

- pros and cons of each program (D4). Consider cultural implications for each. (D8).
3. What specific types of professional development for the teachers, administrators and mental health professionals in the school might be necessary to ensure effective service delivery of this new program? (O6)
  4. Review the “Best Practices in Group Counseling” chapter by Herbstrith and Tobin (2014). Apply some of the practices suggested for use in this case.

## Case Two: Mounting Pressures

Christopher is a male 11th-grade student of Korean descent who has been referred for counseling with the school psychologist, Ms. Randall, by both the assistant principal and Christopher’s parents. According to his mother, Christopher has always excelled in school and has had no difficulties meeting expectations in various challenging classes. In fact, this year, Christopher is taking three advanced placement classes, and three honors classes so he can improve his chances of admission to an elite college. He also reportedly has never had any discipline issues in school. However, now it is November of his junior year of high school and there have been four disciplinary incidents. All the incidents are related to Christopher becoming overly emotional and angry during school. In two of these incidents, he angrily yelled at a teacher after receiving a B on an assignment that he believed was an unfair grade. As a result of these incidents, he was sent to the office with a discipline referral for class disruption and disrespect towards the teacher.

In another incident, Christopher was found crying uncontrollably in the library by the librarian. He refused to provide any information to the librarian about what was wrong and refused to move from the spot that he was in for approximately 45 minutes, which resulted in him receiving a discipline referral for skipping his next class. The latest incident occurred after Christopher met with his guidance counselor about the college application process. Christopher reportedly angrily kicked the counselor’s desk and stormed out of the office, leaving school grounds for approximately 20 minutes before returning. The counselor indicated that she had been describing the application process for college to Christopher and asking him about potential majors when this outburst occurred, seemingly out of the blue. This incident was deemed by the assistant principal to be a more serious disciplinary issue because Christopher left school grounds, which is a safety concern. In fact, multiple school officials, including the school resource officer (SRO) were involved in

searching for Christopher during this time period until he eventually returned to the school on his own. He indicated that he just needed to take a walk to calm down and that he didn't mean to break any school rules. Due to the seriousness of this incident, Christopher was suspended from school for two days. During his suspension, Ms. Randall called home and spoke with both Christopher and his mother. His mother reported that he was grounded at home because of the issues he had at school. She also reported that she was at a loss regarding why he would be behaving this way. The school psychologist asked if she could speak to Christopher and his mother indicated that she would attempt to get him on the phone. Somewhat surprisingly, Christopher willingly came to the phone and immediately began sharing some of his concerns. He indicated that he feels "like no one understands me" and reported feeling immense pressure and anxiety about his future plans. Christopher agreed to come to a counseling session with Ms. Randall and the first session will occur upon Christopher's return to school from his suspension.

### *Discussion Questions*

1. What additional information might the school psychologist want to gather prior to her first counseling session with Christopher? (D1)
2. Provide some ideas of how the counseling session with Christopher can be started. What would be some goals for the first session? (D4)
3. What are some hypotheses that the school psychologist might have regarding the nature of Christopher's sudden behavioral problems? What might be the source of his behavioral issue at school? (D4)
4. Thus far, the focus of the school and his parents seem to be disciplinary and punitive in nature. How effective do you think the disciplinary actions taken by the school will be in improving Christopher's behavior? Why? (D5)
5. Christopher has already reported to the school psychologist that he doesn't feel that anybody understands him. How might this be used in the initial counseling sessions to further understand how Christopher is currently feeling? (D4)
6. By your sixth session with Christopher, he is comfortable expressing that he feels enormous pressure to get into an elite University. He reports that some of this pressure comes from the expectations of his parents since they are both successful in their chosen fields, but it mostly comes from the pressure that he is putting on himself. He reports to the school psychologist that he feels like he might be happier if he goes to community college after high school instead of applying to four-year colleges. He

specifically asks for advice and asks if he should take this route. How might the school psychologist respond? (D4)

7. What are potential cultural considerations or issues in this case? Should cultural variables be considered? Why or why not? (D8)

### *Advanced Applications*

1. Select three counseling theories and explore how counseling sessions might proceed when using those theories in counseling Christopher. (D4)
2. Select three different specific counseling techniques that might be considered for use with Christopher at some point in the counseling relationship. (D4)
3. It might be helpful to also include consultation with Christopher's parents, his teachers and even the school administrators regarding intervention planning for Christopher. What would be the goal of these consultation sessions? Role play how you could engage in consultation with each of these groups. (D2)
4. What type of information should the school psychologist provide to the teachers regarding how best to handle Christopher in the classroom? What types of information is it appropriate to share to ensure that they don't inadvertently escalate similar situations as they occur? (D2, O4)
5. Research some of the best practices and controversies/concerns regarding policing in schools. What are best practices for involving school resource officers in situations such as the one described in this case? What are the potential problems and how can they be managed? (O4)
6. Review Huberty's (2014) *Best Practices in School-Based Interventions for Anxiety and Depression* and apply the relevant elements to this case. What would you recommend be done to assist Christopher based on your review of this chapter?

### **Case Three: Class-Wide Consultation**

Ms. Carter is an enthusiastic teacher in her second year of teaching. During her first year as a teacher, she was assigned to teach in fifth grade. However, due to increasing enrollment for kindergarten, the school realized over the summer months the need to add another class of kindergarten this year and Ms. Carter was assigned in August to a kindergarten classroom. Given late registrations for kindergarten, unfortunately Ms. Carter was only given about

two weeks' notice that she would be teaching kindergarten. Being an enthusiastic teacher, Ms. Carter jumped into planning by reviewing the kindergarten curriculum. However, given her focus on creating instructional materials for the kindergarten level, she did not really have time to change her class-wide behavior management plan prior to the beginning of school. She did her best to adapt the program that was successful during the previous year with her fifth graders to the kindergarten environment. It is now November and she has come into the school psychologist's office, Ms. Kay, in tears after school one day. She reported that she feels that she has "lost control" over the class, as the students had yet to adjust to the behavioral expectations of kindergarten. Ms. Kay agreed to conduct some classroom observations and Ms. Carter indicated her willingness to work with the school psychologist to try to improve some of the behavior management and classroom procedures in the class.

The school psychologist, Ms. Kay, observed the class on four different occasions throughout the morning activities (morning circle time, rotations to stations, and during independent work time) for 60 minutes in total during each observation. Ms. Kay tracked behavioral concerns of multiple students (18 students total) in the classroom (see Table 4.1). During these observations she noted occasions of calling out behaviors, non-compliance with directions and potential safety concerns (i.e., children running in the classroom with scissors, students shoving one another to get a preferred spot in one of the stations). Further, when analyzing the classroom environment, the school psychologist found that the children did not seem to understand the classroom procedures, the stated rules of the classroom, and the behavior management system in use. Ms. Kay noticed that the procedures and classroom rules were written in complex, multi-step language, which might be confusing for kindergarten students. The focus on writing the rules out rather than using pictures and more appealing graphics also seemed to Ms. Kay to be developmentally inappropriate for the kindergarten level. Ms. Kay also noticed that the classroom space was quite cluttered, both on the walls and in the actual physical space. With extra desks and furniture, Ms. Kay noticed that the children did not have a lot of space to move around the room comfortably. It was also noted that all the classroom materials (scissors, markers, crayons, etc.) were out on desks and tables for all children to access at any time.

Ms. Kay and Ms. Carter met to review the data collected by the school psychologist during the four observations and agreed to prioritize the safety concerns (running in class, pushing other students). While they are concerned with all the problematic behaviors occurring within the class, the safety concerns were prioritized given the risk of harm to the students. They discussed making global changes to all the classroom rules and procedures, reorganizing the classroom space, streamlining the rules to focus on the prioritized

**Table 4.1** Class Behavior Observation Data

Baseline	Calling Out	Inability to Follow Directions	Safety Concerns (running with items, pushing/shoving)
Observation 1	14	11	11
Observation 2	15	9	12
Observation 3	18	14	9
Observation 4	16	13	12
Intervention Phase			
Observation 1	13	11	7
Observation 2	11	10	5
Observation 3	12	9	6
Observation 4	11	7	7
Observation 5	10	7	5
Observation 6	11	8	4
Observation 7	10	5	2
Observation 8	12	3	3
Observation 9	14	2	1
Observation 10	14	2	1

issues, and implementing a positive behavior reward system. Ms. Kay agrees to assist with continued weekly observations to determine the effectiveness of the new procedures and interventions put into place. Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1 include the data from the baseline and intervention phases.

### *Discussion Questions*

1. Ms. Kay and Ms. Carter decided to focus on safety concerns as the target of intervention. Do you agree with this decision based on the baseline data collected? Why or why not? (D1)

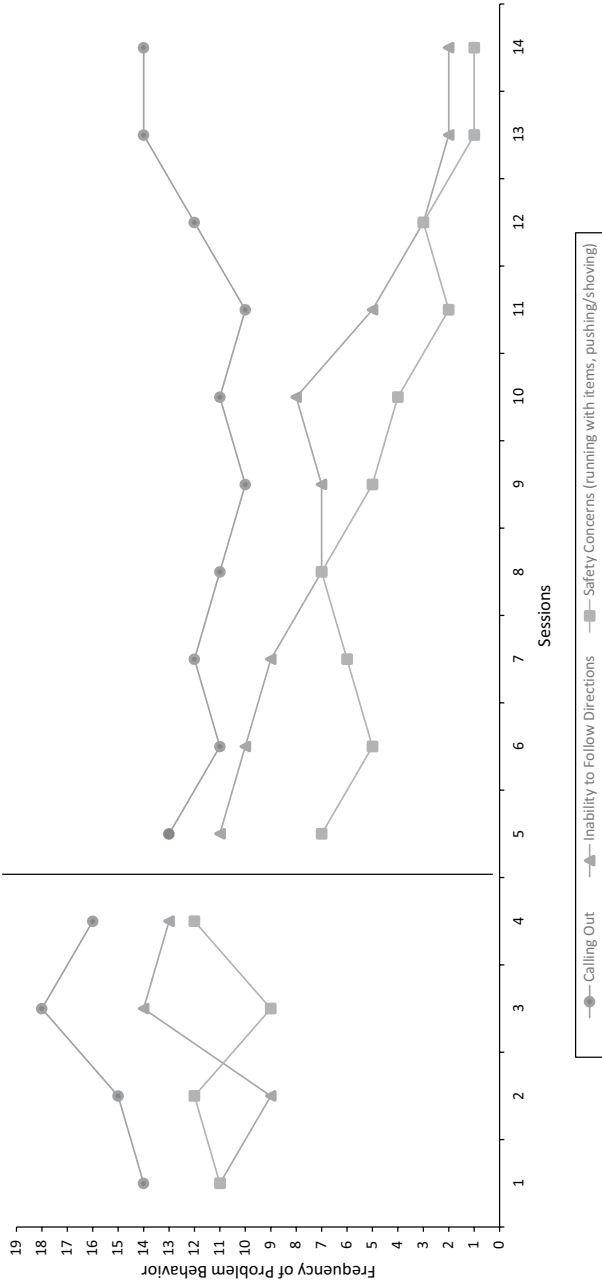


Figure 4.1 Class-Wide Intervention Data

2. How might Ms. Kay and Ms. Carter better operationalize the behaviors of concern (safety concerns, inability to follow directions, calling out)? Write out operationalized definitions for each of these categories. (D4)
3. Upon reviewing the progress monitoring data, are the interventions put into place working? Why or why not? (D1)
4. What might you suggest next in this case? What should be prioritized and why? (D4)
5. Ms. Carter was open to suggestions to assist her behavior management in class as she seemed to realize that she needed some assistance with updating her classroom procedures/management to younger grades. How did her openness to consultation with Ms. Kay influence the outcomes in this case? How might this case have proceeded differently if Ms. Carter was not open to making changes to her classroom management/procedures? (D2)

### *Advanced Applications*

1. During this class-wide intervention, Ms. Kay has been conducting the weekly observations to determine the effectiveness of the interventions. She comes to the class for 60 minutes each week to collect the data in all categories. This may not be feasible for all school psychologists. Design a more stream-lined data collection plan that still allows for data collection for progress monitoring. (D1)
2. The interventions put into place in this classroom were designed to update classroom management/procedures so that they work better with younger children. Thus, the intervention plan was quite general. If more specific interventions were needed, research some possible evidence-based interventions that could be utilized in this class for the identified areas of concern. (D4)
3. This data represents whole-class data. Suppose that the analyses of data find that the continued calling out behavior is mostly from one child in the class who has not adapted to the classroom routine. If the majority of the continued calling out is from this one child, what individual intervention might be suggested to change this behavior? How could this intervention for one child be monitored? (D4)
4. How can the school psychologist ensure that the school administration sees value in her participation in class-wide interventions such as the one described? What data should be presented to document that this is an effective use of the school psychologist's time? (O1, O3, O4)

## Case Four: When the Pandemic Came Along

Jason is an 8th-grade, White male student who attends John F. Kennedy (JFK) Middle School. Jason is described as an average student and teachers have reported in the past to his parents that he seems socially withdrawn, at times unmotivated, and is difficult to engage with when teachers attempt to have conversations with him. He is generally quiet in class and does not seek out interactions with teachers, even when he needs assistance with an assignment. He has historically received Bs and Cs in his academic courses. Jason's mother indicates that he is quiet and shy kid who she describes as "socially awkward." He does have a few friends who he talks with at school, although they live on the opposite sides of town, so they do not often get together after school or on the weekends. Jason is not involved in sports or any other extracurricular activities. His mother reports that he spends most of his free time in the basement playing video games.

When the pandemic began in March of his eighth-grade year, JFK Middle School, like most middle schools, switched to virtual learning. The school did not reopen again for the remainder of the school year. Almost immediately, Jason's teachers reported concerns that Jason was not logging-in to their virtual class sessions and that he was only infrequently submitting assignments. When the school psychologist reached out to the family in May of that year due to his now failing grades in most academic classes, Jason's mother reported that she was becoming increasingly concerned about Jason. She reported that he was extremely unmotivated to complete any academic work. His mother was a nurse and essential worker during the pandemic; therefore, she is not always home during virtual instruction to monitor Jason's attendance. She reported that she would come home from work to find that Jason had slept until the afternoon and then played video games for the remainder of the afternoon. His mother reported that he was not communicating with any friends and she feared that he was playing video games with people that he had only met through the gaming world. She was also concerned because Jason's father, who he would typically see every other weekend, was now not visiting due to his own concerns about the virus because of his ongoing health concerns. As an only child, Jason's mother fears that he is spending too much time alone and asks the school psychologist for suggestions of how she can help her son to cope with the social isolation and withdrawal that she is witnessing from him.

The school psychologist, Ms. Nguyen, was a bit intimidated by this request, not sure how to help a student, teacher, or parent in these stressful and uncertain times. She decided to consult the *APA Guidelines for Practice*

of *Telepsychology* (2013) and the growing body of research supporting teleconsultation to see what models existed that she might use to guide her next steps. She was interested to find that there were studies confirming teacher's acceptability of teleconsultation (Fischer, Dart et al., 2016; Fischer, Dart, Radley et al., 2016.; Schultz et al., 2017), consistency with or improvements upon face-to-face methods (Fischer et al., 2017), and positive student outcomes (e.g., Bice-Urbach & Kratochwill, 2016; Fischer, Dart, Radley et al., 2016). Ms. Nguyen viewed the APA Division 16 webinar, which was recorded and available free online (see Fischer, 2020). She stumbled across two journal special issues that focused solely on the topic of teleconsultation, *The Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation* volume 28, number three (2018) and the *Journal of Behavioral Education* volume 29 (2020). She found the introduction articles by Fischer and his colleagues (2018), Bice-Urbach et al. (2018), and Rispoli and Machalicek (2020) to be important overview resources for the advances in telehealth in education. Armed with that information and recognizing her own efficacy in delivering face-to-face consultation services, she felt ready to try teleconsultation.

### Discussion Questions

1. Jason is clearly struggling with virtual learning during the pandemic. Name some ways that the school could have been more proactive early on in offering support to Jason and his family. (D3, D4, D7)
2. Why was it important for Ms. Nguyen to consult the relevant literature and research around teleconsultation? (D9)
3. What hypotheses do you have regarding Jason's academic performance during virtual instruction? How are Jason's academic and social/emotional concerns related? (D3, D4)
4. Jason is referred to as unmotivated throughout this case. What may be a more positive conceptualization of the areas of concern? (D4)
5. While the switch to virtual instruction seems to have negatively impacted Jason's grades and is the trigger that caused the school to reach out to Jason's mother, there is some evidence to suggest that Jason may have needed additional support from the school prior to this. What are some suggestions for earlier interventions and/or supports that could have been put in place or at least explored during Jason's earlier elementary/middle school years? (D3, D4)
6. Now that Ms. Nguyen is ready to offer teleconsultation, who should be her consultee? Why? (D2)

## Advanced Applications

1. Review some of the references that Ms. Nguyen initially consulted about teleconsultation. Using that information, how might you approach teleconsultation for this case? What steps would you take? What practical and legal considerations would be needed? (D2, D10)
2. Design an assessment plan to better understand some of Jason's particular needs. (D1)
3. Research and design an intervention plan to provide support to Jason and his mother. (D3, D4, D7, D9)
4. The pandemic completely upended the educational system in the entire country. What were some of the immediate and long-term negative impacts of the pandemic on students' learning? How about on students' mental health? How should schools continue to respond to these impacts? (D5)
5. Some believe that one of the positive side effects of the pandemic might be the reimagination of how we educate our children, which has not been critically changed in generations. One example includes an increase in investment in technology-based education that may have benefits for children long after the pandemic has ended. How might this be a long-term benefit? What are the potential drawbacks of an over-reliance on technology-based education? What are other potential positive long-term outcomes may emerge regarding how we educate children in this country? (D5, O1, O2)
6. What additional professional development, specific to school psychologists, might need to happen to ensure that they have the skills to support children during this pandemic? (O6)

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# Understanding School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning

# 5

## **Domain 5: School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning**

"School psychologists understand systems structures, organization, and theory; general and special education programming; implementation science; and evidence-based, school-wide practices that promote learning, positive behavior, and mental health. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, develop and implement practices and strategies to create and maintain safe, effective, and supportive learning environments for students and school staff." (NASP, 2020, p. 6)

One of the vital roles that school psychologists can play is at the school-wide or system-level. With the expertise and knowledge that school psychologists have gained through their training, they can and should be integral to school-wide problem-solving to support the behavior, mental health, and academic development of all children. The cases within this chapter demonstrate some of this wide variety of ways that school psychologists might be involved with school-wide practices to promote learning. The cases all focus on different school-wide practices that directly impact student success.

Whether through participating in program development and design, program evaluation, the professional development of teachers and other staff

in the school, or the monitoring of program implementation and success, school psychologists have the skills to truly make a difference in the school organization to positively benefit children. While using collaborative communication and problem-solving skills, school psychologists can make a difference by understanding how teams and schools as organizations function, how to establish effective collaborative problem-solving units within schools, how to engage multiple stakeholders for common goals, and how to provide professional development and ongoing support to staff and families. Cases one and two provide examples of this in practice, with a focus on the PBIS model and MTSS processes, respectively, in schools. These cases provide sample data for analysis and discussion, specifically related to how to improve the process and ensure ongoing consistency in implementation.

School psychologists also can and should be involved in the development and ongoing evaluation of school improvement plans and/or strategic development goals for schools. They might offer their expertise in the design and delivery of needs assessment for various stakeholder groups or in the recommendations of various evidence-based programs or practices to foster development based on individual school/community needs. To foster discussion about these important skills, Case Four provides an example of how a school psychologist might be involved in the design of a needs assessment and the use of that data to make suggestions for improving school psychologists' professional development opportunities.

School psychologists might become involved with a wide range of school-based programs, including programs foster positive school climate, programs that develop tiered systems of support for children's academic development, programs that increase school attendance, programs that reduce bullying, programs that use positive behavioral support to recognize students' successes, and many more. School psychologists can also be involved in the selection and utilization of various screening measures to better understand the students in the school who may need more academic, social/emotional, or behavioral support. The third case focuses on data-based decision-making for school-wide programs with a scenario involving how a school might analyze and effectively utilize data from a universal screener related to diversity and school climate.

According to NASP (2020, p. 7), "school psychologists analyze systems-level problems and identify factors that influence learning and behavior. . . . They help other school leaders evaluate outcomes . . . support shared decision-making practices . . . and meet general public accountability responsibilities." Cases One and Three provide opportunities to look at potential equity issues that exist within a school. This allows for discussion of the school

psychologist's role in analyzing and sharing that data for accountability and team problem-solving.

## Case One: Beyond Token Rewards: Ensuring Ongoing Improvement With PBIS Implementation

The staff at Ocean Air Elementary school were committed to student success. They recently engaged in a school-wide overhaul of their discipline system. They decided to adopt School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS, Sugai & Horner, 2002). A core group of committed teachers and staff attended the SWPBS Team training three years ago and started to implement SWPBS school-wide that year. They worked very hard in the first year to ramp up their school store to include many more rewards and incentives that students could “purchase” with their “Dolphin Dollars.” A Dolphin Dollar was a token that students received when they were “caught being good,” which meant displaying one of the school’s core values (e.g., Respectful, Responsible, Safe). The SWPBS Team also worked hard that year to develop school-wide activities and events that students could attend weekly on “Fun Friday,” if they earned enough points for the week (e.g., a Dolphin Dance or Dolphins & Donuts). The team was very excited to see the impact of the activities that they had developed and how much the students enjoyed the new incentives.

Each year, the SWPBS Team receives evaluation feedback from the school district’s SWPBS Coordinator. The coordinator used the SWPBS School Evaluation Tool (SET, Horner et al., 2004) evaluation to collect data and provide feedback on SWPBS fidelity. In the third year, the team was proud of their progress each year, but dismayed to see that they were still just short of the 80 percent benchmark to be considered a high implementing team. Their overall SET score was 78 percent. They reviewed the graph of their progress over the past three years (see Figure 5.1). Their highest feature and most notable growth were in their ongoing systems for rewarding behavioral expectations, with a score of 85 percent. The coordinator noted their consistent use of the Dolphin Dollar system. The coordinator indicated that when interviewed, some staff members felt the Dolphin Dollar system was not effective because they felt like they were just “bribing students to behave.”

In terms of behavioral expectation definition, the team received a score of 52 percent. The feedback indicated that they did have three positively stated expectations but noted that these were not prominently displayed in all classrooms, hallways, or special areas. In some cases, the expectations that were posted were slightly different than what the team indicated they should

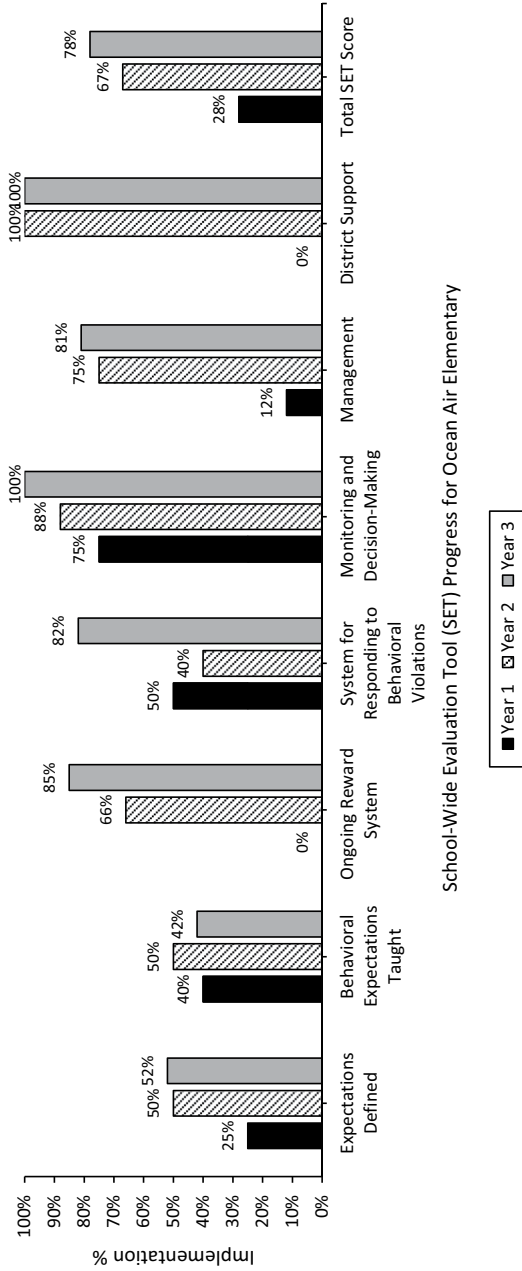


Figure 5.1 School-Wide Evaluation Tool (SET) Progress for Ocean Air Elementary Year

be (e.g., not Respectful, Responsible, Safe; instead, the 4 Bs “Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Proud, Be You!”). Additionally, the team earned 42 percent for the “behavior expectations taught” feature. The coordinator indicated in the feedback that there was nothing in writing to teach students the behavior expectations (e.g., no lesson plans for what it means to be respectful, responsible, or safe in the cafeteria or on the playground). When interviewed, only 65 percent of the staff agreed that they had taught or reinforced the three behavioral expectations this year, and only 30 percent of the teachers and students could recite those expectations.

The team also noted their progress in recent years for responding to behavioral violations, which went up from 40–50 percent to 82 percent. They felt particularly proud of how they cleaned up and clarified their office discipline referral process for student behavior infractions. The staff now knew the difference between a major and a minor referral and were more consistently using the referral form to document concerns. However, a review of their triangle data (see Figure 5.2) from the School-wide Information System (SWIS, SWIS Suite, 2020) indicated that they had a few students who were “high-flyers,” meaning that they received most of the office discipline referrals for

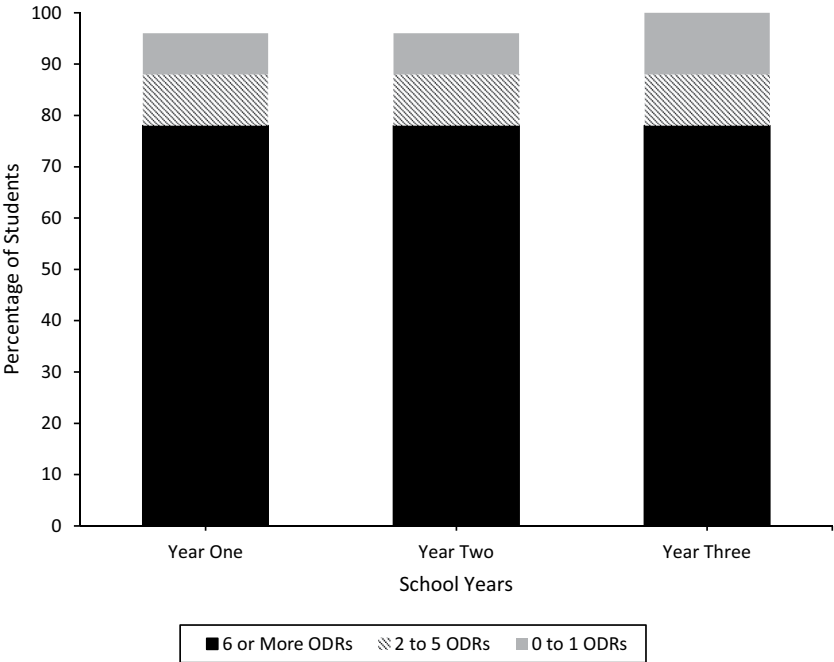


Figure 5.2 SWIS Triangle Data for Ocean Air Elementary

**Table 5.1** Analysis of Repeat Office Referrals by Race/Ethnicity at Ocean Air Elementary

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b># of Students Enrolled</b>	<b># Students With Referrals</b>	<b>% of Students Within Ethnicity With Referrals</b>	<b>Risk Index</b>
American Indian/Alaskan Native	8	4	50%	0.50
Asian	8	1	12.5%	.12
Hispanic/Latino	97	37	38.14%	.38
Black	70	55	78.57%	.79
White	302	99	32.78%	.33
Pacific Islander/ Native Hawaiian	3	0	0%	.00
Multiracial	24	3	12.5%	.13
<b>Totals</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>199</b>		

behavioral violations. These students were not allowed to participate in the “Fun Friday” activities if they had office referrals for the week or if they didn’t earn enough Dolphin Dollars. The coordinator provided feedback that the school should analyze their data to determine who made up this group of repeated referrals. Upon analysis, the school identified the following students as those with the most frequent referrals (Table 5.1). They compared that data to their school demographics to try to determine if any equity issues existed and to develop their action plan for the next school year.

### *Discussion Questions*

1. After reviewing all of the data presented, what is working well in this school? What needs to be improved? (D1, D5)
2. What is the school psychologist’s role in working with this team to analyze this type of fidelity or equity data? A school psychologist was not mentioned in the case. Should they be part of the team? Why or why not? (D1, D8, D5, D10)

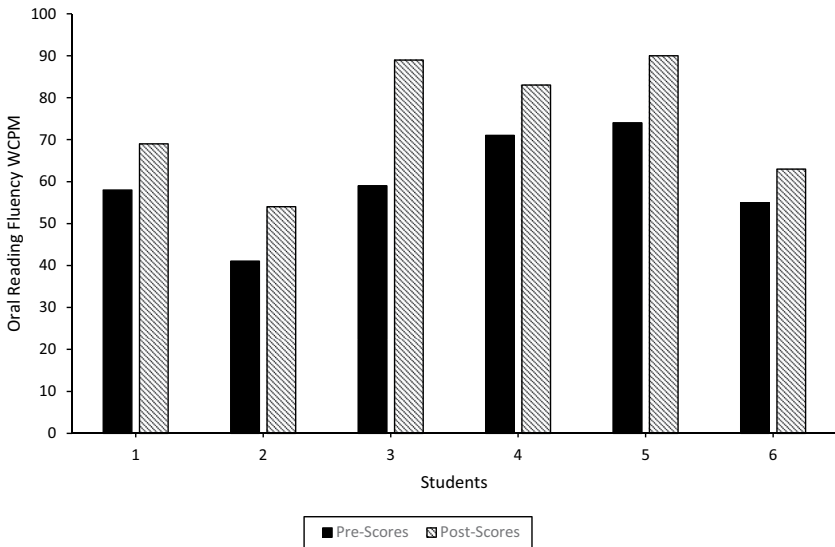
3. If you were a member of this team, what areas would you recommend prioritizing in the school's action plan? (D1, D5)
4. What types of services would you recommend for the areas of prioritized need? (D5, D6)
5. Based on the data in Table 5.1, what were the demographics of the students who were receiving repeat office referrals? In other words, who was excluded from the rewards and incentives? How might the school psychologist help the school analyze and address this to provide more culturally responsive PBIS? (D1, D8)

### *Advanced Applications*

1. After more exploration, you notice that most repeat referrals are coming from one or two classrooms. Role play a conversation with one of the teachers to discuss this concern and offer consultation or coaching services. (D2)
2. Assuming that the teachers in the scenario are interested in engaging in consultation about their classroom management, what would be your first steps in establishing the consultation relationship? What model would you follow and why? (D2)
3. Imagine that you are a part of this PBIS Team Meeting. Upon reviewing this data, develop an action plan. Include a measurable goal for the year and activities to support that goal. (D2, D5)

## Case Two: Comparing Standard Protocol and Problem-Solving Approaches

At Cross Town Elementary School, the school psychologist, Mr. Beery, was a member of the school's MTSS Team. The team noticed that there was a group of third-grade students in need of "strategic" intervention. This meant that the students scored in the "at-risk" range on their benchmark fluency assessments. They were then assigned to receive Tier II reading intervention. At this school, that meant that the students would be placed in a reading intervention group, with the reading specialist, who implemented the Read Naturally® (Read Naturally®, 2020) program 30 minutes daily during intervention block. The students received the intervention from October through January. All students made progress via the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency (ORF, UO DIBELS®, n.d.) probes from October to January (see Figure 5.3).



**Figure 5.3** “Strategic” Third-Grade Group Intervention Fluency Progress

The MTSS Team focused solely on helping the kids on “the bubble” receive the strategic small group services. This meant that there were still a few students in third grade who scored lower on the fluency benchmark but did not receive the Tier II intervention because they appeared to be in an “intensive range.” This left their teacher, Ms. Applegate, perplexed about how to best meet their needs. She requested support from Mr. Beery for those students. Mr. Beery offered his consultation services to Ms. Applegate. Together, from October to November, they worked through a problem-solving process in the problem-identification and analysis phase to better understand the students’ reading concerns. They did informal curriculum-based assessment with one of the students from her class that was scoring in the intensive range on the fluency assessments. They assessed the student in terms of word recognition, phonics, fluency, and comprehension.

In analyzing the data, it appeared that the student read slowly when he came to an unknown word. He spent a long time trying to break larger multisyllabic words apart. With this information, they identified advanced decoding as the prioritized area of concern because they hypothesized that his labored and inaccurate decoding of multisyllabic words hindered his fluency. Together, they developed a classroom-based intervention to help the student learn ways to decode multisyllabic words. They utilized an evidence-based intervention that was easy to use in the classroom without specialized training or curriculum, the phoneme-grapheme mapping strategy (Earle & Sayeski, 2016) in addition to fluency practice via repeated reading

(Evidence Based Intervention Network, 2011; Zimmerman & Reed, 2019) of instructional level text that included the target multisyllabic words. The teacher implemented the strategies with the target student, but also with a group of the other students that had similar decoding and fluency needs. The target student in that group made fluency gains rapidly (see Figure 5.4). All the students in the instructional consultation group improved their fluency quickly (Figure 5.5). In fact, the teacher consultation group

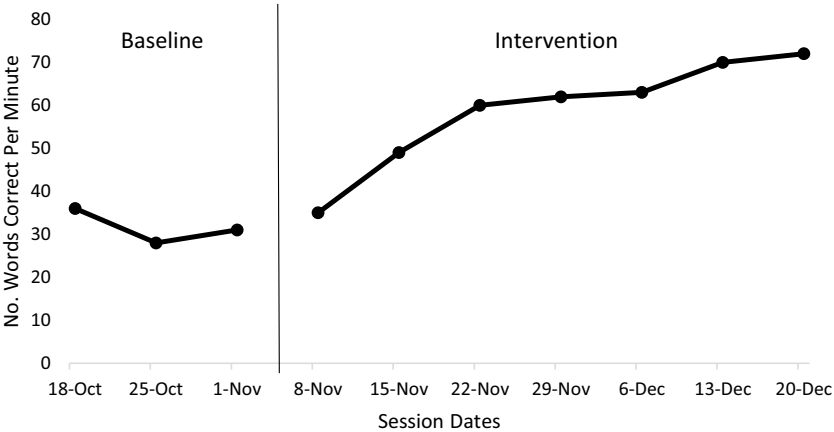


Figure 5.4 "Intensive" Third-Grade Student Intervention Progress: Decoding Intervention, Fluency Gains

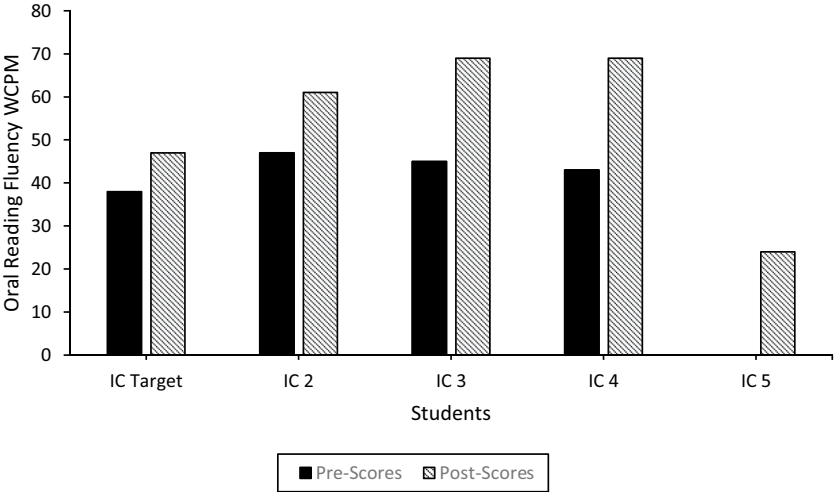
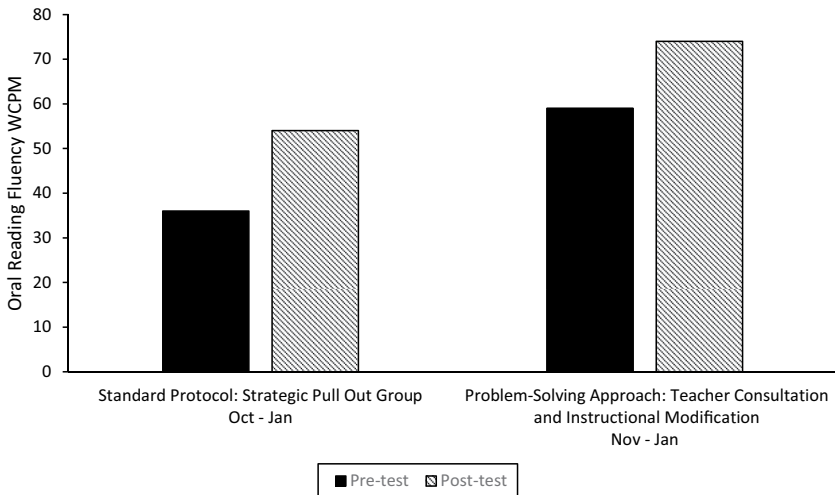


Figure 5.5 "Intensive" Third-Grade Group Intervention Progress: Decoding Intervention, Fluency Gains



**Figure 5.6** Progress of “Strategic” and “Intensive” Groups: Comparison of Standard Protocol Approach and Problem-Solving Approach

made more progress than the Tier II pull-out group in less time because they were further behind and Ms. Applegate and Mr. Beery took an additional month to conduct the problem-identification/analysis stage before intervening (see Figure 5.6).

### Discussion Questions

1. What is the school psychologist’s role in working with a school-wide MTSS team? What were the benefits of Mr. Beery’s involvement with this team? (D1, D2, D3, D5, D10)
2. Why might this group of students have progressed more rapidly than the students receiving the Tier II intervention? What could this mean in terms of improvements needed in the Tier II intervention stage? (D1, D5)
3. What were some of the limitations of this MTSS Team’s approach to problem-solving? What might have happened if Mr. Beery was not involved in offering consultative services? (D1, D2, D3, D9)
4. In looking at the outcomes for this case, is it appropriate to call the groups or students, “intensive” and “strategic” after all? Why or why not? (D8, D10)

## Advanced Applications

1. Read and discuss Erchul's (2011) *School Consultation and Response to Intervention: A Tale of Two Literatures* in relation to this case. Compare and contrast the advantages and disadvantages to both approaches, the Standard Protocol Approach the MTSS Team took for the Tier II "Strategic" group, as compared to the Problem-Solving Approach used with the teacher for the "Intensive" group. How might school-wide practices need to take both into account when building team structures and processes? (D3, D5)
2. Research the evidence base for Read Naturally (Institute of Education Sciences, n.d.). What reading skills are the most likely to improve using this intervention? (D3, D9)
3. Review the concept of the skill-by-treatment interaction (Burns et al., 2014) to describe why each intervention may have been the best fit for each group. What might have happened if the students in Ms. Applegate's group been placed in the fluency intervention program? Would they have made progress as quickly? What is your hypothesis based on the skill-by-treatment interaction concept? (D3)
4. What assessments would you have conducted if you were the school psychologist and consultant for this case, to better understand the students' reading skills and needs? (D1, D3)
5. Review the phoneme-grapheme mapping intervention (e.g., Earle & Sayeski, 2016). Create an intervention script and fidelity checklist to use to consult with a teacher like Ms. Applegate to implement a similar strategy. (D2, D3)

## Case Three: School Diversity Climate Assessment and Intervention

Dr. Williams, a well-established veteran school psychologist, recently switched to a new school in her district, Lakeside Elementary, a diverse Title 1 suburban elementary school (see Table 5.2). She immediately recognized the mismatch in terms of racial, ethnic, and socio-economic status between the staff and the students at the school. She wanted to learn more about the perspectives from various stakeholders in the school. In the first few weeks of working at this school, she made it a point to introduce herself to the Black Student Achievement Program (BSAP) Liaison, Mrs. Jackson, and the Hispanic Association (HA) Liaison, Ms. Benita. Ms. Williams was pleased to see that there were affinity groups and resources established within the

**Table 5.2** Demographics of Lakeside Elementary

	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Students</b>
American Indian/Alaskan	0%	<5%
Asian	0%	10.5%
Black	8%	51.6%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0%	<5%
Hispanic/Latino	5%	25.4%
White	83%	6.3%
Multiracial	4%	5.8%
Free and Reduced Meals	n/a	59.4%

school. She was troubled, however, to learn from Mrs. Jackson that the teachers attributed student learning or behavioral problems to the students' home lives and lack of parent support. Ms. Benita agreed and added that often the parents shy away from school events because they do not want to appear critical or rude by asking clarifying questions of the school or teachers.

Ms. Williams was pleased with the school environment. Unlike her previous school, she noted that it was clean, safe, and free of vandalism, defacement, and broken objects. Additionally, many areas had school logos, which helps to promote a sense of school community and school ownership. Adults were also present in these areas, especially during high traffic times, which promoted student-teacher interactions and teacher-parent interactions, during pick-up and drop-off. She particularly liked the sense of cultural pride visible in the school, with the prominent display of pennants from Historically Black Colleges and Universities, as well as photographs and biographies of famous Black and Latino Americans. She noticed that this was only seen in the wing near the back of the school where the BSAP and HA liaisons had their offices. The front hallway and wing of the school were more sparsely decorated with a photo of the current President of the United States, the governor of the state, and the school superintendent, all white males. There were photos of the past student government leaders of the school and current students of the month. Ms. Williams noticed that the students in those photos were disproportionately white, especially given the school's demographics.

As Ms. Williams got more acclimated in the school, she noticed that there were several school events to attempt to build a sense of community. These

**Table 5.3** School Climate Survey Data

Student Engagement	63%
Employee Engagement	60%
Student Hope	43%

community events were monthly and were planned by each liaison for their respective group of families. Mrs. Jackson hosted a “Soul-Food Potluck” for the BSAP families to highlight their favorite dishes. Ms. Benita planned a “Bilingual Family Literacy Night,” filled with family reading games and activities in both English and Spanish. A small handful of dedicated teachers attended these family community events. There were also PTA meetings, which typically had higher teacher attendance, and were planned by the PTA Board. The PTA Board primarily consisted of white female parents.

Ms. Williams was increasingly interested in understanding the climate and culture of the school, so she looked up climate survey data that were available for each school in her district, on the district’s website. She noticed that overall student and staff perceptions of their engagement were not impressive, ranging from 60–63 percent (see Table 5.3). She was most struck, but the low rating of hope by students in the school (43 percent). She noticed the ratings that were particularly low were “I have a mentor who encourages my development” and “I can find many ways around problems.”

To continue her comprehensive appraisal of the school climate and culture, Ms. Williams started looking up more data on enrollment or eligibility patterns across the school. She noticed that there were patterns of over and underrepresentation that were also concerning (see Table 5.4). The representation patterns of students within groups appeared to maintain racial or ethnic stereotypes. She could also see clear indications that students who lacked financial resources were also missing out on important opportunities such as extracurricular sports or science clubs. She contemplated sharing her observation of some of the needs and issues with the administrator of the school but was unsure of how or where to start.

### *Discussion Questions*

1. What is the school psychologists’ role regarding exploring the diversity and climate issues as seen in this case? What are ethical and legal considerations? (**D5, D8, D10**)

**Table 5.4** School Participation by Race/Ethnicity

	% Enrolled	% in Sports	% in Student Government	% in Gifted	% in Science Club
American Indian/Alaskan	<5%	<5%	0%	0%	0%
Asian	10.5%	<5%	15%	30%	40%
Black	51.6%	70%	15%	10%	<5%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	<5%	<5%	0%	0%	0%
Hispanic/Latinx	25.4%	10%	0%	10%	7%
White	6.3%	15%	70%	50%	50%
Multiracial	5.8%	3%	0%	0%	<5%
Free and Reduced Meals	59.4%	25%	0%	0%	0%

2. What are some of the protective and positive features of the school culture and climate? What are the concerning aspects? What would you prioritize as needs? Explain your rationale. (D5, D6, D7, D8)
3. What types of assessment activities have been important for Ms. Williams to conduct in her first months in the school? Why? What other assessment activities might you recommend for her to understand the school diversity culture and climate better? (D1, D5, D8)
4. Ms. Williams appears to be doing much of this work alone. How could she enlist the support of others to do this work with her? Why might it be important to include others? (D2, D5, D8)

### *Advanced Applications*

1. Research and list specific school culture and climate tools that a school psychologist could use to analyze diversity and equity issues at the school-level. (D1, D5, D8, D9)
2. Review the literature on developing an equity team and best practices on how to facilitate needs assessment and school-wide intervention on diversity climate issues in a school. Develop a list of steps and strategies

- that a school psychologist, who is in a similar position as Ms. Williams, could utilize to guide their work. (D1, D2, D5, D7, D8, D9)
3. Research and describe at least one evidence-based practice to address one of the issues you identified in this case. Provide rationale for why you selected this intervention. (D5, D9)
  4. Role play a consultation session between Ms. Williams and the school principal to practice administrative consultation around an issue identified in this case. (D2, D5, D8)

## Case Four: Prioritizing Time With Fellow School Psychologists: The Case for Specialized Programming

Stacey works as a school psychologist in a mid-size district in a suburban school district. She is busy in her day-to-day work as a school psychologist serving an elementary and middle school and often feels resentful when she is asked to give up time in her schools to attend various professional development sessions with other teachers and staff. After several years of feeling this way, she decides to begin speaking with other school psychologists in the district to see if they also feel the same way. In her conversations, she begins to realize that other school psychologists feel like her, but that it seems to be related to the type of professional development (PD) that is offered during these days, which are geared much more towards teachers. Stacey approaches the Supervisor of Special Services and asks if she can design and distribute a needs assessment to determine areas in which school psychologists feel they need additional PD and the supervisor agrees. Stacey has been out of graduate school for several years and therefore has limited experience/knowledge regarding best practices in needs assessment/survey development.

To ensure that she creates a well-designed survey, she researches best practices online, reads multiple articles about survey/needs assessment development and she collaborates with another school psychologist in the district who is currently enrolled in a doctoral program in school psychology and thus has more recent knowledge about survey design. After the survey is created, they send it to the twenty-eight school psychologists in the district electronically. To their pleasant surprise, there is great interest in completing the survey and they get a 95 percent return rate.

The results demonstrated that overwhelmingly school psychologists report a desire for professional development sessions to be designed specifically for their needs as school psychologists. In open-ended comments, a theme emerged that the school psychologists greatly value their time together

during PD days, since in the day-to-day work as a school psychologist they do not have another school psychology professional in their school to collaborate and problem-solve with around pressing issues. As far as topics for professional development, 70 percent indicated their greatest need is related to academic-based interventions and a need to have a better understanding of evidence-based academic interventions. After this category, the next largest need was for school-wide SEL programs (20 percent indicated this as their top priority), while 10 percent of respondents indicated various other priorities (new standardized assessment training when they are released, best practices in threat assessment).

Based on these results, the supervisor of special services designed the next full-day professional development session to include a presentation on evidence-based academic interventions followed by one hour of small-group processing of pressing issues/case presentations. The entire day was a success with participants indicating that they would turnkey the information presented about academic-based interventions back to their school-based teams. Further, the informal round-table discussion of cases was highly valued by participants who indicated that they greatly appreciated the opportunity to have informal conversations with other school psychologists. Arguably, the informal discussions and case presentations were viewed as the most valuable portion of this professional development day. The school psychologists spoke informally at the end of the day about ways that they can create more opportunities for collaboration, mentoring, case sharing, and general discussions about school psychology practice.

### *Discussion Questions*

1. School psychologists often report that general PD sessions are not particularly helpful to them. What are the advantages and disadvantages of having various professionals come together for PD as an entire building? (O4, O5)
2. Stacey was motivated to create a needs assessment for distribution to her fellow school psychologists but understands that she may have limited or outdated information about best practices in survey design. Why was it important that she consulted the professional literature and other professionals in the school to ensure that she created a sound survey? What could be the consequences of a poorly designed needs assessment? (O5)
3. In this case, Stacey purposefully seeks out guidance from a colleague who is currently attending a doctoral program to ensure that they design

a needs assessment that is in keeping with the latest research on survey design. In what ways are collaboration between Universities (faculty and students) and K-12 schools crucial to reducing the “research to practice gap” that is often viewed as a problem in schools. (D9, D10)

4. What are possible reasons the school psychologists are so enthusiastic about increased opportunities for collaboration across the district? Why is it important for school psychologists to continue to collaborate with other practicing professionals? (O5)

### Advanced Applications

1. What leadership opportunities are available for school psychologists who work in medium/large-size districts for developing programs to support the practice of school psychology? Provide ideas of how to develop programs and resources for school psychologists (PD opportunities, collaboration, case sharing/consultation, etc.). (O5)
2. The specific topic of this PD session was related to academic interventions. Design a plan for the participating school psychologists to turnkey this information back to their individual schools. What specific elements should be included in turnkey trainings to ensure success? What types of ongoing support might be needed to ensure that the new strategies for academic intervention design are incorporated into the practices of the staff at each school? (D5)

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# Understanding Services to Promote Safe and Supportive Schools

# 6

## **Domain 6: Services to Promote Safe and Supportive Schools**

“School psychologists understand principles and research related to social-emotional well-being, resilience and risk factors in learning, mental and behavioral health, services in schools and communities to support multitiered prevention and health promotion, and evidence-based strategies for creating safe and supportive schools. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, promote preventive and responsive services that enhance learning, mental and behavioral health, and psychological and physical safety and implement effective crisis prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery.” (NASP, 2020, p. 7)

One of the critical roles of school psychologists is their active participation in a wide array of services that ensure that schools are both safe and supportive to all children. This begins with understanding, evaluating, and participating in programs that foster a positive school climate with the goals of creating positive relationships among staff, families, and students in the school. School psychologists can be vital in ensuring that school and

community-wide programs are in place that specifically foster these positive relationships and help all students feel connected to school. School psychologists can also address systemic problems that can lead to problems in the school and community environment, such as substance abuse, bullying, self-harm, chronic absenteeism, and criminal behaviors. The fourth case in this chapter focuses on the critical importance of continual evaluation of the school climate and its role in prevention. In this case, there is an opportunity for discussion of how schools can respond to data that suggests issues in the school climate that might negatively impact the school as well as individual students.

School psychologists should seek out opportunities to be involved in decision-making as it relates to ensuring safe and supportive school environments. This might include evaluating the specific vulnerabilities and risks that the school, district, and community may face to ensure that preventative programming and activities are in place, as well as procedures to react to and mitigate the effect of various crises that may occur. Further, this involves understanding and evaluating any early indicators of risks and the implementation of comprehensive plans to conduct suicide risk and threat assessments. Cases Two and Three, respectively, focus on threat assessment and suicide prevention and allow for discussion of how schools can improve these processes.

School psychologists also participate as key members of school safety and school crisis teams, and assist in the prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery efforts of various types of crises. Case One highlights the vital role of school safety and school crisis teams, with a specific focus on the immediate and long-term responses needed after a major hurricane devastates a community. School psychologists can also train teachers, administrators, and other staff in crisis prevention and intervention techniques to ensure that all school staff are aware of how to create positive and safe environments for all children.

The prevention and intervention strategies used by school psychologists related to establishing safe and secure school environments are broad. School psychologists must have the skills and confidence to both prevent and respond to a variety of situations that can occur in both the school environment and in the community. The cases within this chapter attempt to focus on distinct types of preventative and responsive roles that school psychologists might be a part of in schools. From the first case, which focuses on a natural disaster and the wide-ranging impact on the entire community and school, to the second and third cases which focus on the importance of reacting appropriately to potential threats and reports of suicidal ideation, the

cases demonstrate the wide range of situations that can confront a school psychologist.

## Case One: A Once-in-a-Lifetime Storm

Simpson Elementary School has always had an active school safety team and a crisis response team. The teams meet at least quarterly to review their procedures and policies in place and both teams have several members who have been trained in NASP's PREPaRE curriculum and have read the accompanying text (Brock et al., 2016). The school safety team conducts a vulnerability assessment at least once per year, continually updates policies/procedures, and is responsible for the training of staff annually. They also evaluate school-based data on school climate, school connectedness, bullying, and discipline incidents to determine how to better serve the school community, prevent conflicts between students, and strengthen school connectedness. The school crisis response team meets regularly to review procedures for responding to crises, practice the response to various emergency situations via tabletop exercises, plan school-wide emergency protocols/drills, and attend ongoing training in crisis response. They also routinely present to all staff in the building to ensure that all are kept current on their school-specific crisis plans and procedures.

Last year in October, a major, category five hurricane hit the small coastal community, which includes Simpson Elementary School. The impact of the hurricane was devastating to the community. The immediate devastation included the loss of life for 12 individuals in the community, although none of those who perished in the hurricane were school-aged children. The flooding and high winds also caused extensive damage to the elementary school, the regional high school in the area and to most of the homes of the families who attend these schools. In fact, 45 percent of the students who attend Simpson Elementary School had their homes destroyed during the hurricane or had enough damage to their homes that the houses were deemed uninhabitable. Simpson Elementary School was flooded on the entire first level of the school. All paper student records were destroyed in the flooding and much of the computer equipment was damaged. The entire community was without electricity for between 14 and 25 days and most residents did not have Wi-Fi for several weeks, which severely limited the entire community's ability to communicate with one another. Many of the teachers and staff who work at Simpson Elementary School were also negatively impacted by the storm, with many teachers suffering a great deal of damage to their homes in the storm.

The students who attended Simpson Elementary School did not attend school for at least the first three weeks after the storm, and some students missed even more school than this. The school building could not be used for the remainder of that school year, so the school administrative team worked with other local communities to allow students to begin attending other schools. The destruction of all the papers in the school building led to many difficulties in ensuring students, particularly students with special needs and IEPs, had the appropriate educational services in place at their new, temporary schools. Further, some students who were displaced by the storm did not provide information about where they were living and what school they were attending. All told, six percent of students were not accounted for when school services resumed and efforts to contact families to see where they had moved and where their children were attending school were not successful.

The students from Simpson Elementary School ended up being sent to six different school buildings to complete the school year, since many of the schools who accepted students were limited in how many students that they could accept. While mental health support was available in each of these buildings to support students, there was a sense that some students needed additional support. Some of the children reportedly regressed in both their behavior and academic progress while at their new schools. The mental health professionals also reported that some students reported traumatic experiences both from the night of the storm, including having to evacuate from their house quickly as the storm surge rose, and in the weeks following the storm.

It is now the summer after the storm and the team from Simpson Elementary School is grateful that the school building has now been repaired and school is expected to reopen in September. Both the school safety team and the school crisis team are meeting regularly over the summer to prepare for the reopening of the school building. A major goal is to aid and support the students returning to their school who have not been living in the community since the storm. They are concerned that these students may feel disconnected from the school and the community. They estimate that 10 percent of the students at the school are still not living in their original homes and will be commuting to school from surrounding communities until they are able to move back into their homes. They also want to review their response to this community crisis and update procedures. The team is eager to provide as much support for the children and families in their school and are concerned that they might be overlooking ways that they should be providing support. They also realize that some of the teachers and other staff may