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Meredith White-McMahon

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2009

ABSTRACT

The Effects of Life Space Crisis Intervention on Troubled Students' Socioemotional
Growth and Development

by

Meredith White-McMahon

M. Ed., University of Manitoba, 1991
B. Ed., University of Winnipeg, 1977

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education
Teacher Leadership

Walden University
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ABSTRACT

When educators focus primarily on increasing academic achievement, they have less time to understand and meet students' socioemotional needs. An increase in antisocial behavior, school crises, and the expectation of safe and effective learning environments has created a need for intervention models that address students' socioemotional needs. Few empirical studies have looked at the implementation and effects of Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI) and no extant research has examined the effectiveness of LSCI on socioemotional development. The purpose of this quantitative cross-sectional survey study was to examine teacher perceptions of the effects of LSCI strategies on the socioemotional development of troubled students. Participants in the study included 21 special education teachers in three psychoeducational programs in the North Central region of the State of Georgia. Fifty-four critical incidence survey forms documenting the perceived effects of LSCI on student socioemotional development were collected during a ten-week period. These data, comparing teacher perceived student levels of socioemotional development in the areas of sensitivity, awareness, and self-regulation of behavior, before and after LSCI, were analyzed using an estimated one sample t-test. This two-tailed analysis yielded a statistically significant difference, indicating that student socioemotional development scores did improve after LSCI interventions. The results of this study indicate that LSCI helps students develop more adaptive ways to respond to stressful situations. Information from this study contributes to social change in that LSCI and similar programs can be an alternative to suspension, improve attendance, reduce dropout rates, and potentially increase academic achievement.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this paper to my husband Bobby and my son Ryan. I could not have made it to this point without your love, support, and patience. Thank you for understanding.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

The enactment of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation in 2001 required educational stakeholders to demand higher academic standards of all students, including those with disabilities. In addition, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004 has invoked a more inclusionary philosophy where, "to the maximum extent possible, all special students are to be taught in the mainstream at their local school and with their age peers" (Long, Morse, Fecser, & Newman, 2007, p. xvii). However, this focus on academic improvement seems to be at the expense of the "significant relationship between students' emotional and cognitive needs" (p. xv). According to Long et al. when schools and teachers focus primarily on increasing academic achievement, they have less time to understand and meet students' socioemotional needs.

As teachers and schools adapt to the legislative demands of NCLB and IDEA, they are faced with two other issues that impact this educational restructuring. With more troubled and at-risk students with, "identifiable mental health issues in the educational system than ever before, and no let up in sight", (Long et al., 2007, p. xvi), regular education teachers are seeing more of these students in their classrooms. In addition, "enormous social changes have shaped, reshaped, distorted, and sometimes decimated the basic parameters for healthy [teen] development" (Hersch, 1998, p. 18) creating deeper and more profound personal difficulties for these already troubled students (Hersch). Fear, depression, anger, and anxiety replace the ability to focus on school life and many

students are easily frustrated and have the potential of losing their tempers and creating a

school-wide crisis (Long et al., p. 316). Recent incidents of school violence and antisocial

behavior suggested that there is a conflict between proposed educational goals of

academic excellence and the need to meet the socioemotional needs of students. These

incidents also suggested that schools can put themselves in a position of risk if they

ignore these socioemotional needs at the expense of other goals (Long et al; Skiba &

Peterson, 2003).

A concern over school violence and antisocial behavior has led to an increasing

expectation that educators provide safe and effective learning environments for all

students (Quinn, 2000). This has created interest in school-based models that will provide

ways of assisting students whose problems and conflicts can escalate into a crisis that

could pose serious dangers to peers, staff members, and themselves (Long, Fecser, &

Brendtro, 1998; Long et al., 2007). Traditional educational behavior management

paradigms rely on punishment and exclusion including suspension and expulsion based

on zero-tolerance policies (Long, Wood, & Fecser, 2001; Skiba & Knesting, 2001; Van

Acker, 2007). These reactive strategies often make the situation worse, creating an

adversarial climate that can preclude both learning and safety (Skiba & Peterson, 1999).

Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI) uses problems as opportunities for growth and

learning. Used as a form of early intervention, LSCI can limit or prevent student crises

from escalating, reduce school violence, and increase academic opportunities for at-risk and troubled students (Long et al., 1998).

Exploring the special education special education teachers' perceptions of LSCI intervention strategies on socioemotional development of troubled students in psychoeducational programs may indicate a crisis intervention model that educators could implement to help their students improve socioemotional development. In this study, special education teachers' perceptions of LSCI intervention strategies on socioemotional development of troubled students in three psychoeducational programs in the North Central region of the state of Georgia was investigated.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature as it pertains to the socioemotional development needs of troubled students. It begins by considering the research on zero-tolerance policies and how strategies like LSCI can make a positive contribution to improved student behavior and school safety. It will then look at self-determination theory, brain-based learning theory, and psychoeducational theory as a basis for the development of a safe and supportive learning environment. The self-determination theories of Deci (1975), Deci and Ryan (1980, 1985, 2000, 2002), Deci, Koestner, and Ryan (1999), and Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, and Ryan (1991); brain-based learning theories of Damasio (1994), LeDoux (1996, 2002), Sousa (2006), Sapolsky (2004); and the psychoeducational theories of Long et al. (1961, 1998, 2001, 2007) and Redl (1959) will be discussed.

Chapter 2 will also include an overview of the development of psychoeducational

practices, as well as the theories and strategies of LSCI. The chapter concludes with

examples of how the use of LSCI can positively impact school safety, increase academic

success, and potentially decrease the drop-out rate of all troubled students.

<div align="center">Background</div>

There are multiple perspectives that tried to explain why some students are

unsuccessful in traditional schools. One perspective is student-centered (Raywid, 1998).

It examines various risk-factor characteristics such as disruptive behavior, the need for

academic remediation, social skill dysfunction, family disruption or conflict, and chronic

absenteeism (Aron, 2006; Kleiner, Porch, & Farris, 2002; Lange & Sletten, 2002;

McCall, 2003; Quinn, Poirier, Faller, Gable & Tonelson, 2006). Another perspective

suggested that the school system is to blame. It does not effectively meet the diverse and

rapidly changing needs of today's youth (Aron & Zweig, 2003; Powell, 2003; Raywid,

1994, 2001). The third perspective is a combination of the first two. It suggested that,

"the emotional problems in children are a symptom of a malfunctioning ecosystem rather

than an individual pathology" (Quinn et al., 2006, p. 11). In this position, both student

characteristics and systemic problems contribute to the issue. Advocates of this view

believed that teachers need to work with both the student and the system (Fitzsimons-

Hughes et al., 2006; Hamre & Pianta, 2005; Klem & Connell, 2004; Ladd & Burgess,

2001; McNeely & Falci, 2004; Wentzel, 2002; and Wilson, 2004). By doing so they create an environment of care and support that encourages learning and meets their students' socioemotional needs.

An understanding of self-determination theory (SDT) is important for educators trying to create an environment of care and support. This understanding provides a framework for the study and understanding of socioemotional development (Deci & Ryan, 2002). SDT begins with the assumption that people are active organisms who strive to master on-going challenges in life and use these experiences to create a sense of self (Deci & Ryan). This sense of self revolves around the socioemotional needs of competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Deci et al., 1999). In order to create a positive sense of self and function effectively, people require social and environmental support. Their surroundings can either support or thwart this socioemotional development (Deci & Ryan).

SDT is formulated from four mini-theories. Each mini-theory evolved and developed over time to explain phenomena based on different sets of motivational issues (Burton, Lydon, D'Allesandro, & Koestner, 2006; Deci & Ryan, 2002; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Deci et al., 1999; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Deci & Ryan, 1980; Ryan & Connell, 1989; Deci, 1975). The four mini-theories that make up SDT have direct implications for schools as they help to explain why some students behave the way

they do and how we should best educate them. The first mini-theory, cognitive evaluation theory, addresses the effects of social contexts on intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This theory argued that intrinsic motivation (doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable) is maintained only when people feel competent and self-determined (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Deci et al., 1999; Deci & Ryan, 1980; Deci, 1975). The second mini-theory is organismic integration theory (OIT). It addressed the concept of internalization with respect to the development of the five stages of extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Connell, 1989). It made the assumption that individuals are naturally inclined to integrate their on-going experiences and work towards the internalization of regulations. It also assumed that these individuals have developed the necessary inner resources (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Third, causality orientations theory described individual differences in people's tendencies toward self-determined behavior and toward orienting to the environment in ways that support their self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Deci & Ryan, 1985). It took the necessary inner resources mentioned in OIT and described the "relatively stable individual differences in one's motivational orientation towards the social world" (Deci & Ryan, 2002, p. 21). Finally, basic needs theory elaborated the concept of autonomy, competence, and relatedness with their relation to psychological health and well-being (Vansteenkiste, Lens, & Deci, 2006; Deci & Ryan, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2000). These

needs are innate, natural, universal, and essential for the health and well-being of all people (Deci & Ryan, 2002). When these needs are satisfied, people will exist in a state of well-being (Deci & Ryan). However, Vansteenkiste et al., (2006) and Deci and Ryan believe that if people are thwarted, they will show evidence of a lack of initiative and responsibility.

When SDT is applied to educational settings, it helps educators to understand why some students are successful in traditional educational settings and some are not. It has become apparent that self-determination in students positive outcomes for individuals and society (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier & Ryan, 1991, Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Grolnick & Ryan, 1989; Patrick, Ryan, & Kaplan, 2007; Pelletier, Fortier, Vallerand, & Briere, 2001). Legault, Green-Demers, & Pelletier, (2006) asserted that intrinsic motivation and higher quality learning flourish in environments that satisfy socioemotional human needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness.

Learning environments that satisfy human socioemotional needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness do more than encourage higher quality learning. They are vital because the key factors in determining whether or not students are successful at school, in society, or in the world of work are not intelligence or academic achievement; but are instead, social-emotional, and behavioral growth (Fitzsimons-Hughes et al., 2006, p. 19). Supportive and caring relationships within schools promote academic motivation and

reduce risk-behaviors like violence and aggression in adolescents (Catalano, Haggerty, Oesterle, Fleming, & Hawkins, 2004; Hamre & Pianta, 2005; McNeely & Falci, 2004; Wentzel, 2002; Wilson, 2004). Coversely, emotionally distant, uninvolved, cold, or controlling teachers can exacerbate a stressful learning environment, making it more likely that distressed students will develop conflictual relationships with all teachers (Hamre & Pianta, 2005, Wentzel, 2002).

Jensen (2000b) believed "the most common cause of academic demotivation is chronic exposure to distress and/or threat" (p. 129), a state in which many at-risk and troubled students find themselves. Brain-based research on learning reinforced the cultivation and maintenance of a positive, nonthreatening learning environment for at-risk students. It stressed that biologically the human brain is designed for survival and that data affecting survival and emotion take priority over data for new learning (Baker, 2007; Caine, Caine, McClintic, & Klimek, 2005; Jensen, 2000a; Sousa, 2006). For at-risk and troubled students, the focus is often on their stresses and distresses rather than on their educational goals (Jensen, 2000b). Therefore, setting an appropriate emotional climate is essential for psychoeducational programs for at-risk students (Caine et al; Jensen; Sousa). Educators need to orchestrate learning environments that are emotionally safe, providing freedom from rejection and intimidation. Students need to feel that they

have a sense of control, a sufficient time to learn, and the ability to deal with or get assistance dealing with their stress (Jensen).

Problem Statement

Students whose socioemotional needs are not being met are more likely to be angry and hostile and act-out in school (Long et al., 2007). Without some form of intervention, Van Acker (2007) believed that troubled students are " at serious risk for negative outcomes, including school dropout, vocational maladjustment, drug and alcohol abuse, increased rates of arrest and incarceration, relationship problems, and higher hospitalization and mortality rates" (p.6). The problem this study addressed was to determine if LSCI, a therapeutic strategy that views student problems or stressful incidents as opportunities for learning and growth, assisted students in meeting their socioemotional needs.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative cross-sectional survey study was to identify special education teachers' perceived effects of LSCI interventions on student socioemotional development in a K -12 psychoeducational program. The independent variable was defined as LSCI reclaiming interventions. The dependent variable was defined as student socioemotional development (sensitivity, awareness, and self-regulation of behavior).

Research Question

The following research question was addressed in this study: What effects do special education teachers perceive that LSCI interventions had on student socioemotional development?

Hypotheses

The following statistical hypotheses were tested in this study. H_0 represents the null hypothesis, and H_a represents the alternative hypothesis.

H_{01}: Special education teachers perceive that LSCI interventions have no effect on student socioemotional development.

H_{a1}: Special education teachers perceive that LSCI interventions have an effect on student socioemotional development.

Nature of the Study

A quantitative cross-sectional survey design was used to answer the research question. Specifically, desired outcomes were measured after each intervention and analyzed to determine how the independent variable, LSCI strategies, were perceived by the special education teachers to effect the socioemotional development (sensitivity, awareness, and self-regulation of behavior) of students in a K-12 psychoeducational program.

The participants in this study consisted of n = 21 special education teachers in three psychoeducational programs in the state of Georgia. Data was collected using a survey matrix (see Appendix A). These three or four Likert-like items (depending on the intervention) were based on a five point scale ranging from "No self-awareness (1) to Insight and Responsibility (5)". These measures were used to track perceived socioemotional development during each intervention. The teachers involved in the intervention marked their perceived level of each socioemotional development outcome listed on the matrix. A total score for the different outcomes was tallied. All information that was used in this analysis was derived from this survey matrix.

As the survey matrix was self-created, the instrument was pilot tested to ensure that the staff were able to understand and uniformly score the levels of perceived student socioemotional development. Three staff piloted the survey matrix. These staff members did not participate in the study.

The data was collected over a period of 10 weeks between August and mid-October 2008. The data was analyzed using an estimated single sample t-test to determine if there was a difference in student socioemotional development from beginning to end of the intervention. The Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. A thorough description of the population, sample, instrumentation and

materials, data collection procedures, and the data analysis plan of this quantitative cross-sectional survey study are detailed in Chapter 3.

Few empirical studies have looked at the implementation and effects of LSCI and reported data in their evaluations. Grskovic and Goetze (2005) assessed the effects of LSCI on the challenging behaviors of four learning handicapped (IQ range of 70-85) 7th and 10th students in a special school in Germany. The authors felt that the results of the study indicated that LSCI was, "very effective at reducing disruptive behavior for these students and that the results were maintained" (p. 234). However, they suggested that further studies be done to assess the effects of LSCI as a direct measure of behavior of students of average IQ.

Dawson (2004) looked at the effects of LSCI in a large urban center junior high school for students identified with emotional disturbances. Using an experimental and a control school in New York City, she found that with the implementation of LSCI (a) the frequency of crises decreased significantly, (b) the suspension rates decreased, (c) more students were mainstreamed and transferred to less restrictive settings, (d) the attendance rates were higher, and (e) the staff felt more able to manage crisis. Like Grskovic and Goetze (2005), Dawson (2004) recommended further studies with populations in different settings, of different age groups, and for longer time periods. She also suggested

that the effects of LSCI on behavioral and emotional strengths needed to be the subject of future research (p. 229).

DeMagistris and Imber (1980) looked at the effects of LSCI on the academic and social performance of behaviorally disordered children. Attendance and work behavior increased while disturbances decreased for the boys in the treatment group as compared to the control group. The authors concluded that LSCI was highly effective in this regard. In addition to the few empirical studies, two anecdotal reports (Morse & Small, 1959; Long et al., 1961) indicated that LSCI was effective in reducing aggressive behavior towards peers. Data were not presented to support these claims.

The limited amount of empirical research substantiated the need for additional research on the effects of LSCI for at-risk and troubled students. This is the first study that will identify special education teachers' perceptions of student socioemotional development in an educational setting.

<div align="center">Definition of Terms</div>

At-risk/troubled students: a group of youth who are currently struggling to be successful in their roles as adolescents and who are socially, educationally, and (sometimes) economically disadvantaged, relative to their peers (Aron & Zweig, 2003, p. 3).

Antisocial behavior: is defined as self-defeating patterns of behavior that usually involve "aggression, vandalism, rule infractions, defiance of adult authority, and violations of social norms and values" (Van Acker, 2007, p. 5)

Brain-based learning: a theory of learning that combines various disciplines (chemistry, biology, neurology, sociology, psychology, and genetics), attributing the learning process to how the brain naturally functions (Jensen, 2000b, p. 6).

Ecology/Ecological view: in the biological sciences, is defined as: relations or interactions between organisms, their environment, and other organisms. "The ecological view defines emotional disturbance as the expression of discord in the on-going transactions between a child and other in his or her unique world" (Cantrell, Cantrell, Valore, Jones, & Fecser, 1999, p. 1).

Life Space Crisis Intervention: a therapeutic, verbal strategy for turning crisis situations into learning opportunities for students with chronic patterns of self-defeating behavior.

Perception: "The process of becoming aware of objects, qualities, or relations via the sense organs; includes such activities as observing, recognizing, discriminating, and grasping meaning" (Goldenson, 1970, p. 936).

Psychoeducation: "A process of psychological assessment and the subsequent design of remedial programs . . . [where] the choice of the particular psychoeducational

method is often tied to the educator's assumptions or beliefs regarding the nature and etiology of a child's exceptionality" (Psychoeducation, 1986, p. 1266) or "a well planned blending of methods designed for meeting growth needs of children and youth" (Brendtro & Long, 2005).

Self-Determination Theory: a general theory of motivation and the development of personality within social contexts, focusing on the degree to which human behaviors are self-determined. (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Zero tolerance: "A disciplinary policy that is intended primarily as a method of sending a message that certain behaviors will not be tolerated, by punishing all offences severely, no matter how minor" (Skiba & Peterson, 1999, p. 373).

<center>Assumptions</center>

For the purpose of this study, the following assumptions will be made:

1. It is assumed that the teachers implementing the LSCI strategies possess an advanced level of LSCI training.

2. It is assumed that many psychoeducational program students have been removed from the traditional school system.

3. It is assumed that many psychoeducational program students have difficulty with behavior regulation.

4. It is assumed that many psychoeducational program students struggle with positive feelings of competency, relatedness, and autonomy.

Delimitations

In this quantitative cross-sectional survey study, one delimitation is that the research will occur only in psychoeducational K-12 programs in the state of Georgia. A second delimitation is that only students in these programs will participate in the study. A third delimitation is that there is no experimental or control group due to the ethical considerations of not providing crisis intervention for all students who require it. In all cases, this may limit the ability to generalize findings to other populations. Finally, only LSCI strategies will be implemented and findings can, therefore, only be generalized to interventions using LSCI.

Limitations

In this quantitative cross-sectional survey study, improved relationships with the special education teachers who conduct the interventions could pose a limitation. To reduce this limitation, students in crisis will interact with more than on intervening teacher, allowing multiple interpretations of student socioemotional growth. As well, factors related to individual differences in teacher perceptions of student socioemotional development could limit the reliability of some results. To reduce this limitation, training

sessions and discussions of standardized scoring techniques for all participating staff will occur before the survey matrix is used.

Significance of the Study

This study investigated special education teachers' perceived effects of LSCI interventions on student socioemotional development. While various aspects of the effectiveness of LSCI had been previously studied, no extant research had considered teachers perceptions of the effectiveness of LSCI on student socioemotional development. This study identified and provided needed information about the effect of LSCI on student socioemotional development.

This study is significant for educators in psychoeducational programs that serve students with emotional and behavioral issues as it will provide data on its contributions to troubled students' socioemotional development, an area not yet studied. This study also provides important research for all teachers who work with at-risk and troubled students in all classrooms. This study is significant to those educators and trainers involved in LSCI as it will add to the existing limited body of research. This study is also of value for regular educators, as LSCI can provide vital information regarding behavior problems that could affect learning and decrease drop-out rates.

The review of educational psychology research showed the benefits of the development and maintenance of a positive, non-threatening learning environment for

students. A review of the research on the impact of LSCI showed that this strategy has a positive effect on behavior and can result in a decrease in suspensions, poor attendance, antisocial, inappropriate behavior, and school alienation of troubled students in restrictive settings. However, the potential importance of the development of the effectiveness of student socioemotional development has not been examined. This study adds pertinent information to the existing best practices in special education, general education, and LSCI theory.

Social change can occur when an effort to provide the safest and most effective learning environment occurs. However, for this to happen it is necessary to support academic learning by addressing the socioemotional development needs of all students. Proactive interventions, like LSCI, help students develop more adaptive ways to respond to stressful situations which, in turn, could promote an alternative to suspension, reduce dropout rates, improve attendance, and potentially increase academic achievement. Positive changes like these will benefit the students, the schools, and society in general.

As legislative and societal changes modify and restructure the educational system, it becomes more important that the system is able to meet the socioemotional needs as well as the academic needs of troubled students. Schools logically function as a place to help these students by providing emotional support and skills as well as a venue for academic achievement (Fitzsimmons-Hughes et al., 2007). Antisocial behavior that is

not addressed leads to school failure and an increased drop-out rate that in turn leads to political, social, and economic problems for society as a whole (VanAcker, 2007) . Long et al. (2007) believe that by re-focusing on problems and crisis as an opportunity for improved understanding and change, strength-based programs like LSCI can help troubled students develop positive self-evaluations, be self-assured and confident, experience enhanced personal relationships, and can base that on a more accurate perception of reality that will make their lives happier (p. 634).

<div align="center">Conclusion</div>

The 1999 event at Columbine High School in Colorado has forced educators to acknowledge the importance of establishing environments where students' socioemotional needs can be met. The role of public education needs to change to keep up with the pace of an ever-changing society (Hersch, 1998). Significant increases in the number of at-risk and troubled students in North American schools along with, "an awareness of the deeper more profound nature of their personal and ecological difficulties" (Long et al., 2007, p. xvi) require an acknowledgement that socioemotional factors affect learning. This study supports the challenge all educators face as they work to fulfill the mandates of NCLB (a) being safe, (b) closing the achievement gap between high and low performing and advantaged and disadvantaged children, (c) preventing at-

risk youth from dropping out, and (d) providing delinquent youth with a support system to ensure their continued education.

The remainder of this study will consist of four additional chapters. Chapter 2 consists of a review of the related literature as it pertains to the socioemotional development needs of troubled students. It begins by looking briefly at zero tolerance policies and their effect on the learning environment. It then considers self-determination theory, brain-based learning theory, psychoeducational theory, and developmental theory as bases for the development of a safe and supportive learning environment. Finally, it examines the theories, strategies, and skills of LSCI. Chapter 3 explains the research methodology, and describes in detail this quantitative cross-sectional survey research project. Chapter 4 provides information on data collection, data analysis procedures, and the results of this study. Finally, chapter 5 provides an interpretation of the findings and conclusions. It will also detail the significance of the study, make recommendations for future research, and consider the impact of the results on social change as it pertains to education specifically, and society in general.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative cross-sectional survey study was to identify special education teachers' perceived effects of LSCI interventions on student socioemotional development in a K -12 psychoeducational program. With a significant increase in the number of at-risk and troubled students in U. S. schools, teachers struggle with the inherent conflict created by the proposed educational goals of academic excellence and equity-based meeting of needs (Long et al., 2007, p. xvii). LSCI is a comprehensive, multi-modal strategy that Long et al. believe builds a positive learning climate for all students and provides effective interventions for students presenting challenging problems (p. 315).

This chapter examines the literature related to meeting the socioemotional needs of at-risk and troubled students. In that examination, the following topics will be addressed (a) how zero tolerance policies create a negative, ineffective learning environment for troubled students, (b) the theories behind creating a positive, effective learning environment for troubled students, (c) how psychoeducational teaching strategies help students' maladaptive behaviors, (d) the essential skills and strategies of LSCI, and (e) how LSCI helps to improve the socioemotional development of students and lead to safer, more effective schools for all students.

The search for related literature for this study was conducted through several venues. The Walden library databases in EBSCO (PsycArticles, Sage, ERIC, Education

Research Complete, Academic Search Primer) provided a wealth of information.

Dissertations from the ProQuest database were read and used as sources of information.

Books on specific theorists, strategies, and methods were read. An Internet search

through Google and Google Scholar helped to identify scholarly articles, books, and

websites. All citations from these sources were referenced in this paper.

The objective of this study was to identify special education teachers' perception

of the effectiveness of LSCI on students' socioemotional development in

psychoeducational K – 12 programs. In a humanistic learning environment where

problems and crises are viewed as an opportunity for students to experience insight into

their self-defeating behavior patterns, it is hypothesized that students will grow socially

and emotionally. They will also learn skills that will help them better manage volatile

emotional situations in all facets of life. The implications for social change and potential

benefits of this include (a) students who are better able to cope with their stressors in

school and life in general, (b) safer, more effective schools for all students, and (c) a

reduction in the high school drop-out rate.

The National Dropout Prevention Center (2006) confirmed that:

> The dropout problem is not an inevitable, immutable feature of American
> education. Demographics matter, but what happens in schools has a great impact
> on whether students stay in school and graduate. Recent research suggests that,
> even for students who have difficult home lives, dropping out has much to do
> with how schools operate and the educational experiences students have within

them. (p. 3)

Providing a realistic, caring, and supportive environment that meets the needs of students can promote change by helping students' social adjustment through better self-regulation of behavior and better choices, including the choice to remain in school.

Safe Schools and Zero Tolerance – The Impact on School Climate

Since 1992-1993, the National School Safety Center has been collecting data on violent deaths in schools, on school grounds, or at school functions (Quinn, 2000). Despite public opinion to the contrary, "school-associated violent deaths have dropped drastically since the 1992 – 1993 school year" (p. 2). The media, however, have asserted that school violence is on the rise (Schiraldi, 1999), and despite current data to the contrary, the public perception was that schools were becoming increasingly less safe (Skiba & Peterson, 2003: Quinn, 2000). These perceptions have led to the formulation of zero tolerance policies in many schools and school districts in the United States. While these policies were implemented with the best of intentions, it can be argued that the effectiveness of these policies is questionable (Browne, 2005; Fries & DeMitchell, 2007), that they alienate children, exacerbate misbehavior (Insley, 2001), and result in what Skiba and Peterson (2003) believe is disciplinary exclusion that appears to be associated with many potentially negative outcomes for both students and the student climate (p.69).

Fries and DeMitchell (2007) believed that zero tolerance policies provide both opportunities and obstacles. They claimed that while "they provide opportunities for establishing and maintaining a safe environment for students, educators, and staff, they also present obstacles for equal opportunity for all students" (p. 216). In their mixed methods exploratory research study, they examined the perceptions of preservice and inservice teachers on zero tolerance and the policy's relationship to fairness. Using legal and qualitative analyses, the findings of two focus groups suggested that zero tolerance policies were unreasonable as each situation is contextual and intuitive (p. 222). Blanket zero tolerance policies did not leave room to consider the circumstances or nature of each event.

In a meta-analysis of available literature on the effectiveness of zero tolerance and suspensions and expulsions, Skiba and Knesting (2001) found little or no evidence of the efficacy of zero tolerance (p. 17). Instead, they found many unintended effects in student behavioral and emotional reactions. According to the authors:

> While school personnel see school disruption as primarily a student choice and disciplinary consequences as an appropriate reaction to that choice, students, especially at-risk students, tend to view confrontational classroom management or school disciplinary strategies as playing a significant role in escalating student misbehavior, especially if they believe rules or policies are being unfairly applied. In particular, students who are already at risk for disruption may see confrontational discipline as a challenge to escalate their behavior. (p. 33)

Skiba and Knesting believed that not tolerating weapons or violence in schools was both

sensible and reasonable, but also suggested that there was no evidence that the

overextension of the zero tolerance paradigm had led to improved school safety (p. 36).

Instead, they offered the following alternative recommendations based on best practice

knowledge of what worked in both school safety and school discipline (a) use zero

tolerance (suspension and expulsion) only for the most serious and severe behaviors, (b)

replace one-size fits all strategies with a graduated system of discipline, (c) expand

options for schools through training in effective preventative identification and

intervention alternatives, (d) implement these alternative intervention options, and finally,

(e) evaluate all school discipline strategies to assure that they are not only effective, but

are making a positive contribution to improving school safety and student behavior (p.

37).

In their 2003 article on school discipline as instruction, Skiba and Peterson

suggested "an instructional approach to school discipline reflects the consistent findings

of behavioral and cognitive psychology concerning which procedures are most likely to

be effective in producing student learning" (p. 72). LSCI can provide a cognitive,

behavioral, developmental, and psychodynamic approach that will assist in the

development of troubled students' socioemotional development, making them more

likely to be successful in traditional educational settings.

Self-Determination Theory and Self-Regulation in Educational Settings

Some students are successful in traditional educational settings and some are not. An understanding of self-determination theory (SDT) is important for educators as it provides a framework for the study and understanding of personality growth and development and the environmental conditions that encourage student success. It focused on the, "dialectic between the active growth-oriented human organism and social contexts that either support or undermine people's attempts to master and integrate their experiences into a coherent sense of self" (Deci & Ryan, 2002, p. 27). This coherent sense of self revolved around three psychological needs (a) competence, feeling effective in the social environment; (b) relatedness, feeling connected to others in the community; and (c) autonomy, being the perceived source of control over one's own behavior (Deci & Ryan). The fulfillment of these needs in social-contextual conditions facilitated the natural process of healthy psychological development and self-motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

SDT is formulated from four mini-theories. Each mini-theory evolved and developed over time to explain phenomena based on different sets of motivational issues that emerged from research (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Deci et al (1991) suggested that the four mini-theories that make up SDT have direct implications for schools as they helped

to explain why some students behaved the way they did and how we should best educate them.

The first mini-theory, cognitive evaluation theory (CET), addressed the effects of social contexts on intrinsic motivation. This theory argued that intrinsic motivation (doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable) is maintained only when people feel competent and self-determined (Deci & Ryan, 1985). When the school environment provided emotional support and academic encouragement, students felt an enhanced sense of competency and were therefore more likely to positively engage in task-related interactions (Hardre & Reeve, 2003). Conversely, students who had negative beliefs about their academic ability and effort were amotivated and more likely to be detached from school (Legault, Green-Demers & Pelletier, 2006).

From a CET perspective, the educational environment had a profound impact on intrinsic motivation because feelings of competence and autonomy were intertwined with intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Any attempt at extrinsic control, either in a positive (reward or praise) or negative (punishment or a deadline) way, was likely to negatively affect intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic forms of control diminish perceived competence and undermined the need to take responsibility for personal motivation or regulation (Deci et al., 1999). The self-deterministic idea that extrinsic forms of control diminish perceived competence had created controversy between self-determinists and

those that adhered to the behaviorist doctrine and continued to advocate the use of
reward-based incentive systems (Cameron & Pierce, 1994). Self-determination research
over a 30 year period suggested that the more controlling the school or classroom
context, the less intrinsically motivated and less self-regulated students would be
(Legault et al., 2006; Pelletier et al., 2001). In spite of very convincing evidence in
support of the fact that rewards undermined intrinsic motivation, educators continued to
use reward systems (Deci & Ryan, 2002) and the controversy continued.

The second mini-theory, organismic integration theory (OIT), addressed the
concept of internalization with respect to the development of the five stages of extrinsic
motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). It made the assumption that individuals were naturally
inclined to integrate their on-going experiences and work towards the internalization of
regulations, assuming they had developed the necessary inner resources (Deci & Ryan).

Furthermore, OIT viewed the internalization on a continuum (Figure 1) "with
points along the continuum representing distinct self-regulatory styles for behavior"
(Burton et al., 2006, p. 750). Extrinsically motivated behaviors covered the part of the
continuum between amotivation and intrinsic motivation, varying in their extent to which
their regulation was autonomous (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Intrinsic motivation represented
the most autonomous end of the continuum where intrinsic self-regulatory behavior had
been associated with positive outcomes (Reis, Sheldon, Gable, Roscoe, & Ryan, 2000)

and academic achievement (Grolnick & Ryan, 1989; Grolnick & Ryan, 1987). In

contrast, amotivation represented the least autonomous end of the continuum where non-

regulation and non-self-determined behavior outcomes were not necessarily positive

(Legault et al., 2006; Pelletier et al., 2001; Reis et al., 2000), and there is a lack of

academic achievement (Grolnick & Ryan, 1989; Grolnick & Ryan, 1987). Between these

two poles, moving progressively from amotivation to intrinsic motivation, were (a)

external regulation, where behavior occured because of reward or punishment; (b)

introjected regulation, where behavior was reinforced internally through anxiety or

emotions related to self-esteem; and (c) identified regulation, where the behavior was

valued but performed as a means to an end rather than for personal satisfaction (Deci &

Ryan, 2002).

Type of Motivation	AMOTIVATION	EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION				INTRINSIC MOTIVATION
Type of Regulation	Non-Regulation	External Regulation	Introjected Regulation	Identified Regulation	Integrated Regulation	Intrinsic Motivation
Quality of Behavior	Non-self determined					Self-Determined

Figure 1. The self-determination continuum.

Third, causality orientations theory described individual differences in people's

tendencies toward self-determined behavior and toward orienting to the environment in

ways that supported their self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 2002). It took the necessary

inner resources mentioned in OIT and described the "relatively stable individual differences in one's motivational orientation towards the social world" (Deci & Ryan, p. 21). It specified three orientations that differed in the degree to which they represent self-determination. Individuals could be (a) autonomously oriented, where behavior was regulated by interests and personal values; (b) controlled, where behavior was affected by external controls and directives; or (c) they could be impersonally oriented where behavior was perceived by the individual to be out of their control. These different levels of extrinsic motivation correlated to school engagement and outcome. For example, studies in education indicated that more autonomous extrinsic motivation was associated with more engagement (Patrick, Ryan & Kaplan, 2007), better performance (Grolnick & Ryan, 1987), higher quality learning (Deci et al., 1991), and a lower drop-out rate (Hardre & Reeve, 2004). Hardre and Reeve believed that "to promote an interest in learning, a valuing of education, and an affirmation of personal capabilities, educational climates need to find a way to support students' needs for competence and self-determination" (p. 347). Dissocial behavior often ensued when students lacked necessary perceived self-determination, competence, and academic ability (Long et al., 2001).This kind of behavior seemed counterintuitive, yet Long et al. asserted that students "seldom assume responsibility for changing their own behavior . . . until they are psychologically

empowered to make choices about their behavioral alternatives and are ready to accept the consequences of these choices" (p. 3).

Students in psychoeducation programs are often impersonally oriented. They believe that others control their actions and that their behavior is out of their control. An understanding of this state of development helps teachers to stop blaming the students for their behavior and, instead, allows teachers to teach the skills that will empower students to become responsible for their actions.

Finally, basic needs theory elaborated the concept of autonomy, competence, and relatedness with their relation to psychological health and well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2002). These needs were innate, natural, universal, and essential for the health and well-being of all people (Ryan & Deci, 2000). When these needs were satisfied, people would exist in a state of well-being, but if they were thwarted, people would show evidence of a lack of initiative and responsibility (Vansteenkiste et al., 2006).

When SDT was applied to educational settings, it helped educators to understand why some students were successful in traditional educational settings and some were not (Miserandino, 1996). Deci et al. (1991) believed that self-determination through intrinsic motivation and self-regulation in students "leads to the types of outcomes that are beneficial both to individuals and to society" (p. 342). SDT indicated that intrinsic motivation and higher quality learning flourished in contexts that satisfied human needs

for competence (Deci et al., 1991), autonomy (Pelletier et al., 2002), and relatedness (Furrer & Skinner, 2003). The idea of environments that satisfied the basic human needs through a positive climate of care and support was also considered in a brain-based model of learning.

<center>Brain-Based Learning Theory</center>

Brain-based research on learning reinforced the cultivation and maintenance of a positive, non-threatening learning environment for troubled students. It stressed that biologically the human brain was designed for survival and that data affecting survival and emotion took priority over data for new learning (Sousa, 2006). For troubled students, the focus was often on their stresses and distresses rather than on their educational goals (Jensen, 2000b). Therefore, setting an appropriate emotional climate was essential for troubled students (Caine et al., 2005). Educators needed to orchestrate learning environments that were emotionally safe, providing freedom from rejection and intimidation (Jensen, 200a). Students needed to feel that they had a sense of control, had sufficient time to learn, and the ability to deal with or get assistance dealing with their stress. In these environments, they were more likely to be successful (Jensen, 2000b).

Brain-based research on learning asserted that when people were under stress, brain function moved on a continuum from the slower, logical, thought processing pre-frontal cortex towards the quick moving amygdala in the mid-brain – the "fight or flight"

survival zone (Baker, 2007). As the level of stress increased, an individual moved

through levels of attention and motivation until maximum cognitive efficiency was

reached (Goleman, 2006). As the stressor increased past cognitive efficiency, it exceeded

the individual's ability to handle the stress (Sapolsky, 2004). Performance and learning

began to suffer as the survival part of the brain overrode the thinking part of the brain

(LeDoux, 2002). Progressively, people lost control of their ability to think through

situations (Sapolsky). As the pressure intensified, they were less able to "learn, hold

information in working memory, to react flexibly and creatively, to focus attention at

will, and plan and organize effectively . . . what neuroscientists call cognitive

dysfunction" (Goleman, p. 268).

Angry or troubled students were often cognitively dysfunctional (Baker, 2007).

"Under threat, the brain uses less of the reflective 'higher-order' thinking skills of the

frontal lobes and resorts to using more of the reflexive nature of the amygdala" (Jensen,

2000a, p. 237). When the amygdala was activated, cerebral blood flow (CBF) decreased

in the critical thinking/judgment part of the prefrontal cortex. CBF then increased in the

area of the brain that processes emotions. The result was an increase in emotional

response and a decrease in reflective thinking (Drevets & Raichle, 1998). Coincidently,

anxiety or stressors caused the brain to secrete high levels of the stress hormones which

further interfered with the processes for learning and memory.

Students who arrived at school carrying with them personal and ecological difficulties, were often tense, fearful, and in a state of emotional arousal. They were reactive to their surroundings, had a short-attention span, and were unable to problem-solve (Sousa, 2006). They were operating at a concrete level where they were unable to think about the future (Caine et al., 2005). They were forgetful, inflexible, often unreasonable, and unable to think creatively or critically (Jensen, 2000a).

Students who had been exposed to repeated threat or distress had chronically elevated stress-hormone levels (Sapolsky, 2004). High concentrations of these hormones made emotion dominant over cognition and contributed to decreased size and activity in the thought processing prefrontal cortex (Sapolsky). Extended exposure led to deterioration of the hippocampus, a structure in the brain that played a major role in consolidating learning and moving information from working memory to long term storage (Wolfe, 2001). Frontal lobe activity was reduced to focusing on the cause of the stress and how to deal with it while little attention was given to anything else (Sousa, 2006, p. 84). They became hypervigilant to conditions that could be stressful. When this happened, classroom behavior became increasingly aggressive as they became more stressed (Baker, 2007). If they were dissociative and internalized their responses to stress, increasingly they lost contact with reality, resorting to daydreaming and fantasizing

(Siegel, 1999). In either situation, these students were not physically or emotionally ready to learn.

Brain-based learning theorists believed that learning was psychophysiological (Damasio, 1994). Caine et al., (2005) supported this when they asserted that learners were "living systems where physical and mental functioning are interconnected" (p. 2). The brain relied on human experience to learn, one was constantly drawn to interact with others. These interactions and relationships changed the way synaptic connections either grew and connected to other brain cells or were pruned out as unnecessary (Baker, 2007). If early experiences with others were fearful or threatening, these experiences became deeply encoded in the brain and became a generalized representation of emotional relationships (Sapolsky, 2004). Repeated experiences of threat or fear were ingrained in neural circuits as a state of mind (Siegel, 1999). Chronic exposures to these kinds of experiences were so embedded that they affected the character of the individual involved. Life became shaped by reactivations of these memories, and they became the reality of present experience (Baker; Siegel).

Just as early experiences set physical patterns, new experiences altered them (LeDoux, 2002). "Most systems of the brain are plastic, that is, modified by experience, which means that the synapses involved are changed by experience" (LeDoux, p. 8). While negative emotions from threat and stress inhibited learning, arousal and positive

emotions contributed significantly to attention, perception, memory, and problem solving (LeDoux, 1996). However, "when students feel positive about their learning environment, endorphins are released in the brain. Endorphins produce a feeling of euphoria and stimulate the frontal lobes, thereby making the learning experience more pleasurable and successful" (Sousa, 2006, p. 84). Through the establishment of positive, non-threatening learning environments, teachers can create opportunities for distressed students to realize that success at school is a realistic possibility.

Recent brain research has provided opportunities for educators to understand how and under what circumstances the brain learned best (Baker, 2007). Setting an appropriate emotional climate was essential for learning (Sousa, 2006). Educators needed to orchestrate learning environments that were emotionally safe, providing freedom from rejection and intimidation (Caine et al., 2005). The learner needed to experience a state called relaxed alertness. "Relaxed alertness is the optimal state for learning [where] learners feel competent and confident and experience meaning or purpose a great deal of the time" (Caine et al., p. 17). In a positive school and classroom climate, all students felt physically safe and emotionally secure. They felt they had a sense of control, had sufficient time to learn, and the ability to deal with or get assistance dealing with their stress. In this climate, they were more likely to be successful (Jensen, 2000a).

Positive interactions with significant adults strengthened new, healthy neural pathways for troubled students. These interactions improved the way they interacted with and interpreted their world (Caine et al., 2005). Improved social capability led students to an ability to reflect on their own behavior, to develop empathy for others, and to develop a positive self-worth (Baker, 2007). These characteristics improved the chance for successful school completion by the avoidance of destructive patterns that often lead to school failure and subsequent under or unemployment in later life (Kokko & Pulkkinen, 2000).

School Connectedness, the Environment, and Educational Psychology

Educational psychology research on school connectedness supported the findings of brain-based research. It showed that a culture of care and support was necessary for the success of at-risk and troubled students (Hamre & Pianta, 2005).

In their study on school connectedness and health risk behaviors among adolescents, McNeely and Falci (2004) found that if adolescents perceived their teachers as fair and caring, they were less likely to become involved in health risk behaviors such as suicide, sexual activity, violent behavior, smoking, drinking, and drug use. These conclusions were drawn using a stratified sample from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, a nationally representative sample of high school students (p. 284). Interview data were collected in two waves. The first interview data were collected in-

home to measure health-risk behaviors while the second interview data were collected in-school to measure school connectedness. Responses were recorded on a five item Likert type scale measuring six health related outcomes and five potentially confounding socio-demographic characteristics that were known to predict both school connectedness and health-risk behaviors. Conditional multinomial and conditional logistic regressions were used to model the probability of transitions both into and out of health-risk behaviors. McNeely and Falci's findings suggested "conventional connectedness to teachers can counterbalance negative influences of bonding to peers with non-conventional behavioral norms" (p. 292).

Conversely, when students felt that they were not supported by teachers and perceived threat in classroom situations, they exhibited avoidance behaviors and delay tactics. These behaviors were accompanied by negative emotions like anger, denial, and hopelessness (Klem & Connell, 2004). They utilized longitudinal data sets collected by the Institute for Research and Reform in Education that had been used to validate the Research Assessment Package for Schools. Using three different group specific packages, Klem and Connell surveyed students, parents, and teachers. Data were obtained in six elementary school and three middle schools in one urban school district over a five year period. Academic achievement and behavior, engagement in school, and experiences of teacher support were measured. Their study identified threshold levels on experiences of

support from teachers and student engagement in school and then estimated the

difference that achieving those threshold levels made in later achievement and student

outcomes. They also identified resources and liabilities that affected those outcomes.

Klem and Connell noted that student engagement in school was a, "robust predictor of

student achievement and behavior in school regardless of socioeconomic status, . . .that

they were likely to earn higher grades and test scores, and have lower drop out rates" (pp.

262-263). Their findings also indicated that both teachers and students felt that teacher

support was important to student engagement in school.

Hamre and Pianta (2005) examined the ways in which teacher support decreased

children's risk of school failure. The participants were a randomly selected sub-group of

910 first grade children in a national prospective study. They had been categorized as at-

risk on the basis of a combination of demographic characteristics and behavioral,

academic, social, and attention problems as reported by their teachers. A Student-Teacher

Relationships Scale was also used to rate the perception of the relationships between

students and teachers. The researchers found that by the end of the first year in a

classroom with a strong, supportive, caring teacher, their academic achievement scores

and teacher-student relationship scores were equivalent to their low-risk classmates.

Hamre and Pianta findings indicated that supportive teachers were necessary because,

"among children who have displayed difficulty adjusting to their classroom environment,

having teachers who attend to their social and emotional needs may be as or more important to academic development than specific instructional practices" (p. 962).

Wentzel (2002) took this a step further by looking at the perceptions that middle school students had of their teachers along dimensions of effective care giving (p. 287). She examined the utility of parent socialization models for understanding teachers' influence on student adjustment in middle school. Based on information provided by 452 sixth graders from two suburban middle schools, teachers were assessed on their motivational modeling, aspects of control, high expectations, democratic communication, and nurturance. Student adjustment was defined in terms of social and academic goals and interest in class, classroom behavior, and academic performance. Results of multiple regressions indicated that all five teaching dimensions explained significant amounts of variance in student success. However, high expectations were the most consistent positive predictors of success while lack of nurturance was the most consistent negative predictor of success. Wentzel found that positive interactions with peers and teachers increased student academic motivation. She also noted that perceived support from teachers was a key predictor in young adolescents' interest in class and pursuit of goals to be socially responsible (p. 297).

While Wentzel (2002) studied the effects of teacher support, other researchers studied the impact of the lack of teacher support. Ladd and Burgess (2001) addressed the

question of how stressors like teacher-student conflict and protective factors in relationships impacted childhood aggression and school adjustment. Multiple relational risk and protective factors were assessed in a sample of 396 children from the beginning of kindergarten until the spring of the first grade. They used a prospective longitudinal design to examine the linkages between the risk and protective factors and adjustment at three different time points. Specific predictor scales were used for all risk factors. A series of two variance of analysis (ANOVA's) were conducted to check validity whenever subjects met or exceeded initial criterion for a particular risk factor. Ladd and Burgess's finding suggested that students who did not have positive relationships with teachers found their classroom interactions stressful and could lead to lower classroom participation and achievement.

The effect and quality of positive relationships were supported by Furrer and Skinner's (2003) longitudinal study where they examined multiple relationships (parents, teachers, and peers) to see if there was a correlation between students' sense of relatedness and academic achievement. The sample consisted of 948 participants in grades three to six. Data were collected at three one-day time points using self-report questionnaires administered by trained interviewers. The questions were read aloud by one interviewer and monitored for understanding by a second. Teachers were not present during the interviews. The questionnaires measured relatedness to specific social

partners, perceived control in the classroom, and engagement versus disaffection in the classroom. Furrer and Skinner concluded that while relatedness played an important role in academic motivation and achievement, "the most striking example of differences in relative salience of effects was found for relatedness to teachers and for children's (self-report[ed]) emotional experience in the classroom" (p. 159). Positive relationships between students and teachers help to create an optimal learning environment and help to meet the socioemotional development needs of at-risk and troubled students.

<center>School Climate in Effective Alternative Programs</center>

The U. S. Department of Education (2002) defined alternative programs "as a public elementary/secondary school that addresses the needs of students that typically cannot be met in a regular school, provides nontraditional education, [and] serves as an adjunct to regular school" (p.55). They based their definition of alternative programming, in part, on how the unique socioemotional development needs of at-risk and troubled students are met.

Kleiner, Porch, & Farris (2002) asserted that historically, alternative programs have served "diverse populations of students, including those whose family's academic, social, political, or religious values diverged from the mainstream, as well as those who were unsuccessful within the regular public school system" (p. 1). Because the term alternative education had been used so widely, to include so many diverse programs, it

seemed to have lost any universally understood meaning. In an attempt to provide

structure of a common definition, Raywid (1994) synthesized existing alternative

program research and provided the foundation for the development of an alternative

program typology. Under her model, Type I schools offered full-time, multi-year, student

chosen, innovative, individualized programs. Type II programs were short term

placement programs that aimed to reform disruptive students. These programs were often

a *last chance before expulsion* type of program. Type III programs were also short term,

but they provided academic remediation with clinical assistance for social and emotional

problems that affected learning. Their goal was to return students to their traditional

schools (Aron & Zweig, 2003).

Fitzsimons-Hughes et al. (2006) updated Raywid's typologies in an attempt to

further clarify the different settings of alternative programs and the populations that they

served. In the revised model, Type I programs dealt primarily with students with non-

behavioral issues like gifted, special education, truancy and pregnancy. Students with

disciplinary and behavioral issues were dealt with in Type II settings. Type III programs

were therapeutic in nature and served students with diagnosed serious emotional and

behavioral disorders. They emphasized that if alternative programs were to have a

positive impact on at-risk and troubled students, then they needed clearly established,

focused, goals and needs. Given the large numbers of at-risk and troubled students being

served in alternative programs, one of the most critical goals should be high quality

programming that provides a positive psychosocial climate (De La Ossa, 2005;

Fitzsimons-Hughes, et al., 2006; Quinn et al., 2006).

In one of the few empirical studies on alternative programs, Quinn et al., (2006)

examined the school climate in three racially and economically diverse programs. Using

program and within program site selection and extreme case sampling (a variation of

purposeful sampling), they examined three high school alternative programs considered

to be exemplary. 147 students (Program A = 53, B = 45, and C = 49) completed the

student version of the Effective School Battery (ESB). All teachers working with these

students completed the teacher version of the ESB. According to the authors of the study,

the ESB is "a scientifically developed instrument that is used to assess school climate and

identify school strengths and areas for improvement" (p. 14). It consisted of 118 closed-

ended multiple choice and true and false items that include six scales of psychosocial

climate measures: clarity of rules, fairness of rules, planning and action, respects for

students, safety, and student influence. It was also comprised of 13 scales on student

characteristics with an invalidity index to check that student's responses were sensible.

The teacher ESB consisted of 115 similarly configured closed-end items which assessed

similar psychosocial measures as the student ESB. It also included seven scales that

measured teacher characteristics including avoidance of use of grades as sanctions,

morale, parent or community involvement, race relations, resources, safety, and smooth administration.

The ordinal, nonparametric data was analyzed using Kruskall-Wallace (a nonparametric equivalent to analysis of variance) to determine if there was any significant variance between the three programs and a norm group. Any overall significance was followed-up with a Mann-Whitney U test to determine the location of the significance. Student results indicated significant differences in clarity of rules ($p<.05$) and safety ($p<.01$) as well as five student characteristics (avoidance of punishment ($p<.05$), involvement ($p<.01$), parental education ($p<.05$), positive self-concept ($p<.05$), and school rewards ($p<.01$). Teacher results indicated significant differences in avoidance of use of grades as sanctions ($p<.01$), morale ($p<.01$), parent or community involvement ($p<.01$), planning and action ($p<.01$), and resources ($p<.01$), as well as the following teacher characteristics; classroom orderliness ($p<.01$), interactions with students ($p<.05$), job satisfaction ($p<.01$), personal security ($p<.01$), and professional development ($p<.01$).

In general, the findings indicated that students felt that a climate where they were treated with dignity and respect, where rules were equitably enforced, and staff were flexible and open to change supported their interpersonal, social, and academic success. The quality of student-teacher interaction was considered very important as positive

interactions improved academic persistence, decreased delinquent behavior, and increased a commitment to school. According to the authors, "creating caring, non-authoritarian learning environments and populating them with adults who are sympathetic to the special needs of these students and their families is likely a key to success for these students" (Quinn et al., 2006, p. 16).

A qualitative study focused on the students' perceptions of why the traditional educational paradigm does not work for all students (De La Ossa, 2005). Using an Appreciative Inquiry approach, she investigated eight students' insights into their learning, knowing, and their school experiences. Although limited in its scope and not intended to produce universal findings (p. 27), the author used a participant-observational approach in a focus group format to question, highlight, and dialog on what these particular alternative high schools students found beneficial about their school environments on videotape. The data from the focus groups were transcribed and the emerging themes were edited into a 29 minute video documentary. The resulting themes indicated that that school size and class size were important but, the area that affected the students both personally and academically was their personal relationships with teachers.

While additional research is needed, ways to meet at-risk and troubled students' social, emotional, and behavioral growth are critical areas to be addressed in alternative programs. According to Fitzsimons-Hughes et al. (2006),

Intelligence, specific disabilities, and level of academic achievement have not been found to be the key factors in determining whether or not students are successful in society, on general education campuses, and in the world of work. Rather, the keys to students' successful adjustment in schools and the community include social-emotional characteristics and interpersonal skills such as initiative, self-esteem, and social competence. (p. 19/20)

It is important that these needs are addressed directly in the environments in their classroom settings.

The Psychoeducational Model

Psychoeducation is a humanistic approach to the education and treatment of troubled students that placed heavy emphasis upon the adult-student relationship. It combined residential and educational remediation in a synthesis of "cognitive, behavioral, ecological, and sociological concepts as well as psychodynamic and developmental principles" (Wood, Brendtro, Fecser, & Nichols, 1999, p. 10). An historical taxonomy of the various education and remediation models, showing their sequential emergence in the field of special education, was created by Juul, 1980 (as seen in Brendtro and Ness, 1983, pp. 8 & 9). They are as follows:

1. Developmental model. A child progressed through predictable stages and sequences of development as a result of their experiences and interactions with their environment. Some periods, and their ensuing experiences and relationships, were considered to be critical in healthy development.

2. Psychodynamic model. Focused on feelings and emotional needs in the belief that "distorted interpersonal relationships lead to lasting personality disturbance" (p. 8). Proponents of the psychodynamic model believed that relationships with caring adults are vital for healthy development.

3. Learning disability model. Either neurological dysfunctions or an inability to learn normal ways affected emotional and social functioning. Therapy focused on individualized learning and prescriptive teaching.

4. Behavior modification model. Proponents of this model believed that behavior was learned and therefore could be modified through negative or positive reinforcement. In an operant approach, the behavior, its antecedent conditions, and consequences were all analyzed.

5. Medical model. All disturbances in behavior and learning were believed to stem from biological disorders and run the gamut from neurological problems to diet.

6. Ecological model. In this model, behavioral disturbances stemmed from a disharmony between the child and the environment. Improvement focused on changes in both.

7. Counterculture model. Proponents of this model were critical of societal institutions, believing that they squelched inherent potential in all children.

8. Transcendental model. The focus of this model was the belief in "a spiritual or even mystical nature of the human personality. An example is the Rudolph Steiner Anthroposophic Movement, which originated in Europe" (p. 8).

9. Psychoeducational model. Assuming that all models or approaches had something to offer and could be successful in different situations, the psychoeducational model tended to be more holistic, "drawing techniques from other models as they are deemed appropriate. The quality of the child's total experience was seen as central to successful readjustment" (p. 9).

According to Brendtro and Ness (1983), "the term psychoeducational accented the close connections between education, the teachings on human beings, and psychology, the study of human behavior. It was neither pathology-oriented nor exclusively behavioral, cognitive, or affective in focus" (p. 16). In a shift from traditional therapeutic relationships, psychoeducators, while acknowledging the influence of the past, focused more on the here and now and what was to come.

Six tenets underpinned the psychoeducational model; relationships, ecological assessment, holistic behavior, humanistic teaching, using crisis as an opportunity, and pragmatic practice that "makes available the greatest resources to serve children" (Brendtro & Ness, 1983, p. 24).The adults who worked in psychoeducational programs saw inappropriate and antisocial behavior as a reflection of the child's inability to cope

with the situational demands of the environment. Positive behaviors and socioemotional growth were developed not only through manipulation of environmental variables, but also through guided self-reflection and prosocial instruction and practice. Troubled students "experience some insight into their patterns of self-defeating behaviors, learn more effective social skills to manage volatile emotional situations, and improve trust in the teaching staff" (Long et al, 2007, p. 539). An environment of acceptance, empathy, encouragement, and support provided a venue for inclusion and growth.

<div align="center">History of Psychoeducation</div>

Psychoeducation has its roots in early psychodynamic theory going back to the ideas of Freud, Adler, Erikson, Aichorn, and Lewin who looked beyond biological determinants of behavior to social influences across the lifespan. Building on and developing these ideas was Redl, a student of Aichorn's and the man considered to be the father of modern psychoeducation. Redl believed that treating troubled youth using traditional psychotherapy or counseling was not enough. He developed the concept of a therapeutic milieu (1959b) where all aspects of the environment were geared to the psychological and behavioral needs of its residents. Redl and a former student, Wineman, believed that the residential settings used for treating troubled youth in the 40s and 50s should be caring and supportive environments where crisis was viewed as an opportunity to learn from life, self-reflect, and move towards improved self-regulatory behavior.

In Redl's day, psychoanalytic theory consisted primarily of two diametrically opposed viewpoints. Therapists either held the belief that disordered behavior was psychodynamic in nature; the behavior was a symptom of deep, unresolved personality conflict that needed to be resolved, or behaviorist in nature; the behavior was the problem and a change in behavior eliminated that problem (Redl, 1959b). Redl (1959a) argued that there was value in both viewpoints. "Surface behavior itself was itself worthy of observation and manipulation and that many problems would yield to influence at the behavioral level . . . [but also that] his clinical research showed that the child's inner life often served to elicit or perpetuate problem behavior" (Brendtro & Ness, 1983, p. 129). Whether or not the problem was best handled at the emotional or the behavioral level required informed judgment and a differential diagnosis of the child and his life space.

Using an eclectic methodology of psychodynamic, ecological, and crisis intervention theory, Redl and Wineman (1957) developed the Marginal Interview. The name distinguished it from traditional psychotherapy, and was made available for all staff members to use with students in crisis. These ideas, while commonplace today, were innovative and controversial in the first half of the 20th century.

The Marginal Interview evolved into the Life Space Interview (Redl, 1959a) putting the therapeutic emphasis firmly in the existing environment as compared to a pre-appointed session in a therapist's office. Redl identified two kinds of Life Space

Interviews: a) emotional first aid which emotionally supported students in crisis, and b) clinical exploitation of life events which focused on "behavioral incidents for the purposes of re-education" (Brendtro & Ness, 1983, p. 128).

The professional descendants of Redl (1959a) refined his work and reformulated psychoeducational strategies that are in use today. Morse established an interdisciplinary training center. Morse, and his student Long, built on the lessons learned about the dynamics of aggression from Redl. His residential treatment strategies were further developed and moved into schools. Morse and Long co-authored a textbook and Long restructured Redl's Life Space Interview into a counseling intervention known as Life Space Crisis Intervention. In addition, he underpinned this process with the development of the Conflict Cycle paradigm that helps adults working with troubled youth understand how they can actually make problems worse by being drawn into the escalating battle with their students (Long et al, 1998).

Psychoeducational approaches and strategies for dealing with troubled students were student-focused, non-authoritarian, and sought to develop students' autonomy and competence. Different approaches and strategies have generated many different treatment models, all with a slightly different focus. This study focused on one particular psychoeducational model, LSCI.

Life Space Crisis Intervention

LSCI is a multi-modal psychoeducational methodology that "emphasizes the use of students' chronic behavior patterns to promote insight and [the teaching of] more adaptive responses to stressful situations" (Dawson, 2001, p. 45). Like the general psychoeducational model, LSCI is based on cognitive, behavioral, developmental, and psychodynamic theory (Long, Wood & Fecser, 2001). As opposed to waiting for a pre-arranged therapeutic appointment, LSCI uses conflict as an opportunity to initiate a therapeutic discussion as soon as possible after the crisis has occurred.

Caplan (1964) defined crisis as "a relatively short period of psychological disequilibrium in a person who confronts a hazardous circumstance that for him constitutes a problem which he can for the time being neither escape nor resolve with his customary problem-solving resources" (p. 53). Morse (2007) noted that crisis can take several forms. Drawing from the work of Caplan, he identified three generic categories of student crises that can occur at school (a) developmental, (b) destructive personal life event, and (c) situational (p. 547).

Developmental stress is predictable, transitional stress that occurs at different stages in life. They can include starting school, making friends, choosing a career path, and so on. During each of these times, it is possible to become flooded by feelings that

may require adult assistance to navigate. These types of crises are particularly prevalent in middle school age students and can occur in all students, not just troubled ones (Moore, 2007: Wineman, 1959).

Destructive personal life event crises are triggered by events over which the student has no control. They can include violence, abuse, a death in the family, or any other event that drastically affects the student's ability to cope in school. In these types of crisis situations the students involved need intense adult assistance with a great deal of support and affirmation to help them regain control (Morse, 2007).

A situational crisis could be accidental or unexpected and could be personal/physical, material/environmental, or social/interpersonal (Dawson, 2001, Wineman, 1959). According to Wineman, these types of crises were common and could occur in any on-going group situation involving students. These crises provided "teachable moments" through therapeutic discussion to help increase students' socioemotional development. Long et al. (2001) believed that "students are often in crisis because they have failed to recognize the meaning of events that led to their crisis" (p. 79). The goals of the therapeutic discussion were to help the troubled student (a) identify the patterns of thinking, feeling, and behavior; (b) gain insights into the ways that these behaviors are self-defeating; (c) realize that they are responsible for their behavior; (d)

develop better ways to respond to their thinking and feeling; (e) transfer this learning to other settings; and (f) learn to trust caring adults and accept their support in times of need.

The therapeutic discussion or LSCI is a six-step sequential process. The first three steps are diagnostic and information gathering. The last three steps are reclaiming; addressing the chosen intervention. The following stage details are from the LSCI course curriculum (Long et al, 2001; Long & Fecser, 2000).

1. Drain Off: Staff de-escalate the situation and drain-off the intense feelings of the student involved. Control of personal counter-aggressive reactions and focus on the crisis is imperative. The student is supported and affirmed until they are calm and ready to rationally discuss the situation (Long et al., 2001; Long & Fecser, 2000).

2. Timeline: Staff obtain the student's version of the sequence of events that occurred. It also allows for a continued decrease in emotion and increase in rationale thinking on the part of the student. The adult involved expands and clarifies the student's perception of what happened and who was involved (Long et al., 2001; Long & Fecser, 2000).

3. Central Issue: This expansion and clarification continues until the adult has a sufficient understanding of the student's reaction and point of view to determine

the central issue. This stage is critical as it "paves the way" for the remainder of

the LSCI. At this point, the adult understands the student's thinking, feelings, and

how their behavior contributed to the crisis and decides on the goal of the LSCI.

While simply telling the student how to solve the problem would be simpler, the

goal of the LSCI is to instead "plant a seed of insight which we hope will take

root over time and eventually grow into anew realization of repetitive patterns of

self-defeating behavior" (Long et al., 2001, p. 94).

4. Insight: Staff pursues the student's specific pattern of self-defeating behavior for

personal insight and accountability. This is the first step of the reclaiming part of

the LSCI. The goal is to get the student to the stage where there is insight into the

behavior patterns that caused the problem, how behavior could be changed, and

how the student can take ownership of, and work with, the changes. Alternative

solutions are sought and the adult can coach, providing guidelines, rules or values

and then the student chooses a solution and verbalizes it (Long et al, 2001; Long

& Fecser, 2000).

5. New Skills: Staff teach the student new social skills to overcome the pattern of

self-defeating behavior. The focus here is on specific behavior – "what to do and

when" (Long et al., 2001, p. 108). Planning and rehearsal occur and all possible

consequences for the changed behavior are considered. Staff need to affirm the

student's ability to carry out the plan and be successful so that the student is

confident that the change will be beneficial (Long et al, 2001; Long & Fecser).

6. Transfer of Learning: The student is prepared for re-entry into the general milieu

and the adult reinforces and generalizes the new social skills. The incident and

central issue have been discussed and a solution has been determined. Plans have

been made, affirmations have been given, and possible reactions have been

considered. The LSCI ends when the student is in complete control of their

emotions, can describe the behaviors needed to re-join the group, and have

accepted responsibility for participation within the group. If the student has

successfully moved through the stages of the LSCI until this point and then has

feelings re-surface, the student has not said all they need to say, the may not be

confident enough about the new skills discussed and planned. Or, they may be

experiencing some anxiety in leaving the intervening adult. All possibilities must

be considered and the remaining issue re-visited before the student returns to the

group and the LSCI ends (Long et al, 2001; Long & Fecser, 2000).

Long and Fecser (2001) summarized the six essential processes to consider during

an LSCI (a) discover the personal logic that is central to the issue and being defended by

the student, (b) through dialogue simplify, organize, and clarify aspects of the issue that

lead to insight, (c) convey an adult role that is both compatible with the student's view of

authority and therapeutic needs, (d) have sound predictable management strategies if

emotion or fatigue interferes with the LSCI process, (e) timing the LSCI as soon as

possible after the crisis occurs without interruption of mandatory or housekeeping types

of activities, and (f) selecting conditions to conduct the LSCI that are private and allow

for freedom of discussion (p. 81). Change does not occur instantaneously. Each LSCI is

one small step in a series of steps that teaches and reinforces lessons on one type of self-

defeating behavior that is common among troubled students. These lessons in reclaiming

issues will lead to eventual independent problem solving and emotional maturity.

The six reclaiming interventions used to accomplish the therapeutic goals of LSCI

are based on six different self-defeating behaviors (Long et al., 2001). The basic six-stage

process detailed above is used for all of these interventions. The general purpose and

content of the stages does not change. What does change, based on the information

gleaned in the diagnostic stages, is the approach, the direction of the solution, and the

outcome for the student (p. 147). Again, the following details are from the LSCI course

curriculum (Long et al, 2001; Long & Fecser, 2000) unless otherwise cited. The six

reclaiming interventions are detailed below:

1. Reality Rub: This intervention focuses on students with errors in perception,

   tunnel vision about their situation, limit testing, or reaching faulty conclusions

   about the situation due to irrational beliefs. The goal for the intervening staff

member is to help the student gain a more accurate perception of the reality of the situation and understand how they have contributed to the problem – to realize that "nothing comes from nothing" (Long et al., 2001, p. 53).

2. Red Flag: This intervention focuses on students with issues that are either carried-in from an environment other than school, carried-over from a previous class or school-related situation (the bus, recess, or lunch for example), or tapped-in to a personal issue or prior traumatic event. The apparent over-reaction to a normal and reasonable request or rule can result in a power struggle with staff leading to further rejection and feelings of alienation. The goal for the intervening staff member is to identify the source of the problem and the dynamics of displacement - to acknowledge that the "problems the student caused in school are not the cause of the problems" (Long & Fecser, 2000, p. 71).

3. New Tools: This intervention focuses on students who have the correct attitudes towards staff and school but who lack the appropriate social skills and often present with socially inappropriate behaviors. The goal for the intervening staff member is to identify the error in thinking and/or intentions and teach age appropriate social skills. While all LSCI interventions teach

new social skills, this intervention is used only when the student had the right idea but the wrong behavior (Long & Fecser, 2000).

4. Symptom Estrangement: This intervention focuses on students who justify their aggressive and sometimes cruel behavior and show little motivation to change. They often cast themselves in the role of the victim while exploiting others. These students get pleasure from the pain and discomfort of others and are narcissistic, believing that they are doing nothing wrong. The goal for the intervening staff member is to "benignly confront their defenses and irrational beliefs and drop a pebble of a new idea into their pool of irrational beliefs" (Long & Fecser, 2000, p. 95). This is not easy as it is important to expose their self-deception while maintaining a caring relationship. This intervention differs from the others as it is the only intervention where the goal is to increase the student's anxiety a little and have them realize that staff now knows about the issue and will confront them every time it arises. The student needs to feel that maybe, just maybe "I'm not as smart as I tell myself" (p. 95).

5. Manipulation of Body Boundaries: This intervention focuses on students who develop self-defeating "false" friendships with a classmate who will exploit them or are set-up or manipulated by a brighter, passive aggressive student.

One goal for the intervening staff member is to demonstrate to the student that a friend is someone who is helpful and caring, not exploitive or manipulative. Another goal is to demonstrate that a passive aggressive student is tricking them into reacting and getting into trouble (Long & Fecser, 2000).

6. The Massaging Numb Values: This intervention focuses on students who act impulsively and then feel guilt, remorse, shame, or inadequacy because of their behavior. These students have often been abused, neglected or abandoned and have low self-esteem (Long & Fecser, 2000, p. 107). The goal for the intervening staff member is threefold: (a) to gently make students aware that they have more self-control than they think they have, (b) that mistakes or poor decision can happen without feeling worthless, and (c) that they can strengthen and improve their self-control system.

The key to every LSCI was the conflict cycle paradigm developed by Long (1996, 2001, 2007). It was developed "as a way of looking at crisis by analyzing the interactions among student's feelings, behavior, and the reactions of others in the environment" (Long et al., 2001, p. 23). Using a circular diagram, Long demonstrated the cyclical and repetitive interaction process between student and adult that, left unchecked or unrecognized, inevitably leads to escalation of the situation and counter-aggressive behavior on the part of the adult. However, once intervening adults were aware of and

understood the dynamics of the Conflict Cycle and could successfully break or avoid

being drawn into that cycle, the conflict became a teachable opportunity.

Psychoeducational strategies and techniques like LSCI were effective according

to Wood et al. (1999) because they were "systematic, highly organized, rounded in

theory, and focused on the universal therapeutic values of relationship and reclamation"

(p. 22). Data based outcome studies on the effectiveness of using LSCI supported these

strategies and techniques.

<div align="center">LSCI Studies in Educational Settings</div>

The following studies have been conducted to examine the effectiveness of LSCI

in nontraditional educational settings. DeMagistris and Imber (1980) examined student

behavioral change following the use of LSCI. They studied 8 adolescent boys in a self-

contained classroom in a residential treatment center. The students, as a group, were

functioning between the third and seventh grade level and were exhibiting behaviors that

interfered with academic achievement and classroom management. Baseline data was

collected for targeted behaviors and academic achievement in math and reading for each

student. Over a nine week period, the frequency of the targeted behaviors was charted.

For each student the frequency of behaviors was divided by the days in attendance and

these figures were used to compute the percent change. The data collected suggested that

the LSCI interventions were "highly effective in generating decreases in maladaptive

behavior ranging from 31 percent to 72 percent" (p. 23). According to DeMagistris and Imber, "the results of this study clearly supported the use of [LSCI] with these behaviorally disordered adolescents" (p. 12).

Naslund (1987) studied 28 troubled primary school students over the period of a school year. In a descriptive study, he looked at the reasons for conducting LSCIs and found that the reasons changed over time. He also found that while 46% of the students needed fewer interventions over time, the necessity increased for the remainder of the students. He felt that this occurred because they had externalized their behavior problems. Naslund noted that the types of interventions used also changed over time; Reality Rub interventions decreased while New Tools interventions increased. Naslund's study did not include a measure of student behavior or a control group and therefore was unable to prove the effectiveness of LSCI with this particular population.

Dawson (2001) compared student outcomes for two New York junior high schools for students with emotional behavioral disorders. One school used LSCI as a solution strategy for crises while the other employed more traditional management methods. Data were gathered to compare the following student outcomes (a) frequency of crises, (b) suspension rates, (c) transfers to less restrictive settings, and (d) attendance rates. After a semester, students in the experimental school were found to have fewer crises and suspensions, better attendance, and more students mainstreamed in less

restrictive settings than students in the control school. In addition, Dawson reported that teachers and staff felt more able to cope with students in crisis.

Grskovic and Goetze (2005) reported the results of a study that provided a closer observation of individual student outcomes following the use of LSCI. In this study, the challenging behaviors of four learning handicapped high school students (IQ's in the 70 – 85 range). Using two multiple baseline-across-subject designs (one for the females and one for the males) data were collected over a three month period. The dependent measure was discrete events of challenging behavior that was operationalized individually for each student (p. 233). Results indicated that LSCI was very effective at reducing disruptive behaviors for these students and that the results were maintained (p. 234). Grskovic and Goetze hypothesized that the effectiveness of the intervention was increased by the improved relationship with the teacher-principal who conducted the interventions.

<div align="center">Developmental Teaching Theory</div>

According to Wood, Davis, Swindle, and Quirk (1996) behavior management strategies that were used to foster students' socioemotional development must be appropriate to their developmental stage. The developmental stages of socioemotional development of children were as follows (a) Stage 1: responding to the environment with pleasure; approximately the first 18 months of life, (b) Stage 2: responding to the

environment with success; approximately 18 months to 2 years of age, (c) Stage 3:

learning skills for successful group participation; approximately age 5 – 6, (d) Stage 4:

investing in group processes; approximately age 9 – 12 or around the end of upper

elementary school, and (e) Stage 5: applying individual and group skills in new

situations; beginning approximately around age 12 and ending around the age of 16.

Wood believes that "all children progress through these stages of social emotional

maturation as they master developmental milestones . . .making this growth in a fairly

predictable way" (p. 9). This statement is made based on the assumption that children

have had a relatively normal childhood without deleterious experience (Pianta & Nimetz,

1992). Individual assessment is required through the use of the Developmental Teaching

Objectives Rating Form (Revised) (DTORF-R) to identify accurately, the present stage of

development.

> Verbal intervention strategies, like LSCI, have been found to be effective at all
> ages and stages of development. Wood et al. (1996) believe: When they are used
> with skill and sensitivity, they provide ways to minimize students' disruptive,
> destructive behavior and teach acceptable, productive alternatives. They are
> the foundation for a mentally healthy learning environment that is positive in
> approach and emphasizes students' participation in a program. (p. 128)

However, Wood et al. do suggest that LSCI is best used with students in stage 3 or

beyond, which coincides with the time that they first start school and are using verbal

skills rather than physical and behavioral responses to express themselves (p. 231).

Grskovic and Goetze (2005) found LSCI to be effective with learning handicapped students (IQ's in the 70 – 85 range). While developmental teaching theory did not speak directly to IQ and developmental stages, and LSCI appeared to have been effective with students with lower IQ's (Grskovic and Goetze) and likely lower than normal developmental stages, further study is needed in this area.

Results of these studies suggested that LSCI was effective in reducing the frequency of crises and the number of suspensions, increasing student attendance, transfers to less restrictive settings, and improved the ability of the staff to feel able to handle crisis situations with students. The studies also appeared to support the theories that strong student/teacher relationships, caring and supportive environments, and the ensuing academic motivation may have facilitate improvements in creating safer schools and increasing school persistence which, in turn, might decrease the high school dropout rate.

<center>Literature Review Conclusion</center>

As demonstrated in this chapter, a safe, nurturing, effective learning environment for at-risk and troubled students can have a positive impact on their socioemotional development. Self-Determination Theory, applied to educational settings, helped educators to understand why some students are successful in traditional educational settings and some are not. It had become apparent that self-determination through

intrinsic motivation and self-regulation in students "leads to the types of outcomes that are beneficial both to individuals and to society" (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier & Ryan, 1991, p. 342). SDT indicated that intrinsic motivation and higher quality learning flourish in environments that satisfied socioemotional human needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Deci et al., 1991; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Legault et al., 2006; Grolnick & Ryan, 1989; Patrick, Ryan & Kaplan, 2007; Pelletier et al., 2002).

Brain-based learning theory explained how positive interactions with significant adults strengthened new, healthy neural pathways for troubled students (Baker, 2007; Jensen, 2000a; Jensen, 2000b; LeDoux, 2002; Sapolsky, 2004). These interactions improved the way they interacted with and interpreted their world (Caine et al., 2005). Improved social capability led students to an ability to reflect on their own behavior, to develop empathy for others, and to develop a positive self-worth. These characteristics improved the chance for successful school completion by the avoidance of destructive patterns that often led to school failure and subsequent under or unemployment in later life (Kokko & Pulkkinen, 2000).

Educational psychology (Hamre & Pianta, 2005; Klem & Connell, 2004; Ladd & Burgess, 2001; McNeely & Falci, 2004; Wentzel, 2002; and Wilson, 2004) and effective alternative programming studies (De La Ossa, 2005; Fitzsimons-Hughes, et al., 2006; Quinn et al., 2006) confirmed that positive relationships between students and teachers

helped to create an optimal learning environment and help to meet the socioemotional development needs of at-risk and troubled students.

Studies on the implementation and effect of LSCI reported positive impacts in the development of students' socioemotional development. Grskovic and Goetze (2005) felt that the results of their study indicated that LSCI was "very effective at reducing disruptive behavior for these students and that the results were maintained" (p. 234).

Dawson (2004) found that with the implmentation of LSCI the (a) the fequency of crises decreased significantly, (b) the suspension rates decreased, (c) more students were mainstreamed and transferred to less restrictive settings, (d) the attendance rates were higher, and (e) the staff felt more able to manage crisis. DeMagistris and Imber (1980) looked at the effects of LSCI and found that attendance and work behavior increased while disturbances decreased for the boys in the treatment group

The few empirical studies on LSCI to date all suggest that further research is needed. While all studies have examined different aspects of the effectiveness of LSCI, no extant studies have considered the implementing teachers' perception of the effectiveness of the strategies on their students' socioemotional development and coping skills. This study, detailed in chapters 3 and 4, examined the special education teachers' perception of the effectiveness of LSCI for the development of students' socioemotional development in psychoeducational K – 12 programs.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

Based upon the review of the literature in chapter 2, the purpose of this quantitative cross-sectional survey study was to identify the special education teachers' perceived effects of LSCI interventions on student socioemotional development in a K - 12 psychoeducational program. The independent variable is defined as LSCI reclaiming interventions. The dependent variable is defined as student socioemotional development (sensitivity, awareness, and self-regulation of behavior). The research design, population and sample, instrumentation and materials, data analysis, and participant's rights will be discussed.

Research Design

In this study, a quantitative cross-sectional survey design was used to determine special education teachers' perception of the effectiveness of LSCI for the development of students' socioemotional development in psychoeducational K – 12 programs. Creswell (2008) defined a cross-sectional survey research design as "procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population" (p. 388). Cross-sectional survey designs can also be used to evaluate a program (p. 391).

The quantitative method was chosen over other methods to investigate the research question because if a study wishes to identify "factors that influence an outcome,

the utility of an intervention, or the best predictors of outcomes, then a quantitative

approach is best" (Creswell, 2003, p. 21/22). Creswell (2008) added that, "problems best

suited for quantitative research are those in which trends or explanations need to be

made" (p. 62) as compared to qualitative research where the problems "need to be

explored to obtain a deep understanding" (p. 62). In this case, the study simply

determined if special education teachers using LSCI would perceive that it was a useful

intervention/strategy for the positive development of troubled students' socioemotional

development.

The participants in the study were the special education teachers in three K-12

psychoeducational programs in the North Central region of the State of Georgia. The

three NorthStar Educational and Therapeutic Services (formerly Mountainbrook

Comprehensive Academy) are located in Canton, Dalton, and Blue Ridge. All teachers

are certified in Advanced Life Space Crisis Intervention and have experience using the

intervention strategies in psychoeducational settings.

In educational settings, crises occur when an incident escalates into a conflict

between a student and others. Each time a student in the psychoeducational programs

experienced a crisis situation one of the teachers intervened and worked through an

appropriate LSCI with the student. When the intervention was complete, a Critical

Incident Study Form (CISF) was completed and placed in the student file. Part of that form was a self-developed survey matrix (see Appendix A) which was completed as part of the CISF. The survey, in a check-list, Likert-like scale format detailed the possible LSCI intervention strategies and the outcome goals of each particular intervention. Teachers were asked to indicate, on a scale of one to five (one indicating no development and five indicating full insight and responsibility), the student level of socioemotional development they felt was achieved during the intervention.

The quantitative cross-sectional survey design was chosen as the purpose of this study was to learn something about the beliefs and attitudes of the population in question (Creswell, 2008, p. 388). In this case, the study determined if special education teachers using LSCI perceived that it was a useful strategy/program for troubled students' socioemotional development.

Setting and Sample

The NorthStar Educational and Therapeutic Services (formerly Mountainbrook Comprehensive Academies) are all located in the North Central region of the State of Georgia. In total, the three centers have a staff of 21 certified teachers and 35 paraprofessionals and a student population of 167 students K-12. The sample consisted of all 21 special education teachers in the three programs.

Sample

Creswell (2008) defined a sample as a, "subgroup of the target population that the researcher plans to study for generalizing about the target population" (p. 152). The 21 participants in this study were the special education teachers in the three psychoeducational programs in the North Central region of the State of Georgia. This sample was chosen because these special education teachers "represent some characteristic that the researcher seeks to study [and] are willing and available to be studied" (p155). They are all certified in LSCI and experienced in using LSCI strategies with troubled students. This training and experience gives them unique insight and perspective into the effectiveness of LSCI for the development of socioemotional development in these students.

The original research design for this study included a sample consisting of both the certified teachers and paraprofessionals that made up the instructional staff in the three programs. However, due to the potential inconsistencies of their responses because of educational backgrounds and perspectives, only the certified teachers were included in the sample. While reducing the sample size, it ensured uniformity in the data collected.

Role of the Researcher

As I am a nonresident of the state of Georgia, I played a background role in this study. The administration of the psychoeducational schools provided matrix completion training for the special education teacher participants and the director of the psychoeducational schools was responsible for collection and electronic transmission of the data to the researcher. However, I was solely responsible for any data analysis procedures.

Instrumentation and Materials

The purpose of this quantitative cross-sectional survey study was to identify the special education teachers' perceived effects of LSCI interventions on student socioemotional development in a K -12 psychoeducational program. The independent variable was defined as LSCI reclaiming interventions. The dependent variable was defined as student socioemotional development (sensitivity, awareness, and self-regulation of behavior). Special education teachers' socioemotional development scores were collected and recorded on a survey matrix created specifically for this study. All intervention CISF records between August and mid-October 2008 were reviewed and data pertaining to the variables of interest was collected.

Prior to the study, the newly created survey matrix was piloted to ensure that "the individuals in the sample are capable of completing the survey and that can understand the questions" (Creswell, 2008, p. 402). Professional staff members in the psychoeducational programs' administration piloted the survey. Their extensive experience with LSCI and special education teaching backgrounds gave them an expert ability to provide feedback. Participants in the pilot were asked to review the survey matrix and make any comments directly on the copies of their survey matrix. The staff involved in the pilot felt that the survey adequately represented the topic under study and no adjustments were required. As the pilot group provided feedback on the survey construction, they were excluded from the study.

As human observations can be inconsistent, inter-observer reliability was established during training sessions provided for all intervening staff prior to the implementation of the survey matrix. Inter-observer reliability is "used to assess the degree to which different raters/observers give consistent estimates of the same phenomenon" (Trochim, 2006, p. 38). Using practice scenarios just prior to the actual study, special education teachers rated perceived socioemotional development and discussed why they chose the specific values they did. If there were disagreements, the teachers discussed them and attempted to come up with rules for deciding when they

would give a specific rating on a specific item. While this is not an estimate of reliability, it worked to improve the inter-observer reliability in this study (Trochim, 2006).

The survey matrix (see Appendix A) was composed of several columns. The first column listed the six intervention strategies, the second column stated the central issue of each intervention, while the third column provided a check-off spot for the teachers to indicate the intervention used. The fourth and fifth columns listed the outcome goals of each particular intervention and three levels of goal achievement. This last section asked the intervening staff member to rank their perception of effectiveness of that particular intervention on a Likert like scale of 1 – 5, (1 - No self awareness, 3 - Emerging, and 5 - Insight and Responsibility).

The data collection survey matrix listed the desired outcomes of the individual interventions as determined by the developers of LSCI (Long & Fecser, 2000). The effects of instrumentation, changes that can occur in the data when more than one person is collecting data, were controlled for by training. All special education teachers, while having advanced training in LSCI, were also trained in data collection methods using the survey matrix. All data used in this study was collected independently of this study and would, therefore, not influence the intentions of this study.

Data Collection and Analysis

The survey matrix data was collected after each intervention. Matrixes were collected for a period of 10 weeks, between August and mid-October 2008. This time period was chosen as the beginning of the school year tended to be more stressful for troubled students and LSCI intervention strategies were used frequently at this time of the year. Historical data on the frequency of interventions on Crisis Intervention Study Forms and anecdotal evidence from teachers indicated that the periods of returning to school after an extended break and the anticipation of the fall break coincided with increased behavioral interventions.

SPSS was used to analyze the data for the scores using an estimated single sample t-test (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005). According to Gravetter and Wallnau, estimation is used when you want information about an unknown population and wish to use the sample as a basis for estimating the population mean (p. 302), as in this case. All analyses were two-tailed and the Type I alpha error rate for this study was $p = 0.05$. The determination of the alpha level helped define the boundaries of the critical regions by defining unlikely outcomes and, more importantly, determined the probability of Type 1 error (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005). While a lower alpha level decreased this possibility, it increased the probability of a Type 2 error requiring an enormous treatment effect to

reach the critical boundaries (Gravetter & Wallnau). In an attempt to balance this risk, the two-tailed test with an alpha level of 0.05 was chosen. In addition, as an hypothesis test is affected by both the size of the sample and the size of the effect, a Cohen's *d* was also calculated to evaluate the size of the treatment effect (Gravetter & Wallnau).

For the purpose of this study, it was not the level of effectiveness of interventions that was being studied, but simply whether it was considered effective or not. As socioemotional development is incremental, the intervention was considered effective if the student was making progress. Any score greater than one was considered to be effective. Therefore, this test determined an estimated size of the overall program effect as well as an estimated population mean (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005, p. 302).

The following research question was addressed in this study: what effect did special education teachers perceive that LSCI interventions had on student socioemotional development in a K -12 psychoeducational program? The single sample t-test estimation tested the null hypothesis, H_{01}: Special education teachers perceive that LSCI interventions have no effect on student socioemotional development (sensitivity, awareness, and self-regulation of behavior).

Participants' Rights

To ensure the participants' rights were considered in this study, the research plans were submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Walden University. Permission to use data on crisis interventions that occurred from August to mid-October of the 2008 school year was obtained from both the IRB and the program under study. Prior to IRB approval, interim permission for the study had been granted by the director of the school and approved by the Chair, Walden University Institutional Review Board and Director, Office of Research Integrity and Compliance (see Appendix B). After IRB approval number 06-27-08-0354260 was received, the application was submitted to the Board of Control for the psychoeducational programs for their approval and that letter of approval was attached to the study as well (see Appendix C).

As all participants in this study were over the age of 21, they were informed of the purpose and procedures of the study, told that their privacy was respected, and given the right to have their data withdrawn from this study if needed. Confidentiality was guaranteed for all participants. The data was tracked by using randomly assigned identification numbers. Participant names were removed from the matrices and coded prior to data being transmitted. A person other than the researcher did the coding so that the researcher could not identify individual participants.

Upon agreeing to participate, all participants signed an informed consent document stating that they fully understood the rights afforded by this study. The director of the psychoeducational schools stored these documents until completion of the study and publication of the results.

Finally, all participants and the psychoeducational schools' administration were provided, upon request, with a copy of the final results of this study. This allowed the participants to see the results of their efforts.

All collected data was analyzed and statistical data reported in chapter 4. Statistical data was summarized in tables where appropriate. Conclusions and recommendations are detailed in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter presents the major findings of the study. The purpose of this

quantitative cross-sectional survey study was to identify special education teachers'

perceived effects of LSCI interventions on student socioemotional development in a K -

12 psychoeducational program. The study included data collected on a self-developed

survey matrix used after each intervention.

The participants in this study were the 21 special education teachers in the

NorthStar Educational and Therapeutic Services (formerly Mountainbrook

Comprehensive Academy) psychoeducational programs located in the North Central

region of the State of Georgia. In educational settings, crises occur when an incident

escalates into a conflict between a student and others. Each time a student in the

psychoeducational programs experienced a crisis situation one of the teachers intervened

and worked through an appropriate LSCI with the student. Using a data collection survey

matrix that listed the desired outcomes of the individual interventions as determined by

the developers of LSCI, student socioemotional development data was collected after

each intervention. Matrixes were collected for a period of 10 weeks, between August and

mid-October 2008. Fifty-four documented crisis interventions occurred in this time

period. The matrices were completed by the intervening special education teachers in the

sample and then the data was analyzed.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the following question and either

accept or reject the null hypothesis: what effects do special education teachers perceive

that LSCI interventions have on student socioemotional development (sensitivity, awareness, and self-regulation of behavior)? This quantitative study's null hypothesis stated that special education teachers perceived that LSCI interventions had no effect on student socioemotional development. The alternative hypothesis stated that special education teachers perceived that LSCI interventions had an effect on student socioemotional development.

<div align="center">Research Tools</div>

A self-developed LSCI Survey Matrix form (see Appendix A) served as the data collection instrument for this study. Each time a student in the psychoeducational programs experienced a crisis situation one of the teachers intervened and worked through an appropriate LSCI with the student. When the intervention was complete, a Critical Incident Study Form (CISF) was completed and placed in the student file. Part of that form was the self-developed survey matrix. The survey matrix (see Appendix A) was composed of several columns. The first column listed the six intervention strategies, the second column stated the central issue of each intervention, while the third column provided a check-off spot for the teachers to indicate the intervention used. The fourth and fifth columns listed the outcome goals of each particular intervention and three levels of goal achievement. This last section asked the intervening staff member to rank their

perception of effectiveness of that particular intervention on a Likert like scale of $1 - 5$,

(1 - No self awareness, 2/3 - Emerging, and 4/5 - Insight and Responsibility).

As the data collection matrix was self-developed, a pilot study was run in July

2008, prior to the actual study. Professional staff members in the psychoeducational

programs' administration piloted the survey. Their extensive experience with LSCI and

special education teaching backgrounds gave them an expert ability to provide feedback.

As the pilot group provided feedback on the survey construction, they were excluded

from the study. In addition, as human observations can be inconsistent, inter-observer

reliability was established during training sessions provided for all intervening staff prior

to the implementation of the study. While this is not an estimate of reliability, it worked

to improve the inter-observer reliability in this study (Trochim, 2006).

The results of the statistical analysis showed that the 54 interventions scored by

special education teachers with $n = 21$, a t score of 10.327, with a significance of $< .001$.

These results indicated that special education teachers felt the effects of LSCI

interventions were statistically significant for student socioemotional development using

the *t-test* analysis.

<div align="center">Data Analysis</div>

SPSS was used to analyze the scores using an estimated single sample *t*-test .

According to Gravetter and Wallnau (2005), estimation is used when you want

information about an unknown population and wish to use the sample as a basis for estimating the population mean (p. 302), as in this case. All analyses were two-tailed and the Type I alpha error rate for this study was p = 0.05.

An estimated single sample *t*-test was calculated to assess whether the mean scores of student socioemotional development significantly differed from a hypothesized population mean of three which represented the score of a population in which the intervening teacher believed that no socioemotional development had occurred during the use of the LSCI intervention. From this information the researcher provided descriptive and inferential statistics that could be used to reach a conclusion about an entire population (Trochim, 2002).

For the purpose of this study it was not the level of effectiveness of interventions that was being studied, but simply whether the intervention was considered effective or not. As socioemotional development is incremental, the intervention was considered effective if the student was making progress. Any score greater than one was considered to be effective. Therefore, this test determined an estimated size of the overall program effect as well as an estimated population mean (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005, p. 302).

As an hypothesis test is affected by both the size of the sample and the size of the effect, the outcome of the hypothesis test may not always provide an accurate indication

of the treatment effect (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005, p. 233). In order to accurately reflect the effect size, the researcher calculated a Cohen's *d* to evaluate the size of the treatment effect.

<div align="center">Descriptive Data and Findings</div>

All raw scores from the 54 intervention survey matrix forms are shown in Appendix D. The overall mean scores for each studied area of socioemotional development (sensitivity, awareness, and self-regulation) are included. In each of the interventions, intervening teachers were able to score the outcome of that particular intervention in each of the three studied areas of socioemotional development. Each area was scored on a scale of 1 – 5 with a score of 1 indicating that the teacher felt that the student had no self-awareness or no socioemotional development had occurred because of the intervention. A score of 2 or 3 indicated that the student was progressively emerging or showing some socioemotional development, while a score of 4 or 5 indicated good or substantial insight into the issue and personal responsibility for their behavior because of the intervention. Each area had a possible score of 5 while the intervention, in its entirety, had a possible score of 15. As there was no existing data on the effects of LSCI on student socioemotional development, a hypothetical mean of 3 was determined. This mean indicated a score of 1 in each studied area of socioemotional growth, an

indication that the interventions created no self awareness or socioemotional development in the student.

During the 54 LSCI crisis interventions, students showed a mean difference of 4.31, a 143.82 % increase over the hypothetical mean of 3. Table 1 details the *t test* analysis of the interventions.

Table 1

Estimated Single Sample t test Analysis

	t score	*df*	*Significance (2-tailed)*	*Cohen's d (r^2)*
LSCI Interventions	10.33	53	.000	0.6680

The observed *t* value of the difference between the LSCI scores mean and the hypothetical mean is 10.33, with degrees of freedom equal to 53. The two-tailed probability of .000 was less than .05 and, therefore, the test was considered significant. For a two-tailed test at the 0.05 level of significance and with 53 degrees of freedom, the critical region consisted of *t* values greater than +1.674 or less than -1.674. The obtained *t* statistic of 10.205 fell well into the critical region on the right hand side of the t distribution. This finding indicated the rejection of the null hypothesis.

When an hypothesis test rejects the null hypothesis and concludes that the treatment had a significant effect, it can be argued that this did not necessarily mean that

the effect was substantial, particularly when the sample size is small (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005). An effect-size measurement like Cohen's *d* indicates the relative magnitude of an experimental treatment and is not affected by sample size providing an objective measure of the importance of the effect (Field, 2005). For Cohen's *d* an effect size of 0.2 to 0.3 might be a small effect, around 0.5 a medium effect and 0.8 to 1.0 a large effect (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2005). In this study on the overall perceived effect LSCI on student socioemotional growth, the Cohen's *d* suggested that the results were substantial as an r^2 of 0.6680 is considered to be a medium effect.

To further support the study, each area of socioemotional development studied was also analyzed individually. All three areas, sensitivity, awareness, and self-regulation all showed a mean difference increase over their hypothetical mean of 1. The raw scores for each studied area of socioemotional development can be found in Appendix E.

Table 2 shows the mean differences for each area of socioemotional growth studied in all 54 interventions.

Table 2

Mean Differences by Area of Socioemotional Growth

Area	M	M Difference	% Increase
Sensitivity	2.49	1.49	149%
Awareness	2.55	1.55	155%
Self-Regulation	2.42	1.42	142%

Each studied area of socioemotional development shows a similar mean increase

difference over the hypothetical mean of three.

The observed *t* value of the difference between the mean and the hypothetical

mean for each area of socioemotional development is shown below in Table 3. In

addition, computed Cohen's *d* values indicate the effect size of these tests.

Table 3

Estimated Single Sample t test Analysis by Socioemotional Area

	t score	*df*	Significance (2-tailed)	Cohen's d (r^2)
Sensitivity	10.21	53	.000	0.6629
Awareness	9.36	53	.000	0.6231
Self-Regulation	9.27	53	.000	0.6185

In each area shown in Table 3, the two-tailed probability of .000 was less than .05

and, therefore, the test was considered significant. In addition, the Cohen's *d* indicated a

medium effect size.

Then the 54 interventions were grouped by type of intervention (See Appendix

E). The following was noted: five of the possible six types of interventions were

documented: a) Red Flag (RF = 18), b) Symptom Estrangement (SE = 19), c) Reality Rub

(RR = 8), d) Massaging Numb Values (MNV = 7), and e) Manipulating Body Boundaries

(MBB = 2). Below, Table 4 shows the means and mean differences for the interventions

grouped by type.

Table 4

Mean Differences by Type of Intervention

Type of Intervention	*M*	*M Difference*	*% Increase*
Red Flag	7.78	4.78	159%
Symptom Estrangement	6.63	3.63	121%
Reality Rub	6.13	3.13	104%
Massaging Numb Values	9.57	6.57	219%
Manipulating Body Boundaries	6.50	3.50	117%

Each type of intervention showed an overall mean difference increase over the

hypothetical mean of 3. As well, it should be noted that the mean difference increase for

the Massaging Numb Values intervention was quite high.

The observed *t* value of the difference between the mean and the hypothetical mean for each area of socioemotional development is shown below in Table 5. In addition, computed *Cohen's d* values indicate the effect size of these tests.

Table 5

Estimated Single Sample t test Analysis by Type of Intervention

	t score	*df*	*Significance (2-tailed)*	*Cohen's d (r^2)*
Red Flag	6.35	17	.000	0.7034
Symptom Estrangement	5.48	18	.000	0.6252
Reality Rub	3.16	8	.013	0.5553
Massaging Numb Values	6.44	6	.001	0.8736
Manipulating Body Boundaries	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

In each area (with the exception of MBB where there were not enough interventions to run a valid *t* test), the two-tailed probabilities are less than .05 and, therefore, the tests were considered significant. In addition, the Cohen's *d* indicated a medium effect for the Red Flag, Symptom Estrangement, and Reality Rub interventions and a large effect size for the Massaging Numb Values intervention.

The mean difference for each area of socioemotional growth studied over the hypothetical mean of 1 is shown below in Table 6.

Table 6

Mean Differences by Type of Intervention and by Area of Socioemotional Growth

Red Flag Intervention	*M*	*M Difference*	*% Increase*
Sensitivity	2.61	1.61	161%
Awareness	2.50	1.50	150%
Self-Regulation	2.67	1.67	167%

Symptom Estrangement Intervention	*M*	*M Difference*	*% Increase*
Sensitivity	2.26	1.26	126%
Awareness	2.13	1.13	113%
Self-Regulation	1.95	0.95	95%

Reality Rub Intervention	*M*	*M Difference*	*% Increase*
Sensitivity	2.00	1.00	100%
Awareness	2.13	1.13	113%
Self-Regulation	2.00	1.00	100%

Massaging Numb Values Intervention	*M*	*M Difference*	*% Increase*
Sensitivity	3.14	2.14	214%
Awareness	3.29	2.29	229%
Self-Regulation	3.14	2.14	214%

Manipulating Body Boundaries Intervention	*M*	*M Difference*	*% Increase*
Sensitivity	2.00	1.00	100%
Awareness	2.00	1.00	100%
Self-Regulation	2.50	1.50	150%

Each type of intervention showed an overall mean difference increase over the

hypothetical mean of 3. As well, it should be noted that the mean difference increase for

the Massaging Numb Values intervention was again quite high.

The observed t value of the difference between the mean and the

hypothetical mean for each area of socioemotional development is shown below in Table

7. In addition, computed *Cohen's d* values indicate the effect size of these tests.

Table 7

Estimated Single Sample t test Analysis by Type of Intervention and by Area of Socioemotional Growth

Red Flag Intervention	*t* score	*df*	*Significance (2‑tailed)*	*Cohen's d (r²)*
Sensitivity	6.26	17	.000	0.6975
Awareness	5.53	17	.000	0.6427
Self-Regulation	6.87	17	.000	0.7352

Symptom Estrangement Intervention	*t* score	*df*	*Significance (2‑tailed)*	
Sensitivity	5.56	18	.000	0.6320
Awareness	4.92	18	.000	0.5736
Self-Regulation	4.03	18	.001	0.4743

Reality Rub Intervention	*t* score	*df*	*Significance (2‑tailed)*	
Sensitivity	3.06	7	.018	0.5721
Awareness	3.21	7	.015	0.5954
Self-Regulation	3.06	7	.018	0.5721

Massaging Numb Values Intervention	*t* score	*df*	*Significance (2‑tailed)*	
Sensitivity	6.30	6	.001	0.8687
Awareness	4.04	6	.007	0.7312
Self-Regulation	6.30	6	.001	0.8687

In each area, the two-tailed probabilities were less than .05 and, therefore, the tests were considered significant. In addition, the Cohen's *d* indicated a medium effect for the Red Flag, Symptom Estrangement, and Reality Rub interventions and large effect sizes for the sensitivity and self-regulation areas for the Massaging Numb Values intervention.

Summary of Findings

Based on the findings, comparing LSCI score means to a hypothetical mean, student socioemotional development scores did improve after LSCI interventions. The researcher rejected the null hypothesis that special education teachers perceived that LSCI interventions had no effect on student socioemotional development. The alternative hypothesis that stated that special education teachers perceived that LSCI interventions had an effect on student socioemotional development was accepted. The results indicated that that not only were the interventions perceived to be effective in student socioemotional development in general, all interventions were also perceived to be effective in each of the three areas of socioemotional development studied: sensitivity, awareness, and self-regulation. Conclusions and recommendations based on these findings are detailed in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter is divided into six parts: a summary, relationship of findings to theories, social change implications, recommendations for action, recommendations for further research, and conclusions.

Summary

This study investigated the perceived effects of LSCI interventions on three areas of student socioemotional development; sensitivity, awareness, and self-regulation of behavior. The limited amount of empirical research substantiated the need for additional research on the effects of LSCI for at-risk and troubled students. This is the first study that has identified special education teachers' perceptions of student socioemotional development in an educational setting.

The purpose of this quantitative cross-sectional survey study was to identify special education teachers' perceived effects of LSCI interventions on student socioemotional development in a K -12 psychoeducational program. This study related the effects of LSCI interventions to the socioemotional development of students in psychoeducational programs located in the North Central region of the State of Georgia. The following research question was addressed in this study: What effects do special education teachers perceive that LSCI interventions had on student socioemotional development? These questions were answered by using a quantitative cross-sectional survey design. Each time a student in the psychoeducational programs experienced a crisis situation one of the teachers intervened and worked through an appropriate LSCI

with the student. Using a data collection survey matrix that listed the desired outcomes of

the individual interventions as determined by the developers of LSCI, student

socioemotional development data was collected after each intervention. An estimated

single sample t-test was used to test for a significant difference between the mean scores

of student socioemotional development after LSCI and a hypothesized population mean.

To further support the study, each area of socioemotional development studied was also

analyzed individually using an estimated single sample t-test. In addition, because of the

sample size, a Cohen's d for each test was calculated to evaluate the size of the treatment

effect.

The difference in the mean scores of student socioemotional development was

compared to the hypothesized population mean of three which represented the score of a

population in which the intervening teacher believed that no socioemotional development

had occurred during the use of the LSCI intervention. In addition, the mean scores of

each area of socioemotional development studied; sensitivity, awareness, and self-

regulation, were compared to the hypothesized mean. Using an estimated single sample t-

test the results for both sets of data showed significant differences between the

hypothetical mean and the actual mean, thus rejecting the null hypothesis that special

education teachers perceived that LSCI interventions had no effect on student

socioemotional development. In addition, Cohen's d tests for each single sample t-test

showed that both the overall interventions as well as each of the areas of socioemotional development studied had either a medium or large effect size, confirming that the results were substantial.

This study has provided the first set of quantitative data on teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of LSCI interventions on the socioemotional development of students in any type of educational programming, specifically students in psychoeducational programming. Analysis and statistics, from both the interventions overall and the three area of socioemotional development related to these interventions, as well as effect size testing, helped to confirm the results.

<div align="center">Relationship of Findings to Theories</div>

In order to create a positive sense of self and function effectively, people require social and environmental support. Their surroundings can either support or thwart this socioemotional development (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Students whose socioemotional needs are not being met are more likely to be angry and hostile and act-out in school (Long et al., 2007). Students in psychoeducational programs, like the ones studied, are often angry, hostile, and impersonally oriented. Their behavior in their home schools has led to suspension or expulsion and, finally, placement in a more restrictive environment.

They are referred there because they believe that others control their actions and that their behavior is out of their control.

Without the necessary socioemotional support, they lack sensitivity to the impact of their behaviors on others (Vansteenkiste et al, 2006; Deci & Ryan, 2002). They lack an awareness of appropriate ways of seeking help and attention from teachers or other significant adults in their lives (Hamre & Pianta, 2005, Wentzel, 2002), and they focus on their stresses and distresses rather than on their educational goals (Jensen, 2000b). Without learning environments where staff can provide emotionally safe learning environments and provide freedom from rejection and intimidation, these students are at serious risk for negative outcomes (Baker, 2007; Caine et al., 2005; Van Acker, 2007).

The research question asked: What effects do special education teachers perceive that LSCI interventions had on student socioemotional development? The collected data suggests that, according to the teachers in the sample, LSCI interventions had a positive effect on student socioemotional development in a psychoeducational setting.

Overall, the intervention mean scores showed an increase over the hypothetical mean scores that were significant. For the students involved in the interventions, the mean percentage increase was about 144%. An *estimated single sample t-test* revealed that this percentage increase was statistically significant. The data analysis provided strong evidence of the positive impact of the LSCI intervention program on student

socioemotional development. According to the teachers involved, most students who experienced LSCI interventions showed socioemotional growth. That growth will help to create a more positive sense of self and allow them to function more effectively in educational programs as well as in society in general. In addition, the effect size of .6680 on the overall intervention score provides evidence of an effective educational intervention. Most educational interventions have, at best, a small effect (Cohen, 1988), so an effect size such as the one seen for these interventions is very encouraging.

When the overall intervention data was broken down to look at the three studied areas of socioemotional development individually, the results were equally positive. All three areas, sensitivity, awareness, and self-regulation of behavior, showed a similar mean difference increase over the hypothetical mean. All three areas also showed a similar medium effect size. This would indicate that the interventions were not only effective at improving socioemotional development for the students involved but that they were meeting students needs equally in the three identified areas of socioemotional development.

The importance of meeting the socioemotional needs for the long term well-being of these students cannot be stressed enough. Affolter (2003), in his paper on development policies for social well-being, notes that schools and their teachers contribute to socioemotional enablement by creating relationships of trust between learners and staff .

"Adolescent potential to serve as pillars of their societies' future social support structures depends . . . on the psychosocial quality of experiences they grow up with" (p. 56). The data indicated that, as an intervention tool for troubled students, LSCI provides that social, emotional, and environmental support by helping turn crisis situations into learning opportunities for these students.

As the overall effectiveness of the interventions was so encouraging, each type of intervention was examined individually. Five of the six possible types of interventions were documented during the data collection period (a) Red Flag, (b) Symptom Estrangement, (c) Reality Rub, (d) Massaging Numb Values, and (e) Manipulating Body Boundaries. The Manipulating Body Boundaries intervention was only documented twice so it will be excluded from this discussion as there were not enough interventions to draw valid conclusions. However, for the remaining 4 types of interventions, we again see a significant mean difference increase in each case. The Red Flag, Symptom Estrangement, and Reality Rub interventions all showed medium effect sizes while the Massaging Numb Values showed a large effect size. Bearing in mind that a small effect size, at best, usually occurs in educational research interventions, this would indicate that these interventions could have a substantial impact on student socioemotional development. It would appear that LSCI is successful because it provides a nurturing social context and a protective social support network for these students while they process and integrate

social experiences in an educational setting. "Western developmental psychologists confirm that human well-being is a function of relationship dynamics. Relationship experiences generate templates for social analysis (Affolter, 2003, p. 60). LSCI provides these social templates that encourage students to effectively integrate and process adult modeled social experiences in a safe and caring environment.

Finally, each type of intervention was analyzed by area of socioemotional development, and again a significant mean difference increase is seen in each case. In all cases, there was a medium effect size with the exception of the Massaging Numb Values intervention which showed a large effect size in each area of socioemotional development. Long et al. (2001) asserted that this particular intervention "is used to help students who are burdened by anxiety about guilt or inadequacy, yet do not use controls at the right time (p. 187)". Oftentimes, their responses to situations in which they find themselves puzzle outsiders and affected staff members feel that they are facing new and troubling problems. However, seemingly inappropriate responses by troubled students have been documented for over half a century. Redl (1951) documented what he referred to as distorted private logic. Fear and anxiety about a world that they perceive as hostile and unfriendly leads to thinking errors that result in inappropriate reactions and responses on their part. Due to the many and varied difficult situations that these students find themselves in on a daily basis, there follows a rich variety of private logic. Their ensuing

behaviors are best understood when involved adults understand the thinking of the students involved.

Lessons learned in any educational intervention must transfer to immediate relationships in which that student is involved; school, family, peer group, or the community. When teaching gives students practical solutions and coping skills in their naturally occurring setting, transfer is more likely (Brendtro & Shahbazian, 2004). The increases in mean difference as well as the medium to large effects sizes in these interventions suggests that the lessons learned by these students are effective in providing social coping skills. Perhaps, in time and with continued reinforcement, these learned skills will improve the psychosocial quality of their learning experiences not only in educational settings, but in their lives in general.

When considering the socioemotional development of students, emotional resources necessary for creating lasting social support structures, like LSCI, are vital to healthy functioning in society. This is not a new concept. Bronfenbrenner (1995) wrote:

> For more than three decades, I have been citing systematic evidence suggesting a progressive decline in American society of conditions that research increasingly indicates may be critical for developing and sustaining human competence through the life course… At the most general level, the evidence reveals growing chaos in the lives of families, in childcare settings, schools, peer groups, youth programs, neighborhoods, workplaces, and other everyday environments in which human beings live their lives. Such chaos, in turn, interrupts and undermines the

formation and stability of relationships, and activities that are essential for
psychological growth. (1995, pp. 643)

The data, indicated that, as an intervention tool for troubled students, LSCI provides that

social, emotional, and environmental support by helping turn crisis situations into

learning opportunities for these students.

Social Change Implications

The legislative demands of NCLB and IDEA combined with recent incidents of

school violence and antisocial behavior have created a great deal of interest in school

based models that will provide ways of assisting students whose problems and conflicts

can escalate into crises that could pose serious dangers to peers, staff members, and

themselves (Long, Fecser, & Brendtro, 1998; Long et al., 2007). The outcry for change

has been clearly heard. However, in these settings, social change can only occur when an

effort to provide the safest and most effective learning environment occurs. For this to

happen it is necessary for all educators to support academic learning by addressing the

socioemotional development needs of all students. Proactive interventions, like LSCI, not

only promote socioemotional development, they also help students develop more

adaptive ways to respond to stressful situations which, in turn, could promote an

alternative to suspension, reduce dropout rates, improve attendance, and potentially

increase academic achievement. Positive changes like these will benefit the students, the schools, and society in general.

Affolter (2003) believed that "any development agency interested in promoting social well-being will eventually have to consider how context enhances or inhibits socioemotional development. Without effective social support networks that foster socio-emotionally healthy communities, a society's capacity to nourish psychological well-being and cognitive capacity, trusting relationships and a social ethic is going to be crippled" (p. 1).

Educators are often ineffective when it comes to building and supporting a social ethic (Brendtro & Shahbazian, 2004). In an attempt to create and maintain a respectful and orderly environment educators often, ironically, do exactly the opposite where their students are concerned. Disrespect, humiliation, and hostile responses to student behavior from teachers and school administrations do not motivate corrective action. Instead, it more often than not engenders angry pride and further defiance. Students are excluded, suspended, and in a final desperate attempt to coerce and control, they are expelled. Brendtro et al (2001) believed that in a society that values children, as our society claims to do, there can be no *disposable kids*. He suggested that educators are sometimes quick to give up on challenging students. Schools, he said, should be graded, not on their test scores with the students they keep enrolled, but on their holding power with these

challenging students (p. 54). It is time to face reality. Zero tolerance, exclusion,

suspension, and expulsion make the problem worse – not better – for school and for

society as a whole.

A wise person once said a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.

Educators need to stand up and start walking. Social change can only occur when

educators make an effort to provide the safest and most effective learning environment.

However, for this to happen it is necessary to support academic learning by addressing

the socioemotional development needs of all students. Proactive interventions, like LSCI,

help students develop more adaptive ways to respond to stressful situations which, in

turn, could promote an alternative to suspension, reduce dropout rates, improve

attendance, and potentially increase academic achievement. Positive social changes like

these will benefit the students, the schools, and society in general. The results of this

study support the challenge all educators face as they work to fulfill the mandates of

NCLB (a) being safe, (b) closing the achievement gap between high and low performing

and advantaged and disadvantaged children, (c) preventing at-risk youth from dropping

out, and (d) providing delinquent youth with a support system to ensure their continued

education.

Recommendations for Action

Researchers have demonstrated that appropriate socioemotional development of all youth is a societal issue that affects all educators, particularly those working in the field of special education (Catalano, Haggerty, Oesterle, Fleming, & Hawkins, 2004; Hamre & Pianta, 2005; McNeely & Falci, 2004; Wentzel, 2002; Wilson, 2004). As a profession, we need to continue to work to incorporate innovative and best teaching practices that help students succeed in all educational settings. All educators need to strive to provide supportive and caring relationships within schools to promote academic motivation and reduce risk-behaviors like violence and aggression in adolescents.

The legislative demands of NCLB and IDEA and the increasing number of troubled and at-risk students with "identifiable mental health issues in the educational system than ever before (Long et al., p. xvi), have made schools in America responsible for identifying and implementing programs that are successful in increasing student academic achievement.

In order to help facilitate this, findings from this study will initially be shared with the teachers and administrators of the NorthStar Educational and Therapeutic Services (formerly Mountainbrook Comprehensive Academies). In addition, this research will be shared with the Life Space Crisis Intervention Institute of Hagerstown, Maryland, as well

as the editorial board and the senior editors of Reclaiming Youth International at their annual international conference in Victoria, B.C. Canada, in April 2009.

All senior administrators, student services/special education administrators, and school district administrators are urged to consider training staffs to use this educational intervention in their own settings. Given the high degree of efficacy of this intervention, using it with similar groups of students may substantially enhance their socioemotional development and ability to cope with stress and distress in school. Finally, crisis intervention training should become part of pre-service teacher education. LSCI could provide teacher candidates and teachers new to the profession with a better understanding of the socioemotional needs of all students as well as the necessary skills for success with troubled and challenging students.

Significant increases in the number of at-risk and troubled students are evident in North American schools as well as a societal awareness of the deeper more profound nature of their personal and ecological difficulties (Long et al., 2001, p. xvi). This requires acknowledgement by educators that socioemotional factors affect learning. LSCI, a therapeutic strategy that views problems or stressful incidents as opportunities for learning, growth, insight, and change, is one way that schools could help meet their students' socioemotional needs.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. While the entire professional teaching staff of the NorthStar Educational and Therapeutic Services (formerly Mountainbrook Comprehensive Academy) were used in this sample, the sample ($n = 21$) tends to be on the small side. Studying the same topic using a larger sample of teachers could further support the findings in this study.

2. This study, looking at teacher perception of student socioemotional development after LSCI, was the first of its kind. Data was analyzed using a hypothetical mean as no extant data was available. Replicating this study using the mean from this data against another set of data would provide more detailed information.

3. This study included the perceptions of certified professional teaching staff. Many psychoeducational schools train and utilize para-professional staff for LSCI. A study comparing the perception of professional and para-professional staff perceptions would provide a comparison of perceptions.

4. The timed nature of this study provided a limited view of the potential of LSCI. This study only took place over a 10 week period at the beginning of a school year. Collecting data for a period of a semester or even a full school

year would give a much more complete picture of the capabilities of this intervention.

5. This study only considered the effects of LSCI on troubled students in psychoeducational programming. While these student are likely to need this type of programming more than the average student in regular programming, all students can benefit from the life lessons and skill development provided by the program. Studies of students in other populations and less restrictive environments would be an extremely valuable addition to the extant research on LSCI.

6. A mixed-methods study, which incorporates the collection of qualitative and quantitative data, in which the researcher collects student and/or teacher perspectives through interviews, in addition to the socioemotional development data, would give insight into the inner workings of the process.

7. The setting of the study was a psychoeducational day program in the North Central region of the State of Georgia. It would be beneficial for schools in other parts of the country or other countries to complete similar studies to determine if similar effect sizes are found outside the original study setting.

8. The effects of LSCI on areas other than socioemotional development, like academic achievement and/or academic motivation need to be the topics of further study.

Conclusions

A concern over school violence and antisocial behavior in North America, as well as other parts of the world, has lead to an increasing expectation that educators provide safe and effective learning environments for all students. To meet those demands, educators must strive to incorporate innovative and best teaching practices that help students succeed in all educational settings. When students are not successful in school, their chances of being successful in society also decrease. Educators must bear the responsibility for creating environments and support systems that encourage positive and healthy social outcomes for all students.

This study examined the teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of LSCI on troubled students in a K-12 psychoeducational program. The quantitative data collected included data collected on a self-developed survey matrix used after each intervention. Results showed that student socioemotional development scores did improve after LSCI interventions. Results also showed that all three areas of socioemotional development studied improved after the interventions. LSCI provides the necessary social, emotional, and environmental support by helping turn crisis situations into learning opportunities for

these students. It also suggests that used as a form of early intervention, LSCI could limit or prevent student crises from escalating, reduce school violence, and increase academic opportunities for at-risk and troubled students

The review of the educational psychology research literature confirmed that learning environments that satisfy human socioemotional needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness do more than encourage higher quality learning. They are vital because the key factors in determining whether or not students are successful at school, in society, or in the world of work are not intelligence or academic achievement, but are, instead, social-emotional, and behavioral growth. This study provided solid evidence that LSCI helps educators better understand the socioemotional needs of all students as well as assist them in providing students with the necessary skills for success in the classroom and beyond. Antisocial behavior, school violence, and dropout problems are not inevitable, immutable features of North American education. Providing a realistic, caring, and supportive environment that meets students' socioemotional and academic needs can promote change by helping students' social adjustment through better self-regulation of behavior and better choices, including the choice to remain in school.

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Instructions for completing the LSCI Survey Matrix Form

1. Check the appropriate intervention that was used in the "Check One" column.

2. For each of the desired outcomes for the intervention used, please circle the **one** number for each outcome that you feel appropriately describes the students' level of socio-emotional development attained in the intervention.

The following scale could be interpreted as follows:

No self awareness	Emerging	Insight And Responsibility
1	2 3	4 5

1 – The student has not shown any understanding or improvement during the course of the intervention. He/she is no further ahead than he/she was before the intervention occurred.

2-3 – The student has grasped the concept and is grappling with it. A 2 would indicate a very elementary understanding of the desired outcome, whereas a 3 would indicate a slightly more in-depth grasp of the desired outcome in question.

4-5 – The student clearly understands how that outcome affects the individual situation. A 4 would indicate a very good grasp of the desired outcome but is not quite fully engaged. While a 4 would indicate a good level of development and understanding, a 5 would be reserved for a student that you believe has fully internalized the concept.

LSCI Survey Matrix Form

Intervention Used	Central Issue	Check One	Desired Outcome	No self awareness	Emerging		Insight And Responsibility	
Red Flag	carry-in, carry-over, tap-in		- recognize displacement of feelings on others	1	2	3	4	5
			- recognize they are alienating sources of support needed during stress	1	2	3	4	5
			- reduce anxiety	1	2	3	4	5
Symptom Estrangement	self-centered, power, status control		- realize they are paying a high price for justifying exploitation of others	1	2	3	4	5
			- realization that they are tricking themselves into believing their causes are just	1	2	3	4	5
			- increase anxiety	1	2	3	4	5
Reality Rub	tunnel vision, limit testing, misperception		-more accurate perception of reality	1	2	3	4	5
			-realization that there is "more than meets the eye"	1	2	3	4	5
			- reduce anxiety	1	2	3	4	5
Massaging Numb Values	overwhelmed by guilt		- expand student's self-control and confidence about exiting socially desirable attributes and potential for future acclaim by peers	1	2	3	4	5
			- evidence of a shift in responsibility from adult to student	1	2	3	4	5
			- decrease anxiety	1	2	3	4	5
New Tools	right idea, wrong behavior		- realize they have the right attitude and intentions but the wrong behavior	1	2	3	4	5
			-realization that new skills will improve social interactions	1	2	3	4	5
			- decrease anxiety	1	2	3	4	5
Manipulating Body Boundaries	false friendships, "set-ups"		- understand reasons for behavior of others	1	2	3	4	5
			- view social interactions from the perspective of others	1	2	3	4	5
			- decrease anxiety	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX B

MOUNTAINBROOK COMPREHENSIVE ACADEMY
8 GLENWOOD STREET
CANTON, GA 30114
PHONE: 770-720-3550   FAX: 770-720-3552

- Psychoeducational Classes
- Diagnostics
- Psychiatric Services

- Psychological Services
- Consultation / Training
- Caregiver Support

Dr. Paul W. Baker,
Regional Program Director

"Creating Communities of Respect"

Leilani Endicott, Ph.D.
Director, Office of Research Integrity and Compliance
Walden University
155 5th Avenue South, Suite 200
Minneapolis, MN 55401   April 13, 2008

Re: Meredith White-Mc Mahon

Dear Dr.Endicott:

On behalf of the Mountainbrook Comprehensive Academies, it is my pleasure to invite Meredith White-McMahon to conduct records reviews and data collection as part of her research project that will hopefully lead to a completed dissertation.

We are fully aware that she is in the process of submitting final IRB documents and has not received full authority from your institution to proceed. It is our intention to work with Ms. White-Mc Mahon closely to assure maintenance of confidentiality as required under HIPPA, IDEA, ADA and IDEA.

We look forward to working with her as she moves through the research process. Please let me know if we may be of further assistance.

Respectfully,

Paul W. Baker, Ph. D
Regional Director

cc: Meredith White-McMahon

NorthStar
Educational and Therapeutic Services

8 Glenwood Street
Canton, Georgia 30114
770-720-3550, Office 770-720-3552, Fax

- Therapeutic Classes
- Psychological Services / Intervention
- Diagnostic Evaluation

Dr. Paul W. Baker,
Regional Director
paul.baker@cherokee.k12.ga.us

- Neurocognitive Intervention
- Psychiatric Services
- Family / Caregiver Support
- Consultation

Dr. Allison Doerr, Licensed Psychologist
Clinical Services Supervisor
allison.doerr@cherokee.k12.ga.us

June 15, 2008

Ms. Meredith White –McMahon
418 Cordova St
Winnipeg, MB
R3N 1A6

RE: Approval of Research Request

Dear Ms. White-McMahon:

On behalf of the governing body of the NorthStar Educational and Therapeutic Services, formerly known as Mountainbrook Comprehensive Academy, I am pleased to provide you with this letter of full approval to conduct your research at our facility. This approval is based upon your strict adherence to the practices set forth in your IRB submission. Should you need to make changes to the design, please contact me directly to obtain official procedures for requesting this action.

We are pleased that you have selected NorthStar as a research site and look forward to reviewing your findings. We wish you the best as you complete this portion of your doctoral program.

Respectfully,

Paul W. Baker, Ph.D.
Regional Director

CC: File

LSCI Survey Matrix Form Results

Incident #	Scores			Total	Type of Intervention
	Sensitivity	Awareness	Self-Regulation		
1	1	1	2	4	RF
2	2	2	2	6	RF
3	3	3	3	9	RF
4	3	3	3	9	RF
5	2	2	2	6	RF
6	3	3	3	9	RF
7	3	3	3	9	RF
8	4	4	4	12	RF
9	4	4	4	12	RF
10	3	3	3	9	RF
11	3	1	3	7	RF
12	3	3	3	9	RF
13	2	2	2	6	RF
14	1	1	1	3	RF
15	1	1	1	3	RF
16	1	1	1	3	RF
17	4	4	4	12	RF
18	4	4	4	12	RF
19	2	2	2	6	SE
20	3	5	1	9	SE
21	2	2	1	5	SE
22	3	3	3	9	SE
23	4	4	4	12	SE
24	3	3	3	9	SE
25	3	3	3	9	SE
26	1	1	1	3	SE
27	1	1	1	3	SE
28	1	1	2	4	SE
29	1	1	1	3	SE
30	1	1	1	3	SE
31	3	3	3	9	SE

32	3	2	3	8	SE
33	1	1	1	3	SE
34	3	3	2	8	SE
35	3	5	1	9	SE
36	2	2	1	5	SE
37	3	3	3	9	SE
38	3	3	3	9	RR
39	3	3	3	9	RR
40	2	2	2	6	RR
41	3	3	3	9	RR
42	2	1	2	5	RR
43	1	1	1	3	RR
44	1	3	1	5	RR
45	1	1	1	3	RR
46	4	4	4	12	MNV
47	4	4	4	12	MNV
48	2	2	2	6	MNV
49	4	4	4	12	MNV
50	3	3	3	9	MNV
51	2	2	2	6	MNV
52	3	4	3	10	MNV
53	3	3	4	10	MBB
54	1	1	1	3	MBB
Average	2.49	2.55	2.42	7.45	

APPENDIX E

LSCI Survey Matrix Form Results Socio-Emotional Areas of Development

| Incident # | Scores | | | | Type of Intervention |
	Sensitivity	Awareness	Self-Regulation	Total	
1	1	1	2	4	RF
2	2	2	2	6	RF
3	3	3	3	9	RF
4	3	3	3	9	RF
5	2	2	2	6	RF
6	3	3	3	9	RF
7	3	3	3	9	RF
8	4	4	4	12	RF
9	4	4	4	12	RF
10	3	3	3	9	RF
11	3	1	3	7	RF
12	3	3	3	9	RF
13	2	2	2	6	RF
14	1	1	1	3	RF
15	1	1	1	3	RF
16	1	1	1	3	RF
17	4	4	4	12	RF
18	4	4	4	12	RF
	2.61	2.50	2.67	7.78	
19	2	2	2	6	SE
20	3	5	1	9	SE
21	2	2	1	5	SE
22	3	3	3	9	SE
23	4	4	4	12	SE
24	3	3	3	9	SE
25	3	3	3	9	SE

26	1	1	1	3	SE
27	1	1	1	3	SE
28	1	1	2	4	SE
29	1	1	1	3	SE
30	1	1	1	3	SE
31	3	3	3	9	SE
32	3	2	3	8	SE
33	1	1	1	3	SE
34	3	3	2	8	SE
35	3	5	1	9	SE
36	2	2	1	5	SE
37	3	3	3	9	SE
	2.26	2.42	1.95	6.63	

38	3	3	3	9	RR
39	3	3	3	9	RR
40	2	2	2	6	RR
41	3	3	3	9	RR
42	2	1	2	5	RR
43	1	1	1	3	RR
44	1	3	1	5	RR
45	1	1	1	3	RR
	2	2.125	2	6.125	

46	4	4	4	12	MNV
47	4	4	4	12	MNV
48	2	2	2	6	MNV
49	4	4	4	12	MNV
50	3	3	3	9	MNV
51	2	2	2	6	MNV
52	3	4	3	10	MNV

	3.14	3.29	3.14	9.57	

53	3	3	4	10	MBB
54	1	1	1	3	MBB
	2	2	2.5	6.5	

CURRICULUM VITAE

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                         Winnipeg, Manitoba
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Career Overview

Teaching

Over 30 years of K – 12 teaching experience in multiple subject areas.
Demonstrated proficiency in classroom management and organization
Post graduate training in behavior management and crisis intervention
Training and expertise in co-operative learning and differentiated instruction

Academic Publications

Co-author of two secondary Science textbooks – Nelson Science Concepts and Connections 9 and 10
Co-author of two Student Records of Learning – Nelson Concepts and Connections 9 and 10
Co-author of two Teacher's Resource Manuals – Nelson Science Concepts and Connections 9 and 10
Author - Nelson College Prep Chemistry 12 - Study Guide – Organic Chemistry
Co-author - Solutions Manual – College Prep Chemistry 12 – Organic Chemistry
Contributing writer - Solutions Manual – College Prep Biology 11 - Microbiology
Author – Computerized Assessment Bank – Nelson Alberta Science 20
Contributing writer – Solutions Manual – Nelson Alberta Science Chemistry 30

Co-Curricular

Produced and Directed musicals, dramas, and concerts K – 12
Soccer Manager
Cross Country Coach 7 – 12
Co-Coordinator – Space Camp

Educational Qualifications

2008   Doctoral Candidate
             Walden University – Teacher Leadership

1992   Master of Education (Educational Administration)
             University of Manitoba

1977   Bachelor of Education
             University of Winnipeg
             Deans Honor List / General Proficiency Scholarship

Level 1: School Administrator's Certificate (Manitoba) LI – 11891
Level 2: Principal's Certificate (course work completed)
Permanent Professional Certificate (Manitoba) TA – 11891
Professional "A" Certificate (Saskatchewan) 5603244

Teaching Experience

January 1986-Present   **St. James - Assiniboia**
                                                                                            School Division #2

2008 - Present	Jamswood Alternative School – Junior Program and Principal Designate Responsible for the academic and socio-emotional aspects of individual programming for students removed from the regular classroom setting.
2004 - 2008	Educational Support Services – Home Study Teacher –Developed and Implemented a new alternative program for students with severe emotional and behavioral difficulties. Responsible for the academic and socio-emotional aspects of individual programming for students removed from the regular classroom setting.
1997 - 2004	John Taylor Collegiate – Science 10G, 20F, 20FAP, 20G, 20S, 20SAP, Biology 30G, 30S, 30SAP, Biology 40G, Futures in Business 10G, Drama 11G, English 10GA, and Computer Applications 15G
1990-1997	Sansome Junior High – Science 7 and 8, Math 8, Language Arts 8, and Music 4-6, Robotics 7 and 8, G.A.T.E.
1989 - 1990	Sansome Junior High/Golden Gate Junior High/ Director - Divisional Show Choir Choral Music and Language Arts
1988 - 1989	Stevenson–Britannia – Music K-6, Computer Assisted Music
1986 - 1988	Linwood – Music K – 6, Computer Literacy Athlone - Music K – 6, Language Arts 5
1983 - 1984	Polson Elementary – Music K – 6, Special Education
1981 - 1982	Itinerant Music Specialist – 4 Junior Highs – General Music – Regina Public Schools

Maple Leaf Elementary – Music Specialist K-2

1978   Linwood and Assiniboine Elementary – Music Specialist K – 6

Professional Performance and Development

2004 - 2006   Completed Veteran Teachers Mentor Certificate
Author – Computerized Assessment Bank – Nelson Alberta Science 20
Contributing writer – Solutions Manual – Nelson Alberta Science Chemistry 30
Graduate study in Life Space Crisis Intervention and Brain Based Educational Practices
Conferences - Reclaiming Youth International Conference – "No Disposable Kids", Victoria B.C., "Anxiety Disorders in Children and Adolescents" – Winnpeg Anxiety Disorders Clinic, "Keeping Kids in School" – Dr. G. Phillips, and "Hold Onto Your Kids" – Dr. G Mate

2003 - 2004   Professional Development Committee – John Taylor Collegiate
Mentor – First Year Science Teacher
Completed Parts 1 – 3 Veteran Teachers Mentor Certificate
Co-author – Solutions Manual – College Prep Chemistry 12 – Organic Chemistry
Contributing writer - Solutions Manual –College Prep Biology 11 - Microbiology

2002 - 2003   Professional Development Committee Chair – John Taylor Collegiate
SAG STAM Presenter – S1/2 Differentiated Science Curriculum Implementation
STAO (Toronto) Presenter – Differentiated Science 9 and 10
Prince Edward Island Senior Science Teachers' In-service (Charlottetown)
Presenter - Hands-On Science in the High School
Author – Organic Chemistry Study Guide – College Prep Chemistry 12
Advisory Panel Member and Reviewer – Nelson College Prep Biology 11
Advisory Panel Member and Reviewer – Nelson College Prep Chemistry 12

2001 - 2002   Mentor – Second Year Science /Math Teacher
Mentor - New Experienced Teacher
Professional Development Committee Chair – John Taylor Collegiate
SAG STAM Presenter – S1/2 Differentiated Science Curriculum Implementation
Nelson Thompson Learning– Textbook Curriculum Consulting S2
In-service Presenter – New S2 Science Curriculum Implementation
Co-authored Science text Concepts and Connection 9, Nelson Thompson Learning – Chemistry and ancillary texts

2000 - 2001   Mentor – First Year Science Teacher
Professional Development Committee Chair – John Taylor Collegiate
SAG STAM Presenter – S1 Science Curriculum Implementation
Nelson Thompson Learning– Textbook Curriculum Consulting S2

Pilot Course - S2 Science
In-service Presenter – New S2 Science Curriculum Implementation
Co-authored Science text Concepts and Connections 10, Nelson Thompson
Learning – Weather and ancillary texts

1999 - 2000   Nelson Thompson Learning– Textbook Curriculum Consulting 7 – S1
In-service Presenter - New S1 Science Curriculum - Differentiated Instruction
Pilot Course – S1 Science

1997 - 2004   Dramas – Directed – Les Miserables 1998, Up the Down Staircase 1999,
Directed and Produced – Fame 2000, Everything I Need To Know I Learned in
Kindergarten 2001.
Musicals – Co-directed – Brigadoon 1998, Wizard of Oz 1999, Sound of Music
2000, The Pajama Game 2001
Produced and Co-Directed Grease 2002
Producer and Technical Director – Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor
Dreamcoat – 2003
Producer and Technical Director – 42nd Street - 2004

1990 - 1997   St. James – Assiniboia Space Camps
            Co-Coordinator

1992 - 1995   Professional Development Committee Chair – Sansome Junior High

1992 -1993   PSDC – Total Quality Education / Co-operative Learning

University of British Columbia – Graduate Study - Special Education – How to
Deal With Difficult Discipline Problems
PSDC Presentation – How to Deal With Difficult Discipline Problems

1990   Recommended to the Earl Grey Trophy Competition – Golden Gate

Winner – Dr. J. Fredrick Stanton Trophy – Stevenson Britannia

Winner – Dr. J. Fredrick Stanton Trophy - Linwood

1988 - 1990   Instructor – Continuing Education
Word Processing
Computer Literacy for Educators
Divisional In-service Presenter – Hands On Science
Pilot Course – Computer Assisted Music

1988 - 1989   Divisional In-service Committee
Instructional Excellence / Peer Coaching

1981 - 1985   Waterloo Management – Management 1
Certified Management Accountants – Level 2
Conversational German

Additional Qualifications

Certified Personal Trainer – CPTN-CPT 3187

Master Scuba Diver Trainer Instructor – PADI 206267

Volunteer Experience

2003   Western Canada Summer Games
Opening Ceremonies – Staging Coordinator

1997-2001   Scuba Instructor – 17 Wing Air Command, Winnipeg

1996 – 1999   XIII Pan American Games
Venue Operations
Ceremonies Costume Team Leader