



The Texas School Psychologist

A partner on the path to student success

Texas Association of School Psychologists

www.txasp.org

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Winter 2012

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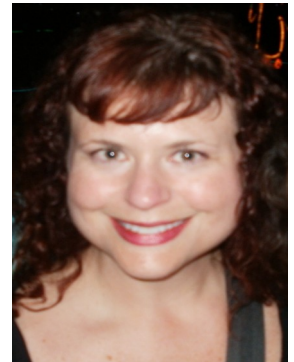
Conference Chair

Rebecca Ray

President's Message

Happy fall, TASP members! Can you believe it's already November and that we're slowly nearing the end of the first semester? Something else I'm having a hard time believing is that my time as President of TASP is almost over. It's been such an incredible year...I've learned so many things about myself and my abilities and have had many wonderful experiences. Some of my favorite moments were getting to meet several members throughout the year via email and in person. In fact, several people introduced themselves to me at the conference, and their kind words made all the difference. That contact with you, the members, reminded me of why I ran for President in the first place and helped to stoke my enthusiasm for the office and the profession itself. I'm happy to report that we, as a board and as an organization, have accomplished many things to be proud of this year. These things could not have been done without the commitment of your TASP board. It's been a pleasure to work with such a dedicated, hard-working group of people. This year, TASP:

*Maureen Hicks,
President*



- Helped facilitate changes that allow those who have earned the certification "Nationally Certified School Psychologist" to use it
- Cosponsored and offered free workshops with the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Texas at San Antonio
- Increased communication and contact with other similar state organizations
- Met over 80% of the organization's goals outlined in the three year strategic plan
- Continued to improve the website and successfully completed online conference registration
- Committed to expand professional development opportunities to other parts of Texas, thereby planning the First Annual TASP Summer Institute to be held in Corpus Christi June 28-29, 2013
- Had another successful annual conference in Houston, with over 600 people in attendance.

I'm tired just thinking about that list, and those are only the highlights of what has been accomplished this year. Many of those things mentioned have also taken many years to accomplish. I hope when someone asks you, or you ask yourself, what benefits you get as a TASP member, you can cite some of these things as examples. I would also encourage you to become involved with the TASP board. Your dedication and commitment will go a long way in furthering the profession of school psychology. This is my final Presidential Address to you. In closing, I wanted to say I have been so honored to have worked on your behalf, not only advocating for the profession but advocating for you and all of the children and families' whose lives you touch everyday. Thank you for this opportunity to make a difference.

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TASP 2012 Conference CALC Summary:

TASP Conference attendees donated \$508.00 to the Sunshine Kids, a national non-profit organization dedicated to children with cancer. The winner of a free registration to TASP's first annual summer conference, June 28-29, 2013, to be held in Corpus Christi, was Dr. Rachel Robillard.

Thank you to all who donated to this wonderful charity. You did a great thing!



Dedicated to children with cancer

Conference 2012

Another successful conference has come and passed. This year's conference saw quite a few changes, including online handouts, online registration, an increase in the number of sessions, and a variety of available session hour options. Each of these transitions helped with ease of registration at the conference. Thank you to our membership for embracing these changes.

As always, a special thank you to our sponsors, graduate student volunteers, and community partners.

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Graduate Student volunteers from the following Universities:

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Texas State University

GRADUATE STUDENT CORNER

Hello Grad Student Members!!!

Now that we are in full swing of the fall semester, I hope that all of you are doing well and holding up! It was very nice to see some of you at our annual TASP conference at the beginning of this month. We had some wonderful presenters for the sessions and some very interesting poster and paper topics (available on the TASP website for viewing). We also got fired up with our motivational speaker, did a little shopping with our new vendors, and raised over \$500 for our CALC project! It was definitely a success. Thanks to all those who came! For those who couldn't make it, we hope to see you next year! Actually, you don't even have to wait that long... this year TASP is having their first ever Summer Institute in Corpus Christi at the end of June! We hope to enlighten our minds and darken our skin! ;) Stay posted for more details.



I was trying to think of something I have used before that could be helpful to you all within whichever type of setting you may currently find yourself in. Of course, something that applies to all of us is the law! As many of you know, there are many different sets of laws that we must abide by within special education – Federal Law, State Law, and State Rules (not to mention the other policies within our districts or placements). Anyway, something I've found to be useful that some of you may have already heard of is called the Side-by-Side. It is literally a side-by-side comparison of IDEA, Texas Education Code, and Texas Administrative Code: Commissioner's and State Board of Education Rules concerning Special Education. Be sure to save it! You can check it out here:

<http://framework.esc18.net/Documents/Side-by-Side%20MAR%202012.pdf>

Since this will be my last article as your Graduate Student Representative, I wanted to take this time to thank you all for your interest in TASP. Your contributions and involvement in the organization, no matter how small or large, provide support to the field of school psychology and TASP's mission statement and goals. We are already seeing great things happen – like being able to use the NCSP as part of our professional title! I hope that all of you continue your memberships and encourage you to spread the word to others within your programs about the importance of promoting and advocating for our field. In closing, I also hope that some of you will consider running for this position next year, as it has been a pleasure serving as your Graduate Student Representative!

Best wishes to all of you,
Amanda Meyer

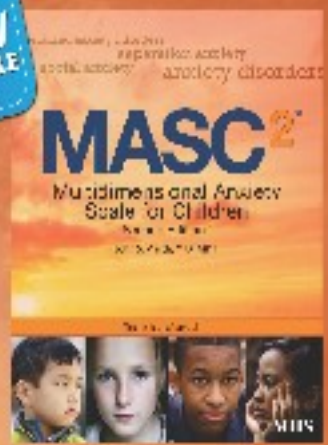
Call for Papers

The Texas Association of School Psychologists is preparing to launch a new peer-reviewed scholarly journal and is accepting submissions for the inaugural edition. If you (or your students or colleagues) have findings relevant to the field of School Psychology that you would like to see published, please contact either Jeremy Sullivan (jeremy.sullivan@utsa.edu) or Art Hernandez (art.hernandez@tamucc.edu) to receive instructions for authors.

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Information from the Area Representatives!

AREA REPRESENTATIVES

Hello TASP Area 1 LSSPs!!! I hope your 2012-2013 school year is off to a great start. TASP just finished a wonderful and successful conference. If you were there you know what I am talking about and if you were not able to attend this year you missed great speakers, exhibitors, and fellowship with fellow LSSPs. Fortunately for anyone who was not able to attend the conference this year in Houston, as well as any of you that did, you will have another opportunity to attend a TASP event in June. TASP will hold its first Summer Institute in Corpus Christi. I am looking forward to this and I hope that you will plan to attend. Personally I will make it a mini family vacation. I LOVE going to the beach!!! LSSPs are encouraged to bring their families as morning workshops will be scheduled so that families will be able to have fun in the sun on the beach in the afternoons.



In other news Dana Goins will take office in January as the TASP President and the board welcomes her to this new position. Dana has served on the board for around 10 years and brings with her much experience to lead TASP in 2013. Dana, during her President Elect 2012 year, planned and organized speakers for this past conference. I don't know about you but after hearing Eric Bostick speak I was fired up and renewed for this school year. I look forward to seeing the positive impact that Dana will make for TASP.

An LSSP in our area asked if TASP had conducted a survey in the past in regards to pay grades and salaries. This was discussed at the last TASP board meeting. A similar survey was conducted in years past. I am working on finding out if I can access that data as well as looking into developing a new survey including these questions. Please check your website, email, and the TASP Facebook page in the future for this survey. I plan to continue to advocate for LSSPs in Area 1. Please remember the following as the year progresses:

- Send me an email about what trainings or speakers you would like to see/hear at future TASP conferences.
- Send me an email about what trainings you would like to see happen at your Regional Educational Service Centers (ESC) or advocacy that you need in your area
- Encourage LSSPs who are not TASP members to join
- Contact me to help coordinate a meeting near your service center
- Communicate to me anything else that you find is a need, area of service, or resource idea for Area 1 LSSPs
- Encourage your colleagues to submit articles or consider submitting articles yourself to the new TASP TIPS (Tools for Intervention and Practice in Schools) online peer-reviewed journal that will be available at a later date
- Check out the TASP website as it is constantly being improved with guidance & much work from Jim Hitchcock, TASP Webmaster. Send me ideas about resources, links, or topics that you would like to be able to access via the TASP website.

I encourage you to contact me at the email below with any suggestion, thought, or concern that you might have that I might be able to help with.

Sincerely,
Lisa Daniel, PhD, LSSP
TASP Area 1 Representative
lisa_m_daniel@hotmail.com

Greetings Area VI Friends!

I really hope your new school year is off to a wonderful beginning. It was great to connect with all of you in Houston last month. For those of you who were unable to attend the TASP Convention, be sure to lock-in your dates for the summer event in Corpus Christi – I'm looking forward to having some time there with you.



School psychology in our part of Texas can often be lonely. One way to battle this professional loneliness might be to promote ourselves, our colleagues, and the work we do with students and families. Take advantage of the upcoming School Psychology Awareness Week to do this. You can find a great deal of ideas at www.nasponline.org to promote our profession. You might also check-out a book by Dr. Rebecca Branstetter called, "The School Psychologist's Survival Guide" to offer you several template letters you can write and place in teacher mailboxes.

Take time this coming month to schedule time to meet with another school psychologist and share some ideas on what you are doing to overcome being too isolated. And, remember, be sure to take care of you! Thank you for letting me represent you to TASP. Please let me know if there is anything I can address for you. Until then, at whatever you do,

Be Awesome!

Greetings Area III,

I hope many of you were able to attend our recent conference at the beautiful Westin Galleria. We had many nationally recognized speakers who shared a wealth of information. The conference was a success, as expected. TASP is hoping to build on that success with our first annual Summer Conference in June in Corpus Christi. Visit the TASP website for more information on that exciting opportunity to have some fun in the sun this summer, while earning more CEUS.

The TASP Charity for our conference this October was the Sunshine Kids Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to children with cancer. At the conference we collected over \$500.00 to donate to this deserving group!

On a personal note, Area III has elected a new representative, as my two year term has ended. I have enjoyed serving the fine folks in Area III and can assure you that this organization has capable leadership to progress through any challenges ahead.

Hope to see you all in June!

Pmoore1@ccisd.net

(281)284-0096

(281)830-3088

Cheers!



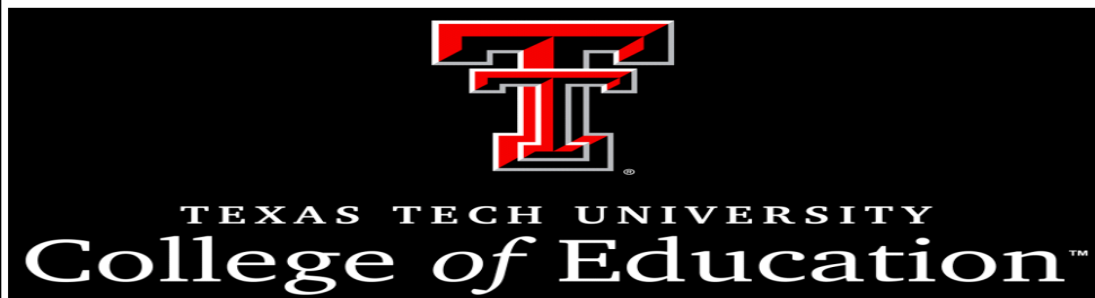
Dear Ethical Eddie,

It's election season and I'm really into politics. I volunteer for several campaigns, attend my precinct meetings, and go door to door encouraging neighbors to vote. One of my colleagues has suggested that it's unethical for school psychologists to get involved in politics, given my professional position in the community. Is political involvement prohibited?

Signed,
Anonymous
Dear Anonymous,

You're free to be politically active, so long as you are speaking as an individual and not as a school psychologist. Moreover, you should identify yourself as an individual rather than an employee of your school district (NASP Principles for Professional Ethics, Standard IV.2.4). Although the standard does not address modes of communication, I should also let you know that it would be inappropriate to use your school district e-mail and letterhead for any political activities, as the use of these would indicate that you are speaking on behalf of the district. Political activity is wonderful, and you are commended for taking part in the democratic process. Just be sure to separate your political activity from your work.

Have a question for Ethical Eddie? Send it to jl30@txstate.edu



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Interested individuals should contact Dr. Tara Stevens at tara.stevens@ttu.edu.



Students are admitted to the School Psychology program in both the Spring and Fall semesters. Deadlines for applications are 4/15 and 11/15, respectively.



School Psychology Program

The Department of Educational Psychology at UTSA is pleased to offer the Master of Arts program in School Psychology. The program includes coursework and field-based experiences consistent with guidelines provided by the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists and the National Association of School Psychologists. Most courses are offered in the evening at the UTSA Downtown Campus, and full-time and part-time tracks are available. New admissions in the Fall 2011 semester included 31 students, with 13 additional students starting in the Spring 2012 semester. Application deadlines are as follows: November 1st for the Spring, and April 1st for the Summer.

For more information, please contact Dr. Jeremy Sullivan (jeremy.sullivan@utsa.edu)

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The Texas School Psychologist is published four times a year. Articles, announcements, advertising, employment notices, and letters should be submitted to:

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The TASP newsletter is published to enhance communication among school psychologists in a manner that advances the general purpose of the Texas Association of School Psychologists. The acceptability of an ad for publication is based upon legal, social, professional, and ethical considerations. All advertising must be in keeping with the generally scholarly, and/or professional nature of the publication. Thus, TASP reserves the right to unilaterally reject, omit, or cancel advertising which it deems not to be in the best interest of the scholarly and professional objectives of the Association, and/or not in keeping with appropriate professional tone, content, or appearance. In addition, the Association reserves the right to refuse advertising submitted for the purpose of airing either side of controversial social or professional issues.

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Camera ready artwork or Employment Notices must be received prior to deadline date for desired publication. Contact TASP at 888-414-8277 for artwork specifications.



School Psychology Program

The School Psychology Program at Texas State University-San Marcos is one of the oldest and largest in the state. Graduates from the program work in all geographic areas of Texas and many other states. The program offers the 60 hour, Specialist in School Psychology degree. Students take the majority of their classes with program faculty, however, they also take courses in Psychology, Special Education, Counseling, and other programs/departments through electives.

The program admits two cohorts (one in the fall and one in the spring) each year. Application deadlines for fall admission is in mid-February and application deadlines for spring admission is in mid-October. Typically, a cohort has 12 students. These students matriculate through the program together, fostering bonds that last well beyond the student years. The network of TSU school psychology alumni is extensive and supportive of TSU students and young professionals. The Clinic for Autism Research, Evaluation and Support provides students opportunities to develop advanced skills in autism assessment techniques. Students report that this experience is highly valued by future employers. In addition, the new University Assessment Clinic allows students to refine cognitive and achievement evaluation skills prior to starting school based practicum



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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

School psychologists work with parents, teachers and administrators to provide supportive learning environments and ensure students' successful social and academic interactions. Their responsibilities include identifying learning disabilities and other special needs as well as offering counseling and intervention services to students and their families.

To highlight the many contributions of school psychologists to the overall academic health of our children, an awareness campaign will be conducted during a week in November.

At this time, I encourage all Texans to recognize the role school psychologists play in educational communities across the Lone Star State.

Therefore, I, Rick Perry, Governor of Texas, do hereby proclaim November 11–17, 2012, to be

School Psychology Week



in Texas, and urge the appropriate recognition whereof.

In official recognition whereof,
I hereby affix my signature this the
10th day of October, 2012.

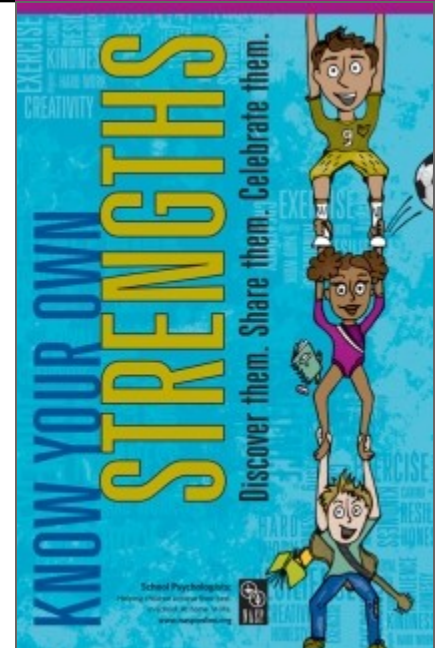


TASP supports legislation that furthers the following goals:

- Increase awareness of and support for comprehensive school psychological services that promote school systems that combine high expectations for achievement with appropriate individualized instruction and equal educational opportunities for all students.
- Provide sufficient student support services to meet the needs of the whole child, in order to promote healthy learning and development, by increasing school psychologists' role in prevention, intervention, and crisis response.
- Ensure inclusion of school psychologists in decision-making affecting the profession, such as regulation and practice requirements.
- Promote equity in access to educational resources and school-based mental health services for all children and youth.

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY AWARENESS WEEK

The Texas Association of School Psychologists (TASP), in conjunction with the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), will celebrate "School Psychology Awareness Week" November 12-16, 2012. Throughout this week our role in, and commitment to, helping parents and educators foster healthy child development by enhancing the total environment in which children learn and grow will be emphasized throughout Texas and the nation. Suggested activities are available on the TASP website.



GOVERNMENT AND PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS UPDATE

TASP Prepares for Upcoming 2013 Session of the Texas Legislature

Laurie McGarry Klose, Ph.D., Government and Professional Relations Chair

In preparation for the upcoming legislative session, the TASP Government and Professional Relations committee is busy laying the foundation for success for our legislative agenda. The TASP legislative agenda is presented in this newsletter. In addition to the legislative priorities that focus of supporting legislation that promotes the practice of school psychology and the educational and social/emotional development of all children, TASP is working with our legislative liaison, Marty DeLeon in the development of a bill that will amend the Psychologist Licensing Act to specify that LSSPs must be represented on the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists. At this time, the statute requires that the board contain four licensed psychologists, two licensed psychological associates and three public members. Neither the board rules or the current statute require that any board member hold the LSSP license or have experience practicing school psychology. LSSPs represent approximately one fourth to one third of all licensees of the TSBEP. We are working with specific legislators to craft a bill that will amend the law to require than an LSSPs be represented on the TSBEP. We will keep the TASP membership informed of the progress of this bill during the legislative session. We will also ask for the membership's help in contacting individual legislators to express support for this bill.

In addition to working on the passage of this specific bill, the TASP GPR committee will be closely monitoring any legislation that has a potential impact on education in general and the practice of school psychology, either directly or indirectly. The GPR committee will keep the membership informed of these types of bills and provide information and the process for the membership to take action, if a member is so inclined.

Texas Tech University

The story of the lonely, rural school psychologist is familiar to West Texas educators where a small number of School Psychology programs exist to support a large region that covers more than 84,000 square miles. Without a sufficient number of training programs, area schools receive little opportunity to partner with universities to generate new LSSPs and benefit from high quality practicum and internship programs. The imbalance between need and service is therefore especially heightened in the West Texas region.

The Educational Psychology Program at Texas Tech University has established a Doctoral Specialization in School Psychology and will join the few area training programs in working to shift the balance to favor the well-being of West Texas children. The specialization, which is now in its third year, was founded on the NASP practice model and is currently collecting data to submit an application for NASP approval. A relationship with Texas Tech Special Education faculty who offer School Psychology Specialization students a sequence of Applied Behavior Analysis courses and opportunities to work with the Burkhart Center for Autism Education and Research is a strength of the specialization. The specialization faculty has adopted the West Texas reliance on meaningful partnerships and has worked closely with an advisory board comprised of area special education directors and LSSPs. The bidirectional communication that results ensures that Texas Tech graduates will be prepared to meet the unique needs of area children and schools in addition to the demands of the profession.

The School Psychology Specialization at Texas Tech was established so that West Texas LSSPs will no longer be lonely. The specialization is presently accepting new students for both spring and fall semesters. Students may begin the Ph.D. with a bachelor's or master's degree. Interested individuals should contact Dr. Tara Stevens at tara.stevens@ttu.edu.

Update from the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists Quarterly Meeting

Laurie McGarry Klose, Ph.D., Government and Professional Relations Chair

The Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists met for their quarterly meeting on October 26th. Several items on the agenda were of importance to LSSPs. TSBEP has decided form an Advisory Committee that will provide guidance to the existing Rules Committee for issues related to rule changes, amendments and/or additions. The members of the committee will include: one licensed psychologist TSBEP member, one TSBEP member to provide a school based practitioner perspective, one representative from the Texas Association of Psychologists, one representative from the Texas Association of Psychological Associates, one representative from TASP, one stakeholder related to any issue being discussed and one expert related to any issue being discussed. This could provide a very important vehicle for TASP to be a resource to TSBEP regarding any future rule changes.

In the course of the discussion of opinion letters that provide board approved responses to licensee questions, the board discussed the responsibility for the protection and retention of records when a private contractor provides a school based psychological services (ex- an LSSP or LP provides services on a contracted basis for a school but is not a long term employee of the school). The opinion letter stated that FERPA regulations supersede board rules and any records that are created as a result of the services provided by the contractor are part of the child's educational record. It is recommended that anyone providing contracted services to a school district should include stipulation in the contract regarding retention and protection of the records related to the services.

The new Executive Director of TSBEP, Darrel Spinks will participate in four roundtable discussions with members of the Texas Psychological Association to provide a primer on the function of TSBEP and the processes utilized in the context of complaint resolution. TASP may consider asking Mr. Spinks to conduct similar discussions for LSSPs. Look for more information about this in future newsletters.

A new rule was proposed that clarifies that the reference letters included in a licensee's application packet must be dated within 6 months (before or after) the date of the license application. The vote for adoption on this rule amendment will occur at the next TSBEP meeting.

Fees for license application, renewal and examinations will go up in the near future. The LSSP renewal fee will be increased by less than \$20.

The next meeting of TSBEP will be on February 14, 2013. All interested members are always invited to attend. The meetings are held at 333 Guadalupe, Tower 2, Room 450 in Austin. The meetings begin at 9:00 and if you are interested in making a public comment, you must sign up before 9.

Attention TASP Members!

I'm pleased to announce the four winners of TASP's second annual Scholarship Program! They will each be receiving a \$500 check for their efforts. Without further adieu, CONGRATULATIONS to:

Andrea Dennison – Doctoral student from Texas A&M University
Jennifer Lay-Su – Specialist level student from Texas State University
Laura Dolan – Specialist level student from Texas State University
Candice Walker – Specialist level student from Sam Houston State University

With all of our wonderful applicants, it was certainly a difficult decision for the committee and the rankings were very close. We enjoy seeing and hearing about your personal endeavors and we love being able to reward some of our young members. I hope that the Scholarship Program will continue for many years to come and that our number of applicants continues to grow. Many thanks to all who applied!

Your Graduate Student Representative,
Amanda Meyer

Arlington ISD School Psychology

The Texas Association of School Psychologists has recognized the Arlington ISD Special Education School Psychology Services and professionals for Outstanding Delivery of School Psychological Services:

School districts were nominated in several areas to recognize the implementation of best practices or innovative practices in school psychology. Areas include:

- **Model of Service Delivery:** This relates to the model by which school psychological services are delivered within the district. This includes the number of psychological service personnel employed by the district and in what capacity they are employed.
- **Programs:** This category involves programs for special students (i.e. students who are at-risk, eligible for special education services and/or general education students, etc.).
- **Direct and Indirect Services:** This area relates to providing school psychological services directly to students and parent(s)/guardian(s) (i.e., assessment, counseling, parent training, and/or indirectly through consultation, professional development, etc.).

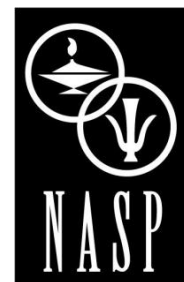
The AISD School Psychology team is led by Dr. Carlos Antoline. On Friday, October 5th, 2012, Dr. Antoline and three other school psychologists received the awards at the TASP conference.

Carol Bushnell
Special Education Director
Arlington ISD
cbushnel@aisd.net
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Managing Strong Emotional Reactions to Traumatic Events: Tips for Parents and Teachers

[Managing Strong Emotional Reactions to Traumatic Events: Tips for Parents and Teachers](#) (PDF)

Our society has been plagued by a number of traumatic events in recent years—schoolyard shootings, the Oklahoma City bombing, floods and tornadoes, and the terrorist attacks of September 2001. When a large-scale tragedy occurs, it can cause strong and deeply felt reactions in adults and children. *How adults express their emotions will influence the reactions of children and youth.* Parents and teachers can help youngsters manage their feelings by both modeling healthy coping strategies themselves and closely monitoring their own emotional state and that of the children in their care.



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Common Reactions to Trauma

It is not uncommon to feel any or all of the following:

- Shock/disbelief
- Fear
- Guilt
- Grief
- Confusion
- Shame/loss

Anger

These reactions are often closely linked and can be difficult to separate, (e.g., where does grief end and outrage begin). Children, in particular, may have trouble understanding and talking about their feelings. Emotional reactions take place over a period of time and may not happen in any particular order. They can affect our behavior, our ability to function, and our overall sense of well-being. The intensity and ways we express our reactions will vary depending on our personal experience, general mental health, other stress factors in our lives, our coping style, our ability to self-monitor our emotional state, and our support network. This is true for both adults and children. Children of all ages may need guidance and support from the significant adults in their lives (parents, teachers, coaches, etc.) as they work through their thoughts and emotional reactions to the event.

Anger: A Natural Reaction

For many people, adults and children alike, anger will be a natural extension of other emotions because it is a defensive mechanism that makes us *feel* more in control. As well, anger with the perpetrators of these horrible acts is, in many ways, justified. The desire to “retaliate” can be strong—but quite harmful if not redirected to a positive outlet. In some situations, a significant factor in the expression of anger is the lack of a concrete “enemy” on which to focus our feelings. As long as there is doubt about the identity of the perpetrators and a lack of closure, or when the trauma is a natural disaster, anger and other strong emotions have no specific target. Such situations can lead to more inappropriate expressions. Adults must ensure that children do not “take out” their anger in inappropriate ways, such as lashing out at classmates or neighbors who might be unfairly associated with the perpetrators of violence because of their ethnicity or other affiliations. The key is to direct anger and other strong emotions in socially and psychologically healthy ways.

Recognizing Anger

The first step in helping children manage their anger is getting your anger under control. Be aware of cues in your own behavior. If necessary, ask someone you trust (a family member, friend or colleague) to give you feedback on your anger reaction. Observe the behavior of other adults around you and your child(ren) and be supportive if they show signs of increased anger.

Signs of Anger in Adults

- Short temper/impatience.
- Sleep problems.
- Eating problems.

- Restlessness and agitation.
 - Hitting and slamming objects, pets, or people.
 - Desire to inflict harm.
 - Verbal outbursts toward family, friends, or fellow workers.
 - A sense of losing control over your life.
 - Poor concentration or attention span.
 - Obsessing about the event.
 - Physical health affected; increase in blood pressure, dizzy, headaches, heart rate elevated, clenched jaw, knot in the stomach, and tight muscles, etc.
- You feel life should be fair, but it is not; and things are not how you want them to be.

Signs of Anger in Children

- Behavioral outbursts, many times without an obvious cause.
 - Sleep problems.
 - Fights at school or home.
 - Physical attacks on others or animals, even among pre-schoolers.
 - Disobedience from otherwise well behaved child(ren).
 - Child state he/she is really sad and does not know why.
 - Complaints of stomachaches and headaches; or vague aches and pains.
- Other reactions similar to those of adults.

Dealing with Anger

Some people have more problems than others dealing with anger. They either try to deny or ignore their feelings and keep them inside, or overreact and “blow-up.” These negative coping strategies can be physically and emotionally unhealthy. Pretending we don’t feel badly can have long-term affects that may eventually cause us to “lose it.” Conversely, psychological research shows that acting out your anger will not relieve it, but instead will make it more intense. We can learn to control or diffuse anger by how we think about the event or people involved and by finding other ways to regain our sense of control and security. Anger can also mask other emotions, such as grief, loss, or fear. It is important to address these related emotions as a way to deal with angry feelings.

Controlling Your Anger

- Admit you are angry.
- Recognize this is a common reaction to an overwhelming event. It is how you control and manage your reaction that makes the difference.
- Try to identify the related emotions that may be fueling your anger, (e.g., sorrow, fear.)
- Find appropriate outlets for these related and equally important emotions, (e.g., talk with family members or friends, seek grief counseling, get involved in activities to help victims, etc.)
- Understand that it not just the actual event that drives your anger, but how you think about it.
- Develop a “positive” outlook and look for what can be done to help rather than harm.
- Stop, take a deep breath, visualize something peaceful or enjoyable, and try to relax for a few minutes.
- Avoid/decrease negative ways to cope, such as misuse of alcohol or drugs.
- Find an acceptable outlet, such as exercise, getting involved with your favorite hobby, sports.
- Distract yourself from continuing to think about the event -- call a friend, go to a movie.
- Keep a sense of humor.
- Turn off the TV and radio; play your favorite music.
- Keep to your daily routines.
- Consult your doctor or a mental health specialist if your reactions continue to intensify, or you feel like doing harm to yourself or others.

If you are seeing a mental health professional, be sure to share your angry feelings with him or her.

Helping Children Control Anger

- Realize they will imitate your responses and reactions.
- Let them understand anger is a normal emotion under these circumstances that can even include feelings of re-venge. However, acting out anger, hurting others, and uncontrolled anger is not okay.
- Answer their questions honestly and openly; but always consider their developmental age.
- Make family time to talk to the child(ren) about their reaction to the events.
- Have child(ren) come up with ideas on how to help those who have been injured, left homeless, or otherwise affected by the tragedy.
- Teach them to stop, take a deep breath, and imagine a restful scene or enjoyable activity for a few minutes as a way to relax.
- Turn off the TV and make sure violence in the media is restricted or monitored.
- Try to understand and encourage children to talk about their fears/sense of loss.
- Try to help them see how they would feel if someone hurt, yelled at, or hit them.
- Sports, exercise, or other physical activity can be quite helpful.
- Be flexible in discipline and monitor your reactions to their misbehaviors.
- Seek mental health or physician consultation if these reactions do not clear up after 30 days.
- Keep family and school routines; get back to a normal life schedule as soon as possible.

If age permits, get the child involved in volunteer work or community service, such as the Red Cross or Animal Shelter, where a child can feel that he/she is making a difference.

Warning Signs of Serious Emotional Trauma

While strong emotional reactions to tragic events are normal, most will fade over the following weeks and most children soon will be able to resume normal activities with minimal displays of anger or anxiety. However, if any of the following symptoms or behaviors continue beyond a few weeks, or if any of these symptoms are exhibited to such a degree that it severely impacts the child's ability to participate in school or home activities, parents and teachers should seek mental health services for evaluation and possible treatment.

- Disruption in peer relationships (little or no interactions with friends, significant increase in conflict with classmates or friend).
- Strained family relationships (high degree of misbehavior, lashing out against family members, refusal to participate in normal family routines).
- Significant decrease in school performance.
- Ongoing physical complaints with no apparent cause.
- Use of chemicals, alcohol (or increase in comparison to previous behavior).
- Repeated nightmares and reporting strong fears of death, violence, etc.
- Repetitive play re-enacting the traumatic events.
- Low self esteem, negative talk about self (if this was not apparent prior to the trauma).

General lack of energy and lack of interest in previously enjoyed activities.

Parents and teachers can help children overcome traumatic effects of a tragedy or disaster and use the process as an opportunity to teach them how to cope more effectively and deal with new challenges. (Interestingly, the Chinese sign for "crisis" is two symbols - "Danger" and "Opportunity.") Depending on the scope of the event, the process may take time and patience and the willingness to reach out to friends, neighbors, and co-workers to lend mutual support.

For further information on managing anger or other strong emotions following a crisis or disaster event, contact NASP at (301) 657-0270 or visit NASP's website at www.nasponline.org

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