

Professional Development Training Institute

NJASP

Mental Health Initiative for NJ Schools 2023-2024

With support from the USDOE Mental Health Service Professional Demonstration Grant, the Training Institute is excited to offer trainings for school-based mental health services.



New Jersey Association of School Psychologists (NJASP)



NJASP has been a leader in NJ in providing trainings for schools, working with the NJDOE and children-based organizations, and playing an active role in serving students, parents, and school-based professionals.

We have always encouraged diversity among school professionals so that our schools reflect the culture of New Jersey.

A NJDOE Initiative: Strengthening the Intern-Supervisor Relationship by Learning Together

Each year, NJASP offers a variety of training opportunities to school psychologists and other school staff. The NJDOE recognizes that there are also hundreds of university graduates starting internships in local school districts. The NJDOE is encouraging all school-based supervisors to invite their interns to join them in participating in the training sessions offered by the New Jersey Association of School Psychologists.



Fall 2023-Spring 2024

Mental Health Training with Free Monthly Supervision

Our trainings will provide all participants with useable mental health skills. To further support this training, we will offer monthly supervision throughout the fall and spring, using case studies that will be discussed for each topic, as well as provide further discussion of any presentation.

In future years, we will offer advanced trainings on many of these topics.

All trainings are offered at no cost for participants

However, we are accepting donations and our "recommended" donation is \$10 per training. This is helpful in covering operating costs and enables us to continue offering expert trainings every year.

Training Schedule

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| October 12 | Reflective and Expressive Journaling, Part 1 |
| November 2 | Working with Parents and Caregivers in Schools, Part 1 |
| November 16 | Trauma-Informed Approach to Fostering Well-Being, Part 1 |
| January 25 | Reflective and Expressive Journaling, Part 2 |
| February 29 | Reflective and Expressive Journaling, Part 3 |
| March 20 | Trauma-Informed Approach to Fostering Well-Being, Part 2 |
| March 28 | Working with parents and Caregivers in Schools, Part 2 |



Benefits of Journaling, Styles of Journaling, and Ways to Engage Student Learning and Mental Health: A Three-Part Series

Youth can learn and process mental health issues best through hands-on experiential-based approaches. This represents a whole-child approach that supports self-discovery, self-reflection, problem-solving, improves motivation,

strengthens personal meaning and purpose, and establishes life-long strategies for coping with change.

Description: Part one: Why journaling? This course focuses on the scientific findings behind journaling as a form of narrative therapy. We will do a quick history on journaling and spend some time writing. We dive deep into the many benefits of journaling, the barriers that prevent students from developing a journaling practice, and ways to overcome those journaling barriers. This provides a basic framework for the benefits of journaling and how to get started. This course incorporates basic journaling techniques, prompts, and questions to start your journaling journey. Learning

Objectives: Identify key benefits of journaling; explore mindfulness through writing; discuss barriers to journaling; incorporate multiple journaling forms; discuss habit formation in students/learners; how to identify student buy-in; and build journaling trust amongst students.

Part Two: Journaling modalities for all learners. Part two is designed to help participants unlock the power of journaling as a versatile tool for personal growth, self-discovery, and creative expression. This is more comprehensive than part one in that participants will be introduced to a wide range of journaling modalities. We will identify the key benefits and insights from each journal style. This course is designed to encourage all learners to journal, including learners with specific writing, verbal, and behavioral challenges. Through reflective exercises and interactive discussions, participants will gain a deeper understanding of themselves and how to develop a beneficial journaling practice that suits the needs of any learner. Learning Objectives: Introduce and discuss multiple journaling styles and benefits; art journaling as a starting point tool; identify journaling strengths and weaknesses; build on existing journaling practices through prompts; encourage creativity and expression through journaling; utilize journaling for problem solving and goal setting; personalize journal practice for all learners.

Part Three: Reflective journaling. Reflective Journaling is a powerful tool that can help students identify personal strengths, process traumatic events, and help uncover personal values and opportunities of growth. This course is designed to explore the various benefits of reflective journaling and provide participants with the necessary skills and techniques to harness its potential. Through a combination of guided exercises, writing prompts, and discussions, learners will embark on a journey of self-discovery and expression. This class focuses on introducing the concept of reflective journal writing and its immediate benefits. While participants won't delve deep into all aspects, they will gain insights into how reflective journaling can be a valuable tool for personal growth and self-expression. Learning Objectives: Define reflective journaling; explore journaling as a tool to process emotions and trauma; explore link between self-reflection, values, and trauma; develop a list of prompts/questions to encourage reflection; explore multiple approaches to reflective

journaling (brain dump, stream of consciousness, prompts, timers, etc); and create a judgment-free zone for self-expression through essential agreements.

Presenter: Kay Kamienski, MA holds a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Denver. She also has a life-long passion for the learning and therapeutic benefits of journaling, which began as a young girl. As a teacher she saw the need to integrate the more cognitive approaches to learning with experiential-based learning that support the mental health of the students and helps make learning a more motivating and meaningful experience. She dedicated nine years in nurturing young minds with a special interest in working with the most challenging students. There was a recognition at her school in her ability to foster a love of learning and writing in her students. Throughout her tenure at Denver Public Schools, she created workshops for teachers, focusing on student engagement in writing and mathematics, along with classroom management. Understanding the importance of experiential-based learning informed her in these trainings.

She eventually left her position at the school to pursue other opportunities. Her journaling has continued to guide her in the cherished ritual for reflection, growth, and finding a renewed sense of purpose. The approaches she now teaches are continually informed by the research and literature reviews on journaling and related methods. She has found that understanding this important way of helping others is especially useful in supporting the well-being of our youth.

Dates: Part 1: October 12; Part 2: January 25; Part 3: February 29, 2024
Times: 7:00-8:30pm

[Register at NJASP.org](https://www.njasp.org)



Working with Parents and Caregivers in Schools: A Two-Part Series

Description: Part 1: Involving Parents and Caregivers in Mental Health Programming for Students at Tier 1: Novel Ideas and Research from the Field. The purpose of this first presentation is to introduce participants to ideas for involving parents and caregivers in mental health programming at the universal level. Although some schools are using structured Tier 1 interventions like Merrell's Strong Kids (Carrizales-Englemann, Feuerborn, Gueldner, & Tran, 2016) or Second Step (Committee for Children, 2011) that may include options for parent outreach, many schools are not using formalized programs to promote mental health and well-being among their students at the universal level. In this first part of this two-part series, the presenter will share evidence-based strategies for involving parents and caregivers in whole school mental health initiatives. Issues that will be addressed include (a) effective ways for delivering information to parents and caregivers at Tier 1, (b) suggestions for the types of information to provide, (c) understanding and appreciating cultural differences in outreach to parents and caregivers, and (d) options for parents and caregivers who need higher levels of support. Participants will learn practical strategies that they can use to invite parents and caregivers to partner with schools to promote children's mental health that can be used independently or to augment existing Tier 1 mental health initiatives.

Part 2: Involving Parents in Mental Health Interventions for Students at Tiers 2-3: What Do We Need from Parents and What Do We Have to Offer Them? The purpose of this second presentation is to offer strategies for working with caregivers whose children are receiving either Tier 2 or Tier 3 mental health interventions at school. In many cases, working cooperatively with parents and caregivers can help to further the goals of mental health interventions, but it is not uncommon for school psychologists to report that it can be difficult to engage parents and caregivers in meaningful ways. Topics to be addressed in this presentation include: (a) getting off on the right foot with parents and caregivers, (b) encouraging two-way communication, (c) maintaining confidentiality while sharing information, and (d) making sense of conflicting information from parents/caregivers and students. The presenter will draw from her own experiences providing Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions to youth as well as the research literature. Participants will learn how to maximize opportunities for working with parents and caregivers whose children are receiving Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions in schools to further the goals of those interventions.

Presenter: Linda Raffaele-Mendez holds a doctorate in School Psychology and is a licensed psychologist. She is an Associate Professor of the School Psychology Program at Fairleigh Dickinson University. Linda is author of Cognitive behavioral therapy in schools: A tiered approach to youth mental health. She is also author/co-author of 12 book chapters and 25 articles on a wide range of topics, ranging from working with parents, addressing

disciplinary outcomes by gender, suspension, gender and education, sexual harassment, treatment of depressed children, and anger and self-regulation. Linda has participated in numerous funded and non-funded research projects related to school, parents, and community-based topics. She has presented at more than 70 peer-reviewed conferences. In her role as associate professor, she supervises dissertation students and teaches a wide range of courses in school psychology.

Dates: Part One: November 2; Part Two: March 28

Time: 7:00-8:30pm

Register at NJASP.org



The Implications of a Trauma-Informed Approach to Fostering Youth Emotional Well-Being: A Two-Part Series

Description: Every day, millions of students—and tens of thousands of educators-- bring their traumatic experiences with them to school. Teachers may not always know about the trauma students are experiencing or know the full details. And staff rarely know the full dimensions of their colleagues' trauma. Under these circumstances, it is not easy for teachers to adapt their instruction in academics, specials, or SEL to meet students' varied and varying needs. However, by creating an explicit connection between SEL interventions and trauma-informed approaches, school psychologists can increase the effectiveness of both types of interventions in schools and help transform the school environment in positive ways.

Part 1: School Psychologists' Role in Addressing School Climate and Adult Trauma

The two most fundamental elements of a trauma-informed approach relate to the creation of a positive school climate and addressing the trauma affecting the adults. This presentation will discuss what school psychologists realistically can do.

Part 2: School Psychologists' Role in Developing Students' SEL and Character Across Tiers

While conditions in schools are important, it is essential to develop students' social-emotional competencies and character to optimally cope with trauma—both current and unanticipated. This presentation will show what school psychologists realistically can do across tiers—and especially in tiers 2 and 3—to build students' skills. We will highlight how to work through alliances, particularly with social studies/history, visual and performing arts, and PE staff.

Presenter: Maurice J. Elias, PhD is Professor, Psychology Department, Rutgers University, Director, Rutgers Social-Emotional and Character Development Lab (www.secdlab.org) and Co-Director of the Academy for SEL in Schools (SELinSchools.org), and on the Leadership Teams of SEL4US and SEL4NJ. He is a Fellow in APA Divisions 16, 53, 12, 9, and 27 and is a licensed psychologist in NJ. He received the Joseph E. Zins Memorial Senior Scholar Award for Social-Emotional Learning from CASEL, the Sanford McDonnell Award for Lifetime Achievement in Character Education, and the Jane Bostrum Service to School Psychology Award. He has co-written *Morning Classroom Conversations: Build Your Students' Social-Emotional, Character and Communication Skills Every Day*, *Students Taking Action Together: 5 Teaching Techniques to Cultivate SEL, Civic Engagement, and a Healthy Democracy*, and, for Tier 2 and 3, *Boost Emotional Intelligence in Students: 30 Flexible Research-Based Lessons to Build EQ Skills*, and *Social-Emotional Learning Lab: A Comprehensive SEL Resource Kit (2021, with Victoria Poedubicky)*. For parents, he has written *Emotionally Intelligent Parenting, Talking Treasure: Stories to Help Build Emotional Intelligence and Resilience in Young Children* (www.researchpress.com), and *The Joys & Oys of Parenting* (Behrman House). He writes a blog on SECD for Edutopia (www.edutopia.org/profile/maurice-j-elias).

Date: Part One: November 16, 2023; Part Two: March 20, 2024

Times: 7:00-8:30pm

Register at NJASP.org





**NJ Association of School Psychologists
Professional Development Training Institute**

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| NJASP President | Kristine Esposito, Ed.S, NCSP |
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