



PSI **d**elines

February 2011

Your Students Love Social Media... and So Can You

As PSI Educators from many different disciplines, we all face the rapidly changing world in which our students live. Challenges abound but so do solutions if we take the time to educate ourselves and broaden our thinking. The following may help you in an area that is growing exponentially among our youth:

(From Teaching Tolerance Magazine, Spring 2011)

Last spring, a New Jersey middle school principal saw a rise in bullying at his school. Students were spreading rumors and gossip online, hiding behind anonymous screen names and profiles. What was worse, the principal said, his school's guidance counselor was spending the majority of her day dealing with the emotional fallout. The principal had had enough. He emailed a letter to parents, asking them to forbid their children from participating on any social networking sites. Experts say the principal's frustration was understandable—but his solution was simply not practical.

A recent Pew Research Center report shows that 73 percent of teens between the ages of 12 and 17 use social networking, up from 55 percent just four years ago. Numbers are greatest among high school girls, who tend to use social media as a way to socialize and strengthen relationships. Facebook and, to a lesser degree, MySpace are the major social networking sites of choice. But teens also use social media when they text on cell phones, play online games and interact with others through online forums and membership sites. In the last five years, social networking has become ubiquitous.

Some of the concern about social media is warranted. Parents should be more knowledgeable about their children's online activity, and cyber-bullying can be painfully vicious. But others say social media is here to stay, and rather than shielding children from it and admonishing them for using it, educators should support these social networks. Pam Rutledge, a psychologist and director of the Media Psychology Resource Center, says adult fear of new technology is not new. There were similar concerns when television was introduced. "From my perspective, this new technology is all a very positive thing. Social media has totally changed the communication model," Rutledge says. "This is so empowering."

That's especially true for teens in their search for affirmation. Teens still engage in traditional behaviors, like talking on the phone for hours and trolling the mall with their friends. But Rutledge says social media provides a new way for them to construct their identities. "It's fundamental for teens to want to feel empowered, to have a sense of individual agency, a willingness to learn, to produce," she says. "To spend all their time making their Facebook page cute allows them to exercise control over their domain and their identity."

Tweet Away Anxiety

Some researchers are finding that social media in the classroom can have positive psychological effects. Erica Robles, an assistant professor of media and communication at New York University discovered that when students were asked to answer questions using Twitter, they felt less pressure, even if the answer was incorrect.

"Social media allows teachers to manage social anxiety and create a safe learning environment where everybody learns," says Robles. "We have only just begun to scratch the surface on the architectural design of the classroom, or the physical layout of information. We're learning that you can go beyond the curriculum to communicate the same content across laptops. It might not be the best place to show collaboration, but it gives students control. Small choices can have implications psychologically."

David Bill, a former middle school teacher, used social media as a teaching tool in his classroom to help students learn from experts around the globe as well as teachers down the hall. "I wanted them to see how it could extend and simplify their learning," says Bill, who is now the online community manager for New Tech Network, an organization that helps create project-based learning schools. "I think it is important for educators to understand our students and try to meet them halfway. To ignore how our students learn and operate would only push them away from enjoying the process of learning."

*For the complete article by Camille Jackson see:
<http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-39-spring-2011/your-students-love-social-media-and-so-can-you>*

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A Periodic Newsletter for PSI's Professional Staff



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Vol. 22, No. 1

A newsletter for the professional staff of PSI published periodically throughout the year.

Mission Statement

PSI is dedicated to providing high-quality services in a cost efficient manner to help students improve their grades, attitudes, behavior, and health. Our professional staff provides innovative resources within the fields of school health, speech/language, prevention, educational specialists and tutoring. We are committed to developing and implementing a customized service and support system to fit the educational and health service needs of students. Services are provided by PSI or a local representative.

EDUCATIONAL SPECIALISTS

Carol Weber, B.S., Coordinator
Nancy Brewer, M.Ed., Educational Consultant

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Colleen Lorber, Ph.D., Director
Linda Grimm, Ed.S., Regional Support Supervisor
Robert Murray, Ed.S., Psychology Coordinator
Karen Heichel, M.A., Psychology Supervisor
Julie Goldyn, M.Ed., Psychology Supervisor
Christine Worthington, M.S., C.C.C., Speech Pathology Supervisor
Robin Caston, M.S., C.C.C., Speech Pathology/Therapy Supervisor

HEALTH SERVICES

Lynn Chrostowski, NCSN, RN, MSN, Manager
Janet Yue, RN, Manager
Laura Sheeks, RN, Manager

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

Ruth Harvey, M.Ed., Coordinator

PREVENTION/INTERVENTION INITIATIVES, SPECIAL PROJECTS

Karen McKelvey, M.Ed., Ed.S., Coordinator

ADMINISTRATION

Steven L. Rosenberg, Ph.D., President
Nancy Musci, Administrative Director/New Client Services

From the Desk of:

Steve Rosenberg
President

We all need to be cognizant that budgetary concerns are becoming part of the everyday landscape throughout the American education system. Staff cutbacks in schools continue to worry everyone working in public, non-public and charter schools. However, we are delighted that our client schools continually tell us how pleased they are with the performance of PSI staff and the commitment we all demonstrate to doing the best we can for the schools and students we serve. This is due to the creativity and dedication of all our staff and managers plus the commitment by school administrators to continue PSI's valuable services.

We are doing everything in our power to maximize this situation to protect the students and schools we work with and of course, the jobs of PSI's most valuable asset: YOU! We are confident we will proceed into the future stronger and more vibrant than we are today.

Thanks for All you do!





Welcome to the second half of the school year!

As many of you know, this is the time of year when schools review their finances and plan for the upcoming year. Be aware that your principals may be asking you about your caseloads and your use of time. This is an important opportunity to demonstrate your utility in the schools. Please call your supervisor if you or your principal have a question about services and/or allocations for next year.

Watch your mail for your Tentative Plans form. We hope to have those to you by the end of February or the beginning of March. Please feel free to write notes on this form with any additional information you would like us to have to better inform planning for next school year.

As always, thank you for all that you do!

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FACTS ABOUT 504 PLANS

Courtesy of PSI's Julie Goldyn, School Psychologist and Educational Support Services Supervisor

WHAT IS SECTION 504?

Section 504 is part of a civil rights law, the American with Disability Act, which prohibits discrimination against person with disabilities.

WHO DOES SECTION 504 APPLY TO?

Any agency that receives federal funding must comply with Section 504.

WHO QUALIFIES FOR A 504 PLAN?

A person with a disability must have one of the following 3 criteria to qualify for a 504 plan:

1. A physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities
2. A record of such impairment which substantially limits a major life activity or
3. Is regarded as having an impairment that substantially limits a major life activity.

Just because a student has an impairment does NOT necessarily mean that they have a disability that would qualify them for a 504 plan.

Schools must establish evaluation and re-evaluation procedures for 504s. A multidisciplinary team should be in charge of this process and although special educators often are involved in the process, this is not a requirement and a special educator is discouraged from acting as the 504 coordinator.

Parents must give consent for their son/daughter to participate in the 504 evaluation process and procedural safeguards must be provided to the parents outlining their rights under Section 504.

DO YOU HAVE TO CONSIDER MITIGATING FACTORS (i.e. medication, prosthetics, hearing aids, mobility devices etc.)? Agencies must NOT consider the ameliorating effects of any mitigating measures that student is using except for ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses. This is a change from prior law.

IS THERE FUNDING THE SCHOOL CAN RECEIVE TO IMPLEMENT 504 PLANS?

No.

What Do You Think?

A student is diagnosed with ADHD and is getting B's and C's in his classes. He could probably do better in school if it wasn't for his ADHD. Should he qualify for a 504 plan?

Answer:

No because while the child has an impairment, the team must consider the "substantially limiting" clause. In this case, a student who is passing but could do better is not a sufficient 504 case because there is no substantial limitation in comparison to the average person. A student does not have a disability under Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act simply because his disability limits him from reaching his potential. Keep in mind that the student got passing grades. If the child got Ds and Fs and did not turn in his work, then this would be a different scenario and the team could argue that his ability to perform is affected.



From the Desk of:

Lynn Chrostowski

Health Services Manager

Smile... The Dentists are Coming!

The Dentists are coming! The Dentists are coming to your school! Well, for some students having a dentist come to your school may be the only way that they will receive dental care. Being a PSI District Nurse in a school district in which it was apparent that many students were in need of dental care, it was determined that some sort of action needed to be taken.

With this being the task at hand, we discovered "Smile Programs... The Mobile Dentists". This is a grant-based program where no child is ever turned away for lack of resources. The mobile dentists include dentists, dental hygienists, and dental assistants who have a devotion to outreach dentistry. Every dentist and dental hygienist working in the school is a locally-licensed clinician. They convert a classroom or designated area, which needs to be 10' x 14', into a portable dental office for the day.

The Smile Program is able to provide dental examinations/screenings, dental cleanings, fluoride treatments, sealants and x-rays when deemed necessary. After the student has seen the dentist, a report card will be sent home for the parents to be informed if all the child's dental needs were met or if further treatment is necessary. After scheduling your dental day or days, the Smile Program will take it from there and send your school(s) all the necessary information for you to distribute to the students and make your Dental Day a huge success.

Please also note that at no time does your district/school ever incur an expense or fee with this program.

If you are interested in scheduling your own mobile dentists to visit your district or school, they can be reached @ 1-888-833-8441 or email CaringDental@mobiledentists.com. For more information you can always access their website @ www.mobiledentists.com.

Thank you for helping to keep our children healthy!

Kelly Smith, R.N., BSN
District Nurse
Garfield Heights City Schools

Reminders from the Health Manager 's Desk

- Tentative Plans will be mailed in the February/March time-frame
- Scoliosis screening schedule (by C. Poe-Kochert RN, PNP) being finalized for April and March
- ODH Immunization Summary for fall 2011 was e mailed to PSI employees, a copy will also be mailed to place in the Resource Guide
- The Diabetes 101 program that was cancelled due to the weather has been re-scheduled. The new date is April 13, 2011 from 4:30pm-6:30pm. The program will be held at the Educational Service Center of Cuyahoga County, Dr. Harry E. Eastridge Professional Development Center, 5700 W. Canal Road Bldg. B, Valley View, Ohio 44125. A flyer will be sent out soon!
- Calls are coming in about bedbugs, for information the following website contains valuable information: www.centralohiobedbugs.org PSI Health Services can also be contacted, we have some handouts and a template for a parent letter. Local health departments would be another resource.
- RNs who supervise health staff should be starting the evaluation process. The form is located in the Evaluation Tools section of the Health Resource Guide on page 19. Once you have given the staff member their evaluation and obtained their signature, provide them a copy and forward the form to PSI Health Services.

As always, if you have any questions call 1-800-841-4774 ext. 226



More From: *Health Services*



Welcome Meredith Bookwalter

Joining PSI's Health Service Team is Meredith Bookwalter. In addition to being a Registered Nurse, Meredith holds a Bachelor of Science in Health Education and is ODE certified. She is part of PSI's school wellness team.

Meredith sees first hand how health impacts student performance. "Something as simple as not having a good night's sleep or a nutritious breakfast makes a difference in how that student participates in school. There are many teachable moments on any given day in the clinic. They are always the most poignant time of the day for me!"

Ms. Bookwalter will be presenting to the schools we serve on a variety of health subjects. Classroom talks, assembly health presentations, student participation programs and faculty and parent wellness programs are all available on a variety of health topics. To reach Ms. Bookwalter and to discuss your school's health education needs, please call PSI at Ext. 226.

HEALTHY CHOICES: Up and Running...

PSI's newest program, Healthy Choices: Be a Healthy Hero, is up and running in many public, charter and nonpublic schools PSI serves. Voluntary student participation is very high (over 67%!). This program, which is complementary and available to interested PSI client schools, helps promote healthy exercise, nutrition and hygiene habits through an incentive program for younger students, usually in grades kindergarten through fourth grade. Programs for older elementary, middle and high school students are in development and will be available in the Fall of 2011. This program helps schools meet the requirements in the recently passed Ohio House Bill 210.

PSI Health Staff in schools interested in this program will be trained upon principal request. Additional PSI wellness experts are available to supplement assigned staff in some situations. These exciting programs complement state and federal initiatives. Parents find these programs valuable and have appreciated participating school's emphasis upon the development of healthy habits!

Contact the PSI Health Office (800-841-4774 ext. 226) for more information about these and other PSI Wellness Programs, classroom presentations and assembly topics on health related topics for students of all ages.



Pictured Above: PSI's Darla Haviland and Healthy Heroes.



From the Desk of:

Karen McKelvey

*Prevention/Intervention Services &
Special Projects Coordinator*

Language Culture Connection News

Tamula Drumm who teaches Chinese for PSI at both Walsh Jesuit High School and St. Vincent-St. Mary High School, has also been presenting a series of staff workshops at Gilmour Academy Lower School this academic year. As part of Gilmour's Global Initiative, Tamula has been presenting on such subjects as Chinese history, religions, education and the modern Chinese family. Through her expertise, Gilmour is meeting their goal of developing a world-class academic program that offers mastery of rigorous academic content with a unique global perspective. PSI is pleased to be an important part of this initiative. Great work, Tamula!

PSI Spanish teacher, Kay Almy, developed a series of Spanish lessons that also tied in with Catholic Schools week. Kay continually finds ways to enrich her lessons while she also shares her lesson ideas with other PSI Spanish teachers. It is a wonderful way to extend learning beyond the basic curriculum that is available to PSI's partner language schools. Thanks for sharing with your fellow teachers, Kay!

All PSI ESL staff is currently involved in helping their schools administer OTELA which is the Ohio Test of English Language Acquisition currently required annually of all Ohio students who have been identified as needing ESL services. This has kept the staff very busy while they also continue to complete their ESL teaching duties!

Reminders to all LCC staff:

- PSI Tentative Plans for 2011-2012 will be mailed this month
- Last Time Remaining Notice to be mailed out in late March
- Check your License: It's time to renew it if it expires on 6/30/11

Professional Development News

Nancy Brewer, PSI Educational Specialist Consultant, recently presented at PSI in the A.M. along with Stephanie Applegate, PSI Educational Specialist. Their topic, "From Failure to Success: Turning on the Turned-Off Student in the Digital Age" included information on why students become disengaged, causes of this disengagement as well as teaching strategies for dealing with these challenging students.

The Horizon Schools are utilizing PSI for a Parent Education workshop series conducted by Marsha Michaels, Mollie Royce and Karen McKelvey on the topics of Depression and Suicide,

Homework Challenges, Internet Issues with Children, and Dealing with Bullying. Parents and staff have appreciated the efforts of Horizon Schools and their collaboration with PSI for information on these vital topics.

Based on the success of National Blue Ribbon School of excellence applications in the Diocese of Cleveland and the preparation workshops that PSI has been offering in conjunction with Mr. John Bednar, additional workshops will be offered in April to schools in Cincinnati, Dayton and Columbus. Mr. Bednar is the principal of St. Paschal-Baylon School in Highland Heights, which received the Blue Ribbon award last school year. We wish good luck to all of our partner schools in their applications!

Julie Goldyn, PSI School Psychologist has been extremely busy presenting workshops to school staff on Positive Behavior Supports (PBS). If your school wants further information on this workshop, contact Karen McKelvey at x. 230

Prevention/Intervention Help

Bullying continues to be a "hot topic" in schools. The following article from Teaching Tolerance Magazine provides an interesting perspective on the roles that students choose:

Bully, Bullied, Bystander...and Beyond by Barbara Coloroso
<http://www.tolerance.org/magazine/number-39-spring-2011/bully-bullied-bystanderand-beyond>

"Bullying: It's Not About Anger..." Contrary to popular opinion, and contrary to the thesis of some anti-bullying programs, bullying is not about anger or conflict. It's about contempt—a powerful feeling of dislike toward someone considered to be worthless, inferior or undeserving of respect. **Bullying is arrogance in action.** Once kids believe that someone is "less than them" they can harm the child without feeling any empathy, compassion or shame."



From the Desk of:

Nancy Brewer
Educational Specialist Consultant

Teaching In The Digital Age

The current explosion of digital technology is not only changing the way we communicate but is rapidly and profoundly altering our children's brains. In the digital age, your students have vastly increased their ability to gather any information they feel they need. But they also need a teacher's guidance more than ever. As educators, we must find new strategies that engage our students and help them learn in ways that work for their technologically rewired brains. A few of the strategic areas of instructions include the following:

Social Cognition

Researchers have found that as the brain has evolved to adopt new technological skills, it has drifted away from fundamental social skills such as recognition of varying facial expressions and emotional reactions. This evidence suggests the need for classroom exercises that involve more team building, role playing and social interactions. In addition, teachers should ask probing questions about lesson content focusing on feelings and emotions involved within their readings.

Sustained Attention

Brain research has shown that there have been notable changes in the reticular activation system (RAS) of the digital age student. The rapid pace of accessing information and the ability to scan it quickly has caused the RAS to respond faster and to encode information differently. As a result, students have a shorter attention span and are able to process more quickly but not necessarily more efficiently. Customary lecture/note-taking lessons are boring to students and they easily become disengaged with the learning process. Suggested school strategies include increased visual input, projects that strengthen sustained attention and lessons that change learning states frequently such as providing frequent movement and changes of modalities. In addition, probing questions are needed to determine if material is being processed, since skills such as error detection are weakened by these changes in the RAS.

Customization and Personalization

Students are offered more choices within their techno-culture than ever before. Their brains have adapted to the freedom of choice and expression and the classroom must reflect this adaptation. Marilee Sprenger states in *Brain-Based Teaching in the Digital Age* that teachers must change their position from "knowledge keeper" to "facilitator of learning". Classroom strategies should reflect an exchange of ideas, increased use of the Web for assigned projects, and the student's ability to make choices within lessons. The National Research Council states: "Students will not exert effort in academic work if convinced they have no control over the outcomes. Choice is a critical factor in enhancing a student's desire to be engaged in intellectual work."

These are a few of the many strategies teachers must consider in order to provide an educational environment that is motivating and engaging to today's student population. Educators are being encouraged by brain researchers to rewire the educational system to accommodate the rewired generation of learners in the emerging digital age.

To learn more about having a presentation on this topic at your school, please contact Karen McKelvey at the PSI office, ext.230.

COMING SOON:

- PSI Tentative Plans for 2011-2012
- Last Time Remaining Notice to be mailed out in late March
- PSI Employee Advisory Board Meeting, 3/16/11
- Time to renew your license if it expires on 6/30/11