

# Supervision and Collaborative Practice in Educational and Developmental Psychology

Psychologists have a vital role to play in schools. From identifying and treating complex psychopathology, through to using psychology as a tool to enrich lives by improving learning, facilitating positive developmental trajectories, and supporting social justice and advocacy, a school psychologist works in a complex and diverse space. In this way, any single day could include questions such as whether a child is socially and intellectually prepared to progress into the next grade; consulting with educators about managing challenging behaviours; conducting comprehensive assessments for cognitive, academic, and psychosocial referrals; writing reports and liaising with other health professionals; providing diagnoses to parents and guardians; providing counselling and evidence-based interventions for young people, teachers, and even parents; and responding to crises and life-threatening events.

How do we prepare psychologists to work in such a complex and diverse environment, and to effectively use the variety of approaches and paradigms that can be applied? Certainly, one pathway is via an accredited Masters program in Educational and Developmental psychology, followed by the completion of an approved registrar program. Graduates of this advanced training pathway bring considerable experience and skills to their psychological practice in schools; however, it worth considering what it is that this pathway actually delivers. Accredited pathways act as a framework to ensure a degree of homogeneity in knowledge, experience, and skills relevant to psychological practice in a particular setting. Perhaps most importantly for schools, an accredited Educational and Developmental psychology pathway ensures that psychologists benefit from the support of those who have come before them — supervisors who through years of experience have developed advanced competencies relevant to psychological practice in educational settings. Regardless of the training pathway chosen, aspiring school psychologists need to ensure they develop advanced competencies in Educational and Developmental psychology under the supervision of appropriate practitioners.

In the current edition of *The Educational and Developmental Psychologist*, Ding and Swalwell investigated the experience of and engagement with supervision among school psychologists. While the uptake of supervision was reportedly high, a number of barriers were identified, such as the availability of supervisors (particularly those with clinical experience) and the challenges of supervision provided by line managers. Ding and Swalwell also found that peer supervision practices were prominent in schools, which complements the article by Thielking, Skues, and Le. Thielking et al. investigated the collaborative practices of psychologists, guidance officers, and counsellors in schools, finding more engagement for within-school collaboration compared to external partners. Finally, in another example of the diversity of school psychological practice, Gan et al. investigated the educational implications for

siblings of children with chronic illness. Siblings of chronically ill children experienced interrupted education and increased distress, with one suggested intervention being a focus on developing a collaborative partnership between families and schools. While this edition contains only three articles, they each comprehensively speak to a number of the defining features of Educational and Developmental psychology practice — complexity, diversity, collaboration, and supervision.

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