



The School Psychologist

QUEENS COLLEGE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY NEWSLETTER

Fall 2008

Newsletter

Editors

Phil Alderman

Maria Garza

Alicia Sage

2007-2008

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Alena Reisman

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Phil Alderman

Coordinator's Corner

Greetings to all. It has been a busy semester with close to 40 students in internship placements, one of our largest groups in years. As you know, our students are trained as school psychologists with an ecological perspective which recognizes that there are multiple systems that influence a child's development. No longer can we assume that a problem rests within a child, but we must consider other systems in a child's life such as the classroom, school, and community. Thus, we must take into account the impact of economic, political, and social forces on children's performance and behavior. For example, we know that underemployment, unemployment, and other economic issues are weighing heavily on families and may influence family priorities. Economic worries are related to health care, housing, nutrition, family interaction patterns, relationships with others, crime and discrimination, all of which may affect school performance. More than ever, the mental health and educational needs of children are inextricably linked within an ecological framework.

At the same time we must also recognize that we practice school psychology within an ecological context as well. We are not immune to the stressors of daily life. It is important that we take good care of ourselves in order that we may help others.

As you will see elsewhere in the newsletter, our 45th Annual School Psychology Conference will take place on Friday, Jan. 30, 2009. Once again we have a noted speaker, Dr. Mark A. Reinecke, Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, at Northwestern University Medical School. Our conference is titled "Depression in Children and Adolescents" and will include examination of biological, social, cognitive, and developmental factors that interact and place children at risk. The afternoon ses-

sion will cover assessment and treatment strategies for school-aged children and adolescents. We hope you will join us for this very exciting event.

The School Psychology Program under the leadership of Emilia Lopez has submitted a 5 year grant titled "Project Multicultural Matters" to train school psychologists in culturally responsive practices, to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education. Its purpose is to recruit, retain, and prepare school psychologists with multicultural competencies. We expect to hear in the next few months whether we have been awarded this grant. In other faculty news, Dr. Lea Theodore will become the Vice President of Professional Affairs for Division 16 of APA in January 2009; she is also an Associate Editor of the *School Psychology Quarterly*.

Recently, we have learned from John Kelly, former-president of the New York Association of School Psychologists (NYASP), that during contract negotiations the Commack School District has accepted a proposal that provides an additional stipend for nationally certified school psychologists (NCSP) in their school district. The school psychologists in Commack used resources available on the NASP website, (<http://www.nasponline.org/certification/index.aspx>), to prepare their proposal. John goes on to say that while school districts in New York recognize nationally certified teachers with a stipend, there are very few districts that give the same recognition to school psychologists. This might be something to explore in your own school districts.

John has also disseminated 2 other related memoranda applicable to school psychologists who are NYSUT (New York State United Teachers) members. Local unions have

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the opportunity to sponsor resolutions for submission to the Representative Assembly (this year by Jan. 5, 2009). One is for "Support for Recognition of Nationally Certified School Psychologists," and the other is titled "Support for Starting Salary of Professional Employees Reflecting Graduate Credits Required to Achieve Degree." Further information can be obtained by contacting NYASP or John Kelly directly (see page 3).

Also, there is some more recent information on the Medicaid reimbursement situation discussed in earlier columns. This has also come from NYASP Legislative Chair John Kelly. In February 2007 the Federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) changed the reimbursement procedures for school districts by indicating that the school provider must be "credentialed to provide the same service outside of the school." In NY this meant that the school district would not be eligible for reimbursement if non-doctoral or non-licensed school psychologists provided the service. Currently, Dr. Rebecca H. Cort, Deputy Commissioner at the NY State Education Dept-VESID, has clarified the directive about Medicaid claiming. This refers to whether school districts can send claims to Medicaid. She indicates that NYS has suggested that school districts continue to send the documentation for the school certified providers, so if the guidelines change in the future, these records would be available for districts to make claims. "This statement recognizes that school certified providers are able to continue to provide services." The issue is NOT whether you can provide services, but rather whether the district will be reimbursed. I will keep you posted on this matter.

Thank you to all of our faculty, college and field supervisors for their excellent mentoring of our students. And thanks, of course, to Sally and Chen for keeping our program office humming.

See you at the conference.
Marian Fish

A New Identity

The Queens College School Psychology Newsletter has been a source of valuable information for many years, both to the students in the program and to alumni. Starting with the Fall 2008 issue, the newsletter will now be officially known as *The School Psychologist*. The editors and faculty wished to attach a strong identity to the newsletter, and it is felt that *The School Psychologist* is an all-encompassing title fully expressing the editorial content and articles presented within.

A Technological Advance

The editors of the newsletter are proud to announce that *The School Psychologist* is now available online. The web address to the newsletter is: <http://qcpages.qc.edu/ECP/SCHPSYCH/schpsychnewsletter.html>. A link can also be found on the Queens College School Psychology webpage.

This would not have been possible without the support of Dr. Fish and the efforts of Dr. Matthew Day.

The current issue, along with the two previous issues, are currently available online, and all future issues will be added as they are published. In this way, the editors wish to create an archive of all future issues of *The School Psychologist*. With its strong editorial content, and article reviews, the online availability of the newsletter will provide a valuable resource for all current and future school psychologists.

Help Us Go Green

We are investigating the possibility of delivering *The School Psychologist* electronically, via email. This would help save resources, not the least of which is paper. Are you interested? If so, please send an email to: qcpsychclub@gmail.com. Please include your full name and address, along with your email address. If there is enough interest, you will receive subsequent issues of *The School Psychologist* via email.

Support for Recognition of Nationally Certified School Psychologists and Starting Salaries Reflecting Graduate Credits for a Specialist's Degree

In New York State and elsewhere, one needs a minimum of 60 graduate level credits to become a certified school psychologist. This is almost twice the number of credits other school based professions, such as teachers, are required to take in the completion of their master's degree. Nevertheless, many school districts will only recognize the broad terminology of "master's" in the determination of starting salaries for school psychologists. The following two resolutions are encouraging districts to recognize the sub-doctoral specialist degree, along with the National Certification program through NASP, to set starting pay and salaries commensurate to the level of education obtained. This is a similar manner in which teachers are currently recognized. Both resolutions will hopefully will be voted upon and accepted at the next Representative Assembly of New York State United Teachers (NYSUT).

Phil Alderman

Support for Recognition of Nationally Certified School Psychologists

Whereas National Board Certification of a professional represents the attainment of credentials that exceed standard credentialing levels; and

Whereas National Board Certification helps to spread best practices to the classrooms and schools; and

Whereas NYSUT encourages members to embrace the challenge of higher credentials whenever they are available in their field; and

Whereas, school psychologists can achieve national certification through a rigorous set of requirements comparable to other nationally certified professionals, including teachers; and

Whereas NYSUT supports grant programs and subsidies to assist candidates in achieving national certifications; and

Whereas NYSUT supports the concept of state-wide stipends to recognize teachers who achieve national certification; therefore be it

Resolved that NYSUT supports recognition of nationally certified school psychologists through comparable stipends offered to nationally certified teachers.

Support for Starting Salary of Professional Employees Reflecting Graduate Credits Required to Achieve Degree

Whereas NYSUT supports commensurate compensation for employees based upon level of training and experience; and

Whereas based upon "uniform salary" laws, school districts establish salary schedules on an incremental level reflecting an employees' level of training and experience; and

Whereas salary increments generally reflect educational degrees attained and years of experience in education; and

Whereas the granting of an educational degree does not reflect the number of credits required to attain the degree; and

Whereas the number of credits required to attain a Masters Degree in certain professions far exceeds the number of credits required in other professions; and

Whereas these additional credits reflect a higher level of training; and

Whereas current salary schedules do not account for differential levels of training among professions who are granted a Masters Degree; therefore be it

Resolved that NYSUT supports commensurate starting salaries that reflect actual level of training of the professional, rather than recognition of the generic title of the degree attained.

Article Reviews

Pediatric Sleep Disorders: Validation of the Sleep Disorders Inventory for Students

Luginbuehl, M., Bradley-Klug, K.L., Ferron, J., McDowell Anderson, W., & Benbadis, S. R. (2008). Pediatric sleep disorders: Validation of the sleep disorders inventory for students. *School Psychology Review*, 37, 409-431.

Summary of Content

This article presented the results of a study on the development of the Sleep Disorders Inventory for Students (SDIS), which is a screening instrument designed for school psychologists to see if problems related to sleep are affecting a student's educational performance. The study reported that 20%-25% of students develop a sleep disorder during their childhood or adolescence, which if untreated, negatively affects cognitive, academic and behavioral performance. The five primary sleep disorders that affect children's cognition, academic performance, behavioral-emotional regulation, health and safety are obstructive sleep apnea syndrome (OSAS), narcolepsy (NARC), periodic limb movement disorder (PLMD), restless legs syndrome (RLS) and delayed sleep phase syndrome (DSPS). After briefly reviewing these disorders, the study described how there is a need for a nationally available screening instrument that all professionals working with children and adolescents can use to screen and identify these disorders.

The SDIS is a parent-report screening inventory for children ages 2-18, and items are based on characteristics of the five sleep disorders. The sample of the study included 595 children of diverse demographics and used five sampling groups including a retrospective sample of students who had been referred to an overnight sleep clinic, a prospective sleep clinic sample, a sample of those referred to school psychologists, a sample of parents working in the school district and students referred for learning and behavioral concerns or gifted assessment to private practices. The students' parents or guardians filled out the SDIS and the returned forms were assessed for reliability and validity compared to the sleep study samples.

The results indicated that the SDIS was accurate in predicting if a child had a significant sleep disorder that required a comprehensive sleep evaluation. Due to a few common characteristics, the SDIS was only moderately accurate in predicting the exact type of disorder, although it did provide a sleep specialist with information needed to develop hypotheses about the disorder to be ruled out or further pursued. Some other findings were that a sleep screening instrument needs to have two separate inventories, one for children 2-10 and one for those 11-18 and that internal consistency, test-retest and predictive reliability were appropriate, indicating that the SDIS has good reliability and validity.

Implications for School Psychology

The article provided information regarding a screening instrument for sleep disorders which can help determine when it is necessary to refer a child to a pediatrician or sleep specialist and when they can work with the parents and student on home interventions. Many times, students with sleep disorders are inaccurately or prematurely identified as having a learning disability, an emotional-behavioral disturbance, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or other mental health problem. By making school psychologists aware of this screening instrument, it will hopefully prevent such errors from occurring in the future and enable students to get the help they need.

Maria Aranzazu Irigoyen

A Meta-Analytic Examination of the Correlates of the Three Dimensions of Job Burnout

Lee, R.T., & Ashforth, B.E. (1996). A meta-analytic examination of the correlates of three dimensions of job burnout. *Journal of Applied Psychology*(2), 123-133.

Summary of Content

This article gave rare empirical insight into what the correlational factors are associated with employment burnout. Through meta-analysis they were able to identify key correlates associated with burnout, but also to determine which of those factors more heavily influences feelings of being burned out in a given profession. This is a concern that is critical in the maintenance of many high impact or stressful professions. Satisfaction with

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employment has implications not only at the subjective level, but can also have implications on the direction of the field, the likelihood of retaining trained professionals and how favorably the field is perceived by other individuals who would potentially be consumers of that profession in the future.

The study outlined 3 major dimensions of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization (felt distance from others), and feelings of diminished personal accomplishment. They also stated that one possible conservation theory implies that burnout occurs when valuable and relevant resources are lost or inadequately meet job demands or the resources available fall short of expected returns. Primary demands were described as including role ambiguity, role conflict, stressful events, heavy workload, and job pressure. Primary resources included general social support; job improvement opportunities, like increased control, participation in decision-making and independence; and lastly, reinforcement or compensation for work. Additionally, associated with these correlates are the behavioral coping responses to them including, job turnover and erosion of job commitment, involvement, and satisfaction.

Overall, the study found that while both job demands and the presence or lack of resources were correlated with emotional fatigue, the level of job demands were the most strongly related to feelings of emotional exhaustion. The lack of effective coping responses were also cited as possible reinforcers for feelings of hopelessness and futility. Emotional exhaustion and depersonalization were strongly associated with intentions to leave the job and one's level of commitment to the job, while coping was associated with feelings of personal accomplishment.

Implications for School Psychology

The implications of this meta-analysis on the field of school psychology are incredibly relevant to the maintenance of professional satisfaction and retention in the field. The demands placed on school psychologists as they juggle the different aspects they have been trained in and their often-central role in the overall mental and behavioral health of the school are a large role to fill. In many situations, the lack of resources including time and work-load, can contribute substantially to feelings of burnout and hopelessness. With populations and special needs soaring, often school psychologists are pushed to their limits, which can have not only implications on their mental health but also on the quality and efficacy of their work, especially when they are not provided with the resources or social support to be able to work most effectively in their school settings.

Simira Freeman

Homophobic Teasing, Psychological Outcomes, and Sexual Orientation Among High School Students: What Influence Do Parents and Schools Have?

Espelage, D.L., Aragon, S.R., Birkett, M., & Koenig, B.W. (2008). Homophobic teasing, psychological outcomes, and sexual orientation among high school students: What influence do parents and schools have? *School Psychology Review*, 37, 202-216.

Summary of Content

This study examined the buffering influences of positive parental relations and positive school climate on mental health outcomes for high school students who are questioning their sexual orientation. Prior to this study, the effects of social support systems on students who are questioning their sexual orientation had not been examined. The responses from surveys filled out by 13,921 high school students from 18 different high schools in a Midwestern county were analyzed. The high school students self-reported victimization, substance use, sexual behavior, and quality of relationships with parents, peers, and schools across the 9th- 12th grade.

Four hypotheses were supported in this study. First, sexual minority youth were more likely to report high levels of depression-suicide feelings and alcohol-marijuana use. Second, students who were questioning their sexual orientation reported more teasing, greater drug use, and more feelings of depression and suicide than either heterosexual or identified lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB) students. Third, sexually questioning students who experienced homophobic teasing were also more likely than LGB students to use drugs-alcohol and rate their school climate as negative. Finally, positive school climate and parental support protected LGB and questioning students against depression and drug use. Although many hypotheses received support, evidence

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did not support that LGB questioning, and heterosexual students differ in their reports of positive school climate or parental communication. This may be due to the lack of correlation between students' sexual orientation and the level of support they receive from their environment. It may be more helpful to consider the environment as influencing the outcomes associated with sexual orientation.

Implications for School Psychology

The findings of this study are particularly informative for school psychologists. They are in a position to educate teachers, administrators, and parents about the research which explores the sexual orientation of students and the effect of unsupportive educational and family climates. School psychologists can be involved in improving the social and emotional climate in their own schools. This can be accomplished by influencing school policies and developing outreach programs for students. Programs addressing bullying and school violence would be beneficial for students and the school environment.

Tracy Anderer

Evidence-Based Interventions Using Home-School Collaboration

Cox, D. D. (2005). Evidence-based interventions using home-school collaboration. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 20(4), 473-497.

Summary of Content

This article provides a comprehensive review and evaluation of 18 empirical studies of home-school collaboration interventions. Home-school collaboration is used in this article to refer to the relationship between students' parents and school educators where both parties work together to enhance student academic achievement and social development. The author distinguishes home-school collaboration from parent involvement, which is characterized by the sharing of information between schools and parents, in that home-school collaboration is more of a partnership between parents and school personnel concerning a child's education; they work collaboratively toward achieving a common goal. The article included studies that investigated this collaborative relationship in terms of intervention and prevention programs. Most of the areas that were targeted for change through home-school collaboration were academic achievement and classroom/school behavior. More specifically, home-school collaboration programs were implemented with students who were at risk for low academic achievement, delays in reading and math, as well as those displaying social difficulties or misconduct.

The meta-analysis of the studies included in this article showed that the home-school collaboration interventions that incorporated communication between the home (parents) and the school (teachers) had the strongest effect-size. These interventions often included such methods as sending daily report cards or notes home from school. Interventions of this nature most commonly employed a contingent reinforcement system that was applied at home by the parents and was dependent upon the school's report of the student's behavior. However, school-wide interventions as well as those involving multiple components were determined to have the smallest effect size. The results of the meta-analysis provided conclusive support that home-school collaboration interventions are effective when implemented to elicit a change in academic performance and school related behaviors. To name a few, home-school interventions were found to be effective in targeting academic achievement, quality of student school/home work, and on/off task behaviors. This study found that a critical component of the success of home-school interventions was the establishment of a co-equal relationship in which both parties participated in implementation and had a bi-directional sharing of information.

Implications for School Psychology

This article has great relevance to the field and practice of school psychology. A major responsibility of a school psychologist is to utilize best practices and implement effective interventions for the individuals he/she serves. The article provides evidence that home-school collaborative interventions are effective in addressing a variety of academic and behavioral problems that school psychologists are confronted with from day to day. One of the implications of these findings is that school psychologists should attempt to employ home-school collaborative techniques when designing and implementing interventions. They should encourage and promote the use of such approaches to intervention by actively bringing the home and school together for the benefit of the student. This may require flexibility on behalf of the school psychologist in terms of accommodating the schedules of working parents who are sought out for collaboration. Implementing home-school interventions may also require the school psychologist to act as a mediator or guide between the parents of a student and his/her teacher, so as to foster the establishment of a "co-equal" collaborative, working relationship, which is essential to its success.

Cassi Gutterman

Multicultural Matters

Join the NASP Interest Group in Bilingual School Psychology

By Emilia C. Lopez

As I write this article I am thinking about the many graduate students who have completed the bilingual and multicultural specializations in our program within the past 19 years. I get to see many of you at the annual conference and we still get to have lively discussions about the many issues you confront in the field. This year we will graduate a total of 13 graduate students who are completing their bilingual and multicultural specializations. The bilingual group includes graduate students who are proficient in Spanish, Korean, Urdu, and Russian. When I meet with our graduate students in the bilingual and multicultural specializations we often end up talking about the challenges of delivering psychological services to linguistically and culturally diverse children and their families.

The number of children in the country who reside in homes where languages other than English are spoken continues to grow every year. Children and youth who speak languages other than English or are English language learners (ELLs) often come to the attention of school psychologists because parents, teachers and other school personnel seek support within the contexts of assessment, intervention, and consultation services. School psychologists who work with bilingual and English language learners are confronted daily with challenging questions related to these students' language and academic needs.

The many practice and training questions we face as bilingual school psychologists and our wish to have a forum to communicate about these issues has led to the creation of a NASP bilingual interest group. A preliminary interest group meeting was held in February 7th, 2008 at the New Orleans NASP national convention. Approximately 90 bilingual professionals came to that meeting, including practitioners, graduate students and trainers. The group enthusiastically agreed that a bilingual interest group would provide bilingual professionals with a forum to communicate about bilingual issues and to explore challenging topics in the field. During this preliminary meeting, a number of suggestions were shared as to how the interest group can collaborate to address bilingual issues in the field of school psychology. Among the suggestions provided were providing mentoring opportunities, developing training materials, creating opportunities for bilingual professionals to network, disseminating professional materials and resources, offering workshops and other training experiences, developing and influencing public policy around bilingual issues, and articulating training requirements for bilingual school psychologists.

The purposes of the interest group are to (a) provide a forum for bilingual school psychologists to connect and share information, and (b) coordinate a variety of activities that will enhance bilingual school-based psychological services. The bilingual interest group has a listserv that has already generated helpful discussions in a variety of areas. An online community is also available that will serve the purposes of posting resources and hosting discussion groups in the near future. To join the listserv and obtain information about the online community, please visit http://www.nasponline.org/about_nasp/ig_bilingual.aspx

The first official meeting for the bilingual interest group will be held at the NASP national convention in Boston on Wednesday, February 25th, 2009 from 8 – 9:50am. The interest group will hold a general meeting and will also provide members with opportunities to discuss a number of current topics while networking with colleagues who are interested in bilingual and multicultural issues. Please join the listserv and hope to see you in Boston!

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY CLUB NEWS



Walk Now for Autism

Participants from the October 5, 2008 Autism Walk at Jones Beach State Park in Wantagh, Long Island: from left to right: Dina Benzaquen, Alena Reisman, Tina Santaniello, Jessica Johnston, and Greg Santise.



Suicide Prevention Education Awareness Presentation

Fellow classmates Gregory Santise and Robyn Haertel gave a successful presentation on suicide prevention earlier this semester. The presentation was based primarily on the Suicide Prevention Education Awareness Kit (SPEAK) which is an information kit available for the public in order to bring awareness to suicide. Included in the night's discussion were risk factors and warning signs, local and statewide resources, and related information about how to seek help and how to help others. Suicide is the third leading cause of death among young people aged 15-24. To learn more please visit: <http://www.omh.state.ny.us/omhweb/speak/>

Maria Garza

A Message From Your Co-Presidents

We have had a wonderful semester, filled with activities promoting the profession of School Psychology. In late September, we welcomed back students with a Meet & Greet Event at Applebee's. With about 30 students, this proved to be a great time for 1st, 2nd, 3rd year, as well as doctoral students to socialize with old friends, while making new ones. On October 5th, club members walked along with 25,000 people at the 2008 Long Island Walk Now for Autism at Jones Beach. As a club, we raised about \$1,000 to help people with Autism Spectrum Disorders. In mid-November, during School Psychology Awareness Week, we were fortunate enough to have two of our very own students, Robyn Haertel and Greg Santise share what they had learned at a New York Association of School Psychologist (NYASP) Conference on Suicide Prevention. The presentation entitled, SPEAK III: Suicide Prevention Education Awareness Workshop: Helping to Preserve Our Future, provided participants with warning signs and testimonials of those who have lost friends and family members to suicide. We want to thank all our club officers who made these events possible, as well as those who attended. We look forward to working with everyone next semester!

Your co-presidents, Alena Reisman & Dina Benzaquen

Awards

Congratulations to **Marie Monterroso**, who has been awarded the prestigious Kennedy Fellows Scholarship for 2008/2009. The Kennedy Fellows Scholarship and Career Mentoring Program was established in 1989 by John F. Kennedy, Jr. to support higher education and career advancement for individuals working in the disability field.

Due to a printing anomaly in the Spring 2008 edition, the following award was inadvertently truncated:

Nassau County Psychological Association (Psychological Services Institute) Meritorious Student Award: Award given to a first year student on the basis of superior scholastic record, integrity, and service to the program or the community. **Recipient: Yulisa Rodriguez**

Announcements

Congratulations to Kimberly Pirro and her husband Gary on the birth of their fourth baby, Gavin Olias, on April 21, 2008.

Congratulations to John and Eileen (Morris) Donovan on the birth of their daughter Eva Claire, born July 23, 2008.

Congratulations to Rachel (Maman) and Chris Tselebis on the birth of their twin girls, Mia and Lia, born October 28, 2008.

Congratulations to Arielle Tannenholz on her engagement to Antonio Fernandez on August 29, 2008. They will be married August 21, 2009 at the Chelsea Pier Light House.

Congratulations to Kim Fogo on her engagement to Ian Toussaint on September 29, 2008. The wedding will take place late September, 2009.

Congratulations to Michelle Campea on her engagement to Steven Smith. They will be married on April 25, 2009 in Baltimore, Maryland.

2009 NASP National Convention

The NASP National Convention will be take place February 24 - 28, 2009 in Boston, Massachusetts. Several hotels will host the convention, with events ranging from the keynote address, special and featured sessions, and over 900 presentations. There are also events designed specifically for school psychology students. In addition, Boston is a wonderful, historic city, with great attractions and museums. Information is available on the NASP website: www.nasponline.org

Phil Alderman, NASP Student Leader

A Look Ahead Toward the Spring 2009 Newsletter

Coordinator's Corner

Multicultural/Bilingual topics

QC school psychology students advocate for their profession with local legislators

Report on the 2009 NASP Convention in Boston

Article submissions are always encouraged and appreciated.

Your editors,

Alicia, Maria, and Phil

Queens College, CUNY
Division of Education
Graduate Program in School Psychology
65-30 Kissena Boulevard
Flushing, New York 11367



2009 ANNUAL SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY CONFERENCE

45th Annual School Psychology Conference

Friday, January 30, 2009

Student Union Building

Topic: **Depression in Children and Adolescents**

An examination of factors that place children at risk along with assessment and treatment

Speaker: **Dr. Mark A. Reinecke**

Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Northwestern University Medical School

For Further Information Contact:

Dr. Marian C. Fish or Mrs. Sally Steinberg

718-997-5230

Graduate Program in School Psychology

Queens College, CUNY

Flushing, New York 11367-1597