

A GSU SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY NEWSLETTER

INPSYGHT



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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome back! I'm delighted to be here. When the first issue of GSU's InPsyght was released, I was a third-year graduate student in GSU's Ed.S. program in School Psychology. I am now beginning the final stretch of the program: internship. I wish all the success to my fellow cohort members at their placements. We'll be walking the stage in no time.

The theme for the second issue of GSU's InPsyght is "Student Support," with a particular focus on NASP

Domains #3, #4, and #8. If you're unfamiliar with these, no worries at all. I will discuss NASP's domains in detail a little later.

This issue's target audience is GSU's undergraduate and graduate communities. I hope it ignites a spark in you.

Thank you for being here with me. Feel free to email with feedback and suggestions for the next issue of GSU's InPsyght. Happy reading!

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NASP PRACTICE MODEL

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) developed the Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services as a guide for school psychologists. It is also called the NASP Practice Model. It comprises two parts.

Part I: Professional Practices introduces the following ten domains as the “core” of school psychologists’ practice:



- Domain 1: Data-Based Decision Making
- Domain 2: Consultation and Collaboration
- **Domain 3: Academic Interventions and Instructional Supports**
- **Domain 4: Mental and Behavioral Health Services and Interventions**
- Domain 5: School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning
- Domain 6: Services to Promote Safe and Supportive Schools
- Domain 7: Family, School, and Community Collaboration
- **Domain 8: Equitable Practices for Diverse Student Populations**
- Domain 9: Research and Evidence-Based Practice
- Domain 10: Legal, Ethical, and Professional Practice

In this issue of InPsyght, we will primarily focus on Domains 3, 4, and 8.

Part 2: Organizational Principles delineates the following six “organizational conditions” as necessary for school psychologists to “effective[ly]” carry out their roles:

- Organizational Principle 1: Organization and Evaluation of Service Delivery
- Organizational Principle 2: Climate
- Organizational Principle 3: Physical, Personnel, and Fiscal Support Systems

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NASP PRACTICE MODEL

- Organizational Principle 4: Professional Communication
- Organizational Principle 5: Supervision, Peer Consultation, and Mentoring
- Organizational Principle 6: Professional Development and Recognition Systems

Learn more about the NASP Practice Model in detail at <https://www.nasponline.org/standards-and-certification/nasp-practice-model>.

NASP provides a self-assessment survey for school psychologists to evaluate how well their practice aligns with the ten domains listed above. NASP states on its website: "Completion of this self-assessment can help draw attention to the time devoted to various activities in your current role and the perceived importance of those activities, point out areas needing additional professional development, and establish goals for expanding your current role." NASP members can access this resource at https://apps.nasponline.org/standards-and-certification/survey/survey_launch.aspx.

If interested in becoming a NASP member, school psychology graduate students can apply at a discounted rate of \$85.00 for one year. Undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in a different program can apply for a NASP membership at the same discounted fee. Learn more at <https://www.nasponline.org/membership-and-community/join-nasp>.

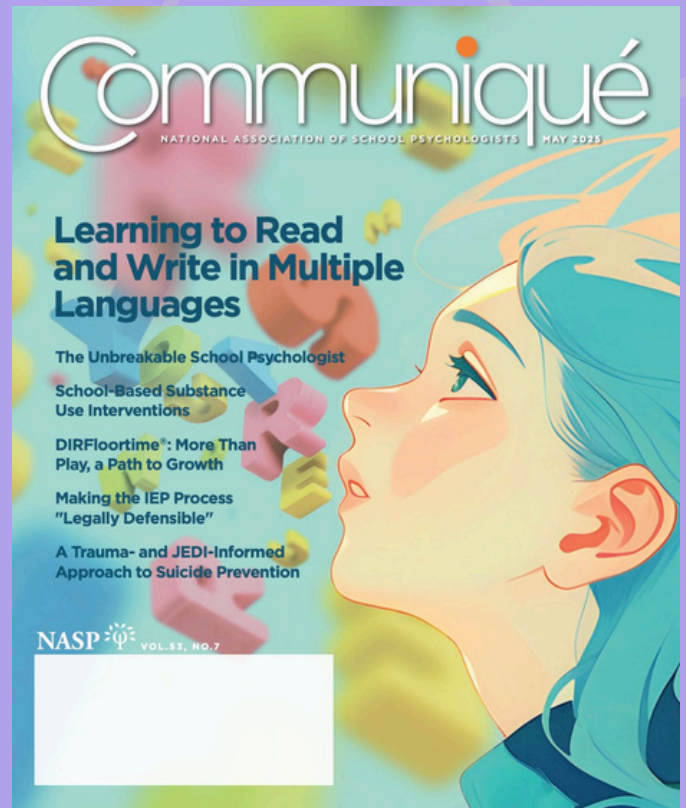


A PEEK IN THE COMMUNIQUE

NASP publishes the Communiqué eight times a year. NASP writes that its purpose is to “keep members informed about the activities of the Association and critical issues and current practices in school psychology.” The May and June 2025 issues offer valuable insights on how to support our students best. Let’s explore an article from each issue that stood out to me.

Learning to Read and Write in Multiple Languages

By Kirsten W. Newell



Dr. Newell describes **emerging biliterates** as “students who are learning to read and write in two (or more) languages.” Schools across the United States have seen an increase in emerging biliterates. Typically, school psychologists do not gain experience in assessing the “skills” of emerging biliterates during their training. Dr. Newell aims to help school psychologists better understand biliteracy to improve their practice.

She begins with an introduction to **bilingualism** and **biliteracy**. Dr. Newell addresses the difference between the two. Despite the difference, she emphasizes their relationship. Dr. Newell also discusses Cummins’s model of Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (**BICS**) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (**CALP**). BICS refers to “conversational language,” while CALP refers to “advanced language.” Children tend to develop BICS before CALP.

Dr. Newell continues by comparing the process of learning to read and write

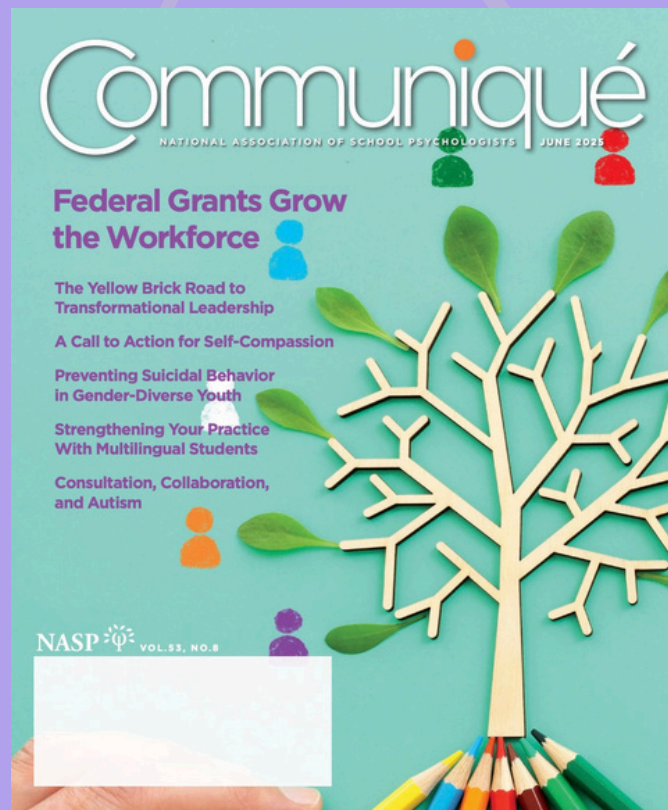
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A PEEK IN THE COMMUNIQUE

in English, to that in other languages. She provides several examples. Unlike Spanish and German, the letter-sound correspondence in English is “irregular.” Dr. Newell explains that English learners tend to take much longer to achieve phonics mastery. Despite these complexities, Dr. Newell presents in-depth research that supports the “cross-linguistic transfer” of literacy skills.

She concludes by discussing the type of “educational setting” most effective for emerging biliterates, recommending a **dual-language program** over a **transitional bilingual program**.



A Call to Action for Self-Compassion

By Reva Mathieu-Sher

Given the demanding nature of a school psychologist’s role, Dr. Mathieu-Sher highlights the importance of practicing self-compassion. She defines **self-compassion** as “engaging in purposeful activities to care for oneself and treat oneself kindly.” Research demonstrates that acts of self-compassion lead to decreased stress and anxiety, enhanced emotion regulation, and improved physical health. Dr. Mathieu-Sher outlines five “steps” that school psychologists can take to start practicing self-compassion.

First, Dr. Mathieu-Sher suggests that school psychologists **examine their current levels of self-compassion** to “identify” their strengths and weaknesses. She provides a free resource called the Self-Compassion Scale that can be used for this purpose.

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A PEEK IN THE COMMUNIQUE

Second, Dr. Mathieu-Sher recommends that school psychologists **consider acceptance and small steps for challenging situations**. She briefly discusses incorporating “acceptance and commitment training” strategies in daily life.

Third, Dr. Mathieu-Sher advises school psychologists to **reconsider their value alignment** and its influence on their practice. She explains that by doing so, school psychologists can make their “work tasks more meaningful.”

Fourth, Dr. Mathieu-Sher suggests that school psychologists **try integrating mindfulness techniques** into their routine. She provides several examples, including “breath work” and “guided imagery.” She states that “engaging in” mindfulness can give school psychologists “an opportunity to consider their needs or feelings and have a chance to attend to them.”

Lastly, Dr. Mathieu-Sher recommends that school psychologists **identify individualized self-care activities**. She urges them to try various activities to see which fits their liking and needs.

One sentence that Dr. Mathieu-Sher writes resonated with me: “When you take care of yourself, you not only strengthen your resilience and effectiveness as a practitioner, you also improve the quality of care you offer to others.” Remember, practicing self-compassion is not selfish. Rather, it is a must for you to give your best to those you serve.



CASEL FRAMEWORK

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) is a non-profit organization that advocates for the integration of social and emotional learning (SEL) in school districts throughout the United States. CASEL states: “SEL helps young people – and adults – learn and practice skills that set them up for academic success, fulfilling careers, healthy relationships, and responsible civic engagement.”

The CASEL Framework offers school districts a step-by-step guide on how to effectively implement SEL. It is “organized” into four focus areas.



Focus Area 1A: Build Foundational Support

The goal of Focus Area 1A is for schools to “assemble” an SEL team, educate its team members on SEL, and develop a clear “two-way communication system” between the SEL team and other staff.

Focus Area 1B: Build Foundational Plan

The goal of Focus Area 1B is for the SEL team to create a plan outlining the implementation of SEL. CASEL recommends “reflect[ing]” on the following questions:

- Where do we want to go?
- Where are we now, and where have we been?
- How do we get from where we are now to where we want to be?
- Are we moving in the right direction? What are we learning on our journey?

Focus Area 2: Strengthen Adult SEL

The goal of Focus Area 2 is for adults in schools to “engage in their own SEL,” collaborate, and integrate their learning into actions for students to observe.

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CASEL FRAMEWORK

Focus Area 3: Promote SEL for Students

The goal of Focus Area 3 is to “develop a coordinated approach” that fosters SEL for students in various environments, including both the classroom and home.

Focus Area 4: Practice Continuous Improvement

Before implementing a school-wide plan, the SEL team must agree on the data collection strategies staff will use to track student progress. The goal of Focus Area 4 is to regularly evaluate and analyze this data to revise the SEL plan as needed.

The CASEL framework is “not a linear process,” meaning it is not required to be implemented in a specific order. However, CASEL urges schools to start with Focus Area 1 for optimal results. Each Focus Area webpage includes a rubric to complete, which helps the SEL team identify strengths and areas for growth.

If interested in learning more about the CASEL Framework, visit:
<https://schoolguide.casel.org/how-it-works/>.



CASEL PROGRAM GUIDE

The CASEL Program Guide, created in 2003, is designed to be used alongside the CASEL Framework. It features 99 “evidence-based” SEL programs that schools can explore and choose to implement.

CASEL has established specific criteria for SEL programs to be included in the Program Guide. Before submitting an SEL program, the following information must be gathered for review:

- A **COMPREHENSIVE** evaluation “demonstrating evidence of effectiveness”
- **ALL** “program design materials”

After conducting an intensive review, CASEL “designates” an SEL program as either SElect, Promising, or SEL-Supportive. SElect is the highest title a program can receive.

If interested in learning more about the CASEL Program Guide, visit: <https://pg.casel.org/>.



AL'S PALS: KIDS MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES

During the Spring Semester of 2024, I completed a course called Psychodiagnostics II. Our professor assigned us to write a review of an SEL program. I chose to review Al's Pals: Kids Making Healthy Choices, a "designated" SElect program.



Al's Pals: Kids Making Healthy Choices was founded by Susan R. Geller and her team at Virginia Commonwealth University (Lynch et al., 2004). Geller undertook the project in the 1990s when a group of early childhood educators voiced their concerns about their at-risk students. Some had resided in low-income neighborhoods with high crime rates and drug use. Geller and her team established the foundation of Al's Pals by conducting intensive "resiliency research" (Lynch et al., 2004). Al's Pals is a "comprehensive SEL curriculum" and "professional development program" aimed at cultivating resilience in children ages three to six (Teaching Strategies, 2021a). Before its implementation in the classroom, Al's Pals requires educators to undergo a two-day formal training (Lynch et al., 2004). Upon completion, educators receive the Al's Pals curriculum kit.

The Al's Pals curriculum kit contains 52 lessons organized into the following themes: "identification and expression of feelings, relationships and respectful communication, safe and unsafe substances and situations, and problem-solving" (Teaching Strategies, 2021a). Al's Pals coincides with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. Two lessons are taught weekly, each running for approximately 20 minutes. Al's Pals engages students through various activities, such as "puppet-led discussions," crafts, and singing (Lynch et al., 2004). The Al's Pal's curriculum kit also includes three puppets and scripts. Al, Ty, and Keisha assist educators in leading lessons. Al is introduced in the second lesson, while Ty and Keisha are introduced in the fifth (Teaching Strategies, 2021a). Twelve songs and a

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AL'S PALS: KIDS MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES

songbook are also available in the curriculum kit. Al's Pals self-produce their music with children in a studio. One of their songs is titled "Lots of Feelings" (Teaching Strategies, 2021a). The Al's Pals curriculum kit also includes forty "theme-related" pictures, two classroom posters, and two children's books.



Al's Pals promotes family involvement. According to the IRIS Center (2008, 2020), there are six types of family involvement: "parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning, school decision-making, and collaborating with the community." Among these, Al's Pals particularly emphasizes "parenting, communicating, and learning" (Teaching Strategies, 2021a). The Al's Pals curriculum kit comprises eighteen family letters from Al. Educators use the letters to keep families informed about the lessons being taught. The Al's Pals curriculum kit grants access to the MyTeachingStrategies® online platform. It provides families with various resources, including Al's Pals lyric videos. The MyTeachingStrategies® online platform also serves as a means of communication. Both educators and families can exchange messages on it. Along with the letters and the MyTeachingStrategies® online platform, there are eight "recognition" certificates and a completion certificate in the curriculum kit (Teaching Strategies, 2021a). These are available in English and Spanish.

According to CASEL, Al's Pals leads to "reduced emotional distress, reduced problem behaviors, and improved social behaviors." It is important to note that the current research on Al's Pals is outdated. Due to COVID-19, many children lost opportunities for SEL. Future research should focus on the impact of Al's Pals on the COVID generation.



The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) releases the **NASP Dialogues** podcast throughout the year, offering listeners valuable insights into school psychology.

I recently listened to an episode titled “NASP Distinguished Lecture: Belonging, Identity, and Behavior—Engaging the Potential of Diverse Student Learners.” The conversation features Dr. Dan Florell, the NASP Online Communication Coordinator, and Dr. Janine Jones, who is the Associate Vice Chancellor for Graduate Affairs at UC Santa Barbara. Previously, she served as an Associate Professor and Director of the School Psychology program at the University of Washington. Dr. Jones is also the sole editor of the book **The Psychology of Multiculturalism in the Schools: A Primer for Practice, Training, and Research**.



Dr. Florell begins the conversation by asking Dr. Jones: “How do you conceptualize belonging?” Dr. Jones describes belonging as a “basic human need” that must be met to reduce the risk of emotional and behavioral issues. She states that some children may experience a “toxic” form of stress caused by a lack of belonging. Dr. Jones emphasizes the importance of recognizing those who are struggling and working closely with them to foster a sense of belonging.

Dr. Florell continues by asking Dr. Jones to connect belongingness with identity. Dr. Jones brings to light the unique challenges that adolescents “of color or those of minority status” face, especially in navigating biculturalism. As a result, many experience cognitive dissonance. Dr. Jones discusses how school psychologists and other educators can support these adolescents by

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PODCAST REVIEW

implementing culturally responsive practices and presents an acronym of beneficial strategies.

- Integrate cultural values
- Notice hidden differences
- Value different perspectives
- Empower others
- Speak less and listen more
- Transform your community

Dr. Florell and Dr. Jones engage in a thought-provoking conversation, urging listeners to reevaluate their professional dispositions. I learned a lot. It helped me envision the practice I hope to establish as a school psychologist. I highly recommend taking 45 minutes from your day to listen to this episode.

NASP Dialogues can be found on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and the NASP website.



SUPPORTING NATIVE AMERICAN YOUTH

Dr. Carol Robinson-Zañartu is Professor Emerita of the Department of Counseling and School Psychology at San Diego State University. In her role as Professor Emerita, she fulfills several responsibilities. Dr. Robinson-Zañartu serves as a Grant Director, securing funding for projects that address issues of equity in the training of school psychologists, counselors, and speech-language pathologists. She has directed projects to support Indigenous specializations in the preparation of school psychologists and school counselors for over 25 years, and is currently the Director of the SHPA Native American and Indigenous Scholars Project.



Before becoming Professor Emerita, Dr. Robinson-Zañartu held various positions. She served as Chair of the Department of Counseling and School Psychology for sixteen years, as well as Professor and Director of the School Psychology program. Earlier in her career, she was the principal of an elementary school for children with learning disabilities.

Dr. Robinson-Zañartu has been commended for her contributions to the field and her work with the Native American community. She was named the 2025 Honored Ally by the Society for Indian Psychologists and has also received the 2025 Judith Kauffman Award for Outstanding Training Contribution to School Psychology. She is a founding member of NASP's Native American Work Group, currently IAS, and an ongoing contributor.

On July 1st, I had the privilege of speaking with Dr. Robinson-Zañartu, an opportunity for which I am truly grateful. Our conversation was one I will

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SUPPORTING NATIVE AMERICAN YOUTH

cherish. She exuded warmth and kindness. I was in awe of her passion for her work. Dr. Robinson-Zañartu enthusiastically discussed the Native Specialty Seminar, a course I wish more universities would offer.

The Native Specialty Seminar is “integrated” into the School Psychology and School Counseling programs at San Diego State University for SHPA Scholars. It meets weekly on Mondays, where students work with Indigenous youth and families at a supervised field site in the mornings, followed by the seminar in the afternoons.

The Native Specialty Seminar kicks off with a Summer Institute, which aims to promote bonding and community building. Dr. Robinson-Zañartu explained, “We bring in local community members to talk about what the community issues have been in history, and who our connections or mentors within the community are. A lot of what we do in those three days is tell stories...I try to create a tremendous support system for people in a way that allows their voices to be heard, validates who they are, and where they come from.”

The Native Specialty Seminar has varied over time. Currently, “there are a series of competencies that the scholars need to learn about working in Native America,” Dr. Robinson-Zañartu stated, ranging from legal and ethical mandates to culturally appropriate interventions. She gave an example of understanding the legal mandates (e.g., ICWA) that support Native youth. To assess their progress, the scholars complete a competency survey three times each semester. Toward the end of the seminar, they conduct research on selected areas of interest and share their findings with the community.

Dr. Robinson-Zañartu mentioned that every semester, the Native Specialty Seminar scholars and faculty also collectively select a book for reading and discussion. As an avid reader, I loved hearing about this. Last year, the group read *What Happened to You?: Conversations on Trauma, Healing, and Resilience* by Bruce D. Perry, M.D., Ph.D., and Oprah Winfrey. Dr. Robinson-Zañartu shared that the group typically reads a couple of chapters at a time.

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SUPPORTING NATIVE AMERICAN YOUTH

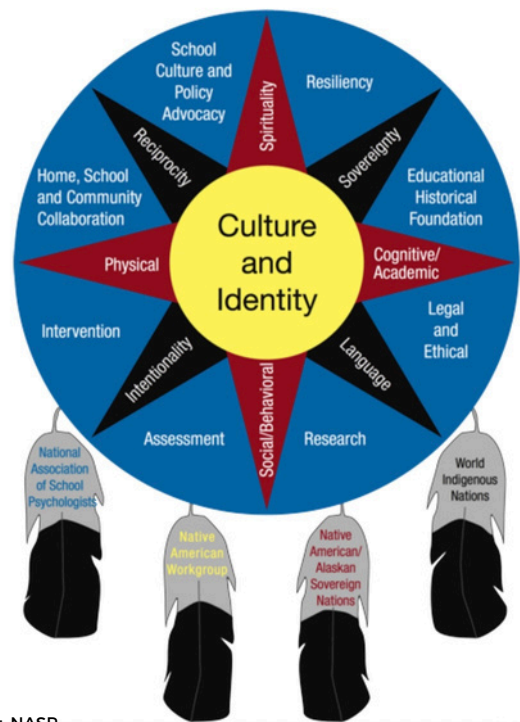
After, scholars reflect with one another, connecting their personal stories to the content of those chapters. It is truly beautiful.

Dr. Robinson-Zañartu provided resources for those interested in learning how to better support Native American and Indigenous students. The Indigenous American Subgroup (IAS) of NASP's Multicultural Affairs Committee has published articles and released podcasts. "We are [also] in the process of writing a book on working alongside Native American youth and families," Dr. Robinson-Zañartu said. The NASP Indigenous Conceptual Framework also serves as a guide for school psychologists working with Indigenous youth and their families. Dr. Robinson-Zañartu recommends joining a book club because it establishes a "common ground" between people. One of her favorite books is *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

I gained valuable insights from my conversation with Dr. Robinson-Zañartu. She possesses profound wisdom. As future school psychologists, we must prioritize culturally responsive practices when working with Native American and Indigenous youth.

Visit https://education2.sdsu.edu/csp/research-projects/naisc/01632-Position_Statement_NASP_EffectiveServiceDeliveryforIndigenousChildrenandYouth.pdf to learn more about the NASP Indigenous Conceptual Framework.

Figure 1. An Indigenous Conceptual Framework: Guiding School Psychology Practice With Indigenous Youth, Families, and Communities



Credit: NASP



STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

NASP Mentorship Program

The NASP Mentorship Program connects “school psychologists at every career stage” with mentors who provide guidance and support. NASP pairs mentees and mentors based on shared “interests, identities, and goals.” Individuals interested in participating must remain NASP members until June 30, 2026, and complete a survey. Registration will close on September 15th, and matches will be “announced” on October 15th. To learn more, visit <https://www.nasponline.org/mentorship>.

Illinois LEND Program

The Illinois Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (IL LEND) program offers multidisciplinary graduate training that prepares students for leadership roles in their respective fields.

Regina Brock, a recent graduate of GSU’s Ed.S. in School Psychology program, participated in the IL LEND program. She writes: “This year of training has helped me learn more about disability rights, advocacy, and most importantly, myself. With this knowledge, I feel even more confident entering my role as a school psychologist and supporting the diverse needs of students.” Regina encourages others to partake in the experience.

Registration for the 2025-2026 academic year closed on March 1st. No details have been announced about the next application period. Stay updated by visiting <https://illinoislend.org>.

KEEN

Kids Enjoy Exercise Now (KEEN) is a non-profit organization that provides free sports and recreational programs for youth with disabilities.

Regina writes: “Volunteering at KEEN is an especially wonderful opportunity for students who may not have much experience working

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STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

with children with various disabilities.” She was recently honored as one of the Volunteers of the Year at the annual KEENFest. KEEN is constantly searching for volunteers. Most of their sessions take place in the Chicagoland area (UIC) and the Evanston/Skokie area. If interested in becoming a volunteer, please visit <https://www.keenchicago.org/new-volunteer-application>.

Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago

The Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago offers volunteer opportunities for both undergraduate and graduate students. Undergraduate students must have completed at least one semester of college before applying. Volunteers are required to commit to a weekly shift for a minimum of six months; however, some assignments may not require this six-month commitment.

The website states: “Volunteers are incorporated throughout the hospital and its outpatient centers in a wide variety of roles, from greeting families and guests as they make their way through the building to play-based roles with patients and siblings.”

If you would like to learn more about the volunteer program at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago, please visit <https://www.luriechildrens.org/en/ways-to-help/volunteer/become-a-hospital-volunteer/>.



UPCOMING EVENTS

October 2-3, 2025

The Midwest Symposium for Leadership in Behavior Disorders (MSLBD) will be holding its Seventh Annual Richard L. Simpson Conference on Autism in Springfield, MO, at Missouri State University. Learn more at <https://mslbd.org/autism-conference/>.

November 4-6, 2025

CASEL's Annual SEL Exchange will be taking place in Minneapolis, MN. Learn more at <https://selexchange.casel.org/>.

November 12-13, 2025

The Illinois School Psychologists Association will be holding its Annual Fall Conference in Downers Grove, IL, at the DoubleTree Suites by Hilton Hotel & Conference Center. Learn more at <https://www.ilispa.org/fall-conference>.

February 24-27, 2026

The NASP Annual Convention will be taking place in Chicago, IL, at the Hyatt Regency Chicago.

- Early registration opens on October 1 and runs until November 19. NASP graduate student members can register for a discounted fee of \$114, while non-NASP members will pay \$529.
- Pre-convention registration opens on November 20 and runs until January 7. NASP graduate student members can register for a discounted fee of \$124, while non-NASP members will pay \$549.
- After January 7, graduate student members will be required to pay \$134, while non-NASP members will pay \$569.

Learn more at <https://www.nasponline.org/professional-development/nasp-annual-convention-x105>.



WORD SEARCH

R E S I L I E N C E A F P R D P O C Y A
 U N K Y I X W J D X B D P E C N L A C I
 Q L V P F E J D J Z M M N S Q Y L S A N
 E H Z W A S B V E S U P P O R T M E V V
 M V D J I S G M V B U E B U N B H L I E
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 W C U G W D Z T H K E I I I E S W F S L
 U D O R U Y X A V K P X N Z S L W G L E
 N Q M A Q I K Z H Z K L E G C M M S A L

Multiculturalism

Biliteracy

Indigenous

Domain

Intervention

Resilience

Resources

INVEST

Mindfulness

Belonging

Support

CASEL

Build your own custom worksheet at [education.com/worksheet-generator](https://www.education.com/worksheet-generator)

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