



The Texas School Psychologist

A partner on the path to student success

Texas Association of School Psychologists

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Affiliate of the National Association of School Psychologists

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Spring 2008

Getting Things Done

Katherine Brehm

TASP President, 2008

Spring is not my favorite Season. The Christmas cheer wore off in January. Spring break takes too long to arrive and goes by too quickly, and the restless winds out here in the desert insist on “bringing the outdoors in” (apologies to the Glade commercials) in unwanted, dusty ways. Teachers get restless, too, and start to re-evaluate their efforts with difficult students. Their sense of urgency translates into a growing pile of referrals on my desk; my thoughts turn to timelines.



I was listening to National Public Radio last week and caught a discussion about a book called Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity by David Allen (Penguin, 2001; www.davidco.com). The topic seemed meant for me, so I bought the book and read it in the plane going to and from NEPSY II

training in Houston instead of one of Laurie Klose’s recommended mystery books (but I’ve bought some of those, too!). The first idea that spoke to me was his presentation of the karate image of perfect readiness called “mind like water”: water (e.g., my mind) responds to a pebble (e.g., “stuff”, like another evaluation or phone call) being dropped in it in proportion to the force and mass of the input, then it returns to a state of calm. Allen proposes that stress-free management of time and effort requires flexibility and a martial arts-like process of clearing of the mind. When you overreact or under-react to those evals and phone calls, they control you, and a tense LSSP is a slow, uncreative one.

So how am I creating this calm, watery mind that’s ready for anything that gets thrown into it? First of all, I’m practicing Allen’s basic step of getting whatever has my attention *out of my mind*. According to Allen, “stuff” that’s undecided or unresolved piles up in our short-term memory, which tends to remind us of how incomplete we are about the “stuff” precisely when we can’t DO anything about it. That’s what we call obsessing, right? So I’m (1) Collecting everything

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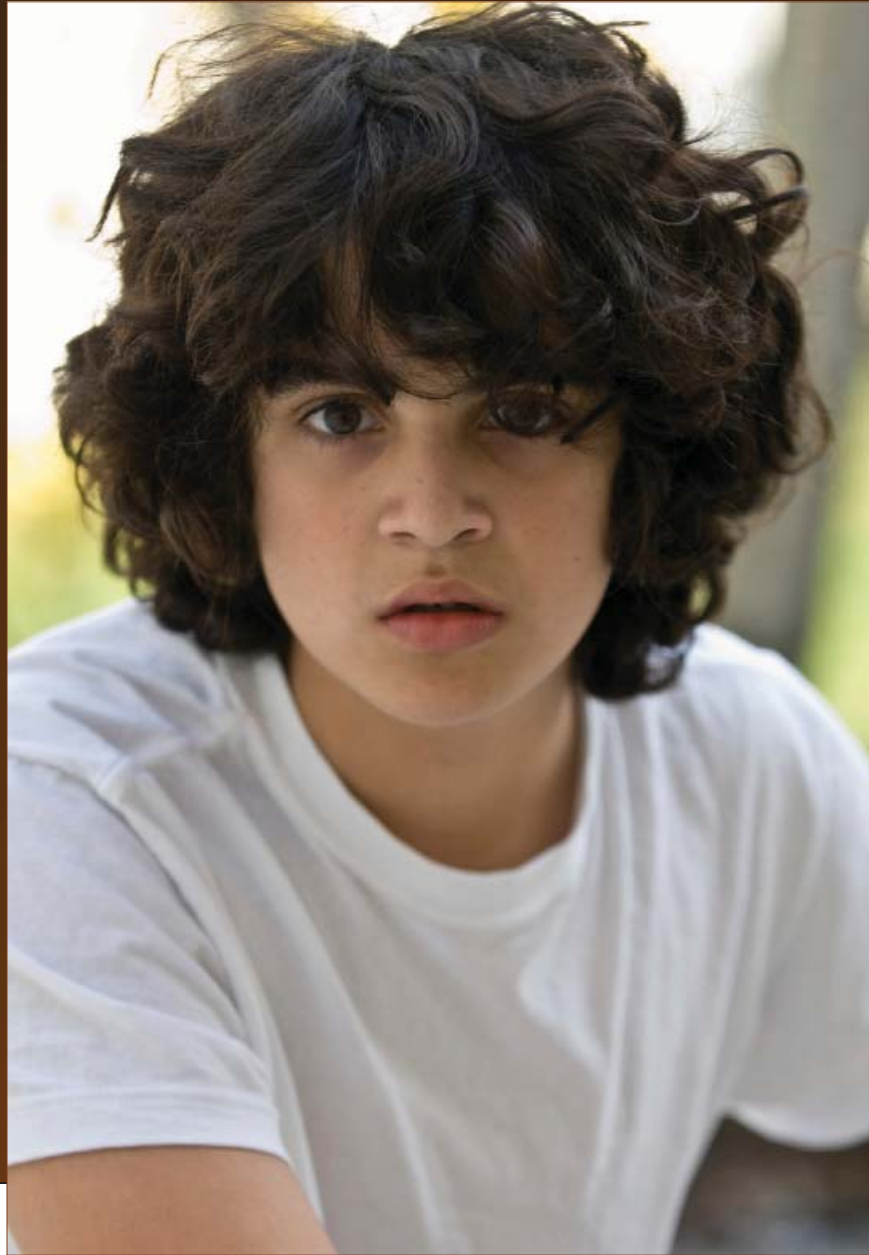
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“My teacher’s a jerk. Homework is stupid. I hate my parents. I hate to read. Math? I don’t get it. Hey, if that guy messes with me again, I’ll kick his....”



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No. 4 Winter	November 1

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TSBEP Update:

Kelly Anderson
GPR Chairperson
taspgrp@gmail.com

The most recent TSBEP board meeting was held on February 7th and there was plenty of information to cover, especially since the board was unable to meet in November. The most important information is that we officially will not be required to obtain Continuing Education (CE's) in Diversity. A final vote was taken at this meeting and they ruled in favor of keeping the CE's the same: "All licensees of the board are obligated to continue their professional education by completing a minimum of 12 hours of continuing education during each year that they hold a license from the Board, regardless of the number of licenses held by the licensee. Of the 12 hours, all licensees must complete a minimum of three hours of continuing education per year in the area of ethics, the Board's Rules of Conduct, or professional responsibility" (471.11 Continuing Education). Another equally important decision made at this board meeting regards the NCSP. TASP recently wrote a letter to the board asking for advice regarding the use of the NCSP title. It had come to our attention that the board rules did not specifically state that LSSPs could also use specialty titles, like the NCSP. TASP wanted clarification that if a person held both the LSSP and the NCSP, both titles could be used. The Board indicated that we could indeed use the NCSP and other specialty titles, but they must follow the LSSP. Furthermore, A licensee must be able to provide information about the board or institution granting the specialty title if a complaint is filed against them regarding the use of that title. Other important information to be discovered at the next TSBEP board meeting are the new appointments made by Governor Perry. There are currently 5 positions on the Board that have expired and the Governor is expected to make new appointments shortly. As always we will keep you all abreast of the new developments. ☺

Model Licensing Act.... Where Do We Stand Now?

Kelly Anderson
GPR Chairperson
taspgrp@gmail.com

As many of you may know there was quite a bit of dialogue presented in the fall newsletter, as well as at our annual conference regarding the American Psychological Association's Model Licensing Act and how that Act may or may not affect our abilities to complete our jobs. Well unfortunately or should I say fortunately nothing has been officially decided yet from APA, in fact it has been rumored that it could be as late as August of 2009 before a resolution is determined. It is apparent that APA has received a vast number of letters both for and against the proposed changes to the MLA. With that being said, now is not the time to sit idly waiting for a decision to be made. Now is the time to initiate contacts with important players in our field to let them know the importance of our roles in the schools and the assistance we provide to children across the state. I recently attended NASP's annual conference in New Orleans and received a wealth of information regarding the challenges being faced nationally in regards to our professional practice. I thought the following information would be useful in informing you all of the advocacy efforts NASP have completed thus far. If you would like more information regarding the MLA and NASP please visit the advocacy page on the NASP website.

NASP Advocacy Roadmap for States: History of NASP Activities Related to the APA Proposed Model Act

1. Fall 2006 NASP learned about APA's "title act" proposed changes and the potential elimination of the exemption for school psychologists.
2. December 1, 2006 NASP sent a letter to the APA Model Act Task Force expressing concern about the potential elimination of the exemption; task force staff responded that the letter was not conveyed to the task force since no other group's input was invited or allowed.
3. January 12-13, 2007 NASP Executive Council (EC) discussed the issue at its winter meeting, not knowing if the current exemption for school psychologists would be dropped by the task force.
4. March 2007 NASP attended the APA "All Boards" Meeting; learned the exemption was eliminated in the proposed draft of the Model Act. The NASP EC and Delegate Assembly (DA) were informed about the proposed APA Model Act and views were shared regarding the potential impact for school psychologists if it was adopted by state legislatures or regulatory boards.
5. April 13, 2007 NASP submitted a letter to APA's Board of Educational Affairs (BEA) during its open comment period.
6. July 2007 NASP governance groups discussed information and strategy during its July 12-15th meetings.
7. August—October 2007: APA opened its 90-day public comment period; NASP posted background materials and a web-based vehicle for providing comments. (NASP sought APA approval for the NASP web-based format). Over 10,600 letters were sent via the NASP web-based submission process. Letters were invited (individually) from national stakeholder groups. More than 10 national stakeholder groups and dozens of state and local stakeholder groups (e.g., special education administrators) and most NASP state association affiliates submitted letters to APA during the comment period.
8. September 10, 2007 NASP officers authorized the hiring of an attorney to assist with issues related to responding to the Model Act.
9. October 2007 NASP hired an attorney who is well versed in Restraint of Trade issues and litigation.



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

10. October 22, 2007 NASP sent a letter to the Model Act Task Force after hearing rumors that NASP supported increasing private practice rights for school psychologists. NASP clarified such efforts are not part of the NASP agenda.
11. Oct—Nov 2007 NASP GPR committee develops Roadmap for NASP state affiliate advocacy.
12. December 2007 NASP EC authorized expanded budget for legal counsel.
13. January 1-December 31, 2007: NASP staff and leaders spent approximately 875 person-hours responding to the proposed elimination of the exemption.
14. January 2008 NASP credentialing and advocacy committee members met to develop additional advocacy materials to assist states in creating a campaign to respond to APA Model Act threats.
15. January 17, 2008 NASP and CASP participated on a conference call with the Deputy Attorney General of California who responded to a CASP letter of concern; the NASP attorney participated on the call

A School Psychology Journal

Libby Rhoades
Area II Representative
Lrhoades@wtamu.edu

The TASP Executive Board has designated a Task Force to investigate the possibility of beginning a School Psychology journal. This grew out of discussions at the February Board Meeting. Several members have stated that they would like to have a place where Texas training programs and practitioners could publish their research that might be of interest to fellow TASP members. While we already have an excellent newsletter, some students and trainers are reluctant to submit research articles because the newsletter will not “count” as a peer-reviewed publication for promotion and tenure.

What do you think? This could be an opportunity for TASP members - students, practitioners and trainers – to publish their research in peer-reviewed forum. Right now we are looking at the logistics and costs involved. We would love to hear your thoughts and ideas! If you have any comments or would like to get involved, contact me. ☺

<http://www.nasponline.org/standards/roadmapO.pdf> ☺

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School Psychology Trainers are Talking about.....

Laurie Klose

School Psychology Trainers

The annual meeting of the Trainers of School Psychologists took place on the first day of the NASP convention in New Orleans. There was a very large crowd and Texas was well represented with faculty members from Texas State University-San Marcos, Abilene Christian University, Texas A&M Commerce, West Texas A&M, Texas Women's University, University of Houston, Baylor University, Tarleton State, and Trinity University (sorry if I left anybody out!).

The main topic of conversation for the trainers was the proposed changes in the Model Licensure Act from the American Psychological Association. This is a very complicated and political process and many trainers from all parts of the country expressed grave concerns about the implications that the proposed changes could have for the day to day practice of school psychology. It is important that all school psychology practitioners, students and trainers stay informed on the progression of the proposed Model Licensure Act and be aware how any changes could impact practice in our state.

On a lighter note, publishing companies are working hard to address the needs created by changes in IDEA 2004. Trainers hope to work with school districts to ensure that the latest technologies and assessment techniques are available and utilized to improve special education assessment and program planning .

The School Psychology Praxis exam is still in the revision process. Because the revisions suggested by the national committee were so extensive, a longer process is required to bring these changes

to fruition. The test will be re-organized to accurately reflect the domains of current practice and new items will be written to represent up to date information in the field.

University trainers were pleased that school psychology has been named as a "hot" profession by several news magazines. This is great news as there continues to be a national shortage of both school psychology practitioners and university trainers. As school psychology gets this type of positive publicity, we should see interest in and awareness of our profession increase and with that increase, we should see an increase in applications for training programs. 🍷

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For more information contact:

Thomas A. Wood, Ed.D., Program Director
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Dues are for July 1 to June 30 Annually (Federal Tax ID # 74-2673792)

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National Association of School Psychologists Annual Conference Update

Andrea Denison
Graduate Student Representative

There's no denying that New Orleans is one of the hardest partying cities in North America, and probably the world. But we also know that school psychologists are some of the most, shall we say, "spirited" professionals out there. So it was a match made in Margaritaville when thousands of school psychologists descended upon New Orleans for a week in February for the annual conference of NASP, the National Association of School Psychologists. I was very fortunate to be present, along with my entire cohort of eight women from Texas State University, for the convention and for Mardi Gras, which preceded it.

Between the conference and the sights and sounds of the city, it was difficult to find time to sleep and even more difficult to crack open a textbook that week. In fact, NOLA (as the city is called by its admirers) should steal the title of "The city that never sleeps" away from New York City. I was at the NASP convention in New York last year and I remember being frustrated by the lack of options at 3 a.m. New

Orleans, for better or worse, has no such limitations. You can karaoke until 6 a.m. if you so desire. And did we ever! I saw more than one set of bleary eyes each morning in the 8 a.m. workshops and presentations, and not just on the students' faces. Thank goodness for chicory coffee and beignets!

In addition to its reputation for excessive indulgence, New Orleans and its surrounding lands have taken on a more tragic notoriety. New Orleans is America's neglected child. Having been virtually ignored by the powers-that-be after a series of natural and man-made catastrophes, many of the city's very loyal inhabitants moved back to their storm-swept town as soon as the green light was given. It is thanks to the loving efforts of these brave individuals, communities and business owners that the city we visited a few short weeks ago exists at all any more.

Tinder-box houses still stand as wrecked and untouchable as they were after Hurricanes Katrina and

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http://www.twu.edu/as/psyphil/School_Home.htm



Photo by Andrea Dennison

Rita ripped through them two and a half years ago. The city feels fragmented, disjointed. Multimillion-dollar houses line majestic streets just blocks away from neighborhoods where, even today, two thirds of the inhabitants are gone. Spray-painted numbers and symbols remain on the facades of houses, where they cryptically reveal how many dead were found in them and the whereabouts of the survivors.

Life, for most, has gone on. I visited two elementary schools during the convention week, and I encountered much the same atmosphere as one might expect to find in many urban schools. However, as kids poured out of the school doors at the end of the day to the buses and cars awaiting them, I thought to myself how these children were not the same as kids in any urban school. They have all been through extraordinary circumstances, the likes of which it was difficult to imagine. Some of these children were separated from families during the storm, and many have spent months or years in schools outside of the region, processing their traumas, while having to “fit in” to their new schools temporarily, only to be extracted again and moved back to the city where they faced some of the hardest days of their lives. I marvel at the courage, the persistence and the amazing strength of those children, and of the people who serve them. New Orleans embodies resilience.

School psychologists are accustomed to delivering services to individuals in need. Sometimes we devote our skills to facilitating system-wide change in schools. But few of us, I would wager, have had to face the destruction of our entire community, our entire city, or have had to start rebuilding our lives from the ground up. I sincerely hope that the funds, the energy, the service projects and the awareness that school psychologists brought to this year’s NASP convention will help in some small way to lift up this beautiful, torn city through its recovery.

For more pictures from NASP New Orleans, including some imagery of the KABOOM! playground build, please see the website for the Association of School Psychology Students at Texas State University: <http://tiny.cc/ASPS> 📷

TASP Membership Update

Andrea Wolf, Membership Chair

So far, the TASP Board is very pleased with how our TASP membership numbers have been growing. Just as an update, I wanted you all to know how our numbers look by Area. We are currently gathering further data to compare our numbers to so that we can report more fully on this at a later date. We are breaking down the TSBEP roster of LSSPs for 2007 by ESC so that we can see what percentage of LSSPs in the different areas are TASP members. We hope that we will be able to use this information to grow our membership and serve our current members better.

TASP Area	ESCs	TASP Members	Major City
1	7 8 10 11	206	Dallas/ Fort Worth
2	18 19 Out of state	8 16	El Paso
3	3 4 5	251	Houston
4	6 12 13	197	Austin
5	1 2 15 20	89	San Antonio
6	9 14 16 17	41	Abilene

Look for the next Membership Update in the upcoming newsletter. 📷

Continued from President's Message - Page 1

that has my mind's attention and putting it into trusted, leakproof external "buckets", such as my weekly Day Planner, saved email, and in-basket. I liked this part because I got to buy myself some new Day Planner sheets to take notes on and an in-basket. Now I know where to find the things I've purged from my STM, and I'm feeling calmer already.

Next, I have to do something with the "stuff" I've collected. This is the (2) Processing step, where Allen recommends that you take the top item in your in-basket and decide if it requires an action. If it doesn't, toss it or file it away for future reference in a nicely labeled file (more shopping!). If something needs to be done about the item, then *decide the very next physical action*, which you do (if it will take less than two minutes), delegate (and track on a "waiting for" list, like sending out those teacher BASC's), or defer (put on an action reminder list). Any item that will take more action than this becomes a project and goes on its own reminder list.

In the next step, (3) Organize, you put the results of your processing in to action categories that can be easily reviewed (remember, the "stuff" is all out of your mind now and on paper). These categories are Projects (like those evals I have to finish), Calendar (for actions that must occur on a specific day and time), Next Actions (actions to be done as soon as possible), and Waiting For (aspects of my projects that others are doing). My weekly Day Planner sheets work well for this – I keep a running list of these categories, with enough backup information that I can make a phone call on the fly or pick up a form at a school if I find I have an extra minute or two.


My calendar and action lists get (4) Reviewed and updated daily and at the end of every week to

keep them current and me reassured that I don't need to hold any of the details in STM. This is really working! I don't have to worry where I put something or that I forgot to write it down, because I'm developing *The Now Habit* (another good book).

The final step, (5) Do, is amazingly easy and guilt-free. Relying on the information from the previous steps, you make ongoing choices about your actions based on the context you're in, how much time and energy you have, and your overall priorities. You're in control of the work at this point, and so what you do is the best you can do.

This week has been very satisfying because I feel I used my time wisely. There will never be *enough* time to do everything others want us to do, or that we feel needs to be done ourselves. But I plan to practice this mind-like-water process and see if I can make it to June in one piece! 🍷

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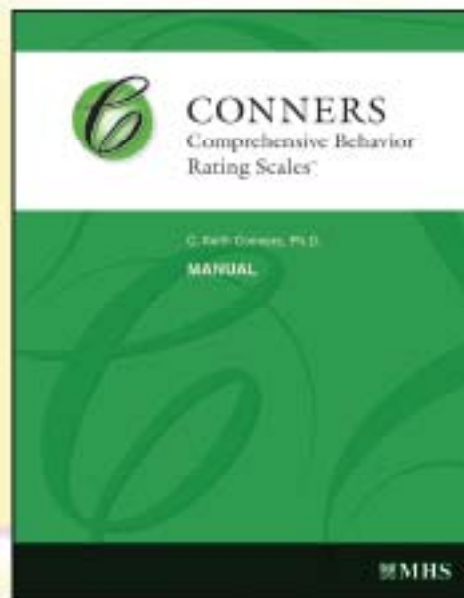
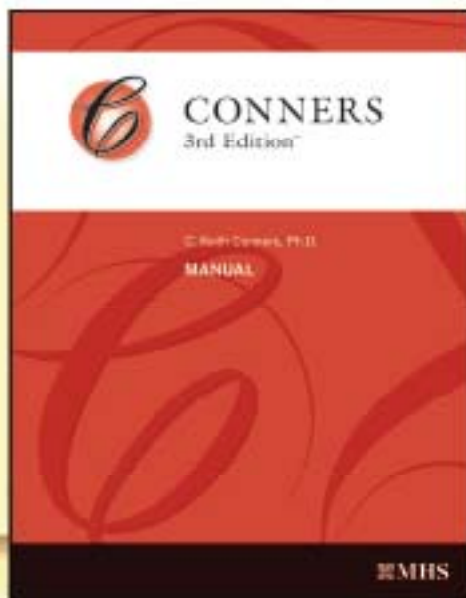
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