

Executive Summary
Spring Internship – Amanda Statnick
Psychology

Introduction

During the spring of 2006 I interned at Central Dauphin School District with one of the school district's school psychologists. Central Dauphin School District is located in northeast Harrisburg and currently serves 11,750 students. My supervisor was Cherie Murk. Cherie works primarily out of two of the district's elementary schools—Mountain View Elementary and North Side Elementary. I spent most of my time with her at these two schools.

I developed two learning objectives to pursue throughout my internship. I came up with several resources to utilize in accomplishing these objectives, along with various means of verifying my completion of these goals. My first objective was to learn how to perform observations of students in the classroom. My second objective was to gain a better understanding of autism and how it affects children in the school setting.

Work/Projects

When I wasn't simply observing Cherie as she administered intelligence tests to students or participated in various meetings about students, there were a few work assignments that she often gave me to do. One of these things, which also fulfilled one of my learning objectives, was to perform observations of students in their classrooms who had learning or other disabilities or who had behavior issues. Another assignment Cherie often gave me was to score Conners' and BASC-2 rating scales that are filled out by parents, teachers, and sometimes students. These rating scales are designed to assess things such as whether a student may be suffering from ADHD or depression. She also sometimes had me enter these scores into part of a comprehensive report that summarizes the assessment of a student and is sent to parents and teachers.

Learning

As I began this internship, I knew only a little about school psychology and I often wondered if I would ever be able to do anything more than follow my supervisor around and observe what she did. As I near the end of my twelve weeks though, I realize that I have learned a lot and am now able to do much more than when I first began. In addition to accomplishing my learning objectives of learning more about autism and learning how to perform observations of students, I also learned how to score the Conners' and BASC-2 rating scales, what it is like to administer the WISC-IV intelligence test for children, what the process of developing an individualized education plan (IEP) for a child who is either being placed into the gifted program or the special education program is like, and what the basic roles and responsibilities of a school psychologist are.

Future Plans

As a result of participating in this internship, I continue to have positive feelings toward the field of school psychology. Although I do not have plans at this moment to attend graduate school for a Master's degree in school psychology, I would definitely still

consider doing this at some point in my future. At the moment I plan to pursue some type of job working with children through a social service agency. I feel that the experiences I had in my internship, such as becoming familiar with the WISC-IV, BASC-2, and Conners' rating scales, as well as becoming more familiar with autism and other child disorders and learning disabilities will prove to be very valuable as I pursue this type of job.

Preparation/Recommendations

A few of my classes have proven to be particularly salient to this internship. These were: Child Development, Statistics, Abnormal Psychology, and Psychological Testing. I was able to see and better understand some of the things I learned about in these classes in my internship. The things I learned in my statistics class helped me to better understand things like percentiles and t-scores in the scoring and interpretation of various tests and some of what I learned in my Psychological Testing class also helped me to better understand some of the psychological tests my supervisor used.

If I could make a recommendation to my academic department, it would be to encourage more students to participate in a practicum or internship such as I did and perhaps to make available resources for students seeking to find psychology-related internships.