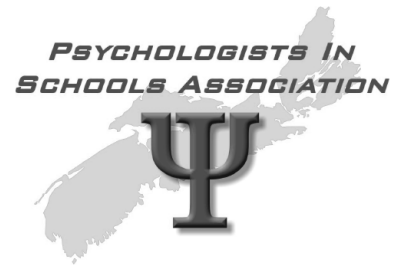


PSYCHOLOGISTS IN SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

PISA NEWSLETTER

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President's Message

This year, PISA had another very successful October conference. It was great to see so many of you at the conference. In fact, we had a record-breaking number of participants with 148 individuals attending. We were very fortunate to have two local presenters, Dr. Jennifer Mullane and Dr. Susan Jerrot, speaking about a topic that is extremely relevant to work within the education system as psychologists and teachers, namely, students with behavioural challenges. Conference day also allows us to reconnect with friends/colleagues. I, as many of you, always look forward to catching up with friends who are now working across the province.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank each member of the PISA executive and to congratulate each member for doing a great job this past year. The executive consists of Margie Nelson, Matthew MacLeod, Nadine Mahon, Carol Arthurs, and Daniel Stephenson. They have all taken time from their personal lives to put on a great conference. Please don't hesitate to show your appreciation if you happen to meet them in your travels.

PISA would like to send a thank you to all the regional representatives in the province. Your work in communicating between us and the members in your area is extremely important. Please continue to voice the ideas and concerns in your area. We are always looking for feedback on topics for professional development that are relevant and useful to our work.

October conference 2011 will mark the end of terms for all positions of the PISA executive (i.e., president, vice-president/conference chair, treasurer, secretary, and newsletter editor). We are currently seeking individuals who would like to consider taking one of these positions. Currently, the length of a term for each position is two years and a position may be held for two consecutive terms if desired. Also note that, at the end of the two year term, the president automatically moves into the past-president position, which means it is a four year commitment. Having new individuals with new/different ideas will benefit the association and keep it moving forward. Please contact us if you would like to receive more information on any position you may be interested in undertaking. We will be posting further information on our website.

In addition to having new members on the executive, we would be more than happy to have people to sit on the conference committee to help generate ideas for possible topics and to plan the logistics of the conference day.

This year, we are holding another draw for a professional development grant worth \$500. Please see the section in the newsletter with further details on how you can enter your name for this prize. Also, we are pleased to announce that we will be offering two bursaries worth \$499 each to a Mount Saint Vincent University student in the School Psychology program. Furthermore, we will be sponsoring two children to attend the Autism Summer Day Camp (\$400 per child).

To close, we'd like to thank all our members and we hope to continue to hear from you about how we can continue to provide quality professional development to you.

Respectfully,
Marc-Robert d'Entremont

Seeking New Executive Members

We will be seeking new PISA Executive Members in October 2011. Positions on the executive are renewed every two years and we have several positions which will require new people. PISA members interested in becoming involved please ask an executive member and we will be happy to provide additional information.



Professional Development Draw

PISA is excited to again offer a special draw for all interested PISA members. Win the registration fees - up to \$500 - to the conference of your choice! **Choose any conference before May 15, 2011 and PISA could be paying your registration fees!**

If you are interested in entering this draw, please send an email to Carol Arthurs (carthurs@nstu.ca). **ONLY** those PISA members who express their interest will be entered in the draw.

The recipient of the draw will be required to pay for the conference fee and will be reimbursed with submission of their receipt for conference fees up to a maximum of \$500.

Messages from the Regional Representatives

Tri-County Regional School Board

This has been an exciting beginning to the school year here in Tri-County and things are as busy as usual. We welcomed new staff members Lindsay Leighton and Ashley Boutilier to our staff. Lindsay began with us in June and Ashley joined us in September. Both are recent graduates of the Mount and, with Lindsay completing her internship in Halifax and Ashley completing her internship in the Annapolis Valley. Natasha Yorke-Philip will be returning from maternity leave in the Spring. We have been busy with assessments, behaviour consultation and counselling and are happy to again be offering a range of services to our schools.

After attending the October session about LD and ADHD diagnosis we have had many interesting discussions. We found the time spent with psychologists from other school boards informative. Hearing the perspectives and roles of others is always appreciated and provides ideas on how to better our

own practices. As well, several people went to the WIAT-III workshop in Halifax and they brought back interesting information. We are looking forward to seeing the revisions and in putting the new version to the 'test'.

—*Carol Arthurs*

Annapolis Valley Regional School Board (AVRSB)

We've been keeping busy amid a lot of changes in the AVRSB this fall. Beth Robinson has taken a leave to teach in the counseling program at Acadia. We miss her, but she is really enjoying the opportunity to teach and pursue areas of research interest – two big passions in her professional life. Robin McGee is also on leave this year taking care of a health issue. We miss her too, but she keeps in touch on a very regular basis. She is taking good care of herself, staying incredibly positive, and is planning to be back to work next year. It's hard to keep a good psychologist down – she has already been in for Administration

and Student Services meetings and is sharing book titles, articles and ideas for PD as she comes across anything of relevance/interest – she really is unstoppable! To keep things exciting, we have also welcomed two new psychologists to our board. Katherine Terauds completed a very successful internship with Beth last year and is now working the Annapolis County school circuit in her absence. The other new member of our psych team is Dr. Birdie Bezanson. She is originally from the Berwick area and has proven that you can indeed come home again! Birdie comes to us from the Wood Street Centre in Truro and is the psychologist for our Day Services for Youth and Experiential High School programs. She brings a wealth of knowledge and experience that is being put to good use! Stephanie, Krista, Natasha and I have been taking on some of Robin's cases, doing inservicing and committee work as needs arise and generally trying to hold the status quo in our own schools. It has been pretty busy so I don't think any of us have had much time for our own PD. Birdie is planning to attend NASP

in February so we will all live vicariously through her! I know that everyone has been doing their own professional readings on topics of interest, but I wasn't quick enough to get any suggestions to share – next time!!

—*Margie Nelson*

Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB)

Hello again everyone! With the new school year well underway things are in full swing for all of us psychologists in HRSB. It's hard to believe that some of us are already on the countdown to the Holiday break!

In addition to the regular start-of-year ramp up, we at HRSB have been busy taking in a great deal of professional development over the past couple of months. We have been fortunate enough to attend presentations on Depression and Anxiety (Maritime Psychiatry), the CHOICES program, LD/ADHD Assessment and Diagnosis, Executive Functioning, Disruptive Behavior Disorders, and an Introduction

to the WIAT-II. For more information on future PD opportunities, check out:

www.pearsonassess.ca/haiweb/cultures/enca/events/webinars.htm

www.pearsonassess.ca/haiweb/cultures/en-ca/events/workshops.htm

www.apns.ca

A big 'thank you' goes out to Sarah Williams and Lindsay Walker, who have been instrumental in organizing and promoting PD in our Board this year.

I also thought I would draw your attention to a resource in our community aimed at teaching youth with disabilities to self-advocate. The "Speak Up Program" is a free program coordinated by the IWK for youth 13 -18 with disabilities and/or brain injuries. Goals of the program include teaching them to speak assertively, deal with bullying, learn negotiating and problem solving skills and more. Contact kim.clarke@iwk.nshealth.ca for more information.

As has been the trend in the past couple of years, we at HRSB are continuing to expand our families and doing our part to ensure there will be ample enrollment in our schools in a few years time. We continue to be quite a prolific bunch! We would like to extend big congratulations to all of the Mommies who

have had (or will have) babies this school year.

Happy Holidays to you and yours and wishing you peace and joy in the New Year!

—*Stacey Young-Bragg*

South Shore Regional School Board PISA Update —Fall 2010

Our four veteran psychologists Janine Brennan, Shannon Hartlen, Kelly Humphries, and Beth MacInnis returned for another year with the South Shore Regional School Board. With renewed energy from our summer break, we developed a number of initiatives that we will pursue over the course of the year.

In July, Shannon and Beth attended a three day training workshop with Dr. Ross Greene in Portland, Maine. One of our Guidance colleagues, Mike Worthylake also attended. Over the three days we were exposed to the nuts and bolts of collaborative problem solving.

Lectures, role playing, and video were used to keep us focused and engaged. We all agreed that the three day session was excellent, and well worth the 15 hour drive to Maine!!! Dr. Greene has a new website www.livesinthebalance.org which offers a wealth of information about Collaborative Problem Solving.

Our Behavioural Lead Team (BLT) has been busy working to develop short presentations that will get school staff members talking about the behavioural challenges that we are facing within our schools. Our first video presentation was well received by school administrators, and all of the psychologists have been invited by various school



principals to show this video and engage staff in a discussion about challenging student behaviour.

This year the School Psychologists have committed to: expanding our knowledge of Executive Functions; incorporating measures of Executive Functions into our assessments; and developing recommendations for teachers and parents that will enhance executive functioning skills of students.

To accomplish these goals we have attended wonderfully informative workshops by Dr. George McCloskey. We also attended the NSTU SPAA conference which featured Sarah Ward, who offered many practical strategies to develop and support Executive Functioning. In December we will be getting together with our SLP and SLD colleagues who attended these sessions to develop Executive Function strategy handouts for parents and teachers.

Shannon and Janine have been busy working with South Shore Safe Communities Bullying Prevention group to organize a community event that will focus on bullying prevention. The goal is to provide middle level students, staff, and community a motivational discussion with Mr. Bill Belsey, a renowned Canadian speaker on bullying. For more information about Bill Belsey and the presentations that he provides, visit www.bullying.org.

Finally, we all agreed that the October 1st workshop organized by the Department of Education was a great experience. It was terrific to have an opportunity to meet and engage in discussion with School Psychologists from other boards. Hats off to Penny, Dan and Crystal for their efforts in making this such a worthwhile day.

Strait Regional School Board (SRSB)

We have a lot of excitement at the Strait Regional School Board! We are happy to announce that we have added 2 new members to our SRSB team! Alison Jessome-Lewis filled our 5th psychology position. A recent MSVU grad, Alison completed her internship at the Cape Breton-Victoria School Board. The second addition is Neil Morris Statchook, a healthy baby boy, born to Psychologist Stephanie Teasdale and her husband Joe Statchook on September 9th. Adding to the excitement, Alison got married on October 16th, Paula Kavanagh and Kara MacDougall passed the EPPPs in May and June, and Matthew MacLeod was re-elected to Treasurer for the PISA association. Congratulations to all!

This year we have purchased two nonverbal tests - the Universal Nonverbal Intelligence Test (UNIT) and the Wechsler Nonverbal Scale of Ability (WNV). These tests have proven to be valuable tools in the assessment of nonverbal intelligence. In terms of continuing professional development, three of our psychologists recently attended a workshop on Violence Threat Assessment.

2010 Conference Report

It seems hard to believe, but the PISA conference has come and gone for yet another year! This was our largest conference to date, with 146 participants. The location of MSVU was familiar territory for many of the school psychologists who have graduated from the MASP program over the years. This year's topic was Disruptive Behaviour Disorders: Diagnosis and Intervention. We were very pleased to be able to respond to feedback and requests from PISA members that identified disruptive behaviour as a topic of interest. We were also able to respond to the suggestion that we seek presenters from our own region. Dr. Jennifer Mullane and Dr. Susan Jerrott both support children and families through IWK Health Centre. The enthusiasm with which they responded to our request, as well as the quality of their presentations, was greatly appreciated. The breadth of their joint knowledge and experience allowed us to organize a conference that addressed the PD interests and needs of the two distinct professional groups we serve – school psychologists and classroom teachers. Dr. Mullane's session focused on the assessment and diagnosis of disruptive behaviour disorders. One of the central messages she delivered was the importance of comprehensive consultation. Needless to say, it was well received by school psychologists who recognize the value of consultation and intervention, and readily offer this well beyond the scope of psycho-educational assessments. Dr. Jerrott provided a focus for classroom teachers related to intervention strategies for the school setting. She was able to affirm the knowledge and skills of the school psychologists by validating the recommendations we provide to schools everyday. She was also able to highlight meaningful insights and strategies for teachers to add to their daily practice.

It goes without saying that the planning of the October Conference takes considerable commitment of personal time and effort by all members of the committee. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Marc d'Entremont, Nadine Mahon, Carol Arthurs and Dan Stephenson. I am particularly grateful to Matthew MacLeod who handled all the details of registration and suffered through the headaches that came with the new on-line registration process. Evaluations were received from 98 participants. 84 % rated the overall conference experience as being Above Average to Excellent – all in all, a very successful day!

Thanks for your continued support of the PISA conference. Looking ahead to October 2011...we will welcome Dr. George MacCloskey to present on the topic of Executive Function. He is a very dynamic speaker and he has an incredible wealth of knowledge – we hope you'll plan to attend!

—Margie Nelson
PISA VP/Conference Chairperson

This was an informative workshop, offering great ideas on preventive strategies and intervention. Also, one of our psychologists was certified in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST). The psychologists are currently developing presentations on behaviour for the upcoming November Regional Inservice and are looking forward to receiving training in December on Individualized Program Plans. It is a busy time of year. As the holidays approach, remember to take time for yourself and travel safely!

—Kara MacDougall

