

Health Care (from p. 5)

there might be many "false positive" identifications of students as Learning Disabled. Adding the consideration of "processing deficits" provides another necessary element for a more appropriate differential diagnosis and allocation of limited resources.

Extended Contracts

Few school psychologists "punch a clock." School psychologists put in time beyond the contracted day for no compensation, although the extent of that commitment varies from person to person. Recently, a request for information about "extended contracts" was posted on OSPA@listbot.com. An ESD school psychologist posted the following response (with some modification):

"Our contract is for 190 days, which includes six paid holidays (i.e. XMAS, Thanksgiving, etc.). Last year (1999-2000), I was given approx. eight (8) days pay (by the ESD) during the year to complete outstanding psychological reports (after school hours). In addition, the

local district provided me three (3) days in late Aug. to finish reports from the previous school year.

The extra time was not part of the bargaining contract, but rather an extended contract agreement. This year (2000-01) is a different story. The contract remained the same, but not so the supervisor. Reports pending piled up over the last three months of the year as referrals more than doubled. Approx. half of all evaluations (30 of 62) were completed during the last three months. When the supervisor was alerted to the fact, the response (not a directive) was that completion of psychological evaluation reports was considered part of the job, according to the contract. Like completion of IEPs by teachers, I was expected to stay late or come in early to get the job done. At the time of this writing, an extended contact is not forthcoming."

Most folks in education are overworked and under funded and often find themselves vying with each other for limited resources to meet the needs of their students. How does one decide among #1 priorities?

Should guidance counselors provide counseling or write college letters of recommendation? Should case managers write IEPs or teach special education students? Should school psychologists do counseling, write IEPs, send for student records, and manage cases so that guidance counselors can counsel and special education teachers can teach? If so, when do school psychologists evaluate students and write reports?

In Conclusion

There is a saying, "It is better to know some of the questions than all of the answers." Your comments, questions and/or answers are encouraged.

ADHD Treatment (from p. 7)

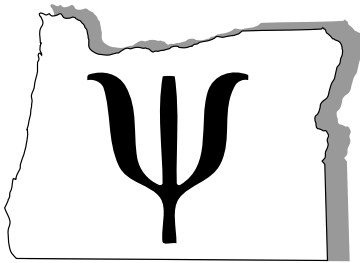
Other alternatives mentioned here fall into the "self-treatment" category, and there often is no adequate way to obtain information on their effectiveness. While stimulant medication continues to enjoy an 80 percent success rate, it is important to be aware of alternatives and to offer information to parents in search of natural treatments.

Oregon School Psychologists Association



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The Oregon School Psychologists Association provides leadership in creating a brighter future for all Oregon children through professional affiliation, collaborative problem-solving, and promotion of practices that are both innovative and based on solid psychological and educational research.



OSPA Bulletin

Newsletter of the Oregon School Psychologists Association

Vol. XXIII, No. 4

Summer 2001

Springfield's Alex Granzin Picked for President-Elect

Springfield school psychologist Alex Granzin was elected by OSPA members this summer to be association president for the 2002-2003 school year. Granzin will spend this year working with the OSPA Board as president-elect. He brings a wealth of experience, from a number of different professional areas, to the job.

Granzin's statement as a candidate told members that his primary interests in graduate school had been the prevention of reading failure and the application of applied behavior analysis in classroom settings. He set three priorities as president. The first two (seeing how we, as an association, can assist schools in solving the "reading riddle," and assisting schools in the implementation of research-based practices in behavior management) reflect his interest in helping schools implement research-based practices. "There is far too much academic failure in our schools," he said, "and special education is often not the best response." His

third, and more personal, priority entails a desire to be a more aggressive advocate for that under-served population of children with reading difficulties.



Alex Granzin

In addition to his work as a school psychologist, Granzin has taught a number of courses at the University of Oregon, including courses on instructional consultation and behavior management.

He was also one of the school psychologists to provide immediate counseling support after the shootings at Thurston High School in the spring of 1998. At that time, Granzin helped coordinate the services of over 200 counselors and mental health workers who donated their time to the crisis.

The president-elect was chosen as the OSPA School Psychologist of the Year for the 1999-2000 school year, an honor he shared with Georgene Inaba of Portland. He is also the author of one book and a number of articles in professional journals. His book, *Working Parents Can Raise Smart Kids*, was published by Parkland Press in 1999.

continues on p. 2

Positive Behavior Support: Changing Schools, Helping Students

by Jayanne Robbenbaum

(Reprinted from the Michigan Psych Report, Winter 2001)

We've all been involved in trying to help a stressed out, overloaded teacher with problem behavior whether it's scratching, hitting, biting, fighting, kicking, or screaming. Each of these behaviors causes even the best educators to reach for solutions to remediate the problems as they question why a child acts the way he or she does.

Traditional behavioral management viewed the individual as the problem and sought to "fix" him or her by quickly eliminating the challenging behavior. In addition,

school discipline has been typically marked by reactive approaches and has been targeted toward specific children with serious problem behaviors.

While there continues to be an appropriate place for this component of school policy, a balance between reactive disciplinary procedures and proactive, positive and supportive skill-building will likely improve both social skills and academics.

One way to achieve this balance is through Positive Behavior Support (PBS), a research-based approach supported by the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs

(OSEP). PBS views systems, settings, and lack of skill as part of the problem and works to change them. As such, PBS helps to reduce inappropriate behavior, teach more appropriate behavior, and provide contextual supports necessary for successful outcomes.

Essentially, PBS is a systemic, proactive and positive support by schools, parents and the community for the teaching and learning of successful student behavior to all students. PBS:

- Facilitates locally determined expectations

continues on p. 6

presidential "postscript"



As summer comes to a close, I hope some of you had time to take in a conference, but mostly relax and restore your spirits. I know that some state associations, such as Florida, plan activities that mix professional development with fun. For now OSPA

does its best with a fall and spring conference, both of which went very well this past year. Coming up in October, on inservice day the 12th, Jerry Sattler will present a full day in the Portland area. He'll bring copies of his two latest books and cover a wide range of issues that mirror the breadth of skills practiced by school psychologists. We hope to see you there.

Your board will be holding its annual September retreat in the Portland area. This time a full day will be spent on strategic planning with Sally Baas from NASP coming west to help us out. Please look on the back of your membership renewal and indicate up to three issues you would like OSPA to address as part of this activity. Your concerns are important.

One issue that I am interested in is the extension of developmental delay into school age populations as an eligibility category. You may know that states have the option to allow districts to go up to age nine or a lower age as determined by each state. Currently, Oregon Department of Education (ODE) is studying this option but it is not clear exactly who in Salem is doing the work on this. At a NASP presentation in Washington, D.C., the presenters indicated the NASP position is favorable on this option, especially since

each district has the choice to exercise it or not. If any of you have an interest or opinion in this matter I would appreciate hearing from you. My e-mail address is haskell@mind.net. The University of North Carolina is doing research on a national level about issues and concerns as well as tracking outcomes in the fifteen or so states that have permitted use of developmental delay as an eligibility category for school age children.

This is my last message as president, and as you read it I have already made way for your next president, Mike Safko, to step forward. I want to thank all those who worked hard to make this a good year for OSPA. In particular, there are several people who have contributed long and hard to OSPA who will be also stepping back. Laramie Palmer took on Treasurer this year even after many years of service and the fact she is retired now. Thank you Laramie. Fred Grossman came to Board meetings in addition to his duties as NASP delegate for eight years. See more about him on the facing page. His presence will be missed.

Phil Bowser made a convincing case that it was time to hand over the OSPA web page to someone else after getting the page up and running in magnificent style for the last few years. Dawna Warren did a fantastic job making your conferences happen as smoothly as they did; the feedback was very positive for both fall and spring events. A line or two is not adequate for these folks. Above all, each of them set a high standard for the level of commitment needed to make OSPA work for its members. You will all be missed as Board members.

And this leads to a call for others of you out there to please consider doing your part for a year or so. There are jobs that need doing and your involvement can make a difference.

Steve Haskell

President-elect (from p. 1)

Granzin is joined on the OSPA board by Colleen Caulfield, from Bend, who will begin a two-year term as treasurer. Caulfield was previously serving as chair of the Awards, Nominations, and Elections Committee. In the same election, association members passed the by-laws revision proposed by the executive board.

OSPA Public Relations chair Karen O'Brien is also changing roles on the board, as she moves to replace Fred Grossman as Oregon's delegate to the National Association of School Psychologists (see next page).

Fall Conference

Save Friday, October 12, for a day with Oregon's School Psychologists at the
Crowne Plaza, Lake Oswego
 (I-5, where it intersects with Hwy 217/ Kruse Way)

Featured Speaker
Jerome Sattler

see further details on the OSPA website:
www.ospaonline.com

guest article from state association colleagues

ADHD Treatment Alternatives

by Alan W. Brue, PhD, NCSP
 Reprinted with permission from the *Georgia Association of School Psychologists newsletter, Dialogue, Autumn, 1999*

School psychologists continually receive requests to evaluate students suspected of having attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). With an estimated 6 to 8 percent of school-aged children affected, we see our fair share of cases each year. Once identified, the majority of individuals are placed on a pharmaceutical regimen, typically stimulant medication. As the popularity of alternative health care continues to grow, however, many parents are choosing to use more natural treatments for their children. Thus, school psychologists should be aware of effective alternatives so they may offer suggestions to parents seeking this type of care. A number of these treatments are used, including neurofeedback, herbal medicine, and nutritional supplements.

NEUROFEEDBACK

Neurofeedback (i.e., EEG biofeedback) training has been applied to a number of neurological, psychological and psychosomatic conditions. This adjunctive procedure is limited to a particular aspect of the electrical activity of the brain, such as frequency, location, amplitude, or duration of specific electroencephalographic (EEG) activity. The EEG in children with ADHD tends to be of a larger amplitude, a condition more appropriate for a daydreaming state than a state in which a child is alert and focused. Neurofeedback has been found to remediate the underlying condition of physiological underarousal in hyperactivity in children and adolescents with ADHD. It is a method for repeatedly exercising the pathways of attention and impulse control, thereby facilitating their growth and development. The use of neurofeedback has resulted in increased attention, impulse control, and speed of information processing on the Test of Variables of Attention (TOVA). Behavior Assessment Scale for Children (BASC) questionnaires also confirm a reduction in ADHD symptoms.

HERBAL MEDICINE

The use of herbs has dramatically increased during the last 20 years. Herbal medicine offers a viable alternative treatment for a host of disorders. It has earned the attention of parents and medical professionals interested in finding an alternative to pharmacological treatment of ADHD. Research has identified two particular herbs, Ginkgo Biloba and lemon balm, that are useful in treating symptoms commonly associated with ADHD.

Ginkgo biloba is one of the oldest living tree species, dating back over 200,000 years. It increases blood circulation to the brain and increases oxygen levels in brain tissues. It has the ability to squeeze through even the narrowest of blood vessels to increase the supply of oxygen to the heart, brain, and all other body parts. Ginkgo is primarily used as a brain and mental energy stimulant, resulting in improved memory, mental clarity, mental efficiency, and alertness.

Melissa officinalis, or lemon balm, contains nerve principles that help restore the balance and function of the brain and nerve cells. Because it has a mild relaxing effect, it is widely used to treat depression that is the result of stress. Lemon balm has been used in the treatment of children's hyperactivity, excitability, anxiety, and nervous sensitivity.

NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS

Nutritional supplements are used to treat a variety of disorders including ADHD. They can be effective and produce few side effects. Because they are readily available, supplements are popular among parents wishing to self-treat their children with ADHD. Many supplements are used to treat symptomatology, and popular choices include Grapine, dimethylaminoethanol, L-Glutamine, and essential fatty acids.

Grapine is a high potency antioxidant known to cross the blood-brain barrier to project oxygen to the brain and central nervous system, resulting in improved mental alertness and amelioration of learn-

ing disabilities. Children with ADHD have found Grapine somewhat effective in decreasing their symptoms by normalizing brain function. While it is relatively new in the United States, it often is used in France to control symptoms of ADHD.

Dimethylaminoethanol (DMAE) is normally present in small quantities in our brains and is thought to improve memory and learning, intelligence, and to elevate moods. A diet high in these foods (mainly seafood) will provide higher than average levels of DMAE and choline to the brain, which serve as raw materials for the production of the neurotransmitter acetylcholine. By accelerating the brain's synthesis of this neurotransmitter, DMAE may aid in improving memory and learning, and has been shown to ameliorate hyperactivity and inattention.

L-Glutamine helps to create the transmitters in the brain that enhance learning and memory. Once inside the brain, it has the unusual ability to provide fuel for brain cells, thus improving mental alertness, and clarity of thinking and mood. Children with ADHD have displayed an improvement in attention after taking glutamine, and some believe glutamine and Ginkgo biloba are an effective combination that promotes concentration, memory, and on-task behavior.

Many children with ADHD cannot metabolize or absorb essential fatty acids (EFAs) normally. EFAs have been found in lower concentrations in the plasma polar lipids and in red blood cell total lipids of ADHD subjects. A deficiency of EFAs can contribute to a variety of physical changes, including an impaired ability to learn and recall information. Essential fatty acid supplementation has been shown to improve attention problems and hyperactivity as measured by the Revised Behavior Problem Checklist and performance tasks.

Summary neurofeedback arguably is the most effective of these alternative methods for children with ADHD, based largely on the number of empirical studies supporting improvement in ADHD symptoms. The

continues on p. 8

PBS, from p. 1

for prosocial behavior

- Includes a variety of strategies for building prosocial behavior as well as for reducing student violations of discipline standard

- Addresses academic and/or behavior problems through interventions guided by a functional assessment of behavior

- Adopts means of data-driven monitoring for implementation and effectiveness.

- Draws upon information from a nationwide variety of successful PBS model programs and leading research.

A synthesis of more than 100 research articles that involved individuals with various cognitive disabilities found that:

1) PBS is widely applicable to individuals with serious challenging behaviors.

2) Research in PBS is rapidly contributing to our knowledge of how to use the results of assessments and how to correct environmental deficiencies.

3) PBS is effective in reducing problem behavior by 80 percent in two-thirds of the cases.

4) Success rates are higher when intervention is based on prior functional assessment (Carr, as reported by the Beach Center on Families and Disability, 1998).

In fact, PBS in Michigan includes not only schools, but also communities as a whole. It is best used as a teaming approach involving students, families, teachers, support staff, school administrators, colleges and universities and community agencies to support any learner's academic or behavioral needs at all times and with all students.

Research has demonstrated that when PBS strategies are implemented school-wide, children with and without disabilities benefit by having an environment that is conducive to learning. They learn more about their own behavior, learn to work together, and support each other as a community of learners.

As a data-based method, PBS includes assessing learning and behavior problems comprehensively. An ecological approach focuses on the identification of the student's needs as well as the student's interaction within the school, home, and

community settings. Functional assessment of learning and/or behavior challenges is linked to an intervention. The effectiveness of the selected intervention is evaluated and reviewed, leading to data-based revisions.

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Within Michigan, the PBS initiative, Positive Behavior Support for ALL Michigan Students, is gaining momentum. The activities include:

- Supporting State Board of Education goals that address behavior and achievement

- Accumulating data identifying behavioral issues as a priority for school practitioners

- Including PBS in State Improvement Plan (SIP) and in State Improvement Grant (SIP) activities

- Supporting federal requirements for functional behavior assessment and behavior intervention planning for special education

- Providing ongoing training and capacity building for pilot projects in schools and communities

Though PBS was only initiated about two years ago, some major accomplishments have been achieved:

1) Six initial "sites of sustained learning" schools, both public and private, are implementing the philosophy and practice of PBS. A group of coaches is being trained to provide support at these sites.

2) To assist in the monitoring of both academic and behavior performance in school sites, web-based data management systems are being developed. Ottawa Intermediate School District is playing an important leadership role in this area.

3) A newly released document entitled "Positive Behavior Support for Young Children" was released at the Council for Exceptional Children March conference. It is a resource for parents/guardians, childcare providers, and others. This PBS foundation document was published by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (OSE/EIS) through the SIP/SIG. Dr. Frances Mueller of Oakland Schools and Dr. Mark Larson of Wayne State University are the main authors of the document.

4) Planning is underway for a major PBS conference. Support from the Great Lakes Area Regional Resource Center has made it possible to contract with keynote speakers who have expertise in PBS.

For more information about PBS, visit the SIP website at www.michigansipsig.match.org and www.pbis.org.

new OSPA web address:
www.ospaonline.com

OSPA Interest

Grossman Retires as NASP Delegate

by Phil Bowser

OSPA member Fred Grossman may hold the record for the most consecutive years as a NASP Delegate. And, due to recently installed term limits, this is a record that is likely to stand unchallenged. His final term of office expired on June 30 of this year, so this is a fitting time to review his accomplishments.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, Fred began his career in school psychology in 1977, when he obtained his Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He worked as a school psychologist in the Lincoln, Nebraska public schools, and as a faculty member at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln before taking a job with the Beaverton, Oregon, School District in 1990. He also teaches classes as adjunct faculty for Lewis and Clark college.

Fred was appointed by the NASP president to be the Oregon Delegate on July 1, 1993. The Delegate at that time had moved out of state and was thus no longer eligible to perform duties for Oregon. Fred was re-elected twice for two-year terms and then, as a result of NASP restructuring, served an additional two years. This gave him an unprecedented eight years in the office. During this time, Fred also represented Oregon's NASP members as a voting member of the OSPA Board of Directors. He was, moreover, assigned to a number of NASP committees and special projects:

- * Subcommittee of the Oregon Advisory Council on Special Education (SACSE)

- * Caseload Study Committee (June, 2000);

- * Invited reviewer of job analysis document for school psychologists, for ETS (March, 1999)

- * Publications Board (July, 1996-June, 1999)

- * Children's Fund Trustee (July, 1995-Present)

- * Ethics Committee, Chair (July, 1996-June, 2000)

- * Ethics Committee, Co-Chair (July, 1995-June, 1996)



* Ethics Committee, Regional Representative (July, 2000-Present)

NASP Delegates set the Association's policies. Twice a year, Fred received a large agenda book containing background information on all of the issues scheduled for the Delegate Assembly. Items that required his debate and vote included dues increases, the creation of the Minority Scholarship Fund, the NASP budgets, discussions about whether regional meetings should continue, convention locations, and approval of official position statements. Under his leadership, Oregon has become more visible and influential as a leader at the national level. Fred's best memories are of the friends he has made and the opportunity to work side-by-side with NASP officers on issues of critical national importance. He notes it has been "a worthwhile experience in every way imaginable."

Karen O'Brien was recently elected to replace Fred as Oregon's NASP Delegate, so the task of attending the July Delegate Assembly was hers. What does Fred plan to do with the free time made available by hanging up his Delegate hat? More travel, more opportunity to pursue other interests, and the chance to make a genuine attempt to maintain a better balance among work, play, and family.

(photo: Fred Grossman gets appreciation, plaque from NASP President Scott Poland)



The *OSPA Bulletin*, the official publication of the Oregon School Psychologists Association, is published four times a year and distributed to members as a membership benefit. OSPA is a nonprofit, non-partisan, educational association of professional school psychologists. It is dedicated to providing for the educational and mental health needs of all children and to advocating for their achievement of independence, dignity, and purpose of life.

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The *OSPA Bulletin* invites contributions. Professional issues and news, articles, questions, reviews, letters and graphic works should be sent to David Streight, 7735 SW 87th, Portland OR, 97223, or streight@rsiss.org. Changes of address should be sent to Brian Craig, Membership Chairperson, 2727 Old Fort Rd., Klamath Falls OR, 97601, or bcraig@cvc.net.

Bulletin deadlines for future issues:

Fall, October 15, 2001

Winter, December 1, 2001

On the Job: It Ain't Always Easy

A question of money...

By Vinny Martin, NCSP
OSPA Health Care Coordinator

"It appears to me that in Ethics, as in all other philosophical studies, the difficulties and disagreements, of which history is full, a mainly due to a very simple cause: namely to the attempt to answer questions, without discovering precisely what question it is which you desire to answer."

George Edward Moore (1873-1953)
Principia Ethica [1903], preface

During the past school year, there has been lively debate about school psychologists as "the best trained health care providers in schools," and their delivery of a "comprehensive service delivery model," based upon Blueprint II. Forums for discussion have included this Bulletin, the listserv, a panel discussion at OSPA's spring conference, and a "social" gathering for Portland area school psychologists. An admittedly informal biased interpretation of feedback from these discussions is that many school psychologists experience periodic angst reconciling expectations (what school psychologists have to offer) with the realities of their employment (limited resources). As a concession, one colleague suggested advocating not for "best practice," but "best possible practice."

Two understandings appeared to emerge from events of the past year. One is that the functioning of a school psychologist is dramatically affected by the system within which we operate and the other is that collegial understanding and support is essential in order to improve that system. Some macro and micro cases in point might serve as illustrations.

Macro Money Matters

Jim Jeffords, the 67-year-old U.S. Senator from Vermont, left the GOP this June to become an Independent. For the first time in U.S. history, control of the Senate shifted from one party (Republicans) to another (Democrats), not as a result of an election. The straight simple answer to "Why?" is money, money for special education.

At the inception of PL 94-142 in 1976, then Congressman Jefford's support for the legislation expected the federal government to pick up 40 percent of the costs of educating the disabled. Time tells us that the federal legislation has been largely an "unfunded mandate," leaving states and local school districts to pick up over 85 percent of the costs for special education.

Jeffords believed the recent federal budget surpluses would finally allow a larger portion of the Individuals with Disabilities Act mandate to be funded. He was overly optimistic, if not dead wrong. Jeffords fought his last legislative good fight by forcing the Senate to reduce President Bush's \$1.6 trillion tax cut to below \$1.3 trillion. The \$300 billion difference was to go to education and half of it to special education over the next ten years.

However, when the budget bill came back in mid-April from the House-Senate conference committee (from which Jeffords had been excluded by his then fellow Republicans), the 300 billion was gone. Regarding his bolt from the GOP, Jeffords recalled, "That's it...It wasn't a final decision at that point, but it just stood out."

Now with the Democrats in control of Congress, Jeffords and other like-minded legislators will have better representation on committees, such as the House-Senate budget committee, from which he was excluded.

The tax cut bill was passed while Jeffords was still a Republican and married couples across the nation are receiving a check for up to \$600 some time this summer. The money might better have been spent for education, special education.

Micro Medicaid Madness

At a time when I was pinching pennies more than today, I decided to keep track of all the sales tax I paid during a year to see if I paid more than the standard deduction allowed based upon my salary (New York State has a 7% sales tax). After a year of saving receipts, the result was that I basically wasted my time from a financial standpoint. However, I did have the satisfaction of knowing that saving receipts did not make a difference in my taxes. herefore, as an approved Medicaid service provider, I wanted to know if keeping track of my services to Medicaid eligible students was worth my time and effort. It was. Here are some data about a hypothetical school psychologist working through the ESD for a local school district.

Medicaid reimbursement is made for either evaluations (i.e. activities associated with the assessment process including meetings and report writing) or ongoing services (i.e. counseling, consultation with staff/parents, etc.). Total reimbursement limits per eligible student for all service providers are 144 units/year (36-hrs. total) for evaluation activities and 264 units/month (66-hrs. total) for ongoing services. A unit is 15 min. and the reimbursement rate established by the ESD is approx. \$22.50/unit (\$90/hr.). This is slightly below the state's cap for per unit reimbursement. The ESD established the per unit reimbursement rate based upon a number of factors to include: 1) average salary of all services providers in a particular category (i.e. school psychologist), 2) service provider length of contract (i.e. 190 days/yr.), 3) indirect costs (i.e. state Medicaid dept. costs) and, 4) agency costs for billing (i.e. ESD).

After the state OMAP takes its cut (65%) to administer the program, approx. 35% of reimbursed funds are returned to the ESD. 17 1/2 percent goes to the ESD School Age Special Education (SASE) Dept. and the ESD returns the other 17 1/2 percent to the local school district. If you are not already asleep, you soon will be, unless you throw cold water on your face and keep reading. Examples of reimbursement follow (these numbers will vary, based upon the actual time spent in a case):

Evaluations:

Activity	Unit/15 min.	Rate/Unit	Total billed	ESD/Dist.	cut
(17-1/2 % ea.)					
Record review	2.00	22.50	45.00	7.88	7.88
Tel. wt. Parent	2.00	22.50	45.00	7.88	7.88
Staff Mtg.	2.00	22.50	45.00	7.88	7.88
Testing	12.00	22.50	270.00	47.25	47.25
Score/Inter.	4.00	22.50	90.00	15.75	15.75
Staff Mtg.	2.00	22.50	45.00	7.88	7.88
Par. Conf.	4.00	22.50	90.00	15.75	15.75
IEP Mtg.	4.00	22.50	90.00	15.75	15.75
Rept. Prep.	12.00	22.50	270.00	47.25	47.25
Totals	44.00	22.50	1,080.00	173.36	173.36

Ongoing Services (i.e. Counseling/consultation)-filed on form 110

Activity	Unit/15 min.	Rate/Unit	Total billed	ESD/Dist.	cut
(17-1/2 % ea.)					
Counseling	2.00	22.50	45.00	7.88	7.88
Staff Mtg.	2.00	22.50	45.00	7.88	7.88
IEP mtg.	4.00	22.50	90.00	15.75	15.75
Tel. wt. Parent	1.00	22.50	22.50	3.94	3.94
Counseling	2.00	22.50	45.00	7.88	7.88
Comm. Agency	1.00	22.50	22.50	3.94	3.94
Totals	12.00	22.50	270.00	47.25	47.25

Based upon the above, cost/benefit projections could be made with regard to the hiring of either an entry level school psychologist at \$45,000/yr. (includes benefits) or a school psychology intern at \$15,000/yr. (Services provided by interns are not Medicaid reimbursable, but they may engaged in activities which would allow a licensed school psychologist to provide services to a Medicaid eligible student, who might not otherwise be provided service.)

A school psychologist whose salary cost is \$45,000./yr. would need to generate approximately \$87,000 (\$29,000. for an intern) in reimbursable Medicaid expenses to cover employment expenses.

Given the above figures and assuming an eight (8) hr. work day, a student could be provided with \$252.00 of Medicaid reimbursable services each day (32 units at 22.50 per unit=\$252.00/8 hrs.).

That is \$1260./week, \$5,040./month, and \$50,400./year. Theoretically, a full time school psychologist could be reimbursed for a full salary, if he/she worked exclusively with Medicaid eligible students. In a takeoff to the saying, "You don't have to be crazy to talk to a psychologist, ...but it helps." ...You need not be Medicaid eligible to benefit from psychological services, ...but it pays.

Resourceful Recommendations

School psychologists have often been (erroneously) considered gatekeepers to Special Education services. Psychological reports and their recommendations are heavily weighted to the extent that inordinate pressure is placed on psychological evaluations to provide in depth information and analyses, but not at a price which might tax existing school district resources and cause administrators sleepless nights. In these days of limited resources,

what is good for the goose will probably leave the gander without.

Unacceptable wording in the recommendations section of some school psychologists' reports has prompted delay in publication, directives to omit wording, "fill in the blank" template reports, and a variety of other attempts to maintain control of resources. While not quite the comic relief afforded by the graveyard scene from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, the following test has been unearthed to assess a school psychologist's recommendation resourcefulness.

Rank order the following psychological report sample recommendations according to usefulness (correct answers will not be published in the next issue):

a) The results and recommendations of this report should be considered carefully with other multidisciplinary team evaluations in order allow for consistency of opinion and to determine educational programming commensurate with Johnny's functioning.

b) Johnny might best benefit from a multi-sensory approach, which remediates his deficits, while allowing him to capitalize on his strengths, thus allowing him to compensate for deficits whenever they manifest themselves, despite individually designed instruction. c) Educational experiences should be geared to Johnny's instructional levels to avoid unnecessary frustrations, while providing appropriate challenges. Cross-referenced programs from product providers should help assure proper grade level placement.

d) Johnny should be provided with social and emotional experiences, which will allow him to develop a healthier self-concept as a basis for enhancing his interpersonal relationships, but still allow him to feel better about himself, even if those relationships don't materialize as expected. e) All assessments (by their inanimate nature) are limited in scope and sequence and, therefore, it may be necessary to re-evaluate Johnny upon publication of anxiously awaited updated versions of the test instruments used in this evaluation. Heuristic considerations are best left to the future. f) A copy of this report may be made available (upon request) after review by the proper authorities for content compatibility with available resources.

After hours of assessment and consultation in an attempt to answer a simple referral question, "Does Johnny have a disability?" doesn't it make sense for a school psychologist to suggest, "Johnny is anticipated to be referred to the IEP/eligibility team for consideration of a possible disability designation (i.e. Learning Disabled) and possible special education programming (i.e. tutorial class, counseling, etc.)." Such wording appears to give some guidance as to the school psychologist's intentions, while not usurping the authority of the IEP/eligibility team. However, such wording is often perceived as problematic due to mention of a specific eligibility and placement option. "LD or not LD?" That is the question.

The bottom line is the financial bottom line. Some school districts maintain a one-and-one-half standard deviation (22.5 points) L.D. discrepancy cutoff solely to keep costs down. Sometimes, discussion of "processing deficits" is a luxury. Even with a 23-point (rounded up for obvious reasons) discrepancy criteria,

continues on next page

continues on p. 8