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Overview

Vignette 1.1

Anne, a fourth-year school psychologist in the Smithville Public Schools, has been asked by the district's lead psychologist to supervise a school psychology intern, **Zoe**. She is excited yet daunted by the prospect. Anne's principal, **Bob**, appreciates the Second Step prevention and evidence-based response to intervention (RTI) programs Anne coordinates. He is apprehensive about her being responsible for an intern in addition to these other responsibilities.

Catherine, the district's lead psychologist, coordinates psychological services, but since she is in the same union bargaining unit as the other school psychologists, she is not the line supervisor who hires and evaluates them. **Dottie** is the district's special services director and hires and evaluates 53 individuals (special education teachers, reading teachers, school psychologists, counselors, social workers, speech pathologists, and nurses). Although trained as a school psychologist, Dottie has little time to provide direct supervision.

The district superintendent, **Paul**, values psychologists' reports that appease angry parents. When drawing up the district budget, he mentions the number of psychoeducational reports generated, and he believes that Catherine should assign school psychologists' time according to the number of reports they generate. He is unaware of the prevention and intervention programs that Anne coordinates.

Are psychological services in Smithville District well supervised? What is working? What isn't? How can the individuals who supervise psychological services in this district—Anne, Bob, Catherine, Dottie, and Paul—better coordinate their efforts? How can they maximize the effectiveness of school psychologists' work with children, adolescents, parents, and educators?

This book addresses these questions in considerable detail. This introductory chapter provides an overview of effective supervision of psychological services in schools and its accompanying challenges.

BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

Schools tend to be hierarchically arranged with clearly designated administrative assignments wherein every employee has a supervisor responsible for completing periodic evaluations. Often these evaluations are defined by district and union policies. In many administrative units, formal observations and evaluations are mandated several times during the first years of employment and less frequently in subsequent years. Despite these extant structures, there have been repeated calls for increased supervision of psychological services in schools (Fischetti & Crespi, 1999; Knoff, 1986; Murphy, 1981; National Association of School Psychologists [NASP], 2004). Several surveys have revealed that school psychologists receive insufficient supervision relative to both personal needs and professional standards (Chafouleas, Clonan, & Vanauken, 2002).

To understand these calls for increased supervision, it is necessary to first consider definitions and rationales for supervision of psychological services in schools, characteristics of effective supervision, and challenges in providing supervision. To implement appropriate supervision, such challenges must be addressed, needs assessed, and appropriate supports provided.

DEFINITIONS OF SUPERVISION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

Supervision of psychological services has been defined as

> an intervention provided by a more senior member of a profession to a more junior member or members of the same profession. This relationship is evaluative, extends over time, and has the simultaneous purposes of enhancing the professional functioning of the more junior person(s), monitoring the quality of professional services offered to [clients], and serving as a gatekeeper of those who are to enter the particular profession. (J. M. Bernard & Goodyear, 2004, p. 8)

Supervision of psychological services in schools has been defined as

> an interpersonal interaction between two or more individuals for the purpose of sharing knowledge, assessing professional competencies, and providing objective feedback with the terminal goals of developing new competencies, facilitating effective delivery of psychological services, and maintaining professional competencies. (D. E. McIntosh & Phelps, 2000, pp. 33–34)

The National Association of School Psychologists adds to this definition the ultimate goal of improving the "performance of all concerned—school psychologist, supervisor, students, and the entire school community" (NASP, 2004, p. 1).

Supervision is both similar to and different from teaching, consulting, and providing therapy (J. M. Bernard & Goodyear, 2004; Evangelista, 2006). Supervision is similar to teaching in that it enhances learners' knowledge and skills and evaluates the same. It differs in that teaching usually is directed toward a group and follows a set curriculum, while supervision is usually individualized and open ended. Supervision is similar to consultation in that it helps supervisees explore new ways to think about issues, identifies resources that enable supervisees to problem solve, and examines skills and needs.

It differs from consultation in that supervision partners are not equal and in that supervision can be imposed rather than requested. Finally, supervision is similar to therapy in that it encourages the individual to see patterns of behavior, set targets for change, and use interventions to bring about that change. It differs from therapy in that it is evaluative and addresses professional rather than personal issues.

To reconcile these different perspectives regarding supervision, it is necessary to discuss the primary roles of supervisors. Much of the counseling psychology literature differentiates these primary roles into *administrative supervision* and *clinical supervision*. There is evidence that an effective supervisor of school psychologists adopts the additional role of *systemic change leader* because of school psychology's highly contextual nature (Harvey, 2008). Thus we will describe a *clinical-administrative-systemic model* of supervision.

All effective supervisors give supervisees helpful comments and provide supervision in a manner that is responsive to the supervisee's developmental level. They help supervisees problem solve, reflect on practice, engage in continuous learning, maintain professional and ethical standards, uphold appropriate laws and statutes, and manage difficult situations such as due process hearings. They also promote school psychological services by, for example, preparing documents regarding the provision of services for school administrators or state and federal departments of education.

Clinical (professional) supervision involves the oversight of professional practice and requires discipline-specific training and knowledge. Clinical supervisors demonstrate and teach techniques and skills, examine student work with supervisees, help supervisees conceptualize cases, assist supervisees as they disaggregate and interpret data, ensure that supervisees practice only within areas of professional competence, assist supervisees as they design intervention strategies, help supervisees learn how to work with different types of clients and colleagues, debrief supervisees after difficult or crisis situations, provide second opinions, help supervisees address their blind spots resulting from personal experiences, and supervise the provision of a broad range of clinical services. Furthermore, clinical supervisors provide formative evaluations of supervisees, provide training and professional development opportunities, reduce feelings of professional isolation during supervision itself by supporting peer collaboration, and encourage induction into the profession via membership in professional organizations. They help supervisees become more aware of what they are doing well and what they need to change and to avoid becoming professionally stagnant. In sum, good clinical supervision plays a pivotal role in fostering professional growth, reducing stress and burnout, and strengthening practice (McMahon & Patton, 2000). Although clinical supervisors do not have a primarily evaluative role, they do evaluate whenever they indicate that supervisees are fit to be licensed or certified or to continue practicing. In contrast to administrative supervision, professional (clinical) supervision must be provided by a credentialed school psychologist or the equivalent (NASP, 2004). In the opening vignette, Anne and Catherine provide clinical supervision. As a trained psychologist, Dottie could provide clinical supervision but cannot do so due to time constraints.

Administrative supervisors provide leadership, recruit and hire, delegate assignments, conduct formal personnel evaluations, design corrective actions, and take ultimate responsibility for services provided by supervisees. They focus

> on the functioning of the service unit, including personnel issues, logistics of service delivery, and legal, contractual and organizational practices. Administrative supervision addresses the performance of job duties in accordance with conditions of employment and assigned responsibilities, and is primarily concerned with outcomes and consumer satisfaction rather than discipline-specific professional skills. (NASP, 2004, ¶ 5)

In that administrative supervision is not discipline specific, it may be provided by individuals who are not trained in school psychology. In fact, most administrative supervision of school psychologists is not provided by school psychologists. More than 75% of school psychologists are evaluated by administrators (district level administrators evaluate 59% and principals evaluate 18%) in contrast to the 18% evaluated by supervising school psychologists (Hunley et al., 2000). In the opening vignette, Bob, Dottie, and Paul provide administrative supervision.

Finally, when serving in the role of systemic change leaders, supervisors act as change agents within the district. They respond to a comprehensive view of school procedures, cultural issues, and school system concerns. In this role, supervisors promote the effective practice of their supervisees by promoting effective educational practices at the district or state level. They conduct program evaluations, not only of school psychological services but also of district-based educational programs and practices.

Within the psychology supervision literature, there is no consensus regarding whether the same individual can fulfill all of these major roles. To provide both administrative and clinical supervision, one must "walk the fine line between the demands for monitoring and the need for support" (Chan, 2004, p. 66). Supervisees might be reluctant to reveal shortcomings to their evaluators (J. M. Bernard & Goodyear, 2004), or supervisors might experience conflicts between professional standards and administrative responsibilities (Le Maistre, Boudreau, & Paré, 2007; Pennington, 1989). On the other hand, combining roles can be beneficial. In a study conducted by Tromski-Klingshirn and Davis (2007), counselors whose supervisors took both administrative and clinical responsibilities reported no difference in satisfaction compared with those who received only clinical supervision. Further, 82% of the supervisees receiving clinical and administrative supervision from the same person did not view this dual role as problematic, and 72.5% perceived it as beneficial.

Considering the supervision activities of clinical supervisors, administrative supervisors, and systemic change leaders helps explain the calls for increased supervision. Only 10% of school psychologists receive formal clinical supervision by a trained school psychologist who is able to provide adequate clinical supervision, yet 70% indicate a perceived need for clinical supervision (Chafouleas et al., 2002; Fischetti & Crespi, 1999).

Therefore, all too often school psychologists do not have sufficient clinical supervision to meet their needs for professional growth. Furthermore, school psychologists' work is frequently compromised when they do not have the support of a systemic change leader to facilitate appropriate district policies.

RATIONALES FOR SUPERVISION

Research Supporting Supervision

A growing body of research in psychology and education provides empirical support for effective supervision. Demonstrated outcomes have included skill maintenance, skill improvement and expansion, professional development, reduced stress, and enhanced accountability.

Skill Maintenance

"Experience without feedback on how to improve is unlikely to lead to high levels of functioning" (Palmer, Stough, Burdenski, & Gonzales, 2005). Expert musicians, athletes, and scientists inevitably seek, obtain, and incorporate corrective feedback regarding their

performance. For example, it is difficult to imagine a world class orchestra without a conductor, or a professional athlete without a coach and personal trainer. In fact, research has repeatedly demonstrated that many hours of practice *accompanied by corrective feedback* is more closely correlated with the development of expertise than is "talent" (Ericsson & Charness, 1994; Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Romer, 1993).

One of the reasons that supervision is needed is because beginners and experts see problems differently. Novices tend to have difficulty identifying important problem components and often respond to surface features rather than underlying concepts and principles. Expert practitioners think so differently from novice professionals that it sometimes interferes with their ability to mentor. Because proficient practitioners and experts no longer think in terms of simple solutions and rules, they can have difficulty providing "rules" and breaking down the big picture into the components novices need (Benner, 1984). Thus supervisors need to take care when they communicate their thought processes to supervisees.

Vignette 1.2

After 25 years as a practicing school psychologist, **Velda** accepted a part-time teaching position at the local university. As practicum students and interns brought in cases to discuss, she found herself making suggestions regarding possible problem areas on the basis of very little information. The students were amazed when her hunches proved correct. Velda realized that, as a highly experienced practitioner, she recognized patterns much more quickly than her students did. To avoid mystifying (and overimpressing) them, she forced herself to break down thought processes into manageable steps that the interns could follow.

Novices require frequent and direct supervision (Stoltenberg, McNeill, & Delworth, 1998). Furthermore, individuals regress to novice status whenever they are learning a new skill, and remain novices for some time. Expert performance takes about 10 years of corrected practice to develop (Ericsson & Charness, 1994).

A meta-analysis of 200 studies analyzing skill acquisition in teachers found that effect sizes averaged zero unless the teachers received ongoing supervision and coaching (Joyce & Showers, 1995). Similarly, although school counseling graduate students demonstrated skill acquisition during training, without ongoing support the skills had little transfer and were maintained for less than a year (Baker, Daniels, & Greely, 1990; Spooner & Stone, 1977). Supervision that includes direct instruction, corrective feedback, and appropriate rewards can prevent skill deterioration (Beck, 1986; Dodenhoff, 1981; Kavanagh et al., 2003). It is unreasonable to expect skills developed during graduate school training to be maintained without additional support.

Increasing recognition of this phenomenon has led to the recommendation to designate and train mentors for beginning teachers (Sprinthall, Reiman, & Thies-Sprinthall, 1993, 1996) and school counselors (Agnew, Vaught, Getz, & Fortune, 2000; Benshoff & Paisley, 1996; Borders, 1991; Crutchfield & Borders, 1997; Herlihy, Gray, & McCollum, 2002; Peace & Sprinthall, 1998). It has also led to multi-level licensure and certification by state departments of education, wherein "professional" credentials are awarded only after several years of practice. Clinical supervision has been identified as necessary for professional growth to occur (Wiley & Ray, 1986) and to prevent the deterioration of performance through lack of practice, carelessness, or inaccurate practice without correction (Franklin, Stillman, Burpeau, & Sabers, 1982).

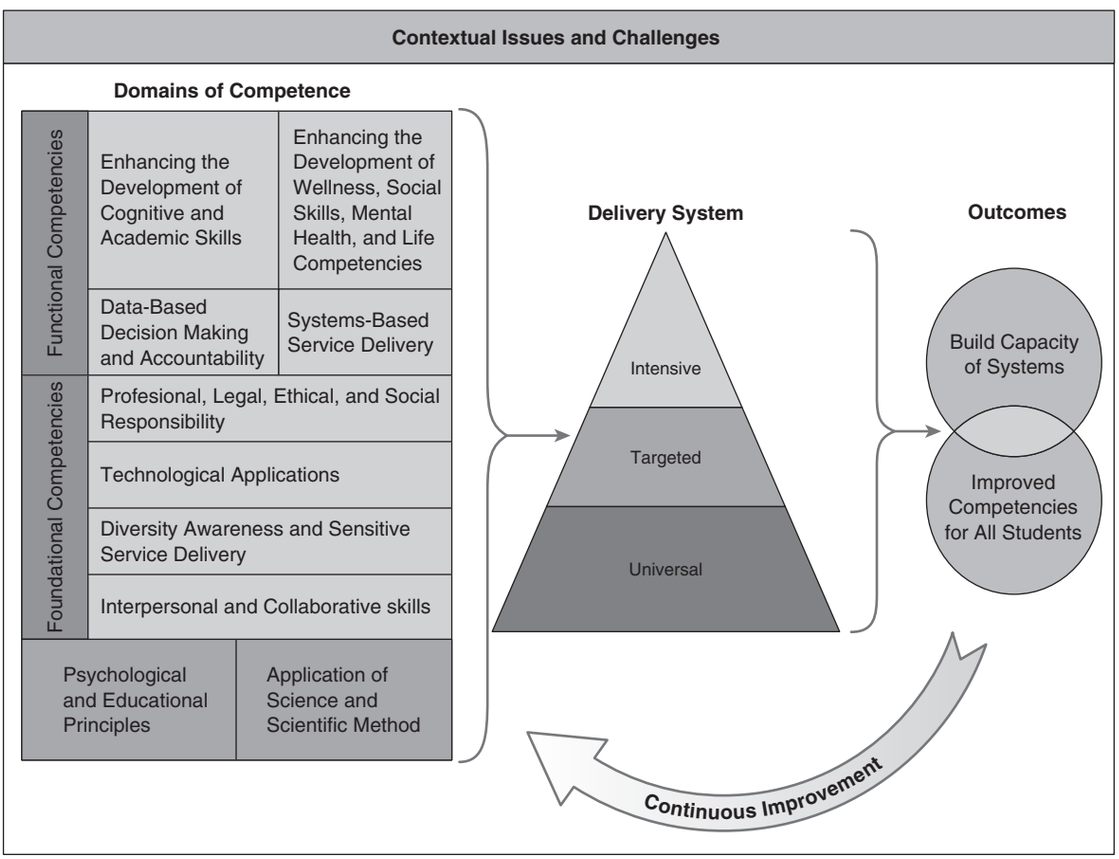
The same issues are relevant to school psychology. The more school psychologists in training receive supervision using a specific technique, the more likely they are to use that

technique effectively in professional practice (E. S. Shapiro & Lentz, 1985). "Simply reading or hearing about empirically supported treatments will not be sufficient to get psychologists to use them; rather, skill development strategies that reflect good models of professional development are also required" (Rosenfield, 2000).

Skill Improvement and Expansion

Graduate training cannot provide all of the attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary for optimal functioning as a school psychologist. As articulated in *School Psychology: A Blueprint for Training and Practice III* (Ysseldyke et al., 2006), competence emerges over time. School psychologists are likely to demonstrate a novice level of competence at the end of coursework and competence in some areas after completing their internships. Only after 5 to 10 years of practice are school psychologists likely to demonstrate expertise across broad domains of practice in multiple delivery systems as prescribed by best practice, as illustrated in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1. Training and practice in school psychology.



From Ysseldyke, J. E., Burns, M., Dawson, P., Kelley, B., Morrison, D., Ortiz, S., et al. (2006). *School psychology: A blueprint for training and practice III.* Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists. Copyright © 2006 by the National Association of School Psychologists, Bethesda, MD. Use of this material is by permission of the publisher, www.nasponline.org.

Furthermore, to be effective practitioners, school psychologists must constantly keep abreast of new knowledge, research, and skills that emerge throughout their professional careers. Clinical supervision is essential for skill development and expansion throughout an individual's career, and school psychologists need an organizational framework for lifelong professional development (Rosenfield, 1985). Typically, professional development opportunities are fragmented, discontinuous, haphazard, and not integrated into practice. Attending professional development workshops is not sufficient, for after hearing about new knowledge and skills in professional development workshops, few participants apply the information to their practice unless they receive feedback and supervision in their application. For example, both doctoral and specialist level school psychologists in more than 60 schools required extensive support to develop and sustain effective instructional consultation teams, even though they were well trained and knew that the method improved student functioning (Rosenfield, 2000; Rosenfield & Gravois, 1996).

Furthermore, regardless of years of experience, practitioners require supervision whenever they enter situations in which they have no previous experience. As indicated by J. M. Bernard and Goodyear (2004), often the most troublesome employees are those with extensive, unsupervised experience. School psychologists can experience significant stress as they learn and implement new approaches. Without considerable support, they can be tempted to continue ineffective or outdated practice because it is familiar and feels safe (Harvey, 2008). School psychologists need ongoing support to sustain best practices.

Vignette 1.3

Prudence, a veteran school psychologist, inappropriately administers the exact same tests to every child regardless of the referring problem—the WISC, WRAT, Bender Gestalt, and House-Tree-Person that she learned in graduate school some years ago. She feels comfortable with these tools and thoroughly enjoys being the "expert" during team meetings. Her district is now mandating that school teams adopt the response to intervention model for diagnosing learning disabilities. Prudence is panicking at the thought of this change and is counting the days until she can retire. Unfortunately, her retirement is 12 years in the future!

It is imperative to provide every staff person support sufficient for practice improvement. Such support requires an appraisal of supervisees' knowledge, skills, confidence, objectivity, and interpersonal interactions and then systematic facilitation of professional development in each area.

Stress Reduction

School psychologists work in complex and emotionally challenging situations that can result in "performance fatigue." They can develop blind spots in their work or be unable to independently address difficult situations, and even expert practitioners need supervision to maintain objectivity. Good supervision promotes job satisfaction and reduces stress for individuals who provide psychological services in highly stressful settings (Hyrkäs, 2005). The research in school counseling supervision over the past 30 years has consistently revealed that school counselors perceive that clinical supervision provides support, ongoing learning, and professional development and therefore reduces professional isolation and burnout. High-quality supervision provides the opportunity to

obtain praise and empathy for successfully resolving challenging problems as well as to obtain support and ideas for problem resolution itself (Kavanagh et al., 2003).

As McMahon and Patton (2000) indicated, the ability to positively adapt to changing situations, or to be resilient, is enhanced through participation in supervision. Individuals working in isolation are less adaptable and more likely to experience stress and burnout. Without supervision, it is difficult to "be resilient enough to endure the challenges of work in the 21st century" (p. 349).

Increased Self-Reflection

Effective school psychologists employ executive functions such as planning and appraisal to reflect on their practice and modify future practice according to their findings. It is very difficult to sustain reflective practice alone, particularly in the face of the time pressures experienced in schools (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). School psychologists are almost always the only psychologist in their assigned building and thus suffer from extreme professional isolation. This isolation, combined with little time for reflection and self-appraisal, means that school psychologists often do not determine which of their practices actually result in improved student functioning. As Carrington (2004) indicated, supervision can ameliorate professional isolation and provide the support necessary to foster self-reflection, an activity that is often neglected, and thereby improve practice.

Particularly when learning new skills, reflective school psychologists monitor their progress by self-applying supervisory techniques normally used with novice supervisees. These include taping and analyzing counseling, consultation, and assessment sessions; obtaining evaluative information from students, teachers, and administrators; and evaluating the effectiveness of services. Reflective school psychologists thereby compare their functioning with best practices described in current publications such as *School Psychology: A Blueprint for Training and Practice III* (Ysseldyke et al., 2006), *Best Practices in School Psychology V* (A. Thomas & Grimes, 2008), the *Professional Conduct Manual* of the National Association of School Psychologists (2000a), and the Guilford School Practitioner Series, as well as professional Listservs and Web sites. In addition to consulting these and other professional resources, self-supervising school psychologists foster a network of experienced psychologists, counselors, teachers, and others with whom they can consult regarding new skills and difficult cases.

Increased Accountability

Through the implementation of the above practices, supervision fosters appraisal of the effectiveness of services. As service effectiveness is established, these results can be made public and used to support the funding of both psychological services and their supervision.

Professional Standards Supporting Supervision

The importance of supervision of psychological services has been supported by professional practice standards and ethical guidelines as defined by both the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and the American Psychological Association (APA).

NASP Position Paper

In 2004, the Delegate Assembly of the National Association of School Psychologists passed a formal position statement entitled "NASP Position Statement on Supervision in

School Psychology" (NASP, 2004). This statement defined professional (clinical) supervision as essential to school improvement and student success in that supervisors observe, monitor, and evaluate the practice of school psychologists to ensure that they provide appropriate services. As such, NASP recommends that school psychologists obtain supervision from trained school psychologists, because it is believed that supervisors who are knowledgeable about and experienced in the delivery of school psychological services will promote adherence to high standards, ensure the provision of appropriate and high-quality services to children and adolescents, provide appropriate evaluations, promote ongoing professional development, and adapt roles to meet changing needs of the school community.

NASP Professional Standards

Guidelines regarding supervision are described in professional practice standards (NASP, 2000b). These standards indicate that interns and first-year school psychologists, as well as others in need of such supervision, must receive at least 2 hours of supervision per week. After the first year of employment, NASP standards indicate, professional supervision and/or peer review *should be available* to ensure ongoing professional development, regardless of level of experience. This is necessary because individuals may not be proficient in skills across the domains of practice. NASP recommends that psychologists' professional functions be supervised by a qualified psychologist who holds an appropriate credential; has at least 3 years of successful, supervised experience as a school psychologist; and is designated by the school district as the supervisor responsible for school psychological services.

APA Standards and Policies

APA standards indicate that nondoctoral school psychologists should receive face-to-face supervision throughout their careers. More than 20 years ago, the "Specialty Guidelines for the Delivery of Services by School Psychologists" (APA, 1981) expressed concern regarding the supervision of school psychologists by nonpsychologists because such supervisors are unfamiliar with relevant ethical responsibilities and professional standards, which is thought to result in conflicts between professional and administrative expectations. APA (2007) also specified that internships should be fully integrated into the organization and governed by written policies. Training should be experiential, sequential, cumulative, graded, respectful of diversity, and consistent with the training program's philosophy, and it should enable interns to integrate science with practice. During the internship, APA mandates at least 4 hours of supervision per week, 2 hours of which must be face to face and individual. Each intern should have at least two supervisors who are appropriately skilled, hold doctoral degrees, are integral members of the organization, and participate actively in the development and evaluation of the internship.

Ethical Standards

Supervision of school psychological services promotes adherence to professional ethical mandates by providing protection for the children and adolescents with whom supervisees work. As supervisors review cases, they help their supervisees sustain interpersonal skills and maintain objectivity in the face of potential bias and covert pressures. To adequately protect clients, supervisors master and apply a complex array of legal and ethical principles. Supervisors are legally responsible for monitoring the welfare of the

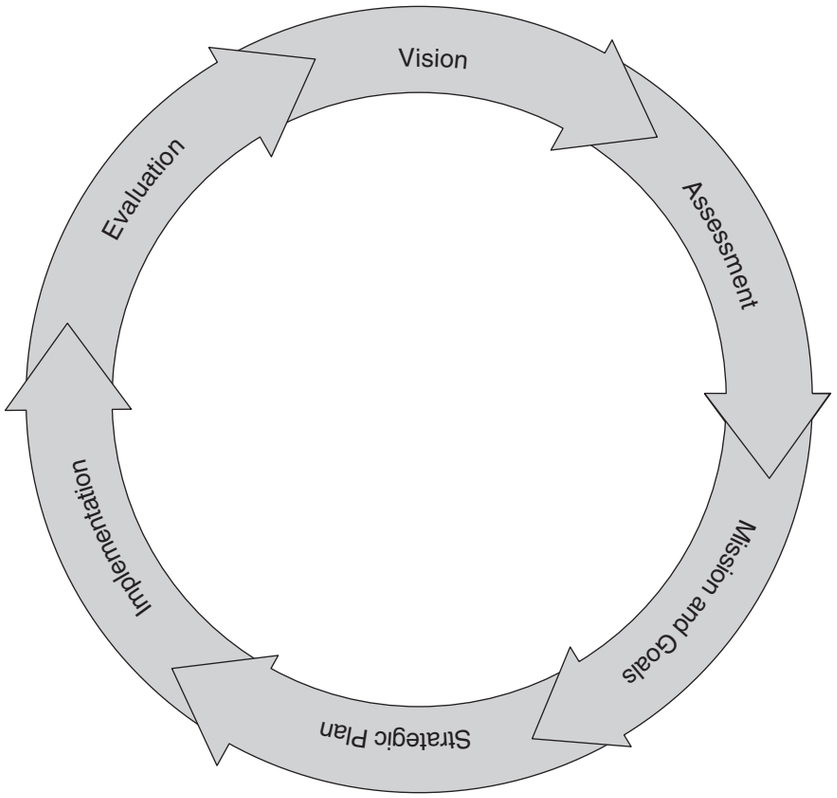
supervisee's clients, particularly when the supervisee is not licensed or certified to practice independently (J. M. Bernard & Goodyear, 2004).

EFFECTIVE SUPERVISORY STRUCTURES

School psychology and the supervision of psychological services are dynamic, as are all systems and systemic relationships. Effective supervisors consider internal and external strengths and weaknesses and then alter the structure of supervision, professional development, and service delivery. The altered structure, in turn, modifies strengths and weaknesses and consequently changes the strategies of choice. This again affects structure. Thus effective supervisors consider the context in which supervision occurs and plan accordingly, change that context by providing supervision, and then revise supervision within the changed context. Each component feeds into and affects the next, as shown in Figure 1.2.

Successful supervision of psychologists in schools requires contextually responsive supervision. This contextual aspect is unique to schools, going beyond the clinical and

Figure 1.2. Systemic supervision cycle.



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administrative supervision appropriate in clinical settings. Because of the highly contextual nature of school psychology, supervisors are challenged by the necessity to assess the needs of each school and school district, determine the needs that could and should be met by school psychologists, take into consideration the professional development of each psychologist as well as the broader context, and then ensure that the school psychologist has sufficient expertise to meet school and school district needs.

Appropriate supervision structures are characterized by several components. As described by Fischetti and Lines (2003) and Harvey (2008), these components include:

- A primary focus on meeting the needs of students
- Coordinated psychological services that respond to the needs of district students, teachers, parents, and administrators in terms of the practice of school psychology and the development of school district policies
- Psychological services permeated by a commitment to ethically responsive educational and school psychological practices that translate theory and research into practice
- Practices that help supervisees cope with rapidly changing knowledge, increasing diversity, and ever-expanding technologies by providing continuing education, facilitating information dissemination, encouraging affiliation with professional organizations, and promoting staff development
- Clearly articulated supervision employing evaluation methods that reflect best practices in school psychology
- Supervisory policies and practice that respect and maximize the unique skills and strengths of each contributing professional and foster self-appraisal, goal setting, and progress monitoring
- Cross-collaboration among staff within small "communities of learning" that network, consult, and team with others
- School psychological services oriented to meeting the needs of all school administrators, general education teachers, special education teachers, parents, and other constituents rather than limited to special education placement
- School psychology staff who regularly meet to discuss difficult cases and to develop position statements on controversial issues such as identification of learning disabilities; these position statements are later used to guide practice, as in-service tools, and to facilitate intra-unit communication (Murphy, 1981)
- Supervising and lead school psychologists who regularly collaborate at the district level to help set policies regarding controversial issues such as curriculum adoption, English language learners, and retention
- An ongoing mentoring program that provides planned intern supervision, mentoring for novice school psychologists, and skill development for supervisors and mentors
- Collaboration with state departments of education and, when possible, university training programs

It is very helpful when a clinical supervisor is an employee of the same school district as a supervisee, because that increases knowledge regarding district issues and personalities as well as affords greater opportunities for systemic leadership. However, where that is not possible, alternative models such as part-time supervisors, the sharing of supervisors among school districts or between districts and community agencies, or online supervision can be used appropriately (NASP, 2004).

CHALLENGES IN SUPERVISING SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

The NASP logo, designed by former president Fred Dornbeck, depicts two interlocking circles: one containing the Greek letter psi (for psychology) and the other containing the lamp of learning (for education). Not surprisingly, the supervision of psychological services in schools is complicated by factors stemming from both the educational context and the field of psychology.

Educational Context

School psychology takes place in schools and concerns the interaction between students and their learning and learning environments. This highly contextualized nature renders the practice of school psychology and its supervision extremely complex.

Funding

Funding affects the supervision of school psychological services in at least two ways: the expense of supervision, and the funds used to underwrite psychological services in general. "Good" clinical supervision requires considerable contact between the supervisor and supervisee, and this time requirement is difficult to reconcile with the high needs of schools. While NASP mandates only 2 hours of face-to-face supervision per week for interns and beginning school psychologists, most skilled supervisors provide much more, particularly at the beginning of the year. In fact, supervisee perception of supervision quality has been found to be tied to frequent supervisee-supervisor contacts (Allen, Szollos, & Williams, 1986). On the other hand, both school psychologists and their supervisors are often severely taxed for time, and geographic separation across the school district exacerbates this difficulty. For school districts to justify this expenditure, supervisors of school psychologists must believe and convince administrators that supervised school psychological services are more cost effective than unsupervised services. Some consider it ethically imperative to experience weekly clinical supervision by a person who "not only knows how to manage others to do a good job but also is . . . able to demonstrate how it can be done" (Chan, 2004, pp. 63–64). Others consider such supervision less valuable than direct service, perceive it as a luxury rather than a necessity, and are unwilling to allocate necessary resources. There is no question that clinical supervision is expensive, because it takes significant time on the part of both supervisors and supervisees. On the other hand, research and professional standards support this expenditure.

In addition, school psychologists are often funded through special education departments. This funding structure has led some to mistakenly believe that school psychologists should work with students only as they are deemed eligible for, or as they receive, special education services (Sheridan & Gutkin, 2000). This practice inappropriately ignores the needs of students in the general population for psychological services such as mental health promotion and crisis prevention and intervention. In their role as systemic change leaders, supervisors who find that their school psychologists are so constrained can work with district administrators to broaden school psychologists' connection to general education programs and students. For example, the job descriptions of school psychologists can be revised to include regular participation in general education child study and student support teams.

Educational Mandates and Legislation

Legislative and educational mandates institute multiple changes in educational practices. For example, the Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) emphasize accountability for teachers and administrators by requiring universal student outcomes; mandate the use of evidence-based educational practices such as scientifically established reading programs; require students—including those identified as eligible for special education services—to achieve certain levels of performance on achievement tests; and demand increased integration between general and special education (for instance, requiring that special education individualized education plans reflect general education curriculum benchmarks). These changes have a profound impact on the work of many school psychologists and on their professional development and supervision needs (Ysseldyke et al., 2006).

General Education Curriculum

The universal adoption of specified general education curricula across schools, districts, and states can have many unintended side effects. For example, many students who were exposed to but unresponsive to whole language reading instruction never developed strong reading skills. Students taught math using strategies completely unfamiliar to their parents are not able to obtain homework help from their parents. These variables affect the practice of school psychologists because they result in "curriculum casualties" and subsequent referrals for special assistance. In their role as systemic change leaders, supervisors can employ a number of strategies to address this challenge. For example, they can serve on curriculum adoption committees to advocate evidence-based curricula, provide professional development programs regarding evidence-based practices for teachers, and help administrators to develop prevention and targeted intervention programs and to evaluate program outcomes.

Increased Demands in Promoting Students' Mental Health

Increased focus on the necessity for schools to address the mental health needs of all students, particularly in the wake of tragic school violence and high rates of suicide, school dropout, and other mental health situations (Sheridan & Gutkin, 2000), has resulted in the need for school psychologists to increase the time they devote to these issues. However, schools do not have a tradition of providing clinical supervision necessary for adequate mental health services and actually have been found to sustain a pervasive anticlinical bias from higher level administrators (Breiman, 2001). The importance of incorporating systemic change leadership into the supervisory role when supervising in a school setting is well illustrated by these considerations.

Evaluation Procedures

Because school psychologists are often evaluated by educational administrators using instruments designed for the evaluation of teachers, they are not evaluated using criteria specific to their role (Chafouleas et al., 2002). To change this, more appropriate evaluation methods that specifically address school psychologists' "standards of performance" must be developed through participation in the collective bargaining process (Clarke, 2006). Successful supervisors address the evaluation system used with school psychologists and ensure that they address the skills needed for effective practice.

Supervisory Structures

Typical school administrative structures complicate adequate supervision of school psychological services considerably. As mentioned previously, most often school psychologists have administrative supervisors who are not psychologists and who are unable to address professional components unique to the provision of school psychological services. This results in school psychologists' receiving very little supervision regarding the activities at which they spend the majority of their time.

Since school psychologists are almost always the only school psychologist in a building, they often do not have opportunities for professional collaboration or peer supervision. Therefore, they are often not members of a "community of learners," essential to professional growth (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007).

As is common for middle managers, supervisors of school psychological services must balance the expectations of upper administration and the needs of the school psychologists whom they supervise. They must resolve conflicting components of professional identity, ethical guidelines, policies of the school district, and expectations and desires of teachers, parents, students, and principals.

Further, the "unity of command" principle indicates that each supervisee should have only one immediate supervisor (Rue & Byars, 1997). Yet in the practice of school psychology there is often more than one administrator (e.g., multiple principals, directors of special education, and superintendents) involved in prioritizing the time and activities of school psychologists.

Finally, schools sustain an extremely high supervisor-supervisee ratio in general. The "span of management" referred to in business literature addresses the number of supervisees a manager can effectively supervise. Urwick (1938) originally indicated that no one should attempt to supervise more than six individuals at a time. This number is not absolute, for it is reduced by the complexity and variety of jobs held by the supervisees and increased by physical proximity and high personnel quality (Rue & Byars, 1997). Nonetheless, this figure is much lower than the number of supervisees typically supervised by a single individual in school settings. For example, in a school of 500 children one principal probably attempts to supervise more than 30 individuals (20 teachers, a half dozen special service and support personnel, and several secretaries and custodians). In a classroom a teacher is expected to supervise the learning of about 25 children at a time, and in the vignette that opened this chapter, Dottie is expected to supervise 53 individuals. The level of supervision possible with such ratios is reminiscent of industrial factories and is far below the level of supervision appropriate for complex settings and professions. In schools, supervision is seen as a low priority and is not well funded, whether the supervisee is a teacher, counselor, or school psychologist.

Confusion Regarding the Appropriate Roles of School Psychologists

Gilman and Gabriel (2004) discerned fundamental differences among teachers', administrators', and school psychologists' perceptions of what school psychology is and what school psychologists should do. School administrators were frequently satisfied with the traditional services provided by school psychologists. Despite this satisfaction, and without regard for time constraints, administrators also endorsed school psychologists' devoting additional time to parent workshops, in-service training, and teacher consultation. On the other hand, teachers believed that school psychologists should increase the time they devoted to individual counseling, group counseling, crisis intervention, work with general education students, teacher consultation, parent consultation, and

parent workshops, while administrators expressed less interest in school psychologists devoting additional time to counseling, crisis intervention, working with general education students, and curriculum development. Despite these additional expectations, on average both teachers and administrators indicated that the amount of time school psychologists spend in special education assessment should remain the same, and at least one third preferred that school psychologists participate in more assessment activities!

On their part, school psychologists tend to endorse spending less time on special education assessment and more time on individual counseling, group counseling, working with general education, and curriculum development (Gilman & Gabriel, 2004). These endorsements are substantiated in professional practice guidelines (Ysseldyke et al., 2006) and professional literature (Sheridan & Gutkin, 2000), which indicate that relying on special education assessment, written reports, and very brief team meetings to communicate complex intervention information results in intervention failure. This finding is particularly troubling given the lack of evidence regarding benefits of full-time special education and the considerable research evidence supporting increased involvement in evidence-based preventative measures, intervention development and monitoring, and policy development.

Therefore, conflicts exist between the expectation of administrators and the desires of teachers, the interests of psychologists, and best practices as defined by research literature. Even though school administrators would like increased teacher consultation, parent workshops, and in-service training, they expect and favorably view the current functions of school psychologists. Time constraints profoundly impact school psychologists' ability to expand their role while simultaneously completing already required paperwork. Since administrators are the individuals who complete the school psychologists' evaluations, their viewpoints are pivotal and must be addressed.

Vignette 1.4

As a clinical supervisor, **Carrie** co-supervises six school psychologists with their administrative supervisors, the district principals. One principal perceives that the school psychologists' primary role is to identify troublesome students as eligible for special education—then recommend placement in self-contained classes located in another school. In contrast, Carrie perceives that their primary role is to develop and monitor interventions enabling those same students to successfully stay in their home school. Clearly, until the clinical supervisor and the administrative supervisor reconcile these fundamental differences, their conflicting viewpoints put one school psychologist in a very difficult position!

Variability in Available School Personnel

Supervision of psychological services in schools is additionally complicated by a high degree of variability in personnel available to provide prevention and intervention programs. In some elementary schools, school psychologists are the only mental health professionals, and they provide preventative and classroom-based services as well as targeted small group mental health interventions. In other schools, these services are provided by school counselors. In some secondary schools, counselors provide guidance relative to course selection and college admissions while school psychologists provide individual counseling, group counseling, and crisis intervention for students with acute mental health issues. In yet other schools, social workers are employed to interface

with families and community agencies, but in some settings this responsibility falls to school psychologists. In some schools reading teachers measure the reading skills of the general student population using Curriculum-Based Measurement tools and then monitor the progress of students enrolled in small group interventions, while other schools do not have reading specialists and this responsibility is assumed by school psychologists. In some schools teachers of students with learning disabilities play a major role in the assessment of academic and cognitive strengths and weaknesses, while in other schools that role is the province of school psychologists. In many districts school psychologists design and monitor behavior intervention plans, while other districts employ behavioral specialists to do the same; similarly, in some settings school psychologists oversee programs for students with emotional handicaps, while in other settings a special education teacher is assigned that responsibility. This variability clearly affects and creates extraordinary disparities in the practice and supervision of school psychology.

Variability in Community Resources

Variability in community resources also affects the practice and supervision of school psychology. Extreme diversity exists in terms of student needs, socioeconomic status, and community supports. For example, a school psychologist working in a small city with supports for students and their families (e.g., an active and involved counseling center that has a sliding scale and appeals to adolescents and low-income families, and a Boys & Girls Club that provides homework support, after-school care, dinner for students, and social work services for families) has resources unavailable to a school psychologist working in an isolated suburb or rural area. In the latter setting, school psychologists may well be called upon to coordinate or even provide such services.

Multiculturalism

Increased multiculturalism in schools and communities has resulted in multiple challenges. First, multiculturalism impacts the practice of school psychology, and supervisors are responsible for helping their supervisees respond appropriately to multicultural issues in counseling and assessment as well as large system issues (e.g., large numbers of English language learners failing high-stakes testing, being refused high school graduation, and dropping out of school). Furthermore, as the field of school psychology becomes increasingly diverse, supervisors of school psychologists face the challenge of supervising individuals from cultures quite unlike their own. Because of the power differential inherent in the supervisory relationship, supervisors must directly bring up and facilitate discussions regarding multicultural issues in supervision, such as cultural sensitivity, respect, and cross-cultural mistrust (Nilsson & Anderson, 2004).

Novice Psychologists' Difficulty Dealing With Complexity

Novices have difficulty dealing with complexity in general. Consequently, one of a supervisor's tasks is to help clarify complex cases for novice psychologists (Stoltenberg et al., 1998). Supervisors of school psychological services must address this challenge on the systems level as well as the individual case level, since the complexity of schools is multifaceted. If supervisors address this issue only at the case level, they will not enable their supervisees to master the complexity of working in schools sufficiently to be able to provide the full range of services.

Concomitant Changes in Psychology

Leaders in the field of school psychology are advocating a paradigm shift in the provision of school psychological services away from assessment-focused practice and toward the provision of empirically supported, outcomes-focused interventions (Sheridan & Gutkin, 2000). This position stems from the belief that, to have meaningful impact on students' lives, school psychologists

> must move away from service delivery systems based on medical models and commit to models that emphasize (a) the development of healthy systems and environments where children spend most of their time (e.g., families, schools, communities); and (b) individual, group, and system-level services that are based in problem-solving methodologies. (Curtis, Grier, & Hunley, 2004, p. 63)

At the 2002 Conference on the Future of School Psychology, critical outcomes on which to focus the practice of school psychology were identified as:

- Improved academic competence and school success for all children
- Improved social-emotional functioning for all children
- Enhanced family-school partnerships and parental involvement in schools
- More effective education and instruction for all learners
- School-based child and family services integrated with community services that promote health and mental health (Cummings et al., 2004)

This shift clearly supports the outcomes-based mandates inherent in legislation such as NCLB and IDEA 2004. However, this shift also creates major challenges for supervisors of school psychological services.

Experience and Comfort Levels

Many school psychologists were trained and have years of experience in a medical model in which they are expected to be assessment experts, particularly in the diagnosis of special education eligibility. Further, many school psychologists are not skilled in understanding systems, effecting systems change, or conceptualizing and delivering prevention programs. Supervisors can deliberately foster supervisees' professional development in these areas through systematic, districtwide support systems that augment traditional workshops.

In supporting a role change, supervisors are challenged by the comfort of the status quo. Many school psychologists are comfortable in the role of special education evaluator, and it is very difficult for individuals who have been experts for some time in one role to accept the considerable discomfort inevitably resulting from assuming new roles and once again performing at the novice level. Supervisors can openly discuss these issues with supervisees and overtly address critical variables such as expectations, time allocation, and criteria for success.

Limited Availability of Appropriate Field Placements

In some settings (e.g., Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Florida) school psychologists have readily stepped into roles reflective of this paradigm shift. They routinely serve on non–special education problem solving teams, coordinate curriculum-based assessments,

monitor intervention results, provide preventative mental health services, and provide intensive evidence-based mental health services. In other settings, these roles are not yet recognized or valued by the school district or state. This variability makes it quite difficult for training programs to have a universal outcome. Training programs can easily provide didactic coursework and even practica in the expanded role, but without internship settings providing sufficient practice to attain some degree of proficiency, the skills will not be sustained. Furthermore, when the school psychologist is employed, particularly in isolated settings, it is very difficult to sustain the expanded role without supervisory or contextual support.

Internship Experiences

Despite many years' emphasis on expanded roles during school psychology training, typical internships still emphasize assessment. This results in interns' and practitioners' experiencing low self-efficacy and low self-esteem regarding other roles such as counseling and consultation (Trant, 2001). Clearly, internships must be carefully structured, organized, and supervised such that sufficient training and supervision in the full spectrum of services occurs and graduates feel effective across all domains.

Shortage of School Psychologists

A shortage of school psychologists has existed for some time and is likely to be exacerbated by a large number of retirements in the near future (Curtis et al., 2004). This shortage adds yet another dimension to the complexity of supervising psychological services. Many positions go unfilled, resulting in unacceptably high student–school psychologist ratios. It can be overwhelming for already overtaxed school psychologists to devote time to acquiring new skills or initiating new programs, even if they save time in the long run. This is particularly problematic when "old" procedures are maintained in the meantime.

Vignette 1.5

Anne, whom we met at the beginning of the chapter, knows that the number of students eligible for special education services will decrease as academic difficulties are identified and addressed in the primary grades. In the meantime, however, she struggles to respond to referrals and reevaluations in the intermediate grades, required for those students who did not benefit from the early intervening program.

Supervision Complexity

Because supervision occurs at multiple levels, a supervisor's skill development must also develop at multiple levels. Supervision training at the graduate level will be almost unavoidably limited to the development of microskills, such as discrete consultation, assessment, and counseling skills, because graduate students have not developed sufficient experience as school psychologists to be able to provide adequate clinical supervision regarding complex services such as systems change. This can usually occur only after additional years of successful experience have afforded sufficient knowledge regarding schools and education as well as sufficient credibility in the eyes of teachers and

administrators. At that point, school psychologists are in a position to provide systemic leadership that can inspire effective school psychology programs and serve as an impetus for appropriate systems level change (Harvey, 2008).

Lack of Supervision Training

According to a demographic survey by Hunley et al. (2000), 90% of supervising school psychologists had not completed coursework in supervision and 83% had not taken part in substantial additional training in supervision. Doctoral level programs supply coursework in supervision and some state associations provide ongoing professional development in supervision (M. E. Swerdlik, personal communication, April 9, 2007). However, most interns are supervised by specialist level school psychologists who are not obligated to complete supervision training. Furthermore, because no supervision credential is required for either clinical or administrative supervision in school psychology, there is little incentive to complete coursework in clinical supervision after a few years of practice. There may be little incentive to complete coursework in administrative supervision unless such coursework is provided or required by the school district or state.

Ambiguous Prioritization of Supervision by Professional Organizations

Supervision has been identified as a central domain of training in psychology (APA, 2007), proposed as a core competency in clinical psychology (Falender et al., 2004), and adopted as a core competency for mental health counselors (Dye & Borders, 1990). Clinical supervision of master's level mental health professionals who work in private practice or clinical settings (Herlihy et al., 2002), and of APA-licensed doctoral level psychologists, is mandated through initial years of work in the field. These standards reflect the pivotal role that supervision plays in the training and credentialing of many psychologists and counselors (Falender et al., 2004).

In contrast, credentialing and training regarding supervision has not been universally supported in the field of school psychology. While NASP adopted a position paper in support of supervision, a supervisory credential has not been established and supervision has not been identified as a core competency. This may stem from a desire of school psychologists to be autonomous and avoid the inherently hierarchical nature of supervision (D. E. McIntosh & Phelps, 2000). Or it may stem from a desire to avoid the discomfort of having one's work scrutinized (Herlihy et al., 2002).

Because of the lack of identification of supervision as a core competency and because of the lack of a supervisory credential, few training programs provide comprehensive training in supervision, and consequently few school psychologists are adequately prepared for this role. R. P. Ross and Goh (1993) found that although most school psychologists supervise other school psychologists or interns at some point, only 25% of supervising school psychologists received graduate training in supervision and only 11% received this training within their school psychology programs. Hunley et al. (2000) found that only 10% of school psychologists identifying themselves as supervisors had received training in supervision prior to becoming a supervisor. Furthermore, since clinical supervision is so rarely provided, few school psychologists have received clinical supervision beyond their internship. Even in situations where supervision does occur, many supervisors have received neither supervision training nor supervision-of-supervision (Illback & Morrissey, 1985).

The lack of training in supervision typical for school psychologists is in direct contrast to the fields of family therapy, counseling psychology, clinical psychology, and school administration, all of which provide training in and have developed a body of literature about supervision. Furthermore, the lack of training in supervision directly contradicts the dictates of professional organizations. Both NASP and APA professional standards indicate that psychologists should not provide services for which they have not had adequate training. Knowledge and skills in supervision have been identified as distinct competencies that must be developed through systematic education and training (Falender et al., 2004), yet as a whole the field of school psychology lacks such training.

SUPERVISOR QUALIFICATIONS, VALUES, KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND TRAINING

As previously indicated, while administrative supervisors do not need training as school psychologists, it is important that clinical supervisors have training, credentials, and at least 3 years of successful experience as a school psychologist (NASP, 2000b). APA standards indicate that supervision should be provided by doctoral level psychologists, and school psychologists who identify themselves as supervisors indeed hold doctoral degrees more often than school psychologists in general (45% vs. 21%; Hunley et al., 2000). NASP (2004) does not mandate the doctoral degree. Nonetheless, professional standards clearly indicate that training in the supervision of school personnel is desirable. This need is reinforced by school psychologists who identify themselves as supervisors and state that they would like to receive additional support, such as training in supervision, meetings with other supervisors, participation in mentoring programs, and membership in Listservs (Hunley et al., 2000).

Regardless of the educational background of the supervisor, supervision is unfortunately not always effective. As Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) stated, for many,

> experiences of supervision are anything but uplifting. Again and again, [educators] tell of being placed in a win-lose situation and of experiencing powerlessness, manipulation, sexual harassment, and racial and ethnic stereotyping. At best, their encounters with supervisors lead directly to evaluative judgments based on the skimpiest of evidence. At worst, these encounters can destroy autonomy, self-confidence, and personal integrity. Unfortunately, supervision as practiced by some supervisors is not only nonprofessional, it is dehumanizing and unethical. (pp. 66–67)

School psychologists report similarly negative supervisory experiences resulting from defensive, domineering, incompetent, or uninvolved supervisors. They might be required to "figure out things for themselves," subjected to overly critical feedback and insensitive supervision, or receive supervision characterized by a lack of awareness of critical issues such as multicultural concerns (Hunley et al., 2000).

Negative supervision experiences result from "supervision mismatches" (S. M. Gross, 2005). Mismatches can occur because the provided supervision does not match the developmental level of the supervisee; because the supervisee and supervisor differ in terms of desired supervision structure, time allocation, privacy of supervisory communications, theoretical orientations, or reliance on empirically based decisions; because the supervisee has multiple supervisors with conflicting expectations; or because supervisees are

unhappy with workloads (perhaps because they feel exploited relative to other practitioners or because they feel they are given the least desirable assignments, or because they feel underutilized). To avoid such mismatches, it is essential to foster the values, knowledge, and skills necessary for effective supervision.

Critical Supervision Values

Effective supervisors maintain and uphold the ethical principals mandated by their profession. They assume responsibility for the welfare of the student and for the practice of the supervisee. They are respectful, sensitive, and responsive to supervisee development. They balance challenges and supports and are committed to respecting diversity. They are committed to lifelong learning and professional growth for their supervisees and for themselves, both in terms of clinical skills and supervision. They also are committed to translating research into practice and advocating service delivery that maximizes student development.

Effective supervisors demonstrate a thorough knowledge and commitment to ethical practice by applying ethical principles in complex situations, fostering the ethical development of supervisees, and ensuring that nonexploitative relationships are maintained between themselves and supervisees as well as between supervisees and clients. They are skillful in conflict management by listening, avoiding blame, suppressing personal needs, and achieving conflict resolution.

Critical Supervisor Knowledge

Professional Knowledge

Effective supervisors maintain current knowledge regarding professional areas, including school psychology, counseling and clinical psychology, educational psychology, neuropsychology, developmental psychology, and general and special education. They regularly read *School Psychology Review*, the *Communiqué*, and other journals such as *American Psychologist*, *Exceptional Children*, *Educational Leadership*, *Educational Psychology*, *Learning Disabilities: Research & Practice*, *Behavioral Disorders*, and *Psychology in the Schools*. They are quickly able to find information and research articles through online or library literature searches.

Systems Knowledge

Effective supervisors have considerable knowledge regarding the schools, district, community, and sociopolitical contexts in which their supervisees practice. They have thorough knowledge of educational organizational structures and policies and the delegation of duties and responsibilities in their employing school systems (Curtis & Yager, 1981, 1987).

Supervision Knowledge

Effective supervisors are additionally knowledgeable regarding models, theories, modalities, and research on supervision. They are skilled in supervision techniques and knowledgeable regarding supervisee development, ethics, legal issues, evaluation, and diversity.

Critical Supervisor Skills

Interpersonal and Communicative Skills

Effective supervisors demonstrate complex interpersonal and communicative skills. They are skilled in working with diverse individuals, conflict resolution, providing individual and group supervision, and advocating for the profession with administrators. Effective supervisors also demonstrate multicultural competencies in working with students, parents, teachers, and supervisees. They have skills relevant to consultation, group dynamics, and decision making, including excellent listening skills and the ability to perceive underlying issues at a deep as well as surface level. They are able to develop strong supervisory alliances by engendering trust and honesty, conveying warmth and acceptance, and eliciting feelings of safety such that supervisees honestly disclose difficulties and subsequently make professional growth and gain confidence (Worthen & McNeill, 1996).

Effective supervisors attend to the developmental level of supervisees by providing beginner supervisees with attention to discrete skill development while simultaneously refining their ability to conceptualize cases. They provide intermediate supervisees with assistance with conceptualization skills, personal development, and theory development, and they provide advanced supervisees with assistance in dealing with complex cases (Stoltenberg et al., 1998; Worthen & McNeill, 1996). They help supervisees perceive the complexity of clients' issues, yet simultaneously render complex and confusing situations more coherent. Good supervisors delegate effectively and motivate their supervisees to high levels of performance. They help supervisees develop a game plan to address challenging situations. They also provide supervisees with the impetus to develop a positive professional identity.

Professional Skills

Clinical supervisors should provide supervision only in those areas in which they are proficient. They therefore should assess their own skill proficiency, find ways to increase their proficiency in less developed areas, and seek support from more proficient professionals when appropriate.

Skills in Systemic Leadership

Effective supervisors are also skilled in providing systemic leadership. They develop and implement programs, serve as change agents at multiple levels to implement scientific problem solving, and translate current research results into educational and psychological practice (Harvey, 2008). While so doing, they consider the impact of local variables such as personnel, budgets, curricula, organizational structure, and changing contexts (Rosenfield, 2000).

Supervisory Skills

Effective supervisors are skillful teachers in that they identify learning needs, write learning goals, devise instructional strategies, present material didactically and/or experientially, evaluate learning, take an authoritative role, and give constructive comments. They skillfully implement supervision methods and techniques, provide effective formative and summative evaluations, and promote professional growth and self-assessment.

They accurately assess their own skills, solicit and respond to supervisee feedback, and seek consultation when they encounter issues beyond their competence. They also balance multiple roles and set appropriate boundaries.

Training Supervisors

To attain the values, attitudes, knowledge, and skills described above, it is highly likely that supervision training is necessary. While many doctoral level programs now include courses in supervision, relatively few specialist level programs do, even though graduates are likely to become intern supervisors within a few years of graduation. The widespread lack of training and supervised practice in the supervision of school psychology is extremely unfortunate and verges on unethical practice, since practicing as a supervisor without adequate training can be construed as practicing outside the area of expertise.

The concept of training and supervising supervisors is not new in counseling psychology (J. M. Bernard & Goodyear, 2004; Mead, 1990; Storm, 1997; Storm, Todd, McDowell, & Sutherland, 1997). The Approved Clinical Supervisor credential put forth by the Center for Credentialing and Education (2001) recommends training processes and content for mental health supervisors. Further, the clinical psychology literature indicates that supervisors should be able to provide verification that they have received training and supervision-of-supervision, as well as documents that reflect feedback regarding their supervisory skills and readiness to supervise independently (Falender et al., 2004). Gizara and Forrest (2004) recommended that supervisor training include the following:

1. Mandated supervision courses and practica that focus on evaluative processes
2. Close examination of and adherence to standards of practice
3. Development of the supervisor's ability to recognize and address ethical issues
4. Development of a professional norm to confront inadequate practice
5. Maintenance of a collegial supervision group characterized by trust and respect, sustained dialogue, and regularly scheduled meetings with other supervisors during the workweek, particularly for novice supervisors

Vignette 1.6

Barbara has been working as a school psychologist for 10 years and feels reasonably capable and competent in the position. This year one of her schools is entering into an agreement with a nearby university to become a Professional Development School, which means that she is now expected to supervise interns. She feels that the supervision she received as an intern was excellent, but that was a long time ago. She is not sure her skills are completely up to date, she no longer has a supervisor, and she has neither had a course in supervision nor ever worked in a setting in which she received supervision other than her internship. She feels that having interns would be exciting and enriching but is concerned that she is being asked to practice in an area beyond her expertise.

Supervising the novice practitioner offers a challenging responsibility. Effective supervision of interns requires proficient teaching abilities, expert clinical knowledge,

and strong technical expertise. Perhaps no other component of professional training has a greater impact on a student's skills and potential. During this structured learning experience, a foundation for future ethical practice and professional knowledge development is established. Just as student teachers tend to teach in a manner similar to that of their supervising practitioners (Henry & Beasley, 1982), the model of practice demonstrated by the supervising school psychologist often becomes the model followed by the intern. Thus internship supervision has perpetuity, because professionals tend to supervise others in the manner in which they were supervised.

Regrettably, despite the intensely demanding nature of this supervisory role, most internship supervisors have received little or no formal academic training in supervision and do not receive supervision of their supervision (Knoff, 1986; Ward, 1999; Zins, Murphy, & Wess, 1989). This important role is customarily undertaken with little knowledge and insufficient ongoing support. In response to this quandary, novice supervisors can obtain training in a number of ways. They can participate in professional workshops followed by informal self-study and peer supervision networks, attend university-run training for field supervisors, enroll in professional workshops, or complete formal coursework.

Workshops, Informal Self-Study, and Peer Supervision Networks

Attending supervision workshops at professional meetings is a good introduction to critical issues but must be supplemented by deliberate self-study and participation in a peer supervision network. All supervisors should seek consultation and collegial supervision from other supervisors or expert psychologists, particularly when supervising in relatively unfamiliar areas. When they self-supervise, supervisors protect the welfare of both clients and supervisees by monitoring and improving their own performance so that it resembles the practice of experienced supervisors (Knoff, 1986; Mead, 1990; Todd, 1997b).

University-Run Training for Field Supervisors

As indicated by Abramson and Fortune (1990), to provide an effective learning environment field, supervisors and university trainers should share common knowledge bases, teaching strategies, and evaluation processes. University-sponsored training sessions for field supervisors can help foster these commonalities. McMahon and Simons (2004) utilized a 4-day, 6-hour-per-day training program that included personal reflection, small group discussions, case discussions, role plays, practice supervision sessions, lectures, readings, and tapes of supervision sessions. Relative to a control group, participants significantly increased their levels of confidence, self-awareness, skills, techniques, and knowledge.

Gourdine and Baffour (2004) described a variety of studies that demonstrate effective university-run training sessions for developing field supervisors' critical thinking skills, ability to conduct process monitoring of discrete clinical skills, knowledge of single-system research design, goal-directed supervision ability, and multicultural skills. Participation in even one training session increased supervisors' perception of their ability to supervise, integrate theory and research into fieldwork, and promote professional socialization. They recommend that competency-based sessions for field supervisors focus on increasing their understanding of professional codes of ethics, core competencies, and basic supervisory skills. Essential competencies for field supervisors, adapted from Gourdine and Baffour, are included in Handout 1.1.

Handout 1.1

FIELD SUPERVISOR COMPETENCIES

(Adapted from Gourdine & Baffour, 2004)[1]

1. Understand internship requirements and evaluation criteria by studying university fieldwork handbooks
2. Review university course syllabi and master training program content to help supervisees integrate theory and current research into practice
3. Review and monitor interns' work both directly (e.g., observe, listen to tapes, and read reports) and indirectly (e.g., read case process notes)
4. Deliver structured learning activities during which district policies are explained and professional tasks are modeled
5. Develop personal problem solving skills and foster them in supervisees through modeling and structured learning activities
6. Improve one's own and supervisees' multicultural skills
7. Promote supervisees' professional identity through mentoring, providing opportunities for interactions with other professionals, modeling professional and respectful behavior, and discussing appropriate professional behavior
8. Structure appropriate internship experiences by specifying tasks, roles, responsibilities, and case presentations
9. Provide interns with opportunities to demonstrate knowledge of district policies, practices, and procedures
10. Assess relevant community and district services, model consultation for interns, and foster their understanding of consultation processes
11. Provide well-structured supervision sessions that facilitate interns' ability to evaluate their own learning
12. Foster interns' understanding of ethical practice by discussing ethical dilemmas and relating them to professional codes
13. Help interns successfully transition from student to practitioner by managing personal and professional stresses
14. Remain aware of the levels of stress that interns may be experiencing and arrange for additional support when appropriate; maintain the roles of mentor and teacher without taking on the role of therapist

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[1]Gourdine, R., & Baffour, T. (2004). Maximizing learning: Evaluating competency-based training program for field instructors. *Clinical Supervisor, 23,* 33–53.

Formal Coursework in Supervision or Administration

Formal training in supervision that includes didactic coursework and in supervision-of-supervision that incorporates observations (direct or via taping) followed by critical feedback has repeatedly been recommended (Falender et al., 2004). Such training addresses knowledge of supervision research and theoretical literature, peer group supervision, training in individual and group supervision, observations of skilled supervisors providing supervision, monitoring and feedback of supervision sessions, consideration of the developmental level of supervisees, multicultural skills of supervisors and supervisees, accountability of supervision, and assessment of supervision skills by supervisees.

Peace and Sprinthall (1998) described a two-semester course in supervision. During the first semester, supervision skills are taught by providing a rationale, modeling the skill, giving opportunities to practice with peers, and generalizing the skill. Topics include:

1. Needs of novice practitioners
2. Techniques for building positive supervisory relationships
3. Models of adult and professional development
4. Differentiating supervision according to supervisee development
5. Updating clinical skills of supervisors
6. Observing, collecting data, and conferencing about clinical skills
7. Analyzing interactions between supervisee and supervisors

During the second semester, supervision students apply the above skills to supervision itself. They keep supervision journals, tape supervision sessions, and review journals and tapes in supervision-of-supervision sessions to obtain corrective feedback. Some supervisors, at a higher developmental level, were easily able to apply skills and analyze them at a complex level, while others required more structured instruction to foster growth (Peace & Sprinthall, 1998).

A NOTE TO THE READER

As evidenced in this chapter's discussion of supervision challenges, enhancing school psychologists' professional development and providing appropriate supervision can be quite challenging. As supervisors adopt the new strategies described in this book, they will need to obtain support in order to tolerate the anxiety and incremental progress that inevitably accompany learning. Furthermore, given the complexity of providing adequate supervision, novice supervisors should either obtain supervision-of-supervision or collaborate with one another to provide mutual support. As they learn, to avoid feeling overwhelmed, supervisors will need to themselves employ executive functions in planning, selecting, implementing, appraising, and modifying their supervision.

While providing supervision is a daunting task that requires both technical expertise and interpersonal skills, it also represents an extraordinary opportunity to truly make a difference. Continuously developing and honing one's own skills while fostering an optimal learning environment for supervisees is a tremendously satisfying way to bequeath one's professional legacy and ultimately benefit the children and adolescents we serve.

SUMMARY

Supervision includes evaluation, skill enhancement, feedback, maintenance of professional competencies, and development of new competencies. The goal of supervision is to improve not only the performance of school psychologists but also the performance of supervisors, students, and the school community as a whole. Supervision has some similarities to teaching, consulting, and providing therapy but is also very different.

Effective supervision assists supervisees with problem solving, reflecting on practice, continuous learning, maintaining professional and ethical standards, upholding laws and statutes, and managing difficult situations. It also provides feedback and training in a manner that is responsive to the supervisee's developmental level. Clinical supervisors are responsible for the oversight of professional practice and the provision of discipline-specific training and knowledge. Administrative supervisors provide leadership, recruit and hire, delegate assignments, conduct formal personnel evaluations, design corrective actions, and take ultimate responsibility for services provided by supervisees.

The importance of supervision is reflected in the professional practice standards and ethical guidelines of both the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and the American Psychological Association (APA), but school psychologists often do not receive adequate supervision. Clinical supervision is often absent or given by supervisors who have no training in school psychology and therefore lack the necessary clinical skills. Furthermore, multiple challenges confront those providing administrative supervision and systemic leadership. Nonetheless, it is critical that effective supervision be established and maintained for school psychologists. Furthermore, it is important that psychologists receive training in the provision of supervision.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

Q1.1. In what ways is supervision both similar to and different from teaching, consulting, and providing therapy?

Q1.2. What are the similarities and differences between administrative and clinical supervision? Which responsibilities fall under each?

Q1.3. Why is clinical supervision neglected? Why is it critically important?

Q1.4. Discuss how professional standards and ethical guidelines support the need for administrative and clinical supervision. What are the specific recommendations of NASP and APA?

Q1.5. What are the features of an effective supervisory structure?

Q1.6. What factors complicate and challenge the supervision of school psychologists?

Q1.7. Why does the supervision of school psychologists require systemic leadership in addition to administrative and clinical supervision?

Q1.8. Discuss the critical needs, skills, and training of supervisors and why these present their own challenges.

Q1.9. Design a supervision training program.