

From Theory and Dreams to Reality and Practice

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With over 250 participants, last year's TSP National Training conference was a huge success. Stimulating plenary sessions, an inspirational keynote address by Dr. James Gabarino and active and insightful working groups generated critical issues and thoughtful ideas (for specific outcomes of the conference, please see the conference issues of *The Forum*). While "thinking" about issues is wonderful and exciting, thinking is not enough to begin to facilitate change within the practice of school psychology or to refocus the nature of our training programs.

With the concept of an ACTION orientation, the 2011 conference committee (consisting of Linda Caterino, Tammy Hughes, Judith Kaufman, Natalie Politikos, David Shriberg, and Sam Song) selected several salient themes as focal points for discussion with the goal of creating position papers and implementation plans or, if you will, TSP's IEP for action! To enrich the discussion and to move forward on the plans we identified last year, several of our 2010 conference strand leaders (Pam Fenning, Janine Jones, and Bonnie Nastasi) along with some new and exciting colleagues will be active participants on our panels and as moderators and facilitators at the upcoming TSP conference in 2011. The conference will also add some new and innovative features (e.g., a "hot topics wall") to further stimulate discussion. Tammy Hughes will provide a summary of last year's highlights and their link to the 2011 conference; Judith Kaufman will moderate discussion to keep consistency within the program.

Stuart Hart, Deputy Director of the International Institute for Child Rights and Development, Centre for Global Studies, University of Victoria, British Columbia, will serve as our keynote speaker on Monday, February 21 (his talk begins at 6PM, with a cocktail reception immediately following in Continental 1-3 (Ballroom Level, Tower 3), Hilton San Francisco Union Square). An engaging and powerful speaker long known for his extensive efforts in support of children's rights, Stuart will provide a model and some direction for ways in which school psychology faculty can channel their advocacy efforts into productive action in support of children.

On Tuesday, February 22, we will join together for a full day of learning and collaborative action. The conference begins with breakfast and opening remarks at 8:30 and will take place in Continental 4 (Ballroom Level, Tower 3), Hilton San Francisco Union Square. Among the frustrations that we experience in our field is the ability to train students and to implement prevention programs, particularly in the mental health arena. With reframing and creativity, it may be possible to explore

the recommended approaches listed at last year's meeting alongside those that are mandated in a variety of states. For example, we need to critically consider: Is it possible to see Response to Intervention mandates as a way of providing prevention programs for mental health? If this can happen - how can it be done? How can we train our students to become effective and demonstrate their effectiveness in this area? What role does consultation play? What is happening internationally that needs to be considered or improved? Our distinguished panel including Sissy Hatzichristou, Breeda McGrath, Karen Stoiber and Mark Terjesen will kick off Tuesday's meeting by addressing these and other critical issues in providing prevention and mental health services to the schools.

One of the most active strand groups at last year's conference focused on curriculum issues. What makes for necessary training? What role do foundational courses play? How do we train our students for the future, particularly when technology is so readily available? And most importantly, with state regulations, NASP approval, APA accreditation and the many other organizations offering input, who makes the decision of what we teach and how that information is presented and integrated into training? In order to address these issues and to potentially reach consensus about what we consider to be critical domains of training and exposure, Pam Fenning and Bonnie Nastasi will moderate this action oriented small group discussion activity: Build Your Own Curriculum. In order to share with accreditation bodies what is "wrong" with their proscribed curriculum, we as trainers need discover what is "right," to provide the best education for our students while protecting the uniqueness of each individual program. We feel that not only will this activity prove beneficial to conference participants in the short term by providing a forum for the sharing of ideas, thinking more long term it is the intention of TSP's leadership to use the ideas and strategies generated in this session as a platform for continued advocacy on behalf of our members.

Waiting for Superman has stimulated debate and discussion in the education field and has generated arguments among the "best of friends." While school psychology was not mentioned at all, either in the book or the documentary, the issues that have been generated are both grave and important to education and the field of school psychology. What might school psychology have to contribute to the national educational debate and what are some strategies for working as a field to have a place at the table as major issues are discussed? Janine Jones and Melissa Pearrow will provide the leadership for a stimulating and action-oriented discussion, *Waiting for Superman: The School Psychology Perspective*.

Throughout the day, our Hot Topics Committee will provide opportunities for participants to "write on the wall" offering suggestions around critical issues on which TSP members can follow-up - it is an opportunity to seek interested parties in in-depth discussions. Finally, TSP's annual poster session and reception will take place from 5-6:30 at Imperial B (Ballroom Level, Tower 1), Hilton San Francisco

Union Square. Led by Max McFarland, this poster session contains a fountain of innovative training research and is also an excellent opportunity to meet and network with faculty colleagues from across the world.

As many of you know, TSP hosts a suite at the conference hotel, we do have an active schedule, which will be posted, yet there will be open times to provide opportunities for individuals with particular interests to have some time to meet and talk together – we want you to be active in generating future directions for TSP.

We hope to see you at what will be a really exciting conference. Come, participate and help to make our dreams and ideas the new reality for future school psychologists and the children and youth we serve.

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