



School Psychology Research and Scholarship News

Volume 3, No. 1

Newsletter of the Society for the Study of School Psychology

February 2000

President's Message

Our Board of Directors had a most productive session at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association (APA) in Boston. Considerable discussion occurred related to making the Society for Study of School Psychology (SSSP) a much more active and visible organization than it has been in past years. Several specific issues were discussed at the meeting that facilitate this general mission. The Board of Directors requested that I facilitate more active involvement of our members in various activities of the organization. To this purpose, several individuals have been appointed to positions that will involve taking leadership roles in facilitating the goals and objectives of SSSP. First, Dr. Tom Kehle will serve as our representative to the Task Force on Post-doctoral Education and Training in School Psychology. This group meets at the APA and NASP meetings and represents a group of individuals who are facilitating information and guidelines pertaining to post-doctoral education. Tom will take an active role in representing our interests within this group. In addition, SSSP has always had an ongoing relationship with APA Division 16. Dr. Cindy Carlson will serve as our formal liaison between SSSP and APA Division 16.

SSSP has provided a number of award programs over the years. The General Purpose Award has not received sufficient attention nationally and many individuals are unclear about the conditions of the award. At our meeting in Boston, we decided to form a committee to review the award and consider developing an annual topic of research that would guide the competition for the award. I am pleased to indicate that Drs. Tim Keith (Chair), David Goh and Virginia Berninger will serve on this committee. Specifically, the committee will examine the overall award program, sharpen and improve the proposal evaluation process, and increase the impact and value of the results of various approved projects. The committee will also examine our current guidelines

for the award competition and clarify obligations for individuals who are recipients of the award.

In the April 1999 issue of our newsletter, I also reviewed membership criteria for SSSP and noted that several individuals had recently been elected for membership. In our attempt to be proactive, we have also appointed a standing Membership Committee who will review criteria and take a proactive approach to soliciting nominations for membership in our organization. I am pleased to announce that Drs. Ena Vasquez Nuttall, William Jensen, Frank Gresham (Chair), and Ed Shapiro will serve on the Membership Committee. Although our committee members will facilitate nominations, we will still entertain self-nominations for membership in SSSP. In other news, SSSP voted to support collaboration with APA Division 16 in their creation of a Task Force on Empirically Supported Intervention Programs in Schools, co-chaired by myself and Karen Callan Stoiber. The Task Force represents a joint SSSP/APA Division 16 effort to review prevention and intervention programs in several domains including a) prevention programs, b) classroom-based and school-wide intervention programs, c) intervention programs for behavioral problems, d) academic programs, e) family-focused intervention programs, f) comprehensive school health care interventions, and a domain related to the intervention utility of various assessment work. Currently the Task Force consists of approximately 20 individuals representing a cross-section of psychology and education as well as liaison members from APA Division 12 and 17.

I am very excited about my role as President of the SSSP and remain strongly committed to facilitating the mission and objectives of the organization. If individuals have any suggestions or ideas that should be considered by SSSP, please feel free to contact me by phone or email.

Tom Kratochwill

1998 Best Article Award at APA in Boston August 1999

Annually SSSP gives a Best Article Award of \$5,000 to the author(s) of the article appearing in the previous year's volume of the *Journal of School Psychology*. The selection is made by a panel of jurors, composed of members of the editorial board of *JSP*, from a list of the five articles that received the highest number of nominations from the membership of SSSP.

The panel considers the article's contribution to the research base of school psychology. This year's winners will receive their award and a plaque at the annual meeting of SSSP which is to be held during the American Psychological Association Convention in Boston in August 1999.

The best article in *JSP* in 1998 was:
Longitudinal Effects of Parent Involvement on High School Grades: Similarities and Differences Across Gender and Ethnic Groups *Journal of School Psychology*, Vol. 36, No. 3, pp. 335-363, 1998
Authors honored were:

Timothy Z. Keith
Alfred University

Patricia B. Keith
College of William & Mary

Kimberly J. Quirk
Keystone Center School
District

Jodi Spurduto
Longwood High School

Stephanie Santillo
Hampton Bays
Secondary School

Stacy Killings
Gates-Chili High School

What is SSSP?

The Society for the Study of School Psychology is relatively new. It has been in existence less than a decade. Although many associated with the field of school psychology know that it is responsible for the *Journal of School Psychology (JSP)*, most do not understand its purpose. The purpose for the Society, stated simply, is to support the development of a body of science and scholarship that provides a foundation for the provision of psychological services in schools and educational settings and to disseminate this knowledge. A more complete history and explanation of SSSP can be found on its web site (<http://www.elsevier.nl/locate/sssps>). The Society is composed of the remaining original investors in the *Journal of School Psychology*, and an additional group of senior psychologists whose demonstrated career-long interests and activities have proved to be isomorphic with the purpose of SSSP. New members are occasionally elected to membership after they have been nominated or applied in response to requests for nominations by the board. No dues are charged to members of SSSP. However, members are required to participate in the activities and committees of the Society in lieu of dues. Several examples of how members might become involved in SSSP are listed throughout this issue of the newsletter. Members are invited to become involved in all aspects of the society.

In addition to governance and oversight of the *Journal of School Psychology*, SSSP has sought to recognize high quality contributions to research in school psychology, and to provide grants for researchers pursuing important questions relevant to application of psychology in schools. In this issue, recent awards are announced. In addition, SSSP is planning to be an important partner in the Task Force on Empirically-Supported Intervention Programs in Schools with Divisions 12 and 16 of APA and has committed a significant amount of money to support this activity. These initiatives have been funded by revenues from publishing *JSP*, and donations from the original members and other interested parties.

SSSP represents a group within school psychology that was meant to be focused in purpose. Developmentally, it has begun to form an identity and to engage in the community of school psychology. It is learning to collaborate with other groups and to take initiatives. As the report from the Committee on Future Directions report summarized elsewhere in this issue (p.6, Board welcomes...) of the newsletter attests, it is also beginning to look at itself and where it should be going. Feel free to contact the President, Tom Kratochwill, or other members of the Board, or the editor with your ideas.

EJM

From the *EDGE*:

The *EDGE* is a new feature of the Newsletter. Each issue will contain an up-to-date summary of the literature in an by an accomplished researcher in that area.

Risk and Resilience in Perspective

Beth Doll
University of Colorado
at Denver

Mark A. Lyon
University of Denver

Over the past five decades, a large and consistent body of prospective, longitudinal research has shown that children's futures are made considerably dimmer by exposure to multiple, chronically adverse living circumstances such as poverty, family dysfunction, parental illness or incompetence, abuse, and poor physical health. Most of these same studies also described complex transactional relationships by which vulnerable children are protected against adult dysfunction through an interplay among characteristics of: (a) the child (e.g., easy temperament, achievement oriented), (b) the caregiver (e.g., a desire to protect the child from burdensome family hardships), and (c) the environment (e.g., a high level of support from extended family, friends, and other important adults, including those in schools). Taken together, the results of these studies suggest that understanding the dynamic ways in which individuals successfully negotiate risk situations holds more promise for understanding resilience than amassing lists of discrete attributes of presumably resilient individuals. (For examples of this work, see Cowen, Wyman, Work, & Parker, 1990; Garmezy, 1991; Kolvin, Miller, Fleeting, & Kolvin, 1988; Song, 1994; Liddle, 1994; Long & Vaillant, 1984; Werner, 1989; and Werner & Smith, 1982).

Resilience research, therefore, is no longer preoccupied with describing static or isolated patterns of risk and resilience. Instead, attention has shifted towards: (a) explaining the specific mechanisms by which constellations of risk propel a child toward poorer adult outcomes and the ways in which these mechanisms are interrupted by protective factors (Masten, 1994; Rutter, 1987, 1994); and (b) understanding how these mechanisms organize into developmental trajectories that facilitate or hinder adult competence. This understanding is dependent on sources of risk and resilience at different points in children's lives, the slope of the trajectories, vari-

ables that change the magnitude and direction of the trajectories, and the points in time when these influential variables were introduced, as well as how they are maintained. Addressing both aspects of negotiating risk (e.g., specifying mechanisms and investigating their influence on developmental trajectories) is essential if social and educational programs are to be successful in helping protect vulnerable children.

Understanding resilience mechanisms is crucial so that social policies will target appropriate sources of child support for those experiencing high conditions of risk. For example, the 1960s War on Poverty assumed that poverty deprived children of material goods, and that its impact could be overcome with supplemental income payments that increased families' access to purchased goods and services. In so doing, however, the government inadvertently increased the rate of father absence in many households, a known risk factor for a variety of psychosocial problems. Current policies presume, instead, that supplementing family income indiscriminately carries potential harm to families' sense of well-being by fostering unhealthy dependency on government funding. Only studies that examine the specific mechanisms underlying the link between poverty and adult dysfunction can untangle such policy disputes.

Understanding developmental trajectories helps inform decisions about optimal timing and content of psychosocial and educational intervention/prevention programs. For example, consider the possibility that dropping out of high school may not cause adult unemployment, but that both school failure and unemployment may be outcomes of other more pervasive risk factors occurring much earlier in a child's development. By revealing the full developmental progression toward adult unemployment, the appropriate points of intervention/prevention can

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(Risk & resilience, continued)

be identified, as can many of the salient targets for treatment.

Most researchers agree that the most powerful means of uncovering resilience mechanisms will be found in prospective, longitudinal prevention studies, where processes that are thought to promote resilience and reduce risk are deliberately implemented and their impact tracked over time in relation to important adult outcomes. Such studies have the potential to reveal the intricate relationships between early precursors and later outcomes that stretch across childhood and adolescence into adulthood. They must begin in early childhood in order to examine mechanisms and processes operating during critical early developmental periods. They must be prospective and manipulate variables systematically in order to clarify links between mechanisms and later outcomes, elucidating trajectories that Robins and Rutter (1990) have termed the 'straight and devious pathways from childhood to adulthood.' These types of studies will require different research designs, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques than have been used in most previous research on risk and resilience. Expanded use of techniques such as structural equation modeling (Connell, 1987), pattern analysis (Magnusson & Bergman, 1990), and survival rates (Coie, 1996) will likely be needed to fully accomplish this task. Finally, because protective factors are typically maintained within caregiving relationships that are genuine, authentic, and persist over time, newer studies will need to occur within natural environments rather than laboratory settings.

This kind of research stretches across decades and requires that we rethink the systemic supports for psychosocial intervention/prevention research as these now exist. Longitudinal prevention studies will require funding that extends beyond the three to five-year periods of most current social science grants. They will demand dependable collaboration between youth service providers with access to families and researchers with the methodological sophistication to examine risk and resilience relationships. Finally, because the unit of analysis is as much the adult support community as the individual child, these studies will need to be conducted across multiple contexts, including families, schools, and communities.

Funding agencies have come to recognize these new demands on social science research. Evidence of this can be found in the plan for the

prevention research of the National Institute of Mental Health, which broadens the funding definition of "prevention" to include intervention with selected groups that are highly vulnerable to future dysfunction, and indicated groups that demonstrate early signs of dysfunction. Other evidence can be found in recent requests for proposals from the Centers for Disease Control, in which funding was based on the strength and appropriateness of the collaborative relationships researchers had established with representative service-provider agencies.

Schools can play a vital role in the advancement of resilience research by virtue of the fact that they deal daily with the problems of students who are seriously at risk for a wide variety of poor educational and psychosocial outcomes. They contain a large and captive audience of at risk students that would be difficult to aggregate under other circumstances for purposes of long-range prevention and intervention efforts. On the other hand, schools need to be mindful of the fact that resilience programs represent yet another area where it may be easy to place "the cart before the horse." The research base on resilience is still developing, and as yet only a partial understanding of the mechanisms involved in successfully negotiating risk situations has been achieved. Children who live in conditions of chronic risk are unlikely to profit from programs that are short-lived, poorly organized, or do not plan for follow-through from grade to grade and from school building to school building. Such programs often represent popularized notions of resilience that are based loosely on resilience research, if at all. Regrettably, a number of the current resilience efforts in schools seem to be of this ilk. Such programs seem destined to go the way of the numerous educational fads that have preceded them, but in the process may also damage the prospects of those programs that are supportable.

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Publishing Schedule for SPRSN

Starting with this issue two issues of the newsletter are planned. Members of SSSP and others in the school psychology community are invited to submit material for consideration including articles about research, announcements of interest to members and the research community in school psychology. The newsletter does not accept advertising.

Issue Number	Deadline for Submissions	Expected Publication Date
1	November 1	December 1
2	May 15	June 1

Annual Membership Meeting

The annual meeting of the Society for the Study of School Psychology was held in conjunction with the meeting of the American Psychological Association Boston, MA at the Boston Sheraton Hotel on August 22, 1999 at 5.00-6:00 PM.

1. Dr. Tom Kratochwill, President of the Board of Directors, welcomed individuals to the annual membership meeting. He indicated that the meeting provides an open forum to discuss the activities of the SSSP.
2. Dr. Kratochwill presented certificate checks for the cash award to the authors of the best article in the *Journal of School Psychology*, of 1998 volume year to Timothy Z. Keith, Patricia B. Keith, Kimberly J. Quirk, Jodi Sperduto, Stephanie Santillo, and Stacy Killings for their article. "Longitudinal effects of parent involvement on high school grades: Similarities and differences across gender and ethnic groups" which appeared in the *Journal of School Psychology*, Vol. 36, No. 3, pp. 335-363, 1998. Dr. Keith expressed thanks to the SSSP, and indicated that he and his co-authors had decided to submit the manuscript to JSP because of the award. The authors of the article spoke briefly about their research and their plans for subsequent investigations related to this topic. Dr. Kratochwill indicated he hopes that the award stimulates further research for the authors.
3. Past President Beeman Phillips introduced Linda Redding, a recipient of one of the 1999 general-purpose award. Dr. Redding described the research that will be supported in part through the award.
4. Dr. Tom Kehle, a member of SSSP, suggested that a personal invitation might encourage more participation in the awards ceremony. President Kratochwill indicated that the Board of Directors had discussed activities that SSSP could undertake that would encourage greater membership involvement in committees and task forces.
5. Cathy Telzrow, SSSP Secretary distributed a list of eight individuals whose mailings have been returned, and requested that if anyone knows the whereabouts of these individuals to notify her.
6. There being no additional business or announcements, President Kratochwill declared the meeting adjourned.

Cathy Telzrow, Secretary of the Board

Board welcomes new treasurer Takes on new initiatives

At its meeting on August 22, 1999 in Boston held in conjunction with the American Psychological Association, Pres. Tom Kratochwill welcomed newly-elected treasurer Bonnie Nastasi to the Board and thanked Sylvia Rosenfield the hard work she did for the Society during her term. He also welcomed Diana Jones as the representative from Elsevier.

In a major policy move, the Board voted to increase SSSP's level of participation in the Joint Task Force on Empirically Supported Programs in Schools. President Kratochwill had recused himself from the discussion because of his heavy commitment to the development of the proposal. The Board voted to fund 3/4 of the estimated first year's budget of \$22,000 with Division 16 of APA providing the remainder. The expectation was for a multi-year project with funding to be reviewed and approved on an annual basis. Further, should Division 16 not approve their participation, SSSP will consider other funding arrangements.

The Committee on Future Directions for SSSP consisting of Beeman Phillips and Manny Mason reported on a survey of members of the society. As a result of this survey several recommendations were made and passed by the Board. The Best article award was voted to be continued at a level of \$2,000. The continuation of the Newsletter was affirmed as a two issues per year publication (expected publication schedule was Nov. 30 And May 30). Terms for edi-

tor and associate editor were fixed at a two year period with associate editor to become editor at the end of the existing editor's term. General purpose awards were voted to be continued with clarifications made in the criteria and programs. Further the president was charged with appointing a committee to develop an annual research topic in which one or two proposals would be funded.

Information about the SSSP and JSP websites were provided by the publisher's representative, Diana Jones from Elsevier. The SSSP web site address is:

<http://www.elsevier.nl/locate/sssp>

The site contains information about SSSP, its activities and its officers. The JSP site on the Elsevier website is:

http://www.elsevier.nl/inca/publications/store/6/9/9/699_pub.htm

This site includes a brief description of the Journal of School Psychology. Contents listings for the journal for the most recent five years are also available on the Elsevier site.

In other action, the Board voted that the editor of JSP shall automatically be endorsed as a member of SSSP. Further, the President was asked to appoint members to the standing committee on membership that would consider nominations, including self-nominations. The need to inform potential members of the responsibilities of members for service to the society in lieu of membership fees was discussed.

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Seeking Associate Editor of the School Psychology Research And Scholarship News. Tenure to start immediately. The new associate newsletter editor will work with the editor to solicit articles and information of interest to the purposes of SSSP. The associate editor will assume the duties of the editor in two years. If interested, please contact Emanuel Mason, Editor of the SPRSN for additional information about assignment and benefits of working on the newsletter. Members of SSSP are urged to participate in this important activity of the Society.

Around and About Research:

An attack on NIMH funding support for behavioral research by the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI), a group that champions a position that NIMH research support should only be available for serious mental illness, was successfully defended by the agency early this winter. NIMH funding policies were defended by APA and APS and other interested groups within psychology. The successful defense was critical to the support of the broad range of research relevant to school psychology and related fields. ***** Federal funding for behavioral research was up in appropriations passed in 2000. Of specific interest to school psychologists, support for the National Institute for Child Health and Development (NICHD) was up approx. \$109 from last year to a total of \$862 million. NIMH received about 14% more than last year to \$978 million. ***** The section on Statistical Education of the American Statistical Association maintains a web site at: <http://renoir.vill.edu/cgi-bin/short/StatEd.cgi> that contains issues of the Newsletter of the Section on Statistical Education of the American Statistical Association with articles on teaching statistics, statistical reasoning and other issues that may be of interest to those teaching or doing research on the teaching of statistics. ***** More and more is appearing on the implications of the Human Genome Project. For example, APA's liaison to the Human Genome Model II Project at the Georgetown University Child Development Center, Suzanne Bronheim, Ph.D., provides some important commentary in the latest issue of the Psychological Science Agenda (Jan./Feb. 2000, page 12). This developing knowledge base can and will have implications for psychological practice and research. It should be an important concern for school psychology groups. ***** A number of school psychology-oriented web sites have been appearing on the Internet. Some are associated with practice-oriented research objectives (e.g., Lou Kruger's Global School Psychology Network <http://www.dac.neu.edu/cp/consult/>). Another that has something for everyone interested in school psychology is http://www.bcpl.lib.md.us/~sandyste/school_psych.html (maintained by Sandra Koser Steingart, Ph.D. Office of Psychological Services, Baltimore County Public Schools, Towson, Md. 21204). This site connects with numerous others that represent a variety of needs for information and collaboration among school psychologists.

Funds for Research

This feature of the newsletter highlights potential sources of funding for those interested in doing research on psychology applied to school and learning settings.

The Center for Research for Mothers and Children (CRMC) (within the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)) has the following priorities: pregnancy; growth and development; prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of developmental abnormalities; and behavioral development. The Center is organized into six branches. The one most pertinent to psychology and schools is the one for Human Learning and Behavior which supports research on the normative behavioral, psychological, and psychobiological development from the prenatal period through infancy, childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood in individuals from different ethnic, minority, and socio-economic backgrounds. The program focuses on biobehavioral, psychological, social, and emotional development divided into five major elements: developmental psychobiology; learning, perception, and cognition; communicative abilities; social and affective development; and behavioral pediatrics. In the Learning, Perception, and Cognition area, learning and cognitive development includes research on basic learning mechanisms necessary for optimal behavioral development. In addition, support is provided for studies of perceptual, cognitive, and memory development. Studies of processes by which cultural, familial, socio-economic, and other environmental influences affect learning, perception, and cognition are of great interest. Research on learning disabilities is also a major focus. This includes research on genetic and environmental contributions to reading, mathematics, and writing difficulties; teaching style differences; phonological and orthographic analyses; cultural differences; motivational influences; educational

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intervention effectiveness; and attention and memory. Also of concern are co-morbidity of attention deficit disorders, hyperactivity, conduct disorders, dyslexia, and several other diagnostic groupings.

SUPPORT PROVIDED: Program project grants are awarded to institutions on behalf of a principal investigator to support a broadly based, often multi disciplinary, long-term research program with a particular major objective or theme. Program projects involve organized efforts of groups of investigators who conduct integrated research projects related to the overall program objectives.

DEADLINES: June 1, 2000 and October 1, 2000
For more information on this award program contact:

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