



February Is Psychology Month

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SPECIAL ADVERTISING FEATURE

Psychologists in Nova Scotia schools: a guide for parents

HAVE YOU MET WITH a psychologist in a school recently? If you are a school teacher, administrator or parent of a child receiving services you have probably attended an assessment feedback or program planning meeting with a psychologist during the school year.

While you may never meet the psychologist that serves your local school, for many children and families the school-based psychologist is the first and the only psychologist they will ever meet.

If you are the parent of a child waiting for an assessment, support, or intervention services, getting to meet the school's psychologist may be taking longer than you would like.

This article describes the role of psychologists in the schools and some of the opportunities for improving the access to psychological services in the Nova Scotia education system.

How psychologists fit in school system

For the Nova Scotia Department of Education, psychologists in the schools are "professional support staff". That means that psychologists employed by school boards generally serve multiple schools and travel circuits that may cover more than one county.

While travel may be reduced in urban areas, school populations tend to be larger and the psychologists may be assigned to seven or more schools.

There are approximately 82 psychologists employed across the regional school boards in Nova Scotia. That number is based in part on the Nova Scotia Department of Education's current "core professional service ratio" of 2,500 students to one psychologist.

The Minister's Review of Services for Students with Special Needs recommended a review of that ratio as recently as 2007. The Nova Scotia Department of Education is scheduled to release



Bonnie Bobryk Photography

Members of the interdisciplinary team at The Classic Therapy Group: Olga Komissarova, right, psychologist (Cand.Reg.), Judie DeRoos, occupational therapist, and Joyce Everett, physiotherapist, discuss a rehabilitation program.

new guidelines for the delivery of psychological services in schools in the very near future.

A psychologist who works in the school system may have been employed in the educational system before they returned to university to become psychologists. Or she or he may have completed their graduate level training and gone directly to work in the schools.

Some may have been practicing psychologists who worked in health, mental health, or in private practice prior to being employed by the school system. Regardless of the route they followed,

'There are 82 psychologists employed across the regional school boards in Nova Scotia... a ratio of 2,500 students to one psychologist.'

psychologists who work in schools have completed an accredited graduate program, applied for registration with the Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in

Psychology, and completed or are completing the requirements to be registered with the Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology (NSBEP), as a Psychologist in Nova Scotia.

The way psychologists work can vary from school to school or board to board according to policies and practices adopted in each school and/or board.

The effect is that what psychologists do in a specific setting appears to be dependent upon what teachers, principals, and school board administrators think psychologists should do as well as how much independence the psycholo-

gist has over how she/he does her/his job.

In the public school system, psychologists and the services they deliver are more often managed and/or supervised by staff other than psychologists. (e.g., principals, resource teachers, guidance counselors, speech-language pathologists, etc.)

This can pose a number of problems for the practising school psychologist, one of which is that there may be unnecessary limitations or a lack of knowledge about what they can or cannot do. Psychologists in the schools have a great deal to offer. According to the Canadian Psychological Association:

School psychologists provide a wide variety of both educational and mental health services to districts, school staff, students, and their families.

School psychologists:

- understand educational policies and issues because they work within the educational system

- understand the viewpoints of the many stakeholders in the educational system because their work requires their regular and direct contact with students, teachers, parents, and the community

- respond over long periods of time to students and situations that are chronic in nature (e.g. disruptive behaviour disorders, learning disabilities) and understand how these problems and situations affect and are affected by the classroom

- bring a scientific, research-based and objective approach to the analysis and assessment of students' learning, behavioural and emotional problems

See **SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS...** / B5

Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology

What is a psychologist and why do I care?

Psychologists

- treat children, adults, couples, families
- diagnose psychological and emotional problems
- consult, counsel, provide therapy and assessments
- consult to individuals, groups, organizations
- help people attain better physical and mental health
- help people achieve better personal, social and vocational adjustment
- teach and apply psychological theory and principles
- design, conduct and communicate psychological research.

Psychologists are licensed professionals and that is important because licensing protects the public. Licensing holds professionals to rigorous standards and makes them accountable.

"Psychologist" is a title protected by a law that governs the practice of psychology in Nova Scotia.

It is important to know that the terms, "counsellor", "therapist", and "psychotherapist" are not licensed titles.

There is no assurance of the qualifications of anyone using only these titles and no professional body to handle complaints about their practices.

An important difference between a psychologist and unregulated practitioners is that extended health-care benefits will pay for a psychologist's services but will not pay for services by unregulated practitioners.

The Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology (NSBEP) protects the public.

Psychologists are required by law to deliver competent, ethical and professional services. They are accountable to the public, through the Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology (NSBEP). Psychologists meet rigorous professional requirements and adhere to prescribed standards, guidelines and ethical principles. You are protected when you see a psychologist because psychologists must adhere to the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists, and Standards for service and conduct, which are established by the NSBEP. The NSBEP is responsible for protection of the public and investigates and addresses complaints against Psychologists. There is no such public protection for practitioners designated only by such terms as counsellor, therapist or psychotherapist.

Only those individuals who meet specific requirements for education, examinations, and supervision are entitled to use the term, "Psychologist", or to provide "psychological services," by virtue of the Psychologists Act of Nova Scotia.

Psychologists have at least these qualifications:

- a doctoral or masters degree in psychology
- two years of supervised experience, in the case of a doctoral degree, or four years, in the case of a masters degree, and
- have passed a standardized, written examination and an oral examination.

Psychologists (Candidate Register) have the same educational qualifications and are in the process of completing their supervised experience.

Who are psychologists in Nova Scotia? As of February 18, these are the Psychologists and Psychologists (Candidate Register):

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Register of Psychologists

Allaby, Dennis, M.A.
Alphonse, Elvira Marie, M.A.
Andrew, Gail, Ph.D.
Angelopoulos, Maria, Ph.D.
Anthony, Andrew, Ph.D.
Arthurs, Carol, M.A.S.P.
Asche, Hans P., M.Ed.
Assh, Donna, Ph.D.
Aubie, Cheryl, Ph.D.
Backman, Joan, Ph.D.
Baker, Diane, Ph.D.
Baker, Erica A., Ph.D.
Baldwin, Kjerstin, Ph.D.
Banks, Laura Stephanie, M.A.
Banks, Tracy, Ph.D.
Bartlett, Nancy Helen, Ph.D.
Bawden, Harry, Ph.D.
Belliveau, Christine, M.A.Ps.
Belliveau, Janice M., M.A.
Benigno, Donna, M.A.
Bren, Gerry, Ph.D.
Bigelow, Ann, Ph.D.
Bilsbury, Christopher David, Ph.D.
Birch, Diane E., Ph.D.
Birnie, C. Laraine, Ph.D.
Black, Michael, M.Ps.
Blood, Lowell, Ph.D.
Blumberg, Marc, Ph.D.
Boivin, Annie, M.Ps.
Boudreau, P. Catherine, M.A.
Boutiller, Joan Mary, Ph.D.
Bower-Jacques, Sheila, M.Sc.
Boyd, L. Elaine, M.Sc.
Brady, Erika, Ph.D.
Braha, Richard, Ph.D.
Braun, Colleen, Ed.D.
Breau, Lynn, Ph.D.
Brewer, Gail Rosemary, M.A.
Broad, James C. Ph.D.
Bryson, Michael, M.A.
Bryson, Susan E., Ph.D.
Buchen, Victoria, M.Sc.
Baranyi, George, Ph.D.
Burke, Francine, M.A.S.P.
Burns, Meredith A., M.Sc.
Butler, Gordon Stuart, Ph.D.
Byrne, Joseph M., Ph.D.
Cabe, Heather, M.A.
Campagnoni, Antonia, M.A.
Campbell, Bryan M. M.Sc.
Campbell, John A., Ph.D.
Campbell, Mary Ann, Ph.D.
Campbell, R. Elaine, Ph.D.
Cane, Douglas, Ph.D.
Cann, Steven S., M.Sc.
Caplan, Joelle, Ph.D.
Carriere, Jean Charles, M.A.
Carter, Ruth Anne, Ph.D.
Carter, Sherri, Ph.D.
Catano, Victor, Ph.D.
Chambers, Christine T., Ph.D.
Chandler, Brenda J., M.A.
Chenail, Pamela, Ph.D.
Chiasson, Gilles, M.Sc.
Chipman, Karen, Ph.D.
Chisholm, Mary Jean, M.A.
Chitty, Dorothy J., Ph.D.
Church, Elizabeth, Ph.D.
Clare, Lauren, M.A.
Clark, Sharon E., Ph.D.
Clark-Toussard, Mary E., M.A.
Clyburn, Leah, Ph.D.
Coady-Shadbolt, Doreen, M. Ed.
Collins, Jean P., Ph.D.
Connors, Angela, Ph.D.
Cook, Melissa, M.A.
Corkum, Penny V., Ph.D.
Corkum, Valerie, Ph.D.
Cornwall, Anne, Ph.D.
Courney, Linda S., Ph.D.
Cox, David W., M.Sc.
Cox, Nancy Lyle, M.A.
Crist, William, Ph.D.
Curren-Lindala, Kendra, M.A.
D'Aloisio, April, Ph.D.
Danquah, Samuel A. Ph.D.
Day, Victor Hugh, Ph.D.
de Stecher, Allan Roy, M.Sc.
deSalle, Margaret, M.Ed.
DeLong, Barbara, M.Ed.

Digout, Wendy E. M.A.S.P.
Dixon, F. Jeannette, M.Sc.
Dixon, Pamela, M.Sc.
Donahoe, Eileen, Ph.D.
Drouin, Ivan, M.A.
Dunn, Ann, M.A.
Dunsiger, Steven, M.A.
Durdle, Brenda, Ph.D.
Eakin, Suzanne, M.Sc.
Earle, Jeffrey, M.A.
Earle, Tracey, M.A.
Ellsworth, Christine P., Ph.D.
Englund, Kristel, M.A.
Eskes, Gail A., Ph.D.
Fairfax, Teri Diania, M.A.
Faulkner, Pauline, M.A.
Fearon, Isabel, Ph.D.
Field, Lars, Ed.D.
Fisk, John D., Ph.D.
Fougere, Dawn, M.Sc.
Fougere, Kerri, M.A.
Fowler, Michael John, M.Ps.
Fox, Barbara, Ph.D.
Frausin, Silvia, M.Sc.
Freeman, Paul, Ph.D.
French, Frederick Ph.D.
Fury, Dwayne K., M.A.
Gair, Joseph, Ph.D.
Gainer, John, Ph.D.
Garland, Debra, M.A.
Garman, James, Ph.D.
Genest, Myles, Ph.D.
Gerriot, Patricia, Ph.D.
Gerry, James, Ph.D.
Gilbert MacLeod, Cheryl, Ph.D.
Gillis, Mary Annette, M.A.
Gleick, Lily, M.A.
Gleich, Stephen, M.Sc.
Goodout, Lise M., M.Sc.
Goodland, Dion, Ph.D.
Goodwin, Shelley, M.A.
Gorman, Maureen, Ph.D.
Gould, Darlene, M.Sc.
Gouthro, Stephen Michael, M.Sc.
Graham, Lisa, M.Sc.
Grant, S. Margaret, M.Sc.
Grantmyre, Jane, M.A.S.P.
Gray, Glenn Allan, M.A.
Greenberg, Norman A., Ph.D.
Gross, Richard, Ph.D.
Guplink, Angela M. Ph.D.
Gusella, Joanna, Ph.D.
Haley, Hugh, Ph.D.
Haley, Jennifer, M.A.
Hall, Carleen, M.Sc.
Hanley, Joan, Ph.D.
Hann, S. Gerald, Ed.D.
Harrell, Jody, M.A.S.P.
Harrop, Brenda, M.A.S.P.
Hartley, Shannon, M.A.S.P.
Hartley, Chris, M.A.S.P.
Hartley, Susan, Ph.D.
Hartman, Lesley, M.A.
Harvie, Phyllis L., M.Sc.
Hayashi, Judith Lynne, M.A.
Hayes, Charles J. A., Ph.D.
Hendrick, Jennifer, Ph.D.
Hennessey, Michael, M.A.
Higgins, Heather, Ph.D.
Hill, Carol L., Ed.D.
Hill, Dorothy, Ph.D.
Hines Ferris, Anne, M.Sc.
Hodson, Sandra, M.Sc.
Holt, Julia, Ed.D.
Horvath, Peter, Ph.D.
Howes, Janice, Ph.D.
Hubley Camthers, Katharine A., Ph.D.
Hughes, Donna, M.A.S.P.
Humphreys, Carolyn Ann, Ph.D.
Humphries, Kelly, M.A.
Hurley, Stefani D., Ph.D.
Hutt-MacLeod, Daphne D., M.
Ingles, Janet Louise, Ph.D.
Isler, Philippe, M.A.
Jefferson, Steven, Ph.D.
Jerrott, Susan E., Ph.D.
Johnson Embery, Debbie, M.Sc.
Johnson, Constance M.B., M.A.
Johnston, Stephanie G., M.A.
Jones, David B., M.A.
Jones, Kevin Scott, M.A.
Jourdrie, J. Kelly, M.A.S.P.
Jurlink, Stacy, M.A.
Karamanos, Nicholas, M.A.
Kelln, Brad, Ph.D.

Kelly, Barbara Ann, M.A.
Kennedy, Norma, Ph.D.
Kilburn, Michael Peter, M.A.
Konopasky, Robert, Ph.D.
Krahe, Richard, Ph.D.
Kumchy, Gayle, Ph.D.
Laidlaw, Toni Ann, Ph.D.
Landry, Reginald, Ph.D.
Leader, B. Todd, M.Sc.
Lechowick, Suzanne Marie, M.A.
L'Ecuycer, Constance, M.Ps.
Lehr, Ron, Ph.D.
Leiter, Michael Patton, Ph.D.
Lenzer, Irmgard, Ph.D.
Lincoln, Kathrine, M.Sc.
Logan-Smith, Lauraine, M.A.
Losier, Bruno J. Ph.D.
Luisy, Helen, Ph.D.
Ludman, Wendy L., Ph.D.
MacDonald, Maureen Clare, M.A.
MacDonald, Valerie, Ph.D.
MacDonald, Wayne, Ph.D.
MacDonnell, M. Joan, M.A.
MacDougall, Judith, M.A.
MacFarlane, Polly K. Ed.D.
MacGillivray, Richard G., Ph.D.
MacInnis, Carole Marie, M.A.
MacInnis, Elizabeth W., M.A.
MacIntyre, Joan, M.A.
MacKay, Macha, M.Ed.
MacLachy, Heather, Ph.D.
MacLean, Barbara K., M.Sc.
MacLellan, Anne, M.A.
MacLellan, Haidee, Ph.D.
MacLeod, Farley, M.A.
MacLeod, Matthew, M.A.S.P.
MacNeil, Sheila, Ph.D.
Mahoney, Anne, Ph.D.
Manuge, M. Christine, M.A.
Marcin, Betsy C., Ph.D.
Marlin, Richard, Ph.D.
Marshall, Maria, Ph.D.
Marsh-Knickle, Lauren, M.Sc.
Martin Wells, Jennifer, M.A.
Matwychuk, Alana K., Ph.D.
Mauro, Gloria Rose, M.A.
McAlpine, Linda M., M.A.
McCarthy, Mary E., Ph.D.
McConville, Holly, Ph.D.
McConville, Brian J., Ph.D.
McEachen, Stephen, Ph.D.
McGe, Robin A., Ph.D.
McGone, Jeannette, Ph.D.
McGrath, Mary, M.Sc.
McGrath, Patrick Ph.D.
McInnes, Julia E., M.A.
McKinnon, Margaret, M.A.
McLaughlin, Elizabeth, Ph.D.
McNeill, Gillian Margaret, M.A.
McRae, Bradley, Ed.D.
Melville, Cornelia, M.Ed.
Mensink David, Ph.D.
Metsala, Jamie, Ph.D.
Mills, Robert, Dip.S.Psy.
Millman, Ellen H., M.A.
Mills, Joanne, M.A.
Milner-Clerk, Jacqueline, M.Sc.
Morine, Stephany, M.A.
Morrissey, Glenda, M.A.
Mott, Penelope, M.A.
Murray, Patricia, M.Sc.
Nathanson, S. Garth, M.Sc.
Nau, Paul A. Ph.D.
Naugler, Jennifer-Jo, Anne, M.A.
Nelson, Margie, M.A.S.P.
Newman, Sandra, M.Ed.
Newsome, Shaun D., Ph.D.
Nickerson, Wendy Elaine, Psy.D.
Norwood Smith, Lisa, M.A.
Oates-Johnson, Tina, Ph.D.
O'Hara, Margaret, M.Sc.
Ohm, Phyllis, Psy.D.
O'Leary, William, M.A.
O'Neill, Patrick, Ph.D.
Pace, Elizabeth, Ph.D.
Parker, Lori, M.A.
Pencer, Alissa, Ph.D.
Pencer, Edward, Ph.D.
Perrott, Stephen B., Ph.D.
Perry, Dean Allen, M.Sc.
Pick, Deborah, M.Sc.
Pilon, David Joseph, Ph.D.
Poisson, Marie E., Ph.D.
Porter, Stephen, Ph.D.
Potter, Susan M., Ph.D.

Price, E. Lisa, Ph.D.
Pure, Kiran, Ph.D.
Purvis, Gregory A., M.Sc.
Pye, Carol, Ph.D.
Rabin, Bonnie L., M.A.
Reynolds, Patricia Lee, M.Sc.
Rice, Kevin Michael, M.A.
Roberts, Marilyn, M.Sc.
Robertson-Dawson, Heather M.A.
Robinson, Lynn, Ph.D.
Rose, Patricia Eileen, M.Sc.
Ross, Lynn, M.A.
Ross, Michael A., Ph.D.
Roth, Jason, M.A.
Rule, Valerie Anne, M.A.
Russell, Mark, M.Sc.
Rutherford, Patricia Joan, M.A.
Ryan, Shannon Michael, Ph.D.
Sablone, Anita Carolyn, M.A.
Sampson, Rosemarie, Ph.D.
Sark, Jody, Ph.D.
Scales, Nicola, M.Sc.
Scattolon, Yvette, Ph.D.
Secouleur-Beaudry, Lori, Ph.D.
Service, John, Ph.D.
Seymour, Carla, M.Sc.
Sheridan, Donald Patrick, Ph.D.
Shirley, Carol M., M.A.S.P.
Silverberg, Jeffrey J. Ph.D.
Simmons, J. Ruth, M.A.
Singh, Harman, M.A.
Smith, Doreen M., M.A.
Smith, Isabel M., Ph.D.
Smith, Melissa D., M.A.
Smith, Rebecca, M.A.S.P.
Sodhi, Surinder Singh, Ph.D.
Sperry, John, Ph.D.
St. Amand, Michelle, Ph.D.
Starzowski, Andrew, Ph.D.
Stee, Jocaine, Psy.D.
Stec, Astrid, M.A.
Stephenson, Daniel Patrick, M.A.
Stewart, Sherry Heather, Ph.D.
Street, Philip, Ph.D.
Strickland-Clark, Lisa, Ph.D.
Stricker Warren, Louise G., M.A.
Strok, Edward Stephen, Ed.D.
Sullivan, Maureen, Ph.D.
Sunarath, John Charles, Ed.D.
Sutherland, Debbie, M.Sc.
Sutherland, Maria, M.A.
Swaine, John R., Ph.D.
Swainson, Pamela, M.Sc.
Symons, Douglas, Ph.D.
Szostak, Deborah J., Ed.M.
Szuskiewicz, Tara, Ph.D.
Taggart, Tracy Lowell, M.A.S.P.
Theriault, Stephen, M.Sc.
Thompson, Carol, Ph.D.
Thurston, Catherine M., M.A.
Todd, Judith, M.A.
Tompkins, Stephanie, M.A.
Tragakis, Christie, Ph.D.
Trim, Faye L., M.A.
Trimper, Jacqueline, M.A.
Ugursal, Billur, M.A.
Vidmar-Perrins, Mikaela, M.S.C.
Vince, Thomas Psy. D.
Voges, Marcia, Ph.D.
Volsky Rushton, Jennifer A., Ph.D.
Vulcano, Brent, Ph.D.
Walford, Virginia L., Ph.D.
Wall-MacDonald, Julie, Ph.D.
Walsh, Trudi, Ph.D.
Warren, Lisa, Ph.D.
Watt, Margo, Ph.D.
Webster, Allister, Ph.D.
Webster, Ann A., M.Ed.
Whelan, John, Ph.D.
Whiffen, Arlene, M.Sc.
Whitaker, Richard H., M.Sc.
Whyte, Robert, M.A.
Wilkins, Janet, Ph.D.
Wilson, Allan, Ph.D.
Winn, Barbara, M.A.
Wiser, Barry, Psy.D.
Wong, Julie, M.Sc.
Wotherspoon, Vanessa, M.A.
Woulff, Nina, Ph.D.
Yeracaris, Flora, Ph.D.
Yorke, Wayne Matthew, M.A.
Young, Stacey Marie, M.A.S.P.
Zehr, Richard, M.A.
Zinck, Beverly D., M.A.S.C.

Candidate Register

Abou-El-Haj, Marriam, M.Sc.
Aulakh, Harpreet, M.A.
Barrett, Sean, Ph.D.
Bates, Lindsay J., M.A.
Boudreau, Ainsley, M.A.S.P.
Brannen, Cynthi, Ph.D.
Brooks, Heidi, M.A.
Butler, Beverly Ph.D.
Campbell, Bernadette, M.A.S.P.
Carter, Rebecca, M.A.S.P.
Cassie, Diana, Ph.D.
Chatman, Jason, Ph.D.
Chisholm, Gina, M.A.S.P.
Churchill Keatinge, Becky, Ph.D.
Conrad, Brent, M.A.
Cook, Andrea, M.A.
Cormier, Louise, M.A.Ps.
Craig, Rebecca, M.A.S.P.
Denny-Hazel, Jennifer, M.Sc.
Doran, Joann, M.A.S.P.
Ebert, Patricia, Ph.D.
Elik, Nezhie, Ph.D.
Ellsworth, Angela, M.A.S.P.
Evans, Janice, M.Sc.
Fagan, James, M.Sc.
Farrell, Kyla Ann, M.A.
Forgeron, Nicole Marguerite, M.Sc.
Foss, Laura Casey, M.Sc.
Fowler, Darren, M.A.
Francouer, Susie, M.A.Ps.
Gabriel, Liza, M.A.S.P.
Gillan, Amy, Psy.D.
Harris, S. Peyton, M.A.
Hasiuk, Maria, M.A.S.P.
Hayden, Lisa, M.A.
Hull, Angela, M.A.S.P.
Hutchings, Veronica M. M., M.A.
Ius, Jessica, M.A.
Jacques, Heather, M.Sc.
Jewer, Chimène, M.Sc.
Johnson, Shannon, Ph.D.
Johnston, Erin, M.Sc.
King, Sara, Ph.D.
Komissarova, Olga, M.Psy.
Lang, Laura, M.Sc.
Lefebvre, Celeste, Ph.D.
Leung, Grace, M.A.
Lewis, Janine, M.A.S.P.
MacBeth, Dailene, M.A.S.P.
MacDonald, Derek, M.Sc.
MacDonald, Tara, M.Sc.
MacGillivray, Amy, M.A.S.P.
MacKay, Angela Dawn, M.Sc.
MacKinnon, Maura, M.A.S.P.
MacLean, Kim, Ph.D.
MacLean, Susan L., M.Sc.
Martin, Sarah, M.A.S.P.
Maxner, Nadine, M.A.S.P.
McCleave, Caitlin, M.A.S.P.
McKay, Marcie, M.A.
McWilliams, Lachlan, Ph.D.
Noseworthy, Bonnie, M.A.S.P.
O'Brien, Sonya, M.Ed.
O'Connor, Kimberly, M.Ed.
O'Sullivan, Traci, M.A.
Panton, Rachel, M.A.S.P.
Penny, Ann Marie, Ph.D.
Peters, Brad, M.Sc.
Pleydon, Anne, Ph.D.
Pottier, Mark, M.A.
Power, Heather, M.Sc.
Rippeyoung, Matthew, M.A.
Sampson, Crystal, M.A.S.P.
Sawlor, Terra, M.A.S.P.
Schurman, George D., M.Sc.
Sebesta, Jon, M.A.S.P.
Séruntine, Cliff, M.Sc.
Sherry, Dayna L., Ph.D.
Smith, Katie, M.A.S.P.
Sparkes, Sandra, Ph.D.
Stoffer, Elaine, Ph.D.
Tatler, Leanne, M.A.S.P.
Teasdale, Stephanie L., M.Sc.
Tracy, Laurie L., M.A.
Vanier, Melanie, Ph.D.
Wambolt, Pamela L., M.Sc.
West, Shelley, M.Sc.
Williams, Sarah, M.A.S.P.
Yorke, Natasha E., M.A.S.P.

*Denotes academic, out of province or retired status.

Any Questions? If you are unsure about whether the person you are seeing is a psychologist, or have any concerns about the ethical conduct of a psychologist, contact the Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology **423-2238**

APNS February Is Psychology Month

ASSOCIATION OF PSYCHOLOGISTS OF NOVA SCOTIA www.apns.ca SPECIAL ADVERTISING FEATURE

School psychologists address social, human ills

continued from / B4

- have the tools to systematically measure change in behaviour over time
- have the training to carry out psychological assessment of students' cognitive and learning styles for the purpose of educational planning
- have the training to recognize, diagnose, and intervene with various child and adolescent behaviour and learning disorders
- collaborate with students, families, teachers and other health care professionals in formulating appropriate recommendations, plans, and achievable goals for students
- support parents and teachers in the implementation of recommendations and plans
- maintain liaisons with other agencies in the community when appropriate to ensure comprehensive service delivery to students, parents, and the teachers with whom they collaborate
- develop, consult, and participate in programs designed to respond to crises and emergency situations in schools
- stay current with research related to psychology and education, and therefore offer psychological resource and expertise to the educational system in the development of educational policy and procedure as well as program evaluation

(Professional Practice Guidelines for School Psychologists in Canada, CPA)

What does the future hold?

Historically, psychological services in school have been closely linked to the delivery of educational services for children with special needs. Typically, schools expect psychologists to provide psycho-educational assessment services, often to the exclusion of other services they are both competent and prepared to deliver. Currently, provincial educators are recognizing the need to integrate education and health care services for children and adolescents. A growing body of research documents the links between good mental health and the ability to learn. There is substantial evidence to support focusing the delivery of psychological services in schools to more comprehensively meet the needs of Nova Scotia's children, youth, and families. Canadian epidemiology research over the past two decades has consistently shown that approximately 18-20 per cent of children will qualify for one or

N.S. SCHOOL BOARDS

- Annapolis Valley Regional School Board
- Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board
- Chignecto-Central Regional School Board
- Conseil scolaire acadien provincial
- Halifax Regional School Board
- South Shore Regional School Board
- Strait Regional School Board
- Tri-County Regional School Board

'...18-20 per cent of children will qualify for one or more psychiatric diagnoses during their time in school.'

more psychiatric diagnoses during their time in school. These diagnoses range from learning disabilities and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (A-D/H/D) to depression and conduct disorder. These are mental health issues with major impacts on a child's or adolescent's behaviour in school and serious impacts on learning. At the same time, learning difficulties can affect a student's social, emotional, and behavioural adjustment, and impact negatively on the child's mental health. Psychologists in schools are uniquely positioned to provide **primary mental health care**. Similar to a primary health care model, primary mental health care includes:

- prevention and treatment of common mental health issues
- basic emergency mental health services
- referrals to/coordination with other levels of care (such as hospital and community based mental health services)
- mental health promotion
- healthy child/adolescent development
- school-based rehabilitation services

In a primary mental health care model, the school-based psychologist can provide direct provision of first-contact services and a coordination function to ensure continuity and ease of move-

ment when longer term or specialized services are required.

"School psychologists are the most highly trained mental health experts in schools. In addition to knowledge about prevention, intervention, and evaluation for a number of childhood problems, school psychologists have unique expertise regarding issues of learning and schools. It is [school psychologists'] ethical responsibility to become involved in programs aimed at problems that are broader than assessing and diagnosing what is wrong with a child. As the most experienced school professionals in this area, school psychologists must become invested in addressing social and human ills ... Although [school psychologists] will not 'solve' these ills, [they] must have a role in ameliorating their impact on the lives of children."

(Sheridan, S. and Gutkin, T., School Psychology Review, v29 n4 p485-502 (2000))

The school-based integrated service model is already exemplified in Nova Scotia by the growing number of Teen Health Centres housed in public schools. Psychologists in the schools are well placed and well prepared to work collaboratively with health care professionals and a variety of community agencies in addition to the Teen Health Centres. Together, they can identify and support students with mental health needs, and develop prevention and early intervention programs. However, a significant obstacle to developing and enhancing the collaborative integrated model is a matter of numbers. According to the Nova Scotia Department of Education, there are 138,661 students currently enrolled in Nova Scotia Schools. This means that the estimated 18 per cent or about 24,959 students who will need psychological support and/or intervention will likely not be offered these services. The lack of capacity to meet the psychological needs of children and adolescents in the schools is due in large part to the fact that the 82 psychologists employed by school boards across the province already have a wait list of students for psycho-educational assessment and there is rarely time available for other services. The Association of Psychologists of

Psychologists in Nova Scotia schools

ALL PSYCHOLOGISTS must be registered with the Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology in order to practice psychology in Nova Scotia. Psychology is a self-regulated profession under the Nova Scotia Psychologists Act (2000).

To be registered, psychologists must meet the standards of the profession, which include a graduate degree in Psychology and extensive education, training and supervised work experience in Psychology. Training to be a school psychologist emphasizes preparation in learning styles, psycho-educational assessment, child development, behaviour, mental health, counselling and school organization. School psychologists work collaboratively with students, parents, school personnel, community agencies, and mental health professionals. School psychologists work directly with students either individually or in groups. They also consult with school personnel to help support children with diverse learning needs. School psychologists tailor their services to fit the specific needs of each child. Services include:

- Consultation**
 - Build and strengthen relationships between students, parents, school personnel, and community
 - Help others understand children's individual needs and how they affect their learning and behaviour
 - Act as a link between schools and community agencies to address children's mental health needs
- Assessment**
 - Evaluate learning styles and specific learning disabilities
 - Examine behaviour and classroom adjustment
 - Assess the impact of social and emotional difficulties on educational progress

- Intervention**
 - In conjunction with the school's Program Planning Team, help to design academic programs for students with diverse learning needs
 - Provide behaviour management strategies and programs to parents and teachers
 - Provide brief counselling services for children experiencing difficulties such as anger, depression, anxiety, and grief
 - Help students, families, and school staff deal with crisis situations

- Evaluation and education**
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of interventions such as academic programs and behaviour management strategies
 - Help create a school and community climate of tolerance, understanding and appreciation of diversity
 - Deliver professional development in-services to school personnel and information sessions to parents and the broader community
 - Evaluate and incorporate new information about assessing and intervening into existing school psychology practice

Growing up is not easy. Psychologists in the schools work with students, parents and school staff to understand and solve such issues as these:

- Have difficulties with academic achievement or performance
- Think they are stupid because they are experiencing difficulties at school
- Lack organizational and study skills
- Feel depressed or angry
- Experience a separation from or loss of a loved one
- Be teased or bullied by other students
- Feel alone because they have no friends
- Consider dropping out of school

Nova Scotia (APNS) encourages the Nova Scotia Department of Education to explore and develop innovative, integrated school based service delivery models to promote mental health in the school age population, including but not

limited to psycho-educational assessment. As the professional organization representing psychologists in Nova Scotia, APNS wishes to extend an offer of support and collaboration to this end.

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