

## AROUND THE STATE

The Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation held a second conference to review new certification examinations. The committee that reviewed the school psychologist test items in February came together again for validation and standards setting. National Evaluation Systems, Inc., developer of the tests, had made revisions based on the initial review. Committee members included: **Steven Crane**, Edmond Public Schools; **Andrew Glenn, Ph.D.**, Norman Public Schools; **Minna Hall**, Western Heights Public Schools; **Mary Ellen Jones**, Sapulpa Public Schools, **Joyce Lowrey**, Oklahoma City Public Schools; **Judy Oehler-Stinnett**, Oklahoma State University and **Marni Wyand**, Mid-Del Public Schools. The new certification test was administered for the first time on Oct. 2.

**Marshall Andrew Glenn, Ph.D.**, Norman Public Schools, has been nominated to become Secretary of the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy. Andy serves on the Board of OICA and also as psychologist on the Interagency Task Force on Child Abuse on the Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth.

**Mary Ellen Jones**, Sapulpa Public Schools, made three recent presentations on the topic of Functional Assessment-Based Behavior Intervention Plans. On Nov. 4, she gave two presentations at the Learning Disabilities Association of Oklahoma (LDAO) conference in Tulsa and on Dec. 2, she presented at the state meeting of Oklahoma Directors of Special Services (ODSS). The presentations were very well received and much appreciated.

**Joyce Lowrey**, Oklahoma City Public Schools, gave a presentation on School Psychology to undergraduate students at the University of Central Oklahoma in November.

**Tracy Fenton**, recipient of the first Mary Joe Keatley Graduate Studies Award, has completed her school psychology certification program at Northeastern State University. Tracy also holds certificates in special education, elementary/secondary counseling, and psychometry. She is now employed as a Counselor and School Psychologist for Hilldale Schools in Muskogee, Oklahoma.

Congratulations to **Linda Sanders**, Jenks Public Schools (and OSPA Past President), for producing a Rhodes Scholarship winner! Linda's son, Jason Sanders, a biochemistry major at OU, was the only Oklahoman chosen to receive the prestigious scholarship. Jason is an honor student who plans to become a physician. While attending Oxford, he plans on studying English language and literature in hopes of bridging the gap between medicine and literature. Rhodes Scholarships, the oldest international fellowships, were initiated in 1902 in honor of Cecil Rhodes. The scholarships allow student from 18 countries to attend Oxford.

## **Helen Copp Leaves OSPA Leadership**

Helen Copp, OSPA Executive Secretary and Managing Newsletter Editor, will be resigning her position as of the end of January. Helen's resignation ends a long history of service to the association and to the field of school psychology.

She began her life-long commitment to education as a first grade teacher in Oklahoma City in 1961-62. Following the birth of her third child, she re-entered the field in 1964 in Anadarko Public School and during the next 9 years she taught middle school reading, remedial reading and started the first class for students with learning disabilities in that district. In 1973 she continued her LD teaching at Crescent Elementary School. The following year, prior to the passage of 94-142, Helen joined the Kingfisher Regional Education Service Center as prescriptive teacher. For the next 22 years, she was employed as a psychometrist at both the Anadarko and Kingfisher RESC offices, as instructor in special education at Southwestern Oklahoma State University and as psychometrist in the Moore Public Schools. Helen began her career in school psychology in 1984 with the Norman Public Schools and at the Oklahoma Youth Center until her retirement at the end of the 1995-96 contract year.

Since 1984, having joined OSPA in 1982, she has been an active participant having served on the Executive Board as a representative from the mental health sector, as President in 1988-89 and *OSPA Today* Newsletter Editor from September, 1990, until August, 1998, when she became Managing Newsletter Editor and Executive Secretary. She was the recipient of the Fay Catlett School Psychologist of the Year award in 1990. In the spring of 1996, Helen was awarded an Honorary OSPA membership. She was also granted the Maurice Walraven Award from the Oklahoma Federation of CEC in 1990.

Helen looks forward to following her newly found interests in being part of an African hand drumming circle, participating in a study at OU involving weight training and volunteering at the Sam Noble Museum of Natural History as well as gardening, sewing, reading and water activities. Of more importance is the opportunity to continue to be active in the lives of her four grandchildren in Stillwater and the youngest granddaughter in Norman.

The OSPA Executive Board expresses its heartfelt appreciation and thanks to Helen for her invaluable service and contributions to the field. Thank you, Helen, you will be greatly missed! Enjoy those grandbabies and a well-deserved retirement.

Submitted by: Mary Ellen Jones, Executive Editor

## **Fall Conference Review**

The OSPA Fall Conference which was held at the Tulsa Southern Hills Marriott on October 8, 1999 was a success. There were 150 people in attendance to hear Dr. Ray Dean's presentation. This attendance was larger than expected and follows the trend of increased membership and increasing attendance at OSPA conferences. There were many positive comments following the meeting.

In conjunction with the Fall Conference, there was an OSPA Executive Board Meeting held on the Thursday evening prior to the conference. The Executive Board members were joined at an informal dinner by University Trainers from OSU, CSU, and NEOSU. Forging alliances with university trainers has been an ongoing goal for OSPA. Alliances between the university training programs and the professional organization allow for coordination of efforts to address training, recruitment, and professional standards of the organization.

Submitted by: Debby Wheat, OSPA President

## **PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE : FORT GIBSON SHOOTING**

Tracy H. Fenton, School Psychologist  
Hilldale Public Schools

By now we are all aware of the tragic shooting which occurred at Fort Gibson Middle School. I will never forget my response when I was given the news. As a new School Psychologist, just a few months on the job, I was shocked and scared. How could this happen to our neighboring school? School shootings are supposed to take place somewhere else, never here. Fort Gibson is just ten minutes from Hilldale. I now know that if a shooting can happen in Fort Gibson, then a shooting can occur in my school. Heartland counselors were contacted to organize the crisis response at Fort Gibson. I was on call to assist and provide additional support as needed.

At Hilldale we experienced what is often termed a "close call." Because of the proximity of our schools, we are closely connected to Fort Gibson. My students were experiencing intense anxieties and fears of their own. Many students between the two schools are friends and relatives, attend the same churches, and play on the same ball teams. In fact, the perpetrator, was in our school for an academic meet just two weeks prior to the shooting. Furthermore, he did not appear to fit any profile from the "Student Violence: Warning Signs" provided by NASP. This has raised many questions with parents who have voiced concerns regarding their own children.

Rumors and gossip spread throughout the school and community. Aggression was directed toward some students who might be considered dangerous. Reports of suspected behavior problems and teacher and parental concerns increased. The police were called to investigate information on "target students."

I compiled information sheets offering suggestions to both parents and teachers about how to talk with children who have experienced traumatic events. The NASP handouts in the notebook, Crisis Prevention & Response, were helpful resources. I was fortunate to have attended many of the workshops on crisis intervention strategies at the NASP Convention in Las Vegas. These workshops taught me many valuable techniques and strategies that could be implemented with parents as well as in the classroom. Furthermore, the workshops gave me the confidence and skills needed to face the events of the weeks ahead.

I met with the Fort Gibson principal and school counselor, who shared the events of the tragedy with me. They were both grateful for the handouts and information from NASP. The day following the shooting, I began going into classrooms to discuss the facts and attempt to dispel the rumors and gossip that were circulating around the school and in the community. Confidentiality and its limitations were discussed with the students. Students were encouraged to take responsibility for notifying an adult of any threats of violence (including guns, weapons, or drugs). Students were notified that all statements and actions would be taken seriously. "Zero Tolerance" was the policy to any inappropriate remarks and actions regarding harm to others. Despite these warnings, several threats and remarks were made and legal actions were taken.

I shared personal reactions and feelings, and allowed students to talk about their feelings and reactions. Questions such as: "What was it like for you when you heard the news? How can you help each other through this? What thoughts and feelings does this bring up for you? Did/Will you discuss it at home with your parents? How did it go?" I was amazed at the number of students who reported that their parents have not talked with them about the tragic event (approximately 18%). Students were encouraged to discuss their feelings with their parents or another adult that they trust.

We discussed the information provided in the newspaper. I tried to provide accurate information to the students about what happened in order to dispel rumors and decrease their anxiety. Many strong feelings were vented and many coping skills identified. Several voiced their concerns and fears for their safety and that of their peers and siblings. I challenged the students to think of practical ways they could participate in making our school safer.

Recently I received Scott Poland's videotapes, *Take Back Your School!* which I found helpful during some of the sessions with the students. Dr. Poland was kind enough to speak with me about my concerns regarding crisis interventions and violence prevention. Topics also discussed with the students

were their opinions of what they feel contributes to school violence and what we can do together to prevent violence in our school. The involvement of the Student Council and the Peer Mediators was an asset in settling some of the stresses that the students were feeling. The student leaders took an active role in writing questionnaires for the students to fill out. This allowed students the opportunity to voice their concerns to the administration regarding safety measures within the school.

**What will stop the violence?** I feel that students hold the key to school safety and violence prevention in their school. The future is the past in preparation. We must learn from each and every one of these tragedies. **What can we do differently? How can we all work together towards prevention?** Students must end the conspiracy of silence that allows guns, weapons, and drugs to be in our schools. Student should be encouraged to take responsibility and let adults know of threats of violence. Prevention activities should be planned to help expand on student involvement and help students know that they make all the difference with regard to school safety and violence prevention.

## **HELPING TO STOP SCHOOL VIOLENCE**

Jonathan M. Solomon, Ph.D., NCSP, School Psychologist

The increase in violent, catastrophic events among adolescents is alarming and disturbing. We see evidence in both the local and national news. I have spoken with others across the country who work in schools and they talk about a "distinct difference" in today's teenagers. It is reasonable to expect, based on current trends, that there will be another Columbine or Paducah before too long. Positive actions are being taken to address some of the many factors that lead to such tragedies through legislation (e.g., school security funding, firearm locking mechanisms) and the recent federal hearings on violence in movies and television. However, there are so many factors to address that it is easy to feel helpless.

I believe there is a way to contribute to a grassroots effort to stop the expansion of violence. My suggestion is based on a combination of behavioral theory and simple economics. Research studies have reliably shown that children mimic the violent behavior they observe. Therefore, the vividly depicted violence in today's media significantly increases the possibility of mimicking such action in young viewers.

The second factor, economics, explains the increasingly violent content in computer and video games, movies, and even elementary-level books. The producers of these materials find a strong demand among consumers for violence. Each company strives to create an even more violent theme to create a "better" product. Fighting alone becomes insufficient; now we must have a severed head with pulsating gushes of blood. The end results? A far more violent atmosphere for consumers and a windfall profit for the producers.

Something can be done to stem the tide of violence. Since there are so many different sources of aggressive media, I suggest a boycott against one company at a time until a new, less violent trend emerges. After recently watching a commercial for Bloody Rage II, Sony Corporation's new video game offering, I have selected SONY as the initial focus of such an effort. I wrote to Sony (and received an empty form-lettered response) asking them to create quality, less violent products. I also informed them that I would not purchase any more of their electronic products until they decided to stop profiting from violence at the expense of our young people and society in general. I know that my actions alone will not have an effect. I fervently hope that enough concerned individuals will take similar actions until SONY is economically forced to change their ways. If Sony takes the lead, other companies may follow. If a change in one company's policy is insufficient, I will select another company with a similar profit-through-violence philosophy.

The age-old saying, "everybody talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it" reflects the inability to improve undesired situations.

Media executives would like us to believe that this also applies to their profit-enhanced increases in violence. We need them to reverse their actions before their gain is our loss again.

(One of our members has recently made me aware of an op-ed article that he wrote and published in the July 31st edition of the "Minneapolis Star Tribune" and which has been disseminated through the Internet. The author seeks a grassroots approach to halting the spiraling violence in our current society. He has received a very positive response from the article, stating that "people seem to yearn for something concrete they can do in response to situations like those in Littleton, CO and Jonesboro, AK." Ron Benner, NASP, Listserve)

## **JONES NAMED SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST OF THE YEAR FOR OSPA**

Mary Ellen Jones, school psychologist for the Sapulpa Public Schools since 1985, has been selected as the recipient of the Fay Catlett School Psychologist of the Year award presented by the Oklahoma School Psychological Association. The award will be presented at the annual spring conference in April. Her name will also be submitted to the National School Psychological Association.

Ms. Jones has been a member of OSPA for 16 years and served in a variety of offices on the OSPA Executive Board including president in 1994-95. She was appointed Executive Newsletter Editor for the organization in 1998. She earned her master's degree from the University of Wisconsin and completed coursework for her school psychology certificate at Oklahoma State University.

The Fay Catlett award was established in 1986 to recognize the outstanding school psychologist for their advancement of school psychology and to increase public awareness of the profession. Dr. Catlett, professor at Central State University, Edmond during the 1970s and early 1980s was one of the pioneer trainers of school psychologists and psychometrists in the state of Oklahoma. Her influence and philosophy continue to be present the system of provision of school psychology services today. Recipients of the award are chosen by the organization and must demonstrate a true dedication to their field by providing caring service to the students, faculty and parents in their school district.

The Oklahoma School Psychological Association was established and incorporated in 1974 as a professional organization. The 25th Anniversary of OSPA was celebrated at their conference on April 23, 1999.

## **PROJECTS FOR CHILDREN: CALL FOR FUNDING APPLICATIONS**

Each year the **NASP CHILDREN'S FUND** solicits applications for projects. Funded projects impact the lives of children and are as diverse as a publishing a "Handbook of Poetry by Classmates of Victims of Shootings in Jonesboro, AR"; provision of a safe interview location for children of physical and sexual abuse in Rutland, VT.; funds for printing and distributing a brochure on a low incidence handicap; providing school supplies in flooded North Dakota and Minnesota and after tornadoes in Florida and Tennessee; a Mental Health Mentoring program in Cantonsville, MD; a project to Bully Proof a Newfield, NY, school and a comprehensive English and Spanish videotape series to inform parents about the special education process in Salt Lake City, UT.

Projects which will be considered for funding will be consistent with the priorities of the **Fund** 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. All full-time school psychologists, as well as, graduate students, academicians and interdisciplinary teams are encouraged to apply for funding. Grant applications can be taken immediately but must meet a June 1, 2000, deadline.

For information or applications, contact Dr. R. I. Olley c/o Pupil Services, Chatsworth Elementary, 222 New Avenue, Reistertown, MD 21136; FAX: 410 526-9263, or call 410 887-6915.

## NASP DELEGATE REPORT

Many activities are going on with NASP. The National Conference is gearing up for New Orleans and promises to be the best ever. If you have not made your reservations do so quickly, so that you will have a place to stay. The NASP Election process is about to begin and it will be time to elect a President-Elect. Two Central region people are candidates for this position and have been active in soliciting your vote. They are Charles Deupree, from Michigan and Sally Baas, from Minnesota. Both would be excellent.

The Regional meeting was very informative and gave us many things to think about for our state. Debbie Wheat, Tracy Fenton and I attended in Minneapolis. Suggestions for our state to recruit members was to use the internet and establish some type of chat room for communication of issues. They also suggested speaking to university students that are early in the college career to encourage them to make a choice to become a school psychologist.

Another issue that was discussed was the need to have one type of certification for Oklahoma, (School Psychologist), so that the rural areas of the state could receive the mental health services that are so desperately needed. This is currently being discussed in many arenas in our state and other states that have dual certifications, i.e.; school psychometrist and psychologist. Although rare, there are two or three other states that have similar situations.

The current legislative session in Washington just ended and many education issues were left on the table. It is imperative that we stay in contact with our legislators and make our wishes known. Our NASP "Friend of Children's Award" will be presented to Cal Hobson at the Spring Conference. He has served as the Legislative Chair for education and introduced many bills on behalf of education and children in Oklahoma.

NASP has several new publications that you can order directly over the internet from the NASP Website. One that I recommend to all School Psychologists is the "*Helping Children at Home and School: Handouts From Your School Psychologist*". This is an excellent resource for all school psychologist in a wonderful handout format. Look at the NASP Website for other wonderful books and publications.

If you have not renewed your NASP membership, please renew today. It is important that we support our professional organizations and take advantage of the many educational opportunities they have provided for us.

See you in New Orleans!!!!!!

Submitted by: Joyce Lowrey, NASP Delegate from Oklahoma

## NASP President Quoted in "Daily Oklahoman"

In an article entitled, "School Shootings: Study Finds Risk Factors" (Nov. 9, 1999), the Oklahoma City newspaper quotes Kevin Dwyer, president of the National Association of School Psychologists, on the topic of risk factors. The article identifies Dwyer as working on an FBI study that identified as many as 50 "risk factors" to help identify youth who may commit acts of extreme violence. The paper reports that the study was to be released later in the month.

According to the newspaper, the study reports that no single factor can make the difference, but that several combined can. Participants in the FBI-sponsored study said the factors include:

- Frequent outburst of violent temper.
- A family history of violence or abuse.
- Forty hours or more a week spent viewing violent video entertainment.
- Discussion with friends about plans to commit violent acts.
- In some instances, a gun in the house.

Kevin Dwyer is said to have described it as a **pathological synergy**. "The adults are doing it. Then you have the portrayals in the media, the video games and the movies, that reinforce the idea that when you get mad at someone, you blow them away." Dwyer goes on to say that one important factor in prevention is parents spending enough time with their teen-agers to see changes in behavior that could serve as a warning.

## **Neuropsychology Update: Professional Parallelism of Neuroscience and Education**

Philip DeFina, Ph.D. , School Psychologist, Howard County Public Schools, Maryland  
Guest Research Scientist, National Institute of Mental Health Neuropsychology Laboratory

The field of clinical neuropsychology has now been officially recognized as a distinct specialty area by the APA. Guidelines for training and practice are currently being formulated; however, there is widespread disagreement in the field as to what those criteria should be. During this time of change and uncertainty in neuropsychology, there is also the problem of the shrinking private practice market of HMOs and PPOs for private practitioners.

As a result of these issues, a national movement is now afoot to organize pediatric or developmental neuropsychologists to target school systems proclaiming that the traditional school psychologists are not capable of performing adequate assessments of TBI, seizure disorders, complicated learning disabilities, autism, MR, CP, and a host of other educationally relevant handicaps as defined by federal law. The argument is that current research and clinical practice in applied areas of psychology mandate that a thorough evaluation must include a brain-behavioral assessment in order to appropriately identify and intervene with these disorders. While many of these organically based educational handicaps should utilize an assessment process that includes a neuropsychological assessment or consultation, it is most appropriate that credentialed school psychologists, and not licensed clinical psychologists, perform these evaluations.

The 1990's were declared "the decade of the brain" and in the new millennium neuroscience will be at the forefront of applied psychology. However, there are a limited number of postgraduate neuropsychology programs available to school psychologists; it is extremely important for us to prepare to retool in our profession to meet the current demands and challenges we are facing.

In preparation for these new challenges, a renowned group of neuropsychologists have created a new diplomate board in school neuropsychology known as the American Board of School Neuropsychology (ABScN) headquartered in Washington, D.C. This Board will enable both Masters and Ph.D. level credentialed school psychologists to achieve this advanced professional certification. The ABScN will promote the active involvement of school psychologists in training and application of neuropsychological principles to the individuals they serve. Certification of special competency in neuropsychology and the acquisition of advanced skills and knowledge in this discipline will result through peer review and examination. The integration of knowledge from traditional school psychology, clinical and developmental neuropsychology will enable school psychologists to enhance their clinical skills and knowledge base thus improving their ability to serve their clients.

The practitioner will be more effective in:

- Conducting comprehensive and relevant evaluations with children who have known or suspected cognitive neuro-behavioral disorders or other CNS dysfunction;

- Screening children with or suspected to have compromised brain-behavioral relationships, and establishing more effective intervention strategies linked directly to related services available by the school based multidisciplinary MET/IEP teams;

- Assisting as a consultant/resource to the classroom teachers who are managing SLI, SLD, POHI, EI, MI and TBI children;

- Assisting in developing a brain-based educational model for school systems that integrates traditional school psychology and developmental neuropsychology into the existing curriculum;
- Assisting in decisions regarding the educational, behavioral, and emotional placement that best meets the needs of these students;

- Consulting with other specialists in a multidisciplinary model of diagnosis and intervention and acting in a liaison role with physicians, clinical neuropsychologists, OTs, PTs, TSLIs, and related care providers so often involved with these children and youth.

For those who are interested in the ABScN Board, please contact Dr. Philip DeFina at 1 888-260-1651 or e-mail him at <braindocpd@aol.com>, for more information.

Reprinted from *The Michigan Psych Report, Spring 1999*.

## **New Qualifications for Teacher Licensure and Certification: Specialist School Psychologist and Psychometrist**

"By law 70 O.S.. 6-180 et. seq., effective September 1, 1999, Oklahoma's teacher licensure and certification became competency-based. Competency for initial licensure is determined by meeting an Oklahoma higher education institution's teacher education program and passing competency examinations."

In regard to adding additional subject areas to a teaching license/certificate, the following section applies to the school psychologist certification:

"Specialist certification (library-media specialist, school counselor, **school psychometrist, school psychologist**, speech-language pathologist, and reading specialist) requires a graduate program meeting the professional education association standards specific to the profession. Contact the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation at 3033 North Walnut, Suite 220E, Oklahoma City, OK 73105, (405) 525-2612. web address:<octp@octp.org> for the universities offering these programs and for information regarding the required competency examination(s).

Once passing test scores are received, contact the State Department of Education, Professional Standards Section, at (405) 521-3337, for an application. The form is also available at <<http://sde.state.ok.us>>. Application for certification in the specialist areas listed above should be initiated through the director of teacher education at the recommending higher education institution."

Information printed in a publication of the Oklahoma State Department of Education, Professional Standards Section (Oct. 1999).

Provided by: Darla Griffin, M.Ed., NCSP, Executive Director, Special Education Services

## **OSPA Web Site Adds Newest Option**

The OSPA website *ospaweb.org* has offered an OSPA Newsletter Archive which goes back to Winter 1998 since it's inception last April. However, a new possibility was added recently. Beginning with the 1999 Fall *OSPA Today*, we are offering a downloadable version of the newsletter in Adobe Acrobat format. The newsletters in Acrobat format are in self-unpacking files for quick download with a series of easily followed steps offering guidance through the process. Once completed the newsletter can be searched or printed. If you don't have the Acrobat Viewer (it's FREE), you can click on the logo provided in the Newsletter Archive to download a copy.

This is just another example of how OSPA is upgrading to become an extensive source for information and leadership in the field of School Psychology in Oklahoma. Join us on the web!

Submitted by: Helen Copp, OSPA Managing Newsletter Editor

## **OSU Faculty and Students to Present at NASP Convention**

The following presentations by faculty and student at Oklahoma State University have been selected for presentation during the annual NASP Convention in New Orleans, March 28 to April 1, 1999.

- Mini Skills 065                      Assessment for ADHD Intervention Planning: Interpretation of a comprehensive battery (Oehler-Stinnett, Palmer, Cagle, Choate, Adams, Boykin)
- Paper Presentation 168              Psychopharmacology in the schools: Curricular and practice considerations for school psychology (Carlson, Demaray)
- Poster 122                              Factors that effect judgements about students labeled HIV+ (Stinnett, Cruce, Langford, Choate, Crawford, Jackson)
- Poster 121                              Promiscuity and sexual orientation as factors in future teachers perceptions of HIV+ children (Cruce, Langford, Stinnett, Choate, Crawford, Jackson)
- Poster 232                              Promoting wellness in gay/lesbian/bisexual youth: An exploratory study of protective factors (Carlson, Miville, Rithcart, Munoz, Neal)

Submitted by John Carlson, Ph.D.

## President's Message

I don't know about you, but this year seems to be flying by. Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas break are passed. Next we have Martin Luther King, President's Day, Valentines Day, Spring Break and then this school year is over. It seems that our lives are driven by our calendars. There are Day Timer Calendars, Franklin Calendars, desk calendars, personal calendars, executive calendars, and Marie Callender's!

Between the sticky notes, the sticky situations, and kids who can't stick with anything; there is E-mail, snail mail, voice mail, and the increased incidence of almost everything bad among male children.

For the members of the OSPA Executive Board, the pace is just as frantic. The executive board has several new members this year. They are becoming acquainted with the functions of the board in keeping the organization viable. Being an executive board member is on-the-job training with little room for error.

We had a retreat in June to orient new members with the Executive Board process. Shortly after, they stepped into their roles on the Executive Board. Since June, we have worked on certification issues for School Psychologists and Psychometrists to insure that high standards for training and certification are maintained. **Dr. John Carlson**, chairman of the Ethical and Professional Standards Committee is working to address the needs for a provisional certification for School Psychologists.

We have fostered cooperation and communication between the School Psychology Training programs in the state and provided them with a forum to discuss their individual training and program needs. **Peggy Kerr**, UCO, has been a pivotal person in bringing this group together. The shortage of school psychologists is a critical issue for this group.

Another way we are working to address the shortage of school psychologists in Oklahoma is through the OSPA Scholarship Program. **Minna Hall**, Awards & Honors Chairperson has distributed the applications and is anxiously waiting for candidates to return them. In addition, there is discussion of adding a minority scholarship.

The regional representatives under the direction of **Marty Yadon** will be making calls and contacting any members who have not renewed their membership this year.

Plans are underway for the Spring Conference which will be held at the Moore-Norman Vo-Tech on April 28, 1999. The speaker is selected and the location is booked.

**Judith Dwyer** keeps a close eye on our expenditures as Treasurer and **Candice Hogan** is assisting her to learn the process. **Cole Menaker** faithfully attends the meetings and records the proceedings in his role as secretary.

**Tracy Fenton**, one of the newer members of the board is updating the Operations Handbook.

**Mary Ellen Jones** and **Helen Copp** have worked diligently to get everyone to complete their article assignments and get the newsletters ready for publication. We are constantly working to make the web page <[www.ospaweb.org](http://www.ospaweb.org)> a useful tool for members.

**Steve Crane** and the Government and Professional Relations committee are looking at legislation which might be favorable to School Psychologists. More to come later. In addition, they are participating in other organizations and forging critical alliances as a voice for children in Oklahoma. Steve is insuring that School Psychologists are recognized within other organizations.

**Joyce Lowry**, our NASP delegate attends all the delegate meetings and keeps us up to date with what is happenings at NASP. As well as **Darla Griffin**, State Liaison, keeping us informed of everything happening at a state level.

The student representatives are working within their respective universities to see that students understand the importance of the professional organization.

And, we are already planning for the next year. Strategic planning is underway, which will be followed by a projected budget, nomination of officers, elections, and the summer training retreat. This process will involve every member of the Executive Board in some way.

This is an exceptional executive board and I am proud to be affiliated with them. They work each day to make OSPA a better organization and to increase the knowledge and appreciation of OSPA across the state.

Debby Wheat, OSPA President

## THE OPINION CORNER

### School Psychology and Psychotropic Medications

Kevin B. Kells, MHR and John S. Carlson, Ph.D., NCSP  
Oklahoma State University

OSPA's spring conference will focus on the topic of medications for school-aged populations. This article provides a brief glimpse at issues related to psychology's movement toward obtaining prescription privileges and the role that our field has played in these discussions.

The school psychology profession, as a whole, has given limited attention to securing and exploring the right to prescribe medications. The Task Force on Psychopharmacology in the Schools (Carlson & Kubiszyn, 1994) made numerous recommendations and summations pertaining to the use of psychoactive medications for school children. Included within this report were the following conclusions: psychologists may be effectively trained to prescribe medications; limited data supports the use of medications in pediatric populations; school psychologists are in a unique position based on their training and setting to initiate and carry out medication evaluations; school psychologists may develop research protocols and seek sources of traditional (e.g., NIMH) and nontraditional funding sources (e.g., drug companies), improved pre- and post-doctoral training in psychopathology and psychopharmacology is warranted; and a movement toward independent, limited prescription privileges would be advantageous compared to a dependent, physician extender model of practice.

Five years later, limited information exists regarding the professions work toward these issues. A similar sentiment to that espoused by Kratochwill (1994, p. 58) remains: "To be taken seriously by our psychology colleagues, the field of school psychology needs to give greater attention to research and training in biopsychosocial interventions." Although in the past, the practice of psychology has taken strides to distance itself from the science of medicine, it has been successfully argued that true autonomy lies in gaining prescription privileges, hospital admission privileges, and insurance (especially Medicare) reimbursement (Brentar & McNamara, 1991).

Many psychologists believe that the right to prescribe psychotropic medication is a natural extension of the practice of psychology (DeLeon, 1988; Fox 1988; and Cullen & Newman, 1997). DeLeon (1988) argues that psychologists have a responsibility to society to provide the best care possible. Failure to examine ways to improve psychological services would therefore be professional negligence (DeLeon, 1988). Fox (1988) further states that, "denial of psychologists' prescription rights can be viewed as a restriction on free trade." Rural areas and special populations (e.g., geriatric and American Indians) where the density of psychiatrists is very low, could be better served by psychologists trained to prescribe (Buie, 1988).

The right to prescribe by non-physicians is not a new development. Since the 1930's, (e.g., the Optometrists Practice Act of 1935), medical professionals have sought and secured legislative initiatives to secure prescription privileges (Cullen & Newman, 1997). Today, this privilege is extensive. Podiatrists can prescribe in all 50 states, after a fifty-year struggle (DeLeon, Fox, & Graham, 1991). Nurse practitioners can prescribe (in some capacity) in 47 states (Pearson, 1995). In addition, pharmacists in seven states can prescribe (National Association of Boards of Pharmacy, 1996).

Health care professionals agree that pharmacology training for psychologists who desire this privilege is paramount. In 1995, the APA's Board of Educational Affairs identified three levels of training, and approved Level 1 curricula for psychopharmacology education and training. The APA work group designed a program around a modular format, adaptable to settings that include doctoral programs, pre-doctoral internships, and post-doctoral residencies. This program that far exceeds the American Medical Association's standards, second in training only to pharmacists (Fox, Schwelitz, & Barclay, 1992).

We all have worked with children and adolescents for whom we wished to have greater authority in making decisions about not prescribing medications. These cases typically involve limited attention to the costs and benefits of a trial of a psychosocial intervention. We are active in consulting with physicians regarding medication treatment, we have acknowledged that current evaluative procedures are inadequate. and we are interested in additional training and practice in this area (Kubiszyn &

Carlson, 1995). As we contemplate the expanding role of the school psychologist in the 21st century, where does the field of child and adolescent psychopharmacology fit?

## References

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EDITOR'S NOTES: Comments on issues related to the position stated in this paper are welcome as LETTERS TO THE EDITOR. Please send to Mary Ellen Jones, Executive Newsletter Editor at MEKJones@swbell.net

## **OSPA SPRING CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS - MEDICATION USE WITH CHILDREN**

The Oklahoma School Psychological Spring Conference is slated for April 28, 2000 at the Moore Norman Vocational Technical School. Dr. Jane Joost, M.D., a fellowship-trained Developmental Behavioral Pediatrician and Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, will be the speaker for the conference on the topic "Current Update on Medication Use and Abuse with Children." As the medical director of a residential treatment facility in Illinois, Dr. Joost has extensive expertise in the medical treatment of children with severe behavior disorders and emotional traumas as a consequence of neglect, abuse and neurobiological factors. Dr. Joost has also served as a behavioral consultant to public schools from the early childhood through high school level. At Southern Illinois University and through a state funded rural health program, Dr. Joost provides regional diagnostic services, care coordination, and behavioral and medication consultation to children with complex developmental, psychosocial, and behavioral issues.

She has also developed special clinical interest in Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

Dr. Joost was a featured speaker at the NASP Conference in 1999 and will be presenting at the upcoming NASP conference in New Orleans. Dr. Joost utilizes a case study approach in her presentations and there will be opportunities for participation and interaction as a variety of cases are discussed. Dr. Joost will also identify ways the School Psychologist can work with medical professionals in the behavioral consultation process.

**THINK ON THIS:** This poem speaks of each generation's responsibilities to its successors.

### **THE BRIDGE BUILDER**

An old man, going a lone highway,  
Came, at the evening, cold and gray,  
To a chasm, vast, and deep, and wide,  
Through which was flowing a sullen tide.  
The old man crossed in the twilight dim;  
The sullen stream had no fears for him;  
But he turned, when safe on the other side,  
And built a bridge to span the tide.  
"Old man," said a fellow pilgrim, near,  
"You are wasting strength with building here;  
Your journey will end with the ending day;  
You never again must pass this way;  
You have crossed the chasm, deep and wide--  
Why build you the bridge at the eventide?"

The builder lifted his old gray head:  
"Good friend, in the path I have come," he said,  
"There followeth after me today  
A youth, whose feet must pass this way.  
This chasm, that has been naught to me,  
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be.  
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;  
Good friend, I am building the bridge for him."

Author : Will Allen Dromgoole

Oklahoma School Psychological Association  
Treasurer Report  
10/07/99 through 12/03/99

**Current Reconciled Balance**

Primary Account	11,355.35
Savings Account	2,696.10

**Income This Period**

Dues	1,120.00
Fall Conference	6,986.00
Interest	34.41

<u>Total Income</u>	<u>8,140.41</u>
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**Expenses This Period**

Board Expenses	111.73
Executive Secretary	1,030.00
Fall Conference	5,156.92
Newsletter	340.79
PR & PI	500.00
Expenses (returned check)	73.25

<u>Total Expenses</u>	<u>7,212.69</u>
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**Outstanding Purchase Orders for Fall Conference**

Total	\$200.00
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## NATIONAL SCHOOL SAFETY CENTER IDENTIFICATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Following the school shooting at Ft. Gibson, we are reminded that these things can indeed happen right here in Oklahoma. We, as school psychologists, can offer assistance to our school districts by providing current information and suggestions regarding identifying and supporting our young people who may be hurting and at high risk for violent behavior. Numerous resources can be found on the internet, starting with the NASP web page. NASP's new publication, *Crisis Prevention & Response: a Collection of NASP Resources*, is also a terrific resource of easy to use handouts.

The National School Safety Center offers the following checklist derived from tracking school-associated violent deaths in the United States from July 1992 to the present. After studying common characteristics of youngsters who have caused such deaths, NSSC has identified the following behaviors, which could indicate a youth's potential for harming him/herself or others.

Accounts of these tragic incidents repeatedly indicate that in most cases, a troubled youth has demonstrated or has talked to others about problems with bullying and feelings of isolation, anger, depression and frustration. While there is no foolproof system for identifying potentially dangerous students who may harm themselves and/or others, this checklist provides a starting point.

These characteristics should serve to alert school administrators, teachers and support staff to address needs of troubled students through meetings with parents, provision of school counseling, guidance and mentoring services, as well as referrals to appropriate community health/social services and law enforcement personnel. Further, such behavior should also provide an early warning signal that safe school plans and crisis prevention/intervention procedures must be in place to protect the health and safety of all school students and staff members so that schools remain safe havens for learning.

### NSSC CHECKLIST FOR IDENTIFYING STUDENTS AT HIGH RISK FOR VIOLENT BEHAVIOR

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Has a history of tantrums and uncontrollable angry outbursts.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ Characteristically resorts to name calling, cursing or abusive language.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Habitually makes violent threats when angry.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Has previously brought a weapon to school
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Has a background of serious disciplinary problems at school and in the community.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ Has a background of drug, alcohol or other substance abuse or dependency.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Is on the fringe of his/her peer group with few or no close friends.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ Is preoccupied with weapons, explosives or other incendiary devices.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ Has previously been truant, suspended or expelled from school.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ Displays cruelty to animals.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ Has little or no supervision and support from parents or a caring adult.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ Has witnessed or been a victim of abuse or neglect in the home.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ Has been bullied and/or bullies or intimidates peers or younger children.
14. \_\_\_\_\_ Tends to blame others for difficulties and problems s/he causes her/himself.
15. \_\_\_\_\_ Consistently prefers TV shows, movies or music expressing violent themes and acts.
16. \_\_\_\_\_ Prefers reading materials dealing with violent themes, rituals and abuse.
17. \_\_\_\_\_ Reflects anger, frustration and the dark side of life in school essays or writing projects.
18. \_\_\_\_\_ Is involved with a gang or an antisocial group on the fringe of peer acceptance.
19. \_\_\_\_\_ Is often depressed and/or has significant mood swings.
20. \_\_\_\_\_ Has threatened or attempted suicide.

Developed by the National School Safety Center © 1998  
Dr. Ronald D. Stephens, Executive Director  
141 Duesenberg Dr., Suite 11, Westlake Village, CA 91362  
Phone: (805) 373-9977; Fax: (805) 373-9277

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## Web Pages of Interest

Neuropsychology:

[www.neuroguide.com/](http://www.neuroguide.com/)  
[www.neuropsychologycentral.com/](http://www.neuropsychologycentral.com/)

Bilingual Assessment:

Ron Anderson's Home Page  
<http://home.earthlink.net/~psychron/homepage.htm>

Learning Strategies:

Study Skills Guides; Dartmouth College, NH  
[www.d.umn.edu/student/loon/acad/strat/](http://www.d.umn.edu/student/loon/acad/strat/)

Instructional Support Services/Learning Center, St. Thomas University  
[www.iss.stthomas.edu/studyguides/](http://www.iss.stthomas.edu/studyguides/)

Academic Skills Center; California Polytech  
[sas.calpoly.edu/asc/ssl.html](http://sas.calpoly.edu/asc/ssl.html)

## WINTER CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

January 17-18, 2000 *Motivating Children in the Classroom*. Presenter: Dr. LaWanda Gladney. OU College of Continuing Education, 1700 Asp Ave., Room 202 Norman, 73072. Contact Darlene Long 405 325-1964 , FAX 325-0860 or e mail dlong.ou.edu.

February 3-4, 2000 *Crisis Intervention Strategies*. Presenter: Dr. Russ Koch. OU College of Continuing Education, 1700 Asp Ave., Room 202 Norman, 73072. Contact Darlene Long 405-325-1964 , FAX 325-0860 or e mail dlong.ou.edu.

February 9, 2000 OCA Pre- Conference *Child Maltreatment: Theory, Assessment, Intervention* Presenter: Jerome M. Sattler, Ph. D. His new book Forensic Interviewing of Children will be offered for a 40% discount. Hilton Northwest Expressway, Oklahoma City. Contact: Valerie Harris at 405 -273-8764.

February 10-11, 2000 *Vision 2000 - Creating Educational Opportunities for ALL Students*. Special Education Services, SDE and The Oklahoma Federation of the Council for Exceptional Children. Holiday Inn, Norman, OK. Contact: Charlotte Dean Special Education-Transition, SDE, 405 521-4864.

February 14-15, 2000 *Violent Children*. Presenter: Dr. Kathryn Seifert. OU College of Continuing Education, 1700 Asp Ave., Room 202, Norman, 73072. Contact Darlene Long 405-325-1964 , FAX 325-0860 or e mail dlong.ou.edu.

February 18-19, 2000 *Behavioral Disorders Conference*. Sponsored by Texas CCBD and The Behavioral Learning Center. DoubleTree Hotel, Austin, TX. Contact: James E. Gilliam Phone 830-596-2070.

March 28-April 1, 2000 **NASP 32nd Annual Convention. Celebrating Our Success!** Sheraton, New Orleans, LA. For further information contact: NASP: 301 657-0270.

April 28, 2000 **OSPA Spring Conference. Current Update on Medication Uses and Abuse with Children**. Presenter: Dr. Jane Joost, MD. Moore Norman Vo-Tech School. For further information contact Debby Wheat, OSPA President, 918 241-8739; e-mail <lwdc@busprod.com> and <dwheat@ba.k12.ok.us> .

July 13-17, 2000 23rd Annual International School Psychology Colloquium. *Many Languages...One Voice for Children*. Durham, New Hampshire. Contact: Peter Whelley, Co-Chair, P.O. Box 500, Moultonborough, NH 03254-0500; ptw@moultonborough.k12.nh.us

### EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Site</u>
February 5, 2000	Host: Oklahoma State University
April 28, 2000	Moore Norman Vo-Tech School
June 2-4, 2000	Host: East Central University: Executive Board Retreat

### LOOKING AHEAD TO NASP CONVENTIONS:

2001	April 17-21	Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, Washington, D. C.
2002	March 5-9	Hyatt Regency, Chicago
2003	April 8-12	Sheraton Centre, Toronto, ON, Canada
2004	TBA	Dallas