

need additional support in their return to school, given their own ongoing hardships as the result of losing their own homes and dealing with the consequences of the storm on their own lives.

Discussion Questions

1. The school safety and crisis teams at Simpson Elementary School were active, well-prepared teams; however, the significant impact of the hurricane on the entire community was overwhelming for all involved. Discuss how you would prioritize the school's response in the immediate aftermath of the storm. What tasks need to occur immediately? How would you triage the response? **(D6)**
2. What different types of traumatic responses might you expect from children from this elementary school? **(D4)**
3. How might the reactions vary depending upon proximity to the event, long-term family impact (i.e., family displacement), academic impacts, and the age of children? What sorts of mental health supports might be needed for these children? **(D4)**
4. In evaluating their response to this crisis, what parts of their response should they reflect upon? In what areas could the school have been better prepared? **(D6)**
5. What sort of support might be necessary for the school staff from Simpson Elementary School? **(D6)**
6. The importance of school-family collaboration and communication is evident in a community crisis such as this. What suggestions would you give the school-based safety and crisis teams at Simpson Elementary School about how they could have/should have fostered communication with families before and after this storm? **(D7)**
7. If some of the teachers report feeling overwhelmed upon the return to school, is it appropriate for the school to provide support for the adults who work in the building? Why or why not? If yes, what types of support for staff could be recommended? **(O2, O4)**

Advanced Applications

1. Using Table 6.1, create lists that detail specific areas that the crisis team should focus on in both the short-term (acute stage of this crisis) and in the long-term recovery efforts for the school community efforts. **(D6)**

Table 6.1 Crisis Team Planning Document

Day After Storm Response	1st Week After Storm Response	1st Month After Storm Response	2–6 Months After Storm Response	Summer Prior to Reopening of School	1st Month of New School Year

- Design potential survey questions that could be used to evaluate the crisis response from this school for various stakeholders (parents, students, school staff). Include at least 5 survey questions that could be asked of each stakeholder group. **(D7, D9)**
- Suppose that by November of the next school year, your Child Study Team is reporting a much higher than usual referral rate for special education evaluation and eligibility due to increased academic concerns of both teachers and parents. How would you handle this situation? What data might you need to collect to better understand what is going on with these children related to their academic progress? **(D3)**
- Review and summarize the chapter by Heath (2014) *Best Practices in Crisis Intervention Following a Natural Disaster*. Based on these practices, what else should the school consider doing in response to this storm? **(D6)**

Case Two: An Ill-Advised Promise of Confidentiality

Christina is a 15-year-old White sophomore student who the school psychologist, Mr. Davies, has been concerned about for some time. She comes to see the school psychologist and indicates that she has something she needs to talk to him about, but that he must swear to keep it a secret. Mr. Davies is pleased that Christina has come to see him because he has reached out to her several times in the past year due to concerns about drinking and

possible drug use reported by teachers; however, she has not been interested in engaging with him. Now she has suddenly come to his office and Mr. Davies feels like it would be best to promise confidentiality to her so that she will open up to him about her concerns. He is quite surprised when she comes into his office and begins to talk about her concerns about her friend, rather than herself. Christina indicates that for the past week, she has been really worried about Jessie, another student at the school. Christina reports that Jessie's girlfriend has recently broken up with him and he has been despondent over the breakup. He was also fired from his job at a retail store due to suspicions by the manager that he had stolen money from the register. He does not know if the manager will be pressing charges against him and he is terrified that his parents will find out about the theft and that he has gotten fired.

Christina has been on the phone with him for the past several nights until three or four a.m. as he cries and tells her that there is no reason to go on living. She has been staying on the phone with him all night because she is concerned that he will harm himself if she gets off the phone with him. She also reported that he has been leaving for work as usual during his scheduled shifts so that his parents do not find out that he has been fired. During his scheduled work times, he tells her he goes to sit by the river and thinks about how to end his life. Christina indicates that she needs this to stay a secret but is reaching out to Mr. Davies for advice on how to help Jessie during their late-night phone calls.

Mr. Davies informs Christina that he is genuinely concerned about Jessie and that he will need to speak with Jessie and his parents and other school officials about this situation. Christina becomes irate with Mr. Davies and begins screaming at him in the office about his broken promises. She then runs out of the office and reportedly leaves school grounds. The security guard reports that he witnessed Christina running into the woods surrounding the school property but could not find her once he went to look for her. Mr. Davies is at a loss about how the situation with Christina turned into this type of crisis. He knows that he also now needs to contact Christina's parents to let them know that the school cannot find her.

Discussion Questions

1. Quite a few things went wrong with Mr. Davies handling of this situation. What ethical mistakes did Mr. Davies make in this situation? (D10)
2. What are Mr. Davies ethical obligations in this situation? (D10)

3. What concerns are the most pressing for Mr. Davies at this point? (D4, D6)
4. What steps should Mr. Davies immediately take now to ensure the safety of both students involved? (D4, D6)
5. Mr. Davies motives are to establish a relationship with Christina to assist her during counseling. What are some other ways that he could have gone about trying to establish a relationship with her so that he could assist her? (D4)
6. Should Mr. Davies be reprimanded for his actions in this case by the principal at the school? By his own supervisor? Why or why not? (O1)

Advanced Applications

1. What specific ways should Mr. Davies follow up with Christina and her family that day and also the following day in school? (D4, D6, D7)
2. Mr. Davies decides to immediately follow up with Jessie and his family. Research an appropriate suicide risk assessment that could be utilized in this situation. (D1, D4)
3. What types of professional development do you recommend for Mr. Davies to assist him in better understanding best practices for future situations such as this one? (O6)
4. Review and summarize the *Best Practices in Suicide Prevention and Intervention* chapter (Lieberman et al., 2014). According to the practices set forth in this chapter, what should Mr. Davies have done differently? How should he respond now? (D4, D6)

Case Three: Threat Assessment Gone Wrong?

Brendan is an eighth-grade student at the middle school who receives special education services due to a diagnosis of autism. Previous testing has indicated that he has low cognitive abilities. He receives special education services in the self-contained Multiple Disabilities program at the middle school. Recently, his self-contained teacher has reported concerns that Brendan has developed an interest in an eighth-grade girl, Ava, who also attends the school. The teacher fears that he is becoming preoccupied with his interests in Ava. He reportedly has become angry with her when she has not paid attention to him when they see each other in school. He has had some angry outbursts when he feels slighted by Ava, but these outbursts have occurred after he has returned to his self-contained classroom. Thus far, the teacher

has been successful in calming him down after a few minutes. The school psychologist, Mrs. Larrimone, has consulted with the teacher about this issue and has begun working with Brendan in their already scheduled counseling sessions about how to communicate more appropriately with his peers and about appropriate reactions when feeling slighted or ignored by others. These sessions appear to be making a difference and Brendan's teacher had just come to the school psychologist to report an improvement in Brendan's interactions and reactions to his peers overall. Mrs. Larrimone has been doing her own research to ensure that she has the skills to discuss the changes associated with puberty with Brendan in appropriate ways. She plans to begin having these discussions with Brendan in the next session.

However, just one day later, the school psychologist finds out that Ava's parents have called the principal to report that Brendan has threatened their daughter. They indicate that she is now extremely afraid to go to lunch because he had said to her "if you don't sit by me, I will get you and all of your friends too." The parents are extremely concerned that this was a threat to their daughter. The principal investigates the situation by speaking with Ava and her friends who all witnessed Brendan make this comment. The principal also speaks with Brendan's self-contained classroom teacher and learns about the ongoing concern regarding Brendan's seeming preoccupation with Ava. Unfortunately, the school psychologist, Mrs. Larrimone, was in a meeting in another building when this all occurs so she is not aware of the situation until the end of the day.

After speaking with the self-contained teacher, the principal attempts to speak to Brendan about the situation. However, since the principal and Brendan do not have a good rapport and have had limited interactions in the past, Brendan does not respond to the principal's questions and he becomes agitated. The principal then makes the decision to call the police to report Brendan's threat. Brendan becomes extremely frightened when the police arrive and ends up acting out in aggressive ways. He backs himself into a corner when the police officer is trying to speak to him and begins crying and screaming. This situation escalates until Brendan throws books from a nearby shelf at the principal and police officer. This unfortunately leads to Brendan's arrest and he leaves the school in handcuffs.

Discussion Questions

1. This situation escalated to the point where the police were called. Review the steps taken by the school and indicate the points in which the school staff could have made different decisions to diffuse this situation. (D6)

2. What are the implications of using zero tolerance policies in schools? (D6)
3. What are the controversies related to the potential concern of “over-policing” in schools? (D6)
4. How should the school balance the needs of Brendan and the safety of Ava? (D6)
5. What are the ethical implications of various decisions that were made in this situation? (D10)
6. Brendan’s parents did not seem to be included in these discussions about the concern from his teacher about the angry outbursts. When should his parents have been brought into the discussion? How might this have changed the outcome? (D7)

Advanced Applications

1. Research a threat assessment that might have been productive for use in this situation. Why did you select this assessment (pros/cons)? (D6)
2. What are best practices for utilizing School Resource Officers in schools? (D6)
3. How might this school’s specific climate have contributed to how the situation was eventually handled? How could the school focus on the issues of climate in the future to avoid this type of outcome? (O2)
4. Review Cornell (2014) *Best Practices in Threat Assessment in Schools*. Summarize Cornell’s major points regarding best practices in threat assessment and apply these practices to this case.

Case Four: Perceptions of Climate

A school-wide climate survey was distributed to all students, teachers and parents in a large middle school that serves children in grades six through eight. The survey asked similar questions to parents, students, and teachers to get their perceptions of bullying and other school climate issues in the school. Table 6.2 provides data regarding the percentage of responses that indicated participant agreement (agree or strongly agree) to the statements provided. The survey included a four-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree). See Table 6.2 and Figure 6.1, which present the results of this school-wide climate survey.

Table 6.2 School Community Responses to School Climate Survey

Climate Survey Question (Student Version/Teacher and Parent Version)	Student Responses	Teacher/Staff Responses	Parent Responses
Bullying is a problem at my school.	89%	35%	71%
I feel safe at school. (Children feel safe at school.)	42%	85%	60%
I feel like I belong at this school. (This school fosters a sense of belonging for children.)	65%	91%	85%
I have reported bullying to a teacher in the past month. (Bullying has been reported to me in the past month.)	28%	4%	35%
When I report bullying to a teacher, something is done about it. (When bullying is reported, we investigate and handle the situation.)	49%	97%	68%
I am comfortable talking to the principal/vice-principal about bullying situations. (Students feel comfortable talking to the principal/vice-principal about bullying situations).	32%	45%	20%
Our school has a specific policy and procedures for reporting bullying, harassment, or assault at school?	45%	95%	82%
In general, my school is a safe school.	60%	91%	74%
In general, my school is a supportive and positive place.	30%	87%	72%

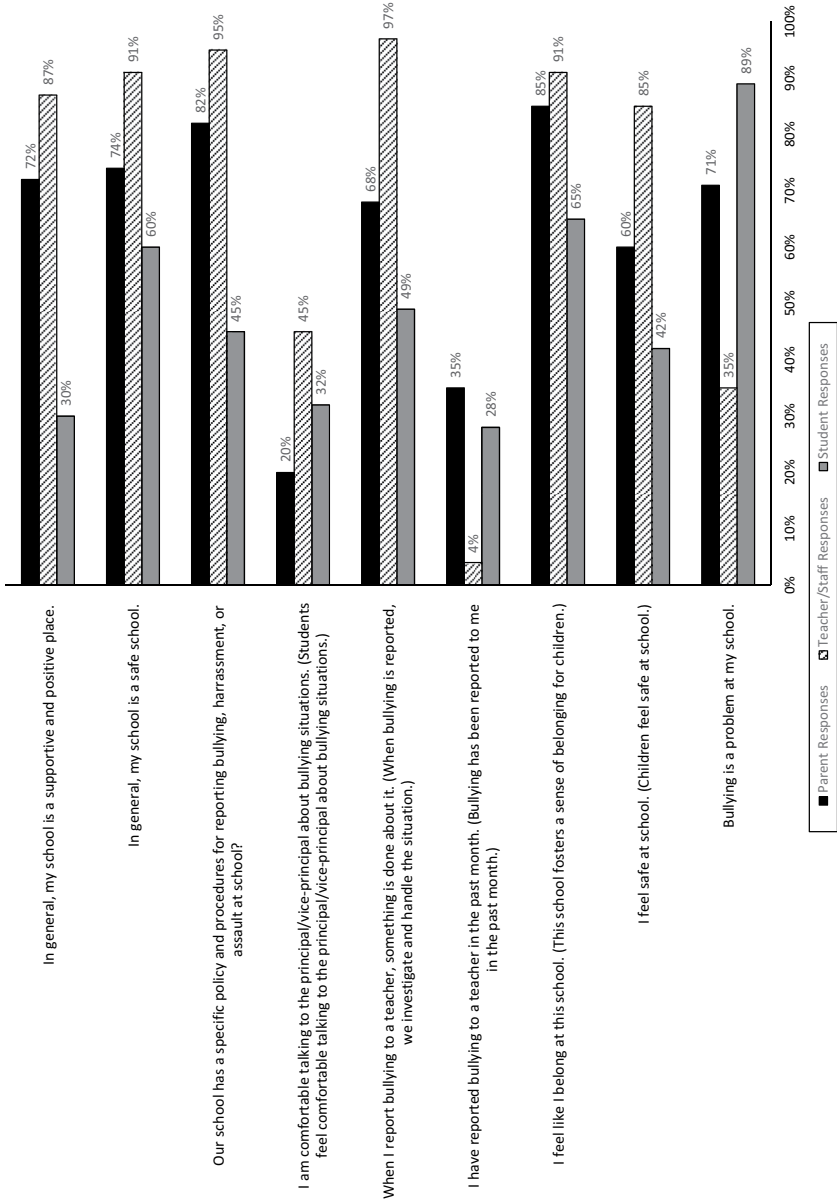


Figure 6.1 Climate Survey Results

The middle school results were like those found by Bradshaw et al. (2007) regarding perception differences amongst children and staff. These items come from their web-based survey adapted from a school climate and aggression survey (Institute of Behavioral Science, 1990), bullying research (Nansel et al., 2001; Solberg & Olweus, 2003) and attitudes towards retaliation from the Normative Beliefs About Aggression Scale (Huesmann et al., 1992). This study found that staff were more likely to report that children feel safe and have a sense of belonging at school than the children reported. Similarly, the students were more likely than the teachers to report the acceptability of the use of aggression/force for retaliation. The school staff was more likely to indicate that bullying was reported to them in the past month (45.6 percent of staff) when compared to the students (21.3 percent). Regarding the staff response to bullying, 33 percent of children reported that nothing was done when they reported bullying to staff, while only 0.6 percent of teachers indicated that they ignore or do nothing when bullying is reported to them.

Discussion Questions

1. According to Bradshaw et al. (2007), this issue is common. What is the school psychologist's role in understanding these differences in perception in their own schools and making decisions about prevention, intervention, and response? (**D6**)
2. For those in field placements, do these data already exist at your field placement site and is anyone analyzing and discussing it? What does that look like? If not, what is the school psychologist's role in working with the school to review, select, and adopt similar screening measures? (**D1**)
3. Staff members' perceived efficacy for resolving a bullying situation is highly related to their likelihood of intervening effectively (Bradshaw et al., 2007; Nicolaides et al., 2002). What is the school psychologist's role in working to increase staff efficacy to handle these issues? (**D2**)
4. According to Bradshaw et al. (2007), teachers may not always respond to a bullying report if there is a perceived lack of administrative support, lack of a school-wide policy regarding bullying, or if the culture of the school does not promote bullying prevention. This can lead to a passive approach to bullying response. What is the role of the school psychologist in working with administration to address these organizational issues? (**D6, O4**)

Advanced Applications

1. Review bullying assessment tools available (e.g., Hamburger et al., 2011). Compare and contrast at least two different measures to identify the advantages and limitations of each.
2. Identify evidence-based resources and programs that this school might use to create a more positive school climate. (D5, D9)
3. Create a short presentation to present at a school staff meeting to present this data and solicit feedback about what might be causing these differences in perspective between students and teachers. (D1, D2, D6, O4)
4. What ideas might be used to allow parents/families to get more involved in creating a positive school climate? (D7, O2)
5. Review the “Best Practices in Bullying Prevention” chapter (Felix et al., 2014). Based on their suggested practices, what else should the school be working on to decrease the problem of bullying within the school? (D5, D6)

References

- Bradshaw, C. P., Sawyer, A. L., & O’Brennan, L. M. (2007). Bullying and peer victimization at school: Perceptual differences between students and school staff. *School Psychology Review, 36*(3), 361–382. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02796015.2007.12087929>
- Brock, S., Nickerson, A., Louvar Reeves, C., Conolly, J. S., Pesce, R., & Lazzaro, B. (2016). *School crisis prevention and intervention: The PREPaRE model* (2nd ed.). National Association of School Psychologists.
- Cornell, D. (2014). Best practices in threat assessment in schools. In P. L. Harrison & A. Thomas (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology: Systems-level services* (pp. 259–272). National Association of School Psychologists.
- Felix, E. D., Green, J. G., & Sharkey, J. D. (2014). Best practices in bullying prevention. In P. L. Harrison & A. Thomas (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology: Systems-level services* (pp. 245–258). National Association of School Psychologists.
- Hamburger, M. E., & Basile, K. C., & Vivolo, A. M. (2011). *Measuring bullying victimization, perpetration, and bystander experiences: A compendium of assessment tools*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. <https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/5994>
- Heath, M. A. (2014). Best practices in crisis intervention following a natural disaster. In P. L. Harrison & A. Thomas (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology: Systems-level services* (pp. 289–302). National Association of School Psychologists.
- Huesmann, R., Guerra, N., Miller, L., & Zelli, A. (1992). The role of social norms in the development of aggression. In H. Zunkley & A. Fraczek (Eds.), *Socialization and aggression*. Springer.
- Institute of Behavioral Science. (1990). *Youth interview schedule: Denver youth survey*. Unpublished manuscript, University of Colorado, Boulder.

- Lieberman, R., Poland, S., & Kornfeld, C. (2014). Best practices in suicide prevention and intervention. In P. L. Harrison & A. Thomas (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology: Systems-level services* (pp. 273–288). National Association of School Psychologists.
- Nansel, T. R., Overpeck, M., Pilla, R. S., Ruan, W. J., Simons-Morton, B., & Scheidt, P. (2001). Bullying behaviors among US youth. *Jama*, *285*(16), 2094. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.285.16.2094>
- National Association of School Psychology. (2020). *The professional standards of the national association of school psychologists*. National Association of School Psychologists.
- Nicolaidis, S., Toda, Y., & Smith, P. K. (2002). Knowledge and attitudes about school bullying in trainee teachers. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *72*(1), 105–118. <https://doi.org/10.1348/000709902158793>
- Solberg, M. E., & Olweus, D. (2003). Prevalence estimation of school bullying with the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire. *Aggressive Behavior*, *29*(3), 239–268. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ab.10047>

School Psychologists as Family, School, and Community Collaborators

7

Domain 7: Family, School, and Community Collaboration

“School psychologists understand principles and research related to family systems, strengths, needs, and cultures; evidence-based strategies to support positive family influences on children’s learning and mental health; and strategies to develop collaboration between families and schools. School psychologists, in collaboration with others, design, implement, and evaluate services that respond to culture and context. They facilitate family and school partnerships and interactions with community agencies to enhance academic and social-behavioral outcomes for children.” (NASP, 2020, p. 8)

The importance of positive family-school relationships on the positive development of children has been well documented in the literature. For example, in their meta-analysis of the impact of family-school relationships on children’s social-emotional development and mental health, Sheridan et al. (2019) found significant positive effects of family-school interventions on children’s social-emotional development. NASP has also created a position statement highlighting the importance of positive school-family partnerships

that includes the important elements for success in creating and maintaining these successful partnerships (NASP, 2019). When working collaboratively with families to understand and solve issues and concerns, school psychologists and schools, in general, can have a greater chance of success. To develop positive and collaborative relationships with families, school psychologists must understand the diversity within and across families in the communities where work, including various communication styles and family expectations of schools. School psychologists must have the ability to understand that their own worldviews and biases must not affect how they interact and develop relationships with families with differing worldviews.

The establishment of inclusive and welcoming school communities are critical for the development of trust and positive relationships between schools and the families they serve. School psychologists should collaborate with other school personnel to ensure that policies and practices are inclusive of the families within their school community. This may happen by creating school-community events, ensuring that meetings and events are scheduled at times that can work for most of the families within the school, or creating an atmosphere of inclusiveness for families by inviting parents to take part in class and school-wide events. School psychologists should strive to ensure that parents and other caregivers feel like their voices are important in advocating for the needs of their children. Parents should understand that their input as the expert on their own child is valued by school personnel. To this end, school psychologists should ensure that staff understand the vast benefits of creating positive school-family partnerships and how these partnerships can allow for proper supports and interventions for children. The first case focuses on the critical need for foster parents to feel heard in an IEP meeting. When parents leave a meeting frustrated and feeling “unheard” or when the team misses an opportunity to understand the valuable input of the parent, the school is not likely to be able to effectively support to the child. Discussion questions focus on how the school team might have handled this specific IEP meeting better. The fourth case highlights the critical need for parents to understand the special education eligibility process and how school psychologists should work to ensure that assessment results are understandable and relatable to their primary readers, the parents of the child being evaluated.

School psychologists must actively work to support minoritized students and their families within the school environment. This may include collaborating and developing relationships with community providers to provide necessary support for these children. When children are involved with multiple community agencies, school psychologists can serve as the link between these community groups and the school environment to ensure

that consistent messaging and idea sharing (with permission) is used. Community-wide partnerships may be set up to create continuity of care and ensure the education of all direct service providers for a child and family. Both the second and third cases focus on how schools can effectively partner with community agencies to provide students and families with necessary supports. This includes a community agency that provides bilingual services and a community agency that educates the school on visually impaired services, respectively.

The four cases within this chapter all highlight the vital importance of forging effective family, school, and community partnerships to ensure student success. The cases vary from demonstrating problematic interactions that hinder successful partnerships to more effective best practices in how to develop positive relationships with our vital partners in education. In all four cases, there are many opportunities to reflect upon how to improve practices to ensure more positive and effective relationships with families and communities.

Case One: Fostering Relationships

Jamal, a fifth-grade Black student, had entered foster care with his sibling at age 18-months due to ongoing neglect issues. He lived with his foster family for about one and a half years and then was reunified with his biological family. Due to more neglect and suspected physical abuse, Jamal was again removed from his biological family's home again at the end of first grade and placed with the same foster family who he had originally been placed with as a toddler. His foster family was white and recently moved out of the city to the suburbs for a house that could accommodate Jamal and his sibling along with their other biological children. At the start of second grade, Jamal enrolled in a new school where his foster family lived. This meant that Jamal moved from a predominantly Black urban school to a predominantly White suburban school. Once he started at the new school, there was no new student welcome or support group counseling sessions offered by the school. He seemed to adjust well to the transition despite the absence of those types of resources. Even with his background of trauma and the recent upheaval and transitions in his life, he appeared happy and made friends easily.

After a few months of school, Jamal started having trouble in school. His teachers contacted his foster parent, Ms. Kramer, to discuss concerns often. They reported that he would have a tantrum, pout, bang his desk,

and refuse to do his work, creating such a distraction that the behavior specialist would remove him from class temporarily to cool down. His math teacher specifically was frustrated with Jamal's behavior in her class and felt he would do better in the other second grade math teacher's class, which was also on grade level, but "a little less challenging." Ms. Kramer was not thrilled about this plan. She was concerned that Jamal was being placed in a lower-level math group. She wanted to focus more on the development of interventions and not just move Jamal to another classroom. At the same time, she realized it might not help to push for Jamal to stay in a teacher's classroom who was not willing to make changes to her instructional or behavioral approach. Ms. Kramer agreed to the switch of math classes, but asked for a team meeting to talk about an intervention with the school's Student Support Team (SST).

At the first SST meeting, the new second grade math teacher, Mr. Fulton, said that he felt Jamal's math accuracy and limited math fact fluency was due to his difficulty paying attention. The teacher suggested that they try to implement a new intervention. He suggested that they allow Jamal to chew gum to increase his focus in class. Ms. Kramer, a former teacher, knew that was not going to be an effective intervention. She was frustrated with this "chewing gum intervention" but tried to stay positive in the meeting with the goal of keeping good school relationships. Ms. Kramer did try to say that chewing gum was not a research-based intervention. She agreed that Jamal would enjoy chewing gum, but that it would not help increase his ability to focus or increase his math skills. Mr. Fulton said that chewing gum is what helped him as a child, so Ms. Kramer did not argue and agreed that they could try it for now. She did state that she believed that his tantrums in math were due to difficulty in math, not due to lack of focus. She could see at home during his homework that he worked well and focused when he was working on addition facts, but that he would whine and complain when he received subtraction problems. She felt that it was important to note that working on math skills might help his focus and reduce his tantrums, as opposed to the other way around. She asked that other interventions be considered beyond the chewing gum.

After the SST meeting, Ms. Kramer received the minutes of the meeting in the mail. After reading the minutes, she was concerned that her comments about the math difficulty were not well documented in the notes, nor were her requests for a math intervention. She noticed that the teacher's comments about the potential cause of the difficulty were well documented. The report read, "Jamal's lack of math accuracy and fluency

is due to his difficulty focusing.” Ms. Kramer requested revisions to the minutes. She either wanted the causal statement to be removed completely or at least be revised to qualify it by saying, “Mr. Fulton *believes* the math accuracy and fluency is due to lack of focus.” She also asked for an addition of the alternate viewpoint, “Ms. Kramer believes the lack of focus could be due to difficulty accurately and fluently solving math problems.” The school SST Chair refused to revise the minutes. Ms. Kramer asserted that math fluency and accuracy errors may lead to lack of focus and that causation could not be proven from the assessments that were conducted. She explained that a more specific definition of the problem is important to deciding interventions. The IEP Chair suggested that Ms. Kramer meet with the principal to discuss her concerns. Once she met with the principal, Ms. Kramer was even more frustrated that the principal disagreed with her request. The principal said that Ms. Kramer could write an addendum to appeal. Ms. Kramer disagreed because she did not feel that she was trying to change the facts of the meeting. She felt that the minutes just did not accurately portray what was said at the meeting. The principal stayed firm in her decision not to revise the minutes. Ms. Kramer left the meeting with the principal feeling angry and hopeless that this school was able to help Jamal.

Discussion Questions

1. How did communication in the meetings or after the meetings affect parent and school relationships? (D7)
2. Assuming the school psychologist was at this meeting, what could they have done differently to maintain relationships? (D7, D10)
3. What is the school psychologist’s role in consulting with the teachers before or after the meeting? If you were the school psychologist, how would you have followed-up with the teachers or staff after each meeting? (D2, D3, D4, D7, D10)
4. How is the school helping to close the gap for students with a significant background of trauma or for students of color? What barriers might they be putting in place for the family? (D7, D8)
5. What other supports might be needed for this family in addition to academic problem-solving? (D3, D7)
6. What are the parents’ rights to request meeting minutes be redacted or revised? When should we make requested revisions versus when should a parent addendum be added? (D7, D10)

Advanced Applications

1. What could the school have done to try to identify if the math accuracy and fluency issue were due to attentional difficulties or math skills? What assessments would you recommend? (D1, D3, D4)
2. Review the research on gum-chewing and on-task behavior? Is there any evidence to support that practice? What evidence-based interventions would be better to suggest besides gum chewing? (D3, D4, D9)
3. In the scenario, there was no plan to monitor the progress of the gum chewing intervention after the SST meeting. What assessments would you suggest for progress-monitoring? (D1)
4. Review the Kendrick-Dunn et al. (2020) article *Infusing Social Justice into Tiered Service Delivery for Low-Income and Economically Marginalized Students in Foster Care* and discuss recommendations for this case based on the reading. (D7, D8, D10)
5. Review Scherr (2014) chapter “Best Practices in Working With Children Living in Foster Care” and discuss recommendations for this case based on the best practices discussed in the chapter. (D7, D8, D10)
6. Is an FBA warranted in this case? Why or why not?
7. If you were to recommend that an FBA be completed, what steps would you take to complete this FBA? Review the chapter by Steege and Scheib (2014) entitled “Best Practices in Conducting Functional Behavioral Assessments” to assist in your response.

Case Two: Language Differences or Deficits?

As a new school psychologist at Elm Tree Elementary, Ms. Lupita started noticing some cultural clashes between the school staff and families. The school consisted of 35 percent Hispanic/Latinx students, 49 percent Black students, 14 percent White students, and 2 percent students identifying with more than two races. Additionally, 65 percent of the students in the school qualify for free/reduced lunch, indicating that they come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Speaking to the Community Resource Coordinator of the school, Mrs. Hernandez, Ms. Lupita quickly learned that there had been a recent influx of families from Guatemala and El Salvador. Mrs. Hernandez said that most of the teachers in the school, who are primarily white females, assume that the students are all from Mexico. She said that the teachers often do not take the time to learn more about their students’ cultural heritage. Mrs. Hernandez also noted that, in general, the staff in the

school have a low opinion of the students' families because they do not attend parent conferences or meetings to a high degree. In terms of student achievement, 58 percent of the English learners (ELs) in the school are making progress on the annual state assessment, however only 11 percent are at or above proficient in math and language arts. Alternatively, 75 percent of the white students in the school are at or above proficient.

One day, Ms. Lupita came to school and noticed a mother attempting to use the automated school check-in system while bringing her children to school late. Because the system is entirely in English with no options for alternate languages, the parent was having a lot of difficulty and had to have her children help her to translate. Before Ms. Lupita could help, the receptionist came over to help the parent, but the receptionist seemed annoyed that the mother did not understand how to use the system. On a different occasion, Ms. Lupita noticed that the school website is entirely in English and translated forms and documents such as the school handbook are either not available or are difficult to find on the website. At a few meetings, Ms. Lupita noticed that translators were not typically present to help translate and interpret for parents who did not speak English. The team members often spoke louder or slower to try to help parents understand. At one meeting, a parent requested a translator and when one was not available, she asked for the meeting to be rescheduled for when a translator would be available. The teacher seemed exasperated after the meeting that they would now have to reschedule for another day.

While this was upsetting for Ms. Lupita to see the many ways linguistically different families were experiencing frustrations and barriers, she was pleased to see some of the improvements the school was making. For example, the school recently hired Mrs. Hernandez as the Community Resource Coordinator. In this new role, Mrs. Hernandez established a family resource room for bilingual parents. She started to hold workshops with translation. The parent attendance at those sessions was high. She started to translate at the PTA meetings and provided families with a headset to hear the translated version of the meetings. Attendance at those meetings was also starting to increase.

Discussion Questions

1. What is the school psychologists' role to support the Community Resource Coordinator in supporting the linguistically diverse families of this school? (D7, D8, D10)

2. What teacher supports and services are needed? (D2, D7, D8)
3. In what ways might the school staff need to develop their own multicultural competency? Review the chapter from Miranda (2014) entitled “Best Practices in Increasing Cross-Cultural Competency” and discuss the ideas listed within the chapter about how to begin the process of increasing cross-cultural competency. (D8, D10, O6)
4. What are the ethical and/or legal issues present in this case? What is the school psychologists’ role in addressing these issues? (D8, D10)
5. What academic equity issues are evident in this case? (D1, D3, D8)

Advanced Applications

1. What assessment steps might you recommend to better understand the academic equity issues at this school? (D1, D3, D8)
2. Research evidence-based practices for working with linguistically diverse families for improving academic outcomes for students. (D2, D3, D7, D8, D9)
3. Develop a list of recommendations and guidelines for working with translators and interpreters in your school, based on best practices. (D7, D10)
4. Review the chapter by Vanderwood and Socie (2014) entitled “Best Practices in Assessing and Improving English Language Learners’ Literacy Performance.” Based on their recommendations, what factors would you suggest that this school needs to be considered to improve academic scores for all children?
5. Review “Best Practices in Working With Children From Economically Disadvantaged Backgrounds” (Mulé et al., 2014). According to these authors, what are some of the risk and protective factors that should be considered when working with children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds? How can these risk and protective factors be applied in this case to ensure school-wide processes that support these children? (D5, D6, D7)

Case Three: Expanding the School’s Knowledge Base: Collaborating With Family and Community Agencies

Daphne is an incoming White, kindergarten student in a midsize suburban school district. Her family recently moved to the area from a neighboring state. Daphne is legally blind and received special education services for her

visual impairment through her previous pre-school since birth. The school psychologist, Mr. Jackson, and the rest of the IEP team at her new kindergarten have not worked with a student who is legally blind. Initially, they were concerned that they lacked the knowledge to create an effective program for the student. Given this situation, the school psychologist and team first consulted with the parents of the student when they became aware Daphne was entering the district. Daphne's mother attended two team meetings over the summer to provide information about her daughter (strengths and weaknesses) and provide information about her daughter's specific needs within the school building, effective classroom design and physical setup of space. She also shared the academic, social, and emotional needs of her daughter, specifically, as well as the needs of children who are blind in general.

The team learned a lot from the parent about the needs of both her daughter, and the blind community in general, and they valued her expertise. The parent also expressed how appreciative she was that the team was so open to collaborating and communicating with her about her daughter. Next, the team reached out to the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired in their state to learn more. From that communication, the commission put them in touch with a local community agency that aids schools in professional development for visually impaired youth. The kindergarten teacher, the administrative team, and members of the Child Study Team all attended training by this community agency over the summer. Finally, with a representative from the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, they scheduled Orientation and Mobility sessions with Daphne and her family prior to the beginning of the school year. The commission also assisted the district in understanding the various instructional technology and supports that Daphne needed to progress academically with her peers. The school reviewed resources about the expanded curriculum that will be specific to this child, which included specific vision-related skills written into Daphne's IEP (i.e., learning how to use various technologies, learning Braille, learning how to use the vision that she does have efficiently). In consultation with all the various experts, it was decided that Daphne will learn Braille in school, while continuing to focus on key academic skills, such as focusing on phonemic awareness skills to aid the development of reading skills.

While Daphne's mother was anxious about her daughter starting kindergarten, particularly in a new community and school, she felt that the district was responsive and open to her family's concerns and needs. Even before school started, there were open lines of communication between the school and parents, as well as the school and the local community agencies with expertise in supporting visually impaired children. This leads to

a positive rapport and feelings of trust between the family and the school. Daphne's mother indicated that she was particularly pleased to see how the various professionals at the school were so open to learning from the various community experts. When the school year began in September, the school and family were prepared to provide Daphne with a positive educational experience. The kindergarten teacher indicated that she was in touch via email with the community agency who offered her ongoing support in designing her instructional plan. Together with the well-trained paraprofessional in the classroom, the school year started for Daphne in a successful manner.

Discussion Questions

1. The school initially was concerned that they may not have the necessary expertise to support a child moving into their district with a visual impairment. What specific steps did they take to ensure that they learned what was necessary to create a sound plan for Daphne's education? (D7)
2. The case shows the value of effective collaborations with families as well as community agencies. What was the positive outcome of these collaborations? What if the team had not been as proactive in reaching out to the family and community agencies with the expertise needed? What could have been the result? (D7)
3. What types of ongoing collaboration with outside agencies would you suggest to ensure that the team continues to understand and respond to Daphne's needs? What types of ongoing professional development would you suggest? (D8, D10, O6)
4. In this case, the parent becomes the consultant to the school, in that she provides them with necessary information both about her daughter and about the potential needs in general of students with visual impairments. The school is receptive to receiving this information from Daphne's mother. This leads to a collaborative consultation between the school and family that can have ongoing benefits as Daphne progresses in school. How might the mother's role as expert assist the collaborative relationship in the future? (D2)
5. Contrast how the school collaborates with Daphne's mother with how the school collaborates with Jamal's mother in Case One. How does the school value the parent's expertise differently in these two cases? (D7)

Advanced Applications

1. Research the available resources in your community for students with visual impairments. Create a list of community supports/agencies that are available to potentially provide support to schools. (D7)
2. Research available resources for at least two other low-incidence disabilities and create a list of these resources. (D7)
3. Conduct a literature review about best practices for supporting children in schools with low-incidence disabilities. Summarize best practices for school-based teams. (D7)
4. While all children with visual impairments will have different strengths/needs as well as differing levels of support needed to progress academically in schools, research some common technologies and services that may be used in schools for children with visual impairments. (D8)
5. According to Bradley-Johnson and Cook (2014) in their “Best Practices in School-Based Services for Students With Visual Impairments” chapter, schools must be aware of and respond to various potential needs of visually impaired children in several areas, including academic development, social skills, classroom behavior, and physical activity/exercise. Research some potential challenges for children with visually impaired students in each of these stated areas and include best practice approaches for how schools should provide accommodations and interventions for these students. (D3, D4)

Case Four: Who Is This Report Written for Anyway?

Kenny is a White, second-grade student who was referred for an evaluation by both his teacher and mother due to ongoing concerns with his academic performance, as well as behavioral concerns in the classroom. His mother had first requested a school meeting last year when he was in first grade because she was concerned that he was falling behind in reading. She was often called by Kenny’s teacher about his behavioral outbursts. She was worried that he was frustrated because he was struggling with reading. At the time, the Child Study Team (CST) decided not to proceed forward with an evaluation because they felt he seemed immature for his age and that he would likely “catch-up” by second or third grade. Now in second grade, his behavioral outbursts and poor academic performance have continued, and his teacher has also asked that he

be evaluated. This year, the Child Study Team agrees that Kenny should be evaluated to decide if he needs special education services.

Kenny's mom, Ms. Linus, received several reports prior to the scheduled meeting with the school. She read all the reports thoroughly but has many questions about what the different tests and numbers mean. She found the narrative of the report to be so jargon-filled that she had trouble following what was being said. She called the school and when connected to the CST Secretary, Ms. Linus asked whether there was a glossary of terms available so that she could understand the terminology. The secretary told her that there was no such glossary available but assured her that while the reports are difficult to understand, the team of professionals would explain it all to her in the meeting. Therefore, Ms. Linus looked forward to the discussion with the school.

When she attended the meeting, she was dismayed that there was no opportunity for discussion. The same professionals who created the reports took turns reading the report in the meeting, used the same jargon and simply reported scores that were presented in the report. After each professional finished reading their reports, the team indicated that he qualified as a student with a learning disability and asked the mom if she agreed. She did not have time to ask her questions and she was not sure why they decided he qualified for services. Based on her experience from first grade, she believed that the only avenue for her son to receive reading help was through qualification for special education services, so she agreed that he qualified. However, she did not actually know what guidelines they were using to say he qualified. She was about to take out her list of questions about the reports that she had prepared in advance, when the secretary came into the meeting to say that the next parent had arrived for their scheduled meeting. The team told the parent that if she had any other questions, she could call and talk to the case manager assigned to her child. She was given the case manager's contact information and escorted out of the meeting.

Discussion Questions

1. The title of this case is "Who Is This Report Written For?" Why do you think the case has this title? In your opinion, who should reports be written for? (D7)
2. There are several areas of concern related to the way that this process unfolds in this situation. What are the areas of concern? Why are these concerns? Are there any ethical concerns? (D7, D10)

3. In what specific ways, could the school team make changes to ensure more effective school-family collaboration? (D7)
4. School teams may often indicate that the reports will be explained at the meeting to discuss findings. What are the barriers to doing this effectively? What sort of procedural changes in schools might be necessary to ensure that meetings are more parent-friendly? (D7, O3, O2)
5. In what specific ways can school-based teams reflect on how they present results to parents in meetings? What are specific ways to make changes to evaluation findings meetings to make them more parent- and child-focused? (D7, O3)
6. In all stages of this evaluation process, this case highlights ways in which Ms. Linus attempted to collaborate with the school regarding her concerns about her son's academic and behavioral performance. List the ways in which she tried to collaborate and the results of those efforts. (D7)

Advanced Applications

1. Review some of the research on report-writing, including *Best Practices in Writing Assessment Reports* (Walrath et al., 2014). What are the major findings related to best practices in presenting results to parents? (D7)
2. Integrated, theme-based, or referral-based reports may be more easily understood as well as more practical for parents/teachers and may more easily lend themselves to recommendations. Find examples of one or more of these types of reports and analyze the differences between this style of report and a more typical test-by-test presentation of findings. (D1, D7)
3. Role play an efficient way to present assessment results in meetings that are brief yet leave time for collaborative conversations between school professional and parents. (D7)
4. Review some of the best practices presented in Minke and Jensen's chapter "*Best Practices in Facilitating Family-School Meetings*" (2014). What strategies presented in this chapter could have applied in this case? (D7)
5. When concerns about Kenny's performance first arose in first grade, the school indicated that he would likely "catch-up" and that he was just immature for his age. Discuss the major problems with this type of approach to children who are beginning to fall behind academically in first grade. (D3)

References

- Bradley-Johnson, S., & Cook, A. (2014). Best practices in school-based services for students with visual impairments. In P. L. Harrison & A. Thomas (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology: Foundations* (pp. 243–254). National Association of School Psychologists.
- Kendrick-Dunn, T. B., Barrett, C., Guttman-Lapin, D., Shriberg, D., Proctor, S. L., & Calderón, O. (2020). Infusing social justice into tiered service delivery for low-income and economically marginalized students in foster care. *Communiqué*, 48(6), 1, 22–26.
- Minke, K. M., & Jensen, K. L. (2014). Best practices in facilitating family-school meetings. In P. L. Harrison & A. Thomas (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology: Systems-level services* (pp. 505–518). National Association of School Psychologists.
- Miranda, A. H. (2014). Best practices in increasing cross-cultural competency. In P. L. Harrison & A. Thomas (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology: Foundations* (pp. 9–19). National Association of School Psychologists.
- Mulé, C., Briggs, A., & Song, S. (2014). Best practices in working with children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. In P. L. Harrison & A. Thomas (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology: Foundations* (pp. 129–142). National Association of School Psychologists.
- National Association of School Psychologists. (2019). *School-family partnering to enhance learning: Essential elements and responsibilities* [Position Statement]. National Association of School Psychologists.
- National Association of School Psychologists. (2020). *The professional standards of the national association of school psychologists*. National Association of School Psychologists.
- Sheridan, S. M., Smith, T. E., Moorman Kim, E., Beretvas, S. N., & Park, S. (2019). A meta-analysis of family-school interventions and children's social-emotional functioning: Moderators and components of efficacy. *Review of Educational Research*, 89(2), 296–332. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654318825437>
- Scherr, T. G. (2014). Best practices in working with children living in foster care. In P. L. Harrison & A. Thomas (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology: Foundations* (pp. 169–180). National Association of School Psychologists.
- Steege, M. W., & Scheib, M. A. (2014). Best practices in conducting functional behavioral assessments. In P. L. Harrison & A. Thomas (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology: Data-based and collaborative decision making* (pp. 273–286). National Association of School Psychologists.
- Vanderwood, M. L., & Socie, D. (2014). Best practices in assessing and improving English language learners' literacy performance. In P. L. Harrison & A. Thomas (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology: Foundations* (pp. 89–98). National Association of School Psychologists.
- Walrath, R., Willis, J. O., & Dumont, R. (2014). Best practices in writing assessment reports. In P. L. Harrison & A. Thomas (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology: Data-based and collaborative decision making* (6th ed., pp. 433–445). National Association of School Psychologists.

Ensuring Equitable Practices for Diverse Populations

8

Domain 8: Equitable Practices for Diverse Populations

"School psychologists have knowledge of individual differences, abilities, disabilities, and other diverse characteristics and the impact they have on development and learning. They also understand principles and research related to diversity in children, families, schools, and communities, including factors related to child development, religion, culture and cultural identity, race, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, and other variables. School psychologists implement evidence-based strategies to enhance services in both general and special education and address potential influences related to diversity. School psychologists demonstrate skills to provide professional services that promote effective functioning for individuals, families, and schools with diverse characteristics, cultures, and backgrounds through an ecological lens across multiple contexts. School psychologists recognize that equitable practices for diverse student populations, respect for diversity in development and learning, and advocacy for social justice are foundational to effective service delivery. While equality ensures

that all children have the same access to general and special educational opportunities, equity ensures that each student receives what they need to benefit from these opportunities.” (NASP, 2020, p. 8)

As guided by professional ethical principles of fairness, justice, and respect for person’s rights and dignity (e.g. NASP, 2020; APA, 2017b), school psychologists must strive to promote equity and respect diversity in all that they do. According to the *APA Multicultural Guidelines* (2017a), psychologists must engage in continual self-reflection to counter their own biases and judgments made about others that might negatively impact diverse children and their families. They also must be aware of how the biases of others influence interactions and the important decisions that are made about children and their families. Whether due to race, gender, sexual orientation, class or any other perceived difference, school psychologists must be aware of and disrupt the biases that negatively affect decisions.

NASP’s strategic goal of social justice is to “ensure that all children and youth are valued and that their rights and opportunities are protected in schools and communities” (NASP, 2017). Hence, school psychologists’ decisions about how to intervene to support children should be made through a social justice lens. School psychologists should not only embrace social justice, but should move beyond to social justice advocacy, recognizing and proactively addressing injustices, not accepting status quo (Grapin & Kranzler, 2018). Case Two, “Zero Tolerance,” highlights the need for social justice advocacy. This case provides an opportunity for discussion about the need for professionals within the school building to understand the student, their culture, their community, and the potential pressures they face navigating their school and community safely. School psychologists are guided by the ethical standard “to correct school practices that are unjustly discriminatory or that deny students or others their legal rights. School psychologists take steps to foster a school climate that is supportive, inclusive, safe, accepting, and respectful toward all persons, particularly those who have experienced marginalization in educational settings” (NASP PPE, 2020, p. 44). Readers should ponder if this standard was upheld fully in this case, as well as what social justice advocacy was needed?

School psychologists must also collaborate with the other professionals within the school and the community to ensure that the community promotes respect for diversity and allows for a supportive school community where all children and their families feel like their voices can be heard. This includes the recognition that children must be understood as the unique

individuals that they are, while simultaneously understanding between-group differences. Case Four, “Transition,” focuses on a transgender teen’s transition to high school, which calls for reflection upon our role with the APA multicultural guideline eight, “Psychologists seek awareness and understanding of how developmental stages and life transitions intersect with the larger biosociocultural context, how identity evolves as a function of such intersections, and how these different socialization and maturation experiences influence worldview and identity” (APA, 2017a, p. 5).

School psychologists should utilize their advanced skills in data analysis to assist in understanding the trends in data that may be negatively impacting diverse students and strive to identify any factors that may be influencing outcomes for diverse children in their academic, social, behavioral, and emotional development. This might include analyzing school-wide discipline data or special education referral rates to determine whether specific groups of students are more at risk for punitive measures or placement in specific types of programming within the school. This data should also be presented to school-based teams and school administrators to remedy issues.

Cases One and Three provide opportunities for discussion related to data-driven decision-making. Specifically, in Case One, “Digging into Discipline Data,” the case follows a school psychologist who reveals concerns about equity in school discipline for Black students. The case includes questions that prompt readers to analyze the data and suggest school-wide practices that might contribute to data trends. In Case Three, “Unclaimed and Underrepresented,” readers will discuss a case involving possible inequities in gifted programs. Readers may identify the barriers to equity within the gifted identification procedures and discuss best practices to ensure equity of Black, Latinx, and economically marginalized students. Both cases connect to school psychologists’ ethical obligation to correct discrimination and “strive to ensure that all children and youth have equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from school programs and that all students and families have access to and can benefit from school psychological services” (NASP PPE, 2020, p. 44). These cases call for reflection upon the APA’s multicultural guideline five, which claims that psychologists are responsible for addressing institutional barriers and inequities (APA, 2017a).

Case One: Digging Into Discipline Data

The school psychologist of a diverse suburban school, Mr. Shields, is an active member of his school’s Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) Team. Each month, the team reviews their office discipline referral (ODR)

data from the SWIS (School-wide Information system). Information about the SWIS processes can be found at www.pbisapps.org/Applications/Pages/SWIS-Suite.aspx. Mr. Shields, along with other team members, usually identify “hot spots,” or locations within the school where referrals are the most frequent (e.g., hallway, cafeteria) to analyze the problem and generate solutions. They also look for the ‘frequent flyers’ to see which students are receiving the most ODRs to determine if more problem-solving is needed. Those students are then referred to the school’s Student Support Team (SST) to develop a more targeted or intensive intervention plan. Mr. Shields noticed after a few months of identifying students with frequent referrals that the students who were getting referred to SST were most often Black. He requested that the PBIS Team analyze the ODR data by race and ethnicity at the next meeting. They reviewed the overall demographics for the school in terms of race and ethnicity (see Table 8.1) and then compared that to the data of the percent of students in each racial or ethnic group that received office referrals (see Table 8.2), over the past three years. Mr. Shields was concerned after

Table 8.1 School Demographics: Percentage of Total Enrolled Students

Percent of Enrolled Students			
	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019
Black	36%	33%	36%
Hispanic	8%	11%	12%
White	46%	48%	41%
Other	10%	8%	11%

Table 8.2 School Office Discipline Referrals by Race and Ethnicity: Percentage of the Total Referrals

Percent of Enrolled Students			
	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019
Black	63%	61%	61%
Hispanic	5%	9%	6%
White	28%	28%	31%
Other	4%	2%	1%

reviewing the data and wanted to bring this up to the PBIS Team to see if they could make changes to the discipline procedures to reduce the number of cases coming to the SST. He presented the data in table format to the team and sought their input into what system-level issues might be at work to create this inequitable situation. Unfortunately, the team had difficulty reaching a consensus about the root causes of the problem, with some team members believing that those children just behave in ways that more often justify office referrals. Mr. Shields is concerned that there may be some implicit biases of his fellow team members that are contributing to their viewpoints.

Discussion Questions

1. After reviewing the data, what issues do you see regarding equity for diverse populations? **(D1, D8)**
2. Why is data-based decision-making like this critical to equity for diverse populations in this example? **(D1, D8)**
3. What other data would you want to collect given what you see here? **(D1)**
4. What might you do as a school psychologist in a school that doesn't have a data system like this already in place? **(D2, D3, D4, D5, D6, D7, D8, D9)**
5. How is Mr. Shields' involvement as an active member of this PBIS important for equity for diverse populations? **(D2, D8, O2)**
6. Regarding collaboration and consultation, what should Mr. Shields next steps entail? What process skills should Mr. Shields use? **(D2)**
7. What interventions or next steps should be considered to address this problem school-wide? **(D5, D6)**

Advanced Applications

1. If you are in a field-placement now, ask to review this type of data for your school. Does the school have this type of data readily available? Do they regularly meet to analyze this data, develop action plans, and share the data with staff? Discuss why or why not and the related implications. **(D1, D2)**
2. Research evidence-based practices for school-wide interventions to reduce disproportionate office referrals. **(D5, D6)**
3. Role-play a team meeting where you review the data, assign roles such as school psychologist, teachers, administrator. **(D1, D2)**

4. Create a presentation of this data, including its implications, to include a professional development session for teachers (and administrators). Consider how to best utilize this data for full faculty and/or staff discussions. **(D5, D8)**

Case Two: Zero Tolerance

Ramon, a Latino eighth-grade student, who received special education services for an “other health impairment” due to attentional concerns, attended Rosa Parks Middle School. This school is an urban school with 33 percent White students, 33 percent Black students, and 33 percent Latinx students. The school staff at Rosa Parks were 77 percent White, 13 percent Black, and 10 percent Asian. Ramon lived with his mother and younger siblings. His father was incarcerated. Because Ramon was identified as a student at-risk on a behavior screening survey, he met weekly with his school psychologist, Ms. Hartley, in a small group social-skills intervention with the other students who scored similarly on the universal screening. In group counseling sessions, Ramon was often lethargic or appeared uninterested. The student was also disconnected in his classes, often appeared disengaged, head down in class or playing games on his phone during class. However, he was popular and well liked among his peers. Ms. Hartley was concerned about him. In addition to his group sessions, she occasionally met with him individually to try to establish stronger rapport and find ways to re-engage him.

After several individual and group meetings with Ms. Hartley, Ramon disclosed that he was experimenting with drugs, specifically marijuana. He brought it up in an individual session because he wanted to know what the harmful effects were, if any. As the school psychologist worked with him in a non-judgmental way to research the effects together online, Ramon began to trust her enough to also disclose additional information. At the next session, he told her that he was being recruited to join MS-13. He shared with her that murdering someone was part of the initiation and reported to her his intense fear of getting involved in this type of criminal activity. Despite his moral opposition, he was ambivalent because he also felt he had no escape. He did not feel he could safely turn down the advances of the MS-13 gang members who were approaching him to initiate him. He also worried that he could not report this safely to anyone else or else he could be at great risk.

Ms. Hartley was unsure how to process this heavy information. She had no experience working with students that disclosed gang involvement to her. She empathized with the difficult situation he was in and wanted to do anything

to keep him from taking a path that could lead to further harm to himself or others. She tried exploring alternatives with him to see if there would be ways for him to avoid being approached by the gang members. Ramon said he preferred to spend time after school with his uncle in his body shop, but his uncle lived too far for him to walk there, and he couldn't get there consistently or easily. Ms. Hartley tried to encourage the school to look for ways to engage Ramon in after school or community activities to keep him safe after school and away from the gang initiation attempts. Unfortunately, there were not many activities available for him to join easily. As a White female, she was also feeling at a loss for how to connect with him on a deeper level. She urged the school to help find him a Latino mentor. She tried to seek one out for him as well. Her school staff had several male teachers, but none of them were Latino. She then began exploring community resources in the hopes of finding him a mentor or a community group that would also serve as a safe haven for him.

A few weeks later, Ramon was found to have a knife tucked in his sock at school and received a suspension for the offense. Around the same time, the principal reported signs of Ramon's gang involvement to the school district's police and gang task force. Unfortunately, Ramon was found with a knife in his sock another time soon after. He was expelled based on the school's code of conduct for a repeat weapon offense. Ms. Hartley was upset to learn about this decision. She felt strongly that Ramon had no intent to harm anyone and was only carrying the weapon for self-defense. She was worried about what could happen to him, if he did not remain in school and had more time to spend in the community unsupervised. A month later, Ms. Hartley saw Ramon outside of the school on the sidewalk on school grounds, during the school day, wearing a bandana on his face, which she feared was an additional sign of his gang involvement. Not long after that, she saw him on a missing person report on the local news. To her relief, he was eventually found. He never returned to school. She often thought about Ramon and wondered what she or the school could have done differently to help him.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the potential socio-cultural mismatches evident in this case and how they may have affected the outcomes. (D8)
2. What are some of the ways that the school and community system failed Ramon? What should the individuals involved have done differently to advocate for Ramon? (D8)

3. What are your own reactions to this case? How competent do you feel to handle a similar situation? What training or supports would you need, if any? **(D10, O5)**
4. What was Ms. Hartley’s level of competence? How did this impact on the decisions that were made? **(D10)**
5. What ethical dilemmas does this case pose? **(D10)**
6. Did Ms. Hartley have a responsibility to intervene immediately once Ramon provided her with information that suggested there was a potential for harm to others? What should she have done at that point? **(D10)**
7. Did Ms. Hartley have any responsibility to intervene immediately once Ramon shared that he was using marijuana? Why or why not? **(D10)**
8. What legal issues are involved in this case? The student received special education services for an “other health impairment.” According to IDEIA Part B (e.g., 34 CFR §300.530), what procedures should be put in place if a long-term suspension or expulsion is being considered for a student with a disability? **(D10)**
9. How did the principal’s perception of Ramon as a threat affect this case? Similarly, how did the school’s zero tolerance policy affect this case? **(D5, D6, D10)**
10. In this case, there was no mention of parent communication or involvement. How might Ms. Hartley have engaged the family more? **(D7)**

Advanced Applications

1. Use an ethical decision-making model (i.e., Liang et al., 2017) to think about a better course of action that Ms. Hartley should have followed. **(D10)**
2. Research the evidence-based for or against zero tolerance policies and alternatives to suspension and expulsion. What would you recommend based on this research? **(D5, D6)**
3. Role-play a conversation with the principal where you express your concerns and explore alternatives to suspension or expulsion. **(D2)**
4. Review best practices for making manifestation determinations (e.g., Kubick Jr. & Lavik, 2014). Provide recommendations for the school given best practices. **(D10)**
5. Review best practices for threat assessment (e.g., Cornell, 2014). Provide recommendations for the school psychologist to aid the school in determining if Ramon possesses a legitimate threat to the school that would warrant removal. **(D1)**