parts of the song from his favorite television show, he knew his numbers (one through ten), could name many, many animals (at least 20) and their sounds, not to mention the 10 basic colors. Cody's questions and statements were advancing to "what cooking?", "where Dillon and Derrick" (the next door neighbor boys), "I kiss you", "Mommy, want to snuggle me?". Cody could point (using the correct finger), he was inquisitive (exploring throughout the house and getting into trouble), he could reenact how he got hurt if we were not in the room to see how he got a "boo-boo". Cody loved us, wanted to be held (almost too much) and was so happy to see us when we would return home after being away for a few hours. In all ways Cody was thriving. What I'm trying to say is... our child was on the right tract. He was developing beautifully.

What happened ... God only knows! I always cry when it comes to this part of the story. "Something" began to creep its way into our lives.... and that something was Autism. "Autism" for many months must have only watched Cody through the window, waiting for the right time to make his move and snatch our child. Cody, before 26 months, was very healthy, but around 27 months he began to experience chronic ear infections and had to be on antibiotics for months. After that "sickly" summer, the birth of our second child (Clay), a move into a new home and dental surgery to have Cody's front four teeth capped, we had a different child. Not strikingly different, but somewhat different. Autism was inching his way into our "safe" and still wonderful lives. Cody became distant and withdrawn, physically looking "blank" and the spark in his eyes was fading. He stopped progressing in language, we saw less smiling, heard less laughing and felt less of Cody's hugs and kisses. Cody quit seeking out affection and seemed more to himself. Autism was reaching and yearning for our sweet Cody and yet we didn't even know it. Autism literally blindfolded Shane and I by being very sly and sneaky. He moved very slowly, gradually stripping Cody of his many skills. We tried to explain the change in Cody as a "stage" and it was due to all the changes in his life. Shane and I began to make up excuses saying things like "isn't it great how content he is playing by himself" or "he's just a little man of few words." Our pediatrician (a wonderful man) set my mind at ease by explaining that Cody was a boy and boys in general are less social than girls and he was not yet three and at three children generally begin to interact. He was right at the time. He nor I could have foreseen what was to "come".

"Something" was beginning to grip on to Cody and this "something" began to aggressively pull Cody away from us. I began to cry almost daily because I was witnessing this change in Cody. He quit asking questions, he quit using what language he had acquired (all spontaneous "thank you's" and "please's" vanished). He didn't care to greet us at the door anymore, he didn't have interest in the next door neighbor boys anymore, he didn't play with his toys anymore, he seemed uninterested, lost and confused. The odd behaviors began to emerge-- first the jumping, then the clapping, later the arm flapping, odd giggling, nonsense talk, teeth grinding, eye squinting, moaning-- it all happened right before our eyes. It was almost as if someone gave Cody the script on how to be autistic and he began to act out the parts one by one. We saw a neurologist who diagnosed Cody with Pervasive Development Disorder (PDD). The doctor at the time didn't see enough criteria to fully meet the criteria label for Autism. His attitude was... only time will tell if Cody was autistic and to be truthful time told the tale. Over time Cody lost eye contact. I clearly remember trying to sing to Cody at Christmas and I wanted him to look at me. I held his head with both hands so he would have to look at me eye to eye. It didn't work, he rolled his eyes to the sides and would only look out of the corners of his eyes to avoid looking at me (Oh, so painful!). Cody's numbers had disappeared, he began to get the colors confused and called common animals by the wrong name. I was beside myself (to say the least). I could not comprehend nor understand what was happening to Cody. Cody's behaviors were similar to that of an infant. He began to lick glass, tried to eat sand and began putting everything in his mouth (fingernails, sponges, his shirt). I tried to tell myself he was just exploring his world (being the positive person that I am) but truthfully it was killing me to see him do such bizarre behaviors. Cody at one time loved his little brother. When Clay would cry Cody would say "get him" or "he needs bottle". Cody voluntarily gave Clay rattles and blankets and loved to play with Clay's feet, but as time progressed Cody ignored Clay, acting as if he did not even exist (it took months for him to acknowledge Clay again). Autism by now had a good hold on Cody, he didn't have to tug and pull anymore. I knew he had my son. Regression didn't stop there. Tantrums became (and still are) a big event in our house. Cody only wanted to stay home and would pitch a fit if we had to get in the car to go somewhere. (To this day, home is a safe haven for Cody). His need for "sameness" is very obvious, puzzles were done (and still are) in the exact same order over and over. I have to wear the same pajamas to sleep every night or he gets upset. Cody gets uptight and nervous when we go to new and unfamiliar places and Cody will only eat about ten different foods. In our house we don't make too many changes or Cody will never let you hear the end of it.

Social events and birthday parties became almost unbearable... to see the other children laughing and playing and there was Cody off to the side picking bark off trees or just wandering aimlessly. No matter how anyone tried to comfort me, I couldn't be helped. To watch my child change so dramatically pushed

me into a deep, deep depression. I hated life and upon each morning would say "Oh, no - not another day". I, this normally level-headed positive person began to literally fall apart. I could not sleep at night, I could not function during the day (my second child had to be raised by my Mom and Mother-in-law for months). My crying spells were uncontrollable. I was not "all alone" but I felt as though I were. My family began to think I might need to visit a rehab hospital for fear that I would have a mental breakdown. It took months for me to get strong and brave enough to even write this story down. After many sessions with counselors, two psychiatrists and many medications, I began to realize I had to stop behaving and thinking in such a negative manner (a hard thing to do given the situation). I convinced myself I had to stop grieving and stop wondering "why us?" and had to start coping. (Don't get me wrong, I still grieve from time to time, just not all the time). I am a stronger person now and I have truly changed in many ways.

In my opinion, Cody was not born autistic, but became autistic. Autism not only stole Cody's social and language skills, but took many of Cody's motor skills as well. He used to point and use gestures, now he can hardly point or hold a pencil correctly. He could open door knobs before and now they are a difficult task (he has trouble knowing the amount of pressure to apply to maneuver things). Cody no longer nods his head "yes" or shakes his head for "no". His cognitive skills are weaker, he was a child that was quick to learn and very bright, now however it takes him a while (many repetitive trials) for him to catch on to something new. Autism plays with Cody's senses - he has become tactile defensive, resisting hugs and kisses (but getting better about it). He is hypersensitive, tags in his shirt bother him and have to be removed. He doesn't enjoy wearing new clothes (sensitive skin). He doesn't like anyone to brush his hair or teeth and really dislikes me washing his hair. He complains of itching and is constantly scratching his skin. Loud noises make him overly nervous and getting a hair cut is a barber's worst nightmare!

Autism may have a lock grip on Cody, but Cody still has a fighting chance to prevail. How do I know ... Cody can't express it, but I know he loves me and his father very much. He has a heart of gold and never wants anyone to be upset. He often used to tell me "Mommy, don't cry". I know whatever made his brain malfunction is hindering him in many ways, but from time to time Cody will say or do something that makes perfect sense. It is these little "glitches" that tell me something in his brain is connecting and I still have a fighting chance to win him back. I tell myself daily "Have hope, maybe he'll outgrow it, or it will go away as mysteriously as it came upon him, or perhaps he'll learn to deal with it and be considered normal again one day. "

We have been at battle with Autism now for almost a year. Cody receives weekly - 12 hours of home training (Lovaas style), 4 hours of speech therapy, 2 hours of occupational/sensory

integration therapy, not to mention 10 hours of school (an early intervention program). He has been tested in areas of language, academics, cognitive, fine and gross motor skills and in all categories is roughly a year behind. (When first diagnosed he was 2-1/2 and rated at the 12 month old level for receptive and expressive language). Thank heavens we are making some ground here!

Overall, Cody is making improvements but the underlying problem is still (very much) there. Cody now likes other children but doesn't quite know how to interact with them. Clay (his younger brother) has made his presence known and Cody seems to acknowledge him more now. Cody's eye contact is better than before, but could still use improvement. Cody's use of language is delayed but getting better all the time. Recently Cody learned to string beads (it took him six months to learn how but he can do it now). Cody seems more interested in playing routine games again and overall is relearning many of the skills he lost.

The hardest thing for me these days is keeping a positive attitude. If Cody is having a good day (talking more, less stimming and in good spirits), I'm having a good day. If Cody is having a bad day... you guessed it.. I'm having a bad day too. I still wonder how this all happened -- genetics, virus, diet, vaccine, antibiotics, dental surgery... only God knows. It is all but a mystery to us here on earth. I have already spent many months pondering over how this all happened (and honestly it gets me nowhere). I have to focus now on how to deal with it and help Cody through intense therapies, special diets, intervention programs and our home program. We sold our house to help finance Cody's therapies (around \$2,000 a month). It doesn't matter if we go broke - money is just money. Cody is worth every cent and one day he'll thank us for all the sacrifices we made for him.

To my friends and family reading this, please keep Cody in your prayers and thank you for your understanding and compassion during this trying time. To the doctors reading this, please keep up the research on the medication, the interventions, and causations of Autism. This is such a horrible, heartbreaking disability - one day there just has to be a cure (no parent should have to endure such pain). To all of Cody's therapists, thank you, thank you, thank you. We could not be where we are today without you. All of you have helped Cody as much as you have helped me. You were the ones that gave me the candle during my darkest days, your knowledge has inspired me to keep learning and you were the ones who rowed the boat for Cody when I was too weak to pick up the paddle. To Autism, you are a horrible monster that literally came through my child's window and snatched him away from me. I want to vanish you and make you disappear in the same sneaky fashion that you used to lure my child away. I will fight you every step of the way. I intend to win this battle. And lastly, to Cody.... I am left here at your window with my arms wide open awaiting the day when you will return, baby, please keep trying come home!

The Seventh Annual TASP Professional Development Conference:

Preparing For The Future

February 24-26 at Embassy Suites Outdoor World, Grapevine

This year's conference has a slightly different format that will surely appeal to everyone in attendance. Our change in format will allow each attendee to accrue 12 to 18 hours of continuing education credit at the conference. We will continue the tradition of a full-day pre-conference workshop, while adding a concurrent half-day pre-conference workshop to the schedule. "Preparing For The Future" will be presented in strand format, which will allow more comprehensive training in a particular area than has been available in the past. Attendees will have the opportunity to choose from any of the available strands when customizing their conference experience. Strands and topics scheduled for presentation include:

Neuropsychology Strand	Legal Strand	Assessment Strand	Intervention Strand
Introduction to the NEPSY	Cases Relevant to LSSPs	Autism Assessment Teams	Therapeutic Interventions
Clinical Interpretation of the NEPSY	Section 504	Early Childhood	Crisis/Violence Intervention
Assessment of Memory and Learning in Children	Legal Question and Answers	Emotional Disturbance	Autism Interventions
		WISC III: PI	

Mark these dates in your calendar and plan to attend. This is sure to be one of the best training opportunities of the year!

Robb Matthews
President-Elect/Conference Chair

Attention Colleges and Universities

TASP will be offering a university recruiting service at the conference. Space will be available for colleges and universities to display information about their school psychology and related programs. Separate tables may also be available at a nominal fee.

Attention School Districts or Other Employers

TASP will be offering a job listing/recruiting service at the TASP 2000 Conference. Space will be available at no charge to those districts or others who are interested in listing a job opening or recruiting at the conference.

NOMINATIONS FOR TASP OFFICES

The 2000-2001 TASP election process is under way with a call for nominations. You are encouraged to participate in the nomination and election process as it provides you the opportunity to be directly involved in the selection of leadership of your state professional organization. The Nominations and Elections Committee asks you to submit names for the office of President-Elect, and Treasurer. You may also submit a name for the office of Area Representative, if your region is listed as electing an Area Representative this year (Regions I, III, and V). Nominees should be chosen on the basis of their potential for effective leadership and willingness to serve TASP and the field of school psychology. Any current regular member of TASP may be nominated. Please contact your nominees and secure their consent prior to placing their names in nomination.

Nominations and Election Procedures:

Once you have the consent of the person you wish to nominate, complete the nomination ballot (next page) and return it postmarked by January 25, 2000. The Nominations and Elections Committee will contact all nominees and the slate of nominees will appear on the ballot.

Ballots will be available at the TASP Conference and ballots will be mailed to all members not voting at the Conference by April 1. Members who receive ballots by mail will have 30 days to vote. As soon as the ballots are counted, candidates will be notified of results. Newly elected officers will take office July 1, 2000.

Elected Positions:

The President-Elect is elected to a one-year term of office. The Treasurer and Area Representatives are elected to two-year terms. All offices require attendance at four or five state meetings annually, one of which is held at the Annual Conference. Executive Board members are reimbursed for travel and other expenses related to operating the association.

You may nominate a candidate for Area Representative only from the region where you are employed. **Area I:** Educational Service Centers 7,8,10 and 11; **Area III:** Educational Service Centers 3, 4, and 5; **Area V:** Education Service Centers 1, 2, 15, and 20.

Call for Nominations

In accordance with our Constitution and By-Laws, nominations are due for the 2000-2001 officers. Nominations are due by January 25, 2000. The nominations committee will prepare a slate of candidates for each vacancy and the membership will be able to vote at the February conference in person, or later by mail.

Please nominate a colleague or yourself for one of the following positions which are available for the 2000-2001 TASP Executive Board:

President-Elect (1 year term) - A voting member of the Executive Board who works closely with the President on association matters and chairs the annual conference.

Treasurer (2 year term) - A voting member of the Executive Board who maintains records of financial transactions and financial status of the Association. Provides written summary reports and budget information to the general membership. Recommends financial policies and procedures to the Association, as needed.

Regional Representative (2 year term staggered with other regions) - A voting member of the Executive Board who represents the interests of TASP to the members in their region and represents the members' concerns and interests to the Executive Board

- Area I (Education Service Centers 7, 8, 10 and 12)
- Area III (Education Service Centers 3, 4, and 5)
- Area V (Education Service Centers 1, 2, 15, and 20)

Mail nominations to:

Ginger Gates
ESC IV
7145 W Tidwell
Houston, TX 77092

TASP NOMINATION BALLOT

President-Elect:

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone H: _____ W: _____

Treasurer:

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone H: _____ W: _____

Area Representative (nominate only from your region):

Name: _____

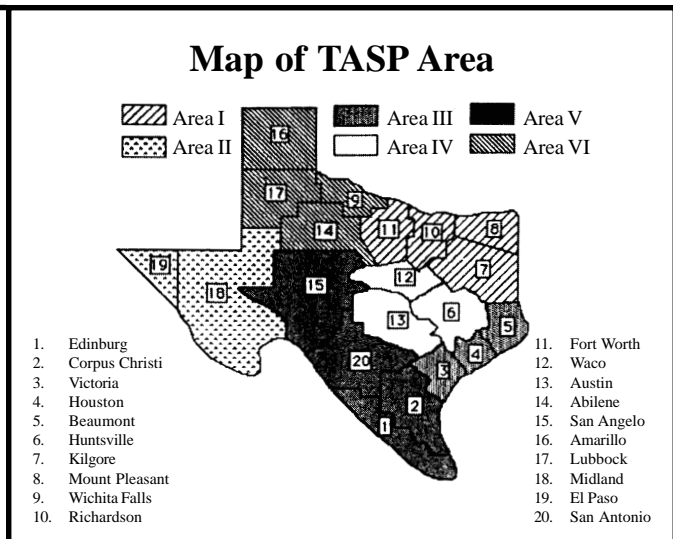
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone H: _____ W: _____

Ballots should be sent to:

Ginger Gates
ESC IV
7145 W Tidwell
Houston, TX 77092

Ballots must be postmarked by
January 25, 2000.



Treasurer's Report

7/1/98 through 6/30/99

Susan Riordan - TASP Treasurer

7/1/99 through 10/31/99

Dear TASP Members,

Financial highlights for the four months ended October 31, 1999, are presented below:

TASP
Financial Highlights
For the Four Months Ended October 31, 1999

Revenues

Membership Dues	\$ 18,540	
Convention	2,970	
Other	621	
	621	
Total Revenues		\$22,131

Expenses

Meeting Expenses	3,459	
Supplies, Postage and Printing	5,298	
Professional Fees	10,215	
Clerical	1,600	
Travel	5,279	
Other	360	
	360	
Total Expenses		26,211

Expenses in Excess of Revenues (4,080)

Beginning Cash 47,245

Ending Cash \$43,165

Detailed accounting records are available upon request.

Newsletter Policy

The Texas Association of School Psychologists Newsletter is a nonprofit newsletter wholly owned, operated, and published by the Texas Association of School Psychologists. Although it is an official publication of the Association, the contents of this Newsletter and the opinions expressed in it do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policy of the Texas Association of School Psychologists, or the elected, or appointed officials of the Association.

Membership Report

Susan Logan - Membership Chair

The TASP Board and the membership at large send their best wishes to Susan Logan, Membership Chair, who is recovering from an illness and subsequent surgeries. We miss you, Susan, and wish you the best!

Regular Members

Judy Blackwell - Cuero
 Donna Costello - Houston
 Kathy DeOrnellas - Denton
 Marie Dowling - Fort Worth
 Jody Fournier - Houston
 Anita Gathright - Tyler
 Susan Hill - Dallas
 Melinda Hudson - San Angelo
 Lorraine Huffaker - Converse
 Oscie Jackson - Stamford
 Bernardine Jaet - Houston
 Harry Kall - Glenview
 Gina Marriott - Fort Worth
 Cindy Mayen-Talcott - San Antonio
 Robin Rumph - Benton
 Carolyn Sasano - Carmichael
 Cilla Stultz - San Antonio
 Jack Teel - Bryan
 Kathleen Thiele-Posey - Schertz
 Laura Wright - Waco

Student Members

Cristen Calnan - Stafford
 Gina Coffee - Waco
 Kelly Crabb - Austin
 Cristin Dooley - Irving
 Ellen Ersland - Denton
 Christine Hudson - Denton
 Anita King - Waskom
 Winifred Kmiecik - Seabrook
 Tawnya Kumarakulasingham - Houston
 Autumn Leal - Austin
 Anne Marden - Webster
 Jose Mendez - San Marcos
 Deborah O'Banion - Seagoville
 Lisa Ozenne - Nacogdoches
 Sherry Pevey - Houston
 Terri Quist - Waco
 Annette Rodriguez - San Antonio
 Lisa Scoggin - Tyler
 Holleigh Sims - McKinney
 Leslie Smith - Houston
 Caryn Swanson - Houston
 Jonelle Unruh - Abilene
 Cheri Waggoner - Greenville
 Karen Werner - Keller

Awards and Honors

Mae F. Fjellsted, NCSP, LSSP - Awards and Honors Chair

I hope that all of you have made the "December One Count" and are looking forward to the Christmas Holidays. Do not forget to make plans to attend the Seventh Annual TASP Conference at the Embassy Suites Outdoor World in Grapevine.

I look forward to seeing you there and hopefully you or your school will be an award winner.

RESULTS OF CONSTITUTIONAL VOTE

In June, 1999 members of TASP received a constitutional ballot addressing 24 proposed changes in the constitution and by-laws. The deadline for return of the voting ballot was July 30, 1999. A total of 599 ballots were mailed and 199 were returned (33.22% return rate). All proposed constitutional changes passed.

In addition to updating our Constitution, there were several major issues addressed in this process.

- (1) TASP membership categories have been extended by adding the Trainee and Retired member categories.
- (2) The Regional Representatives will now be called Area Representatives.
- (3) If changes in dues are recommended, this will be done by a financial advisory committee and then submitted to the executive board for consideration. This is consistent with policies in other organizations of our size or greater. TASP is dedicated to receiving input from its membership prior to recommending any such changes.
- (4) Voting for constitutional changes can now occur at our professional development conference. There was some feedback regarding this proposed change. Basically, this change allows us to vote at the conference, but members not attending the conference would still be mailed a ballot. This is consistent with how we conduct our elections and actually adds to our return rate. The purpose is to have more, not less, representation in the voting process whenever changes in our constitution or by-laws are recommended.

TASP would like to thank all members who voted in the process. We also appreciate the comments that were written. If anyone would like specific numbers of the votes for each of the 24 proposed changes, please contact Gail Chermie, UH-Clear Lake, 2700 Bay Area Blvd., Houston, TX 77058. Phone: (281)283-3392.
E-Mail: chermie@cl.uh.edu

Government & Professional Relations Committee

Margaret Kaltman, NCSP, LSSP, GRP Chair

While the legislature is not currently in session, the activities that take place during the interim period are vital to what takes place during the 2001 legislative session. The groundwork for future legislation is laid during this time and it serves as an opportunity for TASP to promote the profession of school psychology. One area which TASP has participated in to increase the visibility of the profession is attendance at the Attorney General's School Violence Task Force. TASP has attended every meeting of the Task Force to date and plans to provide testimony at the next meeting in Dallas in early Spring. TASP is closely tracking another task force on The Causes of Youth Violence and will provide pertinent information to the Task Force when the time comes.

The proposed Commissioner's Rules will be published soon and feedback will be accepted by Texas Education Agency in the near future. Interested TASP members can be kept up-to-date by contacting the TEA website at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us>. These rules will directly affect the practice of psychological services in the schools and your participation in the feedback process is important.

TASP is in the process of developing Position Statements on such issues as Inclusion, Mental Health in the Schools, Retention, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Contractual Services, and Parent Training. Position Statements are a 1 to 2 page document which explain the position of an organization on a timely issue. These Position Statements will be given to state legislators for them to use when asked to explain an issue at a short notice with which they may be unfamiliar. The Legislators appreciate receiving this information and this helps to increase the visibility of an organization or profession. TASP plans to draft Position Statements on all timely issues prior to the next legislative session.

Crisis intervention in the schools is a very timely issue and TASP is currently in the process of establishing a state-wide crisis response team. More information will be available in the next issue of The Texas School Psychologist. I will be e-mailing all who have expressed an interest in becoming more active on these and other GPR issues in the near future. Please feel free to contact me at mkaltman@inetport.com if you would like to become involved.

Trainers of School Psychologists Committee

Ron Palomares, Ph.D., NCSP, LSSP, Trainers Committee Chair

The Trainers of School Psychologists Committee met on October 8 in Dallas and had a very productive meeting. The primary topic was the agreement to begin working on the creation of the TASP Internship Network (TIN). The goal of the TASP Internship Network is to facilitate the internship process for both prospective interns and current/new internship sites in Texas. This network's primary function is to facilitate the communication of information about school psychology internship programs throughout the state. We will begin by gathering information about internships (both masters/specialist and doctoral levels) and release this through an annually published internship directory. In addition to the directory, the secondary function of this network is to help communicate current state and national training standards to both prospective interns and internship sites, helping to maintain the levels of training required for state licensing and national certification.

In other news, the committee also discussed the TASP 2000 Conference and reported that deadlines for the submissions of posters was November 15, 1999. Art Hernandez discussed the results of the TASP Survey conducted last Spring at the conference, highlighting several important trends and comments. Progress on the Specialist Degree awarding process at TWU was also presented. There was a lot of discussion about the impact the ExCET testing process is having on numerous psychology departments, especially those housed in Colleges of Education. Finally, those in attendance received several brochures and handouts, compliments of NASP. NASP has published brochures in English and Spanish about "What is a School Psychologist" and also another brochure explaining the NCSP. The meeting was well attended and much information was shared amongst the several university training programs represented. The next meeting of the committee will be at the TASP Professional Development Conference (exact date and time to be announced).

Renew Your TASP Membership TODAY!

All Memberships Expire On June 30th!

Use the Membership Application on Page 19

Graduate Student Report

Penny Hampton, LSSP Intern, Graduate Student Representative

I would like to begin by welcoming all the new student members and thanking those of you who have renewed their membership. I recently had the opportunity to speak to several classes and was encouraged by the level of involvement I experienced. As students, I think it is easy to believe that one has plenty of time to become more involved later and not feel that their participation is important; however, as students now is the time to explore the different aspects of the profession. I also know that many graduate students want to become more involved, but are not sure exactly where to begin. One way for students to become more involved in TASP is to enter a proposal for the poster presentation section of the conference. This is a unique opportunity to highlight your interest and illustrate your ideas. I would like to encourage all of the graduate students to become a part of this process.

Developing some type of communication between the various School Psychology programs in Texas remains one of my goals. As my predecessor discovered, this is no small task. My thought is to establish a primary connection at each University to assist in this networking process. I would also be interested in hearing from any of you who have suggestions. Please send any suggestions you have to my e-mail address: pennyh@wireweb.net.

Web Report

Francis Chen, LSSP Intern, Webmaster

Hello from the electronic frontiers of the Texas Association of School Psychologists. The updates to the site were halted with the thought that we were losing our webhost. However, they are still online. TASP will get online to its new host site in the next few weeks. In the meantime, look for updates from our Government and Professional Relations and Public Relations and Information Committees, as well as information for our 7th Annual Convention in Grapevine. There are many changes afoot for the website. It is important that the membership help shape our vision. Please send suggestions to the webmaster. What are your thoughts? We want to know. If there are any members of TASP interested in volunteering their time, as associate webmaster, please contact me.

Please send me e-mail: fc04834@swt.edu OR send me US Postal Service mail to: PO Box 100/San Marcos, TX/78667.

NASP Delegate Report

Daniel C. Miller, Ph.D., NCSP, LSSP

Greetings fellow Texans! I just returned from the NASP Southeastern Regional Meeting which was held in Perdido Beach, Alabama. Thirty-five participants from across our 13 state region attended. Phyllis Hamilton (TASP President) and Robb Matthews (TASP President-Elect) were able to join me for the meetings.

The Alabama State School Psychology Association was meeting at the same hotel as our NASP regional meeting, so I arranged to arrive early on Friday to conduct two hour and a half presentations on the importance of preschool assessment. Friday night all of the state delegates and invited state leadership members arrived and we spent the night sharing what was going on in our states.

Saturday morning we had 3 hours of presentations on exemplary mental health programs including:

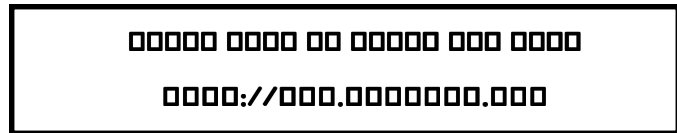
- Curriculum based measurement in a problem solving model - Bill Donelson and Clark Dorman from Florida.
- ADHD Community Support Group by Bobby Smith from Georgia.
- Mentoring model for improving the delivery of rural school psychological services by Phyllis Hamilton from Texas.
- Adolescent Group Counseling in School Psychology by Fred Kreig from West Virginia.

Saturday afternoon, Kevin Dwyer (NASP President) and David Osher (Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice) presented on the Safe Schools Healthy Children model. Both Kevin and David have such a passion for proactive interventions that it was contagious.

On Sunday morning, Fred Kreig gave the delegates an update on NASP legislative issues and then we discussed other NASP issues. The group decided to come to San Antonio in November of 2000. I will be responsible for the program and the logistics of bringing everyone into Texas for the weekend.

NASP's annual conference is to be held in New Orleans on March 28 - April 1, 2000. Mark your calendars and plan to come. Southwest Airlines have some great specials to New Orleans!

If you have not rejoined or joined NASP yet this year, please send in your dues. See you at the TASP conference in Dallas!



Board Members News

Wende Buchanan Jones - Area V Representative

- Wende is a team member of Northside ISD's Parent Power Program, a 1999 TEA Promising Practice in the area of family involvement for PPCD. This group speaks across the state to districts interested in starting a Parent Power Program. This program is designed to provide information and support to parents of children in special education and regular education (PPCD, Pre-K, 1st and 2nd grade) at minimal or no cost to parents. The four session course, revised in 1994, includes: the basics of child development, temperament, communication skills and behavior management skills for parents.

Dan Miller, NASP Delegate & TASP Historian

- Presented a guest lecture for The Fielding Institute in San Antonio on November 19. Dan spoke on the "Neuropsychological Assessment of Children and Adolescents". The next day he presented a workshop to the National RV and Campground Association entitled "How to Recognize Potentially Violent Patrons and Conflict Resolution Techniques".

Alicia Paredes Scribner Editor - The Texas School Psychologist

- Presented a workshop on Culturally/Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learners: Assessment and Intervention in Omaha, Nebraska on November 12, 1999.

Cindy Plotts, Chair, PR&I Committee

- Awarded Creative Development Grant with Jovita Ross-Gordon through the Dean of the College of Education at SWT to continue study of adult learning disability assessment.

Susan Riordan, Treasurer

- Serves on the Board of Directors of Connections, a non-profit agency that operates a shelter for teenage boys and girls, and provides counseling services to individuals and families.

Ed Scholwinski, 1997-98 TASP President

- Has served for two and a half years as a member of the Stakeholders' Group for Commissioner's Rules Concerning Special Education Services in Texas.

Thomas A. Wood, Area II Representative

- Elected President-Elect of the Division of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MRDD) of the Council for Exceptional Children. The MRDD Division is a national organization with 8000 members.

Area Reports

Area I Report - Michael Dixon, Ph.D., LSSP

Who ever said change is not easy certainly knew what they were talking about! The changes that are occurring in FWISD that directly affect psychological services have been fast and furious. As I reported in the last The Texas School Psychologist most LSSPs are assigned to two schools. They no longer have central office space and are to be housed in one of the buildings to which they are assigned. Unfortunately, our district does not have much, and in some cases, has no space for an additional office to house the psychologist. In addition, most LSSPs are spending a great deal of time shuttling files to and from schools and the central office, gathering required information on special education students in terms of TAAS exemptions, running ARD meetings, and in general attending to the problems that accompany special education classrooms, staff, students and administrators who never wanted the special education classes or students on their campus in the first place. With approximately 70 schools having no LSSP assigned to them these campuses are calling on this same group of stalwart LSSPs to help with their students who require mental health intervention or ED assessment. A central resource team of four LSSPs with the assistance of five interns is working hard to deal with crisis situations, gaps in service and take care of overloads from the remaining staff. This small group is also finding that the demands of this role are next to impossible to fulfill. The future hope is that with the added emphasis on early intervention and problem solving there will be by next year a reduction in special education referrals and a reduction in behavioral issues. Stay tuned!

By the time this edition of The Texas School Psychologist is issued DFW-RASP will have had its first professional development meeting. The next scheduled meeting is February 4th. Watch for announcements about place and topic!

Area II Report - Thomas A. Wood, Ed.D., LSSP

The Department of Educational Psychology and Special Services at the University of Texas at El Paso has submitted a funding proposal to the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. The proposal, entitled: Cultural and Linguistic Acquisition for School Psychologists (CLASP) is a collaboration between UTEP and Texas Women's University to establish a School Psychology program in far west Texas. The initial phase of the program will be designed to recruit practicing educational diagnosticians who will complete all requirements for the LSSP in three years with no break in employment. The Project, if funded, will involve two-way distant learning between UTEP and TWU. A special cohort of students at TWU will matriculate parallel with the cohort of students at UTEP. An exciting feature of the Project is a "cross-cultural" institute which

will bring both cohorts together in El Paso and then in the Dallas area to participate in an intense summer training program with Latino, African-American, Asian-American, and Native American populations. As a culminating experience, all participants will be required to write a thesis based on a multicultural issue/concept in school psychology. Tom Wood at UTEP will serve as director of the project and Dan Miller of TWU will be Co-director. Ron Palomares also of TWU will be Assistant Project Director and Coordinator of the summer cross-cultural institutes. Inquiries regarding the proposed program should be sent to Tom Wood (twood@utep.edu or 915-747-5221). Anticipated starting date is September 2000.

Area III Report - Carol Booth, Ph.D., LSSP

I don't know about others, but I'm busy trying to keep my head above water as I work to complete evaluations due before the "December 1 count". While there are many issues and concerns among LSSPs in this area, several surface as critical. The number of vacant LSSP positions creates heavier caseloads and demands for our services. How do we resolve this and maintain our sanity and professional standards? I would love to hear from others about ways to be more efficient in this time of staff shortages.

Another concern that a colleague brought to me was the potential for a conflict of interest or a dual role issue as LSSPs become more involved in school discipline issues. Since the LSSP is often the only LSSP assigned to a campus, how do we as LSSPs reconcile our roles in the areas of assessment, counseling (if we are providing related services counseling), and consultation in the process of the manifestation determination review (MDR) and design of behavior intervention plans? One promising approach in the Houston area is to develop an assessment team to conduct the evaluations and reviews for the MDR process. This way campus-based LSSPs are not put into awkward and potentially unethical situations with students, parents, and staff. If you are aware of other ways that districts are trying to reduce role conflicts for the LSSP, please let me know so that we can share this information in The Texas School Psychologists.

Thank you to all Area III members who renewed their membership in TASP this year. Happy Holidays and please look for the 2000 TASP Conference brochure in the mail soon.

Area V - Wende Buchanan Jones, LSSP

TASP members in Area V have been very active this Fall initiating community service projects, promoting and participating in mixers and workshops, combining efforts with other local professional organizations in psychology and related fields and promoting best practices in school psychology locally and at the state level. As I look back on my personal goals when I became Area Representative almost a year and a half ago, I am excited to see many of these goals underway and gaining

momentum. I would like to express my sincere gratitude for your interest and participation in these pursuits and encourage local TASP members to consider representing our area in the new millennium. Nomination information will be available to you through The Texas School Psychologist, the TASP Professional Development Conference and election mail outs. This is a wonderful opportunity to serve your profession regionally and in the state.

I would also like to encourage continued involvement of Area V TASP members in service projects currently underway such as collecting suitcases, backpacks and duffel bags for Child Protective Services case workers to use with their young clients. If you would like to assist or take the lead in a project in your community please contact me at the numbers below. Since the last Area V Report, I have had the pleasure of communicating with several TASP members through e-mail and phone calls who provided information about upcoming area workshops of interest to LSSPs and would like to include this information below. Please continue to share this information and as frequently as possible I will include it in the Area V Report. Two of the following items were also shared with me by professionals in related fields who attended the Fall Area V workshop and mixer.

On November 8, Dr. Edith Kaplan presented a workshop at Trinity University titled "Quantifying the Qualitative: The Process Approach to Intellectual Assessment". The workshop was sponsored by Trinity University and the Psychological Corporation. On November 9, The School Health Series at the University of Texas Health Science Center School of Nursing, presented "Birth Defects: Causes, Interventions and Outcomes". On November 16, Child Abuse Prevention Education Services presented Cathey Vackar Meyer's, former FBI Agent and President of Safe Concepts Communication, workshop titled "Violence in the School: What Do We Know and Where Do We Go?" On December 2, The Region 20 Service Center presented Attorney Cynthia Buechler's workshop titled "Legal Update: New Developments in Special Education Assessment".

December 11, The School Health Series at the University of Texas Health Science Center School of Nursing, will present Dr. Scott Poland, past chairman of NASP's National Emergency Assistance Team, workshop titled "School Violence: Lessons for Prevention and Intervention". The workshop will be from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information about this workshop call 210-567-5850 or visit their website at <http://nursing.uthscsa.edu>.

December 13, The Region 20 Service Center will present Nancy Hunter, ESC 20 Transition Specialist and Trudy Potts, ESC-20 Assistive Technology Specialist, workshop titled "Basic Issues in Assessment: Transition and Assistive Technology. The workshop will be from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the ESC-20 IS Building. For more information call (210) 370-5453 or visit the Region 20 Website at <http://www.esc20.k12.tx.us>.

January 25, The Region 20 Service Center will present James Patton, Ph.D., University of Texas Adjunct Professor; Director of Development Pro-Ed Corporation, workshop titled "Assessment for Transition Planning". The workshop will be from 8:30 am to 4 p.m. at the ESC-20 Conference Center. For more information call (210) 370-5453 or visit the Region 20 Website at <http://www.esc20.k12.tx.us>.

If you have area news you would like to share, suggestions for area workshops or would like to participate in local service project activities, please contact me at wendejones@satx.rr.com (all lowercase) or call (210) 637-6612 (H) or (210) 692-6105 (W).

Area VI - Jo Ann Campbell, LSSP

School psychology is a multifaceted and enriching profession. In an effort to promote cohesion and communication within Region VI, I am trying to make every effort to contact LSSPs and to identify needs, relay concerns and promote communication between and among school psychologists. Area VI is a fairly diverse area and includes many rural areas; however, technology brings our BIG state together quickly. I will look forward to your correspondence.

The TASP Professional Development conference, "Preparing for the Future" will be terrific! Please plan to join me in Dallas, February 24-26, 2000. You will benefit.

Obituary

Al Riester, Ph.D. (1941-1999)

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Dr. Albert Riester, professor in the Department of Education and director of the School Psychology Program at Trinity University, San Antonio. Dr. Riester died Wednesday, November 14, following a brief battle with Dr. Riester joined the faculty at Trinity University in 1978, and became director of Trinity's graduate School Psychology Program in 1980. He also held the position of clinical professor in the department of psychiatry at the University of Texas Health Science. An active and published scholar, Dr. Riester was widely known for his expertise in teaching methods and behavior management strategies for emotionally disturbed children.

Active in the community and with his profession, he was a consultant to the Southwest Mental Health Center, and held positions with the boards of the San Antonio Group Psychotherapy, the Southwestern Group Psychotherapy Societies, and the American Group Psychotherapy Association.

Donations in Dr. Riester's memory can be made to the Albert E. Riester Fund of the American Group Psychotherapy Foundation, 25 E. 21st St., NY, NY 10010, or the Chi Psy Educational Trust, 20180 Governors Highway, Ste. 303, Olympia fields, IL 60461.

Research Report

Adult Learning Disability Assessment: Issues in Postsecondary Settings

Cynthia A. Plotts, *School Psychology, SWTSU*
Jovita M. Ross-Gordon, *Adult and Developmental Education, SWTSU*

With the support of a Research Enhancement Grant from SWT, the authors designed and implemented a study of assessment practices with adults having known or suspected learning disabilities. The primary purposes of this ongoing study are two-fold: 1) to examine consistency in assessment techniques, process, and diagnostic criteria across several categories of service providers, including public high schools, adult education/GED programs, private assessment professionals, SWT Office of Disability Services, and area Texas Rehabilitation Commission field offices; and 2) to explore the experiences of adults with known or suspected learning disabilities who seek assessment for the purpose of documenting the disability so that they can be considered for accommodations to coursework or testing. To address these issues, the above populations were surveyed about their practices and perspectives. Follow-up interviews were conducted with SWT students, adult education providers, and adult basic education students to gain qualitative information about their experiences related to having LD and/or seeking assessment for LD.

Findings from our surveys of private practitioners and area school district assessment staff providing assessments of adult LD suggest wide variation in the scope and nature of adult LD assessments. While many students receive comprehensive assessments for learning disabilities in elementary through high school and are aware of their LD, criteria applied in high schools for diagnosing LD reflect IDEA guidelines, which do not apply to postsecondary institutions. Furthermore, SWT along with other institutions, requires that assessments be relatively current. IDEA '97 revises the requirement regarding triennial reevaluations. Results from our high school survey suggest that there is considerable variation in interpretation and application of this provision. Therefore, while some LD students may leave high school with a recent comprehensive assessment that meets criteria established by postsecondary institutions, others may receive no formal re-evaluation, while yet others may receive only a screening. Therefore, some students with known LD come to college expecting that accommodations will be made, only to learn that they must obtain further comprehensive assessment, most often at their own expense. We have learned that a significant number of students at SWT experience confusion about the process of documenting a learning disability; for some the cost is prohibitive. Information gathered from SWT students diagnosed with LD indicates that the majority of

respondents perceive a need for a local affordable, and uniform means for obtaining comprehensive testing for LD that meets university guidelines.

In adult basic education programs, our research indicates that access to higher education may be especially restricted by knowledge about the symptoms of LD in adults and how to obtain appropriate assessments. For those students who were not diagnosed with LD during their public school years, the process may be overwhelming. An unknown number of adults with learning disabilities do not recognize the need for or availability of assessment and intervention. Many such individuals appear in adult basic education programs geared toward remediation of basic skills and preparation for the GED. Staff in such programs vary greatly in their awareness of LD, and even more so in their awareness of possible instructional and testing accommodations. But, our data suggest, even among those staff who are relatively well-informed about LD and potential benefits of diagnosis, the perceived lack of affordable options for affordable assessment acts as a strong deterrent to student referral.

In order to further pursue our investigation of these issues, we applied for and were awarded a Creative Development Grant Proposal through the Dean of the College of Education at SWT. With the continued funding, we plan to pursue more detailed quantitative and qualitative data analysis, with the goal of refining, streamlining, and making more accessible assessment services for adults with known or suspected learning disabilities who may be seeking postsecondary educational opportunities.

Public Relations and Information Committee

Cindy Plotts, Ph.D., Chair

School Psychology Week was the primary focus of our committee work at the TASP Board Meeting in October. Ideas and plans were generated for obtaining the Governor's Proclamation to promote and recognize the work of school psychologists, including a greater emphasis on the contributions of school psychology to crisis prevention and intervention. We have initiated a poster competition to tap into our members' creativity in promoting our work and look forward to reviewing entries!

All TASP members who volunteered to work on the PR & I committee have been contacted and asked to contribute ideas for increasing visibility of school psychology in the media and in our school systems, including specific ideas for promoting School Psychology Week. Board members are working together to update and add to our website. I welcome input from any TASP members who are interested in becoming involved in public relations activities.

Book Review

Coping with Noncompliance in the Classroom: A Positive Approach for Teachers

By Hill M. Walker and Janet Eaton Walker (Pro-Ed, 1991)
Reviewed by Christine Fortman, MA

Now that the year is underway, many of us will begin to experience a larger caseload of consultation requests. Insubordination in the classroom is a frequent basis for these requests. This book is designed to give the reader a foundation in understanding noncompliance as well as research based techniques for remediating disobedience in the classroom.

This book is divided into three sections. The first section includes definitions, types and rates of noncompliance, and a discussion of the consequences of long-term rebelliousness. The authors differentiate between requests, commands, and demands including several examples of each. They also review the advantages of using clear and direct commands when directives are necessary. Types of noncompliance are defined for the reader including passive noncompliance, simple refusal, direct defiance, and negotiation. Additionally, research is cited suggesting how often normal and difficult children comply with requests. Finally, the authors offer potential outcomes of long-term noncompliance including difficulty integrating into the work force and a lack of peer involvement. The reader leaves this section with a thorough understanding of the terms used to define noncompliance.

The second section, Research Foundations, is the real meat of this book. It includes a discussion of causal factors, strategies for reducing defiance and increasing compliance, and ways to improve generalization. Causal factors of noncompliance include well-established and reinforced behavior patterns as well as the student's predisposition to defy adult commands. Several techniques for reducing disobedience are offered. The authors advocate altering antecedent events and pairing specific and manageable commands with praise and reward as the most effective ways to increase compliance in the classroom. A discussion of the importance of noticing students' moods and rewarding compliant behavior is included among the strategies for increasing conformity. For reducing defiance, the authors suggest time-out, response cost, and ignoring. Additionally, they offer tips for avoiding and reducing aggressive outbursts. The reader leaves this section with concrete ideas that can be implemented immediately.

The third section of this book gives specific guidelines for structuring classrooms for compliance. Attention is given to how classrooms are arranged as well as to how rules are developed and rewarded within the classroom. The authors offer tips for developing effective relationships thus fostering

learning and maintaining structure. Additionally, they suggest strategies for working with difficult children including listening to the student, reading the student's mood, and using clear but limited commands. Finally, six case studies are given across a variety of situations helping the reader to integrate the material presented. Six appendices are offered as well and include examples of daily report sheets as well as parent resources. The final section of this book assists in planning ways of ensuring compliance.

This book is short and easy to read. It is designed for teachers and can be used either as a reference tool or as a reading suggestion for teachers. The material is based on behavioral theory although the authors do not make that obvious. While the authors preface this work by stating that severely disruptive students may not be better managed with their suggestions, my experience has been that even students assigned to Behavior Improvement Classrooms (BIC) can be more effectively managed with techniques suggested in this work. I have presented two workshops based on this book and found teachers to be very receptive to the ideas and suggestions offered by Walker and Walker. The authors present research-based information in a clear format with multiple examples and case studies making this book a helpful resource.

Christine Fortman holds both the LSSP and NCSP credentials. She has worked with BIC classrooms at all age levels for the past five years in the Azle ISD.

Southwest Texas State University School Psychology Program

SWT offers a specialist level, Master of Arts Program in School Psychology, accredited by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). The program endorses the scientist-practitioner training model and leads to institutional recommendation for certification as a Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP) by NASP and for licensure as a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) from the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists. SWT also offers a Respecialization Program for individuals who already hold a Master's degree in a related field and wish to respecialize in the area of school psychology.

For more information, please contact:

Alicia Paredes Scribner, Ph.D.
Coordinator, School Psychology Program
Southwest Texas State University
601 University Drive
San Marcos, TX 78666
(512) 245-8682
(512) 245-8872 (Fax)
Visit our web site at: www.schooledu.swt.edu/

Preparing For The Future - February 24-26, 2000

If you have not already registered, it's not too late!

Use the registration form that came in your conference brochure. If you don't have one available, call TASP at (888) 414-8277 for a registration form. Be sure and note the cutoff dates for early versus regular/on-site registration as well as the **significant** discount members receive over nonmembers.

Several changes in conference procedures and scheduling made to improve your conference experience are noted below.

- ◆ We are excited to add a half-day preconference workshop in addition to our traditional full-day preconference workshop. Now you have a choice of topics for these valuable and well attended training opportunities.
- ◆ Preconference workshops may be attended without a full conference registration. Be sure to let your colleagues who usually do not attend our full conference (administrators, counselors, behavior specialists, social workers, diagnosticians, etc.) know about the preconference workshops available.
- ◆ Workshops have been designed around five strands including Assessment, Autism, Legal Issues, Neuropsychology and Therapeutic Intervention. The conference is truly focused on Preparing For The Future.
- ◆ Preparing For The Future also allows expanded training on certain topics by indicating the level of knowledge needed to benefit from a particular presentation. We are offering some topics that include both an introductory and an advanced session and some that require previous knowledge or practice in the topic area. Now you have a choice of both content and level of training. Be sure to carefully read workshop descriptions to ensure you select a workshop commensurate with your desired level of training.
- ◆ The popular legal workshop that has traditionally followed our luncheon has been moved to Thursday evening. This will allow conference attendees to receive the full 12 hours of CE credit needed for license renewal.
- ◆ We are offering a vegetarian option for our awards luncheon on Friday. You may indicate your need for a vegetarian meal on your Preparing For The Future registration form. The vegetarian option is only available during early registration.
- ◆ Embassy Suites' world famous cooked to order breakfast will be provided to all who stay in the conference hotel; thus, no continental breakfasts will be provided during the conference.

Looking forward to seeing you in Grapevine!

Robb Matthews
Conference Chairperson
President Elect

POSTER COMPETITION

If you or a family member have artistic talent, consider designing a TASP poster. The poster should promote School Psychology. Entries will be reviewed and the winner announced at the TASP 2000 Conference.

TASP Survey Results

The tabulated results of the survey of school psychologists conducted in conjunction with last year's annual Professional Conference are available at the TASP website. Information includes respondent characteristics, employment characteristics, critical issues, etc. Interested in additional information concerning the survey or results? Contact Art Hernandez at <ahernandez@UTSA.edu>

Employment Opportunities

FACULTY POSITION - TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

School Psychologist. Assistant or Associate Professor, tenure-track. Starting date September, 2000. Ph.D. from APA or NASP approved school psychology program. Minimum of three years experience as a school psychologist practitioner preferred. Expertise in school-neuropsychology preferred. Successful extramural funding for research preferred. Duties include teaching consultation, learning, and neuropsychology, and directing research in the NASP approved Doctoral and Specialist-level programs in school psychology. Department also offers graduate degrees in APA approved Counseling programs. Review of applications will begin November 15 and continue until position is filled. Applicants should be able to integrate technology into teaching. Candidates selected for an interview will be expected to provide evaluations of teaching and course materials. Send letter of application, current vita, three letters of reference, and names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the three references to Dr. Dinah Graham, Department of Psychology and Philosophy, TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY, P.O. Box 425470, Denton, Texas 76204-3470; (940)898-2318; dgraham@twu.edu; AA/EEO.

LSSP - Austin ISD

Austin, TX
Contact: Gloria Young
(512) 414-0007 or
gyoung@admin.austin.sd.tenet.edu

LSSP - Grapevine-Colleyville ISD

Contact: Pamela Carroll
3051 Ira E. Woods Avenue
Grapevine, TX 76051
(817) 251-5530

LSSP - Del Valle ISD

Contact: Mary Ann Rogalewski
2407 Shapard Lane
Del Valle, TX 78617
(512) 389-7377

LSSP - Birdville ISD

Contact: Cordelia Thompson
6125 East Belknap
Halton City, TX 76117

LSSP - Lake Ray Hubbard

Contact: Sherry McIllwain
600 S. Bois D'Arc
Forney, TX 75126
(972) 564-4060

LSSP - Spring Branch ISD

Contact: Vickie Jackson, Ph.D.
9000 Westview, Ste. 201
Houston, TX 77055
(713) 365-5624
jacksonv@spring-branch.isd.tenet.edu

LSSP - Santa Fe ISD

Contact: Neilia Weatherly
P. O. Box 370
Sante Fe, TX 75010
(409) 925-3526, ext. 250
nweatherly@santafe.isd.esc4.net

LSSP - Katy ISD

Contact: Dr. Carolyn Greer
P. O. Box 159
Katy, TX 77492
((281) 396-6000, ext. 273
greerc@katy.isd.tenet.edu

LSSP - Dickinson ISD

Contact: Ruthellen Parks, Special Ed. Director
or Carol Booth, Ph.D., Lead Psych.
Human Resources Department
P. O. Drawer Z
Dickinson, TX
(281) 534-6989

LSSP - Ft. Worth ISD

Contact: Dr. Leslie James
100 N. University, Suite 238
Ft. Worth, TX 76107
(817) 871-2901

Texas Woman's University

School Psychology Graduate Programs

TWU offers three graduate programs in school psychology, Doctoral, Master's, and Respecialization. All programs are accredited by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). The doctorate in school psychology leads to licensure as a Psychologist or a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) and certification as a Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP). The Master's in school psychology leads to licensure as a LSSP and certification as an NCSP. The Respecialization program is intended for those professionals who have a previous Master's degree in a related field and want to get the national NCSP and the Texas LSSP.

For more information contact:

Daniel C. Miller, Ph.D.
Director, School Psychology Graduate Programs
Texas Woman's University
P.O. Box 425470
Denton, Texas 76204
(940) 898-2303 (Department Phone)
(940) 898-2301 (Departmental Fax)

Visit our new Web Page at:

www.twu.edu/as/psyphil/sppc/



THE TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

(Federal Tax ID # 74-2673792)

Initial and Renewal Membership Application

Dues are for July 1 to June 30 Annually

Name: _____

Street Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone Home: (_____) _____ Work: (_____) _____ Fax: (_____) _____

E-Mail Address: _____ Place of Employment: _____

☐ Please do not print my address and phone number in the Texas Association of School Psychologists membership directory.

I am a current member of: (Circle all that apply) NASP APA TPA TPA-Div of Sch Psych TAPA

Please list the county in which you reside: _____ and in which you work: _____

I am applying for membership in the following category (Circle choice): Renewal New Member
Please check the appropriate category of membership:

Professional Member

Regular Member Dues: \$55.00 (Please check all credentials that you hold and their expiration date).

Nationally Certified School Psychologist certification Exp. Date: _____

TSBEP Licensed Specialist in School Psychology Exp. Date: _____

TSBEP Psychologist's license Exp. Date: _____

TSBEP Licensed Psychological Associate Exp. Date: _____

Currently functioning as a school psychologist.

Trained as school psychologist and working as a consultant, supervisor or administrator.

Primarily engaged in training of school psychologists at a college or university.

Affiliate Member Dues: \$40.00

One who is trained or employed in a closely related field or profession, but does not meet the requirements for Regular Membership.

Student Member Dues: \$20.00

One who is actively engaged (minimum of six semester hours or its equivalent per semester) in a program of psychology.

Student Advisor's signature required _____ University: _____

Applicant's Signature: _____ Date submitted: _____

Membership fees: Professional Member Regular Member \$55.00 Affiliate Member \$40.00 Student Member \$20.00 I wish to donate to the Government & Professional Relations (GPR) Fund Make checks, money order, or cashier's check payable to TASP Total: \$ Credit Card: (Visa & Mastercard ONLY) Name on Card: Card Number: Expiration Date:

(Please fill in other side)

The Texas School Psychologist

TASP is a volunteer organization. If you would be willing to serve as a committee member on one of the following committees (check all that apply):

- | | | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Convention Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Nominations & Elections |
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If you would be willing to be a candidate for an office for next year please check all that apply:

- President-Elect** **Treasurer** **Area Representative** **Graduate Student Representative**

Please send completed form, check, and all supportive materials as necessary to:

TASP
PO Box 141023
Austin TX 78714-1023

Call for Funding Applications

Projects for Children

Each year the **NASP CHILDREN'S FUND** solicits applications for projects. Funded projects impact children's lives and are as diverse as a Handbook of Poetry by Classmates of Victims of Shootings in Johnesboro, Arkansas or Teddy Bears for Tornado Victims in Arkansas. The Children's Fund responded to the need for school supplies in flooded North Dakota and Minnesota and after tornadoes in Florida and Tennessee. A funded project was a safe interview location for children of physical and sexual abuse in Rutland, VT. The Children's Fund provided funds for printing and distributing a brochure on a low incidence handicap. This years projects included a mental health mentoring program in Catonsville, MD, a project to bully proof a school in Newfield, NY and a comprehensive English and Spanish videotape series to inform parents about the special education process in Salt Lake City, UT. We are seeking applicants with ideas on projects that will directly affect children.

Projects which will be considered for funding will be consistent with the **Fund's** priorities which include:

- A. Advocate for the essential rights and welfare of all children and youth.
- B. Promote learning environments which facilitate optimal development.
- C. Research effective interventions which address distressing circumstances of children and youth.
- D. Embrace individual differences in children and youth.

The **NASP CHILDREN'S FUND BOARD** encourages full-time school psychologists, as well as, graduate students, academicians, and interdisciplinary teams to apply for funding. Successful applications will be unique in the service provided. Research is considered when it directly interacts with children.

The **NASP CHILDREN'S FUND** is affiliated with, but an independent charitable organization of NASP. As a tax-exempt, nonprofit charity, the Children's Fund can accept and disburse monies for charitable purposes. We invite you to submit an application for funding for the 1999-2000 school year. The deadline for applications is June 1, 1999. For information or applications write to, Dr. R. I. Olley c/o Pupil Services, Chatsworth Elementary, 222 New Avenue, Reisterstown, MD 21136; FAX: 410-526-9263, or call 410-887-6915.

1999-2000 TASP Executive Board

President

Phyllis Hamilton
425 Padre Lane
Victoria, TX 77905
Home: (361) 578-0927
Work: (361) 573-0731
Fax: (361) 576-4804
e-mail: pah@viptx.net

President-Elect

Robb Matthews
2819 Featherston
Wichita Falls, TX 76308
Home: (940) 696-0627
Work: (940) 564-5614
Fax: (940) 564-2287
e-mail: robbnm@wf.net

Past President

Ginger Gates
ESC IV
7145 W. Tidwell
Houston, TX 77092
Home: (713) 528-3062
Work: (713) 744-6303
Fax: (713) 744-0646
e-mail: ggates@esc4.net

Treasurer

Susan Riordan
615 Lake Placid Dr.
Seguin, TX 78155
Home: (830) 629-7363
Work: (830) 625-8081
Fax: (830) 625-2269
e-mail: susanr@compuvision.net

Secretary

Andrea Ogonosky
7222 Oak Walk Dr
Humble, TX 77346-5078
Home: (281) 852-0398
Work: (713) 744-6321
Fax: (713) 744-8133
e-mail: aogon@aol.com

NASP State Delegate

Dan Miller
825 Sandpiper St.
Denton, TX 76205
Home: (940) 381-9140
Work: (940) 898-2251
H Fax: (940) 898-0533
e-mail: dcmiller@kidsinc.com

Membership Chair

Susan Logan
221 Eastwood
Southlake, TX 76092
Home: (817) 329-2907
Work: (817) 251-5471
Fax: (817) 251-5464
e-mail: sulo1116@aol.com

Webmaster

Francis Chen
P.O. Box 100
San Marcos, TX 78667
Home: (512) 357-2360
Work: (830) 372-5771
e-mail: fc04834@swt.edu

Professional Development

Arthur Hernandez
6900 N. Loop 1604 W
San Antonio, TX 78249
Work: (210) 458-5969
Fax: (210) 458-5848
e-mail: aehernandez@utsa.edu

Graduate Student Representative

Penny Hampton
575 East Torrey Street #221
New Braunfels, TX 78130
Home: (830) 629-5640
Work: (830) 625-6251
e-mail: pennyh@wireweb.net

Newsletter Editor

Alicia Paredes Scribner
Dept. of Ed. Adm. & Psyc. Serv.
Southwest Texas State Univ.
San Marcos, TX 78666
Home: (512) 477-8349
Work: (512) 245-8682
Fax: (512) 245-8872
e-mail: aliciaps@tenet.edu

Government & Professional Relations

Margaret Kaltman
3524 Galena Hills Loop
Round Rock, TX 78681
Home: (512) 671-3781
Fax: (512) 671-3781
e-mail: kaltman@inetport.com

Awards & Honors Chair

Mae Fjelsted
9707 Berryville
San Antonio, TX 78245-1903
Home: (210) 674-5994
Work: (210) 225-2406
Fax: (210) 534-7299
e-mail: lmfjelsted@aol.com

School Psychology Trainers

Ron Palomares
2900 Westminster
Dallas, TX 75205
Work: (940) 898-2309
Fax: (940) 898-2301
e-mail: f_palomares@twu.edu

Public Information & Relations

Cindy Plotts
SWTSU
601 University Dr
San Marcos, TX 77666
Work: (512) 245-3086
Fax: (512) 245-8872
e-mail: cp11@swt.edu

Prof. & Ethical Stands./Const

Gail Cheramie
UHCL Box 66
2700 Bay Area Blvd
Houston, TX 77058
Home: (713) 528-3062
Work: (281) 283-3392
Fax: (281) 283-3397
e-mail: cheramie@cl.uh.edu

Area I Representative

Michael Dixon
6749 N Park Dr.
North Richland Hills, TX 76180
Home: (817) 485-4875
Work: (817) 871-2483
Fax: (817) 871-2491
e-mail: mcdixon@tenet.edu

Area II Representative

Thomas A. Wood
5337 Country Oaks Dr
El Paso, TX 79932
Home: (915) 581-4261
Work: (915) 747-5221
Fax: (915) 747-5755
e-mail: twood@utep.edu

Area III Representative

Carol Booth
4111 Bayou Grove Dr.
Taylor Lake Village, TX 77586
Home: (281) 326-2703
Work: (281) 534-6867
Fax: (281) 534-6981
e-mail: cbooth@dickinson.isd.esc4.net

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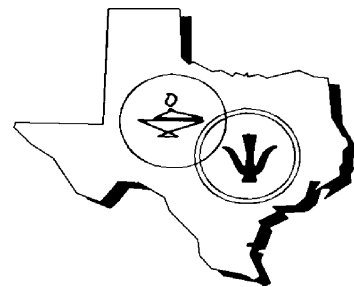
Janice Opella
Rt.3 Box 23
Cedar Creek, TX 78612
Home: (512) 321-3709
Work: (512) 321-4488
Fax: (512) 321-2636
e-mail: jlopel@aol.com

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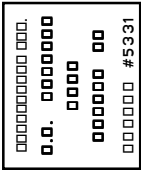
Wende Jones
5827 Spring Crossing
San Antonio, TX 78247
Home: (210) 637-6612
Work: (210) 692-6105
Fax: (210) 692-6125
e-mail: wendejones@satx.rr.com

Area VI Representative

Jo Ann Campbell
1718 Lincoln Dr.
Abilene, TX 79601-3238
Home: (915) 677-0249
Work: (915) 671-4459
Fax: (915) 671-4523
e-mail: campbellj@acu.edu



**Texas Association
of
School Psychologists**



Texas Association Of School Psychologists (TASP)
Alicia Paredes Scribner
PO Box 141023
Austin TX 78714-1023

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Camera ready artwork or Employment Notices must be received prior to deadline date for desired publication. All camera-ready artwork and notices must be on 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper. It is recommended that response deadlines in advertisements be no earlier than the 15th of the month following the month of publication.