

Trainers of School Psychologists (TSP) Response to Hate Expressed in Violence and Speech

In the wake of tragic, senseless acts of violence which have been grounded in hate and bigotry within our public spaces and houses of worship, the Trainers of School Psychologists (TSP) reaffirm our obligation to support and to value all children, families, teachers, and other school personnel. As a national organization which represents faculty from school psychology graduate programs across the United States and abroad, TSP is committed to innovation and excellence in the training of future specialist and doctoral school psychologists.

TSP prioritizes the safety, academic success, and mental health of all children, regardless of color, creed, country of origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or immigration status. TSP upholds the fundamental ethical principles of respect for all people's rights and dignity, beneficence, and non-maleficence.

TSP's ethical guidelines and professional standards require us to disavow any and all violent actions driven by bigotry, misogyny, and general intolerance. Such actions are detrimental to our graduate students and to the school-aged children whom we serve. Violence escalates violence; detracts from feelings of safety; and fuels fear, anxiety, oppression, and discrimination.

TSP further disavows statements that are unequivocally based on hatred of others. TSP has an obligation to act. Trainers of school psychologists promote and model practices which protect vulnerable individuals and groups. It is incumbent upon each of us to view these tumultuous times as an opportunity to reflect upon and to address the many complex social, political, and discriminatory issues that impact our teaching, practice, and research. We must engage in self and program examination to integrate diversity and social justice more effectively within our respective training programs, curricula, assignments, and practicum/internship experiences. We exemplify the 'life-long learner' model in our quest to enhance our skills and knowledge bases in these areas. The future educational leaders and child advocates within our programs look to us to provide them with the tools to engage in culturally responsive problem-solving. They will be on the front lines in mitigating bias in all forms by working collaboratively with all community members so that all children can grow, develop, and learn in safe, peaceful environments. We also encourage trainers to reflect upon our own levels of knowledge and expertise in these areas. It is our responsibility to nurture the development of future educational leaders and child advocates who promote empathy and compassion; to engage in culturally responsive problem-solving; to strive to prevent and to mitigate bias in all forms; and to work collaboratively with teachers, administrators, and communities to support all children. All of us must engage in the work necessary to foster an environment of inclusiveness. In the words of Pablo Casals, "You must work—we must all work—to make the world worthy of its children."

Below are some strategies, resources, and organizations to assist school psychology training programs in discussing the recent tragic hate crimes and responding to our ethical obligations and standards:

- 1) Graduate students in need of support should access resources on campus such as through the university's wellness center or participating advocacy organizations. Embedded within program handbooks and syllabi, support services provided by the program's respective institutions should

be highlighted and easily found. Programs may also highlight the advocacy organizations that are part of the campus community and encourage students to engage in these organizations as part of expanding their social structure and support system.

2) Conversations around issues of bias, discrimination, racism, targeting of immigrants, and hate of all types can be embedded into existing courses that focus on these topics, such as ethics, consultation, multicultural competencies, practica, and internships. In addition, faculty should consider implementing a town hall meeting or smaller programmatic meetings to process emotions and to identify actions the program can take to address bias in one's local context and beyond. It is important that faculty leading these town halls be comfortable in facilitating difficult conversations. Resources for leading difficult conversations can be found here:

<http://www.difficultdialoguesuaa.org/>.

3) **The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC)**, tracks hate crimes in America and works to develop policy and law to combat hate crimes. Educational resources specific to bias, equity, social justice issues, and discrimination, as well as lesson plans and free access to Teaching Tolerance (<https://www.tolerance.org/>), can be found at: <https://www.splcenter.org>.

4) **The Anti-Defamation League** is an organization with a primary mission of stopping hate against all people. The ADL also has free, accessible lesson plans on diversity, social justice, teaching critical thinking skills, and preventing and addressing bias. These resources may be found at: <https://www.adl.org/what-we-do>.

5) **National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)**. Resources on social justice. <http://apps.nasponline.org/search-results.aspx?q=social+justice>

6) **American Psychological Association (APA)**. Resources on social justice, <https://www.apa.org/search.aspx?query=social%20justice>

7) **Brigham Young University's website**. Building Social Skills with Books, includes free lesson plans, activities, posters, and video clips to address the following topics:

- Showing respect <https://education.byu.edu/buildingsocialskills/showing-respect>
- Making a compromise <https://education.byu.edu/buildingsocialskills/making-a-compromise>
- Working together <https://education.byu.edu/buildingsocialskills/working-together>