



Canadian Association of School Psychologists  
L'Association canadienne des psychologues scolaires

Canadian Psychological Association

Société canadienne de psychologie

PSYCHOLOGISTS IN EDUCATION / PSYCHOLOGUES EN EDUCATION

JOINT NEWSLETTER

October 2010

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## Message from the CASP/CPA Psychologists in Education

WELCOME to the latest version of the joint newsletter published by the Canadian Association of School Psychologists and the Psychologists in Education Section of CPA.

We are very pleased to announce that this will be the first newsletter under the editorship of Troy Janzen. Troy is now at the University of Alberta, carrying on the tradition of his father, Dr. Hank Janzen, who is so well known to school and educational psychologists across the country.

As *CASP* members know, we have shown good success in our recent (and continuing) membership drive to revitalize this needed and relevant association. One aspect of the revitalized *CASP* is more frequent communication between the executive and the membership via email and the "Canadian School Psychology blog". This is already proving to be an excellent forum for discussion on matters of relevance to the practice of psychology in the schools. If you would like to join in the discussion, or are just curious about the blog, go to <http://canschoolpsych.wordpress.com/>.

The *Canadian Journal of School Psychology* is now in its 25<sup>th</sup> year, and has recently moved from bi-yearly publication to 4 issues per year. A recent special issue entitled "*School Bullying: Insights From Canadian Researchers*" has gone into a second printing. Another well-received special issue that addressed "*Resiliency: Translating Theory into Applications for Children and Adolescents*" was published in 2008. SAGE, CJSP's publisher, is continually improving the online platform for the journal. If you haven't already done so, go to <http://cjs.sagepub.com/>. The tables of contents and abstracts of current and past issues are accessible, and the OnlineFirst feature presents articles accepted for publication in forthcoming issues prior to hard copy publication. If you like what you see with CJSP, then the most economical way to subscribe is by joining CASP. To do so, go to [http://www.cpa.ca/CASP/Member\\_App\\_CASP\\_2010.pdf](http://www.cpa.ca/CASP/Member_App_CASP_2010.pdf) to

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download a CASP membership application form. Membership dues are just \$50 per year, now and for next year, too!

As an early reminder, the *Canadian Psychological Association* annual conference is set to take place next June in Toronto. The *Psychologists in Education* section has maintained a strong presence at these meetings with a wealth of papers and posters presented by our membership from across Canada, together with representation on various *CPA* committees. This year, we will again host our annual combined keynote speaker-business meeting-reception. Dr. Gordon Flett from York University has been invited to give the keynote presentation. His talk will examine resiliency with a focus on perfectionistic kids struggling with impossible expectations, as well as pessimistic kids who have developed a feeling of hopelessness. Watch the *CPA* website, <http://www.cpa.ca>, for further information on the conference.

We wish you all well.

Joseph Snyder (President, CASP)

Don Saklofske (Chair: Psychologists in Education, CPA)

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## Message from the *NEW* Editor



Greetings! This is my first post to the joint CPA Education/CASP newsletter as editor. I first want to thank the previous editor Laurie Petch for all the help in getting this up and running. As the new editor I am excited about the opportunity to bring interesting news of relevance to psychologists in schools and education more broadly.

To introduce myself, I am a clinical supervisor and Adjunct Assistant Professor connected to the Master's and Doctoral School Psychology programs at the University of Alberta. I have also been a private practice psychologist in Alberta since 1993 and have worked extensively with children and adolescents in schools and other settings. In my new role as supervisor and adjunct professor I have taken an interest in how we train school psychologists as well as the identity of school psychologists in Canada. In Canada, we have a diversity of educational systems that each have a unique perspective on the role and value of school psychologists or psychologists in education. Added to this is the ongoing diversity of training and credentialing standards for psychologists across the provinces and territories. Within each province there is a differential level of organization for school psychologists (if this even exists!). Furthering dialogue and fostering strong national associations will add voice to the value and place of school psychologists in Canada. In addition, the ability to bring our diverse perspectives together in a forum such as this can help eliminate the feelings of professional isolation. Now

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more than ever we need to articulate the value and importance of our roles as school psychologists and continue to share our knowledge and expertise as we look toward the future of education and schools in our provinces and in the nation more broadly. Some of the issues I anticipate we will be facing include such things as; the role of IQ testing in the diagnosis and educational placement and interventions for children with learning disabilities, the knowledge base of school psychologists required to remain relevant in today's schools (this includes the need for cross cultural competency in assessment and intervention), and many others. I would invite you all to consider sending in letters on your perspectives on these and other relevant issues to school psychology.

Within this issue we have a message from the CASP President, an article from two graduate students at UBC on accreditation of School Psychology programs and a submitted article from a school psychologist from Ontario on the perspective of Central Auditory Processing Disorder. I hope you enjoy this newsletter. Feel free to send me comments and submission ideas for future newsletters. Our goal is to submit a quarterly newsletter to keep you up to date on news and notes and keep dialogue going.

Troy Janzen, Ph.D., R. Psych. (AB),

CPA/CASP Joint Newsletter Editor

[cpa.edexchange@gmail.com](mailto:cpa.edexchange@gmail.com)

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## Central Auditory Processing Disorder: Within the purview of school psychologists to assess? *By Ken McCallion*

In many boards there is a controversy around how to access FM sound systems (i.e., a cable-free amplification and broadcast audio system) for students with hearing impairment or suspected auditory difficulties. Many members of my provincial speech association will tell you, 'try the FM sound system without the diagnosis' and see if auditory attention and efficiency improve.

Currently Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) defines a learning disability as a profile in which most cognitive functions are average but there is a contrasting cognitive processing problem (sometimes reflected in a discrepant score but not necessarily). Central auditory processing and its disorders has historically been the province of audiologists to measure and the referring physician to diagnose. Sadly very few families that I serve can access CAP testing because it is not covered by provincial health insurance plans and is thus extra billed and hard to find.

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“what possible reason can be found, to not treat auditory processing deficits just as any other processing deficit central to a learning disability?”

Yet as soon as an FM sound field goes into a classroom everyone's auditory attention is improved, the atmosphere is calmer and the teacher's stress decreases because they can be more flexible in use of vocal register as well as vocal volume. They don't always have to stay in a presentation

register or dramatic voice with room-filling volume. They can more easily drop into a friendly register, group or consultation register with minimal volume and voice stress. This puts an end to behavioural modelling of talking-out behaviour and the students' own vocal behaviour improves based on the more-flexible adult model.

Last but not least, the child with diagnosed or suspected central auditory processing disorder gets essential technology for accessing the curriculum. They are probably also spared an incorrect diagnosis of ADHD. And they may avoid developing a major phonologically-based reading delay.

Given that CAP tests like the SCAN-3:C or SCAN-C have Level B user qualifications, what possible reason can be found, to not treat auditory processing deficits just as any other processing deficit central to a learning disability? The test's real-time psychoacoustics are highly specified but so are the visual-psychophysical properties of highly speeded subtests in the WISC-IV or CTOPP (Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing). So long as the psychoacoustics are established as appropriate and yield both reliable results and have external validity to classrooms, then practitioners do not need specific graduate training in psychoacoustics to be qualified to give these tests and diagnose CAP.

My proposal is that discussions with Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario and perhaps also NASP be opened on the viability of a cognitive deficit model of learning disability based on auditory processing deficit or delay. Delay would be a more appropriate term below age eight. At that age most students who are going to catch up in CAP have done so. Disability would be more of an appropriate term after age eight.

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**STUDENT'S VOICE**

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## **Accreditation of School Psychology Programs in Canada: What does it mean for Students?**

**by Rashmeen Nirmal and Alexandra Percy, University of British Columbia**

In some areas of psychology, such as school psychology, there are abundant job opportunities at the master's level. However, for many students today there is a necessity to pursue a doctorate in psychology in order to work in the profession and to seek full professional registration or licensure with credentialing bodies. Selecting the right graduate program can be a difficult process that students go through. Although many factors are considered, such as program location, funding, and faculty research interests, most prospective students at one point in their decision ask themselves, just how important is it for the program they will complete their graduate training at to be accredited?

Recently, the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) has begun to accredit school psychology programs in Canada, in addition to accrediting other professional psychology programs for quite some time. From a student's point of view, there are several advantages of completing training at an accredited institution, for example, attending a high-quality program, earning sought-out internship placements, and ease of credentialing upon graduation. Accredited programs that have undergone the rigorous screening process by CPA must meet a pre-established set of standards designed to help ensure program quality. Accreditation bodies such as the CPA ensure that the program meets the guidelines for what currently is considered to be important skills that young professionals entering the field should possess. Yet, some programs that are not accredited can be of equal quality to programs that are accredited. However, students may rate accredited programs more favourably, and may perceive such programs as being more credible and of higher quality. Knowing that a program is accredited may give potential applicants the peace of mind that they will be well prepared upon commencing their professional journey. Many individuals who are considering pursuing graduate education often factor in the programs accreditation status when selecting which programs to apply to. Many students will go so far as to only apply to accredited programs as there is a perception that accredited programs are better for future career prospects.



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Another advantage of attending an accredited program is that it facilitates the internship application process, a process that is a mandatory component of successful completion of a doctoral program. Some internship opportunities are restricted to students from accredited programs, especially internships with American institutions. Although there are internships that students coming from unaccredited programs can apply to, not only do these students have to complete more extensive applications, but applicants applying from an accredited program are often viewed more favourably. Furthermore, when applying for registration or licensure as a psychologist upon completion of internship and other doctoral requirements, students graduating from accredited programs do not have to produce the documentation themselves to demonstrate that the program he or she is graduating from meets the high standards of training put forth by credentialing bodies, because it is assumed that the program meets the necessary requirements.

While there are several advantages to studying at an accredited program, there can be disadvantages from a graduate program's point of view. For example, the process of seeking accreditation for graduate programs is time-intensive and laborious in nature. The process can be expensive and requires considerable time devoted to preparing and reviewing documents for submission. Programs may find themselves re-evaluating and revising their program requirements or curriculum based on accreditation expectations, a process which requires the expertise of all program faculty and departmental approval. Although this may be considered an advantage to the program in the broad scheme of things, it is a process that is time-demanding and requires full commitment, commitment that some graduate programs may choose not to undertake. Further, often a pre-view visit is conducted by an accreditation consultant to review the program's possibility of moving forward with accreditation. This factor, in addition to the extensive requirements for accreditation, could possibly be a daunting initial step in the process, which some programs may choose to avoid entirely. What does this mean for students and graduate programs? When programs choose not to move forward with the accreditation process, it may impact factors such as student enrolment as some students may think the program is not up to academic or professional standards and inferior to accredited programs. Students may believe that the program is not equipped to best meet one's academic and professional ambitions. As well, the program and university may potentially lose a certain level of "prestige" if they choose not to participate in the accreditation process (Fagan & Wise, 2007, p. 232).

Although there are disadvantages involved in the accreditation process, the advantages of obtaining accreditation are beneficial for both graduate programs and students. The reflection and reviewing process that graduate programs go through when seeking accreditation can be a beneficial process in maximizing the program's strengths and making

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changes for the better. Students already enrolled in graduate programs that are seeking accreditation can play an instrumental role in the process by providing student insight on the program and helping with the accreditation requirements, which is an educational benefit. Further, prospective students will have a piece of mind knowing that they are attending a program that has undergone the rigorous process of accreditation and as a result, meets a set of academic and professional standards. Overall, programs that seek accreditation can earn a level of established credibility and prestige, and may attract a larger number of students. Students seeking graduate training at accredited programs can be assured that they are receiving high-quality training that will best prepare them to be a successful school psychologist.

Fagan, T. K., & Wise, P. S. (2007). *School psychology: Past, present, and future*. Bethesda, MD: NASP Publications.

## NEWS & NOTES

- November 8-12, 2010 has been declared **School Psychology Awareness Week** by NASP. See their webpage for resources under Key Links
- November 15, 2010 CPA Convention Submission Deadline. See <http://www.cpa.ca/convention/> for details.
- New Funding Opportunity in International School Psychology! For details see <http://www.ispaweb.org/>
- **Article of interest to school psychologists:** The most recent issue of the CJSP contains an article by Saklofske, Zhu, Coalson, Raiford and Weiss which has a Canadian norms table for the Cognitive Proficiency Index (CPI). This is the companion to the General Ability Index (GAI) and encompasses working memory and processing speed subtests. See <http://cjs.sagepub.com/> and search for Vol 25(3), 277-286.
- Graduate Students! Want to join our newsletter editorial board? Contact me at [cpa.edexchange@gmail.com](mailto:cpa.edexchange@gmail.com) with a brief description of yourself to see how you can become involved.
- Trainers in school psychology, I encourage you as well as your students to get involved and contribute to the newsletter!