

# PSI PARADIGM<sup>®</sup>

A PSI Communique for the Educational Community

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<http://www.psi-solutions.org>

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## The Aftermath of the Sandy Hook School Tragedy

While this issue of Paradigm focuses on physical health, it is appropriate in light of the school shootings at Sandy Hook School in December to focus upon mental health issues. As children and staff continue to find ways to cope with the realities of such a tragedy, PSI is available to offer support with resources or other assistance. A national crisis of this magnitude and significance cannot easily be brushed away and schools may find that appropriate *postvention* activities are necessary. PSI's Crisis Team, trained by national expert Dr. Scott Poland, is available to all our partner schools to help in the time of crisis and in the following aftermath. Learn more at [http://psi-solutions.org/school\\_crisis\\_management.html](http://psi-solutions.org/school_crisis_management.html)

It is becoming imperative for school leaders to be knowledgeable about the **signs of stress or anxiety in children**. Changes in behavior or temperament are common flags that may indicate that students are experiencing anxiety. Some common signs to look for include:

- Complaints of stomach aches or headaches
- Sleep problems or difficulty concentrating
- Behavioral changes such as moodiness, a short temper or clinginess
- Development of a nervous habit, such as nail biting
- Refusal to go to school or getting into trouble at school

## Health Matters!



A  
Wellness  
Newsletter  
for  
Educators

### Healthy Weighs Lead to Healthy Ways

Kathy Conrad, RN, the PSI School Nurse at Southside Academy, a K-8 White Hat charter school in Youngstown, Ohio and her health team have created an exciting and innovative Health Education program for the school called "Change Your Weighs (Ways) in 90 Days." It began last year and will continue again this year.

Although losing weight is one important component to this program, its emphasis is on a healthy lifestyle: nutrition, exercise, and controlling weight. Last year's participants included teachers, teacher aides, librarians and security staff. This year we hope to add the PSI Healthy Heroes Program to also include the students.

Since everyone in schools are so busy, the Healthy Weighs program has no required meetings. Staff pay \$5 to join and come in once a week to the clinic to step on the scale. But it's more than a simple weigh-in. Our staff distributes loads of colorful flyers from Dr. Oz and others addressing many health-related concerns including exercise

routines and new recipes. The program works to change the traditional culture while being fun and effective.

Southside Academy's Principal, Stephanie Groscoast, is highly supportive of this new idea.

The winners earn money and recognition! Everyone wins, however, since all will have changed their ways.

The very busy Health Clinic fosters student involvement through national calendar events and other activities. For example, about half the student body wore red shirts for National Wear Red Day in February, donating \$185 to the American Heart Association. In March, National Nutrition Month will be celebrated. In October, students will wear pink one day for Breast Cancer Month. These are just some of the exciting and innovative programs happening at Southside Academy!

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# An outcast becomes a rainmaker

PSI's Lisa Greene, RN, (at right) is a busy woman! Working at Roxbury Elementary School in Solon as District Nurse, she oversees a large health team in Solon City Schools.



Matt, one of the non-medical people on the trip, served as photographer. The clinic was set up in the village of Kabingo, with the news quickly spreading through word-of-mouth. Kabingo is a place with mud houses, very little schooling for children, rampant diseases and health problems, and no running water or electricity. Free medical help was a gift from the skies, with hundreds of people walking all day and then patiently waiting in long lines for their turn.

A typical day would see her as a resource for people who have concerns about the health of students. "If it means going to a school, I go. I check on schools routinely, working in conjunction with the District Officials and the principals of seven schools." Lisa is at the center of a wheel whose spokes include students, teachers, staff, parents, administrators and community leaders.

During the summer of 2010, Lisa and husband Matt were part of a group of 23 that visited Uganda for 2 ½ weeks to establish a free rudimentary health clinic.

"One day my eyes locked on Mackline, a 13-year-old girl whose face had been mauled by a wild boar when she was eleven months old. Her first question to me was: 'Could you help me?'"

Lisa did. After over a year, a plan was patched through to get Mackline and an interpreter named Maria passports, visas, and arrangements for four surgeries at Shriners' Hospital in Cincinnati.



In the ensuing year, Mackline and Maria lived at the Greene household in Hudson, with Mackline attending East Woods Elementary School as a Special Education student. While growing six inches and gaining 40 pounds, Mackline learned the basics we take for granted: colors, the alphabet, how to read, numbers, even watching television. The Hudson community was fantastic, constantly donating clothes and holiday costumes, with numerous invitations for sleepovers, playdates, birthday parties and holiday celebrations. One family agreed to sponsor Mackline in a private boarding school in Uganda for ten years!

Since returning to Uganda, a new wing has been added to Mackline's private elementary school through charitable donations. "I grew to love this little girl who had so much to offer and give to this world," Lisa adds. "The little outcast became a rainmaker here in Hudson and then in Uganda."

When fully grown, Mackline can return for further surgery at Shriners' Hospital, again at no cost.

These are the kind of wonderful people that both Solon City Schools and PSI hires. We are proud to be associated with Lisa and the Solon Schools.



*Pictured above, from left to right: Mackline, Lisa and Marie*

## Notes from PSI's Fall Health Training Meeting

In November PSI hosted its 36th Annual Fall Meeting Training program. We were very pleased with the large attendance of our health staff at this important meeting. All participants enjoyed a hot breakfast and time to network with colleagues.

In addition to standard 'housekeeping' tasks such as the distribution of PSI clinic jackets, name tags, and door prizes, time was spent on new and critical health care information.

Expert speakers addressed the following health issues:

- **PSI's Healthy Choices - Be a Healthy Hero** which is a complimentary wellness program available to all schools served by PSI Health Services.
- **Communication Skills for Health Staff.** PSI's own Karen McKelvey, Coordinator of Prevention and Intervention Services and PSI's own Marsha Michaels, Clinical Counselor, provided an animated and important program on how to communicate with difficult parents about sensitive health issues.



*PSI Health staff listen to information on Food Allergy Focus at the the PSI Fall Meeting*

- **Food Allergies at School - What to do and NOT do!** was another excellent presentation by Teresa Newlands from Food Allegry Focus. This was an excellent and eye opening presentation about peanut and other food allergies. Ms. Newlands specifically and intensively described the DOs and DON'Ts of food allergies as well as the dire consequences of not paying careful attention to this vital and growing problem. This program will help the schools we serve keep students healthy AND avoid the tragedy and costs of unnecessary mistakes that are commonly made in schools.

## KNOW WHERE THE KEYS ARE!!

Several exceedingly tragic deaths and very expensive law suits have been filed recently in US courts against school districts when students locked themselves in offices or bathrooms (e.g. the bathroom in the clinic) and committed suicide behind those locked doors. **By the time school officials found the key to unlock the locked door, the students were already deceased! It sounds commonsensical, but keys are often not available affording unsupervised area for such horrible events. Be mindful of this possibility and be sure to know where important keys are kept for immediate use. Seconds matter in these rare but horrific situations.**

## Healthy Weighs

(Continued from page 1)

The success of "Change Your Weighs (Ways) in 90 Days" has spurred plans to run it again. Ms. Conrad says the idea can be applied to all schools, churches and most workplace environments. "This is about getting people to become more health conscious. It's not just a diet, which usually doesn't work and is a chore at best." Kathy adds, "It's something you can do the rest of your life!"

## PSI INTRODUCES NEW **Special Needs Division!**

PSI is pleased to announce that our newest department of **Special Needs Health Services** offers schools the staffing resources of our pediatric 1:1 health program for students with specialized nursing needs. In addition to our experienced staff, the coordinator of this program, Paula Harris, RN, provides not just the frequent supervision that is necessary, but also is available to help train your school staff to accommodate these students.

**This additional complimentary training of your school staff, upon request, is just one of the many ways we provide the necessary help and support to our partner schools as they work with these special needs students. This training is available to all schools who use PSI for their Special Needs Services and staffing.**

PSI customizes Health Services to meet the needs of your students.

# Promoting School Health- Challenges and Opportunities

Manuella Crawley • PSI Wellness Consultant

It is neither feasible nor realistic to think that schools can address and solve all health issues afflicting today's youth. Parents, the community, the health care system, legislators, the media and students themselves all have a role to play. However, daily more than 50 million students spend a significant portion of their day in schools. This simple fact makes the role of schools key in addressing the health issues of youth.

The health of students and communities has gained much public attention in the last few decades due to the rapid increase in chronic ailments in our society such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and obesity. In order to direct efforts in combating these issues, "Healthy People 2020" - a Governmental Health Initiative - has set national decade-long health objectives for the nation. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the overarching goals of the initiative are to: (a) Attain high-quality, longer lives free of preventable disease, disability, injury, and premature death, (b) Achieve health equity, eliminate disparities, and improve the health of all groups, (c) Create social and physical

environments that promote good health for all and (d) Promote quality of life, healthy development, and healthy behaviors across all life stages.

Within these goals, numerous objectives serve as indicators of the health needs of the country's population. Many of these objectives indicate how schools can help in improving the health of school-aged children and adolescents, such as:

- Increase the proportion of the nation's public and private schools that require daily physical education for all students from the current 7.9% in 2006 to a target of 8.6% of schools by 2020;
- Increase the proportion of elementary, middle, and senior high schools that provide comprehensive school health education to prevent health problems in the following areas: unintentional injury; violence; suicide; tobacco use and addiction; alcohol or other drug use; unintended pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, and STD infection; unhealthy dietary patterns; and inadequate physical activity from 25.6% to 28.2%
- Increase the proportion of elementary, middle, and senior high schools that have health education goals or objectives that address the knowledge and skills articulated in the National

Health Education Standards (high school, middle, elementary) ([www.healthypeople.gov](http://www.healthypeople.gov)).

To achieve these goals, schools can assess the current state health of their students, identify strengths and weaknesses in the existing health policies and programs and identify areas needing further investigation and improvement.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends a coordinated school health (CSH) approach as a strategy for improving student, teacher, and staff's health. This eight-component approach to school health was introduced in 1987 by Kolbe and Allensworth and it includes a healthy school environment, comprehensive school health education, physical education and physical activity, health services, nutrition services, counseling, psychological and social services, healthy and safe school environment, health promotion for staff and family/community involvement.

PSI's Health and Wellness Programs are an exciting addition to our School Health Services. Please contact us for more information about how these services may be right for your school. These programs are individually tailored to your school's schedule, needs & priorities, calendar and budget!

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**PSI**  
2112 Case Parkway South  
Suite 10, PO Box 468  
Twinsburg OH 44087-0468  
800-841-4774

[info@psi-solutions.org](mailto:info@psi-solutions.org)  
[www.psi-solutions.org](http://www.psi-solutions.org)

PSI provides a wide variety of school health, special education, ESL, foreign language and intervention services.

Contact us for more information.



## Health Matters!