



The Psych Report

~A Message from the President~

Fellow Orange County School Psychologists, Greetings to all. I hope that you all have had a great start to the 2008-2009 academic school year. We continue to work very hard to provide OC School Psychologist with *professional development delivered in a practical and informative manner.* We have a lot going on at the OCASP this year.

First, our website is up and running!! You can all thank Veronica Olvera, Web Designer/Editor, for the great work she has done. Please visit us at www.ocasp.net for the latest information including upcoming events, newsletters, and other announcements.

Second, we had a terrific workshop presentation by Dr. Randy Busse on Psychopharmacology. We had a great turn out. Please visit our website to see pictures and comments that were shared with OCASP. We want to thank Starbucks of South Coast Plaza for donating coffee for this event and Mimi's Café of Laguna Hills for donating delicious muffins.

Third, this year's CASP Board Meeting was held in Sacramento. OCASP board members had the pleasure of attending this very important board meeting. Items of vital importance included the APA Model

Act. Please log on to www.casponline.org to learn more about how the Act can change your job description. CASP is fighting to keep this from impacting school psychologist. Christine Marsden has included further board updates and information under her Region IX report of this newsletter.

Forth, we had Doug Siembieda speak about the current state of school psychology in California. He spoke about CASP's involvement in current legislative issues, encouraged participants to join CASP, and spoke on the APA model act. We also had our first ever toy drive to support children in need and those affected by the recent wildfires. I am happy to say that we had a total of 29 donated toys!!! *Thank you OCASP members and participants!!!* These toys were donated to the Yorba Linda Fire Department which is partnering with the Salvation Army this holiday season.

Fifth, please join Team OCASP as we partner with Walk for Autism (see page 2). Join us as we are now forming *Team OCASP* and joining forces with other organizations to support Autism research. OCASP is excited to be part of efforts to support good causes in the community. Join us!

Sixth, we have two great workshops lined up for the Spring. We will be having an Academic Intervention Monitoring System (AIMS) workshop in February 2009. This will be very relevant as many of us are implementing RTI programs in our schools. We will also have a workshop looking at the Biological bases & neuropsychological assessment of Autism in April.

Thanks for all your support this year. I hope that you have a great and refreshing holiday season!

Pedro Olvera, PsyD, LEP
OCASP President

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- Derek Ihori, MS, NCSP—Web Master Liaison

WHAT I'VE LEARNED AS A SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST INTERN

~Libby Barnish, BA~

Chapman University Representative

I've already had some amazing and rewarding experiences in my short time in the field. In honor of all the struggling students, here is my top ten list of things I have learned (so far)...

1. **ASK AROUND.** If you're not sure about what districts take practicum and interns, or what districts have intern training programs, start asking around.
2. **GET INVOLVED.**...in your school's organization, in OCASP, in CASP or in NASP. Attend workshops. Just get involved. You'll learn more than you imagine....and run into some unique experiences in the process!
3. **ASK QUESTIONS.** Don't be afraid to ask a question. Ask your supervisor, ask the administrators at your sites, and ask your professors. If you stifle your question, you stifle an opportunity to learn.
4. **CONSULT YOUR CLASSMATES.** You'll come up with some really great ideas, learn from a friend's mistakes, and probably keep each other laughing along the way. All of this is good for your own mental health.
5. **DON'T JUST WAIT FOR OPPORTUNITIES, SEEK THEM OUT.** If you see a need for a counseling group or you see an opportunity to make a difference, then talk to someone who might be able to help you get started. Express interest.
6. **BE PREPARED.** This goes without saying, but be prepared for meetings, trainings, class. All of our interactions are with our potential employers.
7. **BE FLEXIBLE.** Be prepared for anything but be ready for any plans to be thrown out completely if a crisis should arise.
8. **DON'T STRESS OUT!** Some of us are better at this than others, but listen to your body and don't stress out. Do what you can and don't worry about what things you can't get to.
9. **IDENTIFY POSITIVES IN EVERY EXPERIENCE.** Find a way to laugh about a stressful situation and to learn from every experience. Some of the most difficult experiences offer the most rewarding teachings.
10. **LASTLY, WEAR SUNSCREEN.** Seriously, just take care of yourself. Try to eat healthy and continue to exercise. Make sure and set aside some time to do things that you enjoy and that relax you. Take a walk or a run. Go for a bike ride. Pet your dog. Call a friend. Stay healthy.

Happy Holidays! - *Libby*

Join OCASP in Supporting Walk Now For Autism

Team OCASP will be joining others on April 25th, 2009 at the Rose Bowl for a fundraising and awareness event supporting Autism Speaks' Walk Now for Autism.

Walk Now for Autism is the largest grassroots autism walk program in the United States.

The walk begins at 10:00 am.

"Never doubt that a small group of dedicated people could change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

- Margaret Mead

There will be children's activities, entertainment, and refreshments starting at 8:30 a.m.

If you're interested in joining Team OCASP, or simply supporting the team such as making a donation, please sign up at:

www.walknowforautism.org/losangeles/ocasp.

Walk for Lupus Now –October - Exposition Park in Los Angeles

Participating in the Lupus Foundation of America's **Walk for Lupus Now** gave me an opportunity to partake in an event raising funds to save lives from lupus, an autoimmune disease which affects more than 1.5 million Americans. It was a cool Saturday morning with many people of all ages and backgrounds supporting the event. Before starting the 5k walk, I made sure to load up with a banana and granola bar.



Vhenus, President-Elect & Libby, Chapman University Rep. pictured upper left corner.

After a touching speech by the honorary speaker, we were off. We completed three laps around Exposition Park enjoying the scenery of the museums and rose garden. While I do not know anyone personally diagnosed with lupus, I felt it was necessary to extend support to the many individuals and families who battle with lupus. The **Walk for Lupus Now** supports lupus research, education programs, and patient & family support services.

Joining OCASP

Still pondering on whether to join OCASP this year?

Here are some reasons to join:

- Network with other professionals
- Discounts on cutting edge workshops that also satisfy CEU's
- Be part of a innovative & dynamic professional organization
- Stay on top of current trends



OCASP Districts Needing Representatives

OCASP wants to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the entire county.

With this in mind, the call is out for OCASP district representatives!

Please contact OCASP President at polvera@apu.edu if you are interested in becoming a district representative.

Region IX Representative CASP Report by *Christine Marsden*

Hello there from Christine Marsden, CASP Region IX Rep.!!!

It's time for another CASP and local affiliate update.

The SoCal Affiliate (OCASP) is alive and doing very well. Under new leadership, President Pedro Olvera, and the ever expanding board, have been hard at work planning a new year for OCASP. The kickoff workshop presented by Dr. Randy Busse from Chapman University on Child & Adolescent Psychopharmacology was a dynamic success. Thank you Dr. Busse!

To celebrate School Psychology Week, a free workshop with lunch provided, was offered to school psychologists on December 3rd. The guest speaker was our very own CASP President Doug Siembieda. We had a great turnout. Thank you Doug for the informative session! Thank you also to everyone for joining us that day. OCASP members have unity and momentum!!!

Affiliate Leadership Day @ State Capitol

This Fall's State Capitol annual Leadership Day hosted by President Doug Siembieda and Affiliate Representative Jenny Jones provided much needed information for school psychologists. Affiliate members and board members from around the state attended.

- John Brady, President-elect, spoke on the issue of recruiting future leaders for CASP emphasizing the importance of reaching out and growing this leadership up through the local ranks.
- Lynn Aung of the Political Action Committee addressed the importance of the annual fundraising that goes toward our legislation efforts that support issues of importance to children and the educational community. She urged all affiliates to be thinking early about their donations for the Silent Auction, held annually at the Convention (this year in Riverside, CA).
- After a hearty lunch in the Capitol basement, Rick Simpson, Deputy Chief of Staff to Governor Schwarzenegger, spoke on issues regard-

ing the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). Its relevance and fairness continue to be debated regarding students in special education. Some students in the recent past have been covered by exemptions, but this does not apply to the next few years' cohort.

Attendees were then escorted on a tour of the Capitol building itself. If you have never visited the Capitol you are missing out on some tremendous architecture dating back to the late 1800's. There is a fabulous collection of worthy gallery portraits of the California governors. Don't miss Jerry Brown's unique portrait done in the Abstract Expressionistic style!

We were then escorted into the Senate and House chambers and saw a portrait of George Washington that was painted by the same artist who painted the portrait of our U.S. one dollar bill! Some of us also stopped by the lobby of the Governor's office to view a photograph of Maria and him, and even some Terminator collectibles ☺.

Please view website for continuation of this section.

~~Future Workshops~~

OCASP has scheduled the following exciting and informative workshops:

<u>WORKSHOP</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
1. AIMS WEB	Friday, February 6, 2009 ⇒ <i>Time TBA – Flyer to Come</i>	Placentia-Yorba USD, Boardroom
2. Biological Bases & Neuropsychological Assessment of Autism: A Primer for School Psychologists	April, 2009, Specific date TBA	Location TBA

~Visit us at www.ocasp.net for the most updated information regarding workshops~

QUALIFYING CRITERIA AND RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI)

By Derek Ihori, M.S., NCSP

While most practicing school psychologists are aware of and have a general knowledge of RTI, few are aware of the actual criteria that must be satisfied prior to qualifying a student for Special Ed services based on failure to respond to research-based procedures.

◆ Common myths include the following:

Myth #1: If we try something and it doesn't work, the student has not responded to interventions and therefore we can qualify him as having a Specific Learning Disability (SLD).

Myth #2: Progress monitoring is best practice, but is not really required.

Myth #3: No testing is required with RTI and therefore RTI is going to put psychologists out of business.

Contrary to the myths listed above, the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) issued guidelines in October 2006 clearly stating what criteria must be met prior to qualifying a student as having a Specific Learning Disability (SLD). Based on the OSEP guidelines, the IEP team must provide the following:

- * *Data that demonstrate that prior to, or as part of, the referral process, the student received appropriate instruction that was delivered by qualified personnel.*
- * *Data-based documentation (i.e. progress monitoring) of repeated assessments (such as Curriculum Based Measures) reflecting formal assessment of the student's progress.*

If the student does qualify as having an SLD, the team must document on the IEP the instructional strategies used and the data collected as well as documentation that the parents were made aware of the policies regarding the amount and nature of the data being collected, the interventions that were being implemented, and that they were notified of their right to request an evaluation.

Additionally, it is important to note that while the California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 56337 states that "in determining whether a pupil has a specific learning disability, a local educational agency may use a process that determines if the pupil responds to scientific, research-based intervention as a part of the assessment procedures," it continues to define a Specific Learning Disability as "a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or perform mathematical calculations." Based on this unchanged definition of SLD, a processing deficit continues to be a required component on the SLD eligibility criteria at this time.

Based on the above information, the facts regarding qualifying students under the category of SLD due to a lack of response to intervention include the following:

- *Not just any intervention can be used as a qualifying factor – interventions must be research-based.*
- *Progress monitoring is not just best practice – it is a required component of the evaluation.*
- *Testing for processing deficits continues to be necessary.*

Further, school psychologists now find themselves with the opportunity to be "in the trenches" with the general education teachers, providing consultation regarding research-based interventions, monitoring treatment fidelity, ensuring that progress monitoring is being conducted effectively, and evaluating the data. Finally, school psychologists may wish to educate themselves regarding the general education curriculum, various reading programs, and keep abreast of new research in order to better assist their schools with providing the highest quality of support to both the special and the general education population.

References

U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs. (2006, October 4). Identification of Specific Learning Disabilities. Retrieved March 9, 2008 from the World Wide Web: idea.ed.gov/frontend_dev.php/object/fileDownload/model/TopicalBrieffield/PdfFile/primary_key/23



Orange County Association of School Psychologists

MAILING ADDRESS:

Orange County Association of School Psychologists (OCASP)
650 N. Rose Dr. #303
Placentia, CA 92870

Visit us on the web for the latest news:

www.ocasp.net

MISSION STATEMENT

The Orange County Association of Psychologist (OCASP) is an organization of credentialed school psychologists, persons practicing in allied fields, and graduate students in school psychology training programs. OCASP offers its members effective in-services, newsletters to disseminate current information on educational/psychological issues, and a channel for discussion of improvement of professional practices within the school organization of pupil services.

A Practicum Student's Point of View

Life as a practicum student has been challenging and fun. I have learned a lot this year working under the supervision of a practicing school psychologist and I know I will be learning a lot more. All of the work I have put into my first year of study as a school psychology student is beginning to translate into my practical work experience. I see what the all-night study sessions are beginning to mean in the larger scheme of things. Studying about what school psychologists do is much different from actually practicing what a school psychologist does.

From my practicum work, I have found that multi-tasking is a very important part of the job. *Is it fair to say that a class in multi-tasking should be taught to graduate students to prepare for this career?*

Aside from the difficult balancing act of a school psychologist, I am balanced out when I am in class with fellow graduate students where we share and learn from each other. The camaraderie built within my cohort at Chapman University has shown me how important support from peers can be. Just to know that what I'm going through is shared by my cohorts is comforting. This group has made this journey fun. I can't wait to finish up the year and half that is remaining in my program at Chapman with the support of mentors and fellow graduate students!

*Kate McClain,
University Liaison*

OSP AWARD

JANUARY 9, 2009 is the deadline for the NASP Outstanding School Psychologist (OSP) Award.

JANUARY 9, 2009 is also the deadline for the NASP Lifetime Achievement Award.

For more information, please visit:

www.nasponline.org

We have provided a link to this website on our website, www.ocasp.net. By clicking on the Links Tab, you will see the various other organizations that pertain to school psychologists.

Please stay informed and do not hesitate to ask any of our board members questions when the need arises.