



The Texas School Psychologist

*A partner on the path to student success*

**Texas Association of School Psychologists**

Volume 31, Number 4

www.txasp.org

Winter 2018

## President's Message

*G. Thomas Schanding, Jr., President*

### TASP Elected Executive Board:

#### **Area I Representative**

Jenna Becker

#### **Area II Representative**

Cammaron Trujillo

#### **Area III Representative**

David Kahn

#### **Area IV Representative**

Cassandra Hulsey

#### **Area V Representative**

Jessica Greve

#### **Area VI Representative**

Christy Chapman

#### **Graduate Student Representative**

Kristin Streich

#### **Past President**

Brook Roberts

#### **President**

Thomas Schanding

#### **President-Elect**

Art Hernandez

#### **Secretary**

Kelsey Theis

#### **Treasurer**

Stephanie Barbre

#### **Treasurer-Elect**

Curt Johnson

### TASP Appointed Executive Board:

#### **Awards & Honors Chair**

Gill Strait

#### **Convention Chair**

Jenna Becker

#### **Government & Professional Relations**

Cassandra Hulsey

#### **Historian**

Ashley Arnold

#### **TASP Journal Task Force**

Jeremy Sullivan

#### **Membership Chair**

Kelsey Theis

#### **NASP State Delegate**

Laurie Klose

#### **Newsletter Editor**

Daniel McCleary

#### **Professional Development**

Gill Strait

#### **Public Information & Relations**

Daniel McCleary

#### **School Psychology Trainers**

Sarah Mire

#### **Webmaster**

Brook Roberts

It has been an honor to serve as the President of TASP this year. I am so grateful to work in such a wonderful profession and represent the important issues to you as well as children, families, and schools. I also want to thank all of the Executive Board members of TASP – you guys have made this an amazing year.

TASP had a very busy year. I would like to take a moment to highlight some of the activities of 2018.

TASP held its first joint **Summer Institute** with our friends, the **Arkansas School Psychology Association** in Texarkana. We were happy to offer some great professional development and make new friends (or catch up with old friends). We are currently working to solidify our plans for another joint Summer Institute with our friends at the **Louisiana School Psychology Association** for the upcoming summer!

TASP board members worked extensively with various school safety committees in Austin following the tragic school shooting in Santa Fe ISD. TASP met with key legislators and stakeholder groups to discuss the importance of not only physical safety of schools but ensuring the psychological safety of our students, families, and school personnel.

At the October board meeting, TASP took important steps to further support school psychologists in their work. We voted to create the **Texas School Psychology Safety and Crisis Committee**. This new

committee will be committed to providing up-to-date information to the TASP Executive Board, serve as a support liaison to local districts experiencing a crisis event, and provide consultation to districts and Educational Service Centers regarding school safety and crisis practices.

You talked, and we listened. TASP Board members also voted to create the **TASP Shortage Task Force**. This Task Force is charged with studying issues related to the shortage of school psychologists in Texas and providing recommendations to the board that will support the work of school psychologists and increase our numbers in Texas.

As always, TASP is already hard at work preparing for the 2019 **86<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislative Session**. One of our top priorities will be addressing the sunset of the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists. TASP supports the creation of the Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council as the new licensing agency for providers of school-based psychological services. We are also working to help support funding for schools; social-emotional learning TEKS; and creating safe, supportive environments for students.

We know that this upcoming year will be a great year, and look forward to further working with you to ensure that Texas knows what school psychologists can do. Enjoy the holidays everyone, and keep up the great work!

*G. Thomas Schanding, Jr.*  
TASP President, 2018

# Treasurer's Report

We are nearing the end of the 2018 fiscal year! We had a successful Fall Convention in October and await our totals for profits and expenditures. We thank each and every one of you for your support and attendance. If you did not make it this year, we hope to see you next year.

Most areas in the TASP budget continue to remain within budget at the present time. I am excited to see the final year-end totals and I expect our efforts in being fiscally responsible will pay off. We have now surpassed our projected income for membership this year. In fact, we have surpassed last year's total. That is great news! It is motivating for us as an association to see our membership increase and it reminds us that what we are doing is important and meaningful.

As our fiscal year comes to a close, so does my term as the TASP treasurer. When I was first approached with the idea of running for treasurer-elect, I was apprehensive. Being the treasurer is a very involved position with a significant amount of responsibility. Probably more work than all of my other former positions combined! However, I quickly realized that I love being the treasurer. It connects me with our members and the association itself. It has been an honor to serve as the treasurer, but I have no doubt the incoming treasurer will be great. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at [treasurer@txasp.org](mailto:treasurer@txasp.org).

*Stephanie Barbre*

Treasurer



University of Texas at San Antonio

## School Psychology Program

The Department of Educational Psychology at UTSA is pleased to offer the Master of Arts program in School Psychology. The program includes coursework and field-based experiences consistent with guidelines provided by the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists and the National Association of School Psychologists. Most courses are offered in the evening at the UTSA Downtown Campus, and full-time and part-time tracks are available. Application deadlines are as follows: July 1st for the Fall, November 1st for the Spring, and April 1st for the Summer. Students are currently completing their practicum experiences with the following sites: Alamo Heights ISD, Atascosa-McMullen Cooperative, Bexar County Academy, Boerne ISD, George Gervin Academy, San Antonio ISD, San Antonio Special Programs Cooperative, Somerset ISD, and South San ISD. Students are currently completing their internship experiences with the following sites: AIM Consulting, Alamo Heights ISD, Atascosa-McMullen Cooperative, Autism Treatment Center, Belton ISD, Boerne ISD, East Central ISD, George Gervin Academy, Granbury ISD, Heartland Special Education Cooperative, Katy ISD, and San Antonio ISD.

For more information, please contact Dr. Jeremy Sullivan ([jeremy.sullivan@utsa.edu](mailto:jeremy.sullivan@utsa.edu))



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For more information please contact Dr. Laurie McGarry Klose ([lklose@trinity.edu](mailto:lklose@trinity.edu))  
or Sonia Mireles ([smireles@trinity.edu](mailto:smireles@trinity.edu)) at 210. 999.7501.

<http://www.trinity.edu/departments/Education/index.asp>

## School Psychology Program

The University of Houston-Clear Lake's College of Human Sciences and Humanities offers a Specialist in School Psychology (SSP). Approved by the National Association of School Psychologists, the UHCL School Psychology program seeks to prepare students to become Licensed Specialists in School Psychology (LSSPs) and Nationally Certified School Psychologists (NCSPs).

Students gain knowledge and skills aligning with national standards such as:

- assessment for academic, behavioral, developmental, and social-emotional functioning;
- evidence-based prevention and intervention services for academic, behavioral, and social-emotional functioning;
- crisis prevention/intervention; and
- consultation and collaboration with schools and families.

Students complete courses with outstanding faculty and have hands-on training in the UHCL Psychological Services Clinic, school-based practicum, and the capstone, paid school-based internship.

Applications should be submitted by January 25<sup>th</sup>.

<http://www.uhcl.edu/schoolpsychology>

For more information, contact Dr. Thomas Schanding ([schandingjr@uhcl.edu](mailto:schandingjr@uhcl.edu)).



# University of Houston Clear Lake

The choice is clear.

# Children's Assistance for Living Committee (CALC)

The 2018 Children's Assistance for Living Committee (CALC) chose Heroes for Children to be the recipient of donations received at TASP's 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Convention. Heroes for Children advocates for and provides financial and social assistance to families with children (0-22 years) battling cancer.



Donations from this year's Fall Convention are in and TASP members donated a total of \$894! Great job, members! Your donations will benefit more than 5,000 families in Texas that are in need of Heroes for Children's financial and social assistance programs.

There is no other organization that provides direct and immediate assistance to families with such ease. Heroes for Children works to restore normalcy and bring comfort during each family's journey. Thank you TASP members, for helping us support these families so they do not have to fight alone!

Heroes for Children help families battling pediatric cancer all over Texas, and may be a helpful resource for a child that you are working with. If you are interested in continued support for Heroes for Children, or wish to learn more about this wonderful organization, please go to their website at [www.heroesforchildren.org](http://www.heroesforchildren.org).

*Jessica Greve*

Area V Representative  
CALC Member

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## Government & Professional Relations Update

TASP has officially adopted a 2019 Legislative Platform to guide our advocacy efforts for the upcoming legislative session. Those of you who attended the Keynote presentation at Fall Convention were introduced to our platform. We will be working hard to address solutions to the LSSP shortage, promote research-based practices in school safety, and ensure that LSSPs are equitably represented if TSBEP is consolidated into the proposed Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council (TBHEC). Our agenda is ambitious, but so are we! If you are interested in participating in TASP's advocacy work, please reach out to me at [govtrelations@txasp.org](mailto:govtrelations@txasp.org). The upcoming legislative session begins in January and we are gearing up for an exciting ride!

*Cassandra Hulsey*

Government & Professional Relations

## Area III Update

Greetings Area III members! It was so good to see many of you at TASP's 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention. Each annual conference gets better, and this year's conference was no exception. Between the regular convention sessions and the mini skills sessions, there was something available for everyone. In particular, there were sessions for LSSPs who want to redefine their role by taking on more administrative duties and becoming involved in program evaluation. If you have not already done so, mark your calendars for the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention, which will be on October 22-24, 2019, in Houston at the Westin Galleria.



This year we are planning the Summer Institute in collaboration with the Louisiana School Psychology Association. Stay tuned for the dates and location, and make plans to attend. The focus of the Summer Institute will be the PREP<sub>a</sub>RE School Safety and Crisis Preparedness Curriculum. For those of you who have not attended Workshop 1 or Workshop 2 of the PREP<sub>a</sub>RE Curriculum, Summer Institute will provide you with an affordable option for completion. For those who are already PREP<sub>a</sub>RE certified, the Summer Institute will provide you with the opportunity to complete the Trainer of Trainers workshops, so you can go back and schedule Workshop 1 and 2 trainings in your District.

Thank you for being loyal members of TASP. Without you, TASP would not be able to advocate for the profession. Our state legislators have started drafting bills for the upcoming 2019 legislative session. The leadership of TASP is doing everything we can to ensure that bills adopted have a positive impact on our work and our students. TASP needs the support of all LSSPs during this crucial time. Continue to encourage your colleagues who are not currently TASP members to consider joining. We are only as strong as our membership, so let us work together to ensure that every LSSP in Area III is a member of TASP. Please contact me if there is anything I can do to assist you in your efforts to recruit your colleagues as new members.

*David Kahn*

## DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

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[www.uh.edu/school-psychology](http://www.uh.edu/school-psychology)

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## Area IV Update



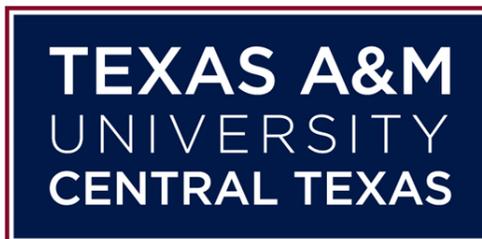
The Texas 2019 legislative session will begin in just a couple of months! TASP has adopted a legislative platform focusing on school safety, representation in the proposed Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council (TBHEC), and the school psychologist shortage. As I have mentioned to you before, we in Area IV are conveniently located in proximity to our state capitol, which affords us more opportunity (and responsibility) to participate in advocacy. A new opportunity has risen with the creation of the TASP 2019 Sunset Task Force, which will focus advocacy efforts surrounding the proposed consolidation of TSBEP into the TBHEC.

The purpose of the TASP 2019 Sunset Task Force will include the following:

- 1) Examine issues related to the Sunset of the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists;
- 2) Work to promote the association's position regarding the creation of the Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council in conjunction with allied mental health associations;
- 3) Coordinate efforts with the TASP Legislative Liaison; and
- 4) Provide updates to the TASP Executive Board regarding progress on legislative activities related to Sunset.

The Sunset Task Force will be chaired by the TASP GPR Chair and will include the Legislative Liaison and 3-5 regular and/or student TASP members within the Central Texas area. These regular/student members will provide support to the Chair in the form of helping conduct surveys, meeting with identified legislators, and assisting in preparing reports/communications to the TASP Executive Board and TASP general membership. This task force is expected to last through the end of 2019 and is primarily directed at recruiting members within the Austin area who will be more able to respond to action at the capitol if needed. **If you are interested in serving on this task force as a regular or student member, please contact me at: [area4@txasp.org](mailto:area4@txasp.org).** Help us ensure equitable representation for school psychologists!

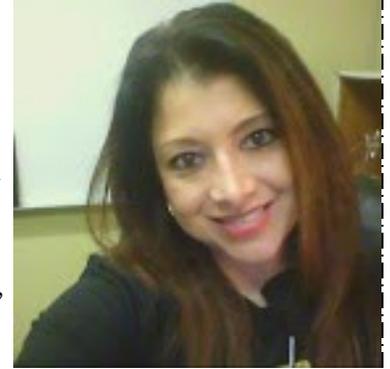
*Cassandra Hulsey*



Texas A&M University – Central Texas School Psychology program is accepting applications for their Specialist Degree in School Psychology (SSP) program. Interested applicants should hold a Bachelors degree in Psychology or a closely related field and be dedicated to improving the lives of students and schools. The SSP program is 63 graduate hours and prepares students to become a Licensed Specialist in School Psychology in the state of Texas, or seek licensure as a School Psychologist in other states. The program includes extensive training in assessment, counseling, consultation and internship experiences that help apply classroom learning to real life problems. Send letters of inquiry to: Dr. Cody Lapiere, LSSP, 1001 Leadership Place, Killeen, Texas 76549 or [lapiere@tamuct.edu](mailto:lapiere@tamuct.edu)

## Area V Update

Thank you for attending the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Convention in Dallas! This year, we had another great opportunity to meet our CPD requirements with high quality speakers and excellent sessions. As always, it is wonderful to see so many familiar fellow LSSPs all together. For those of you that attended, thank you for taking the time! We know all too well how difficult it can be to take time away from your caseload and campuses. If you were not able to attend this year, we hope to see you in Houston at the Westin Galleria on October 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Also, please stay tuned for more details on 2019s Summer Institute.



We also thank Jule Siegel, Executive Director of Heroes for Children, for speaking about this wonderful organization before this year's Keynote. Thank you to all who donated to their cause! If you would like to further donate to this organization or would like to learn more about their services, visit their website at [www.heroesforchildren.org](http://www.heroesforchildren.org). They not only provide services for children battling cancer in the Dallas area, but also all over Texas! As LSSPs it can make a difference to be informed of the type of support that is available for families in need.

If you have any questions or comments about TASP or the convention, feel free to email me! I would love to hear from you! Stay tuned for further updates in January after our next board meeting, and enjoy the holidays!

*Jessica Greve*

## TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

*The rising STAR of Texas*

**Texas State University offers a Specialist in School Psychology (SSP) degree in school psychology, approved by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and accredited by the International School Psychology Association (ISPA).**

The Texas State School Psychology program is one of the oldest school psychology programs in the state of Texas and endorses the scientist-practitioner training model. Texas State offers advanced training opportunities in the recognition and diagnosis of autism spectrum disorders as well as advanced training opportunities in bilingual school psychology. The deadline for applying to the school psychology program at Texas State University is mid-February. Application information may be found at:

<http://www.txstate.edu/clas/schoolpsychology/Admissions-Information.html>

**For more information, please contact: Paul B. Jantz, Ph.D.**

[Pj16@txstate.edu](mailto:Pj16@txstate.edu)

Coordinator, School Psychology Program

## Area VI Update

It was wonderful to meet so many of you in October at our TASP Fall Convention in Dallas! We had some impressive speakers and were thrilled to have such a great turnout. For those of you who were not able to attend, we hope that you can make it next year...we missed you!



Whew, we have been busy in Area VI this fall! Two of the biggest areas that we have focused on are trauma-informed care and collaboration with community agencies and organizations. Stephanie Barbre met with Dr. Gomez, an expert in the field of trauma at Texas Tech, to consider opportunities for trauma informed practices in schools. We hope that this may impact training opportunities in our area, as many of our districts have expressed interest (and a high need!) in this area.

Lubbock ISD LSSPs recently presented on trauma-informed care to teachers for professional development, and the district has rolled out a new risk assessment and school safety initiative, including the addition of a director of school safety and security. LSSPs have been included in the conversations regarding school safety and are being heard! Our hope is that similar movements are occurring in your districts in this important time for ensuring the safety of our students and staff. I would love to hear about what you all are doing in the interest of school safety and trauma-informed care!

I have the honor of recently becoming the secretary and charter member of the newly formed Lubbock Llano Lions Club, which places a heavy focus on serving individuals with disabilities. I am so excited to see what this committed group of professionals will do for our disability community and how we can partner with LSSPs, social workers, and others in schools across our region!

I have had the opportunity to meet with several community partners, including staff from Region 17 ESC and the Burkhart Center for Autism at Texas Tech, to determine how we can collaboratively serve our students. We hope to begin meeting with organizations from many facets of our community who serve those with disabilities in order to share ideas and goals. I believe that these community partnerships are critical to the success of our students, from birth through adulthood.

With the holidays swiftly approaching, I wish you all a time to relax with family and friends, to refresh and take care of yourselves, and to reignite the fires within you that may have smothered over time. We need you, your students need you, and the profession of school psychology needs you. Wishing a wonderful holiday season to you all!

*Christy Chapman*

# Election Results

The votes for the 2018 TASP Election have been counted and candidates were notified of the results. Congratulations to the following members whose new terms on the TASP Executive Board will begin January 1, 2019:

President-Elect: Stephanie Barbre  
Treasurer-Elect: Kristin Streich  
Area I Representative: Jenna Becker  
Area III Representative: David Kahn  
Area V Representative: Jessica Greve  
Graduate Student Representative: Kassi Gregory

It has been an honor serving the association and the profession during the past few years, and I look forward to the growth of the profession and our members as TASP continues to partner to achieve student success.

*Brook Roberts*

Past President



  
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or **Mr. Brook Roberts** at [brook.roberts@ttu.edu](mailto:brook.roberts@ttu.edu)

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# Graduate Student Corner

Happy winter to all our wonderful TASP graduate students! I am happy to say that we have all officially survived the fall semester.

As most of you can attest, the 2018 TASP Annual Fall Convention was a great success. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting so many of you at the graduate student session and had a wonderful time hearing about all of your successes to date. I would like to give a very special thank you to our fellow graduate student, Jesse Robinson, from the University of Houston-Clear Lake doctoral program, for helping us learn what to expect on the Praxis and how to seek licensure and internship placement.

Additionally, I would like to recognize our 2018 TASP Graduate Student Scholarship recipients, Behnaz Darban and Amy Gorniak. Both Behnaz and Amy have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement as well as a desire to continue building their professional skill set and assist children and adolescents in attaining success. Congratulations to you both!

As we look forward to the spring semester, many of us have the Praxis exam and internship interviews on the horizon, TASP is here to help. The graduate student session presentation, as previously mentioned, provides several resources for Praxis study material and internship tips. Feel free to download the presentation handout from the conference webpage.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for having selected me to represent you on the TASP board two years in a row. Serving on the board has been an outstanding experience, and I am grateful to you all for having been given the opportunity to serve you in this capacity. Have a wonderful winter and engage in some much deserved self-care, and enjoy the holiday season!

*Kristin Streich*



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**For more information:** [baylor.edu/SOE/edp/schoolpsychology](http://baylor.edu/SOE/edp/schoolpsychology)

**Dr. Alex Beaujean, program director:** [Alex\\_Beaujean@baylor.edu](mailto:Alex_Beaujean@baylor.edu)

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# TASP 2018 Awards and Honors

The annual TASP Awards Ceremony was held on October 25th, 2018. Congratulations to the 2018 award recipients—TASP appreciates their outstanding service delivery and contributions to school psychology. The recipients and their contributions are described below:



**Outstanding Service to the Profession - Dr. Cynthia Riccio** is a professor and doctoral training director for Texas A&M's School Psychology program. Dr. Riccio has served as the training director for over a decade—having immeasurable impact on the careers of past and present students. In addition to service and student mentorship, Dr. Riccio has maintained a prolific research career with over 76 refereed journal articles and 32 edited book chapters. Dr. Riccio is an LSSP, Licensed Psychologist, TASP member, and she has board certifications from the American Board of Professional Psychology and American Academy of Pediatric Neuropsychology.

**Outstanding Doctoral School Psychologist - Dr. Julianna Carpenter** received the Outstanding Doctoral School Psychologist award for her work in Southeast Lubbock County Shared Services Arrangement (SELCO SSA). Currently, Dr. Carpenter serves four districts in the Lubbock area. Dr. Carpenter started in the field of education as a first grade classroom teacher and was repeatedly commended for her management and devotion to her students. Her classroom experience is instrumental in relating to the teachers she works with as an LSSP. Dr. Carpenter continuously provides compassionate and humane behavioral intervention services in working with students, while also training educators to replicate and incorporate these services within their own work. This past summer, Dr. Carpenter exhausted numerous hours creating a social skills curriculum for teachers to implement with their students across her cooperative.



# TASP 2018 Awards and Honors

**Outstanding School Psychologist Specialist-** Korb-in Williams received the Outstanding School Psychologist Specialist award for his work in Seminole Independent School District (SISD). Mr. Williams has served as an LSSP in SISD since 2012. At SISD, Mr. Williams conducts comprehensive psycho-educational and maintains an active counseling and consultation caseload. He is described as being a “creative problem solver” with “a great penchant for meeting deadlines.” Mr. Williams earned his MA in School Psychology from Trinity University.



**Outstanding Doctoral Graduate Student -** Rosario Moreno completed her LSSP Internship with the Dallas Independent School District during the 2017-2018 school year. She was assigned to two campuses and performed a full range of responsibilities including assessment, case management, counseling, consultation, and collaboration with campus staff to ensure student success in the school setting. She is skilled in the identification of a variety of disabilities in students. In addition, Mrs. Moreno sought out training to identify students with autism, helping her become a valuable member of DISD’s autism team. Finally, Mrs. Moreno is described as contributing invaluable

work with students learning English as a second language and consulting with school staff.



Texas A&M University Commerce

Students are admitted to the School Psychology program in both the Spring and Fall semesters. Deadlines for applications are 4/15 and 11/15, respectively.

# TASP 2018 Awards and Honors

**Outstanding Delivery of School Psychological Services** - Cypress-Fairbanks ISD's (CFISD) Psychological Services Department is comprised of 24 full-time staff, 6 part-time staff and 8 doctoral psychology interns who team together to provide comprehensive service delivery across 12 high schools, 18 middle schools, 56 elementary schools, and 4 alternative campuses.

CFISD has offered professional psychology intern training since 1984. The training program has been listed in both the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) and the Joint Committee for Internships in School Psychology since 1987. Cypress-Fairbanks ISD's Department of Psychological Services emphasizes the use of indirect services including consultation with teachers in programs such as PCCD (early childhood), Pre-Kindergarten, Life Skills, and Adaptive Behavior (AB)/ACCESS classes. They also provide consultation to help teachers plan for students with Autism, Emotional Disturbance, Traumatic Brain Injury, Tourette's, Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder, and Conduct Disorder. In addition to indirect services, CFISD's Department of Psychological Services provides direct services to at-risk students, their families, and district staff through counseling, crisis intervention, and comprehensive psychological evaluations.



**Outstanding Specialist Graduate Student** - Farrah Walton is a graduate student in West Texas A&M University's school psychology program. During her time at West Texas A&M University, Mrs. Walton served as a NASP graduate student leader and a graduate assistant. Prior to starting her school psychology training, Mrs. Walton helped organize and lead art camps for cancer survivors and children and adolescents with disabilities.



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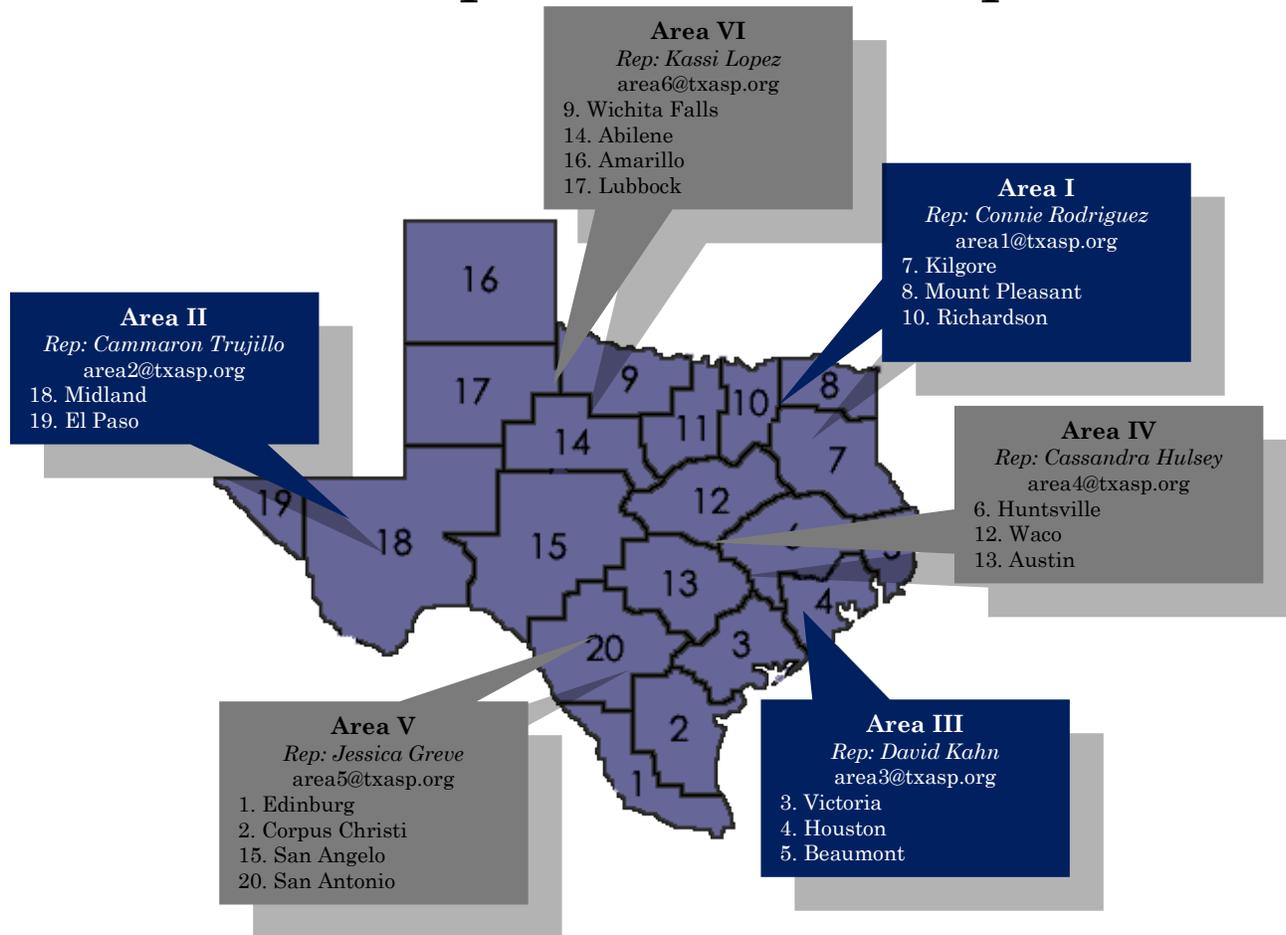


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# Information from the Area Representatives!

## Area Representative Map



### Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) in Health Service Psychology (Combined Clinical/School Psychology Program)

The University of Houston-Clear Lake College of Human Sciences and Humanities is proud to offer the first PsyD at a public university in Texas. Graduates are trained as practitioner-scientists for careers as health professionals in clinical and school settings. Interested applicants should hold a masters or specialist degree in clinical psychology, school psychology, or a closely related field. The PsyD program prepares graduates to become a Licensed Psychologist, Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP), Health Service Psychologist, and Nationally Certified School Psychologist.

**Deadline for applications is December 15, 2016.**

<http://prtl.uhcl.edu/human-sciences-humanities/clinical-health-applied-sciences/doctorate-psychology>



**UHCL**  
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For more information, contact Dr. Mary Short  
(shortmb@uhcl.edu).  
**The choice is clear.**

# Spotlight on a Training Program: University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

By Nancy Peña Razo

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV), a Hispanic Serving Institution, is located in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, which is the southernmost part of the state. It has campuses across the valley, from the tip of Texas in Brownsville to Rio Grande City. The UTRGV School Psychology program is primarily housed on the Edinburg campus. This program is the only School Psychology program south of San Antonio. There are currently three full-time faculty for the program. The purpose of the UTRGV School Psychology Master of Arts degree program is to prepare school psychologists to work with children, adolescents, and families from diverse socio-cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The majority of students enrolled in the UTRGV School Psychology program are Hispanic and bilingual. The UTRGV School Psychology program began in Fall 2015. Prior to Fall 2015, the program was part of the University of Texas Pan American (UTPA) in Edinburg, Texas. At UTPA, the School Psychology program began in 1992.

The goal of the UTRGV School Psychology program is to produce graduates with the necessary skills to improve educational and psychological outcomes of children in the Rio Grande Valley, the state of Texas, and beyond. The program focuses on training Bilingual School Psychologists with emphasis on multicultural and bilingual assessment and interventions. As part of the transition to UTRGV, the School Psychology program curriculum was revised to align more closely with the *Standards for Graduate Preparation of School Psychologists* (NASP, 2010).

The program has had steady enrollment gains over the last 5 years. There are currently 68 students enrolled in the program. This is double or triple the enrollment of other School Psychology



programs in the state of Texas. Ten students are currently on internship, and 15 students will be on internship during the 2019-2020 school year. This is an increase from six interns during the 2013-2014 school year at UTPA. Since we became UTRGV in 2015, internship sites have included: Alvin ISD\*, Akron Public Schools (Ohio)\*, Bastrop ISD\*, Brooks County (Falfurrias), Brownsville ISD\*, Brazosport ISD\*, Clark County Public Schools (Las Vegas, Nevada), Conroe ISD\*, Corpus Christi ISD, Dallas ISD, Donna ISD, Galveston ISD\*, Goosecreek ISD\*, Harlingen CISD, Hidalgo ISD\*, IDEA Public Schools\*, Los Fresnos ISD\*, Mid-Valley Behavioral Health

& Psychological Services, Mission CISD\*, Pearland ISD, PSJA ISD\*, San Antonio Cooperative, San Antonio ISD, Sinton ISD, Temple ISD, and Victoria ISD; School districts with an asterisk indicate districts that were an internship site and currently have a graduate of our program as an LSSP.

In the last 5 years, there have been 42 graduates from the UTPA/UTRGV School Psychology program. Twenty-six of those graduates are currently employed in school districts across the Rio Grande Valley. While the majority of graduates from the program stay in the Rio Grande Valley, students from the UTRGV School Psychology Program are recruited from across the country because of their bilingualism as well as their specialized multicultural and bilingual training. Graduates from the UTRGV School Psychology Program have had a direct impact in improving psychological services in the Rio Grande Valley and beyond. As recent statistics on the shortages of LSSPs demonstrated, the Rio Grande Valley educates the fifth largest population in the state of Texas, yet has the sixth worst LSSP to student ratios in the state. The UTRGV School psychology program will continue to graduate qualified LSSPs to work with our multicultural and bilingual communities.



## MASTER OF ARTS IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

At UTRGV our graduate program in school psychology prepares you to work with children, adolescents, and families from diverse socio-cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The UTRGV School Psychology program is in accordance with the scientist-practitioner model of training, which emphasizes school psychologists to use empirical research in practice. The program training includes preparation in mental health and educational interventions, child development, learning, behavior, motivation, curriculum and instruction, assessment, consultation, collaboration, school law, and school systems.

*You will also receive preparation for the following credentials:* Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists) and the Nationally Certified School Psychologist (National Association of School Psychologists Certification Board).

*For more information contact Dr. Nancy P. Razo, School Psychology Program Coordinator, at [nancy.razo@utrgv.edu](mailto:nancy.razo@utrgv.edu) or the UTRGV Graduate College at [utrgv.edu/grad](http://utrgv.edu/grad)*

# Research and Practice in the Schools: The Official Journal of the Texas Association of School Psychologists

## Journal Update

The first five issues of *Research and Practice in the Schools* can be accessed on the TASP website: <http://www.txasp.org/tasp-journal>. We welcome manuscripts from school psychologists working in a variety of settings. Submissions can include original empirical research, theoretical or conceptual articles, test reviews, book reviews, and software reviews.

If you would like to submit a manuscript for publication consideration, please email [jere-my.sullivan@utsa.edu](mailto:jere-my.sullivan@utsa.edu) or see the latest issue for the Instructions for Authors.

### Call for Papers: Special Issue on Trauma-Informed School Psychology Practices

*Research and Practice in the Schools*, under the guest editorship of Julia Englund Strait, PhD, Kirby Wycoff, PsyD, and Aaron Gubi, PhD, invites submissions for a special issue focusing on current and promising practices in trauma-informed care in the schools. Although recent years have seen an explosion of interest in trauma-informed care across many mental health and public health disciplines, there is still confusion and a general paucity of research in school psychology regarding the specific details of how to approach school-based assessment, intervention, consultation, and systems-level practices in a trauma-informed, effective, and feasible way.

Submissions should focus on trauma-informed strategies, approaches, and practices that are supported by or promising in terms of research evidence and psychological theory for use in the schools. Submissions may include empirical data analyses, systematic reviews, or meta-analyses of available evidence supporting trauma-informed practices, as well as reports describing the piloting or implementation of trauma-related programs, instruments, or models in real school settings.

We especially encourage submissions from practitioners, early career scholars, and graduate students who can offer overviews of what is *actually being done* in their school settings, and the evidence base or theory behind it. We also encourage submissions on a range of school psychology activities and across all MTSS tiers, from training teachers and staff to working with individual students referred for evaluation and/or targeted, intensive treatment. Submissions should be directly applicable to practitioners, including, if applicable, resources for school psychologists to use in their schools “on Monday morning.”

The timeline for initial manuscript submissions will be from August 1, 2018 to February 28, 2019. If you are interested in submitting a manuscript to be considered for this special issue, please contact Dr. Julia Strait, Lead Guest Editor, for more information and instructions for authors ([straitj@uhcl.edu](mailto:straitj@uhcl.edu)).

Thanks to all who have contributed to the continuing evolution of *Research and Practice in the Schools*. If you have any questions or suggestions, please email [jeremy.sullivan@utsa.edu](mailto:jeremy.sullivan@utsa.edu) or [aeherna8@uiwtx.edu](mailto:aeherna8@uiwtx.edu).

*Jeremy Sullivan and Art Hernandez*

Editors, *Research and Practice in the Schools*

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### Future Conventions

Oct. 22-24, 2019 at Westin Galleria Houston

Oct. 8-10, 2020 at Omni San Antonio Hotel at the Colonnade

Nov. 3-6, 2021 at Sheraton Austin Georgetown Hotel & Conference Center

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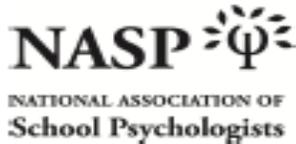
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From the NASP Resource adopted by the TASP Executive Board August 2014



# Position Statement

## School Violence Prevention

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) vigorously supports and promotes efforts that create safe, secure, and peaceful schools free of the destructive influence of violence in all of its forms. NASP further maintains that schools must implement purposeful, coordinated strategies that increase levels of safety and security that simultaneously promote student wellness and resilience. NASP supports all evidence-based policies and practices that promote the safety of our students, schools, and communities because these efforts improve students' readiness to learn and build school climates characterized by positive civil engagement.

School violence is a broad term that includes overt aggressive behaviors such as physical fights on campus, bullying (including online bullying or *cyberbullying*), physical assault, bombing, arson, or other deliberate means of causing harm to the staff and students. Sadly, it includes rare, tragic, and devastating school shootings. In addition, school violence includes more covert behaviors that increase fear and diminish school safety such as threats of injury at school, weapons possession, and harassment (Furlong, Jones, Lilles, & Derzon, 2010). In some communities, gangs recruit school-age students to be members and contribute to violence in schools. Although not the core focus of school violence prevention, exposure to gun violence and inappropriate access to firearms are highly associated with increased risk of injury and death among youth as well as diminished social, emotional, and academic well-being (Garbarino, Bradshaw, & Vorrasi, 2002; Kirk & Hardy, 2014).

Recent national reports indicate that efforts to reduce school violence have shown some success. For example, between 1999 and 2011, there was a 49% reduction in students reporting that they are fearful of being attacked or harmed on their school campus and a 15% reduction in student reports of both carrying weapons and fighting at school (Robers, Kemp, & Truman, 2013). These encouraging trends are associated with coordinated, comprehensive efforts by schools and communities to reduce school violence. However, other less obvious forms of school violence such as threats, teasing, and mean-spirited verbal attacks, including cyberbullying, occur at higher rates and make schools less welcoming settings for students (Nekvasil & Cornell, 2012). In addition to violence affecting students, schools need to be mindful of the victimization of teachers and staff. Eighty percent of school teachers and school staff members reported victimization (harassment, theft, or physical attack) in the past year, primarily by students, but also by two or more perpetrators, such as students and parents (Espelage et al., 2013).

Despite some welcomed reductions in school violence, it challenges assumptions that society holds about the role of schools. When parents send their daughters and sons to school each day, they trust that their children will be cared for and safe. They believe that schools will minimize exposure to all sources of harm, be it tragic campus shootings, chronic bullying, cyberbullying, name-calling, sexual

harassment, or social exclusion. When violence occurs at school, trust is violated, which thereby diminishes schools' efforts to attain their primary mission of educating all students and helping them to reach their full potential. Research shows that victims of school violence are at increased risk of academic (Lacey & Cornell, 2013) and social-emotional problems (Nickerson & Slater, 2009; Reijntjes, Kamphuis, Prinzie, & Telch, 2010).

Although gun violence in schools is extremely rare, the majority of youth homicides are by a firearm, and nearly half of youth suicide deaths involve the use of a gun (CDC, 2014; NASP, 2013). Most often, those firearms are obtained from home, a friend, or a relative (Reza et al., 2003). Efforts to reduce violence in schools and communities at large must include strategies for eliminating inappropriate youth access to firearms, strategies to keep guns out of the hands of those who would harm students, and school policies which ensure that the only armed persons at schools are highly trained professionals (e.g., school resource officers).

NASP recognizes that no single strategy or program will create a safe school and that effective efforts require collaboration among administrators, teachers, school psychologists, other school mental health professionals, school resource officers, parents, students, and community agencies. NASP supports a balanced cross-discipline approach to school safety promotion that emphasizes clear communication, fostering positive personal connectedness, and the implementation of evidence-based support services (Interdisciplinary Group on Preventing School and Community Violence, 2013).

Teachers and other educators, including school psychologists, have the potential to be resources for children and youth who experience multiple chronic risk factors. The relationships that students form with adults in the school setting can help them cope with challenges and avoid violence perpetration and/or victimization. It is important to consider the role of positive school engagement in promoting and enhancing school violence prevention efforts (Tillery, Varjas, Roach, Kuperminc, & Meyers, 2013). Having school-based mental health professionals, such as school psychologists, is an important way to prevent school violence and provide support if it happens.

## **ROLE OF THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST**

Educators have a responsibility to monitor and maintain campus conditions that create safe, secure, and peaceful schools. NASP recognizes that school psychologists, as key members of the school student support staff, must play a central role in the prevention of campus conditions that diminish student and staff safety and must manage and respond to violence when it unfortunately occurs. Principle IV.1 of the NASP *Principles for Professional Ethics* (NASP, 2010, p. 12) states that “school psychologists use their expertise in psychology and education to promote school, family, and community environments that are safe and healthy for children.” NASP supports school psychologists’ leadership in encouraging schools to develop comprehensive approaches to prevent violence and appropriately prepare for and respond to violence-related crises when they occur. To carry out these school-wide approaches, school psychologists are trained to:

- provide group facilitation and consultation to help schools form effective safety and crisis planning teams (Furlong et al., 2010);
- facilitate efforts to collect and organize safety, violence, and crisis needs assessment information at school and district levels using validated instruments that support effective evidence-based decision making (Larson & Mark, 2014);

- implement prevention and intervention programs that include collaboration among parents, teachers, students, and community members designed to reduce aggressive behaviors among students (Larson & Mark, 2104);
- consult with school staff to implement programs that foster social–emotional skills, so that students are better able to avoid conflicts and to resolve them peacefully when they do occur (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymniki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011);
- counsel and support victims of violence in all its forms (e.g., physical, psychological, and social isolation; Brock, Nickerson, Reeves, Savage, & Woitaszewski, 2011);
- participate in and facilitate the implementation of empirically validated procedures to respond to threats of targeted violence (Cornell, Sheras, Gregory, & Fan, 2009); and
- help individuals and communities respond to and recover from crises spawned by violence (Brock & Jimerson, 2012).

To prepare all school psychologists to provide leadership in creating campus conditions that increase physical and psychological safety, NASP has developed school violence professional training standards and advocates that they be adopted by all state education credentialing bodies (Cowan, Vaillancourt, Rossen, & Pollitt, 2013).

## CREATING SAFE SCHOOLS

Efforts to reduce school violence are most successful when they use multiple strategies selected to be appropriate for each school’s needs, which include:

- *Creating school–community safety partnerships.* No school district or individual school alone can implement a comprehensive, multitiered school violence prevention program without engaging in a systematic planning process to understand its school safety challenges and opportunities. This is effectively done in concert with multiple stakeholders, including community partners. School psychologists assist schools by helping them to engage in conducting comprehensive vulnerability assessments and creating corresponding safety plans and teams (Brock et al., 2009). School psychologists can assist in community-wide efforts that increase and strengthen protective factors aimed at reducing violence inside and outside of school. Such efforts might include tutoring, mentoring, life-skills training, case management, increased parental involvement, improving connections with schools, and other opportunities for supervised recreational activities (Leap, 2013). They can facilitate capacity building within community organizations through education, training, grant writing, evaluation, and use of evidence-based best practices (Espelage et al., 2013).
- *Establishing comprehensive school crisis response plans.* Although violence prevention is the most important goal, NASP recognizes that it is critical to have crisis plans for multiple crisis situations with clearly defined roles for each member of the multidisciplinary crisis team. Plans should also consider the importance of the mental health response to minimize the traumatic impact of such events. Therefore, crisis response plans should have explicit procedures for reaffirming physical health, ensuring perceptions of safety and security, re-establishing social support, evaluating psychological trauma risk, and providing the interventions appropriate for the level of risk (Brock et al., 2009).
- *Enhancing classroom and school climate.* Some programs might not focus on specific violent behaviors directly, but seek to alter conditions that might unintentionally foster violent acts. Teachers’ classroom management skills are a strong indicator of the extent to which student

violence is directed toward teachers (Espelage et al., 2013). Individualized instruction and remedial support, where needed, can reduce academic failure and frustration. Programs to decrease racism and other forms of intolerance have the effect of also increasing appreciation of diversity and improving levels of trust among members of the school community (Savage & Schanding, 2013). Such programs can also decrease violence by creating a climate of acceptance and understanding and improve the quality of the relationships among students and staff (Steffgen, Recchia, & Viechtbauer, 2013). Complementing climate-building strategies are those that promote robust social-emotional skills, which enhance positive, adaptive interpersonal relations among all students and educators (Durlak et al., 2011; Furlong, Froh, Muller, & Gonzalez, 2014).

- *Promoting positive school discipline and support.* Although school violence may engender a desire to discipline aggressors harshly, NASP encourages school personnel to balance disciplinary responses with efforts to promote cooperation, positive social skills, and peaceful means of resolving conflicts. Approaches such as school-wide positive behavior support (SWPBS) use a systems approach for establishing a positive social culture and individualizing behavior supports to make schools safe, supportive learning environments (Sprague & Horner, 2012). Addressing school violence must go beyond increasing campus security and punishing students who have violated school rules and should seek to create an authoritative (as compared to authoritarian or permissive) school discipline climate that includes high levels of structure and support (Gregory et al., 2010). A comprehensive campaign to end school violence must also encompass efforts to increase support, trust, and caring among students and staff, as is the foundation of restorative justice, which offers an alternative positive discipline approach (Sharkey & Fenning, 2012).
- *Using nonstigmatizing school violence prevention programs.* Attention to early behavioral and emotional distress signals from students will help to ensure that students are provided prevention and support services as early in their school careers as possible. Such efforts will ensure that students get help prior to the need for extreme disciplinary responses. NASP does not support assessment procedures known as risk assessment. Such procedures claim to identify or “profile” students as being “at risk” of committing acts of violence; research shows that such methods are associated with high false identification rates. While many students have emotional or behavior difficulties, relatively few commit serious violent acts and using so-called “violence risk profiling” assessments are more stigmatizing than useful. Instead, NASP believes that schools can and must respond to all threats that students (and others) make on school campuses. For this reason, NASP endorses using a threat assessment approach to understanding students’ potential violent behavior (Cornell & Allen, 2011). Although research shows that the vast majority of student threats of school violence do not result in actual violence, they nonetheless provide opportunities to explore, better understand, and respond to any special needs of the students making the threat and the students being threatened. Each such threat needs to be reviewed and threat response efforts at school should be based on research-validated procedures (Cornell & Allen, 2011). NASP promotes the use of positive methods of school discipline, such as solution-focused approaches that include the application of behavior management principles and strategies (Bear & Manning, 2014; National Association of School Psychologists, 2014; Sharkey & Fenning, 2012).
- *Promoting antiviolence initiatives that include prevention programs for all students.* NASP advocates the use of a multilevel model of school violence prevention. At the most general level, interventions include school-wide violence prevention programs, particularly those that address bullying, which is the most pervasive school safety challenge (Felix, Greif Green, & Sharkey, 2014; Ttofi & Farrington, 2012). These activities encourage all students to experience positive emotional development and to use nonviolent means to resolve their personal conflicts. Such programs are

natural bridges between interventions that focus on individual change and those seeking to change the ecology of the school (Larson & Beckman, 2012).

- *Providing support for students exhibiting early warning signs of disruptive behavior.* Not all students respond to school-wide programs; therefore, violence prevention efforts must provide support for students who have shown aggressive behavior at school. Policies that focus solely on catching and punishing violent behaviors fall far short of creating a safe school environment (Gregory & Cornell, 2009). An authoritarian school discipline approach (high structure accompanied by low student support) is linked with higher levels of victimization at school, whereas authoritative discipline (high structure and high support) is associated with lower levels of victimization (Gregory et al., 2010).
- *Intervening with students who experience significant school behavioral adjustment problems.* Schools must also make efforts to modify the behavior of students who have engaged in or are at risk of engaging in violent behavior. NASP strongly supports systematic efforts to implement strategies that foster students' social-emotional skills that are associated with adaptive coping and resilience. In addition, for students who are experiencing social and/or psychological distress, the complex problems they face require the coordination of interventions across school and community agencies. Schools alone cannot address the myriad needs of these students. For this small number of students, cooperative agreements will be needed with community mental health, juvenile probation, child welfare services, alcohol and drug treatment, and other youth and family-serving agencies. These students often will need coordinated wraparound services and interventions that are empirically validated (Larson & Beckman, 2012).
- *Supporting policies that reduce access to firearms by youth and others who are of immediate danger to themselves or others.* Undeniably, firearms play a significant role in school and community violence (American Psychological Association, 2013). Multiple lines of research have demonstrated a clear connection between local availability of guns and gun-related violent behaviors, with estimates of close to 2 million children and adolescents having access at home to loaded, unlocked guns (Interdisciplinary Group on Preventing School and Community Violence, 2012). Although extremely violent and lethal school events are rare, most school-associated homicides involved a firearm (Modzeleski et al., 2008). Additionally, exposure to gun violence in the community can result in anxiety, depression, antisocial behavior, and a decline of students' capacity to meaningfully engage in academic tasks (Garbarino et al., 2002; Sharkey, Tirado-Strayer, Papachristos, & Raver, 2012). NASP supports policies that take a holistic approach to decrease the potential for the injury or death of students, staff, and other community members on school campuses, on the way to/from school, and when participating in school-sanctioned events. Such approaches include eliminating inappropriate youth access to guns; keeping guns out of the hands of individuals deemed at risk of hurting themselves and others; improving awareness of safe gun practices, including secure storage of firearms; and restricting the presence of guns in schools to only commissioned school resource officers.

## SUMMARY

Left unaddressed, overt acts of school violence and other common forms of victimization can erode the climate of the school, damage the resilience-promoting influence of schools, and leave many students to suffer in silence with diminished personal wellness and resilience capacity. Efforts to reduce violence at school, therefore, must be multifaceted. NASP recognizes that serious violent acts at school, although rare, have complex origins and profound consequences. In addition, less extreme forms of violence such as bullying, sexual harassment, and fights are much more common, yet can have pervasive

effects on individual students and the overall campus climate (Mehta, Cornell, Fan, & Gregory, 2013). These forms of school violence occur on every school campus. A successful program will ensure the ongoing safety of all students and staff by creating conditions that discourage violence by responding quickly and effectively when violence occurs. To be truly comprehensive, however, violence reduction programs must influence student attitudes toward violence, teach students and school staff effective conflict resolution skills, and create a climate that promotes tolerance and understanding among students and staff. School safety programs are most effective when integrated with other violence prevention efforts involving local law enforcement, juvenile probation, public health personnel, and other parent and community groups. When an entire community commits to reducing violence, the health and well-being of its children and youth are enhanced.

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