

Report to the Board on Children, Youth, and Families

Institute of Medicine and National Research Council

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National Association of School Psychologists

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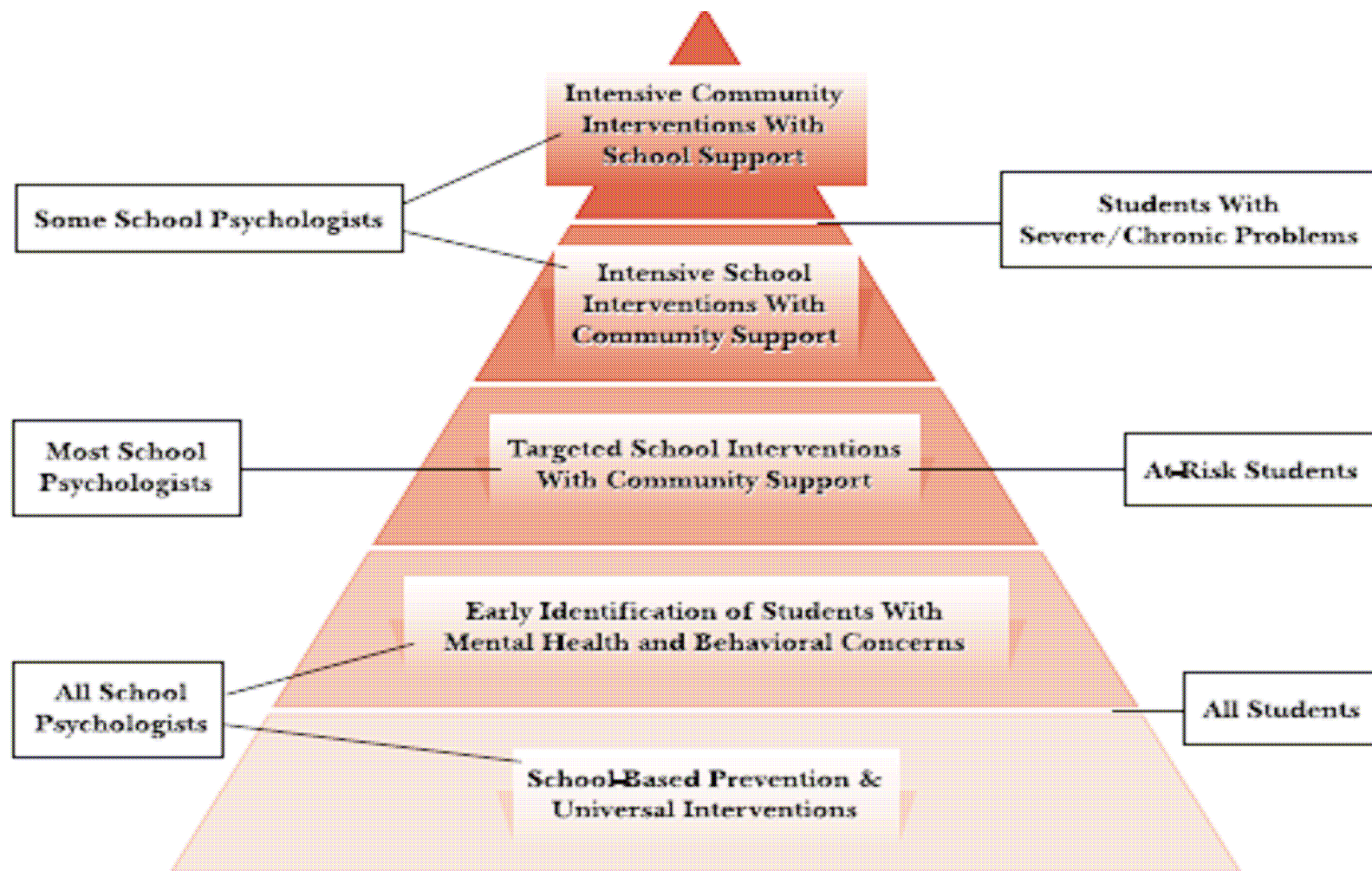
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Overview of School Psychology

- NASP represents over 25,000 school psychologists in the United States and abroad.
- NASP promotes children's healthy development and learning through programs and services that prevent social, academic, and emotional problems.
- School psychologists primarily work in public school settings on teams with other school-employed mental health providers, teachers, related service providers, school administrators, parents and community providers supporting students.
- The ratio of school psychologists to student varies nationwide. National average is 1:1,653. Best ratio: 1:542 (CT) and worst ratio: 1:7,960 (MS)

Overview of School Psychology

- Work collaboratively in schools to provide and promote:
 - Individualized strategies that promote student success
 - Prevention and promotion services
 - Early, targeted, and intensive intervention for students at risk and struggling in school
 - Safe, healthy classrooms and school environments
 - School-wide mental health, behavior, and academic supports
 - Home-School-Community Collaboration for a full-continuum of mental health services



The Continuum of School Mental Health Services

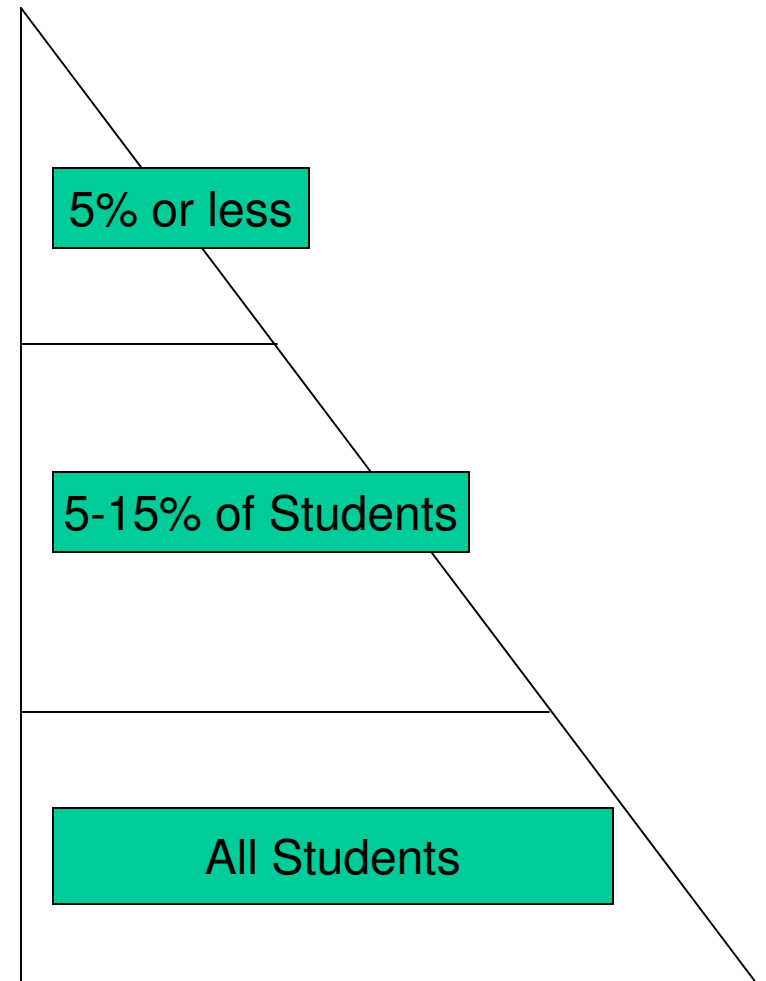
From "Communication Planning and Message Development: Promoting School-Based Mental Health Services" in *Communique*, Vol. 35, No. 1. National Association of School Psychologists, 2006

Examples of Mental Health Services in Schools

Tier 3 Intensive Interventions: Comprehensive evaluation, PBIS-intensive, 1:1 and small group interventions (i.e. intensive counseling, FBA/behavior programming, ongoing progress monitoring of individual student behavior, remedial behavior plans, etc.) Therapeutic interventions and comprehensive family services. Ongoing progress monitoring.

Tier 2 Targeted Interventions: Targeted small group interventions, PBIS targeted, FBA and behavior support plans, brief counseling, classroom management, systematic consultation with parents and teachers. Early identification and assessment of mental health problems. Ongoing progress monitoring.

Tier 1 Universal Interventions: PBIS, Bully-proofing, violence prevention, ART, skill streaming, Developmental Assets, Character Education. Universal social-emotional and behavioral screening. Ongoing progress monitoring.



NASP Position on Mental Health Promotion and Prevention

- NASP strongly believes that good mental health is critical to success in school and life.
- Research supports that students who receive social emotional support and prevention services achieve better academically in school (Greenberg et al., 2003; Zins et al., 2004)
- Research has found that expanded mental health services in elementary schools have been found to reduce special education referrals, improve aspects of the school climate, produce declines in disciplinary referrals, suspensions, and grade retention (Bruns et al., 2004; Hussey & Guo, 2003; Jennings, Pearson, & Harris, 2000)

NASP Position on Mental Health Promotion and Prevention

- Examples of NASP Position Statements:
 - Interagency Collaboration to Support the Mental Health Needs of Children and Families
 - Mental Health Services in the Schools
- NASP Training and Practice Standards:
 - Strategic Plan
 - Blueprint for School Psychology (III)
 - NASP Professional Standards and Ethics
 - Training Program, Field Placement, and Credentialing Standards
- Packet handouts emphasize the role of school mental health providers in building developmental skills and assets in students; promoting collaboration between schools, teachers, and families; and ensuring positive school climates conducive to learning and prosocial behavior.

Role of Evidence-Based Practices

- NASP believes that it is essential that programs utilized to address the mental health needs of children and youth be evidenced-based.
- NASP Training and Credentialing Standards emphasize training and supervision in statistics, research methodologies and evidence-based practices.

Translating Evidence-Based Practices into Service Delivery

- NASP believes that evidence-based practice is best translated into practice through initial training, continuing professional development, access to research and literature, and collaboration among allied professionals.
- NASP Resources
 - Position Statement: Prevention and Intervention Research in Schools
 - Peer Reviewed Journals: School Psychology Review, School Psychology Forum: Research & Practice
 - Newspaper: Communiqué
 - Professional Development: NASP Convention, Summer Conferences, online self study courses
 - EBSCO Research Database
 - Publications: Books and “Toolkits”

Barriers to the Adoption of Evidence Based Practices

- Barriers to the adoption of evidence-based practices relates to the complexity and dynamic nature of schools: No two days, schools, students, or faculties are alike.
- Primary Barriers:
 - Lack of recognition by school leaders of the need for and benefit of evidenced based practices. Knowledgeable, effective leaders are critical.
 - Difficulty providing comprehensive professional development opportunities (narrow mandates, limited resources, in-service model vs. comprehensive professional development, follow up supports)
 - Difficulty conducting empirical research in schools limits generalizability of findings.

Final Thoughts....

- We believe that students need public policy that expands and improves school based mental health services.
- Specific Goals:
 - Improve access and availability of school MH services
 - Improve coordination and leadership across systems and agencies
 - Streamline and blend funding that follows student needs
 - Adequate funding for the adequate staffing of school-employed mental health providers, implementation of proven programs, and dissemination of information on evidence-based programs
 - Focus on evidence-based programs and interventions
 - Promote new research on the efficacy of evidence-based programs in school settings