

# Psych

*perspectives*



A Publication of the West Virginia School Psychologists Association

Spring

2004

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE "Easier Said Than Done"**

**M**y term as President of WVSPA, 2003-04, is quickly coming to an end and I like I'm just ready to begin. Even in an association as small as ours, there is so much to learn and so little time to learn it. And just when you think you have a handle on some things, it's time to move on and let someone else take over. This, by itself, should underscore the importance that all members play in our association and the need for us to work together as a team in order to accomplish our very important mission. However, getting folks to work as a team is easier said than done.

What are some things that have been undertaken to encourage team building and member participation? Here are just a few. The WVSPA web page ([www.wvspa.org](http://www.wvspa.org)) has been revamped and is being used as one tool to share information with all who wish to and take the time to visit. There has been an open invitation to the membership to become more involved with the association, and to share their ideas and accomplishments in working with children and families. Strategic planning has been initiated and, in many instances, regional representatives and liaisons have been asked to take the lead in developing components of the strategic plan. The WVSPA Operations Handbook is also under revision, and there is more to be done.

What can we do? Although it's easier said than done, each and every one of us can write down from one to

three goals that we would like to accomplish during the year. Although it's easier said than done, we can develop an action plan consisting of the activities that we will engage in to accomplish our goals and a time line for when each of the activities are to be completed. Although it's easier said than done, we can share our best activities with a colleague or a regional representative. Although it's easier said than done, we can write down what worked and what didn't and what we might do the next time to make it work better. Although it's easier said than done, we can do a self evaluation to determine whether or not what we are doing is promoting the rights, welfare, education and mental health of children and youth.

Toni G. Parsons, President  
WVSPA

## **INSIDE**

WVSPA Sponsors GLBQ .....	2
EMPATHY: The Best Deterrent .....	2
Top 10 Things You Should Know .....	3
Tips on Professionalism .....	5
Providing Workable Alternatives to Retention ....	6
Marketing and Promoting School Psychology ....	7
WISC-IV - W-J III Correlations Project .....	11
Mandatory Reporting of ASD .....	11

## WVSPA Sponsors GLBQ Seminar

By  
Debra S. Layne,  
WVSPA Treasurer

WVSPA is proud to have been a sponsor, via the donation of \$250, of the “Understanding Sexual Identity - Part II: Strategies to reduce bullying, foster safety, growth, and resiliency in gay, lesbian, bisexual, and questioning (GLBQ) youth” seminar.

The purpose of the seminar was to promote the value and strength of diversity and to increase the competence of helping professionals and concerned adults in supporting gay, lesbian, bisexual, and questioning youth. The seminar was held on February 26 and February 27, 2004, in Charleston, West Virginia. π

## EMPATHY: The Best Deterrent of Aggressive Behavior

By  
Erica Stetson, Ph.D.,  
Angela Hurley,  
and Gloria Miller, Ph.D.  
(Colorado Society of School Psychologists)

When your students are caught being aggressive toward others, are they more concerned with the “consequences” or punishment for their behavior, or with the welfare of their victims? Unfortunately, with the push toward safe school environments, many adults seem more concerned with punishment than with prevention. Probably, knowing that they will get kicked out of school or suspended has stopped some students from being aggressive. But it will only stop them if they believe they will be caught. We can not watch them 24 hours a day, seven days a week, so consequences will not always be a deterrent. There is more we can do to curtail student violence. If we teach children to empathize with others, they will always carry that with them, and empathy, we believe, is the best deterrent of aggressive behavior.

Empathy is a skill that can be taught. However, it is a complex skill, requiring both cognitive and affective abilities. Children need to learn to “put themselves in the other person’s shoes,” but they also need to learn how to respond with similar affect. This is most difficult for those students who have not experienced much empathy in their own life. Thus, schools need to make it a priority to empathize with their students. When there is violence, is all the attention focused on retribution of the perpetrator, or is empathy for the victim modeled?

When facilitating the development of empathy, it is critical to assess where the child is in the process of learning to empathize. The roots of empathy begin in infancy, when babies learn to self-soothe, a key component of being able to empathize. We can not expect children to feel for others, when they have not learned basic self-regulation. Similarly, we can not expect children to understand others’ feelings, when they still



It's not bioterrorism I fear most . . .  
it's working with kids during cold and  
flu season.

cannot label their own emotions. Thus, educators, need to assess where the student is in the developmental progression of empathy, and work to build on those skills.

It is important that schools create an atmosphere that promotes empathy. While there are essential skills which can be taught to promote empathy, this should not be done in isolation. As noted earlier, children need to experience empathy themselves in order to become empathic. Think of these when trying to create a school atmosphere that promotes empathy:

- Model empathy whenever you can. Allow your students to see you empathize with their classmates and with your co-workers.
- Make sure that all students experience empathy. Respond to them empathetically.
- Use discipline as an opportunity to help students develop empathy. Encourage them to think about how their behavior affects others.
- Get strong buy-in from everyone in the school. Provide a training highlighting the importance of empathy.
- Train all constituents—not just teachers, but bus drivers and lunch room workers.
- Develop a common language. This provides consistency and helps children to generalize new skill.
- Make multiple connections across the curriculum. That is, work on empathy during the affective education time, reading or writing, encouraging children to think about how fictional characters are feeling is a great way to promote social perspective taking.
- Be sensitive to culture. The word empathy and its expression may have different meanings.
- Create a climate where children become agents of change. Convince children that developing empathy is important for them. Show them how it helps them get along with others and develop friendships.
- Be very explicit in stating that empathy is important in school. Acknowledge those who show empathy.

By taking these steps, you will help to deter violent behavior in school. Further, you will be helping students develop empathy, which will benefit them in their interpersonal relationships throughout their lives. π

## TOP TEN THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT READING

Reprinted from the *Louisiana School Psychologist*

1. Learning to read is complex. Reading, making meaning from print, is a complex process that draws upon many skills that need to be developed at the same time. Marilyn Adams compared the operation of the reading system to the operation of a car—but unlike drivers, readers need to: build the car (develop the mechanical systems for identifying words), as well as maintain it (fueling it with print, fixing up problems along the way, and making sure it runs smoothly), and most importantly, drive it (which requires us to be motivated, strategic, and mindful of the route we're taking).

But learning to read is more complex than building a car. Cars are built by assembling the parts separately and fastening them together; in contrast, the parts of the reading system are not discrete. We cannot proceed by completing each individual subsystem and then fastening it to one another. Rather, the parts of the reading system must grow together. “They must grow to one another and from one another” (Adams et al, 1990, pp. 20-21).

2. Teaching reading requires an integration of methods. In past years, the merits of phonics instruction—and whole language instruction—a focus on meaning-making—have been hotly debated. The research suggests that skilled teachers integrate both skills and meaning into a balanced program. However, constructing an integrated and effective reading program is challenging.

In their report, “Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children,” the National Research Council (1998), argued that they do not endorse “balance” if it means singly mixing together a hodgepodge of phonics and whole language activities. Instead, they argue that reading instruction should “integrate attention to the alphabetic principle with attention to the construction of meaning and opportunities to develop fluency...The opportunities to learn these two aspects of skilled reading should be going on at the same time, in the context of the same activities, and the choice of

instructional activities should be part of an overall coherent approach to supporting literacy development” (pp. vii-viii).

3. A lot of American children don't read well. Researchers estimate that 10 million American children are poor readers (Fletcher & Lyon, 1998). Thirty-eight percent of our fourth graders read below “Basic” level on the National Assessment of Educational Progress reading test. The “Basic” level is defined as “partial mastery of the pre-requisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work at each grade” (NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card).

4. Kids from all kinds of families have reading problems. About 20% of elementary students have significant reading difficulties. The rate of reading failure for African-American, Hispanic, limited-English speakers and poor children ranges from 60 to 70%.

While the achievement gap must continue to close, reading problems cut across ethnic and socioeconomic lines. One third of poor readers nationwide are from college-educated families (AFT, 1999).

5. Kids who struggle usually problems sounding out words. Difficulties in decoding and word recognition are at the core of most reading difficulties. Poor readers have difficulty understanding that sounds in words are linked to certain letters and letter patterns called the “alphabetic principle.”

And the reason many poor readers don't attain the “alphabetic principle” is because they haven't developed phonemic awareness - the ability to recognize and manipulate the sound they hear in words (Lyon, 1997). When word recognition isn't automatic, reading isn't fluent, and comprehension suffers.

6. What happens before school matters a lot. What preschoolers know before they enter school is strongly related to how easily they learn to read in first grade. Three predictors of reading achievement that they learn before they get to school are: the ability to recognize and name letters of the alphabet, general knowledge about print (which is the front of the book and which is the back, which was to turn the pages of a book); and awareness of phonemes (the sounds in words).

Reading aloud with children is the single most important activity for building the knowledge and skills they will need for learning to read (Adams, 1990).

7. Learning to read is closely tied to learning to talk and listen. Families and caregivers need to talk and listen to young children in order to help them learn a lot of the skills they will need for reading. When a child says “cook” and her father says, “You want a cookie?”, he is building her knowledge of vocabulary, sentence structure, syntax, and purposes for communication—all of which will help her become a reader in later years. When a caregiver sings rhymes and plays word games with the children she cares for, she is helping them recognize the sounds in words—called phonemic awareness.

8. Without help, slow starters don't improve. Eight-eight percent of children who have difficulty reading at the end of first grade display similar difficulties at the end of fourth grade (Juel, 1998). Three-quarters of students who are poor readers in third grade will remain poor readers in high school (Shaywitz et al., 1997).

9. With help, slow starters can succeed. For 85 to 90% of poor readers, prevention and early intervention programs that combine instruction in phoneme awareness, phonics, spelling, reading fluency, and reading comprehension strategies provided by well-trained teachers can increase reading skills to average reading levels (Lyon, 1997). As many as two-thirds of reading-disabled children can become average or above average readers if they are identified early and taught appropriately (Vellutino et al., 1996; Fletcher & Lyon, 1998).

10. Teaching kids to read is a collaborative effort. Parents, teachers, caregivers, and members of the community must recognize the important role they can play in helping children learn to read. The research shows that families make a difference, teachers make a difference, and various community intervention and tutoring programs make a difference as well. It's time for all of the people who work with children work together to ensure that every child learns to read. It is our shared responsibility.

For more information, read: Top ten things you should know about reading. What is reading? How Does

Reading Develop? Leipzig, ff. H. (2001). Top Ten Things You Should Know About Reading. Reading Rockets project. WETA: Arlington, VA.  $\pi$



## TIPS ON PROFESSIONALISM: Curse OF Perfectionism

BY

**Dr. Donald E. Wetmore**  
*(RIPA QUARTERLY)*

There's a rule known as the Pareto Principle. It teaches us that 20% of our efforts produce 80% of our results. The additional 80% of our efforts will only yield an additional 20% of results. The first thrust of effort then is the most productive use of our time. The latter thrust is very costly.

For example, let's say you allocate two hours (which we'll represent as 20% of your time) to clean a room, a basement, or a garage. Let's say that will you will be able to get it to be 80% clean. It won't be perfect, but it will be acceptable and a job well done. However, to squeeze out an additional 20% of results, to make it "perfectly clean", will require an additional 80% of your time, or eight hours. The additional results are 16 times more costly than the initial results from 20% of the effort, not to mention that while you're trying to squeeze out those additional results, you are kept from doing a lot of other more productive things.

This rule has a lot of application to you as a time manager. Ever notice if you're in sales how 20% of your customers give you 80% of your sales and the other 80% of your customers give you the remaining 20% of your business? Where then should you be spending 80% of your time? With the 20% of the customers who are giving you 80% of your business.

Ever notice how 20% of your relatives give your 80%

of your headaches? It may not always work with exact mathematical precision, but typically, the small chunk of input yields the biggest chunk of output or results.

Most of us benefit from this rule intuitively. When you and I approach a task (clean a room, prepare a term paper, write up a project, etc.) we decide to put in a reasonable result. The result may not be perfect but it will be acceptable and this will free us to devote our time to tackling other endeavors.

We put in a reasonable amount of time and produce a pretty decent report. It may not be perfect, but putting in a whole lot more time to make it a little better is not cost-effective and therefore not worth the effort.

Those who suffer from the Curse of Perfectionism do not understand this principle. Their goal is always perfection, which, realistically, is unattainable. For example, you cannot clean a room perfectly. As you clean, it's getting dirty as dust settles. Any written report can be polished and improved upon with more time and effort. Striving for perfection is then always stressful and frustrating.

Their overall productivity suffers as they spend an inordinate amount of time on a few things, trying to make them perfect, rather than a lesser amount of time on a lot of things that will multiply their results.

The curse is cured when they abandon the need to do their tasks perfectly, when they understand that excellence in performance is attaining a degree of perfection, not absolute perfection. This does not compromise one's standard of excellence in performance with increased results.

For a humorous break for you and to share with others, get your free copy now of my article, "You Just Might Be A Workaholic". To get your free copy now, e-mail your request to Dr. Donald E. Wetmore, professional speaker, for "might" to [ctsem@msn.com](mailto:ctsem@msn.com)  $\pi$

**Articles for *Psych Perspectives*  
should be sent to:  
Charles Szasz,  
P. O. Box 630,  
Elkivew, WV 25071 or e-mailed to  
[cszasz@newwave.net](mailto:cszasz@newwave.net)**

# Providing Workable Alternatives to Retention

By  
**Patricia Cloud Duttweiler,**  
Assistant Director of the National  
Dropout Prevention Center

The push for standards-based school reform is the predominant issue facing today's public schools. Half the states apply sanctions to those schools whose students fail to meet the standards, and over a third of the states require students to score at designated levels on tests to get promoted and/or to graduate. For many students, the price of failure is retention in grade. This places minority, poor, urban students and English language-learners in a kind of double jeopardy: Systems that failed to educate them adequately are now punishing them for not being educated.

Current high-profile political rhetoric decries social promotion as being partly responsible for students who are unable to pass tests measuring the new, higher standards. Policy-makers, school administrators and teachers see retention as a desirable alternative. When asked why they retain students in grade, teachers respond that it gives students another year to master the academic content and to improve their social behavior. Yet, this reasoning flies in the face of an overwhelming amount of research.

The author of a 1989 analysis of 63 studies conducted on the effects of retention in grade found that 54 of the studies indicated overall negative effects. Retention was found to harm students' achievement, attendance records, personal adjustment in school and attitude toward to school. In a study published in 1997 in the *Journal of School Psychology*, a group of low-achieving students who had been promoted were compared with a group of similarly low-achieving students who had been retained. The researchers found that the groups did not differ significantly on intellectual functioning at five years, four months of age, and at the end of the third grade. In addition, the researchers found that by sixth grade, retained students displayed exacerbated behavior problems while the behavior of the promoted students remained stable.

Studies have found that retention increases the probability of a student's dropping out of school. Male, black, Southern and poor students are more likely to be the ones retained according to a report from the National Center for Education Statistics, *Dropout Rates in the United States: 1995*. Of those students who had been retained, nearly twice as many reported having dropped out of school as those who had never been retained. A study conducted by the Association of California Urban School Districts found that students who were retained twice had a nearly 100% chance of dropping out.

Jeannie Oakes of UCLA suggests that the strong support for retention is in part an attempt to accommodate the expectation that all children must learn while, at the same time, maintaining the powerful social norms of traditional schooling. Although it makes no sense to ignore the research that points to the futility of retaining students in grade, neither should the negative effects of retention be used to support whole scale promotion. Students should not be pushed through a system that does not ensure they acquire the skills and knowledge they need. It should be clear to educators, if not to policy-makers, that students with behavioral or academic problems should be identified early and provided the support and interventions needed to help them. Resources should be provided for early childhood education, smaller class sizes, tutoring programs, year-round schooling, multigrade classrooms and assessment for continuous improvement. In addition, resources should be provided for after-school and Saturday programs, summer school, teacher professional development and other strategies designed to help, not punish, students.  $\pi$





## **Marketing and Promoting School Psychology In Today's Schools**

**By**

**Robyn N. Waizenhofer,**

**M.A. University of South Carolina,**

**And**

**Catherine C. Cantrell, Ph.D., Lexington  
County School District One**

**F**or over 50 years, calls for change in the role and the function of school psychologists have appeared in the literature (Bradley-Johnson & Dean, 2000). Calls for change consistently have included greater emphasis on indirect service, application of the science of psychology to define problems and design programs (i.e., call for a more experimental, data-driven approach to problem-solving, Reschly & Ysseldyke, 2002), use of a systematic evaluation of services (i.e., data-driven), an emphasis on prevention rather than remediation, and involvement of key stakeholders (e.g. teachers, parents) in the development and evaluation of services. Despite some evidence of change for a few outstanding individual psychologists and a number of model programs, most school psychologists “do too much testing, diagnosing, classifying, and work with special education populations and not enough consultation, systems change, child advocacy, and service to all children,” (Medway, 1996, p. 111). Recent survey studies indicate that school psychologists spend approximately two-thirds of their time in activities related to special education classification and placement, with slightly over half of the time spent in individual assessment activities (Reschly & Ysseldyke, 2002). These same surveys also indicate that school psychologists would prefer to spend more time in direct (e.g., counseling) and indirect (e.g., problem-solving consultation) and indirect (e.g., prob-

lem-solving consultation) activities related to intervention.

Why is it problematic that school psychologists spend the majority of their time engaged in activities related to special education classification and placement? Why the long standing call for change? Reschly and Ysseldyke (2002) suggest “the value of current roles and time allocations depends heavily on the benefits to students associated with classification as disabled and placement programs,” (p. 6). In other words, does classifying students into special education categories (e.g., learning disability) lead to category-specific treatments, and are those treatments differentially effective depending on the student’s label? Reschly and Ysseldyke (2002) argue “no” on both accounts. Additionally, school psychologists have recognized for many years that there simply are too many children in need of services for school psychologists to work with them on a one-on-one basis (e.g., in individual assessment); instead, school psychologists need to change the behavior of those adults who work with the students everyday (Bradley-Johnson & Dean, 2000). “As school psychologists. Our ultimate objective is to facilitate the development of solutions that can work without us being present,” (Sheridan & Gutkin, 2000, p. 489).

Where does school psychology need to go? Reschly and Ysseldyke (2002) suggest that assessment and treatment move away from the “deficit orientation” and toward “competence enhancement and capacity building at the individual and systems level,” (p. 7). Similarly, Sheridan and Gutkin (2000) argue that school psychology move away from its current “medical model” approach where dysfunction is located within the individual child and towards an ecological and multi-level systems paradigm where dysfunction relates to the larger systems that encompass our clients (i.e., the children). “It is simply not possible for school psychologists to serve effectively without focusing much of their professional attention upon the important adults in children’s lives,” (Sheridan & Gutkin, 2000). As Miller argued in 1969, we need to “give psychology away” to individuals who are integral in the child’s daily life and long-term environment (e.g., teachers, parents, community leaders) (Sheridan & Gutkin, 2000). Changes to the system have longer and more far reaching effects. In sum, these approaches emphasize prevention, indirect service, and service

to all children.

How do we change the role and function of school psychology? Bradley-Johnson and Dean (2000) have suggested that changes to role and function are, to a large extent, up to individual practitioners. Although systems level changes certainly are necessary for complete paradigm shifts, individual psychologists can begin the change process at their individual schools by providing a broader range of services and by marketing these services. Medway (1996) argues that all school psychologists should begin the change process at their individual schools by providing a broader range of services and by marketing these services. Medway (1996) argues that all school psychologists should be concerned with promoting school psychology and building a positive image for psychologists within their schools and community. Thus, the following paper discusses how a school psychologist might market these changes in role and function to the faculty (i.e., teachers) of a school. Marketing strategies are based on the marketing principles discussed in Harry Beckwith's (1997) book, "Selling the Invisible: A Guide to Modern Marketing."

### **Overriding Principles when Promoting and Marketing School Psychology in the Schools**

#### Gaining Administrative and Teacher Support

Before discussing particular strategies for marketing school psychological services to the faculty (i.e., teachers) of a school, it is important to note one important caveat discussed by Beckwith (1997) at the end of his book. Beckwith states that "To succeed spectacularly in a service business, you must get all your ducks in a row. Marketing is just one duck. But it is one very big duck," (p. 243). For example, despite its brilliant campaigns to establish itself in overnight delivery, Federal Express would never have flown without skillful negotiation and lobbying in Washington. The translation for school psychologists is that the support of building administrators is necessary for any marketing campaign, no matter how brilliant, to succeed within a school. Administrative support is one very important preliminary duck! If the administration within a school does NOT support the version of school psychology one wishes to market (e.g., principal believes school psychologist should only test and place), then neither will the teachers. Thus, it is essential for school psychologists to meet with

building principals and assistant principals to discuss ideas and gather support before attempting to market their services to the faculty of a school. It also would be beneficial to discuss ideas and to gain the support of influential and experienced teachers (i.e., informal network leaders, department heads) within the school. By gaining the support of the administration and of influential teachers, school psychologists hopefully can prevent these leaders from potentially undermining their efforts to expand their role and function. Additionally, these leaders can be a fantastic source of publicity for school psychological services. Having the support of building administrators and influential leaders, however, is not enough. It is simply a necessary starting point. Once support is obtained, then school psychologists can begin the daunting task of marketing their services to the faculty of a school.

#### Make the Invisible Visible

School psychologists provide a specialized "service" (e.g., assessment, problem-solving skills, counseling, consultation) to schools. Services are particularly hard to market because, unlike products, they are invisible and intangible (Beckwith, (1997). One can see, touch, and smell a product (e.g., a new car) but not a service. Thus, Beckwith (1997) suggests that when selling a services, make the invisible visible. In other words, to market school psychology, schools need to see the actual school psychologists. Thus one overriding strategy for marketing school psychology to the faculty of a school is that the school psychologist be visible and accessible to the school community. School psychologists need to be visible in the classrooms, in the faculty lounge, in the cafeteria, and throughout the school building. Furthermore, because one can actually see school psychologists, they really are the best people to market "school psychology" to their respective schools and communities.

#### One Thing Most Experts Don's Know

Another difference between marketing a service versus a product is that one can inspect a product before buying the product and it is relatively easy to determine when the product fails (e.g., car breaks down). When buying a service, however, one simply buys a "promise" with no guarantees that the service will be good and oftentimes, the average lay person cannot determine whether the service was adequate. What "buyers" can assess, however, is the quality of the relationship they have with the service provider. Beckwith

(1997) argues that if you're selling a service, you're selling a relationship. Thus, school psychologists need to make special efforts to develop and maintain quality relationships with the faculty in their schools. This is another overriding principle that school psychologists must be aware of when marketing school psychology to their schools. Being visible throughout the school building and accessible to faculty will help school psychologists to build and maintain relationships!

### With Whom Are You Really Competing

Finally, Beckwith (1997) argues that when one is selling a "service," your real competitor often is sitting across the table (i.e., the client/buyer). Basically, when selling a service, one is not really battling against a different competitor, as often is the case with products (i.e., Coke versus Pepsi). Instead, the client/buyer is trying to decide whether to use any service at all. The client essentially has three choices: use the service, do it themselves, or don't do it all. So a teacher who is having difficulty with a student can ignore the problem, try to develop an intervention on her own, or consult with the school psychologist to develop an intervention. Thus, the trick for school psychologists is to get the teacher to "buy" their services, especially if the teacher is unable or unqualified to develop an intervention on her own. Through there is often not more than one school psychologist in a given school, the psychologist has to make his services appealing, nonetheless.

### **Specific Ways to Promote and Market School Psychology to a School**

#### Fanatical Focus

According to Beckwith (1997), "successful marketing starts with positioning," (p. 103). He argues that sellers of services (e.g., school psychologists) must position themselves in client's minds and the position should be one single statement "AA fanatical focus on doing one thing well," (Beckwith, 1997, p. 103). Thus if school psychologists want to market changes in their role and function to their respective schools, they should focus on one change in their role and function. In other words, if a school psychologist wishes to do more teacher consultations, then he should market himself as a "resource for teachers" (e.g., provide teachers with information about topics of interest to them, help teachers with particular students, etc.) and to set up appropriate expectations for his service. To

manage satisfaction, you must carefully manage your customer's expectations. For example, it would be important for the school psychologist to admit that he might not know the answer to every question a teacher may have but that he certainly knows how to find the answer. It also would be important for the school psychologist to admit that there sometimes won't be a "quick fix" for the teacher to determine the best possible intervention/solution.

Beckwith (1997) describes several benefits of focusing on one thing well. For example, he argues that by narrowing your position, oftentimes you broaden your appeal. So, by focusing on being a "resource for teachers," a school psychologist is actually reaching more students. Specifically, if a school psychologist shows a teacher how to set up a behavior management system for one child, she actually taught the teacher a new skill that the teacher can then use with other children in the future. Another advantage of narrowing focus follows that if you position yourself as the expert on a hard task, then you'll have lesser logic in your corner. In other words, clients will say, "if they can do something that hard, then by lesser logic they can do this," (Beckwith, 1997, p. 107). Thus, by choosing to market school psychology as a "resource for teachers," hopefully teachers will think if the school psychologist can help me with this problem, he can certainly help my students.

Finally, Beckwith (1997) argues that after you say one thing, repeat it again and again. So, after a school psychologist markets the message, "I'm a resource for teachers. I'm here for teachers," he must repeat that message again and again through his words and actions.

#### The Most Compelling Selling Message

Beckwith (1997) argues that the most compelling selling message for a service is not that the service provider has something wonderful to sell (e.g., skills in assessment, problem-solving skills, etc.), but is "I understand what you need," (p. 208). Don't sell your service. Sell your prospect/client. He suggests finding out what the client wants, what the client needs, and who the client is. Thus, if a school psychologist decides to sell school psychology as a "resource for teachers" at a school, he should take the time to find out about the teachers at the school. For example, the school psychologist might set up meetings (especially

if new to the school) with administrators or department heads to gather information about the teachers at the school (e.g., what is morale like, how many students do they have in a class, are there any unique problems with the community or administration, are they local in the community or do they travel to the school, background on specific teachers, etc.). The school psychologist also could ask teachers about their needs and wants. For example, the school psychologist could ask teachers at the first faculty meeting of the year (after the presentation on school psychology as a resource for teachers) about specific topics they wanted more information about. The school psychologist also could leave a suggestion box in the teacher's lounge so that teachers could contribute topic ideas throughout the year. By asking teachers what they need and want, the school psychologist minimizes the risk of a bad service experience for the teacher.

#### You Have Nothing to Fear but Your Client's Fear Itself

When selling a service (e.g., school psychological services), the real competitor is the client/buyer. The client/buyer is trying to decide whether to use any service at all! And because services are invisible, the client can't inspect the service before buying. A service is simply a promise with no guarantees that the service provider will do what was paid for and do it well. This invisibility often makes clients fearful and may cause clients to NOT buy the service, even if the service is needed and clients know they could benefit from the service. Beckwith (1997) argues that the best thing you can do for a prospect is eliminate her fear. Offer a trial or a test product.

There are multiple ways that school psychologists can offer free trials of their services to teachers. One suggestion is to offer short inservices once a semester (possibly on a teacher work day) on a topic many teachers have indicated they want more information about (e.g., autism, how to set up behavior management systems, teen depression, warning signs of violence etc.). Another way to offer free trials of school psychological services to teachers is to put a one page fact sheet in teachers' boxes once a month. The fact sheets could include information on topics of interest to teachers as well as serve as advertisement for success stories. Beckwith (1997) argues that service providers need to create the evidence of their service quality and then communicate it. Thus, the fact sheets could include a very brief description of a successful

consultation with a teacher (keeping confidentiality and getting the teacher's permission would be necessary!). A final and very beneficial way to offer a free trial of school psychological services to teachers would be actually go into the classroom and take over the class for the teacher. The school psychologist could use the time to teach social skills to the students or do bully proofing activities. These activities would not only provide students with great information, they also would show/model for the teacher how to teach these concepts herself. More importantly (according to Beckwith!) it would make the school psychologist more familiar to teachers and to students!

#### How Prospects Decide: Choosing the Familiar

There are multiple examples of the fact that prospects/clients make decisions based on familiarity (Beckwith, 1997). People choose what seems most familiar time and time again. Thus, Beckwith (1997) argues that familiarity breeds business and that service providers need to spread their work however they can. In other words, school psychologists need to get out into the schools (be visible!!) and make themselves very familiar to teachers. Then, teachers will choose to use the services of school psychologists! As noted above, spending time in classrooms can definitely help school psychologists become familiar to teachers. School psychologists also can become familiar by spending time in teachers's lounges, eating lunch with teachers, and by getting into the hallways and cafeteria as much as possible.

#### Focus on Buying, not Selling

Beckwith (1997) argues that "good marketing must focus on the buy," (p. 208). A client can be sold on a service but then chose not to purchase because it was too hard to buy the service. Make your service easy to buy. This can be extremely difficult for school psychologists because they often are not in the same school everyday. Thus, their services are not always accessible for teachers to buy, even if the teacher wishes to buy! School psychologists need to find create ways of making their services more accessible to teachers, of making their services easier to buy. One possibility might be for a school psychologist to make a point of getting to school a half hour before school starts. This time could be specified as time for teachers to come and share problems. Although school psychologists might not be at each school everyday, having a specified time to meet with teachers when they

# **Mandatory Reporting Of Autism Spectrum Disorders in West Virginia**

**By  
Charlotte D. Hays,  
Licensed Psychologist and Program  
Coordinator, Marshall University's  
Autism Training Center**

are at the school would hopefully make them more accessible and would communicate to the teachers that school psychologists really want to be a resource for teachers. Another way to be more accessible might be for school psychologists to leave a box envelope outside their office doors (if they have an office) in which teachers could leave slips of paper with their names written on. Then, when the school psychologist came to that particular school, he would know which teachers needed to talk to him and could make sure to approach those teachers sometimes during the day.

## Keeping the Client

Once a school psychologist has formed relationships with teachers within a school, it is extremely important to maintain those relationships. Remember, when selling a service, you're actually a relationship. Thus, it is extremely important for school psychologists to thank teachers for their time, to carefully manage teacher's expectations of the service so they don't become dissatisfied, to advertise successes (let them know what you are doing!), and to remain visible! Selling new roles and functions for school psychologists to teachers is definitely not an easy task. There are many systemic barriers (e.g., school psychology grouped with special education at the district level) and stereotypes (e.g., school psychologist simply test and place) to break down. However, individual psychologists can begin the change process at their respective schools by providing a broader range of services and by marketing these services effectively. π

## **WISC-IV - W-J III Correlations Project**

**By  
Charles Szasz**

**C**urrently there are no correlations for the WISC-IV and the W-J III. An effort has been underway since October to collect cases to compile correlations. Over 80 cases have been received but we need more before we can compile correlations. If you have any cases you wish to submit, please send W-J III computer scoring report along with the Verbal Comprehension, Perceptual Reasoning and Full Scale scores without the students' names to Charles Szasz, Kanawha County Schools, 200 Elizabeth Street, Charleston, WV 25311. Counties that participate will receive an update to the SLD program with the new correlations. π

**R**ecently, Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) became a "reportable condition" in West Virginia through Legislative Rule 64, series 7, category 11A (3.5.b.2.). As a result, beginning January 1, 2004, psychologists and doctors must report diagnostic information regarding any individual that receives a primary diagnosis included under Autism Spectrum Disorders. For the purpose of reporting, the primary diagnosis must be one of these five following disorders as defined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, Text Revision (DSM-IV-TR): Autism, Pervasive Developmental Disorder-NOS, Asperger's Syndrome, Rett's Syndrome, and Childhood Disintegrative Disorder. The individual with the disorder must also live in the of West Virginia.

West Virginia is the first state in the nation to establish an Autism Spectrum Disorders Registry. Four years ago, with the encouragement and support of West Virginia Senator Robert C. Byrd, the West Virginia Autism Training Center at Marshall University began an autism epidemiology program in collaboration with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). To further assist in tracking prevalence and incidence rates, the West Virginia Legislature established Autism Spectrum disorders as a reportable condition in public health in 2001. Reporting will be conducted by the West Virginia Autism Spectrum Disorders Registry (WVASDR) which is housed at and operated by the West Virginia Autism Training Center at Marshall University. As an agent for the state of West Virginia and public, WVASDR is fully compliant with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability (HIPAA). The Autism Registry became active January 1, 2004. For further information about the WVASDR, visit [www.marshall.edu/wvasdr](http://www.marshall.edu/wvasdr) or contact Cathy Jo Templeton, WVASD Registry Coordinator at 1-800-344-5115. π

**Charles Szasz, Editor**  
*Psych Perspectives*  
**P. O. Box 630**  
**Elkview, WV 25071**

**To:**