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## School Psychologist Committee Develops Intervention Manual

Story by Jason Levi

As part of an ongoing mission to work at improving learning and behavior outcomes for all students, a group of psychologists recently developed a resource to be used by Student Assistance Teams (SAT) when developing interventions. The manual was developed, however, to be used by any staff/faculty member with a stake in delivering educational services to students.

Committee members spent countless hours throughout the 09-10 school year researching intervention ideas

and developing intervention samples to help staff/faculty through the process.

Researched interventions with step-by-step instructions include components of reading, such as phonemic awareness and reading comprehension, math, writing, and behavior/social skills. The committee members considered these areas to be common skill areas that have potential to impede student success. The samples included in the manual were written with the language often used during SAT meetings so one might use them as guides for documenting interventions.

In each academic and behavior skill area, the reader

will find models of problem statements, baseline data, potential goals, measurement tools, and interventions. A description of each intervention and often a corresponding data collection sheet are also provided. The vision of this group was to develop a resource that allowed those providing direct intervention services to students immediate access to intervention ideas and tools to monitor student progress.

Staff and faculty are able to obtain the intervention samples manual through the teacher web portal under "School Assistance Team."

## Lead Psychologist Advocates Parents & Teachers Working Together

Story by Donna Nice

Dr. Corliss Thompson-Drew, Lead Psychologist for WS/FC Schools, presented information to parents regarding the Student Intervention Process at this year's annual No Parent Left Behind Conference which was held at Parkland Magnet High School last month.

Along with WS/FC, the Conference was sponsored by The Forsyth Council for Youth of the Northwest Piedmont Workforce Development Board, ELink, the YMCA, and The Daryl Hunt Project for Freedom and Justice.

Continued on page 2



Dr. Corliss Thompson-Drew

# Lead Psychologist Advocates (Story Continued)

According to Dr. Thompson-Drew, if students are having problems in school, the first step toward seeking answers is for parents to contact the child's teacher to make a plan to help the student succeed. Teachers know this as the Problem Solving Level 1 stage. In level 2, a specialist may be brought into the fold to help generate ideas and interventions.

The process could be taken a step further through the referral to the Student Assistance Team (SAT) which typically includes the guidance counselor, social worker, school psychologist, other teachers, and other appropriate persons.

At times, if the problem persists, the SAT may recommend a referral to the Individualized

Education Program (IEP) team for further recommendations.

It's very important for parents to be actively involved in their student's intervention process. Parents are encouraged to share their concerns and questions.

On a personal note, Dr. Thompson-Drew is the mother of a teenage daughter. She has been the Lead Psychologist for ten years and has been a school psychologist for almost 30

years. She enjoys reading, cooking, and traveling with her family.

For more information on the Student Assistance Team and intervention processes, teachers can go to the Learning Village Resources and click "Student Intervention Services." Teachers can also find a Parent Handout on page 6.

For more information about the No Parent Left Behind Conference, contact Sharon Frazier, the Parent Coordinator for WS/FCS and for Title I at 748-4000 x34225. The Conference attracts hundreds of parents and guardians from six surrounding counties, and sponsors aim to provide information and assistance to our youth entering the workforce or preparing to enter the workforce in the future.



There are 24 School Psychologists, two Educational Diagnosticians, and two Administrative Assistants for Psych Services employed by WSIFCS this year.

## Ask the Psychologist

**Ann, you were recently recognized by the School Board for 33 years of service to WSFCS and have seen the Administrative Offices moved from Granville Drive to Miller Street and now to Corporate Square Drive. Would you share some of your observations regarding changes in school psychology/education over the years?**

I have had the privilege of serving the school system during many changes in our field. When I initially started work as a school psychologist, I had 15 schools assigned to me. Years ago, our department undertook a revamping of the referral procedures which later became the model upon which the state patterned a standardized system. That was quite a feather in our cap! We also organized a regional forum to discuss issues in our field and strongly promoted our rather new discipline of school psychology.

I also had the privilege of helping to develop the role of elementary guidance counselor, another new position at that time, by working closely with the first elementary counselor in our schools. I have also witnessed a greater emphasis on early intervention within our school system.



## The Pros Behind the Scene: Kay & Tammy

by Sarah Monks



"Good morning, this is Psych Services." Who are the ladies on the other side of the phone? Our very own administrative assistants, Kay Hutchens and Tammy Taylor.

Kay has been with Psychological Services for nearly 25 years and is a Clemmons native. She attended the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and Business College and currently has 14 psychologists and diagnosticians under her care. Kay also orders supplies for the department and distributes health forms to schools. Kay has three grown children and a two-year-old granddaughter. She is a member of several groups, including the Friends of the Library and Forsyth Piecers & Quilters Guild. Most weekdays, you can find Kay reading during her lunch break. She enjoys reading books, going to the library, cooking, attending church, doing crafts, decorating her house, traveling, and spending time with her grandchild, Kaitlyn.

Tammy has been with our department for about seven years and has 13 psychologists and diagnosticians under her care. Prior to joining WSFCS, Tammy worked for Davie County Schools EC & Student Services Department. Tammy attended Catawba College and is seeking a Bachelor of Business Administration Degree at East Carolina University. Tammy is a licensed hair stylist and is very active in organizations on a state and local level, including serving two years as President of the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Association of Educational Office Professionals (AEOP). Tammy has been married to her high school sweetheart for 24 years and has two children. She enjoys traveling, working on home improvement projects, cruising in her TR6, and gardening.

## Meet the Intern

by Gretchen Troutman, Ph.D.

Please welcome our new intern from New York City! After graduating from the University of Notre Dame, Colin Cox worked in Boston at several nonprofit educational agencies. He is currently in a school psychology graduate program at Teacher's College, Columbia University. Before beginning his graduate training, Colin was actively involved in running youth lacrosse clinics in Boston and New York and he also coached lacrosse at a high school in Harlem.

This is the first time Colin has been south of Maryland, and he has been impressed by the southern hospitality and feeling of community here. Colin is currently training for the Outer Banks Marathon; he can be found running at Salem Lake, Hanes Park, and downtown when he is not at work.

Although Colin pulls for the Fighting Irish, he is being supervised by two Virginia Tech graduates. He has been told he will need to start supporting ACC sports!

*Editors' Note:* While in WS/FCS, Colin is being supervised by Dr. Gretchen Troutman and Dr. Paul Trivette.



National  
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Week 2010:  
November  
8 — 12

Did you know  
one of the  
school  
psychologists  
is a bee  
keeper?

## Getting to Know Us

Some personnel changes occur each year, and you may have yet to meet the school psychologist assigned to your school. We'd like to take this opportunity to update you on the many roles the school psychologist plays in WS/FCS. As part of student services, our vision is to provide comprehensive services to enhance the quality of education for all children. We are committed to improving educational outcomes through problem solving, prevention, intervention, and collaboration with others.

School psychologists have training in various aspects of the field of education in addition to psychology. Our graduate level training programs prepare us for unique opportunities to work collaboratively with school staff, parents, and community agencies.

Each member of the Psychological Services Department has areas of background knowledge and expertise that enhance the department as a whole. Our roles include, but are not limited to, serving on Student Assistance Teams (SAT), providing school/community based presentations, being available on a consultative basis, assessing student's functioning in various areas, writing psychological reports, directly and indirectly intervening with students with academic and behavior skills, and serving on various departmental committees to enhance our understanding of important school related issues and promote programs and ideas that will impact student achievement. Our department conducted over 1700 evaluations between Sept. '09—May '10.

Our psychologists serve on departmental committees to help develop district wide guidelines such as for assessing students with autism, behavioral or emotional issues, and those learning English as a second language. We have a psychologist that specializes in preschool assessment and several members who conduct risk assessments. Several psychologists have specific training in observing and assessing students with Traumatic Brain Injury. These colleagues will be featured in future editions of PsychSpeak!

Although some have already done so, the school psychologists will receive Reading Foundations training this year. The program, facilitated by EC Staff Development Coordinator, Angela Rodriguez, will span several sessions and include training in components of reading, emphasizing phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. Angie will focus on strategies for teaching reading to all students, especially the struggling reader.

Mined by Paul & Patsy

Intervention **Gem**: Helping Early Literacy with Practice Strategies ..... (HELPS)



Primarily developed by John Begeny, Assistant Professor in the School Psychology Program at North Carolina State University, HELPS is a supplemental program designed to help develop oral reading fluency in younger students (K-3). Other programs are in development and will be useful for small groups and for parents working at home with their children. Materials, including teacher manual, are free for download in PDF format.

[www.helpsprogram.org](http://www.helpsprogram.org)

# PsychSpeak

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Five School Psychologists  
are currently teaching at  
local colleges.

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## District Psychologists "Get Psyched" Over CBM By Susan Miller

With the new regulations regarding reading fluency and the district's implementation of Universal Screening K-2 last year, your school psychologists found themselves eager to learn more about Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM).

Stepping in from half-time status to full-time status with background in using CBM, Donna Nice, School Psychologist, conducted the first of two parts of training for her colleagues before school started.

Teachers may find CBM a useful method for quickly and easily determining students' level of proficiency in a variety of areas. Teachers can select from appropriate "probes," or tasks/prompts, depending on the student's grade level, assumed proficiency level, or other criteria.

For example, in order to determine proficiency in oral reading, the student is asked to read a short selection aloud for a predetermined time period. Scoring consists of counting words read and subtracting errors. This number is compared to grade level norms, thus quickly and easily determining proficiency level.

Teachers can use these results to set appropriate educational goals for the student, either short-term or long-term. These levels can also be used to monitor the student's progress.

CBM can also be used to determine proficiency in math and written language. Screening in these areas can be done in groups as well as individually. Norms are available to quickly and easily determine the student's level of proficiency.

For more information, ask your School Psychologist!

## **STUDENT INTERVENTION PROCESS PARENT INFORMATION SHEET**

The student intervention process is the means by which the school and parents work together to solve student problems. The focus is on providing help for your child in the regular education classroom with specific interventions and instructional strategies. Information about how those strategies and interventions are working and the child's progress are collected so that decisions can be made about what to do.

If your child is having difficulties in school, the first step is usually a meeting with the teacher to plan a course of action, i.e., what will be done to solve the problem. If this approach has not been successful, sometimes it might be necessary to involve others, such as a specialist in the school. The process could be taken a step further through a referral to the Student Assistance Team (SAT). The SAT is a group of professionals at the school, typically the guidance counselor, social worker, psychologist, teacher(s), and any other person(s) as might be appropriate, that work together to better define the problem and come up with other ways to assist your child.

At times, if the problem persists and your child continues to struggle in the classroom, even with additional resources and support, the SAT might recommend a referral to the Individualized Educational Program (IEP) team. This does not mean that your child will be placed in special education. The IEP team, of which you are a member, will review all the information that has been collected and decide whether or not an evaluation is needed. If the decision is to conduct an evaluation, you must be given notice of this and your written permission obtained before an evaluation can proceed. Once the evaluation has been completed, another IEP team meeting is held to determine (1) if your child has a disability, (2) if that disability has a negative effect on educational performance, and (3) if your child needs specialized instruction. If your child is found eligible for special education services, you will have to give written permission before those services can be provided.

As a parent, it is very important that you be actively involved in the student intervention process. Share your concerns with school staff. Ask questions if you do not understand or are uncertain about something. Monitor your child's homework and schoolwork. Talk to your child about what he or she is learning or having problems with in school. Remember that we are all working together in the best interest of your child.

**Corliss Thompson-Drew, Psy. D., NCSP**  
**WSFCS Lead Psychologist**